

## **Ecstasy, Utopia, and Healing: Religious Experiments and American Moral Worlds**

### **Institutional Context**

Fordham University is a Jesuit institution, with two required theology courses and a broad emphasis on “*cura personalis*” (care of the whole person), “*eloquentia perfecta*” (excellence in writing and speaking), and the production of “men and women for others.” These goals sit at the foundation of a relatively new core curriculum. If approved, this course will operate as an “EP-4” or “Values” seminar in the core. These designations signal its special attention to *eloquentia perfecta* [EP] as well as its focus on “ethical and moral questions in order to cultivate social responsibility.” Class size is limited to nineteen to make possible more substantive feedback on written and oral expression. Any senior would be eligible to sign up for this course. It could be structured to meet once-a-week for 2½ hours or twice-a-week for 1¼ hours.

Fordham College at Lincoln Center (FCLC) was founded in the 1960s. In addition to the liberal arts college, Lincoln Center houses several graduate schools, a school of professional and continuing studies, and a branch of the undergraduate business school. The broader university educates about 15,000 students. The number of FCLC undergraduates is about 1700. About 75% of these were in the top 25% of their high school class. Tuition is \$44,000. For many years, a large portion of students at FCLC were commuters who lived at home and often held other jobs or helped out in the home. This presence of commuter students stayed at about 50% until the recent construction of a new dormitory. More than two-thirds will now live on campus.

68% of our students come from New York City, New Jersey, and New York State, a number that has been slowly going down over the past decade or so. A full ¼ are from the city. This year, approximately 44% of our students selected Asian, Hispanic, or African American on their entrance forms. Hispanic and Asian students predominate among this group. Our biggest major is Communications and Media Studies. We have very strong Theater and Dance programs, whose influence radiates out beyond the majors. The Theology major is robust.

### **Course Rationale**

In designing this particular course as a core curriculum “values seminar,” I am hoping to add to the variety of offerings that can be thought of as “values” oriented. This course approaches values from a slightly askew angle. Rather than entering into debates about two possible approaches to a given circumstance, my course seeks to elicit American “moral worlds,” by which I hope to indicate that values emerge from something more than a body of ethical prescriptions.

Uncovering moral worlds involves trying to discover the range of the possible in particular settings, the networks and structures that guide decisions, and even the emotional regimes in play in given worlds. I propose that historical study of radical religious expressions and experiences puts historical moral worlds in particularly sharp relief. They touch a nerve. I suppose I am trying to touch a nerve too, among my students, so that conversation about American religious history comes alive for them. At the same time, I want the course to be a respectable historical survey of American religious history. Thus I move chronologically. I believe I have selected contexts of study that will enable me, at least in lecture, to hit on many of the major notes covered in many American religious history courses.

I am conscious of some of the risks involved in this kind of course. By eschewing in some sense “ordinary” religion, there is a risk of exoticism. I’ve tried to blunt that risk by insisting on attention to the connections of those we’re studying with the communities out of which they emerged. Their concerns were not unique, I’ll want to show, and even their exoticism (to those around them) was a sign of their attraction and compelling presentation of *something different*. I hope, at the least, that the cases I’ve selected reveal in powerful ways the tangled moral worlds in which they operated. In addition to being fun to read about, these people exposed in acute ways the moral worlds around them. But if the risk of exoticism is not wholly eliminated by this turn to contexts and networks, I think I am willing to take the chance anyway.

From a more personal angle, I am enthusiastic about this course because I want to honor the experiments and risks taken by those we will study. There is part of *me* that wants to break free too. These people—whether out of social pressure, the force of tradition, or the sheer power of their creative will—tried to ease their predicaments by trying something that the world around them considered weird or worse. Sometimes the results of their endeavors *were* in fact “worse,” resulting in real harm. But if the experiments went awry, they are not therefore wholly other to us. I want Fordham’s students to have the chance to consider alternatives and the challenges of making them real. The course is not a precursor to a manifesto nor an endorsement of what we read. Failure and even disaster are a big part of the story here, as the readings indicate. With both idealistic hopes and horrifying failures fully in play, the course is an attempt to explore moral worlds of the past and imagine how they might shape our own understandings of what matters most to us.

I’ve appended explanations to each week’s reading list. These descriptions aim to communicate what I envision as the “values questions” animating the proposed session.

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Prof. John C. Seitz  
Spring 2016  
M/R 2:30-3:45pm  
LL-310

Office Hours (LL 916E)  
M/R 10:30-11:15 and by appt.

### **Course Description**

This course approaches American religions through historical study of the pursuit of ecstatic, utopian, and healing experiences. We will seek to understand America's religious past by investigating specific contexts in which Americans have sought radical release from everyday consciousness, social disorder, and pain.

These pursuits, while distinct from one another in crucial ways, share an intense uneasiness with life as it is *and* an equally intense hopefulness in a particular solution. Sometimes people explicitly *theorized* these pursuits, but often they simply *lived* them as extensions of practical knowledge. In all cases we will explore the reasons for their hope as well as their responses to its triumph and its all-too-frequent failure.

Whether successful or not, those driving these endeavors remained (sometimes despite their desires) permeated by and influential upon the worlds around them. Accordingly, we will explore the ways their hopes and desires—while often expressed with unique assertiveness and addressed with solutions considered radical—linked them with the wider communities from which they emerged.

Indeed, those we will study were the subject of fascination, admiration, and profound attraction during and after their lives. But they were also subject to severe mockery, outright dismissal, and even violence from observers both past and present. And sometimes they themselves turned violent, abusive, or otherwise disastrous. This social location—at the tense nexus of fear and desire—makes their stories ideal windows onto what has mattered most to Americans and what might matter most to us today.

### **Schedule of Readings by Week**

#### **1. Orientation: Interrogating Our Terms**

- a. Martin Jay, "The Appeal of Religious Experience: Schleiermacher, James, Otto, and Buber," in *Songs of Experience: Modern American and European Variations on a Universal Theme* (78-130).

- b. R. Laurence Moore, “Introduction: Protestant Unity and the American Mission—The Historiography of a Desire” in *Religious Outsiders and the Making of Americans* (3-24).
- c. Thomas J. Csordas, “Imaginal Performance and Memory in Ritual Healing,” in *The Performance of Healing* ed. Carol Laderman and Marina Roseman (91-113).
- d. Robert A. Orsi, “Snakes Alive: Religious Studies Between Heaven and Earth” in *Between Heaven and Earth: The Religious Worlds People Make and the Scholars who Study Them* (177-204).

This week’s reading and discussion will aim to immerse students in theoretical and historiographical arguments related to the critical terms of our study. We’ll consider the ways historians and anthropologists have attempted to understand ecstatic religious experience, separatist utopian communities, and religious healing. In the process, and in particular with help from the Orsi piece, we’ll plumb the depths of our own interpretive predilections in our encounters with these kinds of stories.

## 2. Mystic Exoticism in New France

- a. Allen Greer, Ch. 1 “Beautiful Death,” Ch. 7 “Curing the Afflicted,” Ch. 8 “Virgins and Cannibals,” and “Epilogue: ‘Our Catherine,’” in *Mohawk Saint: Catherine Tekakwitha and the Jesuits* (3-24, 147-205)
- b. *Jesuit Relations*, Claude Chauchetiere “Lettre à ——. *Claude Chauchetiere*; Sault St. Fr. Xavier, October 14, 1682” [CLII]

History of the early modern Catholic reform, the rise of the Jesuits, and the missions to the New World will provide essential background for this week’s conversation. Greer’s text offers a very readable and supple analysis of the Mohawk-Jesuit encounter, attending specifically to two characters, the future Roman Catholic saint, Kateri Tekakwitha, and her European advocate, the French Jesuit Claude Chauchetiere. The text documents the affinities between Chauchetiere’s austere mystical Catholic faith and Tekakwitha’s devotional intensity. The readings provide an opportunity to consider the radical inequalities, real admiration, and fantasies that attended the missionary endeavor to the New World. The bodily quality of Tekakwitha’s devotions—she and her fellow converts practiced mortifications—bound her in Chauchetiere’s admiration and propelled her into sainthood. This week thus provides a chance to consider the abiding appeal, in Catholic America and beyond, of sacrificial suffering. Does suffering make holiness? How? What are the risks associated with this way of imagining sainthood?

## 3. Jerusalem’s New and Newer

- a. John Winthrop, “A Model of Christian Charity” (1630) in *American Religions: A Documentary History* ed. R. Marie Griffith (16-19)
- b. John Winthrop, “Reasons for Removal” in *A Documentary History of Religion in America v. 1* ed. Edwin S. Gaudstad (104-105).
- c. “The Examination of Mrs. Anne Hutchinson” (1637) in *American Religions: A Documentary History* ed. R. Marie Griffith (38-63).
- d. David D. Hall, “A World of Wonders: The Mentality of the Supernatural in Seventeenth-Century New England” in *Religion and American Culture: A Reader* ed. David G. Hackett (27-52).

This week we explore the Puritan’s aspirations for purity. A brief history of the reformation, particularly its Calvinist and British chapters, will offer important backdrop to the story. The Calvinist’s willingness to travel to the Americas emerged less from persecution and more from an ambition to make the new world a New

Jerusalem. The ideal society they imagined and attempted to establish contained many elements common to other Christian utopian visions including unbreakable bonds of mutual love, shared resources, spiritual solidarity, and relative equality among members. As the Hall essay demonstrates, the Puritans were so conscious of the high stakes of their collective endeavor that they translated events of the natural world into signs, wonders, and miracles testifying to the state of their experiment. God had messages for them as they tried to build the “city upon a hill.” These ambitions naturally faced major challenges, and almost immediately proved impossible to sustain. Controversy surrounding Hutchinson and the Quakers exposed the dilemmas associated with the attempt to create a communion of saints: someone else can always claim more immediate (antinomian) access to eternal truths. The compromises required to keep the puritan community and church going were easily ridiculed under the sign of the original ambition for purity. This history raises questions about the power and liability of claims to purity and the value and limits of pluralism. The abiding importance of the Puritans in America’s founding myth means that these discussions offer students valuable historical perspective on debates about the meanings of America as a so-called “Christian nation.”

#### 4. Protestants Exceeding the Limits of Reason Alone

- a. Jonathan Edwards, from “Some Thoughts Concerning the Present Revival of Religion in New England” (1743) in *American Religions* ed. Griffith (92-101).
- b. Sarah Pierpont Edwards, “Conversion Narrative” from Sereno Edwards Dwight, *The Works of President Edwards: With a Memoir of His Life* Vol. I. New York: G. & C. & H. Carvill. 1830. 171-186.  
<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~ma05/peltier/conversion/pierpont2.html>
- c. Sylvia Frey and Betty Wood, “The First Awakening: Patterns of Founding” in *Come Shouting to Zion: African American Protestantism in the American South and British Caribbean to 1830* (p. 80-117).
- d. Recommended: Jon F. Sensbach, “A Pilgrim in Europe” in *Rebecca’s Revival: Creating Black Christianity in the Atlantic World* (162-201). (ch. on Moravians ecstatic, sexualized devotional practices)
- e. Recommended: Jane T. Merritt “The Indian Great Awakening” in *At the Crossroads: Indians and Empires on a Mid-Atlantic Frontier, 1700-1763* (89-128). (Ch. On bloodletting/fixation on blood and wound as bond between Moravian and Amerindians in their conversion rituals)

Focusing on the highly-charged conversion experiences associated with the First Great Awakening, this week we will consider the relationship of various kinds of religious knowing. We will situate the First Great Awakening in the midst of the European Enlightenment and explore the valorization of reason emerging from the latter movement. The rise of out-of-body experiences and visceral (and sometimes vividly sensual) aspects in the proto-evangelical awakenings provide a chance to reflect on what kinds of experiences “count” and what kinds are “ruled out” when it comes to claims about eternal truth. As the readings and lectures will demonstrate, awakeners were themselves acutely aware of the criticisms they faced when worship became bodily, emotional, and ecstatic. The narrative of Sarah Pierpont Edwards not only offers a first-hand account of an ecstatic conversion, but also witnesses (in comparison with her more famous husband’s redacted version of the same story) to the sensitivity around questions of emotionally charged religious expression. Awakeners’ efforts to reign in their own “excesses” offer vivid illustration of the moral potency of enlightenment standards of truth. But “reason” was not only an epistemological category, it was also imbued with social power. For example, the affective worship associated with awakenings was a threat to what was widely accepted as the “reasonable” social structure of the slave system, and the essential differences between African, Amerindian, and European. Accordingly, we turn to Frey and Wood’s text, which explores African-influenced slave-adaptations of Protestant revival forms. Merritt and Sensbach consider the powerfully affective and bodily versions of piety adopted by Moravians and those Africans and Amerindians who took up those forms.

## 5. Religious Persecution in Catholic New Spain

- a. Nora E. Jaffary, Introduction “Ana Rodriguez de Castro y Aramburu: An *Ilusa* before the Mexican Inquisition” Ch. 1 “The Production of Orthodoxy and Deviancy,” Ch. 2 “Mystical Spirituality in the Social Context of Colonial Mexico,” in *False Mystics: Deviant Orthodoxy in Colonial Mexico* (1-78).
- b. “Trials and Testimonies against *Alumbrados* (Illuminati) and Others for Heretical Acts and False Revelations,” “Trials and Testimonies against Superstitions, Sorcery, and Magical Practices” in *The Inquisition in New Spain, 1536-1820: A Documentary Reader* ed. John F. Chuchiak IV (274-307).
- c. Recommended: “Trials and Testimonies against the use of Peyote and Other Herbs and Plants for Divination” in *The Inquisition in New Spain* ed. Chuchiak IV (308-317).

Turning to the history of the Inquisition in New Spain, we have an opportunity to consider the interplay of race and gender in the articulation and enforcement of orthodoxy. Many of those accused in the Mexican Inquisition were women, some of whom had incorporated indigenous healing and divination traditions into their Catholicism. Catholic mystical traditions that had won grudging approval among Europeans were less tolerable once they had slipped out of the hands of clergy and into the mestizo populations of New Spain. Students will confront colonialism, the inadequacy of static notions of conversion, and the challenges of religious diversity from the perspective of those in charge and from the perspective of those standing outside centers of authority.

## 6. Utopian and Visionary Challenges to Market and Family

- a. Jan Shipps, *Mormonism: The Story of a New Religious Tradition* (1-168).

This week brings students into the religiously fertile early 19<sup>th</sup> century, when various Protestant groups of primitivists, seekers, and visionaries extended Christian perfectionism and plied various channels of divine communication toward the production of new utopian communities. A broader survey of the period—to include groups like those surrounding the Prophet Matthias at Ossining, John Humphrey Noyes at Oneida, and the transcendentalist community at Brook Farm, MA—will help contextualize Mormon history in a broader story of religious creativity and experiment. Social and economic change related to the market revolution, especially pressure on gender norms and the rural subsistence economy, will add to the density of the historical account. Shipps’ account of Mormonism, while a bit dated methodologically, has the benefit of offering an explicitly comparative lens. It poses the question of the relationship of the founding of Mormonism to the founding other religious traditions, including Christianity. It documents vividly the violent expulsion of the emerging church and presents polygamy as a key to early Mormon identity. As such, and in conversation with the other histories mentioned above, the book poses stark ethical questions about the extent and limits of religious tolerance, the institution of the ‘traditional’ family, and the notion of continuing revelation. In particular, issues of family, the definition of marriage, and the range of religious tolerance remain live issues at the intersection of religion and contemporary U.S. politics.

## 7. Halfway Point: Catch-Up, Review, or Breath

## 8. The Spirit World on Gender, Health, and Sex

- a. Ann Braude, “Introduction: ‘My Soul’s Thralldom and its Deliverance’” and “The Meaning of Mediumship” in *Radical Spirits: Spiritualism and Women’s Rights in Nineteenth-Century America* (1-9, 82-117).

- b. Mary Baker Eddy, “Science and the Senses” (1888) in *A Documentary History of Religion in America* ed. Gaustad (243-247).
- c. Ida Craddock, “Psychic Wedlock” (1895) and “Spiritual Joys (Excerpt from ‘The Marriage Relation’” (1900) in *Sexual Outlaw, Erotic Mystic: The Essential Ida Craddock* comp. Vere Chappell (141-172).

This week is about the religious history of women’s rights. Braude uncovers 19<sup>th</sup> century Spiritualism—mediumship, communion with the dead, clairvoyance, and other phenomena connecting people to a spirit world—as a surprising site for the articulation and enactment of women’s rights. Women gained a powerful voice in Spiritualism in ways that was not possible elsewhere, in part because their leadership hinged on unthreatening, “passive” reception of messages from beyond. Eddy and Craddock offer different cases, building on their Spiritualist roots to assert leadership in the realms of health and sex. Our readings during this week will allow us to explore the “Cult of True Womanhood,” an idealized and subjugating portrait of women as pure, traditionally holy, asexual, and as anchors for the moral world. They also expose the shifting quality of what counts as radical, and promote questions about contemporary gender boundaries, transgression, and ecstatic religious practice.

## 9. Bodies in Motion: Indian Dance Controversies

- a. James Mooney, *The Ghost Dance Religion and Wounded Knee* 777-791, 915-927.
- b. Tisa Wenger, “Introduction” in *We Have a Religion: The 1920s Pueblo Indian Dance Controversy and American Religious Freedom* (1-16).
- c. Department of the Interior Office of Indian Affairs, “Circular #1665: Indian Dancing” (1923)  
<http://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/~rfrey/PDF/329/IndianDances.pdf>

Dances associated with various Native American ceremonies had long vexed Euro-American authorities. Their secrecy and inaccessibility, as well as their overt embodiment, unnerved Euro-Americans who couldn’t categorize and feared the dances. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries Euro-Americans made considerable efforts to extirpate, expose, or modify dance traditions among various native groups. This session focuses attention on the Ghost Dance, a practice with Christian and indigenous roots which spread rapidly among Native Americans in the late 1880s. Euro-American officials’ misunderstanding of the Ghost Dance tradition—they considered it a precursor to war—contributed to the massacre at Wounded Knee. In contrast, James Mooney’s 1894 account of the Ghost Dance is a remarkable contemporary source, which documents the dance, compares it with other kinds of religious practice, and offers an explanation hinging on the emerging psychological interest in hypnotism. Later, in the 1920s, secret ceremonial dances continued among the Pueblo. This time, Euro-American critics of the dances (they fantasized about their sexually aberrancy) were met with “modernist” Euro-American supporters of the dances. Adding to the mix were “progressive” Pueblos who wanted to mute the dance traditions as well as traditionalist Pueblos who sought to protect them. The texts provide a chance not only to think about the boundary-markers that differentiate “modern” from “backward,” but also offer an opportunity to interrogate the very category of religion and its legal entailments. What should be protected under the law as freedom of religion? How do we casually define religion, and what does that mean for the boundaries of our own moral worlds?

## 10. Healing at the Intersection of Faith and Popular Culture

- a. Edith L. Blumhofer, *Aimee Semple McPherson: Everybody’s Sister* (1993)

Aimee Semple McPherson was North America’s most famous evangelist during the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. An early and profoundly successful advocate of Pentecostal forms of worship and healing, McPherson made a lasting impact on a movement that has grown in staggering proportions across the world since the mid

20<sup>th</sup> century. Then as now, the healing practices radiating from Pentecostal and Christian charismatic communities have, in particular, raised sensitive and far-reaching moral and ethical questions. Our concern, drawing selectively from Blumhofer's accessible biography, will center on questions about pain and its meanings. How are we to respond to our pains? What counts as "good" suffering and what kinds of suffering are rightly considered intolerable? Who has access to and authority over the body in pain? What counts as "health"? By claiming the power of spiritual healing (and by garnering legions of admirers as McPherson did) charismatics expose the uncertainties and grey areas lingering beneath ethical bromides about suffering and the regimented efficiency of professional medicine.

### **11. Sustainability, Justice, and Radical Catholic Communalism**

- a. Paul Hanley Furfey, *Fire on the Earth* (1937) (1-156).
- b. Eric Anglada, "Roots of a New Society: Peter Maurin and the Agronomic University," (February 21, 2011) at *Jesus Radicals*  
<http://www.jesusradicals.com/roots-of-a-new-society-peter-maurin-and-the-agronomic-university/>

American religious attention to sustainability and fair trade are older than most students realize. In this week, we approach the work of a Catholic sociologist, Paul Hanley Furfey, in his attempt to create a "supernatural sociology" that would help Catholics live up to their calling to be nothing less than saints. Furfey proposed the creation of distinctly Catholic self-sustaining villages, each of which would provide a model of abstaining from social sin through sustainable and just means of production and provision. Furfey's rendering of the "mystical body of Christ" as the supernatural unity of humankind which imposes ethical demands on all Catholics resonates with similar reflections emerging from the Catholic Worker, especially its promotion of Houses of Hospitality and self-sustaining farming communes. Peter Maurin's (co-founder with Dorothy Day of the Catholic Worker) idea of the Agronomic University will also be considered. The reflections of a contemporary Catholic Worker (Anglada) on the ongoing experiment with just, sustainable, and self-sufficient farms will shape conversation about religion and the ethics of consumption.

### **12. Ecstasy, Alienation, and Black Self-Determination**

- a. James Baldwin, *Go Tell it on the Mountain* (1952) (1-221).
- b. Kathryn Lofton, "The Perpetual Primitive in African American Religious Historiography" in *The New Black Gods: Arthur Huff Fauset and the Study of African American Religions* ed. Edward E. Curtis IV (171-191).

Baldwin's story tracks the life of an adolescent boy, John, whose family expects him to become a leader in their Harlem store-front church, the Temple of the Fire Baptized. As John struggles with his ambivalence about coming to Jesus, or "getting saved," Baldwin takes the readers through the other characters' memories, into a long history of slavery, Jim Crow, and the Great Migration. In the end, John's desire for freedom—from his father's religion, from racial oppression, from his own hopeless future—is complicated by a powerful force which leaves him writhing for a whole night in ecstasy and agony on the floor of the church. The ambiguous ending of the book—is John saved? from what? for what?—opens out to discussion of the value and constraint of community as measured against the liberation and loneliness of independence. His particular religious vision—populated with agonized black bodies—suggests the potency of religious imagination in the development of solidarity. His stepfather's previous religious conversion, on the other hand, radiates with images of triumph, authority, and self-aggrandizement. Baldwin's seminal novel provides the opportunity to explore the volatility of the holy, in the particular context of African American history. Lofton offers a succinct historiographic intervention, complementing Baldwin's character's desire to be released from expectations about African American religiosity.

### 13. Countercultural Visions in Hope and Tragedy: Jonestown, Tijerina, and The Farm

- a. Jonathan Z. Smith, “The Devil in Mr. Jones” in *Imagining Religion: From Babylon to Jonestown* (1982) 102-120.
- b. Rudy Busto, “Valle de Paz: Texts, Visions, and Landscapes” in *King Tiger: The Religious Vision of Reies Lopez Tijerina* (2005) 115-141.
- c. Morgan Shipley, “Hippies and the Mystic Way: Dropping Out, Unitive Experiences, and Communal Utopianism” in *Utopian Studies* 24:2 (2013) 232-263.

These final essays offer a chance to explore three distinct political and social experiments emerging out of the tension and upheaval of the U.S. 1960s. The People’s Temple (in its final years at Jonestown in Guyana), Valle de Paz (a commune founded by Reies Lopez Tijerina in New Mexico), and The Farm (a self-described and still-extant hippy commune in Tennessee) manifested different but interrelated desires of a generation alienated by a rising sense of America as a site of militarization, bureaucratic control, racial and ethnic animosity, deadening work environments, dogmatic religion, ecological disaster, consumerism, and the abiding legacy of colonial land theft. Precisely through their exoticism, horror, anger, joy, and beauty, these three cases offer potent reminders of our common humanity and insist on the “possibility of intelligibility” (Smith), which should drive scholarship and may provide one foundation for the forging of new moral worlds.

### During Final Exam Session: Final Papers Due, Date TBA

#### Texts

All of the readings will appear on blackboard. I recommend that you print them all out and bind them somehow together. In any case, you must have a copy of the reading material for each session in front of you during class.

#### Course Requirements, Assignments, and Grade Distribution

- **Participation-20%:** Class participation includes evaluation of your informed and regular contribution to class discussion. It also includes attendance.
  - Readings and Discussion
    - This is not a lecture course, but a course designed with informed discussion at the core. Accordingly, you should arrive to class having read the assigned pages for that day.
    - I will keep track of the times when students offer exceptionally thoughtful questions or analyses as part of class discussion. I will also note when they demonstrate their thoughtfulness and immersion in course material by building meaningfully on others’ comments to advance class discussion.
    - Lectures, when offered, are meant to augment understanding of general events and themes and provide a foundation for better discussion and writing.
    - You must bring assigned readings to class.

- Be prepared. I will call on people to contribute or answer questions.
- Attendance
  - Attendance counts because it influences course dynamics and provides the context for your testing out of your scholarly mind and voice.
  - Regular attendance is a required part of the course. Unexcused absences may factor into the final grade.
- **Short Papers and Presentations (25%; 2 at 5% each, 2 at 7.5% each):** Four times during the semester you will submit a paper of 3 pages analyzing a contemporary moral question in light of one of our course readings. Two of these papers will be reworked, after instructor feedback, to become in-class presentations.
  - Keep an eye out over the course of the semester for contemporary news items or personal experiences which can fruitfully be interpreted in light of one of our readings.
  - This assignment hinges on your making connections across disparate moments in history. This requires both caution and creativity. It will not be accomplished successfully outside of a thorough immersion in the readings.
  - We will discuss the assignment and set up presentation and due dates during the first week of class.
- **In-Class Writing (ICW)-10%:** At various increments we will set aside time for in-class writing on the themes emerging from reading and discussion.
  - Somewhere between an essay exam and a brainstorming exercise, ICW assignments aim to help you to focus on the task of thinking critically and comparatively about the texts of a given section.
  - During the days leading up to ICW days, you should prepare by re-reading important, inspiring, or confusing sections of the texts in question. In addition to your own interests and questions, prompts will help guide you in your review and preparation.
  - Although you should prepare, you should not write your ICW before class. Come to class ready for an intensive 25-minute session of quiet, productive, and free-flowing writing. These are not to be 'polished' pieces of writing, but more a witnessing of thoughts on a certain topic.
  - You may write with a laptop if you have one, or by hand. If you write on a laptop, upload the document to the designated dropbox on our blackboard page.
  - Grades for ICWs will be based on the following criteria:
    - Completion (60%)
    - Immersion in and intellectual engagement with material (20%)
    - Creative exploration of the wider implications of the readings (20%)
- **Final Project-45%:**

A paper, integrating course material and independent research, exploring the moral world of a particular group or individual in American religious history. Be sure to select a context involving ecstatic experience, utopian endeavor, or healing practices.

Topics will be chosen based on each student's particular interests. They will be finalized through conversation with the professor in the first few weeks of the semester. Papers must draw upon scholarly sources and demonstrate deep engagement with contemporary conversations around the topic. Papers should integrate at least one text from our course. The exact number of other scholarly sources will vary, but will probably not be less than five.

More on this project will emerge in class. But for now know that papers must have a "project." That is, they should aim to project something of value and interest out into the world.

Three distinct parts make up the assignment:

- Final Research Paper-35%
  - 15-20 pages, excluding notes and bibliography, both of which should be completed following *Chicago Manual of Style* (available online).
  - 12pt. font, double-spaced, normal margins
  - Due during our final exam session....
- Research Paper Prospectus and Presentation-10%
  - 2 page description of paper
  - 1-2 page bibliography of works to be used
  - In-class presentation [date tba] of project and the problems and questions it entails
- Research Paper Rough Draft and Presentation-10%
  - A complete rough draft of the final paper, not an outline or jottings/notes. Due [date tba].
  - In-class presentation [date tba] of project and the problems and questions it entails.
  - Professor will reply to these rough drafts by [date tba], to provide students with time to integrate comments in preparation of final draft.

### **Other Important Matters**

- Communications
  - Many common problems can be avoided with advance notice and open lines of communication.
  - I will rely on email to communicate important course-related information to you. Please read your emails and respond to them as needed. I send emails

- through blackboard, which employs your default address for Fordham. This is usually your @fordham.edu address. Be sure to arrange to check this account frequently or have it forwarded to your favored account.
- Feel free to send emails to me with your questions or concerns.
- Laptops and Other Tech Stuff
- I discourage use of laptops and tablets. If they house your readings, they may be employed so long as they do not pose a distraction.
- Academic Integrity
- From Fordham's Academic Integrity webpage: "Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity in an honest, truthful, and responsible manner. Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating on exams, falsification, unapproved collaboration, and destruction of library materials." For further information about the Arts and Sciences Policy on Academic Integrity, and the procedures related to violations of it, please click:  
[http://www.fordham.edu/academics/colleges\\_graduate\\_s/undergraduate\\_colleg/fordham\\_college\\_at\\_1/studying\\_at\\_lincoln\\_/academic\\_integrity\\_23682.asp](http://www.fordham.edu/academics/colleges_graduate_s/undergraduate_colleg/fordham_college_at_1/studying_at_lincoln_/academic_integrity_23682.asp)
  - Beware in particular of non-scholarly webpages.
- Late Work, Emailed Work, Absences
- If they desire full credit, students are required to turn in all work on its assigned due date. Exceptions will be made only in the case of documented illness or other documented emergency. Hand in documentation along with the assignment at first possible moment after the emergency.
  - Adhering to this policy will create a stable environment for learning and class discussion.
  - No Questions Late Policy: Deductions for late work amount to one letter grade per day. If an extra day would turn a C- paper into an A- paper, take the extra day! No explanations required.
  - Unless otherwise specified, I do not accept emailed work.
  - Here are the steps to take if you are absent outside of documented illness or emergency:
    1. Do the assigned reading
    2. Get notes from someone in class
    3. Review notes in light of your reading
    4. If desired, make an appointment with me to discuss your questions about the reading and the class notes
- Disabilities
- "Under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973, all students, with or without disabilities, are entitled

to equal access to the programs and activities of Fordham University. If you believe that you have a disabling condition that may interfere with your ability to participate in the activities, course work, or assessment of the object of this course, you may be entitled to accommodations. Please schedule an appointment to speak with someone at the Office of Disability Services (Rose Hill – O'Hare Hall, Lower Level, x0655 or at Lincoln Center – Room 207, x6282)."

- Grades: 93-100% = A; 90-92% = A-; 88-89% = B+; 83-87% = B; 80-82% = B-; 78-79% = C+; 73-77% = C; 70-72% = C-; 60-69% = D; 0-59% = F.