

**Northwestern College**  
**Issues in American History:**  
**FOLLOWING JESUS IN AMERICA:**  
**FOUR CASES**

History 240-1, First half, Fall Semester 2011  
(2 Credits)

**Professor:** Douglas Firth Anderson

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**Office hours:** MWF, 2:10 p.m., or by appointment

**Class Period:** MWF, 10:40-11:40 a.m.

**Class Location:** VPH 126

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Course materials and grades available on MyNorthwestern

In a country divided by race, ethnicity, gender, class, and religion, Jesus functions as common cultural coin.... While [some] Americans loved Jesus because of Christianity, [others] loved him despite it. The fact that the United States is a Jesus nation does not make it a Christian one.

Stephen Prothero, *American Jesus: How the Son of God Became a National Icon* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003), 300, 301.

It is tempting to suppose that Christian belief has had such staying power in America because it provides respectable conformity, relief from anxiety, or a promise of eternal happiness. Yet some people find Christianity compelling because it provides an alternative to conformity, or a correction to their complacency.... There is at least one more reason for the lasting power of Christian belief in America: so many Americans have known holy people who loved Christ ...

Richard W. Fox, *Jesus in America: Personal Savior, Cultural Hero, National Obsession* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 2005), 405-406.

## **COURSE INTRODUCTION**

### Summary description:

Following Jesus has mattered to many Americans over time, apart from debate over whether the United States is or ever was a Christian nation. This course is a historical exploration of beliefs and practices of Americans concerning Jesus. Within an overview of major developments, important institutions, and key events, the course will focus on four individuals as case studies. Key themes in the course will include religion as a major thread in American history, Christianity as both a set of social institutions and structures and also as lived religion, and the varied appropriations of Jesus throughout America's historical experience.

### Course purpose:

This is an elective course in American history. Within the limits of a half semester, it moves beyond the introductory level of history courses through the amount and rigor of critical reading, writing, and discussion required about people, texts, and developments from the past. It also requires a bit of historical research, albeit less than that required in upper division history courses.

As a history course, it implements elements of Northwestern College's "A Vision for Learning." In what is studied as well as how it is studied, this course especially addresses the following aspects of "[A Vision for Learning](#)" for students:

- Fostering competence in navigating and contributing to the world of ideas and information connected with the human past.
- Pursuing truth faithfully in studying and understanding the past.
- Developing a broad understanding of the historical interplay of different realms of knowledge and experience.
- Fostering regarding all persons as made in the image of God and thus deserving of understanding, love, and justice.

#### Course objectives:

Given the general nature and purposes of this course as described above, particular objectives include the following:

1. To foster familiarity with and understanding of Christianity as a complex set of beliefs and practices that has been implicated in both justifying and questioning American society and culture, since Jesus himself said that salt can lose its flavor, light can be hidden, and many can say "Lord, Lord" without him knowing them (Matt. 5:13-16, 7:21-23).
2. To develop skills in analytical reading, critical thinking, historical writing, and oral discussion beyond the introductory level through course assignments and activities, since such skills are key tools for learning how, with the Apostle Paul, to "take every thought captive to obey Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5).
3. To instill what have been called the "three Ws" as guiding questions in studying the past: What happened? What was it like? Why does it matter?
4. To foster what have been called the "five Cs" as essential habits of mind for interpreting and understanding the past: change, context, causality, contingency, complexity.<sup>1</sup>
5. To provide tools and opportunity for reflecting Christianly about the human past, for "in [Christ] all things hold together" (Col. 1:17)

## **REQUIRED READING**

- *The Apostle*. Videocassette. Written and directed by Robert Duvall. New York: USA Home Entertainment, 1999.
- Day, Dorothy. Selected Writings from *The Catholic Worker Movement*. <http://www.catholicworker.org/dorothyday/thesauruslist.cfm>.
- ----- . *Loaves and Fishes*. Introduction by Robert Coles. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1997; original publication 1963. ISBN 9781570751561
- Douglass, Frederick. "American Slavery, American Religion, and the Free Church of Scotland: An Address Delivered in London, England, on May 22, 1846." The Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition. <http://www.yale.edu/glc/archive/1077.htm>.
- ----- . "Baptists, Congregationalists, the Free Church, and Slavery: An Address Delivered in Belfast, Ireland, on December 23, 1845." The Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition. <http://www.yale.edu/glc/archive/1065.htm>.
- ----- . *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself with Related Documents*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Edited by David W. Blight. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2003; original publication 1845. ISBN 9780312257378

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas Andrews and Flannery Burke, "What Does It Mean to Think Historically?" *Perspectives* 45 (Jan. 2007): 32.

- Eastman, Charles A. *From the Deep Woods to Civilization*. Introduction by Raymond Wilson. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1977; original publication 1916. ISBN 9780060914134
- -----, "I. The Great Mystery" and "IV. Barbarism and the Moral Code." In *The Soul of the Indian*, 1-24, 85-115. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1980; original publication 1911. <http://books.google.com/books?id=TovQnmMOwL8C&pg=PR15#v=onepage&q&f=false>
- Woolman, John. *The Journal of John Woolman and Plea for the Poor*. Introduction by Frederick B. Tolles. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1998; original publication 1774. ISBN 9781579101466

## RECOMMENDED READING

- Fox, Richard W. *Jesus in America: Personal Savior, Cultural Hero, National Obsession*. New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 2005. ON LIBRARY RESERVE
- Marsden, George M. "A Christian Perspective for the Teaching of History." In *A Christian View of History?* Edited by George Marsden and Frank Roberts, 31-49. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1975. LINKED TO MyNWC
- Prothero, Stephen. *American Jesus: How the Son of God Became a National Icon*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003. ON LIBRARY RESERVE

## COURSE OUTLINE OF DAILY TOPICS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

CLASS # & DATE (MWF)	CLASS TOPIC and/or ASSIGNMENT DUE	READING TO BE DONE
1. Aug. 24	Course Introduction	• in-class handout(s)
2. Aug. 26	Christianity, Religion, & History	• Marsden (recom.)
3. Aug. 29	Jesus in America I	• Fox, 1-200 (recom.)
4. Aug. 31	Jesus in America II	• Fox, 201-412 (recom.)
5. Sept. 2	American Jesus I	• Prothero, 3-157 (recom.)
6. Sept. 5	American Jesus II	• Prothero, 161-303 (recom.)
7. Sept. 7	CASE CONTEXT REPORTS Case I: John Woolman 1	• Woolman, Chap. I-IV
8. Sept. 9	Case I: John Woolman 2	• Woolman, Chap. V-VIII
9. Sept. 12	Case I: John Woolman 3	• Woolman, Chap. IX-Plea
10. Sept. 14	CASE CONTEXT REPORTS Case II: Frederick Douglass 1	• Douglass, Prefaces- Chap. IX
11. Sept. 16	Case II: Frederick Douglass 2	• Douglass, Chap. X- Appendix
12. Sept. 19	Case II: Frederick Douglass 3	• Douglass, 129-178 (supplemental documents); 2 online speeches
13. Sept. 21	<i>The Apostle</i> I	
14. Sept. 23	<i>The Apostle</i> II	

15. Sept.26	<i>The Apostle</i> III	
16. Sept.28	CASE CONTEXT REPORTS Case III: Charles Eastman 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eastman, Chap. I-VI</li> </ul>
17. Sept.30	Case III: Charles Eastman 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eastman, Chap. VII-XII</li> </ul>
18. Oct. 3	FILM ESSAY DUE Case III: Charles Eastman 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eastman, 2 online chapters</li> </ul>
19. Oct. 5	CASE CONTEXT REPORTS Case IV: Dorothy Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Day, ix-74</li> </ul>
20. Oct. 7	Case IV: Dorothy Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Day, 75-150</li> </ul>
21. Oct. 10	Case IV: Dorothy Day 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Day, 151-221</li> <li>• Day, 2 online writings (students' choice)</li> </ul>
22. Oct. 12	NO CLASS—STUDY DAY	
<b>Oct. 14 (Fri.), FINAL PAPER DUE</b>		

## COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

### **1. A FINAL PAPER on course material will constitute 40% of the course grade.**

1. For the final paper, discuss the following: *Consider John Woolman, Frederick Douglass, Charles Eastman, and Dorothy Day. Critically summarize and assess what following Jesus meant for each, in historical context. Whose way, if any, do you find the most problematic? Whose the most compelling? Why?*
2. The paper should use the primary sources (Woolman, Douglass, Eastman, and Day) and any relevant course secondary sources (book introductory and supplemental materials, online reading, lecture notes, recommended reading, article report materials, film, etc.).
3. The paper is *due* by 11:40 a.m. of the specified due date, Oct. 14. (On late paper policy, see Course Miscellany, section 1.)
4. The paper should be no less than 8 pp. long. Normally, it need not be longer than 10 pp., but there is no penalty for it going over 10 by one or two pages. In addition, each paper should
  - have the student's name, the due date, the student's e-mail address, and a title at the head; no title page, please!
  - be typed double spaced.
  - be clear and accurate about historical details, especially dates.
  - be in the student's own words, except for clearly indicated and brief quotations (see Course Miscellany, section 2 on academic dishonesty).
  - use " " for quotations shorter than three lines and a block form for those three lines or longer. "Block form" means setting the quotation apart in a "block"—single spaced, indented left margin, no quotation marks. (See an example of this form in Blight's edition of *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, pp. 13-14.)
  - note quotation sources by footnotes in Chicago style. Form guides available on Ramaker Library on their [Citing Sources](#) page. See also the endnote examples in Blight's edition of *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, pp. 23-26.

5. Submit the paper as a Microsoft Word file (that is, .doc, .docx, or .rtf) through MyNorthwestern (when in your MyNorthwestern account, click on the link to this course, then click on coursework, then click on the appropriate paper, then, in the drop box, search for your Word file, select it, and send it in; your paper will automatically be sent to Turnitin.com). If you encounter trouble in submitting the paper through MyNorthwestern, consult with the folks in the Computer Center, especially *Tina Jansen* and the Help Desk folks ([helpdesk@nwciova.edu](mailto:helpdesk@nwciova.edu)). A graded copy, with grading checklist attached, will be returned to you by e-mail attachment.
6. The main *factors for evaluating* each paper are as follows: How well does/is the paper
  - meet all the formal specifications for the assignment?
  - address the entire assignment?
  - written, i.e., manifests a welcoming introduction, clear and coherent organization, effective transitions, engaging style, careful spelling, punctuation, and grammar, and a conclusion that sums up generalizations and insights from the discussion?
  - make an effective historical argument, i.e., manifests a clear and sustained interpretive claim/thesis that thoughtfully and plausibly accounts for the available evidence in all the relevant materials, particularly primary sources?
  - insightfully informed, as relevant, by the “three Ws” (What happened? What was it like? Why does it matter?) and the “five Cs” (change, context, causality, contingency, complexity) in narration, analysis, and interpretation?

## **2. A CASE CONTEXT REPORT will constitute 30% of the course grade.**

1. Each student will be assigned a case context report shortly after the course gets underway. The finished written report and its oral presentation are *due* Sept. 7 (Woolman), Sept. 14 (Douglass), Sept. 28 (Eastman), or Oct. 5 (Day).
2. The *purpose* of a case context report is to help set the historical context of one of the four case persons (i.e., Woolman, Douglass, Eastman, or Day).
3. In *research*, in addition to reading the book of their assigned case person, and with the help of a reference librarian as necessary, each student should
  - study any *introductory materials* provided in the volume for their assigned case person.
  - select and study an *article or chapter* from an academic journal or edited collection that is either directly about their case person or about some aspect of their case person’s historical context (e.g., about John Woolman directly, or about colonial era Quakers, or about colonial Quakers and slavery, etc.).
  - pursue *any additional biographical or other contextual background* about their assigned case person that seems important to understanding them. Normally, this should entail consulting recommended reading as well as library reference materials (i.e., specialized reference works such as biographical encyclopedias, historical period or topic encyclopedias).
4. In *content*, the *written report* should set a historical context for the assigned case person by (not necessarily in this order)
  - summarizing the content of the selected article or chapter and connecting the most important information and/or perspectives to the case person.
  - highlighting other relevant biographical and/or contextual information gleaned from introductory materials and any additional reference materials.

5. *In form, the written report* should be no less than 5 pp. long. Normally, it need not be longer than 7 pp., but there is no penalty for it going over 7 by one or two pages. In addition, each report should
  - be typed single spaced
  - have at the top of the first page (or as a "header" for each page) the student's name, e-mail address, the class date, and a title; no title page is needed
  - set forth the specified content in what manner seems best
6. Submit the written report as a Microsoft Word file (that is, .doc, .docx, or .rtf) through MyNorthwestern (when in your MyNorthwestern account, click on the link to this course, then click on coursework, then click on the appropriate paper, then, in the drop box, search for your Word file, select it, and send it in; your paper will automatically be sent to Turnitin.com). If you encounter trouble in submitting the paper through MyNorthwestern, consult with the folks in the Computer Center, especially *Tina Jansen* and the Help Desk folks ([helpdesk@nwciowa.edu](mailto:helpdesk@nwciowa.edu)). A graded copy, with grading checklist attached, will be returned to you by e-mail attachment.
7. The written report is also to be *summarized orally to the class* on the same day the written report is due. Plan on 10-15 minutes for presentation, plus time for discussion. This time is subject to adjustment depending on how many students need to present on a given day.
8. The main *factors for evaluating* each report are as follows: How well does/is the report
  - meet all the formal specifications for the assignment?
  - address the entire assignment?
  - written, i.e., manifests a welcoming introduction, clear and coherent organization, effective transitions, engaging style, careful spelling, punctuation, and grammar, and a conclusion that sums up generalizations and insights from the discussion?
  - presented orally, i.e., clearly and engaging presented to the class?
  - set the assigned case person in historical context?
  - insightfully informed, as relevant, by the "three Ws" (What happened? What was it like? Why does it matter?) and the "five Cs" (change, context, causality, contingency, complexity) in narration, analysis, and interpretation?

### **3. A FILM ESSAY will constitute 20% of the course grade.**

1. For the film essay, discuss the following: *Consider The Apostle in light of assigned reading, notes, and discussion thus far (Sept. 19). How much or in what way(s) would John Woolman and Frederick Douglass recognize and confess the Jesus—and the following of him—of the film? How different is the film's Jesus (and following him) from that of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and earlier? In what way(s) is this difference significant?*
2. Each essay is *due* by 11:55 p.m. of the specified due date, Oct. 3. (On late paper policy, see Course Miscellany, section 1.)
3. Each essay should be no less than 4 pp. long. Normally, it need not be longer than 5 pp., but there is no penalty for it going over 5 by one or two pages. In addition, each essay should
  - have the student's name, the due date, the student's e-mail address, and a title at the head; no title page, please!
  - be typed double spaced.
  - be clear and accurate about historical details, especially dates.
  - be in the student's own words, except for clearly indicated and brief quotations (see Course Miscellany, section 2 on academic dishonesty).

- use “ ” for quotations shorter than three lines and a block form for those three lines or longer. “Block form” means setting the quotation apart in a “block”—single spaced, indented left margin, no quotation marks. (See an example of this form in Blight’s edition of *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, pp. 13-14.)
  - note quotation sources by footnotes in Chicago style. Form guides available on Ramaker Library’s [Citing Sources](#) page. See also the endnote examples in Blight’s edition of *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, pp. 23-26.
4. Submit the paper as a Microsoft Word file (that is, .doc, .docx, or .rtf) through MyNorthwestern (when in your MyNorthwestern account, click on the link to this course, then click on coursework, then click on the appropriate paper, then, in the drop box, search for your Word file, select it, and send it in; your paper will automatically be sent to Turnitin.com). If you encounter trouble in submitting the paper through MyNorthwestern, consult with the folks in the Computer Center, especially *Tina Jansen* and the Help Desk folks ([helpdesk@nwciova.edu](mailto:helpdesk@nwciova.edu)). A graded copy, with grading checklist attached, will be returned to you by e-mail attachment.
  5. The main *factors for evaluating* each paper are as follows: How well does/is the essay
    - meet all the formal specifications for the assignment?
    - address the entire assignment?
    - written, i.e., manifests a welcoming introduction, clear and coherent organization, effective transitions, engaging style, careful spelling, punctuation, and grammar, and a conclusion that sums up generalizations and insights from the discussion?
    - make an effective historical argument, i.e., manifests a clear and sustained interpretive claim/thesis that thoughtfully and plausibly accounts for the available evidence in all the relevant assigned course materials, particularly primary sources?
    - insightfully informed, as relevant, by the “three Ws” (What happened? What was it like? Why does it matter?) and the “five Cs” (change, context, causality, contingency, complexity) in narration, analysis, and interpretation?

#### **4. CLASS PARTICIPATION will constitute 10% of the course grade.**

1. Class participation is a portion of the grade based on the instructor’s estimation of the integrity of each student’s engagement with the course material and the classroom environment.
2. For the most part this portion of the grade will be based on various brief in-class written assignments (e.g., developing questions about or reflecting on course material). A record of the assignments and their general sufficiency will be kept (i.e., pass/not pass).
  - “P” (pass) means that a given assignment is clearly, thoughtfully “on topic.”
  - “NP” (not pass) means that no assignment was received or that a given assignment was unclear, less than thoughtful, and/or not “on topic.”
3. In addition to the in-class written assignments, regular attendance and in-class engagement with course materials and discussions will be taken into account. (Note: the “hard” evidence of in-class written assignments normally is intertwined with the “soft” evidence of how regularly a student attends and how engaged s/he is with course materials and discussion.)
4. *Evaluation:* At the end of the course, if all or most of the in-class written assignments are “pass” and if there is nothing problematic in attendance and/or in-class engagement, then this portion of the course grade will reflect at least an average of the rest of the course grade.
5. When appropriate, the instructor is prepared to be flexible with occasional student scheduling problems, but the instructor must be consulted. “Exceptions” are not an entitlement.

# COURSE MISCELLANY

## 1. Late Assignments

1. All assignments are due as stated in the syllabus or announced in class.
2. *Extensions* due to illness, approved field trips, regularly scheduled games or performances, or other reasons outside the control of the student can be made, but *it is up to the student to petition the instructor for such legitimate extensions.*
3. *Papers:* If a paper is handed in late up to a week after it was due and without a legitimate extension, it will normally receive a penalty of at least one full grade down from whatever score the work merits apart from the penalty. If a paper is over a week late and without a legitimate extension, it will not be accepted.
4. *Final:* A final can only be rescheduled through application to the Registrar's Office; a [Final Exam Change form](#) is linked to the Registrar's Form webpage. Travel plans are not a legitimate reason for rescheduling finals. All material must be in to the instructor by the scheduled period; no materials will be accepted thereafter.
5. *In-class written assignments:* Late in-class written assignments will not be accepted for credit.

## 2. Academic Honesty

1. It is expected that all reading and written work done in and for the course will be done with integrity. That is, reading and writing as assigned is to be done with honest single-mindedness by each student, without undue reliance on others to do the work, and without deceit about the work's timeliness, authorship, and sources. Integrity of this sort is not easy or convenient; it does not provide shortcuts or guarantee an "A." Yet it is the best path to growth in wisdom, and wisdom is the fruit of education most to be savored.
2. Academic dishonesty includes cheating and plagiarism, as defined in the Student and Faculty Handbooks.
3. Academic dishonesty, will, when duly determined, lead to a "0" score for the assignment involved and the filing of a report with the Office of the Provost, per the Student and Faculty Handbooks.

## 3. Grading

1. We the faculty of the History Department do not believe that "grade inflation" is good for you. Jesus admonishes us to "Let your word be 'Yes, Yes' or 'No, No'" (Mt. 5:37); in other words, let grades have integrity as indicators of knowledge and/or competence for a given assignment or course.
2. Therefore, an *A=excellent* or outstanding work; *B=good* work (more than adequate but not excellent); *C=adequate* work (the assignment or the course's requirements have been met, but not with any remarkable quality); *D=inadequate* work (does not fully meet the assignment); *F=failing* work.
3. *Grades for most assignments and for the course as a whole are based on a 100% scale, as follows:*

A = 90-100

B = 80-89

C = 70-79

D = 60-69

F = 0-59

4. Within the 100% scale for letter grades, + and - will be given on the following scale (exceptions: no A+ or F+ or F-):

$$+ = x7-x9 \quad - = x0-x2$$

5. *Remember*--grades are NOT a measure of your personal worth; that is already established by God! Grades are measures of the quality of your work for a given assignment and/or course--nothing more and nothing less.

#### 4. Further help

- If you need some aid, *the Writing Center is a good place to visit. Peer tutors are available there to help you. I also am willing to review drafts of papers* and provide feedback, so long as there are not too many, they are not given me the night before the final copy is due, and other obligations do not loom over me at the same time.
- In compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act, NWC will provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have a documented disability that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact both their instructor and the college disability service provider (John Menning; [john.menning@nwc.iowa.edu](mailto:john.menning@nwc.iowa.edu)) to discuss their individual needs and accommodations.

# HISTORY PAPER EVALUATION

## Formal & substantive elements

(Note: NA in boxes below means the element is not applicable to this assignment)

Excel- lent	Good	Ade- quate	Needs Improv- ing	Un- accept- able	Element
					Your paper meets all the <b>formal specifications</b> for the assignment, e.g., typing, header/title page information and form, length, quotation form, notation form, bibliography (if specified), etc.
					Your paper <b>addresses all the assignment</b> with due balance to all aspects.
					Your paper is <b>well written</b> ; that is, it manifests a welcoming introduction, clear and coherent organization, effective transitions, engaging style, careful spelling, punctuation, and grammar, and a conclusion that sums up generalizations and insights from the discussion.
					Your paper makes an <b>effective historical argument</b> ; that is, it manifests a clear and sustained interpretive claim/thesis that thoughtfully and plausibly accounts for the available evidence in a) all the relevant assigned course materials or b) researched materials.
					Your paper is insightfully informed, as relevant, by <b>the "three Ws"</b> (What happened? What was it like? Why does it matter?) and <b>the "five Cs"</b> (change, context, causality, contingency, complexity) in narration, analysis, and interpretation.
					Your paper shows <b>thorough, diligent research</b> relevant to your topic and consistent with the limits of the assignment and the time allowed.
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:					