

SCHEDULE: FEMINIST THEOLOGY

September 13	Intro
20	The Church: Sexual Metaphors and Social Reality
27	Tradition I Recovery of the suppressed story
October 04	Tradition II Suppression as psychological and theological theme
11	Biblical Studies I: Women in Scripture J. Henry
18	Biblical Studies II: Hermeneutics
25	Creation
November 01	Fall
08	Soteriology (Salvation)
15	Trinity: "Father"/"Mother" (Mary)
22	Trinity: "Son"
29	Trinity: Spirit
December 06	Conclusion

COURSE INFORMATION

Objectives:

- Students - will become familiar with selected Christian classics
- will analyse several doctrines with special regard for philosophical and theological presuppositions
- will become familiar with texts of feminist theology
- will develop skill in using a feminist critique themselves
- will form judgements about the use of gendered language in speaking of God, the links between doctrine and patriarchy, and the possibilities for a feminist reconstruction of doctrine and belief

Methods:

- Students - will read an extensive bibliography
- will focus on selected texts
- will present analytic papers
- will participate in discussion
- will participate in exercises to explore personal religious imagery
- will attend to own attitudinal and emotional responses to the subject matter in a collegial setting

Assignments:

1. a 5-6 page (approx. 1200 words) paper on a selected topic, presented on the scheduled day 20%
2. a 20-page (approx. 3000 words) paper analysing a selected Christian doctrine from a feminist perspective, due November 29 40%
3. a final exam 40%

TOPICS FOR CLASS PRESENTATIONS (5 - 6 pages)

Session	Topic
3 Women in the Tradition	a) Outline and assess the contributions of women in the classical and medieval eras. b) Outline and assess the contributions of women in the Protestant and Catholic post-reformation world.
4 Suppression as Psychological and Theological Theme	a) Explore "witch-hunts" as an historical phenomenon: what happened and why did it happen when it did? Comment on how (male) scholars have discussed the atrocities. b) If the witch-hunts were essentially a reaction of fear to female spirituality, discuss (i) the outlines of that spirituality (ii) possible psychological and theological sources of male hostility.
5 Women in Scripture	a) Pick a key female figure of the Old Testament and (i) discuss the Biblical texts referring to her, using feminist scholarship (ii) outline her contributions to the Tradition as recovered by feminist scholars (iii) explore the contribution she makes to your own expanding awareness of the Tradition. b) Ditto for a figure of the New Testament.
6 Hermeneutics	a) "It is striking to note how one's position affects and even determines what one sees in the text." (Swartley, 183). Illustrating with examples of writers who see subordination and writers who see equality in selected Biblical texts, discuss the problems you see posed for the interpreter by the quoted statement.

Session	Topic
6	Hermeneutics (Cont'd)
	b) How are we to reconcile a belief that the Bible is authoritative for faith ("the Word of God") with a conviction that Biblical texts often promote the subordination of women (as well as other evils)?
7	Creation
	a) Discuss the Creation stories in Genesis I and II from the perspective of i) the traditional interpretation (briefly), ii) the feminist re-interpretation.
	b) Discuss the importance of the Creation stories as interpreted by feminists for our fundamental understanding of human nature today.
8	Fall
	a) Do a brief interpretive summary of the patriarchal interpretation of the Fall.
	b) Using feminist scholarship analyse the story of the Fall in Genesis II. What do you think its "real" meaning is?
9	Soteriology
	a) Can a male saviour redeem females? What assumptions about human beings and the divine-human relationship must we make if we say yes, what assumptions if we say no? Discuss each in some detail.
	b) According to some Gospel traditions, Jesus was sympathetic toward women. What difference does this make, if any, to our understanding of God's redemptive will for humanity.
10	Father/Mother
	a) Discuss with examples from the Bible and Tradition the principal characteristic of each of the patriarchal image of God (Father) and the matriarchal image (Mother). Are they reconcilable?
	b) "Jesus called God 'Father'; that's good enough for me." Outline a feminist critique of this stance.
11	Son
	a) "Is maleness constitutive of the Christ?"
	b) Discuss the Trinity as found in the Nicene creed, from the perspective of Mary Daly's comment, "'The Processions of Divine Persons' is the most sensational one-act play of the centuries, the original <u>Love Story</u> , performed by the supreme All Male cast. Here we have the epitome of male bonding . . . 'sublime'

Session

Topic

11 Son (Cont'd)

- b) (and therefore disguised) erotic male homo-sexual myths . . ." (Gyn/Ecology, 38)

12 Spirit

- a) Assess the claim that the Spirit is the feminine dimension of the Trinity.
- b) What are the characteristics of women's experience of the Spirit, and how do these characteristics relate to the Biblical witness?

FORMAT

SESSION NO. 1

Area: Introduction

Goal: To introduce participants to the purpose, design, and methodology of the course.

Objectives:

1. To introduce participants to each other
2. To identify expectations in regard to the course
3. To identify participants' previous experience with the subject matter
4. To locate feminist theology within the theological enterprise in a preliminary way
5. To review the course outline with participants
6. To negotiate work patterns and assignments

Process:

FORMAT

SESSION NO. 2

- Area: The Church: Sexual metaphors and sociological reality
- Goal: To identify women's experience in the Church by exploring a number of contemporary issues.
- Objectives:
1. To name women's experience in the Church by exploring a number of contemporary issues.
 2. To develop a statement of the components of an adequate, feminist understanding of the Church.
- Process: Intro to Tripolar model
Use of model

BIBLIOGRAPHY : CHURCH

- 270.1 Bettensen, Henry ed. The Later Christian Fathers
 Be (London, 1974), 237ff.
- Cardman, Francine "Tradition, Hermeneutics and Ordination" reprint
- 230 Cooke, Bernard Ministry to Word and Sacraments
 Co (Philadelphia, 1976), 654-6
- 287.9 Davey, Shirley ed. Women, Work and Worship
 Da (, 1983) passim
- Elsworth, Jill & Jim "Words and Images" reprint of an address
- Parvey, Constance ed. The Community of Women and Men in the Church : The Sheffield Report, WCC 1983
- 261.8 Parvey, Constance ed. Ordination of Women in Ecumenical Perspective Faith and Order Paper 105 (Geneva, 1980)
- 232.9 Ruether, Rosemary R. Mary, The Feminine Face of the Church. (Philadelphia, 1977)
- 261.8 Ruether, Rosemary R. and McLaughlin, E. eds. Women of Spirit. (New York, 1979) esp. chs. 11, 13
- 261.8 Swidler, Leonard Biblical Affirmations of Women. (Philadelphia, 1979). Part Three
- Thompson, Betty A Chance to Change. WCC, 1982
- Women in Ministry Research Report. Division of Ministry Personnel and Education, The United Church of Canada, 1984
- The Hymn Book Anglican Church of Canada/ United Church of Canada passim esp. re "Church" - compare other collections

FORMAT

SESSION NO. 3

Area: Tradition I : Recovery of the suppressed story

Goal: To gain knowledge and a positive appreciation of the contributions of women to the Christian tradition.

Objectives:

1. To recover the stories of women in the classical period and medieval period.
2. To recover the stories of women in post-reformation times, both Protestant and Catholic.
3. To explore the meaning of Tradition in our theological reflection.
4. To consider the difference made in our own attitudes toward the tradition when female "greats" are added.

Process:

1. Papers : Discussion Issues
2. Lecture: Enlarging of the data base
3. Discussion : Summary : What are the major contributions we need to note.

BIBLIOGRAPHY : SUPPRESSED STORY

Text Ch. 1

- | | | |
|-------------|--|--|
| 230
Pe | Aquinas, Thos. | Summa Theologica Pt. 7 Quaes. 92 "The Production of Women" in Pegis, A.C.: <u>Basic Writing of Thos. Aquinas</u> Vol. 1, pp 879-884 (or other edition) |
| | Chicago, Judy | <u>The Dinner Party</u> |
| 230
Co | Cooke, Bernard | <u>Ministry to Word and Sacraments</u> (Philadelphia; Fortress, 1976) 114-115 |
| 230
P1 | Plaskow, Judith | <u>Sex, Sin and Grace</u> , (Washington, D.C. : University Press of America 1980) Introduction |
| 261.8
Ru | Ruether, Rosemary R. | <u>Religion and Sexism</u> , (New York, Simon and Schuster, 1974) esp. pp 150-183, 213-343 |
| 261.8
Ru | Ruether, R.R. and McLaughlin, E., eds. | <u>Women of Spirit</u> (New York : Simon and Schuster, 1979) passim |
| 291.2
St | Stone, Merlin | <u>Ancient Mirrors of Womanhood</u> Vols I & II (New York : New Sibylline Books, 1979) Introduction |
| 291.2
St | Stone, Merlin | <u>When God Was a Woman</u> , (New York : Harvest, HBJ, 1976) passim |

FORMAT

SESSION NO. 4

- Area: Tradition II Suppression as a psychological and theological theme
- Goal: To come to terms with the shadow side of Christianity
- Objectives:
1. To become familiar with the patriarchal biases of theological scholarship.
 2. To explore the psychological dynamics of suppression of female tradition.
 3. To explore some theological implications of the suppression of female tradition in the Christian Tradition.
- Process:
1. To explore the historical and psychological dynamics of the witchhunts--paper and discussion.
 2. Exploration of Mary Daly's criticism of Christianity as fundamentally repressive of women - paper and discussion
 3. Lecture. The issues.
 4. Discussion: What responses are appropriate for us in the light of the above?

FORMAT

SESSION NO. 5

- Area: Biblical Studies I: Women in Scripture
- Goal: To recover and reflect upon the stories of women in Scripture.
- Objectives:
1. To become familiar with a variety of female Biblical characters.
 2. To acquire a positive appreciation of their roles and contributions.
 3. To draw conclusions about why they have been ignored.
 4. To draw conclusions about how our understanding of the tradition will change as women's stories become more acknowledged as revelatory.
- Process:
1. Class presentations of selected figures.
 2. Lecture "What does it mean to recover lost or suppressed strands of tradition like these?"
 3. What does it mean to us personally to take seriously the female tradition? Discussion.

BIBLIOGRAPHY : SCRIPTURE

- Fiorenza, Elizabeth
Schussler In Memory of Her: A Feminist
Theological Reconstruction of
Christian Origins. (New
York, 1983)
- 261.8 Moltmann-Wendel,
Mo Elizabeth The Women Around Jesus (London :
SCM, 1982)
- 261.8 Ruether, Rosemary
Radford Religion and Sexism. (New York,
& 1974) 41-88; 117-149
& McLaughlin, eds. Women of Spirit (New York,
1979) ch. 1
- 261.8 Swidler, Leonard Biblical Affirmations of Woman
Sw (Philadelphia, 1979) passim
- Throckmorton, Burton H. Jr.
"Why the Inclusive Language
Lectionary", The Christian
Century, Vol. 101, No. 24,
August 1-8, 1984, 742-4
- Trible, Phyllis Texts of Terror (Philadelphia,
Fortress Press, 198-)
- Wahlberg, Rachel C. Jesus and the Freed Woman (New
York, 1978) passim

FORMAT

SESSION NO. 6 BIBLICAL STUDIES II

Area: Hermeneutics

Goal: To reflect on the interpretive process as an activity of faith.

Objectives: To become familiar with issues in interpreting a text.
To explore some implications for faith.
To examine the history of hermeneutics as a theological theme.
To explore theologizing from experience.
To come to terms with a revisionist interpretive stance as an activity of faith.

Process: 1. Papers and discussion.
2. Lecture - background
- "experience" and theology
3. Using a model of theological reflection
(tri-polar)

BIBLIOGRAPHY : HERMENEUTICS

Text Ch. 1

- | | | | |
|-------------|----------------------|--|------------------------|
| | Cardman, Francine | "Tradition, Hermeneutics and Ordination" reprint | |
| 261.8
Ru | Ruether, Rosemary R. | <u>To Change The World,</u>
(London, 1981) Intro | |
| 221.6
Tr | Trible, Phyllis | <u>God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality</u>
(Philadelphia, 1978) pp 1-23 | |
| | ----- | <u>Texts of Terror</u> | |
| 291.2
St | Stone, Merlin | <u>When God Was A Woman</u>
York, 1976) Intro | (New York, 1976) Intro |
| 220.6
Sw | Swartley, Willard M. | <u>Slavery, Sabbath, War and Women</u>
Kitchener, 1981) ch. 4 | (Scottsdale and |

FORMAT

SESSION NO. 7

Area: Creation

Goal: To Demythologize the Creation Stories

Objectives: To examine Genesis I and II texts, as an exercise in feminist hermeneutics.

To explore the motifs of domination/equality.

To explore the connections between patriarchy and war/pollution.

Process:

1. Papers focusing on Genesis I and II
2. Lecture: Closer Exegesis
3. Discussion: What is the connection between Genesis and militarism, pollution, etc.

BIBLIOGRAPHY : CREATION

- Text Chs. 3,4,7
- 230 Ba Barth, Karl Dogmatics in Outline (London: SCM, 1952) ch.8
- 291.2 St Stone, Merlin Ancient Mirrors of Womanhood Vol. 1, 23-31, 49-129
- 291-2 St Stone, Merlin When God Was A Woman, ch. 10
- 221.6 Tr Tribble, Phyllis God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality (Philadelphia : Fortress 1978) pp 12-23
- The Bible : Gen. 1,2
ICor II:2-16

FORMAT

SESSION NO. 8

Area: Fall

Goal: That participants free themselves from the sexist/patriarchal dimension of the doctrine of the "fall" of humanity.

Objectives:

1. To identify the patriarchal dimension of the doctrine of the fall.
2. To explore the texts supporting the patriarchal understandings of the fall using a feminist hermeneutic.
3. To explore traditional concepts of original sin in search of any enduring usefulness.
4. To develop an outline of an adequate doctrine of "fall" and original sin in the light of the feminist critique.

Process:

1. Papers, discussion, conclusions about the texts.
2. Lecture: Outline of traditional doctrine and its existential source. (What theological problems does it solve? create?)
3. Develop an "adequate" doctrine of the fall.

BIBLIOGRAPHY : FALL

- Text chs. 3, 4, 7
- 270.1 Augustine in Bettensen, H. The Later
 Be Christian Fathers, (London :
 Oxford U.P., 1972) pp 192-199
- 230 Barth, Karl Church Dogmatics, (Edinburgh:
 Ba T & T, Clark, 1956) IV-1,
 Section 60:2,3
- Daly, Mary Beyond God the Father ch 2
- 230 Plaskow, Judith Sex, Sin and Grace passim
 Pl
- 291.2 Stone, Merlin When God Was A Woman, ch 10
 St
- 221.6 Tribble, Phyllis God and the Rhetoric of
 Tr Sexuality, ch 4, esp. pp100f
- The Bible : Gen. 3
 Ro. 5

FORMAT

SESSION NO. 9

Area: Soteriology

Goal: To develop an understanding of salvation that takes account of the experience of women and the feminist critique of tradition.

Objectives:

1. To examine the presuppositions of the traditional understanding of salvation.
2. To explore feminist criticism of the traditional view.
3. To become familiar with the experiential basis of the doctrine of salvation and some classical texts.
4. To develop our own statement of the doctrine.

Process:

1. Papers and discussion -- issues
2. Lecture: The problems dealt with by the tradition. The experiential basis.
3. The understanding of salvation required by a feminist consciousness. Discussion.

BIBLIOGRAPHY : SOTERIOLOGY

Text chs 3, 9

- 230 Anselm Cur Deus Homo passim
 An
- 220.1 Augustine in Bettenson, ed., The Later
 Be Christian Fathers pp 219-227
- 270 "Enchiridion" in Library
 Or of Christian Classics VII
 (London : SCM, 1955) ch X
- 230 Plaskow, Judith Sex, Sin and Grace,
 P1 passim esp. chs I and IV
- 232 Ruether, Rosemary To Change the World, (London,
 Ru SCM, 1981) pp 45-56
- The Bible Ro. 5

FORMAT

SESSION NO. 10

Area: Trinity : God the Father/Mother

Goal: That participants demythologize/depatriarchalize their concept of God.

Objectives:

1. To explore the language and imagery of the traditional (patriarchal) concept of God
2. To explore some of the issues surrounding the use of male and female language in naming "God/dess" (Reuther)
3. To become familiar with some of the Theological motives behind the traditional concept of God.
4. To explore feelings and implications for us personally of a shift from the traditional concept of God to a depatriarchalized concept.

Process:

1. "Imaginative exercise": God
2. Papers discussion issues
3. Lecture: God-talk
 - language issues
 - traditional motifs of transcendence and justice
4. Discussion

BIBLIOGRAPHY : FATHER/MOTHER

- Text chs 2, 6
- 270.1 Augustine in Bettensen, The Later
 Be Christian Fathers pp 191-2,
 236-6
- 230 Barth, Karl Church Dogmatics II-1, 302-21
 Ba
- Daly, Mary Beyond God the Father, ch 1
 and pp 81-97
- 231 Engelsman, Joan C. The Feminine Dimension of the
 En Divine, (Philadelphia : West-
 minster, 1979)
- 201.4 McFague, Sally Metaphorical Theology passim
 McF
- 230 Plaskow, Judith Sex, Sin and Grace, pp 162-7
 Pl
- 261-8 Swidler Biblical Affirmations of Women
 Sw Part I

FORMAT

SESSION NO. 11

Area: Christology

Goal: To explore the doctrines of the person of Christ from the perspective of women's experience.

Objectives: To explore the relationship between the maleness of Jesus and the traditional concept of the Christ.

To become familiar with the traditional Christology and the "problems" it was meant to "solve".

To develop a statement of the being of Christ that expresses a feminist perspective.

Process:

1. Papers discussion issues
2. Lecture: Christology - ancient and contemporary
3. Discussion: "What needs to be said?"

BIBLIOGRAPHY : CHRISTOLOGY

Text: ch 5

- 230 An Anselm Cur Deus Homo, London, passim
- 270 Au Augustine Enchiridion, Library of Christian Classics VII ch X in Bettenson, H., ed.
- 230 Ba Barth, Karl Church Dogmatics (Gollwitzer, ed.) 45-49, 92-133
- 270.1 Be Bettensen, H. ed. The Later Christian Fathers, (London, 1970) 214-227
- Daly, Mary Beyond God the Father, pp 69-81
- 301.4 Da Daly, Mary Gyn/Ecology, 79-89
- 232.1 Du Dunn, James D.G. Christology in the Making, (London, SCM, 1980) ch 2, esp. 12-33, 251-268
- 230 P1 Plaskow, Judith Sex, Sin and Grace, (Washington, 1980) esp. 124ff
- 232 Ru Ruether, Rosemary To Change the World, (London, 1981), 45-56

FORMAT

SESSION NO. 12

Area: The Spirit

Goal: To develop an understanding of Spirit congruent with female experience.

Objectives:

1. To examine the contention that the spirit is the feminine side of God.
2. To explore the tradition in regard to the spirit.
3. To do theological reflection on Spirit.

Process:

1. Papers discussion issues
2. Lecture: The Spirit in Tradition
3. Discussion: Theological Reflection on Spirit

BIBLIOGRAPHY : SPIRIT

- | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|--|
| 230
Ba | Barth, Karl | <u>Dogmatics in Outline</u> , pp137-40 |
| 301.4
Da | Daly, Mary | <u>Gyn/Ecology</u> , pp 35-8, 75, 229-32 |
| 231.7
Ne | Newman, Paul W. | <u>Humanity and Spirit</u> (Toronto: Image 1983) |