

Portland State University  
**FEMINIST BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION**  
WS 410 002, CRN 64375 4 credits  
April 3-June 7, T-Th 12:00-1:50, Ond. 202

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

In this course we will explore feminist voices discussing the biblical tradition. What are feminist biblical scholars saying? How do their interpretations relate to our personal experiences and provide commentary on contemporary culture? Participants will be encouraged to explore a question of their own choosing, culminating in a research paper or presentation.

**READING MATERIALS**

Text: Carol A. Newsom and Sharon H. Ringe, eds. *The Women's Bible Commentary, expanded edition*. Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 1998.

Available M-F first week in the Women's Resource Center, basement of Montgomery. Subsequently at In Other Words, 8b NE Killingsworth St.

See next page for book buying hours at the WRC and info. on In Other Words.

Handouts: In class, no charge

**GRADED ASSIGNMENTS:**

1. Attendance and participation: **40%**. This includes preparatory readings, presence in class, and appropriate participation in discussion and experiential exercises.
2. Short papers: **20%**. Four 2-page response papers, as listed in syllabus.
3. Research project: **40%**. 7 p. paper **or** 20 min. presentation with references cited and a resource list. Project ideas include exploring the work of a feminist biblical scholar, exploration of an issue in feminist biblical interpretation, interpretation of a biblical text using feminist techniques, interviewing an author or practitioner in the field. If project is a paper: due June 12. If presentation: by sign-up.

**EXPECTATIONS FOR PARTICIPATION**

1. Create a safe and respectful atmosphere for discussion. Treat others with consideration, including ensuring time for all to speak.
2. Understand that each person's spiritual experience is sacred. Respect one another's traditions.
3. Agree to keep specifics of class conversations within class.
4. Recognize that no one has "the facts" about spirituality or spiritual traditions. Respect others' wisdom and your own.
5. Acknowledge that sexism, racism, classism, homophobia, and other forms of oppression exist.

**Recognize that this class is taught from the perspective of feminist analysis.**

## Buying Your Books Through In Other Words Bookstore

### **About Us**

In Other Words is a non-profit feminist bookstore and community resource center, located in N/NE Portland. We serve not only as a bookstore that provides feminist and women's writing, but also as a free meeting space and host to a variety of events such as yoga classes, musical performances, author readings, and writing groups. Our core values include social change through grassroots activism, educating for empowerment, and connecting feminism to all movements for justice.

### **Why buy your books through In Other Words?**

Buying your books through In Other Words instead of online is an important way that you can support not only your local feminist community but also your local economy. Over the 13 years that In Other Words has been open, we have watched many of our sister feminist bookstores close their doors. Textbook sales are a huge part of what keeps ours doors open and our community programs thriving.

### **How to buy your books through In Other Words:**

Textbooks are available at our store in NE Portland before and after the term starts. *For the first week of classes only*, we bring them to the Women's Resource Center (WRC) located on PSU Campus. The WRC is in the basement of the Montgomery Building at SW Montgomery and SW Park. We will also mail books for out of town students. We accept cash, checks, and credit cards. Most books are new and we sell used books when available.

### **Our Hours at the WRC:**

April 2 Mon 10 – 5:30

April 3 Tues 10 – 5:30

April 4 Weds 10 – 7:00

April 5 Thurs 10 – 5:30

April 6 Fri 10 – 4:30

### **The Bookstore:**

8 NE Killingsworth (at Williams Ave.)

503-232-6003

Monday thru Friday 10 – 9

Saturdays noon – 6

Sundays closed

By car from PSU: Take I-5 N to the Killingsworth and Alberta St. exit (x303).

Stay to the right. At the second stop sign, turn Right onto Killingsworth.

Drive about 10 blocks to Williams Ave. We are located on the right, just after the light.

By bus from PSU: Board 40 Mocks Crest at SW 6<sup>th</sup> and Mill

Get off at Killingsworth and Vancouver. Walk 2 blocks east to Williams.

We are located on the right, just after the light.

### **Return Policy:**

*If you drop the class* you may return your textbooks to our bookstore, for full credit, within 10 days of purchase. They must be in new condition, and you must present proof of having dropped the class (such as a printout of the new class schedule).

### **Buy Back Policy:**

We will buy your used textbooks back at 20–25 % of the retail price *if we are sure the book is going to be used again*. Only a manager can buy back your books, so call the store ahead of time to make sure one will be there. Manager hours at In Other Words are generally 10 to 6 Mon-Fri, and noon to 3 on Saturday. Managers may sometimes be present at the WRC.

Feel free to contact us: [textbooks@inotherwords.org](mailto:textbooks@inotherwords.org), or [www.inotherwords.org](http://www.inotherwords.org)

# SYLLABUS, FEMINIST BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

Spring 2007

## APRIL

**Tues. Apr. 3** Introduction, experiential exercise, explanation of syllabus and assignments. Introductions to one another. Textbook purchase. Assignment: Phyllis Trible article.

**Thurs. Apr. 5** Discussion: Phyllis Trible article. Video: Joan Chittister. Discussion. Defining Feminist Biblical Interpretation. Assignment: Intro. pp. xix-xxv, "When Women Interpret the Bible" pp. 1-9.

**Tues. Apr. 10** Discuss above readings. Vocabulary; Introduction to history of the Bible and biblical interpretation. Read: Genesis p. 13-29.

**Thurs. Apr. 12** Biblical interpretation continued. Discuss Genesis. Read Exodus, p. 30-39 and one other of Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

**Tues. Apr. 17** Discuss above books. Intro. to Historical books, Psalms, Prophets. Sign up for Project meetings. Read Esther, Psalms, Isaiah.

**Thurs. Apr. 19** Speaker: Rabbi Laurie Rutenberg. Read Song of Songs, Proverbs, and Intro. to the Apocrypha, and Wisdom of Solomon.

**Tues. Apr. 24** Meet with me re. your project. Read handout on Wis. of Solomon.

**Thurs. Apr. 26** Library training with Jennifer Dorner. Library, Room 160. More project meetings.

Read Sirach & choice of apocrypha.

## MAY

**Tues. May 1 First Response Paper Due.** Discuss Wisdom Writings. Intro. to Gospels. Reading for Thurs.: Handout on Wisdom of Solomon; Ruth (pages 84-90).

**Thurs. May 3** Speaker: Carol Joy Brendlinger, PSU Spiritual Life Center. Read one Gospel: Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John.

**Tues. May 8 Second Response Paper Due.** Discuss Gospels. Intro. to Epistles. Reading for Thurs.: One Epistle.

**Thurs. May 10** Discuss Epistles. Read Revelation.

**Tues. May 15** Discuss Epistle & Revelation. Reading: Early Extracanonial Writings.

**Thurs. May 17** Rabbi Laurie Rutenberg Part II

**Tues. May 22** Discuss: Extracanonial Writings and Hot topics in Biblical Interpretation. Research.

**Thurs. May 24** Speaker: Tara Wilkins, Community of Welcoming Congregations.

**Tues. May 29** **Third Speaker Response Paper Due.** Class presentations?

**JUNE**

**Thurs. May 31** Class presentations.

**Tues. June 5.** Class presentations.

**Thurs. June 7** Last class (Party)

**Papers due:** Mon. June 11, online to me or at Women's Studies office, 469 NH.