



**HISTORY 264.02E: A NATION DIVIDED
THE END OF THE WORLD
COURSE SYLLABUS: FALL 2014**



Albrecht Durer, *The Revelation of St. John: The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* (1497-98)
Staatliche Kunsthalle, Karlsruhe

Instructor: Associate Professor John H. Smith

Course Location/Time: Ferguson Social Sciences 141 / Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:00 a.m.-
12:15 p.m.

Office Location: Ferguson Social Sciences 117

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., 2:00 - 4:00 p.m., or by appointment

Office Phone: 903-886-5219

Office Fax: 903-468-3230

University Email Address: John.Smith@tamuc.edu

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:*Textbooks Required:*

The Bible (any version will do, though the KJV is more poetic)

Paul Boyer, *When Time Shall Be No More: Prophecy Belief in Modern American Culture*.
Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992. ISBN10 0-674-95129-8

Hal Lindsey, with C. C. Carlson, *The Late Great Planet Earth*. Grand Rapids, MI:
Zondervan Press, 1970. ISBN10 0-310-27771-X

Supplemental Readings as Assigned

A Proviso:

Students considering purchasing e-book versions of any of the course texts using devices such as the Kindle or the Nook, need to be aware that because of the readers' font size-changing ability that knowing the "analog" page numbers for any section of the text cannot be known with proper exactitude. Since it is necessary for students to be able to discuss the text with each other and the Instructor, and be able to provide accurate page numbers—especially in citing any of the course texts in a paper—the Instructor asks that students purchase hard copies of the texts. *Students are expected to acquire the course texts prior to the start of class.* Failure to do so will hinder a student's ability to keep up with the course, and the Instructor is in no way responsible for such an eventuality. **Allowances will not be made for students who lack possession of the textbooks.**

Course Description:

The idea that the world (or the universe in its entirety) had a distinct beginning and will have a definite end is a commonly held belief throughout the world, but nowhere more so than in the United States. Much of this has to do with a current of Protestant Christian apocalypticism—beliefs about an end to the world—that runs through the American consciousness. Apocalyptic hopes and fears permeate not only the fundamentalist Christian mind, but also that of the non-religious, and apocalyptic imagery regularly appears in our popular culture. Through the close study of primary and secondary works we will examine the ancient and biblical origins of the eschatological sensibility, and the episodic expressions of apocalyptic anxiety throughout history, particularly in the United States from the founding of New England in the seventeenth century, to the fears of a global electronic shutdown at the coming of the year 2000, and the current anxiety over Islamic terrorism and belief that an apocalyptic "clash of civilizations" between Islam and Judeo-Christianity looms ahead.

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will be able to form substantive and evidence-driven arguments to propose solutions to problems or explain phenomena.
2. Student communication will follow conventions of grammar and syntax appropriate to the audience, purpose and message.
3. Students will demonstrate awareness of societal and/or civic issues.
4. Students will be able to understand their role in their own education.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments

This course consists of a series of activities and assessments to assist students in achieving the outcomes/objectives for the course and instructional units/modules. Each week students will work on various combinations of readings, discussions, and research.

Student Responsibility SheetStudent Learning Outcomes no. 4:

The Student Responsibility Sheet consists of a series of questions about the Instructor and the course syllabus that must be filled out and submitted to the Instructor no later than Jan. 28. The form can be downloaded from the eCollege course site, or from the History Department homepage.

Attendance & Participation: (100 pts., 25% of course grade)Student Learning Outcomes nos. 1, 2, & 3:

Participation in class discussions is intended to allow students to discuss substantively issues pertaining to the topics at hand, and will serve to inform the Instructor about how well students are absorbing course content. Facility in oral communication will thus be developed through these activities. Regular attendance to class is mandatory, and students intending to perform well in this aspect of the course must come to each class meeting prepared to discuss the day's subjects and ask pertinent questions about the material. Routine absences and/or distractive behavior will negatively impact the participation grade.

Readings Quizzes: (100 pts., 25% of course grade)Student Learning Outcomes nos. 1, 2, & 3:

The readings quizzes are designed to test students' comprehension of the readings for each particular day a quiz is administered, testing the depth of their knowledge of the topic(s) at hand and their analytical skills. Administration will be random, and each quiz will take up no more than 10 minutes of class time at the beginning of each class period. Grading will be on a 0-10 point scale for each quiz, with a running average maintained through the semester that will be adjusted to a score from 0-100 at the end of the semester.

Final Exam: (100 pts., 25% of course grade)Student Learning Outcomes nos. 1, 2, & 3:

The Final Exam, to be administered via eCollege, will be an open-book examination wherein students will be required to write substantive analytical essays in response to a series of questions within a two-hour time period. Students will be required to utilize their absorption of the course content, supplemented by their use of the course texts as evidentiary support, in order to compose fulsome responses to questions that test their understanding of the course content.

Project: (100 pts., 25% of course grade)Student Learning Outcomes nos. 1, 2, & 3:

The project is designed to give students the opportunity to demonstrate their comprehension and mastery of the course content through the artful composition of an original work of apocalyptic interpretation (see below, "The End of the World as I Know It").

The paper must conform to the following physical parameters:

Processed using MS Word or WordPerfect in 12 pt. Times New Roman font
 1-inch margins all around, and double-spaced text
 8-10 pages in length (*not* including the bibliography)
 All pages must be numbered

Failure to meet most or all of the above requirements will result in an automatic F for the assignment. Failure to do the assignment at all will result in an F for the course.

Grading

Grading will be calculated using a standard 10-point scale, with course elements weighted accordingly:

90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
0-59	F

Participation (100 pts.)	25%
Project (100 pts.)	25%
Readings Quizzes (10 pts. each)	25%
Final Exam (100 pts.)	25%

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

As this course is web-enhanced through eCollege, students will require the following hardware and software:

*Our campus is optimized to work in a Microsoft Windows environment. Windows XP or newer, and Internet Explorer 6.0 or newer is best.
 Internet access/connection—high speed preferred (not dial-up).
 Word Processor (preferably Microsoft Word 1997-2003 or newer).*

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

This course will be facilitated using eCollege, the Learning Management System used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to: <https://leo.tamu-commerce.edu/login.aspx>.

You will need your CWID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamu-commerce.edu.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement:

Office hours are given at the top of this syllabus, and are posted outside of my door. Arrangements can be made if a student cannot meet with me during regular office hours for

consultations. Email is the most reliable method of reaching me outside of my office. Expect a reply within 24 to 48 hours, and replies will only be sent to students' LeoMail accounts. **Do not email me from your personal email account.** Students may also be able to reach me by phone during office hours, and at other times do not leave a callback number as I do not return students' phone calls.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES
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Academic Honesty

It is the policy of the University, the History Department, and the instructor that no form of plagiarism or cheating will be tolerated. Plagiarism is defined as the deliberate use of another's work and claiming it as one's own. This means ideas as well as text, whether paraphrased or presented verbatim (word-for-word). **Anyone caught cheating or plagiarizing will automatically fail the assignment in question, may summarily fail the course, and could be subject to disciplinary action by the University.**

*The instructor's evaluative judgment of tests and examinations is **final**, and will not be subject to revision except in cases of mathematical error.*

Class Decorum

All students must show respect toward the Instructor and the Instructor's syllabus, presentations, assignments, and point of view. Students should also respect each others' differences. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. If the Instructor determines that a student is not being respectful toward other students or the Instructor, it is the Instructor's prerogative to remove the student from the class either temporarily or permanently, as the case requires.

Note: Failure to comply with any of the Instructor's policies will result in immediate deregistration from the course.

A Note on Religious History

Please keep in mind that in a course on the history of religion, controversial subjects may undoubtedly arise. There are two important features about striking the right tone and attitude in discussing religious history: 1) other students around you may hold a belief system directly related to or descended from the groups under discussion, so please be respectful, and 2) historical analysis or interpretations of religion in the past do not necessarily reflect upon their present-day status or claims to ultimate meaning. I will work hard to keep lectures and discussions open and collegial, and if you have any questions or concerns, please see me.

University Specific Procedures:

ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library 132

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See *Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook*).

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Aug. 26-28: The Beginning of the End

Aug. 26: Course Introduction

Aug. 28: What is Eschatology?

Readings: Boyer, "Prologue"

Sept. 2-4: Ancient Roots of Apocalypticism

Sept. 2: Egyptian and Mesopotamian Beginnings

Sept. 4: Indo-Aryan and Persian Influences

Sept. 9-11: Jewish Apocalypticism

Sept. 9: "Thou didst bestride the earth in fury"

Readings: The Old Testament—Isaiah 24-27, Book of Ezekiel, and Book of Daniel

Sept. 11: "He shall appoint their retribution with burning"

Readings: 1 Enoch, "The Book of Watchers" (eCollege Doc Sharing); Dead Sea Scrolls—"The War Scroll" and "The War of the Messiah" fragments (handout); Boyer, chap. 1 (to p. 33)

Sept. 16-18: Christian Apocalypticism

Sept. 16: "I saw a new heaven and a new earth"

Readings: The New Testament—Mark 13, 1 and 2 John, and the Book of Revelation (Apocalypse of John); Boyer, chap. 1 (remainder)

Sept. 18: "We think the end is upon us so that we perish"

Readings: Christian Apocrypha—The Apocalypse of Thomas and the Christian Sibyllines (eCollege Weblibliography)

Sept. 23-25: Early Medieval European Apocalypticism

Sept. 23: Norse Apocalypticism

Readings: Excerpts from the *Eddas* (eCollege Weblibliography)

Sept. 25: Anglo-Saxon Apocalypticism

Readings: Excerpts from *The Exeter Book* (eCollege Weblibliography)

Sept. 30-Oct. 2: Late Medieval and Reformation Era Apocalypticism

Sept. 30: St. Augustine, Joachim of Fiore, and Hildegard of Bingen

Readings: Boyer, chap. 2 (to p. 56—end of section)

Oct. 2: Martin Luther and Thomas Muntzer

Readings: Boyer, chap. 2 (to p. 68—end of section)

Oct. 7-9: “Errand into the Wilderness”

Oct. 7: The Puritan Exodus to a New Canaan

Readings: Boyer, chap. 2 (pp. 68-70); Michael Wigglesworth, “The Day of Doom” (handout); Jonathan Edwards, “Notes on the Apocalypse” (handout)

Oct. 9: The First Great Awakening as Millennial Harbinger

Readings: Boyer, chap. 2 (p. 71); John Howard Smith, “‘The Promised Day of the Lord’: American Millennialism and Apocalypticism, 1735-1775” (handout—to end of p. 120)

Oct. 14-16: The Seven Years’ War and the American Revolution

Oct. 14: “Methinks I see mighty cities rising on every hill”

Readings: Smith, “‘The Promised Day of the Lord’” (pp. 120-127)

Oct. 16: “The prophecy of Daniel is now literally fulfilling”

Readings: Boyer, chap. 2 (remainder); Smith (remainder)

Oct. 21-23: Nineteenth-Century American Millennialism and Apocalypticism

Oct. 21: William Miller and the Rise of Premillennialism

Readings: Boyer, chap. 3 (to p. 90—end of section); William Miller, *Views of the Prophecies and Prophetic Chronology . . .* (handout)

Oct. 23: The Triumph of Premillennialism

Readings: Boyer, chap. 3 (pp. 90-100—end of section); Cyrus I. Scofield, “The Seven Dispensations” from *The Scofield Study Bible* (handout)

Oct. 28-30: Twentieth-Century American Millennialism and Apocalypticism

Oct. 28: World War I and World War II

Readings: Boyer, chap. 3 (remainder); Arthur I. Brown, *The Eleventh “Hour”* (handout)

Oct. 30: Cold War Anxieties

Readings: Boyer, chaps. 4-5; Jack Van Impe, *Signs of the Times and 11:59 and Counting* (handout)

Nov. 4-6: The United States as Good and Evil

Nov. 4: The Centrality of Israel

Readings: Boyer, chap. 6; Lindsey, *The Late Great Planet Earth* (entire)

Nov. 6: The United States in Prophecy; the Waco Debacle

Readings: Boyer, chap. 7

Nov. 11-13: Y2K, 9/11, and the New Millennium

Nov. 11: A New World Order

Readings: Jerry Falwell, “The Twenty-First Century and the End of the World” (handout); James McKeever, “The Muslims Have Declared War” (handout)

Nov. 13: The Shadow of Islamic Extremism

Readings: Federal Bureau of Investigation, “Project Megiddo Report” (link on eCollege); David Cook, “America, the Second ‘Ad: The Perception of the United States in Modern Muslim Apocalyptic Literature” (handout)

Nov. 18-20: Secular Apocalypticism (Scientific)

Nov. 18: Environmentalism

Nov. 20: Coming Plagues

Nov. 25-27: Thanksgiving Break**Dec. 2-4: Secular Apocalypticism (Pop Cultural)**

Dec. 2: Alien Invasions

Dec. 4: The Walking Dead

Dec. 8-12: Final Exam (on eCollege)**Paper Assignment: The End of the World As I Know It**

The purpose of this final paper is to draw on the entirety of the American Judeo-Christian apocalyptic and millenarian experience to write an original work of prophecy interpretation, in the mode of Hal Lindsey or any number of other popular apocalypticists. You may choose any interpretative schema you wish from any theological perspective, just so long as you make use of some of the canonical and/or apocryphal biblical texts traditionally used by apocalypticists (i.e., Book of Ezekiel, Book of Daniel, Book of Revelation, etc.), as well as any others from different religious traditions you may wish to employ. Adopt the persona of an apocalypticist, and write a convincing exegetical analysis that argues that ancient prophecies are beginning to come to pass that are leading directly to some conception of the world's end. You may or may not choose to date future events such as the Rapture (if you want to include the Rapture), the Tribulation, or the onset of the Millennium (if indeed you wish to use these constructs). You may or may not choose to identify the Antichrist. This is your chance to play at being Joachim of Fiore, Jonathan Edwards, William Miller, Hal Lindsey, John Hagee, et al.

However, do not think that, because so many apocalypticists have been Christians, and the ancient texts you'll be using are from the Judeo-Christian tradition, that you have to approach this assignment only from that angle. You can choose to be a Zoroastrian Buddhist, a radical Muslim, a Neo-Babylonian Jew, a Hindu Methodist, a Ghost Dancer . . . the only limit is your imagination! Therefore, you can augment your use of the biblical texts with any ancient or modern sources you wish. Regardless of your persona's religious orientation, the evaluation of this assignment is based on a mastery of the ancient texts from the Near Eastern and other traditions, and how cleverly your interpretations of those prophecies are connected to current events and those of the past.

This is not exactly an academic assignment, so scholarly language is not especially necessary. However, I would expect your syntax to be more erudite than Lindsey's!

If, based on your personal beliefs, you are uncomfortable with doing this assignment, please consult with me for an alternative.

Paper Parameters

Paper must be composed using Microsoft Word.

Text must be in 12 pt. Times New Roman font, double-spaced.

The minimum length (not counting the Bibliography) is 8 pp.

Margins must be one inch on top and bottom, left and right, with full justification. Disable the extra space between paragraphs function.
Bibliography must begin on a separate page, not on the same page as the end of the text.