

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
Spring 2013
Contemporary Philosophical Hermeneutics PHIL9402
Professors: Robert B. Stewart and Charles A. Ray, Jr.
Thursday 1:00-4:00 p.m. Dodd Conference Room
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Seminary Mission Statement

The mission of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is to equip leaders to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries.

Course Description

The course introduces students to contemporary philosophical issues related to biblical hermeneutics. Issues addressed include the nature of the task, the role of the reader, the proper focus of interpretation, the import of philosophy, history, literary criticism, and theology upon biblical interpretation. The answers given by a selection of contemporary interpreters and theorists will be examined. The course will emphasize personal reading, research, and writing.

Objectives

1. Students will read broadly on the relationship of contemporary literary theory and biblical interpretation.
2. Students will become familiar with issues related to philosophical hermeneutics in the contemporary academy.
3. Students will research, summarize, and critique a contemporary scholar or method.
4. Students will state their own conclusions concerning philosophical hermeneutics.

Requirements

1. Reading Reports. Each student will write two reading reports (3-5 pages, single-spaced), including discussion questions, on assigned readings and present them to the seminar and lead in discussing the assigned reading.
2. Book Reviews. Each student will write a book review (3-5 pages, single-spaced) on an optional text and post it to Blackboard.
3. Research Paper. Each student will write a research paper on a topic agreed upon by the professor and the student. (Papers should be not more than 30 double-spaced pages in length, with footnotes and conform to Turabian style.)

4. Formal Response. Each student will write a formal response that summarizes, analyzes, and critiques a paper by another student.
5. Personal Perspective. Each student will write a personal perspective on philosophical hermeneutics.

All assignments will be posted to Blackboard. Students will bring hard copies to class for distribution to professors and other students.

Grading

Grades will be assigned on the basis of the NOBTS grading scale.

Evaluation

Reading Report #1	10%
Reading Report #2	15%
Book Review	10%
Research Paper	40%
Formal Response	15%
<u>Personal Perspective</u>	<u>10%</u>
	100%

Required Texts

- Porter, Stanley E. and Jason C. Robinson, *Hermeneutics: An Introduction to Interpretive Theory*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011.
- Thiselton, Anthony C.. *New Horizons in Hermeneutics: The Theory and Practice of Transforming Biblical Reading*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992.
- . *The Hermeneutics of Doctrine*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007.
- Vanhoozer, Kevin J. *Is There a Meaning in This Text? The Bible, The Reader, and the Morality of Literary Knowledge*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998.

Optional Texts

- A. K. M. Adam. *What Is Postmodern Biblical Criticism?* Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1995.
- John Barton. *Reading the Old Testament: Method in Biblical Study*. Revised and Enlarged. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1996.
- Richard S. Briggs. *Words in Action: Speech-Act Theory and Biblical Interpretation*. New York & London: T. & T. Clark, 2004.
- Jacques Derrida. *Of Grammatology*. Corrected Edition. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998.
- . *Writing and Difference*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980.
- Stanley Fish, *Is There a Text in This Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982.

- Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Philosophical Hermeneutics*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2008.
- . *Truth and Method*. Second Revised Edition. London & New York: Continuum, 2005.
- E. D. Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967.
- Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading. A Theory of Aesthetic Response*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980.
- Allan Megill, *Prophets of Extremity: Nietzsche, Heidegger, Foucault, Derrida*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1987.
- Stephen D. Moore, *Poststructuralism and the New Testament: Derrida and Foucault at the Foot of the Cross*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994.
- Moises Silva. *Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996.
- Ferdinand de Saussure. *Course in General Linguistics*. Peru, IL: Open Court, 2009.
- Robert B. Stewart, *The Quest of the Hermeneutical Jesus: The Impact of Hermeneutics on the Jesus Research of John Dominic Crossan and N. T. Wright*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2008.
- Dan R. Stiver, *Theology After Ricoeur: New Directions in Hermeneutical Theology*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2001.
- . *The Philosophy of Religious Language: Sign, Symbol and Story*. Oxford & Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 1996.
- John Sturrock, ed. *Structuralism and Since: From Lévi-Strauss to Derrida*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1979.
- Anthony C. Thiselton. *Hermeneutics of Doctrine*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007.
- . *The Two Horizons: New Testament Hermeneutics and Philosophical Description with Special Reference to Heidegger, Bultmann, Gadamer, and Wittgenstein*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980.

Contemporary Philosophical Hermeneutics Schedule

January 24

1. Introduction to Course
2. Porter and Robinson, *Hermeneutics*, Chapters 2-3
3. Porter and Robinson, *Hermeneutics*, Chapters 4-5

January 31

4. Paper Assignments/Response Assignments
5. Porter and Robinson, *Hermeneutics*, Chapters 6-7
6. Porter and Robinson, *Hermeneutics*, Chapters 8-9

February 7

7. Porter and Robinson, *Hermeneutics*, Chapters 10-11
8. Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in this Text?*, Chapters 2-3
9. Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in this Text?*, *Hermeneutics*, Chapters 4-5

February 14

10. Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in this Text?, Hermeneutics*, Chapters 6-7
11. Thiselton, *New Horizons*, Chapters 1-2
12. Thiselton, *New Horizons*, Chapters 3-4

February 21

13. Thiselton, *New Horizons*, Chapters 5-6
14. Thiselton, *New Horizons*, Chapters 7-8
15. Thiselton, *New Horizons*, Chapters 9-10

February 28

16. Thiselton, *New Horizons*, Chapters 11-12
17. Thiselton, *New Horizons*, Chapters 13-14
18. Thiselton, *New Horizons*, Chapters 15-16

March 7

19. Paper 1, Response 1

March 14

20. Paper 2, Response 2

March 21

SPRING BREAK

March 28

21. Paper 3, Response 3

April 4

22. Paper 4, Response 4

April 11

23. Paper 5, Response 5

April 18

24. Paper 6, Response 6

April 25

25. Paper 7, Response 7

May 2

26. Paper 8, Response 8

May 9

Miscellaneous if need be

Select Bibliography

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- Adam, A. K. M. *What Is Postmodern Biblical Criticism?* Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1995.
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- Barthes, Roland. *Criticism and Truth*. Translated by Katrine Pilcher Keuneman. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987.
- . *Empire of Signs*. Translated by Richard Howard. New York: Hill and Wang, 1982.
- . *Elements of Semiology*. Translated by Annette Lavers and Colin Smith. New York: Noonday, 1988.
- . *Structural Analysis and Biblical Exegesis: Interpretational Essays*. Translated by Alfred M. Johnson, Jr. Pittsburgh: Pickwick, 1974.
- . *S/Z*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1974.
- . *The Pleasure of the Text*. Translated by Richard Miller. Hill and Wang, 1975.
- . *The Responsibility of Forms*. Translated by Richard Howard. Hill and Wang, 1985.
- . *The Semiotic Challenge*. Translated by Richard Howard. New York: Hill and Wang, 1988.
- . *Writing Degree Zero*. Translated by Annette Lavers and Colin Smith. New York: Hill and Wang, 1968.
- Barton, John. *Reading the Old Testament: Method in Biblical Study*. Revised and Enlarged. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1996.
- Boff, Clodovis. *Feet-On-The-Ground Theology: A Brazilian Journey*. Translated by Phillip Berryman. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1987.
- . *Theology and Praxis: Epistemological Foundations*. Translated by Robert R. Barr. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1987.
- Boff, Leonardo and Clodovis Boff. *Introducing Liberation Theology*. Translated by Paul Burns. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1987.
- . *Salvation and Liberation*. Translated by Robert R. Barr. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1984.
- Boff, Leonardo. *Jesus Christ Liberator: A Critical Christology for Our Times*. Translated by Patrick Hughes. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1978.
- . *Way of the Cross—Way of Justice* Translated by John Drury. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1980.

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- . *The New Testament as Canon: An Introduction*. London: SCM Press, 1984.
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- . *Writing and Difference*. Translated by Alan Bass. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978.
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