Course Description: This course is designed to explore a variety of cultural media as they present apologetic opportunities for the church. These include novels, films, plays, etc. An important aspect of the course is the analysis of the contemporary context as it defines the kinds of questions being asked and the manner in which they are asked. The course is designed to be a graduate seminar.

Course Objectives:

1. The student will understand the postmodern context in such a way as to better appreciate the complex dimensions of the apologetic encounter in the 21st century.
2. The student will develop specific analytical tools which are applicable to our understanding of the primary aesthetic forms (novels, films, etc.).
3. The student will learn to identify universal apologetic themes as they are expressed in contemporary cultural forms.

Primary Text(s) for Course:

Robert K. Johnston, *Useless Beauty: Ecclesiastes through the lens of Contemporary Film*.
Ralph Wood, *The Comedy of Redemption*
John Updike, *The Beauty of the Lilies* (Novel)
Eric Bogosian, *Suburbia* (Play)

Course Assessment:

1. This course will be run as a graduate seminar (no exams). This means that the evaluation will be exclusively based on writing and group discussion/participation.
2. Written assignments include:
   A. Two novels will be read and ten page papers written on each (20% each). I have assigned one (Updike) and you have the choice of the other one. The selection must come from those referred to by Wood in his book (e.g., O’Connor, Percy, Devries—excluding Updike since I have already assigned one of his books).
   B. Two films will be viewed and discussion guides (5 pages in length per guide) written on each (10% each).
   C. One play will be read and a five page discussion guide written (10%).
   D. Ten page analysis of Johnston book (15%).
   E. Ten page analysis of Wood’s book (15%).
**Novels:**

_The Beauty of the Lilies_ by John Updike
(Your selection from Wood)

**Films: (Films will be on reserve in the Library)**

_Babette’s Feast_
_Winter Light_

**Play:**

_Suburbia_ by Eric Bogosian

**Reading/Writing Assignment Schedule:**

1. Written analysis of Johnston is due Feb. 24th.
2. Written analysis of Wood is due March 10th.
3. Written analysis of Updike is due March 28th.
4. Study Guides for _Babette’s Feast and Winter Light_ are due April 7th.
5. Written analysis of _Suburbia_ is due April 21st.
6. Written analysis of selected novel is due April 24th.