

OT4130
HARLOTS AND HEROINES:
WOMEN IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Tuesday, 1:10-4:00
GH 104

Spring, 2009
Diane Jacobson, prof
<http://www.luthersem.edu/djacobso>

PURPOSE:

1. To study in detail, interact with, and play with many of the Old Testament texts that deal with women.
2. To explore different methods of reading and interacting with these texts with particular emphasis on literary methods.
3. To examine these texts in the light of twentieth century questions and views of women.

REQUIREMENTS:

1. Regular attendance and participation in each class
2. A substantial amount of biblical and secondary reading.
3. Five of the six weeks you will post on the web a report on one article you have read relative to that week's texts.
4. Each week, you will participate in the on-line discussion of the posted question(s) of the week, as instructed in the distributed Web Instruction Sheet.
5. One week you will take the lead in the on-line discussion.

The following books are required:

Newsom, Carol, and Ringe, Sharon, eds. *The Women's Bible Commentary, Expanded Edition*. Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1998. (Hereafter, *WBC*)
Meyers, Carol. *Women in Scripture: A Dictionary of Named and Unnamed Women in the Hebrew Bible, the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books, and the New Testament*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 2000.

Highly recommended is:

Bellis, Alice Ogden. *Helpmates, Harlots, Heroines: Women's Stories in the Hebrew Bible*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1994.

Other Referenced Reading:

Alter, Robert. *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, N.Y.: Basic, 1981.
Berlin, Adele. *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1994.
Trible, Phyllis. *God and The Rhetoric of Sexuality*, Phil.: Fortress, 1978.

Note: also the various Feminist Companion volumes (1993-2001)
edited by Athalya Brenner, all of which are on reserve.

For other reading: consult the posted bibliography on my website.

CLASS SCHEDULE:

Week One

Tuesday, February 10 - **Women in Creation: Rhetorical Critical Interpretation**

Biblical reading: Gen.1-3, Song of Songs

Secondary reading: *WBC*, 13-18; 164-169 Alter, 27-32; 141-147; Trible, 1-30; 72-165; Bellis, 45-66, 199-203.

Week Two

Tuesday, February 17 - **Matriarchs in Genesis and Moses and Women: Type Scenes,**

Women's Stories as parallel to Men's Stories, and Women Saving The Saviors

Biblical reading: Gen. 11-36; 38; Ex. 1-2; 4:24-26; 15; Num.12

Secondary reading: *WBC*, 18-39 Alter, 53-56; 185-88; 160-161; Bellis, 67-106.

Week Three

Tuesday, February 24 - **Women in Judges and Ruth - Women as Representative of Israel**

Biblical reading: Judges 4-5; 11; 13-16; 19-21; Ruth.

Secondary reading: *WBC*, 73-96; Alter, 81-87; Berlin, 83-110; Trible, chapter 6; Bellis, 115-139, 206-211.

Week Four

Tuesday, March 3 - **Rahab, Hannah, David and Women: Characterization**

Biblical reading: I-II Samuel; Joshua 2

Secondary reading: *WBC*, 96-101; Alter, 75-6; 98-100; 114-130; Berlin, 23-42; Bellis, 140-159.

Week Five

Tuesday, March 10 - **Women and The Law: The Place of The Law**

Biblical reading: Selections from Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, & Deuteronomy

Secondary reading: *WBC*, 40-68.

Or (class vote)

Prophecy and Women: Metaphor as Message

Biblical reading: parts of Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah, & Ezekiel

Secondary reading: *WBC*, 169-250 (as assigned); Trible, chapter 2; Bellis, 177-190.

Week Six

Thursday, March 17 - **Three later Heroines: Esther, Judith, and Susanna**

Biblical reading: Esther, Judith; Susanna (Additions to Daniel)

Secondary reading: *WBC*, 131-137; 235-238; 279-285; 311-316; Bellis, 211-226.