

CH 3W03/6W06 – HISTORY OF WOMEN IN CHRISTIANITY

McMaster Divinity College

Fall Semester 2011

Thursday

1:30pm-3:20pm

Instructor: Dr. Gordon L. Heath

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

A survey and analysis of the roles and impact of women in the history of Christianity from the earliest churches to the modern period of global Christianity.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Knowing

- to provide students with an understanding of how women have participated in, and contributed to, the life of the church over the centuries
- to help students place the contemporary debate over gender roles in the church in the larger historical context

Being

- to explore - and ultimately appreciate - the diverse ways that women have served in the church
- to create an awareness of the breadth and diversity of the Church, and provide a sense of “place” within the many church traditions

Doing

- to develop in each student an ability to assess documents and situations from an historical perspective – and in particular, to be able to assess critically the various claims made about women in leadership throughout the church’s history

REQUIRED TEXTS:

- Ruth A. Tucker & Walter L. Liefeld. *Daughters of the Church: Women and Ministry from New Testament Times to the Present*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987.
- Mary T. Malone. *Women and Christianity: The First Thousand Years*. Mary Knoll, Orbis Books, 2001.
- Karen Jo Torjesen. *When Women Were Priests: Women’s Leadership in the Early Church & the Scandal of their Subordination in the Rise of Christianity*. San Francisco: Harper, 1995.
- Gordon L. Heath. *Doing Church History: A User-friendly Introduction to Researching the History of Christianity*. Toronto: Clements Publishing, 2008.
- There may also be the occasional journal article to be read (distributed by the professor in class).

All required textbooks for this class are available from the College’s book service, READ On Bookstore, Room 218, McMaster Divinity College. Texts may be purchased on the first day of class. For advance purchase, you may contact READ On Bookstores, 304 The East Mall, Suite 100, Etobicoke, ON M9B 6E2: phone 416-620-2934; fax 416-622-2308; e-mail books@readon.ca.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Along with completing the weekly readings, and participating in class discussions and debates, each student will be required to complete the following:

- Position Paper: Each student is required to write a three-page position paper.
- Research Paper: Each student is required to write a ten-page research paper on a topic agreed upon by the professor.
- Biographical Presentation: Each student is required to present a fifteen minute presentation on a particular woman in the church's history.
- Book Review: Students will be required to write a four-page critique of *When Women were Priests*.

Advanced degree students are expected to fulfill all assignments at an advanced degree level. They will also be required to prepare an annotated bibliography of ten books and ten articles in the area of their research paper, as well as write an additional 7500 words for the research paper.

GRADING:

3-unit level

- Position Paper: 10%
- Research Paper: 40%
- Biographical Presentation: 25%
- Book Review: 15%
- Participation: 10%

6-unit level

- Position Paper: 10%
- Research Paper: 50%
- Biographical Presentation: 25%
- Book Review: 15%

GENERAL COMMENTS:

- Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one's academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College. Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty ~ www.madciv.ca/regs/honesty.php.
- McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all of its publications. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected. The NRSV and TNIV are examples of the use of inclusive language for human beings. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments.
- Essays must be handed in at the beginning of the class on the day they are due. All other essays will be considered to be late. Students may be exempted from the late penalty of 3% per day (not including weekends) if they attach to their essay a letter explaining the genuine emergency that delayed them. Late assignments (even ones with an extension) will not receive comments and constructive criticism from the professor.

- The essay should be handed directly to the instructor. To avoid any potential problems, students are advised to keep their working notes and a copy of their paper until a final mark has been received.
- Unless noted otherwise, all written work must conform to the *McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses*.
- Please turn off your cell phone and/or pager before the class begins.
- Please do not attend class if you are ill and contagious (e.g. the flu).
- Respectful dialogue and disagreement is expected.

COMMENTS ON ASSIGNMENTS

All assignments are due at the beginning of the class – anything else is considered to be late.

- **Position Paper (Due 15 September, in class)**

This assignment is a brief statement on one's own view of women in ministry, as well as one's view of the church's treatment of women in its history. More details will be provided in class.

- **Research Paper (TBD)**

This ten page typed, double-spaced, 12 point font, 1¼ inch margins, and Chicago-style endnotes research paper provides an opportunity for students to pursue an area of research that intrigues them. It is expected that this paper will have a clearly stated and argue thesis on some matter related to the history of woman in the church. The results of this paper will be shared at the end of the course when students orally present their papers to the class. See *Doing Church History* for further instructions.

- Choose a topic that interests you (and one which you will be able to find enough research material on).
- Use endnotes (not footnotes).
- Please include at the very end of the paper (after the bibliography) a one page “personal reaction” to the person you are studying. It does NOT count towards the ten page total page count. This reaction can be as personal as you like, and is intended to give you a chance to react to the person outside of your more formal research paper.
- Please follow the format noted below:

Title Page	Page #1	Page #2	Page #3	Page #4	Page #5	Page #6
Page #7	Page #8	Page #9	Page #10	End notes	Biblio	Pers Reflec

- **Book Review (Due: 22 September, in class)**

This three page typed, double-spaced, 12 point font, 1¼ inch margins, and Chicago-style endnotes review should answer questions such as: what is the author's thesis? How did she go about arguing her thesis (structure, sources, methodology, etc.)? What are the weaknesses and strengths of the book? What is the value of reading the book? See *Doing Church History* for further instructions.

- **Biographical Presentation (TBD)**

This assignment is concerned with trying to gain an understanding of a woman's life and contribution to the church and society. In order to do this, you must not only study primary

sources, but also secondary sources. As you study the relevant secondary sources you will come to realize that different authors may have opposing interpretations. These differences are important to note and understand. See *Doing Church History* for further instructions.

In order for a presentation to be in the range of an “A”, the following minimal requirements must be met:

- a. on time & organized
- b. minimum of ten secondary sources used
- c. pro and con views presented
- d. detailed, thoughtful, engaging, critical
- e. actual quote(s) from the person being studied

Please distribute to the class a handout that provides a basic outline of your presentation, a bibliography of sources consulted, as well as a copy of a writing of the person. (The professor will make photocopies if you provide the handout well in advance of the class.)

CLASS SCHEDULE:

- Sept 8 Introduction to the Class
Reading: *Doing Church History* (all)
- Sept 15 Women in the Early Church I
Reading: *Daughters of the Church* (chs.1-3), *Women and Christianity* (chs.1-4)
Position Paper Due
- Sept 22 Women in the Early Church II
Reading: *Women and Christianity* (chs.5-7)
Book Review Due
- Sept 29 Medieval Female Monastic Orders
Reading: *Daughters of the Church* (ch.4), *Women and Christianity* (chs.8-10)
- Oct 6 Medieval Women: Sainthood and Motherhood
- Oct 13 Women as Reformers in the Reformation
Reading: *Daughters of the Church* (ch.5)
- Oct 20 Evangelicalism, Missions, and Women
Reading: *Daughters of the Church* (chs.6-8)
- Oct 27 TBD
- Nov 3 Women in the Modern West
Reading: *Daughters of the Church* (chs.10-11)
- Nov 10 Women in the Global Church
Reading: *Daughters of the Church* (ch.9)
- Nov 17 Research Paper Presentations
Research Paper Due
- Nov 24 Research Paper Presentations
- Dec 1 Research Paper Presentations

Please Note: This syllabus is the property of the instructor and is prepared with currently available information. The instructor reserves the right to make changes and revisions up to and including the first day of class.