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CS 610 Women in Church and Society

Christine Pohl

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CS 610: Women in Church and Society
Asbury Theological Seminary, Fall 2005
Tuesdays, 6:15-9:00pm

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Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 12:30-3:00pm and by appointment

DRAFTExpect some minor revisions before first day of class***

Purpose:

To equip students with an understanding and appreciation of women's contributions in church and society. To provide students with critical tools for interacting with contemporary issues of gender. To understand the role of gender in church and society--historically, sociologically, morally, and theologically.

Objectives:

Upon completion of the course, students will be able:

- * To recognize and critique historical texts that have shaped theological and cultural views of women and their roles, spheres, virtues, etc.
- * To explain their own understandings of the complex and ambiguous history of women in the church.
- * To explain the significance of gender in the various spheres of life: family, church, economy, polity, and culture.
- * To assess contemporary analyses of women in church and society.
- * To demonstrate understanding of issues that especially affect women and families today: e.g. pornography, working outside the home, abortion, abuse.
- * To articulate a normative framework for offering a Christian response to the current discussions of gender, gender difference, power and powerlessness, etc.

Texts:

Bauckham, Richard, *Gospel Women: Studies of the Named Women in the Gospels* (Eerdmans, 2002).

Gallagher, Sally K., *Evangelical Identity and Gendered Family Life* (Rutgers Univ. Press, 2003).

MacHaffie, Barbara J., ed., *Readings in Her Story: Women in Christian Tradition* (Fortress, 1992).

Storkey, Elaine, *Origins of Difference* (Baker, 2001).

Selected readings on internet and electronic data bases.

Additional Reading

Choose one of the following to read and write interaction paper on:

Barger, Lilian Calles, *Eve's Revenge: Women and a Spirituality of the Body* (Brazos, 2003). Due Nov. 29.

Creegan, Nicola Hoggard and Christine D. Pohl, *Living on the Boundaries: Evangelical Women, Feminism and the Theological Academy* (InterVarsity, 2005). Due Dec. 6.

Van Leeuwen, Mary Stewart, *My Brother's Keeper: What the Social Sciences Do (and Don't) Tell Us about Masculinity* (InterVarsity, 2002). Due Nov. 15.

Walker, Margaret Urban, ed., *Mother Time: Women, Aging and Ethics* (Rowman & Littlefield, 1999). Due Nov. 1.

Evaluation:

15% Integrative essays on biblical and early Christian tradition. Due Oct. 4.

10% Integrative essays on historical tradition. Due Oct. 25.

5% Interaction paper on additional reading. Due on the day the book will be discussed in class.

20% 5 page paper on selected topic in second half of course—see lists.

10% Class presentation on chosen topic.

40% Final research paper.

Debit: For inadequate class participation and/or late or incomplete reading.

Grade Range:

Work for CS610 will be evaluated at a graduate/professional school level.

A = (4.0) Exceptional work: surpassing, markedly outstanding achievement of course objectives

B = (3.0) Good work: strong, significant achievement of course objectives

C = (2.0) Acceptable work: basic, essential achievement of course objectives

D = (1.0) Marginal work: inadequate, minimal achievement of course objectives

F = (0) Unacceptable work: failure to achieve course objectives

Participation: Students are required to complete all assigned readings. Reading Records will be collected on the last day of class. Failure to complete readings on time will result in a lowering of the final grade, as will poor attendance for class. Attendance will be taken. The deduction for low participation and/or late or incomplete reading of assigned material will be up to 10% against the final grade (a full letter grade reduction).

Written Work: All written work must be typed with 12-point type, one inch margins on all four sides, and true double-spacing (unless otherwise indicated). Please follow page limit requirements. There will be a penalty for late papers commensurate with the degree of lateness and the adequacy of the excuse. Papers are due in class on assigned date.

All written work must use inclusive language when reference is made to human beings (male and female). This provides for both greater inclusion and greater precision.

Assignments:

1. Integrative essays covering biblical, early church and patristic materials. Assignment to be distributed in class. Five pages, due October 4 (15%).
2. Integrative essays covering historical materials. Assignment to be distributed in class. Three pages, due October 25 (10%).
3. Interaction paper on additional reading. See book choices above. Instructions re. format for paper on page 7 of syllabus. Due for class session during which book will be addressed. See below. 1 page, single-spaced (5%).
4. Paper on contemporary issue or movement—for topics, see below. 5 page paper plus annotated bibliography. Instructions on page 7 of syllabus. Due on day topic will be discussed in class (20%).
5. Class presentation based on assignment #4. Includes outline and annotated bibliography to be distributed to class—see page 7 of syllabus. Due on day topic will be discussed in class (10%).
6. Final research paper. Students will choose a topic of current debate in gender discussions: e.g., pornography, abortion, language about God, ordination of women, women and racism, homosexuality. Paper should be 12-15 pages (double-spaced) and is due on Thursday of exam week. See pages 7-8 of syllabus (40%).
7. Class participation and reading record (debit).

CLASS SESSIONS: THEMES AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

September 6: Introductions to one another and to themes of the course.

September 13: Women in the Old Testament.

Read and carefully reflect on the following Old Testament passages:
 Genesis 1-3; 12; 16; 29-30; 34; 38. Exodus 20:14, 17; 21:7-11, 22.
 Leviticus 12; 15:19-33; 20:10-21. Deuteronomy 22:5, 13-30; 24:1-5; 25:5-10. Joshua 2. Judges 4-5; 11:29-40; 19. Ruth. 1 Samuel 1-2:21; 25.
 1 Kings 17. 2 Kings 4:8-37; 22. Proverbs 5:1-6; 9:13-18; 31:10-31.
 Ezekiel 16. Joel 2:28-29. Hosea 1-3.

Read: Bauckham, xi-107.

September 20: Women, Jesus, and the Gospels

Read and carefully reflect on the following Gospel passages: Matthew 1-2; 12:46-50; 15:21-28; 19:1-15; 22:23-33; 27:15-20; 27:55-28:20. Mark 5:21-43; 15:40-16:20. Luke 1-3; 7:11-17, 36-50; 8:1-3, 19-21, 40-56; 10:38-42; 13:10-17; 23:49-24:53. John 4:1-42; 8:1-11; 11:1-44; 12:1-8; 19:25-20:31.

Read: Bauckham, 108-310.

September 27: Women and the New Testament church, early church, and patristic period

Read and carefully reflect on the following New Testament passages: Acts 1:12-14; 2:14-21; 9:36-43; 12:12-17; 16:11-15; 18:1-3, 24-28; 21:8-9. Romans 16. 1 Corinthians 7; 11:1-16; 14:33-40. Galatians 3:26-28. Ephesians 5:21-33. Colossians 3:18-19; 4:15. 1 Timothy 2:8-15; 5:3-16. Titus 2:3-5. 1 Peter 3:1-7.

Read: MacHaffie, 17-20, 24-49.
Selected Readings as announced

October 4: NO CLASS

October 11: Women in Graeco-Roman thought, Middle Ages, and Reformation

Read: MacHaffie, 49-91.
Selected Readings by Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, and Reformation writers

October 18: Women and the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

Read: MacHaffie, 92-162
Selected readings by Wesley and other eighteenth century writers

October 25: Women and the Twentieth and Twenty-first Century: Overview of contemporary feminisms and contemporary analyses of gender

Read: Storkey, 7-133

5 Page Papers and Class Presentations:

Womanist (African-American Feminist) Contributions
 Mujerista (Latina) Feminist Contributions
 Asian Feminist Contributions
 Feminism and the American Civil Rights Movement
 Islamic Feminism
 Jewish Feminism

November 1: Women and the Family**Read:** Gallagher, 3-104Reading & Interaction Paper Option: *Mother Time***5 Page Papers and Class Presentations:**

Women and Abortion
 Women and Aging
 Gender and Childrearing
 Teen Pregnancy
 Gender and Reproductive Technologies
 Domestic Violence
 International Concerns about the “girl child”

November 8: Women and the Economy (work and household issues)**Read:** Gallagher, 105-180*Selected Readings***5 Page Papers and Class Presentations:**

Women and Poverty (US issues)
 Women and Welfare
 Daycare and Children’s Well-being
 Workplace Innovations
 Sexual Harassment in the Workplace
 Women and Development Issues (international)

November 15: Women and the Political Sphere**Read:***Selected Readings*Reading and Interaction Paper Option: *My Brother’s Keeper*

5 Page Paper and Class Presentations:

Women as Criminals and Crime Victims
 Women and Pornography
 Gender and Conversational styles
 Women and Leadership styles
 Contemporary Men's Movements
 Women and the Military
 International Issues: Women and Forced Prostitution
 International Issues: Domestic Workers

November 22:**READING WEEK****November 29:****Women and Culture****Read:***Selected Readings*Reading and Interaction Paper Option: *Eve's Revenge***5 Page Paper and Class Presentations:**

Gender and Friendship
 Women and Fashion
 Women and Media Images
 Gender and Eating Disorders
 Inclusive Language
 International: Women in Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, or Judaism

December 6:**Women and the Church****Read:** MacHaffie, 191-238*Selected Readings*Reading and Interaction Paper Option: *Living on the Boundaries***5 Page Paper and Class Presentations:**

Women and Ordination
 Gender and Liturgy
 Feminist Ecclesiologies
 Sophia/Goddess
 Gender in the classroom
 Women and the Emergent Church
 Women in Contemporary Missions

Guidelines for Papers and Presentations

Five Page Paper and One Page Annotated Bibliography:

Students will choose among topics listed in boxes on pages 5-6 of syllabus, providing a 1st, 2nd, and 3rd choice to make sure all topics are covered.

For the paper:

In two pages, describe the issue and its impact in contemporary society.

Use the next two pages to analyze causal factors and concerns.

In a final page, suggest normative and practical responses for individual Christians and congregations.

Provide an *annotated* bibliography of six to eight of the best sources you found (include a mix of books, articles and websites). Provide two to three substantive sentences on each source.

Class Presentation:

From your paper above, develop **an eight minute** class presentation (you must stay within the time limit). Develop a one page substantive outline to distribute to the class.

Also, provide each student in the class with a copy of your annotated bibliography.

Creativity of presentation is encouraged, but there can be no use of technology.

Interaction Paper:

Choose one of the books listed under “Additional Reading.” Read it carefully and write a one page/single-spaced interaction paper, following this format:

1. Identify a key issue raised by the author(s). Explain why the author thinks it is significant and analyze the basic contours of the argument (you will need to be very concise).
2. What parts of the analysis are convincing? Which are problematic?
3. What are the implications for Christian ministry?

Guidelines for Final Paper

Your final paper should help you to understand the significance of gender for a particular issue (e.g. abortion, pornography, ordination) or sphere of life (e.g. family, church, economy, culture). **DO NOT CHOOSE THE SAME TOPIC AS YOU COVERED IN YOUR 5 PAGE PAPER.** From your research and reflection, you should draw normative conclusions about the issue you have worked on (how should the Christian respond to this issue and why).

The first half of your paper should address the following questions:

1. What are the key issues and arguments related to your topic?
2. How do questions of gender, power (social, economic, or political), and belief affect this topic?
3. Which persons and institutions are most affected by this topic and how is this significant to the issue?
4. Why is this topic contested? Which aspects are most compelling to you?

In the second half of your paper you should develop a framework for addressing the issue. It should take seriously the relevant biblical materials, theological commitments, and concerns about the well-being of all persons, but especially address concerns about the well-being of women. It should include some practical implications and strategies for response.

The paper should be 12-15 pages long—divided into two parts—the first is an analysis of the issue and its interpretations; the second half should provide a normative response to the issue. Use proper form for footnotes and bibliography. You should have at least eight significant sources. You must clear the topic with the professor.