

# A HISTORY OF JESUS

HNRS 2030. Professor Delbert Burkett. Wednesday 6:00-8:50 PM. Coates 211.



This course examines some of the numerous ways in which Jesus has been portrayed or conceived from ancient times to the present. We consider not only the question of who Jesus was, but also the question of why he has been portrayed in so many different ways.

We first examine **“the canonical Jesus”**: the different portraits of Jesus in the four gospels of the New Testament. We continue with **“the apocryphal Jesus”**: portraits of Jesus in other early Christian literature that was not included in the New Testament. We then turn to **“the orthodox Jesus”**: the theological creeds that defined Jesus as a member of the Trinity, both fully human and fully divine. We next examine **“the non-Christian Jesus”**: portraits of Jesus in non-Christian religions. We consider how the modern Enlightenment cast doubt on traditional views of Jesus and inaugurated a quest to discover **“the historical Jesus.”** We then examine **“the celluloid Jesus”**: portrayals of Jesus in contemporary film. Finally we examine **“the fictional Jesus”**: portraits of Jesus in fictional literature.

Course requirements include regular short essays of 2-3 pages over assigned reading assignments and a critical book review. Class sessions are devoted to student discussion.