

**HIST 510: THE FOLLY AND THE IVY:
A CRITICAL CONSIDERATION OF CHRISTMAS**

Gerry Bowler
May 26-30, 2014
8:00-11:00 am
1 or 2 graduate credit hours



Please Note: The Course Information Sheet is meant to assist in selecting courses.
The official syllabus should be consulted for more detailed information.
Syllabi are available to Regent students at <http://www2.regent-college.edu/courses/login>

Course Description

Christmas is the world's most popular holiday and comes with a long and rich history. We will study its origins as a religious celebration and chart the changes to its festive complexion. We will meet astrologer-kings, virgins, shepherds, merchants, priests, werewolves, warriors, prophets, academics and sundry nocturnal gift-bringers; we will encounter reindeer, puddings, Puritans, Nazis and atheists. We will examine songs, art, violence, commerce, ceremony and magic of almost two thousand years of the feast.

Class Outline

Monday, May 26	The Invention of Christmas
Tuesday, May 27	Crisis and Decline
Wednesday, May 28	The Revival of Christmas
Thursday, May 29	The Rise of Santa Claus
Friday, May 30	The Christmas Wars

Assignments

1. Book Review Essays

One-credit students will write two book review essays on two of the assigned texts of their choosing, showing that they have read and understood the books, reflecting on their meaning for the contemporary celebration of Christmas as discussed in the lectures. Each essay will be 1,000 words.

Two-credit students will write two book review essays on the assigned texts. Each essay should be 1,250 words.

DUE: Monday, July 14, 2014

**SUMMER PROGRAMS
2014**

**rgnt.net/summer
P 604.224.3245 TF 1.800.663.8664**

2. Term Paper (*Two-credit students only*)

Two-credit students will also write a 4,000-word term paper on a Christmas topic agreed upon with the instructor. This will involve research using secondary sources and, perhaps, first-hand inquiry into the topic.

Due: Monday, July 14, 2014

Evaluation

	1 cr hrs	2 cr hrs
Book Review Essay #1	50%	25%
Book Review Essay #2	50%	25%
Term Paper	—	50%

Required Reading

Bowler, Gerry. *The World Encyclopedia of Christmas*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 2000. Out of print, available on Kindle.

Bowler, Gerry. *Santa Claus: A Biography*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 2005. ISBN: 9780771016684.

Talen, Billy. *What Would Jesus Buy?: Fabulous Prayers in the Face of the Shopocalypse*. New York: PublicAffairs, 2007. Out of print, available on Kindle.

Kelly, Joseph P. *The Feast of Christmas*, Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2010. ISBN: 9780814633250.

Deadline for dropping the course with refund is 4:30 pm on May 26, 2014 (100% refund) or 4:30 pm on May 27, 2014 (75% refund). There is no refund of any tuition fees after the 75% refund deadline, but the course may be dropped, changed to audit, or reduced in credit hours up until 4:30 pm on May 30, 2014 (no refunds).