

HON 3200.01/3201.01 HONORS COLLOQUIUM

SYLLABUS: SPRING 2015 FALSE FRIENDS: TEMPTING, DECEIVING, AND LEADING ASTRAY

Colloquium Professor: Dr. Philip Jenkins

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Colloquium Details and Support: Luke Mitchell (L_Mitchell@baylor.edu)

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Course Description

Friends guide and advise us. But throughout Western culture, a sizable literature warns us that what seem like friendly voices can be sinister, evil, or downright diabolic, and much skill is needed to tell when our seemingly friendly advisers are not what they seem! We think of great Tempters from Goethe's *Faust* onwards, while in modern literature, authors have portrayed disturbed individuals inventing demons and tempters from their own minds. One way and another, the Devil remains a cultural force, even as formal belief in him might have waned.

In this colloquium, we will explore ideas of the diabolic as they have evolved through the centuries, and how today they have merged with therapeutic concepts. Through discussing several key texts, we will address such themes as the place of the diabolical in modern religious thought; the overlap between religious and therapeutic concepts of evil; and the difficulty of distinguishing between divine and diabolic impulses. Above all, we will explore the extraordinary dilemmas of understanding our own minds and personalities – of recognizing when those seemingly holy ideas might prove to be false friends!

“False Friends” is an alternative track within the regular Colloquium, a two-credit-hour course for sophomores and juniors in the Honors Program. To receive credit, participants in this alternative track must read four texts, submit four essays, and attend four dinner discussions.

Texts

Please note: I don't care which editions you use for the Thompson or Chesterton books, but I really want you to use this specific version of the Hogg novel.

[Jeffrey Burton Russell, *Prince of Darkness*](#) (Cornell University Press, 1992)

ISBN-10: 0801480566 / ISBN-13: 978-0801480560

[James Hogg, *Confessions of a Justified Sinner*](#) (Penguin Classics 2007)

ISBN-10: 0141441534 / ISBN-13: 978-0141441535

[G. K. Chesterton, *The Man Who Was Thursday*](#) (Boom Shakalaka Press, 2014).

ISBN-10: 1613824025 / ISBN-13: 978-1613824023

[Jim Thompson, *Pop. 1280*](#) (Mulholland Books 2014)

ISBN-10: 0316403784 / ISBN-13: 978-0316403788

Attendance and Participation. To receive credit for attendance, you must be present for the *entire* discussion. Your contributions to the conversation are essential and will be considered when I evaluate your performance. You receive no attendance credit unless you also turn in a paper.

Absences. If you must miss a colloquium, contact Mr. Mitchell *beforehand*. If the Honors Program approves, you may be asked to submit an additional essay. If your absence is unexcused, you will not be eligible to submit an essay and will receive no points for the unexcused absence (see *Grading* below).

Academic Integrity. Plagiarism is a grievous offense and will result in *at least* an “F” for the course and your dismissal from the Honors Program. Never submit the work of others as your own.

Grading. Your overall performance for each session is based both on the essay and on attendance and participation. You will not receive credit for attending without submitting an essay; likewise, you will not receive credit for submitting an essay if you do not attend. You must both attend and turn in a paper to receive any points for a session. Good participation refers to cogency more than frequency of remarks. Dr. Jenkins will return essays with comments.

A final grade will be given according to the following scale:

36-40 = A 35-35.9 = A- 34-34.9 = B+ 33-33.9 = B 32-32.9 = B-
31-31.9 = C+ 29-30.9 = C 28-28.9 = C- 25-27.9 = D <25 = F

Guidelines. Before each session, prepare the reading questions that Dr. Jenkins has provided for discussion. While reading, mark the passages that intrigue or confuse you or that seem central for the author. Unrushed interaction will shape a response that addresses the issues in the text.

Following the session, write a 900-1000-word essay (typed and double-spaced, 12-pt font) using the prompt Dr. Jenkins has provided with the reading questions. Provide page number(s) in parentheses following quotations/paraphrases from assigned text. Plan enough time to construct an essay that does justice to the book.

Submit your essay by e-mail to Philip_Jenkins@baylor.edu before 5:00 PM of the Monday following the colloquium. *Late submissions are penalized one point per day, beginning at 5:01 PM of the due date.*

SCHEDULE for “False Friends”

January 26: 6:30-9:30 PM in Memorial Senior Common Room: Dinner and discussion
Introduction
Jeffrey Burton Russell, *Prince of Darkness*
Assignment Link: <http://www.personal.psu.edu/faculty/j/p/jpj1/russell.htm>
→ Essay due by 5:00 PM on Monday, February 2, 2015

February 23, 2015: 6:30-9:30 PM in Memorial Senior Common Room: Dinner and discussion
James Hogg, *Confessions of a Justified Sinner*
Assignment Link: <http://www.personal.psu.edu/faculty/j/p/jpj1/hogg.htm>
→ Essay due by 5:00 PM on Monday, March 2, 2015

March 16, 2015: 6:30-9:30 PM in Memorial Senior Common Room: Dinner and discussion
G. K. Chesterton, *The Man Who Was Thursday*
Assignment Link: <http://www.personal.psu.edu/faculty/j/p/jpj1/thursday.htm>
→ Essay due by 5:00 PM on Monday, March 23, 2015

April 27, 2015: 6:30-9:30 PM in Memorial Senior Common Room: Dinner and discussion
Jim Thompson, *Pop. 1280*
Assignment Link: <http://www.personal.psu.edu/faculty/j/p/jpj1/thompson.htm>
→ Essay due by 5:00 PM on Monday, May 4, 2015