

HONORS II

Section Moderators: Darrell Gwaltney, Bob Byrd, Steve Guthrie

Fidelity 412

3:30 – 5:00 PM

3:30-4:00

“Praise: A Consideration of the Role of Jazz in Christian Worship”

Calen E.L. Gayle

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Darrell Gwaltney

Jazz, in essence, is beneficial to the musical worship experience, both in cultic and secular settings. It is beneficial because it comes from the community, in that its historical locus is the daily life of the oppressed. It is beneficial as it is used for the community, this being the community of believers, in worship settings, again, both ecclesial and secular. It is beneficial, thirdly, because it goes beyond the community of faith to the community of the suffering and to the world at large. This presentation addresses and elucidates each of these broader benefits of jazz for the worship experience. Jazz creates beneficial inherent opportunities for worship as well as spontaneous opportunities for worship in both ecclesial and secular settings.

Jazz inherently creates opportunities for worship in both cultic and secular settings. Specific works considered for examples of this include Coltrane’s *A Love Supreme*, Ellington’s *The Sacred Concerts* and Mary Lou’s *Mass*. The question of jazz’s role in worship is of special significance potential worship leaders, and to jazz musicians. Hence the search for greater understanding of the doxological tension of jazz—tension arising from the genre’s secular affiliation and its simultaneous theological pertinence to worship—is both personal and scholarly. It is likewise a consideration pertinent to the broader past and present discourse on the integration of diverse music styles into a singular worship service.

Disciplines: Honors /Religion and Music

4:00-4:30

“Table of Grace: A Disability Theology”

Megan S. Stephens

Faculty Advisor: Robert O. Byrd

Theology regarding disability is a subject of which research is long overdue. Because of many recent developments in other facets of life concerning disability, such as scientific research and civil rights laws, theologians are beginning to recognize that the subject of disability must be addressed in the field of religion, specifically Christianity.

I have chosen five texts in order to demonstrate three ways in which disability is discussed in the Bible: Exclusion from Rituals (Leviticus 21:16-23), Recipients of Divine Care (Leviticus 19:14; Luke 14:12-24; John 9), and Disability as Metaphor (Isaiah 35:5-6; John 9). These texts provide a general overview of the way people with disabilities are characterized in the Bible and the theology of the biblical writer. Do they marginalize people with disabilities or welcome them to the table of grace? Does Scripture encourage us to simply pity disability or does it place value on their perspective? Are they viewed as expendable?

People with disabilities constitute nearly a fourth of the population of the United States. Yet they are the most unreached people group in our country, with an estimated 95% being outside the church. If we are to be a part of the kingdom of God that Jesus discusses in the Gospels, it is high time we start focusing on this community of people. I will address the Southern Baptist Convention, asking them to consider incorporating disability theology into their position statements online as well as adding an online list of Southern Baptist churches with ministries for people with disabilities.

Discipline: Honors /Religion

4:30-5:00

“Re-Visioning Worship”

Nathan Sutliff

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Steven Guthrie

Visual art has been part of Christian worship since its beginnings. Icons, paintings, stained glass windows, and architecture have all been used to enhance Christian worship and direct worshippers’ attention toward God. Increasingly a new sort of visual art is being employed, as American Evangelical churches incorporate short films and video clips into their worship services.”

Though this is an emerging discipline, discussion about its effectiveness, appropriateness, and usefulness. This thesis draws on material from theologians, philosophers and church leaders in developing an analysis of this emerging field. Film is a unique art form as it incorporates a number of other mediums. Used in an appropriate way, film has the ability to encourage community, engage the heart and mind, and serve a homiletic function.

Though this is a developing art form there are a number of popular examples to evaluate. Rob Bell’s “Nooma” series, Erwin McManus’ “Crave” and “Wide Awake” series, and a selection of the most popular films according to Collide Magazine and SermonSpice.com will be evaluated aesthetically and theologically. This presentation will also include a viewing of popular and created content as examples of this emerging medium and discipline.

Discipline: Honors/Religion and the Arts/Multimedia Productions