

THEO 7019  
Fall 2019  
Mark Massa, S.J.  
Thursdays, 3 to 5:25  
24 Quincy Road, Room 101 (Boisi Center, Seminar Room)

### Classic Texts in American Theology

#### **Class Meetings**

This is a graduate seminar focused on classic texts in American theology—texts that every person working in an American theological environment should know. Precisely because of the seminar format, everyone will be expected to both “prepare” the texts before the class meetings, and to take turns convening the discussions. By preparing the texts I mean a careful reading of the assigned works (so that all of us arrive at our seminar meetings with questions/insights), and some willingness to engage each other’s interpretation of the texts (yes, mine too). I will convene the first three seminar meetings, to model what I have in mind about the business of “convening” (something which, whatever your future life path, you’ll be doing the rest of your lives); then each of you will have a hand running a few of them.

#### **Required Readings**

Jonathan Edwards, “Treatise on the Religious Affections,” H. Richard Niebuhr,  
William James, Walter Rauschenbusch,  
Reinhold Niebuhr, J. Gresham Machen,  
James Cone, Mordecai Kaplan,  
John Courtney Murray, David Tracy,  
Elizabeth Johnson, James Kugel,

#### **Requirements**

- 1) Attendance at all seminar meetings, save for near-death experiences. Likewise, everyone

**Evaluation**

The three critical essays (minus the lowest grade) count for 50% of the final grade. The seminar paper counts for the other 50% of the final grade. Your class performance and skill at convening seminar meetings will not be graded, as these fall under the broad category of “coerced activity.”

**Office Hours**

I'll be open for business on Mondays from 1pm – 3pm

**Reading:** William James,  
Massa convening  
\*\*Critical Essay Number 1 on William James Due

**B. The “Great Tradition” in American Protestant Theology**

**September 19:** The Social Gospel and Structural Sin  
Rauschenbusch and the Progressive Mainstream  
**Reading:** Walter Rauschenbusch,  
Student convening

**November 7:** Individual meetings with Massa (sign up)

**\*Description and initial bibliography for seminar paper due.**

**November 14:** Thomism and Feminism as Allies  
A Catholic Call for a “Larger” God

**Reading:** Elizabeth Johnson,  
Massa (probably) convening

#### **D. The Challenge of Post-Modernism**

**November 21:** Being PoMo (And All That)  
Well Beyond Biblical Literalism

**Reading:** James Kugel,  
Massa convening

**December 5:** Reports from the Field (That Is, You!)

**\*\*\*Seminar paper due by 5 pm on December 12 \*\*\*\*\***