

The College of the Humanities
Religion Program
RELI 3840A :Topics in Judaism: ADAM & EVE AND THEIR INTERPRETERS

Prof. Shawna Dolansky**Office:** Paterson 3a60 **Office Hours:** Thursdays 11:30-1:00**Phone:** 520-2600 X 7042(*do not leave messages here*) **Email:** Shawna_dolansky@carleton.ca

A distinguishing feature of Western religious traditions is their use of scripture. Other religions often make use of sacred texts, but Judaism, Christianity, and Islam all appeal to their holy books as ultimate authorities, as the voice of God.

We begin by discussing the origins of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam in their respective historical contexts, with a focus on the creation and development of sacred scriptures. This will serve as background in exploring the ongoing dialogues that Jewish, Christian and Muslim theologians and thinkers have with the text from their beginnings through to the present day. Understanding this ongoing exegesis and interpretation of the Hebrew Bible, the New Testament, and the Qur'an is our primary goal. We will consider the social and political applications of religious principles interpreted from these texts and applied within societies that organize themselves on the basis of scripture.

The questions in which we are particularly interested are: (1) how, when, and why do texts become "sacred," and what does that mean? (2) how much influence do sacred texts have in determining cultural values and ideals, and how much does context (historical, social, cultural, political) influence the reading and interpretation of sacred texts? We will use the story of Adam and Eve as our ongoing case study in exploring the role religion plays in defining and shaping human identity. The opening chapters of the Hebrew Bible have been interpreted and reinterpreted, not only by New Testament authors and in the Qur'an, but in exegeses by Jewish, Christian, and Muslim authors throughout history. Primarily, Genesis 1-3 have served to legitimize and enforce gender and other social hierarchies, although we will find that the story of the first man and woman has also been used to challenge those hierarchies and argue for egalitarianism.

NOTE: As with any course that pursues the academic study of religion, we examine all texts and contexts from a **secular, scholarly perspective**. The nature of the material is theological, but our task as scholars is to view it academically, to discuss it without being attached to any particular theological interpretation, and yet to respect the fact that the theological interpretations and the beliefs they entail are of great importance to adherents of each of these three religious traditions.

EVALUATION:

1. Four 2-page papers 15% each = 60% (see below)
2. Final exam = 25%
3. Class participation = 15%

Papers:

You will write four short reading responses throughout the semester, worth 15% each. They will be typed, double-spaced, two pages long, and stapled. They will be your own reflections on the readings and lecture material, and you will not do any research in order to write them.

Plagiarism is illegal, and carries with it a penalty of failing the course. Do your own work: do not use another's material as if it were your own.

Required Reading:

1. *Eve and Adam: Jewish, Christian and Muslim Readings on Genesis and Gender*, eds. Kvam, Scheuring and Ziegler (available at the bookstore)
2. Online selections as noted below, including articles posted to CuLearn
3. Selections from the Bible @ biblegateway.com (choose NRSV translation)

SCHEDULE:

Th 1/7 Introduction to the course

Tu 1/12 Religion, Society, and Sacred Texts

Eve & Adam General Introduction

Bible: Genesis 1-3

http://www.myjewishlearning.com/texts/Bible/Origins_of_the_Bible.shtml

Th 1/14 Introduction to the Hebrew Bible

http://www.myjewishlearning.com/texts/Bible/Origins_of_the_Bible/Other_Ancient_Texts/Bible_as_Ancient_Literature/Canonization.shtml

http://www.myjewishlearning.com/texts/Bible/Origins_of_the_Bible/Other_Ancient_Texts/Bible_as_Ancient_Literature.shtml?TSBI

http://www.myjewishlearning.com/texts/Bible/Origins_of_the_Bible/Authorship.shtml?TSBI

http://www.myjewishlearning.com/texts/About_Jewish_Texts/Jewish_Books.shtml?TSAJ

Bible: Gen 15; Deut 28-30

Tu 1/19 Women & Men in Ancient Israel

Bible: Genesis 12-38; Proverbs 31

http://www.myjewishlearning.com/beliefs/Issues/Gender_and_Feminism/Traditional_Views/Biblical.shtml?BFIS

<http://www.myjewishlearning.com/texts/Bible/Torah/Genesis/Sarah.shtml>

Th 1/21 Adam and Eve

Eve & Adam chapter 1

Tu 1/26 Reading in Context

CuLearn articles: E. Stern - Pagan Yahwism

S. Dolansky – The Fall of Eve

**First reflection paper due, beginning of class – answer the following questions:*

To what extent can we determine the original context of the story? What might it have meant then? (Why) Does it matter? How does understanding the original context of the story, and biblical scholarship such as you've read so far (Trible, Dolansky, Stern) and heard in class lectures, impact your reading of the story?

Th 1/28 Second Temple Judaism

http://www.myjewishlearning.com/history/Ancient_and_Medieval_History/539_BCE-632_CE/Palestine_Under_Persian_Rule_I.shtml?HSAM

http://www.myjewishlearning.com/history/Ancient_and_Medieval_History/539_BCE-632_CE/Palestine_Under_Persian_Rule_I/Palestine_Under_Persian_Rule_II.shtml?HSAM

http://www.myjewishlearning.com/history/Ancient_and_Medieval_History/539_BCE-632_CE/Daily_Life/Marriage_and_Family.shtml?HSAM

Tu 2/2 Eve in Post-Biblical Jewish Texts

http://www.myjewishlearning.com/texts/Bible/Origins_of_the_Bible/Other_Ancient_Texts.shtml

Eve & Adam chapter 2

Th 2/4 Rise of the Rabbis

http://www.myjewishlearning.com/history/Ancient_and_Medieval_History/2500_BCE-539_BCE/Religion_and_Culture.shtml

http://www.myjewishlearning.com/texts/About_Jewish_Texts/Jewish_Books/Sacred_Texts.shtml?TSAJ

<http://www.myjewishlearning.com/texts/Rabbinics/Talmud/Talmud.shtml>

http://www.myjewishlearning.com/beliefs/Issues/Gender_and_Feminism/Traditional_Views/Rabbinic.shtml?BFIS

http://www.myjewishlearning.com/history/Ancient_and_Medieval_History/539_BCE-632_CE/The_Diaspora/Women.shtml

Tu 2/9 Rabbinic Interpretations

E&A chapter 3

**Second reflection paper due, beginning of class – answer the following question:*

What are the changes in perspectives on Eden evident in the Rabbinic interpretations from those of post-biblical Judaism, and what do they tell us about Rabbinic Judaism?

Th 2/11 Early Christianity and the New Testament: Gospels

Matthew 1-7; 10; 19; 22-23; <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/religion/first/women.html>

E&A ch 4 to p 116

Tu 2/16 BREAK

Th 2/18 BREAK

Tu 2/23 Early Christianity and the New Testament II: Paul

Gal 1; Rom 1-3

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/religion/first/roles.html>

E & A pp. 117-119

Th 2/25 Other Christianities

<http://www.gnosis.org/genesis.html>

<http://www.gnosis.org/library/marygosp.htm>

http://www.gnosis.org/library/thomas_poxy.htm

E&A ch 4 to p. 128

Tu 3/1 Church Fathers

E&A rest of ch 4

<http://www.womenpriests.org/traditio/august.asp>

<http://heritage.villanova.edu/vu/heritage/allthings/2001SU.htm>

<http://witcombe.sbc.edu/davincicode/original-sin.html>

**Third reflection paper due, beginning of class –*

As we've seen, interpretations of Adam and Eve develop in a mutual interaction between text and context, and new interpretations draw on aspects of older ones that are compatible with the worldview that the new interpretations want to foster. How do both "egalitarian" and "hierarchical" Christian readings reflect the variety of contexts in which early Christianity developed; and in this light, what's the best explanation for the triumph of hierarchical readings in what becomes mainstream Christian thought? You can have 3 pages for this one.

Th 3/3 Islam and the Qur'an

<http://library.thinkquest.org/28505/islam/intro.htm> (read through all the pages)

<http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/199901/koran/2>

<http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/199901/koran/3>

E&A 156-86

Tu 3/8 Women in Islam

E&A 186-203

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/Archive/Article/0,4273,4314573,00.html>

Th 3/10 Medieval Judaism

http://www.myjewishlearning.com/ideas_belief/genderfeminism/Fem_Traditional_TO/Fem_Medieval.htm

E & A 203-225

Tu 3/15 Medieval Christianity

<http://library.thinkquest.org/12834/> (“visit the city” and “biography.” In “visit the city,” explore all especially “the chapel.”)

E & A 225-248

Th 3/17 The Protestant Reformation

E & A 249-88

Tu 3/22 Milton’s Paradise Lost

E & A 288-304

**Fourth reflection paper due, beginning of class – question TBA*

Th 3/24 Modernity and the American Context: Gender, Slavery and Human Rights

E&A 305-340

Tu 3/29 Equality?

E&A 340-370

Bring questions for discussion, and be prepared to boost your participation grade

Th 3/31 Gender in Contemporary Judaism and Christianity

E & A 371-413, 419-463, 477-81

Tu 4/5 Gender in Contemporary Islam

E & A 413-419, 463-476

Th 4/7 Reflections and Conclusions

E & A 483-502

REGULATIONS COMMON TO ALL HUMANITIES COURSES

COPIES OF WRITTEN WORK SUBMITTED

Always retain for yourself a copy of all essays, term papers, written assignments or take-home tests submitted in your courses.

PLAGIARISM

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “*presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.*” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in “*substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.*”

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of “F” for the course

GRADING SYSTEM

Letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

A+ = 90-100 (12)	B = 73-76 (8)	C - = 60-62 (4)
A = 85-89 (11)	B- = 70-72 (7)	D+ = 57-59 (3)
A- = 80-84 (10)	C+ = 67-69 (6)	D = 53-56 (2)
B+ = 77-79 (9)	C = 63-66 (5)	D - = 50-52 (1)

F	Failure. Assigned 0.0 grade points
ABS	Absent from final examination, equivalent to F
DEF	Official deferral (see “Petitions to Defer”)
FND	Failure with no deferred exam allowed -- assigned only when the student has failed the course on the basis of inadequate term work as specified in the course outline.

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean.

WITHDRAWAL WITHOUT ACADEMIC PENALTY

The last date to withdraw from **FALL TERM** courses is **DEC. 7, 2015**. The last day to withdraw from **FALL/WINTER (Full Term)** and **WINTER** term courses is **APRIL 8, 2016**.

REQUESTS FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term because of disability, pregnancy or religious obligations. Please review the course outline promptly and write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at: carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/

Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Documented disabilities could include but not limited to mobility/physical impairments, specific Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/psychological disabilities, sensory disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and chronic medical conditions. Registered PMC students are required to contact the PMC, 613-520-6608, every term to ensure that your Instructor receives your Letter of Accommodation, no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations. If you only require accommodations for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodations to PMC by **Nov. 6, 2015** for the Fall term and **March 6, 2016** for the Winter term. For more details visit the Equity Services website: carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/

PETITIONS TO DEFER

If you miss a final examination and/or fail to submit a **FINAL** assignment by the due date because of circumstances beyond your control, you may apply a deferral of examination/assignment. If you are applying for a deferral due to illness you will be required to see a physician in order to confirm illness and obtain a medical certificate dated no later than one working day after the examination or assignment deadline. This supporting documentation must specify the date of onset of the illness, the degree of incapacitation, and the expected date of recovery.

If you are applying for a deferral for reasons other than personal illness, please [contact](#) the Registrar’s Office directly for information on other forms of documentation that we accept.

Deferrals of a final assignment or take home, in courses without a final examination, must be supported by confirmation of the assignment due date, for example a copy of the course outline specifying the due date and any documented extensions from the course instructor.

Deferral applications for examination or assignments must be submitted within **5 working days** of the original final exam.

ADDRESSES: (Area Code 613)

College of the Humanities 520-2809	300 Paterson
Greek and Roman Studies Office 520-2809	300 Paterson
Religion Office 520-2100	2A39 Paterson
Registrar's Office 520-3500	300 Tory
Student Academic Success Centre 520-7850	302 Tory
Paul Menton Centre 520-6608/TTY 520-3937	501 Uni-Centre
Writing Tutorial Service 520-2600 Ext. 1125	4 th Floor Library
Learning Support Service 520-2600 Ext 1125	4 th Floor Library