

Fundamental Reading

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As our nation remembers the 9/11 terrorist attacks, first-year students are looking at the event that changed the world through a different lens, from a foreign perspective. As part of the Tulane Reading Project, Mohsin Hamid, author of *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, will be on campus on Monday (Sept. 15) to discuss his critically acclaimed second novel.



Mohsin Hamid ? author of two critically acclaimed novels, *Mothsmoke* (2000) and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2007) ? will speak on campus on Monday (Sept. 15). (Photo by Ed Kashi)

Created in 2002, the [Reading Project](#) was formed to create a shared intellectual experience for the entering class. All first-year students read an assigned book and attend faculty-moderated discussions, lectures and other events related to the text.

Administrators selected Hamid's book ? the first work of fiction ever chosen for the Reading Project ? because they feel it has particular poignancy, considering the age of the students.

“This book touches on a lot of issues that the incoming freshmen grew up with,” says Tom Moody, manager of cocurricular programs for Newcomb-Tulane College. “[9/11] happened seven years ago, so they grew up with it and this issue is so much more in their consciousness.”

The Reading Project website says Hamid's book leaves the reader “pondering themes of national identity and prejudice, American hubris, and the immigrant experience in the post-9/11 world.”

Trina Beck, director of Newcomb-Tulane college programs, says that the topics in the novel have sparked heated debate among students.

“Students have very strong opinions about the book,” Beck says. “Because of that, I think the students are really excited about having a chance to hear from the author himself.”

The Reluctant Fundamentalist won the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award and the South Bank Show Award for Literature, was shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize, and was a *New York Times* notable book of the year.

Although Hamid's lecture is geared toward the first-year students, Beck says it is open to the public.

“We definitely welcome anyone who is interested in coming to see him speak,” Beck says. “We want to include as much of the community as possible in this kind of intellectual dialogue.”

Hamid's lecture will be on Monday at 7 p.m. in Dixon Hall.