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WSU Professor to Speak April 26 at LCC on The Antichrist and Evangelical Political Activism

Matthew Avery Sutton, Ph.D., will speak on "The Antichrist, Evangelical Political Activism, and the 2012 Election" at Lower Columbia College, Thursday, April 26. This free community lecture, the William Vest Memorial Lecture, begins at 7:30 p.m. in the Wollenberg Auditorium, Rose Center for the Arts.

Sutton is an associate professor of history at Washington State University. His first book, “Aimee Semple McPherson and the Resurrection of Christian America” (Harvard University Press, 2007), won the Thomas J. Wilson Memorial Prize from Harvard University Press, awarded annually to the best book in any discipline by a first time author. The book was also the basis for the PBS documentary “Sister Aimee.”

His lecture will focus on the ways in which international events, including the World Wars and the global economic depression of the 1930s, fueled American fundamentalists’ fears of Armageddon. These fears, in turn, shaped fundamentalists’ opposition to Franklin Roosevelt and New Deal liberalism, driving them to the political right. Finally, Sutton suggests that the apocalyptic anxieties that fueled fundamentalist hostility to FDR could play a role in the 2012 election and they help to explain contemporary evangelical opposition to Barack Obama.

He is currently working on a new book, “American Evangelicals and the Politics of Apocalypse” (Harvard University Press, forthcoming 2013), which examines the relationships among American evangelicalism, apocalyptic thought, and political activism in times of national crisis and war. He recently published "Was FDR the Antichrist? The Birth of Fundamentalist Anti-liberalism in a Global Age” in the Journal of American History (March 2012) and he has written a new text titled, “Jerry Falwell and the Rise of the Religious Right: A Brief History with Documents” (Bedford/St. Martin’s), which will be out this fall.

Sutton has received research fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Woodrow Wilson Fellowship Foundation. He has also written for the New York Times.

More information about Sutton and the William Vest Memorial Lectures is available at lowercolumbia.edu/lectures