

## Your Professor

### Dr. Emily Clark

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Humanities 335

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Office Hours: M 1:00-2:00 pm  
and Tues 11:00am-2:00 pm;  
and by appointment

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## How This Course Helps You Graduate

This course is a core integration seminar and fulfills one of your core curriculum requirements.

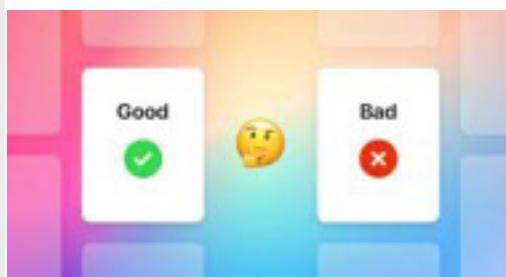
## Course Texts

Richard Godbeer, [The Salem Witch Hunt: A Brief History With Documents](#) (Bedford, 2017).

Yvonne Chireau, [Black Magic: Religion and the African American Conjuring Tradition](#) (University of California Press, 2006).

Dennis Covington, [Salvation on Sand Mountain: Snake Handling and Redemption in Southern Appalachia](#) (De Capo Press, 2009).

The books are required.  
Additional readings will be posted on Blackboard.



## Course Description

As a Core Integrative Seminar, this course imagines the possible and

our role in the world. The fourth-year core question is, “Imagining the possible: What is our role in the world.” In pursuit of this question, Bad Religion prompts us to consider how others have evaluated the “bad” to better understand our social responsibilities to each other.

To achieve this, Bad Religion examines how and why certain religions get categorized as bad: superstitious, evil, dangerous, or weird. In these cases, “bad” and “good” are not *sui generis* descriptions, meaning inherently obvious. Rather, what makes these religions “bad” is constructed by society. In taking bad religions as our objects of study, we will interrogate questions about fear, outsiders, cultural/social boundaries, as well as assumptions and ideas about race, gender, and class. Bad Religion reveals the limits of our tolerance, our reservations about others, and our fears about ourselves. Deeming something bad is rarely a neutral act.

### Core Integration Seminar Course Learning Outcomes

1. Students will be able to integrate the principles of a Jesuit education, prior components of the Core, and their disciplinary expertise.

In Bad Religion, students will interrogate how societies and

cultures label something or someone as “bad.” This prompts students to synthesize prior knowledge and skills from core courses in History, Religious Studies, Philosophy, and the social sciences.

2. Students will be able to clearly and persuasively communicate with an audience of diverse educational backgrounds, personal experiences, and value commitments using ideas and arguments based on evidence, logic, and critical thinking.

In Bad Religion, students will analyze how and why a religion is seen as bad, as well as considering the category of “bad” more broadly. Through a final project, students will research a “bad” subject of their choice and design a podcast to teach a public audience.

3. Students will be able to assess the ways in which the Core has transformed the commitments and perspectives that will inform their future endeavors.

In Bad Religion, students will apply prior and new knowledge to understand how and why societies and cultures label something or someone as “bad.” They will be able to evaluate the reasons behind that labeling and come to their own conclusions about those processes and the people involved.

### How to Succeed in this Course



- 1) Come to class, arrive on time, and stay for the entire meeting. Excused absences include: documented University approved activities, contagious illness, or family emergencies. **Email me when you know you're going to be absent.**
- 2) Regularly check your email. I frequently email about grades, housekeeping issues, and more.
- 3) Complete assigned readings, in their entirety, on schedule. Engage with

your reading. **Bring** the readings to class.

- 4) Contribute to class discussions. You should come to class with questions and comments, prepared to participate in a lively discussion.
- 5) Complete all assignments, in a timely manner. Due dates are firm but I allow requested extensions if requested 12 hours before due date. Otherwise late papers will be deducted a full letter grade for every day it is late.
- 6) Ask for help when you need it. I am happy to assist you in your attempts to master course materials and successfully complete course assignments (Really, I am). Come to my office hours and I am always available via email.

## Course Policies

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### RESPECT FOR MATERIAL, OUR SUBJECTS, AND YOUR PEERS

This course is not confessional in nature; that is, we are not here to promote a particular religious viewpoint or to debate religious “truth.” Rather, we will be engaging religious materials in order to understand their meanings for the people who have produced and used them. You may have your own religious commitment; if so, throughout this course you will likely encounter opinions and religious beliefs and activities with which you do not agree - especially in a course like this! This does not make them unworthy of your study, consideration, and respect. I ask you to imagine yourself in the shoes of someone else whose practices and beliefs may differ from your own and yet carry immense meaning and value for that person. Furthermore, you will be expected to communicate in a civil manner at all times, both in and out of the classroom. This means that interactions are to be carried out in a polite, courteous, and dignified way. Treat your peers and the subject material with respect.

### COURSE POLICY ON RACE AND ETHNICITY

This class and classroom is one that respects and welcomes each other. Many of my classes cover topics related to race, colonialism, religion, and racism. These conversations and readings are difficult for some students, and I encourage you to live in that space of productive discomfort and allow yourself to be challenged. Gonzaga’s [Mission Statement](#) emphasizes a commitment to intercultural competence, diversity, and social justice. Let’s live that mission in the classroom. Through these sometimes-uncomfortable conversations, we will learn and grow together.

### PLAGIARISM POLICY

I do not tolerate plagiarism or cheating. We are an intellectual and academic community, and all of us are responsible to act with integrity. All violations of the Gonzaga Academic Honesty Policy will result in a zero on the assignment. Plagiarism is the act of passing another’s work off as your own. Whether intentional or not, all plagiarized assignments will receive a zero. If you have questions or concerns about plagiarism, consult the guide on blackboard. [Click here for more on Academic Citizenship at Gonzaga](#).

### SCREEN POLICY

You are welcome to use your computer or tablet in class to take notes and refer to pdf readings you did not print out. Screens are **not** to be allowed for other purposes during class. If you have a screen open, you have agreed that I can cold-call on you at any time. The only exceptions to this rule are those with relevant disability accommodations.

## DISABILITY ACCESS POLICY

Students with disabilities who need academic accommodations should:

1. Register with and provide documentation to the Disability Access.
2. Bring a letter to me from the Disability Access Office indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done within the first two weeks of class. The sooner I know, the sooner we can work together.

For more information about services available to GU students with disabilities, contact:

[disability@gonzaga.edu](mailto:disability@gonzaga.edu); 313-4134. Or visit their office in Foley 209 [www.gonzaga.edu/Campus-Resources/Offices-and-Services-A-Z/Disability-Resources-Education-and-Access-Management/default.asp](http://www.gonzaga.edu/Campus-Resources/Offices-and-Services-A-Z/Disability-Resources-Education-and-Access-Management/default.asp).

## A NOTE ON HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION AND SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

Consistent with its mission, Gonzaga seeks to assure all community members learn and work in a welcoming and inclusive environment. Title VII, Title IX and Gonzaga's policy prohibit harassment, discrimination and sexual misconduct. Gonzaga encourages anyone experiencing harassment, discrimination or sexual misconduct to talk to someone from the Campus and Local Resources list found in the Student Handbook: [www.gonzaga.edu/studenthandbook](http://www.gonzaga.edu/studenthandbook) about what happened so they can get the support they need and Gonzaga can respond appropriately. There are both confidential and non-confidential resources and reporting options available to you. Gonzaga is legally obligated to respond to reports of sexual misconduct, and therefore we cannot guarantee the confidentiality of a report, unless made to a confidential resource. Responses may vary from support services to formal investigations. As a faculty member, I am required to report incidents of sexual misconduct and thus cannot guarantee confidentiality. I must provide our Title IX coordinator with relevant details such as the names of those involved in the incident. For more information about policies and resources or reporting options, please visit the following website: [www.gonzaga.edu/titleix](http://www.gonzaga.edu/titleix). My office is a safe space, but I am legally required to report sexual misconduct.

For more on Title IX, see: Christina Thomas

Title IX Director

509-313-4104

[thomasc1@gonzaga.edu](mailto:thomasc1@gonzaga.edu)

Business Services Building 018

Or by filling out an online [Sexual Misconduct Report Form](#)

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

I enforce the [Gonzaga attendance policy](#), if you miss more than 6 class meetings, you will receive a "V," which is the same as a "F." For a seminar class to work, attendance is necessary. Per the University [policy on religious holidays](#), exceptions to this include religious holidays. And any COVID-related issue, like exhibiting symptoms, is fully excused.

## Assignments and Grading

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- 1) 3Qs Reading Journals. These show critical engagement with texts. Every class period that has an assigned reading, you'll submit a reading journal entry on blackboard that includes: a rich **quote**, a discussion **question** for the class, and a **quandary** that the reading left with you. For more on the grading, see the Reading Journals Rubric on blackboard. Your journal is before class begins. Worth 300 points (for 30 reading journals).
- 2) Salem Reflection: When we complete the course section on the 1692 Salem witch crisis, you'll reflect on how concerns about witchcraft (and to a much lesser extent heresy) informed the crisis, with an eye towards the role of social forces (of many kinds) and the justice (or lack thereof) in the trials. This will be an informal reflection of about 500-750 words. Worth 100 points.
- 3) "Bad" Comparison: After we complete the course sections on Salem, magic, and "cults," you'll select two examples of religious "badness" from the semester and compare and contrast them, with an aim to conclude how/why they were deemed bad. This will be a comparative paper of about 750-1000 words. Worth 130 points.
- 4) Podcast Analysis: In preparation for your final project, you will select an episode of the podcast series *Lore* and analyze it from the perspective of content, storytelling, and delivery. This will be an informal analysis of about 500 words and prepares you for thinking about how to communicate in an engaging way to a wide audience. Worth 70 points.
- 5) Podcast Final: You will select an example of something "bad" from your home discipline of study. You will further research the topic, develop a script for a 6-7 minute podcast episode, and record it. Worth 225 points.
- 6) Preparation and Participation: The least boring and most effective way to learn is to participate fully in the process. You are expected to contribute to the success of this course by: reading the assigned materials, attending every class, taking notes, listening respectfully, and contributing to class discussions. See the In-Class Participation Rubric for more. Worth 175 points.

3Qs Reading Journals: 300 points

1000-895 points: A range

Salem Reflection: 100 points

A/A- cutoff at 925

"Bad" Comparison: 130 points

894-795 points: B range

Podcast Analysis: 70 points

B+/B cutoff at 855

Podcast Final: 225 points

B/B- cutoff at 825

Preparation and Participation: 175 points

794-695 points: C range

Total: 1000 points

C+/C cutoff at 755

C/C- cutoff at 725

694-595 points: D range

D+/D cutoff at 655

594 points and below: F

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## Course Schedule

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Important: You need to come to class having already read the assigned reading for that day; in other words, readings are due the date listed.

### Week 1: Course Introduction

Wednesday, Jan 18: Introductions, Class Expectations

Friday, Jan 20: What is Religion?

Reading: “Religion, Religions, Religious” on blackboard

### Week 2: Course Introduction

Monday, Jan 23: What makes a religion bad?

Reading: “The Body Ritual of the Nacirema” on blackboard

Wednesday, Jan 25: Why is it hard to study “bad” religion?

Reading: “The Devil in Mr. Jones” on blackboard

Friday, Jan 27: No Class. Dr. Clark will be at the Learning Assessment Day workshop.



### Week 3: What was the Salem Witch Crisis?

Monday, Jan 30: Salem Witch Crisis

Reading: Introduction (pgs 1-31) in *The Salem Witch Hunt*

Wednesday, Feb 1: Gender

Reading: “Social Construction of Gender” on blackboard

Friday, Jan Feb 3: Salem Witch Crisis

Reading: Signs and Assaults from the Supernatural World (38-50) in *The Salem Witch Hunt*

### Week 4: Salem “Witches” on Trial

Monday, Jan 6: Salem Witch Crisis

Reading: Beginnings (51-66) in *The Salem Witch Hunt*

Wednesday, Feb 8: Witch Crisis

Reading: Witches on Trial: Sarah Good (67-82) in *The Salem Witch Hunt*

Friday, Feb 10: Salem Witch Crisis

Reading: Tituba (83-93) in *The Salem Witch Hunt*



### Week 5: Salem “Witches” on Trial

Monday, Feb 13: Salem Witch Crisis

Reading: Bridget Bishop (103-116) and Dorcas Hoar (117-127) in *The Salem Witch Hunt*

Wednesday, Feb 15: Salem Witch Crisis

Reading: John Proctor (94-102) and George Burroughs (128-140)

in *The Salem Witch Hunt*

Friday, Feb 17: Salem Witch Crisis

Reading: Witch Court Under Attack (147-168) in *The Salem Witch Hunt*

### Week 6: Salem Witch Crisis

Monday, Feb 20: No Class. Presidents' Day.

Wednesday, Feb 22: Salem Witch Crisis

Reading: Aftermath (169-185) in *The Salem Witch Hunt*

Friday, Feb 24: Salem, Satan, and Olympia, WA

Reading: "Satanic Panic" on blackboard



### Week 7: *The Witch*

Monday, Feb 27: *The Witch*

Wednesday, March 1: *The Witch*

Friday, March 3: Wrapping up Witches

No reading, but your **Salem Reflection Due before class begins (2:10 pm)**



### Week 8: Religion, Folklore, and Pop Culture

Monday, March 6: New Orleans Voudou

Reading: "New Orleans Voudou" on blackboard

Wednesday, March 8: Voodoo in Pop Culture

Reading: "Academic Hoodoo" on blackboard

Friday, March 10: No Class.

**Podcast Reflection Due by class time (2:10 pm)**

**March 13-March 17: SPRING BREAK! Get on with your bad self!**

### Week 9: Black Magic

Monday, March 20: African American Religion and Conjuring

Reading: Introduction and Chapter 1 in *Black Magic*

Wednesday, March 22: African American Religion and Conjuring

Reading: Chapter 2 in *Black Magic*

Friday, March 24: African American Religion and Conjuring

Reading: Chapter 3 in *Black Magic*

### Week 10: Black Magic

Monday, March 27: African American Religion and Conjuring

Reading: Chapter 4 in *Black Magic*

Wednesday, March 29: African American Religion and Conjuring

Reading: Chapter 5 in *Black Magic*

Friday, March 31: African American Religion and Conjuring



Reading: Conclusion in *Black Magic*

### Week 11: Things “Culty”

Monday, April 3: What’s a Cult?

Reading: “Cultish” on blackboard

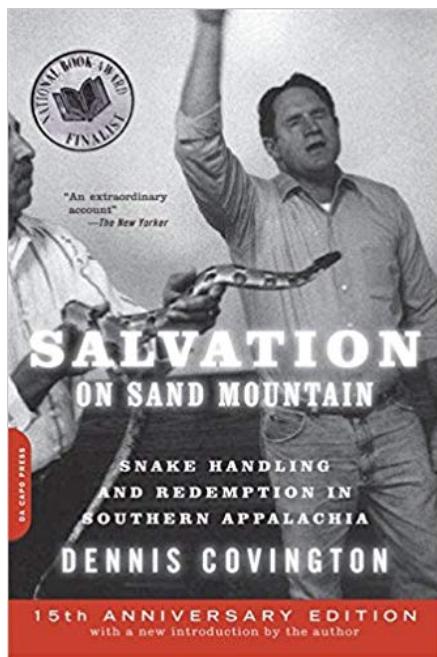
Wednesday, April 5: Appalachian Serpent Handling

Reading: Chapters 1 and 2 in *Salvation on Sand Mountain*

Friday, April 7: No Class. Good Friday

### Week 12: Serpent Handling

Monday, April 10: No Class. Easter Monday



Wednesday, April 12: Appalachian Serpent Handling

Reading: Chapters 3 and 4 in *Salvation on Sand Mountain*

Friday, April 14: No Class. Dr. Clark will be giving a talk at Notre Dame University.

### Week 13: Serpent Handling

Monday, April 17: Appalachian Serpent Handling

Reading: Chapters 5 and 6 in *Salvation on Sand Mountain*

Wednesday, April 19: Appalachian Serpent Handling

Reading: Chapters 7 and 8 in *Salvation on Sand Mountain*

Friday, April 21: Appalachian Serpent Handling

Reading: Chapters 9 and 10 in *Salvation on Sand Mountain*

### Week 14: Serpent Handling

Monday, April 24: Appalachian Serpent Handling

Reading: Chapter 11 and Afterword in *Salvation on Sand Mountain*

Wednesday, April 26: Appalachian Serpent Handling

Reading: “Snakes Alive” on blackboard

Friday, April 28: What’s “Bad” for you?

Reading: No reading, but your **“Bad” Comparison reflection is due before class begins.**

### Week 15: What’s “Bad” for you?

Monday, May 1: Bad Workshop

Wednesday, May 3: Bad Workshop

Friday, May 5: Bad Workshop

### Final Exam Week

2:10 pm MFW Class: **Tuesday, May 9, 6:00-8:00 pm**

Your podcasts are due before the end of the exam period!