Sex and the Bible

Instructor: Shawna Dolansky
Office hours: 2a61 PA, Wed 11:30am – 1:30pm
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Phone: 520-2600 ex.1954 *no vm messages*

Seminar: Wed 8:35am-11:25am, Paterson 2a46

Through reading primary texts, ideas about sexuality in the Hebrew Bible and New Testament are explored to understand sex in the ancient context, and to trace the history of interpretation leading to current attitudes about sex in contemporary Western culture.

Evaluation
1. Weekly reading responses (2 pages) 8 weeks @ 5% = 40%
2. Active & constructive weekly seminar participation, initiative, and leadership = 10%
3. *Presentation (see course outline below for dates; sign up on first-come first-served basis) =10%
4. Paper Proposal (outlining proposed research and investigative questions in 1 page) due Feb 11=5%
5. Annotated Bibliography for Final Paper (due Mar 18; 2 pages; minimum 8 references) =5%
6. Final Paper (10-12 or 18-20* pages, due Apr 17) =20%

A note on attendance:
The seminar format depends on student preparedness and attendance. More than 2 absences over the course of the semester will result in a grade of F for the course. (Note: leaving after the break, or arriving to class at the break, count as absences from class.)

A few notes on written work:
Late reflection papers or term papers will not be accepted.
Late proposals or annotated bibliographies will be assessed a penalty of 1% (out of 5% total) per day.
Proposals or bibliographies more than 4 days late will receive a grade of zero: however if they are not handed in at all, your final paper will not be accepted.
Please review the note on plagiarism on the “Regulations” page at the end of this course outline.

*5850 Students
As students receiving graduate level credit for this course, your class presentations and final papers will be expected to be longer, more detailed, and more extensively researched than those receiving undergraduate credit.
Schedule

**Jan 7**  The Bible’s Sex in Context
Before class read:

Shawna Dolansky, “On Women’s Bibles and the Bible’s Women: Feminism in Biblical Scholarship” (onCULearn)

Susan Ackerman, chapter 1 in *When Heroes Love: The Ambiguity of Eros in the Stories of Gilgamesh and David* (onCULearn)

**Jan 14**  Women in the Hebrew Bible & the Ancient Near East

READ:
Julia M. Asher-Greve, “Decisive Sex, Essential Gender,” *Sex and Gender in the Ancient Near East*, pp. 11-26


**Jan 21**  Sexual narratives

READ:
Genesis 6 through 38

Tikva Frymer-Kensky, *In the Wake of the Goddesses*, 187-198

Ilona N. Rashkow, *Taboo or not Taboo: Sexuality and Family in the Hebrew Bible*, 15-42

David Biale, *Eros and the Jews*, 1-32

**Presentation:** Susan Ackerman “‘I Have Hired You with My Son’s Mandrakes’: Women’s Reproductive Magic in Ancient Israel” in *Sex in Antiquity: Exploring Gender and Sexuality in the Ancient World* (Routledge 2014)

**Presentation:** Tikva Frymer-Kensky, “Virginity in the Bible” in *Gender and Law in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East*, eds. Matthews, Levinson, and Frymer-Kensky

**Jan 28**  Sex Laws, Consent, Adultery, and Slavery

READ:
Exod 21; Deut 22-23; Judg 19; 2 Samuel 11-13

Friedman & Dolansky, *The Bible Now*, ch. 3


Feb 4 Pornography?
READ:
Song of Songs; Hos 1-3; Ezek 16, 23; Jer 4, 13, 15, 20, 22, 31


David Carr, “Gender and the Shaping of Desire in the Song of Songs and Its Interpretation”

Athalya Brenner, “Pornoprophetics Re-visited: Some Additional Reflections”

E. Clewlow “Pornoprophetics evaluated: an investigation into the application of pornographic theory to biblical texts”

Presentation: Stephanie Budin, “Sacred Prostitution in the First Person” in Prostitutes and Courtesans in the Ancient World eds. Faraone and McClure


Grad Presentation: Gerlinde Baumann, Love and Violence: Marriage as Metaphor for the Relationship Between YHWH and Israel in the Prophetic Books

Feb 11 Homosexuality
Paper proposal due beginning of class
READ:
Lev 18 & 20; 1 Sam 18-20; 2 Sam 1


Friedman & Dolansky, The Bible Now ch 1

Susan Ackerman, When Heroes Love, ch 7 (165-199)

Grad Presentation: Howard Eilberg-Schwartz, God’s Phallus: And Other Problems for Men and Monotheism

Feb 18 – READING WEEK
Feb 25 Femmes Fatales
READ: Judges 4-5, 13-16; Ruth; Judith; Esther


Anchor Bible Dictionary: “Jezebel”


Mar 4 Gender, Body, and Sexuality in the Pre-Christian Mediterranean World
READ:
Dale B. Martin, The Corinthian Body - preface and ch. 1
Peter Brown, The Body and Society - ch 1

Presentation: Frymer-Kensky, In the Wake of the Goddesses pp. 203-220 (biblical attitudes toward sex and gender change under Hellenism)

Presentation: Daniel Boyarin, “Gender” (ch 6 in Mark Taylor’s Critical Terms for Religions Studies)

Grad Presentation: Daniel Boyarin, Carnal Israel: Reading Sex in Talmudic Culture

Mar 11 Women and Gender in the Jesus Movement
READ:


Grad Presentation: Jennifer Knust, Abandoned to Lust: Sexual Slander and Ancient Christianity
Mar 18  Sex, Desire, and Pollution: Paul and 1 Corinthians
READ:
1 Corinthians (all); Romans 16; Galatians 3; Philippians 4; Philemon

http://www.bibleodyssey.org/people/main-articles/paul.aspx


Grad Presentation: Dale B. Martin, The Corinthian Body

READ:
Dale B. Martin, chapters 3 and 6 in Sex and the Single Savior (Westminster/John Knox, 2006)

Bernadette Brooten, Love Between Women: Early Christian Responses to Female Homoeroticism, 314-36


Grad Presentation: Dale B. Martin, Sex and the Single Savior

Grad Presentation: Bernadette Brooten, Love Between Women: Early Christian Responses to Female Homoeroticism

Apr 1  Conclusions
Presentations of Works-in-Progress
Further potential references for projects/presentations:

Gnosticism: (primary texts available online)
Apocryphon of John 
The Reality of the Rulers (Hypostasis of the Archons)

Mary Magdalene and the "Gnostic Mary"
The Gospel of Philip
The Gospel according to Mary
The Pists Sophia

Range of Early Christian Views on Marriage & Sex
Clement, On Marriage (Stromateis, III)
Epiphanius, Panarion
Justin the Gnostic, The Book Baruch

Sex & Slavery

Sex & Apocalypse
Mark 13; 1 Thessalonians 4; Revelation
Tina Pippin, Death and Desire: The Rhetoric of Gender in the Apocalypse of John (Westminster/John Knox, 1992), 45-68

Other fun stuff to read:

About Lilith in early Judaism and Christianity http://jewishchristianlit.com//Topics/Lilith/
Coptic Spell for a Man to Obtain a Male Lover http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/pwh/copticspell.asp
Shaye J.D. Cohen, Why Aren’t Jewish Women Circumcised: Gender and Covenant in Judaism

Resource pages for primary texts in biblical and related studies:
http://torreys.org/bible/
http://legacy.fordham.edu/Halsall/ancient/asbook06.asp#index
www.biblegateway.com (online Bible – choose NRSV translation)
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)
- A = 85-89 (11)
- A- = 80-84 (10)
- B+ = 77-79 (9)
- B = 73-76 (8)
- B- = 70-72 (7)
- C+ = 67-69 (6)
- C = 63-66 (5)
- C- = 60-62 (4)
- D+ = 57-59 (3)
- D = 53-56 (2)
- D- = 50-52 (1)
- F Failure. Assigned 0.0 grade points

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. 8, 2014. The last day to withdraw from FALL/WINTER (Full Term) and WINTER term courses is APRIL 8, 2015.

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. 7, 2014 for the Fall term and March 6, 2015 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 assignments 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.

ADRESSES: (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 4th Floor Library
Learning Support Service 520-2600 Ext 1125 4th Floor Library