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## Phys. Ed. 112 Syllabus: You and Your Apocalypse

Alexander Lumans

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## Phys. Ed. 112 Syllabus: You and Your Apocalypse

### Abstract

Instructor: Richard Branson, with TAs Ernest Shackleton and Cormac McCarthy

Course Description: The world will end, is ending, has ended. Nuclear winter, Yellowstone's supervolcano, robot zombies or zombie robots -- what do you do now? If you're dead, then nothing except come back and harvest the living. But if you've managed to somehow survive total devastation with at least half of your original limb count, then you have options. This course will teach you to hone those options into life-saving (or -damning) skills.

### Keywords

apocalypse, end times, preparation, desperation



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February 24, 2012

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by Alexander Lumans

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Required Texts and Tools:

*You and Your Spork: A Branch Davidian Philosophy*

*Audubon Field Guide to Edible Minerals and Zebra Flesh*

*Spark Notes for The Book of Revelations*

*Dig Your Own Grave Like a Pro!*

Pencils and Paper

Rope

Shovel

A Positive, Can-Do Attitude

Course Objectives and Rationale:

(*Disclaimer:* Due to the unfortunate circumstances last year surrounding Billy Gretzel's disappearance, subsequent appearance, and, soon thereafter, his second disappearance along with the principal's severed hand, we've toned down this semester's lessons.)

Lesson 1—Burn one ant colony with a magnifying glass. This will instill a false sense of deific omnipotence that will be important to lose once the Apocalypse has arrived and you are forced to scavenge on rare dog breeds.

*Homework:* Choose one faith to believe in.

Lesson 2—Select your Apocalypse for the semester. Options *not* for consideration: Plague of Cotton Candy, Nudist Colony Takeover, Brain Deformation that Allows You to Finally Wish for More Wishes, Invading Legion of Victoria's Secret Angels (post Semi-Annual Sale).

Lesson 3—Weapons distributed: cudgel, duck teeth, piano wire, defibrillator, sockful of nickels, spork, living will. Half of class must be eliminated by the end of today's lesson. Choose member of opposite gender to procreate with copiously in the event that you two become the last people to carry the torch of civilization. Because we have an unequal number of boys and girls, some of you will have to share Anna Marie Jerivicious.

*Homework:* Tell your parents nothing. Gather materials for Final Manhattan Project.

Lesson 4—Find your spirit animal. Eat it. Practice profound disillusionment.

Lesson 5—A Lifting of the Veil: You will be blindfolded, driven to an insecure location, and left there to make your way back to campus. Anyone returning with fresh dog hides or firemen scalps will receive extra oranges to fight off scurvy. Anyone not returning will be sought out by the returned students for their hair and bones (and Extra Credit!).

*Homework:* Cast off belief in Lesson 1's chosen faith. Tell someone that God(s) is dead.

Lesson 6—Community Service Hours: Choose a building downtown. Take it over. Secure with traps (emphasis on rope snares, undersink toxins, explosive filings from stripped wiring). As your mother tells you to get down from the crow's nest, tell her you're doing your local population a favor by preparing it for future banditry. In the class's panic room, practice regret at getting sloppy seconds with Anna Marie.

*Homework:* Watch *Home Alone I* and *II*.

Lesson 7—Remaining students form two factions: The Shelbyville Shining Path and The Visigoths. Elect respective Khans. Do battle. I repeat: neither of these factions will be allowed to form a New World Nudist Colony, regardless of the skewed girl-to-boy ratio.

*Homework:* Study for quiz on Ultraviolet Catastrophes, Called Shots to the Head.

Lesson 8—Find Billy Gretzel. Eat Billy Gretzel. Return principal's severed hand.

Lesson 9—Dig your own grave. Consult manual for best soil type, dimensions. You will only receive credit if you can climb in, fill the plot from a reclining position, then exhume yourself before your air supply diminishes. Those who survive will be issued eyeglasses for one week. If a student breaks his or her glasses, he or she must stand alone on the nearest library's steps and yell out, "But there was time now!"

Lesson 10—Found new adobe city in Horticulture Club garden. Continue to impugn chosen faith. Write anti-technology manifesto of Disorders, Dog Meat, and Desperados. Deliver in Argot to cafeteria crowd. If Anna Marie is still alive, French kiss her at the conclusion. Extra credit for howling, rutting one of two lunch ladies, mock signing of Writ of Woe.

*Homework:* Test individual Final Manhattan Projects (Z-Virus in cheerleader waterbottles, radiated ant attacks on the allergic, a singularity in Math class).

Last Day of Class—Pizza Party at Cici's Buffet. Final Presentations and guest pandemic demonstration by Pestilence of The Four Horsemen. Party concludes with the End of Days.

*Alexander Lumans graduated from the M.F.A. Fiction Program at Southern Illinois University Carbondale. His fiction has been published in or is*

*forthcoming in The Cincinnati Review, American Short Fiction, Blackbird, Surreal South '11, and The Book of Villains, among other magazines. He was a Tennessee Williams Scholar at the 2010 Sewanee Writers' Conference and he won the 2011 Barry Hannah Fiction Prize from The Yalobusha Review. Recently, he was awarded a MacDowell Colony Fellowship.*

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