

Daughters of Eve, Sisters of Mary: Women in Medieval History
HIS 310-01
TR 11-12:15

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Office Hours: By appointment (I'm here all the time, just ask).

Course description:

In order to investigate the lives and experiences of medieval women, we will take a thematic approach, rather than a strictly linear narrative of all of medieval history. We will focus on primary sources by and about women, as well as historians' interpretations of those texts, to investigate such topics as power and agency, religion, sexuality, and family life. We will attempt, through our readings, to come to grips with the paradoxical dichotomy that medieval women were understood as both "daughters of Eve" (inherently sinful and duplicitous) and "sisters of Mary" (inherently virtuous and spiritual), and what this meant for women's lived experience, as well as their later interpretation by historians.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate broad knowledge of the political, religious, and social history of women throughout the Middle Ages.
2. Use a historical approach to analyze and contextualize primary and secondary sources representing divergent perspectives.
3. Synthesize material from a variety of sources to produce a larger analytical conclusion
4. Use evidence to interpret the past coherently, orally and/or in writing.
5. Demonstrate logical argumentation in speech and in writing.
6. Apply theoretical frameworks – gender, agency, power – to analyze how and why women's roles varied across socio-economic, religious, and temporal boundaries.

Texts:

Online texts. We will have no hard-copy textbook for this class. All the readings are digital and located online. **Readings can be found on Blackboard, unless otherwise noted.** For each of these readings, I have listed the link where they may be found (The on-line version of this syllabus has clickable links, where applicable, and so does Blackboard). If you have trouble using the internet, please see me for assistance. Please note that lacking internet access the day a reading is due is no excuse for not having read it. You have the whole semester to access, print, or save copies of the readings.

The standard expectation of students in a 300-level class is that they will read 100-150 pages per week. Be prepared for the fact that we will be doing a significant amount of reading this semester. This reading is NOT optional, it is a necessary precursor to our in-class discussions.

Attendance:

After you have missed three class periods for any reason, your final grade for the course will be reduced by two percentage points (ie from 85 to 83) for each additional absence.

Assignments and Grading:

Class participation: 10%

Quizzes: 10%

Analysis of Gender: 20%

Article Analysis: 15%

Article Analysis: 15%

Final research paper: 30%

Broken down as: prospectus (3%), annotated bibliography (7%), and paper (20%)

Grading Scale:

100.99-97.00 = A+ 89.99-87.00 = B+ 79.99-77.00 = C+ 69.99-67.00 = D+ 59.99-0 = F

96.99-94.00 = A 86.99-84.00 = B 76.99-74.00 = C 66.99-64.00 = D

93.99-90.00 = A- 83.99-80.00 = B- 73.99-70.00 = C- 63.99-60.00 = D-

I do not accept late work. All assignments must be turned in by 4 pm on the day that they are due.

Class participation: A great deal of our class-time will be spent discussing the texts we read and their relationship to our overarching themes. In order for this to be functional, you will need to have read the texts and be willing to speak up. Simply showing up to class and never opening your mouth will earn you, at best, a D for this portion of your grade. The full participation rubric can be found on Blackboard. (SLOs 1, 2, 4, 5)

Quizzes: Pop quizzes will be held randomly throughout the semester, at the beginning of class. They will be based on the reading questions for each day and will require a short paragraph response. The quizzes are mostly intended to keep you honest about doing the reading, and if it is clear from class participation that you are staying engaged with the material, then quizzes will be few and far between. (SLOs 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

Article Analysis: Students will write two 2-page papers analyzing a scholarly article chosen from the list of additional readings for that week. One of these papers must be completed before Spring Break, the other must be completed by the final exam period, but they can be turned in at any point before those two deadlines. (SLOs 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

Gender Analysis: Students will write a 3-5 page paper analyzing how gender was understood in a medieval context, as well as how it can be used as a historical tool of analysis. More detailed instructions for this assignment can be found on Blackboard. (SLOs 3, 4, 5, 6)

Research project: Students will formulate a thesis, conduct research, and complete a 7-10 page research project on a medieval woman of their choice. This project will be broken down as follows: a prospective thesis/research topic (3%), an annotated bibliography of at least five scholarly sources (7%), and the 7-10 page paper (20%). More details about each part of this assignment will be available on Blackboard. (SLOs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

Academic Integrity Policy:

I do not tolerate plagiarism, cheating, or any other violation of the honor code. Any violations will be dealt with according to the Academic Integrity Policy (if you don't know what the policy says, it's right here: <http://sa.uncg.edu/handbook/academic-integrity-policy/>. Go read it). This includes any and all

plagiarism from websites – **the only websites you should be using are those specifically assigned.** If you think I won't notice that you copied and pasted whole paragraphs from Wikipedia, you're wrong.

Adverse Weather Policy:

If you think that the university might be closed due to weather, either call the UNCG Adverse Weather Line at (336) 334-4400 or check the SpartanAlert website (<http://spartanalert.uncg.edu/>). If the university is open, we will have class. If the university is closed, I will send an email letting you know how the syllabus has changed and what readings we will cover during the next class.

Other Important Stuff:

Please turn off your cell-phones before the lecture starts. **Do not text during my class.** It is rude and disrespectful to me, and disruptive to your fellow students. If I catch you texting during my class, I will stop class and ask you to leave, since you obviously have something more important to be doing than learning.

You can bring your laptop to class for note-taking purposes and so you don't have to print out the readings. However, if I find that you are using your laptop for non-class-related purposes, I will ask you to put it away and not bring it to class again.

Week 1: Historical Gender

Jan 13: Class intro

Jan 15:

Secondary sources:

Ruth Mazo Karras, "Sex and the Middle Ages" in *Sexuality in Medieval Europe: Doing Unto Others* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 1-27.

Week 2: Religious Archetypes

Jan 20

Primary sources:

Genesis 1-3 (<http://witcombe.sbc.edu/eve-women/genesis.html>)

Excerpts from St. Paul

Excerpts from St. Jerome

Secondary sources:

James Brundage, "Sex and Canon Law" in *Handbook of Medieval Sexuality*, eds. Vern L. Bullough and James A. Brundage (New York: Garland Publishing, 1996), 33-50.

Jan 22

Primary sources:

Aquinas on Mary

Augustine on Mary's virginity

Tales of the Virgin (<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/tales-virgin.asp>)

Secondary sources:

Caroline Walker Bynum, excerpts from "Jesus as Mother and Abbot as Mother: Some Themes in Twelfth-Century Cistercian Writing," in *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 110-146 and 166-169.

Week 3: Other Medieval Ideas on Gender

Jan 27

Primary sources:

Galen and other medical texts (William of Conches)

Perpetua

The Rape of Lucretia

(<http://web.archive.org/web/19981205091007/http://pluto.clinch.edu/history/wciv1/civ1ref/rape.html>)

Jan 29

Primary sources:

Byzantine Law

Germanic Law

Anglo-Saxon Law

Norman Law

Secondary Sources:

Janet S. Loengard, "Common Law for Margery: Separate but not Equal," in *Women in Medieval Western European Culture*, ed. Linda Mitchell (New York: Garland Publishing, 1999), 117-130.

Week 4: Women and Work

Feb 3

Primary sources:

Widow Miller
Peasant Girl at Work
Other women at work

Secondary sources:

Benjamin R. McRee and Trisha K. Dent, "Working Women in the Medieval City," in *Women in Medieval Western European Culture*, ed. Linda Mitchell (New York: Garland Publishing, 1999), 241-256.

Feb 5

Primary sources:

Dhuoda's *Liber Manualis*
The Good Wife

Secondary sources:

Carmen Caballero-Navas, "The Care of Women's Health and Beauty: An Experience Shared by Medieval Jewish and Christian Women," *Journal of Medieval History*, vol. 34 (2008), 146-163.

Week 5: Love and Marriage

Feb 10:

Gender Analysis due

Primary sources:

Church Fathers on Marriage
Gratian on Marriage (<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/gratian1.asp>)
Augustine on Marriage
Marriage in Literature

Secondary sources:

Michael M. Sheehan, "Choice of Marriage Partner in the Middle Ages: Development and Mode of Application of a Theory of Marriage," in *Handbook of Medieval Sexuality*, eds. Vern L. Bullough and James A. Brundage (New York: Garland Publishing, 1996), 157-191.

Feb 12:

Primary sources:

Christina of Markyate

Secondary sources:

Robert Stanton, "Marriage, Socialization, and Domestic Violence in *The Life of Christina of Markyate*," in *Domestic Violence in Medieval Texts*, eds. Eve Salisbury, Georgina Donavin, and Merrall Llewelyn Price (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2002), 242-271.

Week 6: Women and Sex

Feb 17

Primary sources:

London accounts

How to determine chastity

Secondary sources:

Ruth Mazo Karras, "Prostitution in Medieval Europe," in *Handbook of Medieval Sexuality*, eds. Vern L. Bullough and James A. Brundage (New York: Garland Publishing, 1996), 143-160.

Feb 19

Primary sources:

Penitential of Theodore

Love Letter and Folk Tale

Secondary sources:

Jacqueline Murray, "Twice Marginal and Twice Invisible: Lesbians in the Middle Ages," in *Handbook of Medieval Sexuality*, eds. Vern L. Bullough and James A. Brundage (New York: Garland Publishing, 1996), 191-222.

Week 7: Women as outsiders

Feb 24

Primary sources:

Women in Judaism

Women in Islam

Secondary sources:

Judith R. Baskin, "Medieval Jewish Women," in *Women in Medieval Western European Culture*, ed. Linda Mitchell (New York: Garland Publishing, 1999), 65-80.

Jonathan Berkey, "Women in Medieval Islamic Society," in *Women in Medieval Western European Culture*, ed. Linda Mitchell (New York: Garland Publishing, 1999), 95-111.

Feb 26

Primary sources:
Witchcraft texts

Secondary sources:
Espeth Whitney, "Witches, Saints, and 'Others': Women and Deviance in Medieval Culture," in *Women in Medieval Western European Culture*, ed. Linda Mitchell (New York: Garland Publishing, 1999), 295-312.

Week 8: Female violence

Mar 3

Primary sources:
Women in Frankish Society

Secondary sources:
Nira Gradowicz-Pancer, "De-Gendering Female Violence: Merovingian Female Honour as an 'Exchange of Violence'," *Early Medieval Europe*, vol. 11, no. 1 (2001), 1-18.

Mar 5

Primary sources:
Excerpts from Beowulf
Johan Nider on Joan of Arc (<http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/source/nider-stjoan1.asp>)
Joan of Arc's letter to the King of England
(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/joanofarc.asp>)

Secondary sources:
M. Wendy Hennequin, "We've Created a Monster: The Strange Case of Grendel's Mother," *English Studies*, vol. 89, no. 5 (Oct., 2008), 503-523.

Week 9: Spring Break!

Week 10: Female lordship

Mar 17

Primary sources:
Norman Noblewomen (<http://www.uncg.edu/~rebarton/normanwomen.htm>)

Secondary sources:
Kimberly A. LoPrete, "The Gender of Lordly Women: The Case of Adela of Blois," in *Studies on Medieval and Early Modern Women: Pawns or Players*, eds. Christine Meek and Catherine Lawless (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2003), 90-120.

Mar 19

Primary sources:
Letter to Eleanor of Aquitaine (<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/eleanor.asp>)
Matilda's intervention in the case of Thomas Becket

Secondary sources:

Christine Owens, "Noblewomen and Political Activity," in *Women in Medieval Western European Culture*, ed. Linda Mitchell (New York: Garland Publishing, 1999), 209-219.

Week 11: Mystics

Mar 24

Paper Prospectus Due

Primary sources:

Mystics

Secondary sources:

Jane Tibbetts Schulenburg, "Female Sanctity: Public and Private Roles, ca. 500-1100," in *Women and Power in the Middle Ages*, eds. Mary Erler and Maryanne Kowaleski (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1988), 102-125.

Mar 26

Primary sources:

Concerning the Beguines

Secondary sources:

Caroline Walker Bynum, "Fast, Feast, and Flesh: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women," *Representations*, no. 11 (Summer, 1985), 1-25.

Week 12: Other female religious practices

Mar 31

Primary sources:

The Rule of St. Claire of Assisi

Secondary sources:

Moshe Sluhovsky, "The Devil in the Convent," *The American Historical Review*, vol. 107, no 5 (Dec., 2002), 1379-1411.

Apr 2

Primary sources:

Margery Kempe

Secondary sources:

Diana Webb, "Freedom of Movement? Women as Travellers in the Middle Ages," in *Studies on Medieval and Early Modern Women: Pawns or Players*, eds. Christine Meek and Catherine Lawless (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2003), 75-89.

Week 13: Women as Theologians

Apr 7

Primary sources:
Catherine of Siena

Secondary sources:
Alcuin Blamires, "Women and Preaching in Medieval Orthodoxy, Heresy, and Saints' Lives," *Viator*, vol. 26 (1995), 135-152.

Apr 9

Primary sources:
Hildegard of Bingen

Secondary sources:
Augustine Thompson, "Hildegard of Bingen on Gender and the Priesthood," *Church History*, vol. 63, no. 3 (Sep., 1994), 349-364.

Week 14: Women Writers

Apr 14

Annotated Bibliography due

Primary sources:
Christine de Pisan

Secondary sources:
Katherina M. Wilson and Glenda McLeod, "Sounding Trumpets, Chords of Light, and Little Knives: Medieval Women Writers," in *Women in Medieval Western European Culture*, ed. Linda Mitchell (New York: Garland Publishing, 1999), 331-334.

Apr 16

Primary sources:
Marie de France
Anna Comnena

Secondary sources:
June Hall McCash, "Images of Women in the Lais of Marie de France," *Medieval Perspectives*, vol. 11 (1996), 96-112.

Week 15: Women in Literature

Apr 21

Primary sources:
Erec and Enide

Apr 23

Primary sources:
Prologue to the Wife of Bath's Tale (<http://legacy.fordham.edu/Halsall/source/CT-prolog-bathmod.asp>)

Final exam:

April 30 – final paper due by 4 pm.