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HSSP 2580 Women and Religious Leadership

Spring, 2009

Tuesdays 6:30-9:10 p.m. Mudd 102

This course is an intermediate course exploring the history of women in leadership roles within Christianity. Methodologically, the course explores the topic of how women have achieved leadership roles throughout Christian history, therefore the lectures will be historical in nature and students will be expected to use historical method in their analyses. There will be ample room for student-generated input based on experience and research. In fact, students must anticipate being active co-creators of this course, since the topic is too broad for any single professor to teach in a comprehensive way.

Required Textbooks

Beverly Kienzle and Pamela Walker, eds. *Women Preachers and Prophets through Two Millennia of Christian History*

Gary Macy, *The Hidden History of Women's Ordination*

Catherine Brekus, *Strangers and Pilgrims. Female Preaching in America, 1740-1845*

Paul Lachance, *Angela of Foligno: Passionate Mystic of the Double Abyss*

Anne Carr, *Transforming Grace. Christian Tradition and Women's Experience*

The learning objective of this class are:

1. to develop and demonstrate an understanding of historical method and a historical approach to studying Christianity from the perspective of women's roles
2. to understand how the distant past remains relevant to the present practice of the Christian faith
3. to develop and demonstrate oral presentation skills
4. to develop and demonstrate research skills, specifically in the discipline of history
5. to develop skills for critical analysis of the Christian faith through the discipline of history
6. to understand the various academic disciplinary and methodological approaches that scholars use to study women's religious leadership roles

Grade is based on class participation including short oral presentations and short one-page thesis statements of works read for class discussion (35%); Take Home Midterm Exam (15%); Final Project (written and oral) 50%. The length of the Final Paper depends on the degree program you're in: Special Student and M. Div. 15 pages; MTS 20 pages; MA and Ph.D. 25-30 pages. (n.b. If you're in a ministerial degree program, think in terms of a project that you will be able to use in the future.) The Oral presentations

should be about 20 minutes in length with 10 minutes for questions and discussion. The expectation is that these are professional quality oral presentations: well-organized; clear; engaging; with appropriate visual aids (short video clips; slides; overheads; PowerPoint, etc.)

Feb 3 Naming the Women Leaders in the Christian Faith

Defining Leadership

How do we learn of women leaders?

How do we teach about women leaders?

Film Clips: Jesus Camp; Thea Bowman addressing American Council of Catholic Bishops

Feb. 10 Ordination: The Goal or the Problem?

To Prepare:

Critically read and be prepared to discuss Macy's *Hidden History*

Write and turn in a one-page statement of Macy's thesis (state in one sentence) and summary of his argument (i.e. how does he prove or demonstrate his thesis. Include in your summary of his argument a brief analysis of the sources he uses.)

Read and consider how you will use the Template for note taking found at:

<http://courseweb.fst.edu/pryds/Study/notes.pdf>

Feb. 17: Disciplinary Approaches: Methodologies for Studying Women's Religious Leadership

To Prepare:

Critically read and be prepared to discuss Anne E. Carr, *Transforming Grace*: pp. xi-xxi; 1-18, 21-59. Fill out and turn in a completed Template for Notetaking for the sections you have read of Carr's book.

For discussion purposes, consider how this book differs from Macy's book in terms of presentation of thesis and argument; and in terms of methodological approach. One way to do this is to pay special attention to the sources used.

Feb. 24: Researching Historically

Class will meet in GTU Library Computer Lab

To Prepare:

Read and be prepared to engage in discussion about the disciplinary approaches discussed in Anne E. Carr, *Transforming Grace*, pp. 63-214

Read and consider how to implement in your own research for this class the handout on research and writing found at:

<http://courseweb.fst.edu/pryds/Study/research.pdf>

Bring to class three ideas of possible research paper subject areas

You will be asked to submit by the end of class a list of 5 scholarly books; 3 scholarly articles; 3 book reviews; one website; one movie on one possible area of research that will become the center of your research paper. You do not have to commit to writing on this subject.

Mar 3: Historical Models of Women's Leadership

Historical Manipulations of Women about whom little is known.

To Prepare: Read Part One, Chapters 1-3 in Kienzle and Walker, *Women Preachers and Prophets*

Submit in writing a one-page statement of thesis and argument of ONE of the articles you read in Kienzle and Walker. You may choose which article you summarize. Presumably you will choose the article that is of most interest to you and your own research.

You must be able to state the thesis and argument of each article for class discussion. In this class we will continue to engage in the methodological ideas and perspectives discussed by Carr in *Transforming Grace* and bring these ideas into conversation with historical methodology.

Mar. 10: Medieval Women: Cloistered and Mendicant Modes of Leadership

Anchoresses: Caged Women Leaders

Letter Writing: Catherine of Siena

Monasticism: Leadership Communities Behind the Walls

To Prepare: Read Kienzle and Walker, *Women Preachers and Prophets*, chapters 6-9
Submit in writing a one-page statement of thesis and argument of ONE of the articles you read in Kienzle and Walker. You may choose which article you summarize. Presumably you will choose the article that is of most interest to you and your own research.

You must be able to state the thesis and argument of each article for class discussion.

Handout in class: Letter of Catherine of Siena

Film Clip: *The Anchoress*; *The Nun's Story*

Mar. 17: The Active Approach

Women Preachers

Redefining Preaching

Vita Apostolica, Beguines, Humiliati, 3rd Order

Heresy and the Marginalization of Women

To Prepare: Read Kienzle and Walker, *Women Preachers and Prophets*, ch. 4-5
Submit in writing a one-page statement of thesis and argument of ONE of the articles you read in Kienzle and Walker. You may choose which article you summarize. Presumably you will choose the article that is of most interest to you and your own research.

You must be able to state the thesis and argument of each article for class discussion.

Handout: Passages from Joan of Arc's Inquisitorial Trial
 Film Clip: *Joan of Arc*

Assignment for Take Home Exam will be distributed in class on March 17. The assignment will be due in hard copy in class on Tuesday March 31.

March 24: Reading Week/ No Class

Mar. 31 American Women and Leadership Roles

To Prepare: read Catherine Brekus, *Strangers and Pilgrims* and be prepared to discuss the book with regard to Brekus' thesis and argument. The Take-Home exam will be related to this book, therefore the two assignments will compliment one another.

Take Home Exam due today in class in hard copy.

April 7 American Women, cont.

To Prepare: read Kienzle and Walker, ch. 14-17.

Submit in writing a one-page statement of thesis and argument of ONE of the articles you read in Kienzle and Walker. You may choose which article you summarize. Presumably you will choose the article that is of most interest to you and your own research.

You must be able to state the thesis and argument of each article for class discussion.

Apr. 17: Entertaining Angels

Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker Movement
 Film and discussion.

Apr. 21: Burnout: The Struggles of Women Today in Leadership

Roundtable discussion of Local Religious Leaders

Suggested Reading on Reserve: Barbara Brown Taylor, *Leaving Church*

Apr. 28

Summarizing a history of women's religious leadership
 Class discussion

May 5: Student Presentations

All Term Papers are due in class today. No Exceptions

May 12: Student Presentations and Conclusions