

Santa Clara University
Spring 2017

SCTR 33:
New Testament
Narratives & Cinema:
Ongoing Revelations
[51796]



MW – 7:20-9:05 PM
Alum Sci 120



Prof. Joe Morris, Ph.D.
Office: Kenna 315
Office Hours:
MW 3:00 – 4:00 PM or
after class or by
appointment.
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Course Description

This class will explore select themes emerging from the narratives of the New Testament both in their historical and cultural contexts and in their reimagining in contemporary cinema. [Three themes will be selected from the following: civic engagement; poverty/wealth; gender; conversion; cultural and religious diversity; death and afterlife; non-violence and peace; suffering; evil; oppression; character and identity; kinship, family and community, creation; God's reign, etc.]

The RTC 2 course should:

- approach the study of religious phenomena through multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary means (2a)
- focus on complex and diverse religious phenomena (2b)
- integrate critical inquiry and reflection on beliefs (2c)

Course Objectives: RTC 2 -- Explorations

1. Students will develop skills to analyze select New Testament themes in two types of texts: the New Testament and contemporary cinema.
2. Students will be able to integrate and compare the selected narratives from the New Testament and their re-imagining in film through historical, social, rhetorical and narrative critical methods of study that are constitutive of these twin discourses.
3. Students will be able to clarify and express their beliefs and questions, as well as probe the religious dimensions of human existence by tracing the intertextual transformations, re-imaginings and ongoing revelations of these New Testament themes in cinema today.
4. Students will be able to make an argument about the significance of scriptural allusion within the structure of the film as a whole.

Required Texts

Reinhartz, Adele. *Bible and Cinema: An Introduction*. New York: Routledge, 2013.

New Testament. Online versions will be provided, but your own copy of the New Testament is also useful provided it is a version in modern English.

CAMINO course site will contain all the readings and other materials required for the course.

Cinema Studies Pathway

This course is associated with the Cinema Studies Pathway. A main goal of the Cinema Studies Pathway is to deepen the knowledge and understanding of how cinema shapes, and is shaped, by the culture it exists in and emerge not only knowledgeable about cinema and television, but also enriched by contact with history, literature, foreign cultures, philosophy, and theology. If you declare this Pathway, you may use a representative piece of work from this course as one of the Pathway materials you will upload via eCampus during your junior or senior year. Therefore, we recommend that

you keep electronic copies of your work using Dropbox or Google Docs, in addition to saving copies on your own computer or flash drives. This may ensure you will have a range of choices for retrieving your saved files when you analyze and assemble your Pathway materials in preparation to write the Pathway reflection essay.

Assessment and Grading

1] *Class Attendance & Participation:*

Evaluation is based on attendance, completion of readings, film viewings, small and large group discussions and engagement in class generally as well as through the group project. There are three things included in class participation: attendance and contributing qualitatively and quantitatively to discussions – this includes film viewing classes. Therefore, all students are expected to be present, on time, prepared and active participants at each class for presentations, film viewings and discussions. ***Should an absence be necessary it can be excused only with written notification which must be submitted at the first class after the absence. No late notifications will be accepted.*** Points are lost for lateness and please make sure you check with the instructor after the class you arrived late to assure that you get marked present. No participation points are given for the use of computers for other purposes than class, nor for texting – even if you participate during that specific class. [15%] [Students learn to *analyze* diverse religious narratives in the New Testament and contemporary film (2a) with the help of contextual analysis (2b). Students will then *clarify* and *express* in reading responses and discussions their beliefs and understandings in light of their analyses of these narratives in their New Testament context and their iterations in film and identify the rhetorical situations that crafted these cultural transformations (2c).]

2] *Two Projects:*

The first project will focus on explicit films about Jesus' life, death and resurrection. Although films will be group assigned, this is an individual project. This project has two foci: examination of a scene from an explicit Jesus film and discussing it considering the NT portrayal of the scene; and examining the crucifixion scene considering the portrayal in the NT. This project will be a four-page response. The second project will be comprised of a writing assignment [four pages] that selects a film with a NT reference and then analyzes the context in the film in dialogue with the expression and context of the NT passage. Due dates for both projects are posted on Camino. [20%; 10% each] [The projects will provide an opportunity for students to employ the *various disciplinary approaches* to *analyze* the cultural and rhetorical situations that birthed these narrative texts; to *integrate* and *compare* the two sets of narratives around the select religious theme; to *clarify* and *express* how this comparison provides insight into cultural and religious re-imaginings and ongoing revelation (2a, 2b, 2c).]

3] *Reading Responses and Reflections:*

There will be 15 reading responses. Questions designed to assist discussion and reflection will be distributed with the assigned readings and/or film viewings. These short responses are due the class of the scheduled discussion of the assigned readings/films and are to be submitted in the drop box provided at the CAMINO course site. [15%] [These reading responses will focus on integrating the readings in light of the *different disciplinary approaches* to assist in *comparing* the select religious themes in their New Testament context and their re-expression in film(s) (2b, 2c).]

4] *Group Project:*

Each student will participate in a group project throughout the quarter culminating in an in-class group presentation in Week 10. Each group will select a theme or issue from the

Christian Scriptures and after an analysis of the historical and cultural context of the text(s) for emerging Christianity, provide an accounting of the ways that they have been re-imagined in contemporary film(s) and the challenge this proposes. [25%] [This project will assist the students in gaining insight into the cultural transformations around religious phenomena, as well as the ongoing relevance and importance of the New Testament for today (2a, 2b, 2c).]

5] Individual Final Project: [2 options]

A] A 6-8 page essay on a New Testament issue, theme or narrative and its reimagining in contemporary film(s). This paper should both analyze the cultural and historical situations of the New Testament and film narratives, as well as reflect on what this comparison yields regarding the selected issue or theme. [25%] [2a, 2b, 2c] OR

B] A multimedia presentation on a New Testament issue, theme or narrative and its reimagining in contemporary film(s). This presentation should both analyze the cultural and historical situations of the New Testament and film narratives, as well as reflect on what this comparison yields regarding the selected issue or theme. [25%] [2a, 2b, 2c] Due Dates posted on Camino.

Grading Scale

95%-100%	A
90%-94%	A-
87%-89%	B+
83%-86%	B
80%-82%	B-
77%-79%	C+
73%-76%	C
70%-72%	C-
67%-69%	D+
63%-66%	D
60%-62%	D-
59% & below	F

Feedback on Reading Responses, Examinations and Final Project will be provided in writing; Group project feedback will be communicated through consultation.

Students will evaluate the course formally at the end of the quarter by the narrative evaluation provided by the Religious Studies department.

OTHER INFORMATION:

Disabilities Syllabus Statement

If you have a disability for which accommodations may be required in this class, please contact Disabilities Resources, Benson 216, www.scu.edu/disabilities as soon as possible to discuss your needs and register for accommodations with the University. If you have already arranged accommodations through Disabilities Resources, please discuss them with me during my office hours. Students who have medical needs related to pregnancy or parenting may be eligible for accommodations.

While I am happy to assist you, I am unable to provide accommodations until I have received verification from Disabilities Resources. The Disabilities Resources office will work with students and faculty to

arrange proctored exams for students whose accommodations include double time for exams and/or assisted technology. (Students with approved accommodations of time-and-a-half should talk with me as soon as possible). Disabilities Resources must be contacted in advance to schedule proctored examinations or to arrange other accommodations. The Disabilities Resources office would be grateful for advance notice of at least two weeks. For more information, you may contact Disabilities Resources at 408-554-4109.

In alignment with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and with the California Education Code, Section 66281.7, Santa Clara University provides reasonable accommodations to students who are pregnant, have recently experienced childbirth, and/or have medical needs related to childbirth. Pregnant and parenting students can often arrange accommodations by working directly with their instructors, supervisors, or departments. Alternatively, a pregnant or parenting student experiencing related medical conditions may request accommodations through Disability Resources..

Title IX Syllabus Statement

Santa Clara University upholds a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination, harassment and sexual misconduct. If you (or someone you know) have experienced discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence or stalking, we encourage you to tell someone promptly. For more information, please go to www.scu.edu/studentlife and click on the link for the University's [Gender-Based Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct Policy](#) or contact the University's EEO and Title IX Coordinator, Belinda Guthrie at 408-554-3043 or by email at bguthrie@scu.edu. Reports may be submitted online through www.scu.edu/osl/report or anonymously through Ethicspoint: www.ethicspoint.com

Academic Integrity Policy

Academic Integrity Pledge

The Academic Integrity pledge is an expression of the University's commitment to fostering an understanding of -- and commitment to -- a culture of integrity at Santa Clara University.

The Academic Integrity pledge, which applies to all students, states:

I am committed to being a person of integrity. I pledge, as a member of the Santa Clara University community, to abide by and uphold the standards of academic integrity contained in the Student Conduct Code.

Students are expected to uphold the principles of this pledge for all work in this class

The University is committed to academic excellence and integrity. Students are expected to do their own work and to cite any sources they use. A student who is guilty of a dishonest act in an examination, paper, or other work required for a course, or who assists others in such an act, may, at the discretion of the instructor, receive a grade of F for the course. In addition, a student found guilty of a dishonest act may be subject to sanctions up to and including dismissal from the University as a result of the student judicial process as described in the Community Handbook. A student who violates copyright laws, including those covering the copying of software programs, or who knowingly alters official academic records from this or any other institution is subject to similar disciplinary action.