

RGP 5209HF (2009)
THE SPIRITUAL THEOLOGY OF EVELYN UNDERHILL
(cross-listed to the Theology Department)

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office hours: Wednesday 10-12
or by appointment

Monday 4:30-6:30
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Course Description: A critical exploration of the mystical, liturgical, and pastoral theology of Evelyn Underhill, as she develops these in her fictional and scholarly writings. Her thought will be examined in light of contemporary issues in spirituality, such as the status of sexuality and the body, mysticism and social action, the subjectivization of mystical experience, and the effect of socio-political structures on spirituality.

Course Objectives: Students will be able to describe and evaluate significant features of Underhill's spiritual theology within the context of her life-history. They will also be able to explain and to appreciate the significance of certain contemporary issues in spirituality, and be able to analyze these features of Underhill's writings within that context in critical and creative ways.

Required Books: (available at Crux Bookstore at Wycliffe College)

Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism: The Study of Nature and Development of Man's Spiritual Consciousness*, any edition.
Evelyn Underhill, *The Golden Sequence: A Four-Fold Study of the Spiritual Life*, any edition.

Reserve Reading: Some required reading selections, listed on the course syllabus (p. 5), will be available on Reserve in the Regis College Library. See the Reserve Reading list on p. 6 of this course outline.

Grading:

A numerical mark will be given for each course requirement. Following the final examination, a letter grade will be assigned on the following number and letter grade scheme:

A+	= 100-90	B	= 76-73
A	= 89-85	B-	= 72-70
A-	= 84-80	FZ	= 69-0
B+	= 79-77		

Graded Assignments

30% Course Presentation:

- 1) Students are to choose a reading of interest from those listed on the course syllabus, October 1 through October 15.
- 2) At least one hour of class period will be devoted to a student presentation on the readings, in the form of a mini-essay.
- 3) The mini-essays should be about 1800 words - 7 to 8 typed pages or so - and take about 15-20 minutes to read. The rest of the class hour (or more) will be spent in discussion, led by both the presenter and myself.
- 4) Each presentation must include the development of questions and issues appropriate for class discussion, listed at the end of the mini-essay.
- 5) Students need to bring photocopies of presentations to distribute in class.
- 6) Evaluative criteria are:
 - i) accuracy and comprehensiveness (of the treatment of the subject matter);
 - ii) substance (rigor and depth of development);
 - iii) conciseness and clarity;
 - iv) creative/critical analysis (in relation to previous course or other material, problems or issues);
 - v) significance of the issues raised for class discussion.
- 7) Also, as participants in the presentations by your colleagues, you are expected to read and think about the relevant material, and come to class prepared to talk about it.

**60% Major Essay, about 3500 words (14-15 typed pages or so).
Due Monday, December 14.**

The topic can be either:

- 1) develop and explore significant features of Underhill's life and/or thought in light of some aspect(s) of Grace Jantzen's critique of Evelyn Underhill in "The Legacy of Evelyn Underhill", *Feminist Theology*, 4 (1993) pp. 59-71;

or

- 2) develop and explore a topic of your own choice pertaining to some aspect(s) of Evelyn Underhill's spiritual theology, that has been approved by me.

10% Class Participation: attendance, evidence that you are keeping up with the readings, class discussion, etc.

Essay Assignments:

- 1) Note the date deadline for the major essay. A 10% reduction of the grade will be applied to late assignments each week or part week it is late.
- 2) Essay format and marking criteria: I expect all essays to show significant thought and effort. They should be well-developed and polished.

Format: essays must be double spaced, have a title page, page numbers, appropriate margin spacing, footnotes, and a bibliography. Neglect of appropriate notation will result in a significant reduction of your grade, possibly even an 'F'. Essays are usually more legible/ if typed, but hand-written essays are acceptable if they are legible and double spaced.

Academic Honesty: Documentation for footnotes is necessary, when quoting writers or referring to secondary sources. All material which you quote directly should be noted, as well as any judgments, arguments, and data that you draw from other sources.

- i. Plagiarism will result in a grade of F for the course, and the notification of the Dean of your Faculty.
- ii. In order to deter plagiarism, I might require an oral defense of essays. Failure to attend the defense will result in an "F" on the essay.
- iii. Failure to document properly the sources of your research will involve a significant reduction in your grade, possibly even an "F". This includes the failure to cite the appropriate books or page numbers of books from which you have quoted.
- iv. If the essay makes any major use of work done in another course, submit the work along with the essay. If there is not a significant amount of new work, the grade may be reduced. See me if you have any questions on this.

Marking Criteria:

- i. Clarity of the essay, in grammatical detail and expression, and in the overall structure. Be sure your paper is drawn together coherently; a strong introduction stating what you will do and how you will do it, and conclusion summarizing what you have done, are essential in this regard.
- ii. Substance of the essay, whether it is significant or superficial, rigorous or sloppy. You must take an appropriate objective and scholarly approach, and show some significant understanding of the material and relevant research issues.
- iii. Accuracy of the essay, where it involves an exposition or explanation of information from books or lecture notes.
- iv. Scope of the essay: that is, be sure to develop the significant relevant issues and implications that arise from the problems, issues, or themes of the material in question.
- v. Conciseness of the essay, in contrast with being wordy or overly elaborate or

needlessly repetitive.

vi. Originality of the essay: the analysis should show some critical reflection on the theme or question, whether it is your own or a synthesis of ideas connected to another course-reading or of ideas developed in class discussion. You must show some critical and creative development on your part.

Tentative Syllabus:

- Sep. 14 Introduction. Course Outline. Overview of the course.
- Sep. 21 Introduction. Readings: Underhill, Preface of *Fragments from an Inner Life*, Dana Greene, ed., pp. 13-24; Grace Jantzen, "The Legacy of Evelyn Underhill", *Feminist Theology*, 4 (1993) pp. 59-71; Grace Adolphensen Brame, "Evelyn Underhill: The Integrity of Personal Intellect and Individual Religious Experience as Related to Ecclesiastical Authority", *Worship* 68 (January 1994).
- Sep. 28 The Early Underhill. Readings: Michael Stoeber, "Evelyn Underhill on Magic, Sacrament, and Spiritual Transformation," *Worship*, Vol. 77, No. 2 (March 2003) (R.R.); Underhill, *Mysticism*, Part II, Chapter VI and VII, pp. 125-164.
- Oct. 5 Student presentations on Underhill's short stories and first novel..
- 1) Evelyn Underhill, "The Death of a Saint," "The Ivory Tower," "Our Lady of the Gate," "The Mountain Image," and "A Green Mass" (R.R.) (Choose three of the five);
presenter: _____
- 2) Evelyn Underhill, *The Gray World* (London: William Heinemann, 1904) (R.R.).
presenter: _____
- Oct. 12 Student presentations on Underhill's novels:
- 1) Evelyn Underhill, *The Lost Word* (London: William Heinemann, 1907) (R.R.);
presenter: _____
- 2) Evelyn Underhill, *The Column of Dust* (London: Methuen & Co., 1909) (R.R.).
presenter: _____

Oct. 19 Student presentations on her poetry.

1) Evelyn Underhill, *Immanence. A Book of Verses* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd, 1912) (R.R.);

presenter: _____

2) Evelyn Underhill, *Theophanies. A Book of Verses* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1916) (R.R.).

presenter: _____

Oct. 26 Reading Week, No Class.

Some adjustments might be made to the following class readings and topics for November 2 – December 7, depending on student interests.

Nov 2 Underhill's Spiritual Theology: Reading: Underhill, *Mysticism* (most of Part I, pp. 1-124)

Nov. 9 Underhill's Spiritual Theology: Reading: Underhill, *Mysticism* (Part II, selections to be determined later.

Nov. 16 Underhill's Spiritual Theology: Reading: Underhill, *Mysticism* (Part II, selections to be determined later. Jeffrey Kripal, Chapter 1, "Eyeing the Burning Wings: Analyzing the Mystical Experience of Love in Evelyn Underhill's *Mysticism*", *Roads of Excess, Palaces of Wisdom: Eroticism & Reflexivity in the Study of Mysticism*, pp. 33-84.

Nov. 23 Underhill's Spiritual Theology: Reading: Underhill, *Fragments from an Inner Life*, Dana Greene, ed.

Nov. 30 Underhill's Spiritual Theology: Reading: Underhill, *The Golden Sequence: A Four-Fold Study of the Spiritual Life*

Dec. 7 Concluding comments; Student reviews-outlines-discussions of their essay topics.

Dec. 14 Major Essay Due

Articles and Books on Reserve Reading in Regis College Library

Christopher J. R. Armstrong, *Evelyn Underhill*, London: Mowbrays, 1975.

**Grace Adolphsen Brame, "Evelyn Underhill: The Integrity of Personal Intellect and Individual Religious Experience as Related to Ecclesiastical Authority", *Worship* 68 (January 1994).

**Grace Brame, "Evelyn Underhill and the Mastery of Time", *Spirituality Today* (Winter, 1990).

**Grace Brame, "Continuing Incarnation: Evelyn Underhill's Double Thread of Spirituality", *Christian Century* (October 1990).

Annicé Callahan, *Evelyn Underhill: Spirituality for Daily Living* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1997).

Margaret Cropper, *Life of Evelyn Underhill* (New York: Harper, 1958).

Dana Greene, *Evelyn Underhill: Artist of the Infinite Life* (New York: Crossroad, 1990).

_____, (ed.) *Evelyn Underhill: Modern Guide to the Ancient Quest for the Holy* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1988).

**_____, "Adhering to God: The Message of Evelyn Underhill For Our Times", *Spirituality Today* (Spring 1987).

**Grace Jantzen, "The Legacy of Evelyn Underhill", *Feminist Theology*, 4 (1993) pp. 59-71.

Jeffrey Kripal, *Roads of Excess, Palaces of Wisdom: Eroticism & Reflexivity in the Study of Mysticism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).

**Michael Stoeber, "Evelyn Underhill on Magic, Sacrament, and Spiritual Transformation," *Worship*, Vol. 77, No. 2, (March 2003).

**Evelyn Underhill, "The Death of a Saint," "The Ivory Tower," "Our Lady of the Gate," "The Mountain Image," and "A Green Mass," in *The Horlick's Magazine*, 2(1904).

**_____, *The Column of Dust* (London: Methuen & Co., 1909)

Evelyn Underhill, *Fragments from an Inner Life*, Dana Greene, ed. (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 1993).

**_____, *The Gray World* (London: William Heinemann, 1904)

**_____, *Immanence. A Book of Verses* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd, 1912),

**_____, *The Lost Word* (London: William Heinemann, 1907),

_____, *The Mystic Way: A Psychological Study of Christian Origins* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1914).

_____, *Mysticism* (London, Methuen, 1911).

**_____, *Theophanies. A Book of Verses* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1916).

Charles Williams (ed.), *The Letters of Evelyn Underhill* (London: Longmans, 1938).

**Robert Gail Woods, "The Future We Can't See: Evelyn Underhill's Pacifism", *Christian Century*, (May 1979).

**** These articles and books are my copies on file.**