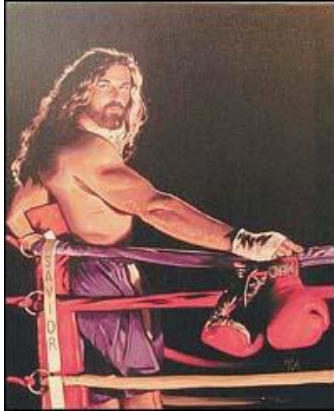


REST 430: Gender and Religion in American Culture
Spring 2011



I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Kelly J. Baker
Term: Spring 2011
Time: TR 210-325
Office Hours: T 1130-1230

Email: kbaker27@utk.edu
Phone: 974-7220
Room: Haslam 131
Office: 525 McClung Tower

II. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course covers the role of religion in lives of American women and men, gender as a category of analysis for the study of religion, the often-conflicted relationship between religion and sexuality, and perhaps most importantly, how religion and the religious construct, reconstruct and deconstruct gender norms. Religion informs gender, but gender also informs religious discourse. American men and women practice and live religion, and thus, religion cannot be separated from the sexed bodies we inhabit. Gender matters.

We will examine the pivotal role of religion in defining and constructing gender from Puritans to Salem Witch Trials to Spiritualism to muscular Christianity (including modern constructions of religion and sport) to contemporary debates over sexuality and abstinence to home birth to LGBTQ concerns to gender performativity. We will use historical and modern case studies to explore both the nature of femininity and masculinity in the religious lives of Americans.

III. TEXTBOOKS/MATERIALS

- ✓ Various articles on **Blackboard**. **There are no textbooks. Make sure *to print out all these articles and bring them to class on the date assigned.***
- ✓ Occasional online readings. The links to these readings are listed on the syllabus.
- ✓ Blackboard component. This website will contain links to online readings, the grade book, and supplementary materials for the class. Please check at least once a week for announcements or updates.

IV. COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- ✓ Survey the historical and cultural development of religion in lives of American women and men;
- ✓ Examine the practices and beliefs of different religious expressions to see the impact on male and female believers;
- ✓ Use gender as a category of analysis to study religion in print, culture and praxis; and
- ✓ Think and write reflexively and critically about the study of religion and religious peoples.

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This class is a SEMINAR, which means each student has to read, discuss and contribute to each class meeting. Moreover, this is a SENIOR seminar, which means a higher quality of work than other courses. Each week requires the student to read at least two scholarly articles and discuss these articles in a coherent way. Please prepare to read, read, read and read! For this class to be successful, one has to read and participate in class discussion. The third time is the charm: *you must read*.

Attendance:

If you absolutely must miss a class, then you alone are responsible for finding out what you missed. If possible, please inform the instructor in advance if you are going to miss a class.

Late arrival is sometimes unavoidable, but habitual lateness will be treated as an unexcused absence. In case of absence or tardiness, students are responsible for making themselves aware of any announcements, handouts, changes in assignments or deadlines, and material covered in class.

Late Assignments:

Tardiness of assignments is unacceptable and disallowed. Papers and projects are ALL due at the beginning of class. For take home assignments, late papers are marked off one point (out of ten) as soon as class starts. After I leave class, papers are marked off two points. Every day after the assignment is due is another point off. Please turn your papers in **on time**. **In the event of illness or dire circumstances, you must contact me before class and have a verifiable excuse.**

Journals and Lateness:

No late journals will be accepted. Journals are due immediately before class begins on Blackboard. **If you for some reason miss this deadline, you cannot make up the missed journal assignment. No exceptions.**

Students will complete the following:

- Gender as Analysis Paper (10 points)—This is a 1000-1500 word paper that examines the impact of gender in your own life. This requires you to use the theories and articles from the first several weeks of the semester to describe your gendered experience of the world. More detailed guidelines will be distributed later in class.

- Religious Field Visit Paper (10 points)—This project consists of a site visit to a religious service of which you are not familiar to analyze how gender functions in worship services and in the lived faith of Americans. The paper is 1500-2000 words. More detailed guidelines will be distributed later in class.
- Research Paper (30+10+10=10=60 points)—Because part of the purpose of higher education is learning how to do independent research, the primary requirement for the course is a research project on a topic of the student's choosing. This requirement is broadly defined; however, the project must somehow focus gender and religion in American culture, and it must be have my APPROVAL. This could include studies of men and women's religious experiences, the official positions on issues of gender and sexuality, understandings of femininity and masculinity, historical case studies, ethnographic work in one of the traditions covered in class. You are free to be as creative (or uncreative) as you choose. The typical format for this project is a 12-15 page research paper, though students may (and are encouraged to) make the case for some alternative form of project. Your thesis statement, a brief summary of the project, and a bibliography of the project is 5 points of your grade. A first draft of the paper is another 10 points. A presentation of your research is another 10 points. The other 30 points is the paper itself.
- Journals (20 points)-- Each week, you will have to write up a paragraph (at least six lines) length summary for each of the readings. The reading summary of the week is due on Blackboard immediately before class each Tuesday and Thursday. No exceptions, extensions or late journals.

Grading Scale:

90 - 100 A, 88 - 89 A-, B+ 85 - 87, 80 - 84 B, 78 - 79 B-, 75 - 77 C+, 70 - 74 C, 68 - 69 C-, 65 - 67 D+, 60 - 64 D, 0-59 F

*A brief note about the grading scale: To make an 88, one has to make an 88 not an 87.8 or so on. Grades are **not** rounded up in this class.*

UT Blackboard and Email:

You are required to have access to both Blackboard and your UT email. Since I post relevant links, files, and announcements, you should log onto to Blackboard before class everyday to for updates and announcements. **All students are responsible for checking Blackboard and having functional email.**

Communicating:

You will be able to email the instructor (and the whole class if needed) through Blackboard or you can reach me through my above email addresses. ***Emails without your course number in the subject line will be ignored.*** Please identify yourself and the class you are taking, and be courteous and to the point if you have a question or a problem. I will respond to email within 24 hours, so be patient for email responses. Multiple emails on the same subject will be ignored.

Classroom Courtesy:

- Make sure to turn off cell phones. If a cell phone goes off, a pop quiz will be given. Please use your laptops, pdas or smart phones for classroom purposes only.
- Try to be on time, but if you are late, DO come in! If it is necessary to leave early, please let me know before class. Habitual lateness will be counted as absences.
- Also please avoid shuffling papers and closing books in the final moments of class. Please wait to gather your things until I end the class.
- Additionally, this class has a large discussion component. Discussion about race, gender and religion can be contentious, so please be courteous and kind to your peers during discussions.

Standards for Work:

1. All take-home assignments must be typed/word-processed (12-point font with 1-inch margins), carefully proof-read, correctly referenced and titled, and need **not** have a cover-page or document cover. They must be printed out (white paper/black ink), preferably front and back, *not e-mailed* (unless with permission because of exceptional circumstances).
2. Retain your graded work in the event of a query.
3. Your work will be graded on its clarity, coherency and cogency.
4. *Always include a thesis statement in the first paragraph of any major writing assignment.*
5. Poorly edited or sloppily presented work will be returned to sender .
6. Relevance of material is crucial, so too are argumentation and presentation.
7. Your written and oral work should use gender-inclusive language, according to University guidelines (available on request).
8. Images which are relevant to the topic may be included in an essay, but not as substitute for written text.

Plagiarism

The two most common plagiarism errors are quoting assigned readings word for word without putting the borrowed words or phrases in quotation marks, and paraphrasing information without citing the source. Websites must be cited just as if they were published on paper. All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Dean of Students office and punished accordingly. Review the discussion of Academic Dishonesty that is found in *Hilltopics*, and familiarize yourself with the proper ways to cite texts. Ask at any time if you have any questions. It is much better to ask for help than to plagiarize and risk expulsion from the university. A grade of zero will be assigned to any assignment that breaks the code of Academic Honesty that each student signed before beginning classes at U.T. On how to avoid plagiarism, see these excellent guidelines at <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>.

Disabilities:

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the Office of Disability Services at 865-974-6087 in Hoskins Library to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

Places to go for Assistance:

There are several support centers on campus that you should know about and consider using:

Writing Center: HSS 212, 974-2611, writingcenter@utk.edu

M-W 9am-7:30pm and Th-F 9am-3pm

Disability Services: 2227 Dunford Hall, 974-6087, ods@utk.edu

Student Success Center: 1817 Melrose Ave, 946-HELP (946-4357), studentsuccess@utk.edu

VI. SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS/READINGS:
--

Gender and Its Discontents**Week 1 Jan. 13****Introductions**

Why are you here? Why am I here? What are our initial impressions of gender?

Week 2 Jan. 18, 20**What is exactly is Gender?**

What is sex? What is gender? How does gender function biologically and socially? How can gender be useful as a category of analysis?

Reading 1: Excerpt from Lise Eliot, *Pink Brain, Blue Brain* (2009).

Reading 2: Joan Scott, "Gender as a Useful Category of Analysis," *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 91, No. 5 (Dec., 1986), pp. 1053-1075.

Week 3, Jan. 25, 27**Gendering Religion**

Why is women's history so important to American religious history? How do concepts like maternity, nature and gender become important for religious history? How does the discourse of the natural function?

Reading 3: Ann Braude, "Women's History is American Religious History" in *Retelling U.S. Religious History*, ed. Thomas Tweed, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

Reading 4: Pamela Klassen, "Sacred Maternities and Postbiomedical Bodies: Religion and Nature in Contemporary Home Birth," *Signs*, 26:3, (Spring 2001), pp. 775-809.

The "Perils" of Womanhood and Women**Week 4 Feb. 1, 3****Patriarchy and Evil Women**

Why did the Puritans find women so troublesome? How are women defined theologically? How does gender figure into the Salem Witch Trials and accusations of witchcraft?

Reading 5: Marilyn J. Westerkamp, "Puritan Patriarchy and the Problem of Revelation," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 23:3, (Winter 1993), pp. 571-595.

Reading 6: Excerpt from Carol F. Karlsen, *Devil in the Shape of a Woman*

Week 5 Feb. 8, 10**"Pure" And/Or "Vulnerable" Women**

Which women are labeled as pure? How does gender function with anti-Catholicism? What does women's devotion to Saint Jude show? What does it mean that women devote themselves to the saint of lost causes?

Reading 7: Marie Ann Pagliarini, "The Pure American Woman and the Wicked Catholic Priest: An Analysis of Anti-Catholic Literature in Antebellum America," *Religion and American Culture*, 9:1 (Winter 1999), 97-128.

Reading 8: Robert Orsi, "'He Keeps Me Going': Women's Devotion to Saint Jude Thaddeus..." in *Religion in American History: A Reader*, eds. Jon Butler and Harry S. Stout, (Oxford: 1998).

Week 6 Feb. 15, 17

Punished by Gender: Hell House

How does a Hell House function as a theatre of gender? Who is punished? Why are they punished? What does this show about evangelical Christian constructions of gender?

Reading 9: Excerpt from Jason Bivins, *The Religion of Fear*.

Film: *Hell House*

Gender as a Category of Analysis Paper due February 15.

The Performance of Gender

Week 7 Feb. 22, 24

Ambiguous Men and Christian Knights

Why is it troublesome for gender to be ambiguous? Why is religious masculinity more problematic than other forms of masculinity? How is masculinity constructed by spiritualists and Catholics?

Reading 10: Bret Carroll, "The Religious Construction of Masculinity in Victorian America: The Male Mediumship of John Shoebridge Williams," *Religion and American Culture*, 7:1, (Winter 1997), 27-60.

Reading 11: Amy Koehlinger, "Let Us Live for Those Who Love Us": Faith, Family and the Contours of Manhood Among the Knights of Columbus in Late Nineteenth-Century Connecticut, *Journal of Social History*, 38:2, (Winter 2004), pp. 455-469.

Research Proposal Due Feb. 24

Week 8 Mar. 1, 3

Fashion and Bodies

How does dress encode gender? How does bodily practice inform gender? What makes a woman "feminine?"

Reading 12: Pamela Klassen, "The Robes of Womanhood: Dress and Authenticity among African American Methodist Women in the Nineteenth Century," *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (Winter, 2004), pp. 39-82.

Reading 13: Excerpt from Julie Byrne's *God of Players: The Story of the Immaculata Mighty Macs*

Week 9 Mar. 8, 10

Symbols of the Faith: Veils and Genes

How do women in particular become symbols of their faith? And why? How are women's bodies religiously constructed?

Reading 14: Rhys Williams and Gira Vashi, "*Hijab* and American Muslim Women: Creating the Space for Autonomous Selves," *Sociology of Religion*, 68:2 (2007), 269-287.

Reading 15: Karen Anijar, "Jewish Genes, Jewish Jeans: A Fashionable Body," in *Religion, Dress and the Body*, ed. Linda B. Arthur, (Berg, 2000), pp. 181-200

Week 10 Mar. 15, 17

Spring Break

Enjoy your break!

Week 11 Mar. 22, 24 **Performing Gendered Religion**

Why do women read evangelical romance novels? How does reading romance perform religion? How does the narrative of Malcolm X perform gender? What kind of masculinity is consumed through reading?

Reading 16: Excerpt from Lynn Neal's *Romancing God*

Reading 17: Maria Josefina Saldaña-Portillo, "Consuming Malcolm X: Prophecy and Performative Masculinity," *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction*, Vol. 30, No. 3 (Spring, 1997), pp. 289-308

First Draft Due March 24

Sex, Sexuality and the Family

Week 12 Mar. 29, 31 **Reproduction and Family**

How is reproduction religiously created and policed? How can sexuality be explained in religious terms?

Reading 18: Leslie Woodcock Tentler, "The Abominable Crime of Onan": Catholic Pastoral Practice and Family Limitation in the United States, 1875-1919," *Church History*, 71:2 (June 2002), pp.307-340.

Reading 19: Amy DeRogatis, "Born Again is a Sexual Term": Demons, STDS, and God's Healing Sperm," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 77:2 (June 2009), pp. 275-302.

Week 13 April 5, 7 **LGBTQ and Religion**

How does sexuality complicate religious experience and expression? How do LGBTQ persons navigate their religious lives? What is the place of homophobia in religious circles? How is homophobia related to masculinity?

Reading 20: Krista McQueeney, "We Are God's Children, Y'All:" Race, Gender, and Sexuality in Lesbian- and Gay-Affirming Congregations, *Social Problems*, Vol. 56, No. 1 (Feb., 2009), pp. 151-173,

Reading 21: Excerpt from Tanya Erzen's *Straight to Jesus*
Field Visit due April 7

Week 14 April 12, 14 **Reconciling Sexuality and Religion (or Not)**

Can sexuality and religion be reconciled? Why or why not? What does this mean for conservative religious traditions? How does one navigate sexuality and ultimate religious dictate?

Film: *Trembling Before G-d*

Week 15 April 19, 21 **Presentations**
Research Paper due April 19

Week 16 April 26, 28 **Presentations**

Please note: There is NO final for this course!