

## CHRISTIAN FUNDAMENTALISM vs. CHRISTIAN LIBERALISM.

Christian fundamentalists do not reject every aspect of modernity; they just reject those parts of modernity that contradict the bible. They believe the bible is the "inerrant" word of God and should therefore not be twisted, or modified but taken exactly as it is. Therefore when Charles Darwin proposed the theory of evolution, it did not appeal to fundamentalists.

Liberals on the other hand believe that the bible should not be taken literally but that its mythology is meant to represent the right kinds of lives to live. They also believe Christianity needs to be modified so as to fit today's modern outlook. This response of the liberals is considered inappropriate by the fundamentalists because they believe it clearly states in the bible that nothing should be added or removed from it and such an act will result in a plague on the people who do so (Rev 22: 18-19). The theory of evolution, abortion rights, pornography and feminism are aspects of modernity condoned by liberal Christians and fundamentalists believe this to be dangerous to morality of society.

Too weak.  
See Borg, for example, re Genesis meaning.  
So, is this really the fund. view of liberals?

The Christian information foundation; a fundamentalist organization, show in their essay, *How the Bible and Evolution Conflict* that the theory of evolution is falsifying the bible. The theory that man came by accident or by random chance removes meaning from life. For man to have come about by accident suggests that man has no special purpose on this earth and they believe this will only lead to despair. The theory of evolution also takes away the role of God and Jesus in the existence of man; it takes away the specialness of man and removes any reason why there would be a relationship between God and man. <sup>(1)</sup> Fundamentalists therefore believe that the acceptance of this theory makes the basis of the Christian faith meaningless because the bible is about how God made man and wants to have a relationship with him.

Liberals presumably don't agree with this claim. I'm not so sure that fundamentalists would even say this. \*

Fundamentalists also take the contents of the bible literally because if they do not, it results in different interpretations of what God is really saying in His word. <sup>(6)</sup> Liberals therefore not taking the bible literally are allowing for different views and denominations of Christianity to occur because people who do not take the bible as it is are bound to disagree on what it truly means. <sup>(7)</sup> Liberals like Bultmann suggesting that the bible be demythologized, that is, all the miraculous portions of it be excluded are trying to falsify

\* I'd have to look at Falwell again to see if he goes this far.

the bible in its entirety because the bible contains a lot about the divine power of God and the liberals want to exclude this significant portion from it.

Abortion rights is another major part of modernity that fundamentalists oppose. They say that abortion is murder and that life begins from conception because the bible says that "...my substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought I the lowest parts of the earth."<sup>(2)</sup> This confirms that God already knows man even as he is formed in the womb, thereby making him a living thing in the womb worthy of the rights given to other human beings such as a right to live.<sup>(2)</sup> As the bible also states very clearly, "thou shall not kill", abortion is clearly nothing other than murder.<sup>(2)</sup> Therefore, they say that America's acceptance of abortion rights has allowed more lives to be killed than would have ordinarily been through wars and traffic accidents.<sup>(2)</sup>

Homosexuality also comprises a major section of what activist fundamentalists are fighting against. To them, it is a grievous and abominable sin such that God destroyed whole cities such as Sodom and Gomorrah because of it and they fear America will suffer the same fate if it is continued to be condoned.<sup>(2)</sup> Falwell believes that gay rights are not even an issue but instead gay people have problems and what they need is love and help. If liberals therefore begin to see homosexuality as normal, it would not be long before alcoholism, drug addiction and incest are labeled normal as well.<sup>(2)</sup>

According to fundamentalists, liberals are introducing new ideas into Christianity and it is not preserving the truth of the gospel. They, fundamentalists, are interested in preserving the truth of the gospel against onslaught.<sup>(8)</sup> Falwell, believes that the liberal Christians are the result of so many things wrong with Christianity today. He says that non-Christians are not the problem but that bad Christians (i.e. liberals) are the problem because they have relaxed and have allowed modernity to creep in and steal away their morals. They are now accepting things that the bible literally contradicts, such as homosexuality, abortion, feminism, pornography, evolution and also allowing the government to take the place of God in their lives.

Fundamentalists believe that liberals' acceptance of certain aspects of modernity has allowed them to lose the foundation upon which the Christian faith is built; which is

*I see your line  
of argument.  
Perhaps F.  
really does  
imply this.*

the word of God.<sup>(7)</sup> They are afraid that Christianity will lose its stance if these threats from modernity mentioned above which are clearly prohibited by the bible are not checked.<sup>(2)</sup>

Liberal Christians are those looking to reform Christianity to so it can speak effectively in a culture that has become modern.<sup>(8)</sup> An example is Bultmann who believes that the language of the bible is mythological; it is only meant to tell stories of how to live right and the stories should not be taken as facts.<sup>(4)</sup> He believes that the language does not fit the modern outlook of our present day and that it must be modified so that the gospel can be understood by the modern man.<sup>(4)</sup> If all the talk of miracles, heaven and hell, Jesus ascending into the sky are presented to the modern man, it would be hard for him to believe because of the scientific knowledge available today.<sup>(4)</sup> Science has proven that there is no such thing as a three-tiered world, the earth is not in the center of the universe; things that happen follow the laws of nature such that most mysteries have scientific explanations.<sup>(4)</sup> Presenting any of this mythological speech to the modern man as reality and truth might not make Christianity appealing to him.<sup>(4)</sup> According to the liberals, Christianity must be changed so that it can still thrive in the present day world.

Liberals do not necessarily embrace every aspect of modernity, they as well as fundamentalists reject the idea that the secular world is the only reality but unlike fundamentalists, they are open to others' ideas and do not believe that all persons who do not accept their ideas are wrong.<sup>(8)</sup>

The liberation theologians state that Christianity should not be about people accepting their fate on earth and then receiving their rewards in heaven which is what some fundamentalists believe, rather, Christianity should be able to change the lives of people in the here and now.<sup>(3)</sup> In Latin America for example, Christianity should take care of the poor just as Jesus took care of the poor during his own time and should not promote the idea that the poor should accept their fate and wait for a reward in heaven.<sup>(3)</sup> This view that Latin America Christian fundamentalists hold is seen as erroneous by the liberation theologians because they believe it only benefits the rich and that it is not the message Jesus came to preach.<sup>(3)</sup> Jesus came for the sinners and the poor not the rich and

*Actually, it was the traditional Catholic church, rather than fundamentalists, who held this view.*

righteous. <sup>(3)</sup> In other words, liberation theologians are pushing for a change in the meaning of Christianity within their tradition. <sup>(8)</sup>

Spong states that if Christianity must survive, it must change <sup>(8)</sup> and Bultmann says to demythologize the bible and remove all the miraculous workings because they do not fit with the knowledge that has been acquired today as a result of modern science. <sup>(4)</sup> Borg says the bible is in the language of poetry and should not be taken as real physical things that happened. <sup>(5)</sup> He also suggests that the creation stories are not really God's word but rather Israel's history. <sup>(5)</sup> Hick is another liberal Christian who believes that literally, Jesus was not truly divine, but he lived a life that was truly in tune with God and his examples are worth following. <sup>(8)</sup> But metaphorically, one can say that he is God incarnate because he had most of God's attributes but not literally because all he was was human. <sup>(8)</sup>

*Show  
relevance.*

The language of the bible that is accepted so literally by the fundamentalists will not be efficient today in bringing people to Christianity so activist fundamental approach is in other words ineffective according to liberals. <sup>(8)</sup> These liberals are as well pushing for a dramatic change in the meaning of Christianity in their tradition so that they can keep it alive. <sup>(8)</sup>

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## Grading Rubric for Essays

Some standard positive and negative comments are listed on the right. If any of those comments stand out in determining the points awarded to your essay, they are underlined>. Circled numbers indicate points awarded in each category.

<b>Organization, Cohesion &amp; Clarity</b>		
5 - <u>4</u>	Excellent	Well-organized overall. Effective paragraphing. Clear writing. Points are clearly connected to each other. Main ideas are clear and stand out. Stays on topic, with each paragraph relevant.
3 - 2	Good	Occasionally choppy or disconnected. Sometimes not clear what the point is. Some paragraphs trail off as they end. Some parts seem irrelevant. Ideas confused and/or disconnected throughout. Hard to see the point. Too vague; main ideas difficult to detect. Frequently off-topic or irrelevant. Overall organization weak.
1	Weak	Frequent pointless or unintelligible statements. Completely off-topic (in which case there are no more points available in the other categories below).
0	Very Bad	<i>My only comment here is that it could have been made a little clearer that the statements in each part of the paper were being made in the voice of one of the two parts of view.</i>
<b>Depth, Elaboration &amp; Development, Accuracy</b>		
<u>8</u> - 7	Excellent - Very Good	Main ideas fully explained. Careful consideration of relevant alternatives and of potential objections. Distinguishes subtle differences among possible positions. <u>Says something insightful on the topic. Accurate, well-developed representation of relevant positions from the reading/class discussion.</u> Conveys a strong grasp of the full complexity of the issues.
6 - 5	Good - Adequate	Makes some important points on the topic. At least a little consideration of relevant alternatives or potential objections. Enough detail to make the main ideas stand out. Mostly accurate in presenting relevant positions from readings/class discussion as needed. Conveys some sense that the issues are reasonably well-grasped. Does not take much notice of relevant alternatives and objections. Lacking sufficient detail to develop main ideas. Lacking a sense that the complexity of the topic has been genuinely understood. Details provided, but not relevant. Distorted representation of readings/ class discussion. Some significant positions/ideas omitted.
4 - 3	Fair - Poor	Insufficient development of any point of view. Minimal explanation. Crucial aspects/considerations missing. Grazes the surface, not demonstrating any real thought. Reads like a last-minute creation. Gross misrepresentation or omission of relevant positions from readings/discussion. Demonstrates lack of understanding.
2 - 0	Bad - Awful	
<b>Argument Strength &amp; Logical Consistency</b>		
<u>8</u> - <u>7</u>	Excellent - Very Good	Offers strong, logical arguments for points that need support. Does not assume too much. Arguments are directed at establishing relevant and important points. Mostly offers decent arguments when needed. May rely on questionable assumptions. Somewhat more research needed to establish the premises.

*Could have addressed the fundamentalist problems from the liberal point of view more directly.*

5-3	Good – Adequate	Key arguments display obvious loopholes. Relies on unsupported controversial premises, making the argument too easy. Inadequate research to establish basic facts. Arguments may be somewhat off topic or not about the most important issues. Occasionally slips into inconsistency.
4-3	Fair	Unsupported premises seem obviously false. Main argument appears to seriously contradict itself or to be obviously illogical. Line of argument disconnected. Main arguments are off-topic.
2-1	Poor	No support offered for main conclusions, or there are no clear conclusions. Paper may read like an exposition of unsupported opinion, or a list of unsupported claims. Paper consists mostly of quotes strung together. Or, no apparent connection between the conclusion and the topic of the paper.
0	Bad	

**Grammar, punctuation, spelling, citation of sources, presentation**

4-3	Excellent – Very Good	Sophisticated vocabulary and sentence structures; few faults with respect to spelling, punctuation, capitalization; all sources are properly cited as needed; clean presentation.
2	Good	Acceptable vocabulary and sentence structures; occasional faults in spelling, punctuation, capitalization; citation of sources may contain errors; clean presentation.
1	Weak	Poor vocabulary and sentence structures; over-simple wording; frequent errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization; citation of sources inadequate; messy presentation.
0	Bad	Inappropriate language choices; frequent serious breakdowns in wording; persistent dramatic errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization. Sources are not cited. Messy.
Raw Total Max = 25	23	This is your "raw score". Given the definitions of the points in each category above, the following scale for interpreting your raw score makes sense: 21.5 is the boundary between "Excellent" and "Good" 16 is the boundary between "Good" and "Adequate" 11 is the boundary between "Adequate" and "Poor" 6 is the boundary between "Poor" and "Very bad"
Recorded score Max = 15	13.8	This essay is to be worth 15 points toward the course grade. To make this happen, the raw total shown above is multiplied by .6 to get the number of points you receive for this essay; the result is shown to the left. This is the number that counts toward your course grade. Multiply the boundaries listed in the box above by .6 to get approximate boundaries for letter grades on this essay: 13 is approximately the lowest A 10 is the lowest B 7 is the lowest C (Yes, 7 out of 15 is still a C) 4 is the lowest passing score See the online syllabus for details about the course grading scale. Note that grades are NOT based on 90%, 80%, 70%, and 60% cut-offs.

## Paper #1

If one would like to define a word "opposite" with an example, he/she could easily use the concept of modernity on one side and the religious traditions of Christianity on the other. While the traditional view attempts to explain major issues with God's will or with the concept of supernatural, the modern outlook tends to use <sup>objective?</sup> ~~the~~ evidence to figure out what idea is more acceptable. Religious traditions, Christianity in particular, have lost a lot of credibility with the advancement of science. With the development of modernity, it has become much harder for religion and the church to maintain their authority. Well-known scientists such as Copernicus, Galileo and Newton started to prove that certain aspects of people's lives that were being explained for a long time simply as a "will of God" were actually something other than God's work. Secular humanists such as Bertrand Russell, the author of "The Faith of a Rationalist," argue that if one believes in basic principles of logic and in things that can be proven, then he/she logically must reject anything about the realm of the supernatural.

Needless to say, Christianity was not prepared to handle and certainly not "happy" with the fact that modernity was changing people's views and decreasing their interest in God and religious traditions. That is why Christianity has been trying frequently to fight back and respond to modernity. Given that all people are different, many different theories and ways of "fighting back" have developed over time. There are mainly three different ways of how Christianity has responded to modernity and these are fundamentalism, traditionalism and liberalism (Machina). One could argue that even though they are very different when it comes to specifics, fundamentalist and liberal Christians would agree on one general issue: the modern view is in conflict with traditional Christianity. Generally, both fundamentalist and liberal views have some version of change in their core. However, there is an essential difference between the concept of change from the fundamentalist view and the concept of

change from the liberal view. The change attempted by Liberals is usually big and forward-looking. The Fundamentalists have a backward looking approach, yet not in the sense of craving to return to the past; "rather, it is an attempt to create a future that contains crucial elements from the past" (Machina).

Based on their activity and their ways of fighting against certain modern pressures, Fundamentalists can be divided into two major groups. The separatist fundamentalist view is mostly represented by people who do not significantly interact with the non-fundamentalist Christian population. Some representatives are Bob Jones Jr., Bob Jones III and John Vaughn and for the most part they are politically inactive. The focus here is on the activist fundamentalists that are a lot more active in public life as well as in politics. They usually work with non-fundamentalist Christians, trying to "wake them up" and convince them how they have been seduced by modernity. This kind of activism is referred to as "scandalizing" (Marty, Appleby, 22). One of the major representatives of activist fundamentalist Christians was Jerry Falwell, a Baptist minister and the author of the book "Listen, America!" who was very proud to be a Christian fundamentalist.

The supporters of the liberal reform seem to be well aware of the fact that modernity is right here right now and that it took a few centuries for the average person to adopt the modern view. Based on this, there is no point in trying to change the whole world all over again and wait another couple of centuries in order to get the results. Liberals basically "accepted the intellectual force of modernity, and in order to maintain an effective and relevant Christian message, they want to reshape and reform the meaning of Christianity" (Machina). That is why they generally propose the kind of change which includes the concept of "new." Political activists such as Martin Marty and Scott Appleby, the authors of "The Glory and the Power," did not propose new ideas and new ways of thinking about Christianity. Rather they aim to fight the evil aspects of modernity in order to "regain the lost cultural territory" (Marty, 17). \*

As a consequence of these fundamental differences between the two theories, the major gap between the fundamentalist and liberal view occurs as two theories become highly critical of each other. Fundamentalists are extremely focused on the Bible; they base roughly

\* M. & A. are only reporting on the fundamentalist view. They themselves are not fundamentalists at all.

every single aspect of life on it, and read it in a very literal sense. From their point of view, the liberal Christians are not responding to modernity the right way because they are not reading the Bible literally. The fundamentalist Christians see the problem as, if the Bible is not taken literally, there are too many possible interpretations. They argue that anybody can come up with a different explanation of the Bible, so in order to avoid the confusion, it should be taken literally.

↓ Keep God's truth

Liberals by all means do not reject the Bible, but they see myth as a metaphorical concept rather than the pure literal truth. Marcus J Borg, a Christian theologian and the author of the book "Reading the Bible Again for the First Time" addressed the stories from Genesis as if they had a metaphoric meaning. He also argues that "they are not God's stories of the world's beginnings; rather, they are ancient Israel's stories of the world's beginnings" (Borg, 2). Borg is a typical liberal due to the fact that he is introducing a new idea and he is doing so in a way that is not intended to bring time back, which is the opposite of the fundamentalist view. On the other side when the Fundamentalists are asked the question "Why do you read the Bible in a literal sense?" most of them would respond with "Because it is the *inerrant* word of God." They also see themselves as trying to "preserve the traditional things rather than change them", and whoever does not read the Bible in a literal way is ruining Christianity. This is another one of the reasons why fundamentalist Christians find the Liberals' response to modernity to be inappropriate.

because . . .

Liberal Christians are generally "more open to hear the ideas that differ from their own, except that they are highly critical of the fundamentalist approach" (Machina). Considering the main characteristics, Liberals find the Fundamentalists' response to modernity to be inappropriate. This is due to the fact that they want to adjust Christianity in regard to modernity, while Fundamentalists would somehow rather destroy the "bad" aspects of modernity in order to reclaim what they believe has been lost. With accepting modernity overall, Liberals also have accepted the theory of evolution. This again distinguishes them from Fundamentalists who, even though they essentially did not reject science, said that evolution

\* Careful. Do the liberals really buy the idea that secularism is the way to go? Maybe some do. I see from what you say later on that you do get ~~me~~ this.

theory is not science (or that it is a bad science). Fundamentalists addressed it as a philosophy even though it has been proven with scientific methods by Charles Darwin. † *many others*

In order to continue with the examination of the opposing views of fundamentalist and liberal Christians, public welfare can be used as another example. Baptist minister Jerry Falwell, in his book "Listen, America!" openly attacked public welfare by actually calling it "welfarism" and saying how "it [welfarism] has grown because Americans have forgotten how to tithe [i.e. donate 10% of income to church and charity]" (Falwell, 12). He also refers to aspects such as ownership of property and competition in business as being biblical, which reflects his purely fundamentalist view. On liberal side of this particular issue, the Liberation Theology represents the attempt to stop the favoring of the rich over the poor. It came along after the colonial times in Latin America, and it was lead by the young priests who tried to change the fact that the Roman Catholic Church became the tool of rich people to keep the poor people poor. As Liberals, the young priests wanted the *change* from "love Jesus and suffer like Jesus suffered and eventually you will be rewarded" to "Jesus should also protect you from evil here and now." Thus according to Liberation Theology, Jerry Falwell's activist fundamentalist view on public welfare is inappropriate. The fundamentalist opponents of Liberation Theology would most likely argue against the young priests with statements such as "God has a purpose and a path for you, so if you are poor that means God wants you to be poor and you should live with it and be happy, because that is the will of God."

*Maybe not. Falwell argues the church should help the poor.*

To additionally explore in what ways the Fundamentalists and Liberals find each other's responses to modernity inappropriate, one can refer to mythology. Given that the Fundamentalists feel very strongly about the Bible, in their view mythology is also taken ✓ literally. This made literally no sense to Rudolf Bultmann, the professor of New Testament at Marburg University. He argues that the blind acceptance of mythology is completely irrational. To back his statement, Bultmann states that the culture has changed due to the modern pressures and that we now see the world differently. The argument Fundamentalists would bring against Bultmann would be the fact that even today not everybody is modern. However, the gap between mythological and modern view does exist, and Bultmann is saying that

Christianity has to be changed fairly dramatically in order to fit the modern world. He introduced the concept of "demythologizing" and wanted to drastically change Christianity by accepting only the modern statements, those with no mythology inside them. This was obviously very inappropriate from the fundamentalist point of view, due to the fact that they only accept the literal way of reading the Bible.

*good argument*

In the attempt to find some kind of a compromise, one could articulate that Liberal Reform does not necessarily embrace everything about modernity and that Christian Fundamentalism does include some aspects of modernity. For instance, "liberal reform will uniformly reject the idea that the secular realm is the only reality, and religious fundamentalism is in a way a modern phenomenon because it occurs as a response to modern pressures" (Machina). However, the two theories differ in some of the essentials. Overall the Liberal Reform is saying: "There is something wrong with the tradition, therefore we need to change it in order to make it fit into the modern world." Most of the liberal authors propose a big change with introducing something new without looking back in time. In difference to that, fundamentalist Christians would rather say: "Nothing is wrong with the tradition, all we need is a Bible and the alarm clock to wake up the 'sleeping non-fundamentalist Christians' so we can change the modern society by implementing the crucial elements from the past." With one theory obviously looking backward and the other one looking forward, it seems that the Fundamentalist and Liberal Christians will continue to be at odds and will keep finding each other's response to modernity inappropriate.

*Solid summary.*

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3-2	Good	Occasionally choppy or disconnected. Sometimes not clear what the point is. Some paragraphs trail off as they end. Some parts seem irrelevant. Ideas confused and/or disconnected throughout. Hard to see the point. Too vague; main ideas difficult to detect. Frequently off-topic or irrelevant. Overall organization weak.
1	Weak	Frequent pointless or unintelligible statements. Completely off-topic (in which case there are no more points available in the other categories below).
0	Very Bad	
<b>Depth, Elaboration &amp; Development, Accuracy</b>		
8-7	Excellent -Very Good	Main ideas fully explained. Careful consideration of relevant alternatives and of potential objections. <u>Distinguishes subtle differences among possible positions.</u> <u>Says something insightful on the topic.</u> <u>Accurate, well-developed representation of relevant positions from the reading/class discussion.</u> Conveys a strong grasp of the full complexity of the issues.
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4-3	Fair - Poor	Insufficient development of any point of view. Minimal explanation. Crucial aspects/considerations missing. Grazes the surface, not demonstrating any real thought. Reads like a last-minute creation. Gross misrepresentation or omission of relevant positions from readings/discussion. Demonstrates lack of understanding.
2-0	Bad - Awful	
<b>Argument Strength &amp; Logical Consistency</b>		
8-7	Excellent -Very Good	Offers strong, logical arguments for points that need support. Does not assume too much. <u>Arguments are directed at establishing relevant and important points.</u> <u>Mostly offers decent arguments when needed.</u> May rely on questionable assumptions. Somewhat more research needed to establish the premises.

*Could have developed some of the arguments more.*

6 - 5	Good - Adequate	Key arguments display obvious loopholes. Relies on unsupported controversial premises, making the argument too easy. Inadequate research to establish basic facts. Arguments may be somewhat off topic or act about the most important issues. Occasionally slips into inconsistency.
4 - 3	Fair	Unsupported premises seem obviously false. Main argument appears to seriously contradict itself or to be obviously illogical. Line of argument disconnected. Main arguments are off-topic.
2 - 1	Poor	No support offered for main conclusions, or there are no clear conclusions. Paper may read like an exposition of unsupported opinion, or a list of unsupported claims. Paper consists mostly of quotes strung together. Or, no apparent connection between the conclusion and the topic of the paper.
0	Bad	

**Grammar, punctuation, spelling, citation of sources, presentation**

4 - 3	Excellent - Very Good	Sophisticated vocabulary and sentence structures; few faults with respect to spelling, punctuation, capitalization; all sources are properly cited as needed; <u>clean presentation.</u>
2	Good	Acceptable vocabulary and sentence structures; occasional faults in spelling, punctuation, capitalization; citation of sources may contain errors; clean presentation.
1	Weak	Poor vocabulary and sentence structures; over-simple wording; frequent errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization; citation of sources inadequate; messy presentation.
0	Bad	Inappropriate language choices; frequent serious breakdowns in wording; persistent dramatic errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization. Sources are not cited. Messy.

**Raw Total**  
Max = 25

**22**

This is your "raw score". Given the definitions of the points in each category above, the following scale for interpreting your raw score makes sense:  
 21.5 is the boundary between "Excellent" and "Good"  
 16 is the boundary between "Good" and "Adequate"  
 11 is the boundary between "Adequate" and "Poor"  
 6 is the boundary between "Poor" and "Very bad"

**Recorded score**  
Max = 15

**13.2**

This essay is to be worth 15 points toward the course grade. To make this happen, the raw total shown above is multiplied by .6 to get the number of points you receive for this essay; the result is shown to the left. This is the number that counts toward your course grade.

Multiply the boundaries listed in the box above by .6 to get approximate boundaries for letter grades on this essay:  
 13 is approximately the lowest A  
 10 is the lowest B  
 7 is the lowest C (Yes, 7 out of 15 is still a C.)  
 4 is the lowest passing score

See the online syllabus for details about the course grading scale. Note that grades are NOT based on 90%, 80%, 70%, and 60% cut-offs.