

## SMC 322H1F – CHRISTIANITY AND FEMINISM

**CLASS MEETINGS:** R10-12, Carr Hall 103

---

**Instructor:** Reid B. Locklin

**Office:** Odette Hall 130

**Phone:** 416.926.1300, x3317

**Email:** [reid.locklin@utoronto.ca](mailto:reid.locklin@utoronto.ca)

**Office Hours:** **T10:10 am – 12 noon** and by chance or appointment

**Email Policy:** I will attempt to respond to legitimate email enquiries from students within 3-4 days. If you do not receive a reply within this period, please re-submit your question(s) and/or leave a message by telephone. Where a question cannot be easily or briefly answered by email, I will indicate that the student should see me during my posted office hours.

---

### Course Description

A study of the impact of modern and contemporary feminist movements in Christian theology and practice. In the first and second sections of the course, we take up key issues in the feminist critique of classical Christianity and several feminist reformulations of major Christian *topoi* of salvation, sin and community, respectively. These sections will draw mainly on North American feminist theorists and theologians, in dialogue with Queer theology, First Nations critique and postcolonial perspectives from the global South. The final section of the course will consist of a close reading of a significant work by a single thinker: in this case, the Brazilian ecofeminist Ivone Gebara.

The format of the course will ordinarily be class discussion of the assigned readings in the first hour, followed by a lecture on the assignment for the following class in the second hour.

---

### Course Objectives

1. To acquire and demonstrate sympathetic familiarity with modern and contemporary feminist critiques of classical Christian thought and various responses to them, from sources both external and internal to Christian traditions;
2. To acquire and demonstrate the ability to articulate and critically to reflect upon diverse feminist reformulations of major Christian ideas;
3. To further develop and demonstrate academic skills in reading, critical analysis, research and clear written expression.

---

### Required Texts

- The following required textbooks are available at **Crux Books** (5 Hoskin Avenue, at Wycliffe College; 416.599.2749):
  - Ivone Gebara, *Longing for Running Water* (Fortress, 1999).
  - Serene Jones, *Feminist Theory and Christian Theology* (Fortress, 2000).
  - *Recommended:* Kate Turabian, et al, *A Manual for Writers*, 8<sup>th</sup> Ed (Chicago UP, 2013).
- Students will also need to access additional readings, which are available on Blackboard.

Please see the attached course outline for specific assignments and full bibliographic information.

---

## Assignments and Evaluation

- 10% – *General Class Participation* (attendance, contributions to small group and large group class discussions, and other short assignments, as specified by the instructor).
  - 10% – *Weekly, In-Class Submissions of “Two-Sentence Summaries”* – see attached guidelines.
  - 10% – *Annotated Bibliographical Citation* (300-400 words) on one scholarly article selected from a list provided by the instructor, due **30 September 2013** – see attached guidelines.
  - 10% – *Individual or Group Research Project Proposal*, due **1 November 2013**.
  - 30% – *Individual or Group Research Project* (10-12 page research paper, or an alternate assessment tool proposed on 1 November and approved by the instructor), due **2 December 2013**.
  - 30% – *Comprehensive Final Examination*, Fall Examination Period (9-20 December 2013)\*\*  
**\*\*Date and time to be set by the Registrar for the Faculty of Arts and Science**
- ✓ **Please note:** late papers and projects will be penalized by 2% for each day, or portion thereof, they are delayed (M-F). Papers will not ordinarily be accepted more than one week past the assigned deadline; **papers delayed more than one week will receive a score of 0%.**

Marking protocols for tests and term papers will follow the Grading Regulations described on p. 674-75 of the *University of Toronto Faculty of Arts and Science (St. George Campus) 2013-2014 Calendar*. **NOTE: Failure to attempt each one of these assignments (annotation, proposal, project, final examination) will ordinarily result in failure of the course.**

---

## Academic Expectations

Students are expected to attend class regularly, to submit assignments on time, and to participate actively in class discussions. It is also expected that reading assignments will be completed by the date and time of each class. Excessive absences (i.e. more than one in a term), obvious lack of preparation and/or inadequate performance in the service placement will weigh against the participation portion of the student's final grade. *Please turn off pagers and cell phones during class.*

All students in this class are bound by the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters available at <<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>>. Each individual student is responsible for completing her or his own work, for appropriately acknowledging outside sources used in the preparation of papers and other written work and for avoiding plagiarism or any other academic offence detailed in the Code. For more information on the Code and suggestions on how to avoid an offence, please visit the Student Academic Integrity website (<http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/osai/students>). To ensure the veracity of written work, students will submit papers both to the instructor and to Turnitin.com, a commercial anti-plagiarism service engaged by the University of Toronto.

**Please read the following notice very carefully:** *Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.*

2013-2014 COURSE OUTLINE FOR  
SMC322H1F: CHRISTIANITY AND FEMINISM

**Instructor:** Reid B. Locklin, University of Toronto

Reading assignments should generally be completed no later than **the date and time of the class for which they are assigned**. They may be subject to review and revision, as specified by the instructor. Sources marked with an asterisk (\*) are available on Blackboard.

UNIT ONE: FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES

12 September Introduction to the Course

- *Optional:* Mary Field Belenky and Ann V. Stanton, "Inequality, Development, and Connected Knowing," in *Learning as Transformation: Critical Perspectives on a Theory in Progress*, ed. Jack Mezirow. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2000), 71-102.\*

19 September What is Feminism?

- Seneca Falls Conference, "Declaration of Sentiments" (1848), *Modern History Sourcebook*, <<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/senecafalls.asp>>.\*
- Paula Treichler and Cheris Kramarae, "Feminism," in *Feminist Theory: A Reader*, ed. Wendy K. Kolmar and Frances Bartkowski, 3d ed. (Boston: McGraw Hill Higher Education, 2010), 7-11.\*
- Serene Jones, *Feminist Theory and Christian Theology: Cartographies of Grace* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 1-48 (chs. 1-2).
- **Due in Class on 19 Sept:** Two-Sentence Summary on 1) Treichler and Kramarae, 2) Jones, ch. 2 (2 sentences for each [4 total], two short paragraphs for one or the other).

26 September Male and Female?

- Judith Butler, Selection from *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (1990), in *Feminist Theory: A Reader*, ed. Wendy K. Kolmar and Frances Bartkowski, 3d ed. (Boston: McGraw Hill Higher Education, 2010), 434-442.\*
- Prudence Allen, R.S.M., "Sex and Gender Differentiation in Hildegard of Bingen and Edith Stein," *Communio* 20 (1993): 389-414.\*
- Sarah Coakley, "The Eschatological Body: Gender, Transformation and God," in *Powers and Submissions: Spirituality, Philosophy and Gender* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), 153-67.\*
- **Due in Class on 26 Sept:** Two-Sentence Summary on Butler, Allen and Coakley (2 sentences for each [6 total], two short paragraphs for one you select).

⇒ **Annotated Bibliographical Citation due in the strongbox outside Alumni Hall 311 no later than 1:00 pm on Monday, 30 September 2013.**

## 3 October Scripture and Tradition?

- Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Selections from *The Woman's Bible* (1895, 1898), in *Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Feminist as Thinker: A Reader in Documents and Essays*, ed. Ellen Carol Dubois and Richard Cándida Smith (New York and London: New York University Press, 2007), 282-95.\*
- Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, "Toward a Feminist Critical Hermeneutics," in *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins* (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1983), 3-40.\*
- Musa W. Dube, "The Doubly Colonized Decolonizing Method," in *Postcolonial Feminist Interpretation of the Bible* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2000), 111-24.\*
- **Due in Class on 3 Oct:** Two-Sentence Summary on Stanton, Schüssler Fiorenza, and Dube (again: 6 sentences, 2 paragraphs).

## 10 October God and/or Goddess?

- Mary Daly, "After the Death of God the Father: Women's Liberation and the Transformation of Christian Consciousness" (1971), in *Womanspirit Rising: A Feminist Reader in Religion*, ed. Carol B. Christ and Judith Plaskow, 2d ed. (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1992), 53-62.\*
- Rosemary Radford Ruether, "Sexism and God-Language: Male and Female Images of the Divine," in *Sexism and God-Talk: Toward a Feminist Theology* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1983), 47-71.\*
- Catherine Keller, "Returning God: The Gift of Feminist Theology," in *Feminism, Sexuality, and the Return of Religion*, ed. Linda Martin Alcoff and John D. Caputo (Indianapolis and Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011), 55-76.\*
- **Due in Class on 10 Oct:** Two-Sentence Summary on Daly, Ruether and Keller.

## UNIT TWO: GRACE, SIN AND CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

## 17 October Redeeming Grace

- Jones, *Feminist Theory*, 49-68 (ch. 3).
- Marcella Althaus-Reid, "Queer Holiness: Post-Colonial Revelations," in *The Queer God* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 154-71.\*
- Tina Beattie, "Queen of Heaven," in *Queer Theology: Rethinking the Western Body*, ed. Gerard Loughlin (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2007), 293-304.\*
- **Due in Class on 17 Oct:** Two-Sentence Summary on Jones, Althaus-Reid and Beattie.

## 24 October Sin and/as Oppression

- Valerie Saiving, "The Human Situation: A Feminine View," *Journal of Religion* 40 (1960): 100-112.\*
- Jones, *Feminist Theory*, 69-125 (chs. 4-5).
- **Due in Class on 24 Oct:** Two-Sentence Summary on Saiving, Jones, ch. 4, and Jones, ch. 5 (6 sentences, 2 short paragraphs).

## 31 October Human Community

- Jones, *Feminist Theory*, 126-52 (ch. 6).
- Samantha Brennan, "The Liberal Rights of Liberal Feminism," in *Varieties of Feminist Liberalism*, ed. Amy R. Baehr (Lanham, MD: Rowan and Littlefield, 2004), 85-102.\*
- Andrea Smith, "First Nation, Empire and Globalization," in *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Theology*, ed. Mary McClintock Fulkerson and Sheila Briggs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 307-31.\*
- **Due in Class on 31 Oct:** Two-Sentence Summary on Jones, Brennan, and Smith.

⇒ **Research Project Proposal due in the strongbox outside Alumni Hall 311 no later than 1:00 pm on Friday, 1 November 2013.**

## 7 November Christian Community

- Jones, *Feminist Theory*, 153-76 (ch. 7).
- Anne-Marie Pelletier, "The Teachers of Man, for the Church as Bride," in *Women in Christ: Toward a New Feminism*, ed. Michele M. Schumacher (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2004), 232-47.\*
- Kwok Pui-Lan, "Beyond Pluralism: Toward a Postcolonial Theology of Religious Difference," in *Postcolonial Imagination and Feminist Theology* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), 186-208.\*
- **Due in Class on 7 Nov:** Two-Sentence Summary on Jones, Pelletier and Kwok.

## UNIT THREE: ECOLOGY, FEMINISM AND CHRISTIAN LIBERATION

## 14 November Epistemology and Anthropology

- Ivone Gebara, *Longing for Running Water: Ecofeminism and Liberation* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1999), v-ix, 1-99 (Prologue, Introduction, chs. 1-2).
- **Due in Class on 14 Nov:** Two-Sentence Summary on Gebara, ch. 1 and ch. 2.

21 November            God and Trinity

- Gebara, *Longing for Running Water*, 101-71 (chs. 3-4).
- **Due in Class on 21 Nov:** Two-Sentence Summary on Gebara, ch. 3 *and* ch. 4.

28 Nov                    Incarnation and Ethics

- Gebara, *Longing for Running Water*, 173-216 (chs. 5-6, Epilogue).
- **Due in Class on 28 Nov:** Two-Sentence Summary on Gebara, ch. 5 *and* ch. 6.
- **Second Hour:** Distribute questions and review for Final Examination.

⇒ **Final Research Paper due in the strongbox outside Alumni Hall 311 no later than 1:00 pm on Monday, 2 December 2013.**

9-20 December

**Comprehensive Final Examination on the date and time set by the Registrar for the Faculty of Arts and Science**

## What on Earth is a Two-Sentence Summary?

In the first hour of most class sessions, we will conduct a discussion of the readings assigned for the week. There are various ways to prepare for class discussions: reading, obviously, but also one or another form of pre-writing. In some classes, I have used short summaries of course readings or concept maps. In this class, for **each** reading for a given week (two or three), I ask students to identify two sentences from that source and copy them onto a separate sheet:

- One sentence that you judge *best illustrates the argument, purpose or distinctive perspective of the author*. Here I am not interested so much in what *you* think about the piece, as in what you judge that **the author** is trying to communicate.
- One sentence that *you wish to affirm and/or to challenge*. Here the precise purpose is to develop **your own perspective**, and to note what excites or troubles you (or both) in a particular reading. This sentence may be central to the author's own argument, or it may be a rather marginal point the author makes along the way. Please mark this sentence A (affirm), or C (challenge), or AC (both affirm and challenge).

Please give the page number from which you have drawn the sentence. A full bibliographical citation is not required for this assignment.

For **one** of the assigned sources (your choice), I ask students to write two short paragraphs (50-100 words) to explain: **for sentence #1**, why you think that sentence best captures the author's argument and/or how it draws together other ideas presented by the source; and **for sentence #2**, what you find attractive, troubling or provocative about the ideas represented by the selected sentence and/or what specifically you wish to affirm or challenge.

Each week, students are thus asked to come prepared with 4-6 sentences copied from 2-3 sources, as well as two short paragraphs on one of these sentence pairs. The Two-Sentence Summary may be typed, or it may be handwritten. If you wish, you can think of it as a weekly journal for the course, albeit one focused primarily on gaining a sympathetic command of assigned readings.

The Two-Sentence Summary will be collected at the end of discussion **every class for which there is assigned reading**. It will not be given a letter grade, but will be marked with a ✓ for completion, √- if it is incomplete (missing sentences or paragraphs), or 0 for non-completion. The instructor will periodically provide written feedback on the Two-Sentence Summaries.

**PLEASE NOTE: Two-Sentence Summaries will not be accepted late, by email, or outside of class.** If you miss a class, you will ordinarily also miss the opportunity to submit the Two-Sentence Summary for the readings assigned for that class.

**MODEL TWO-SENTENCE SUMMARY***For Selected Readings Assigned for 19 September 2013*

By Reid B. Locklin

(I tried to do this fairly quickly, without obsessing too much about it: it took me a bit over 20 minutes, several days after completing the readings)

Seneca Falls Conference:

1. “Now, in view of this entire disfranchisement of one-half the people of this country, their social and religious degradation . . . we insist that they have immediate admission to all the rights and privileges which belong to them.”
2. AC: “We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights . . . ”

Treichler and Kramarae:

1. “Has as its goal to give every woman ‘the opportunity of becoming the best that her natural faculties make her capable of’ (Millicent Garrett Fawcett)” (p. 7)

This reading deliberately adopts a plural idiom, even to the point of rejecting correct grammatical constructions as a criterion of proper prose. It highlights the particularity of different voices and definitions it quotes. Nevertheless, I think that this quotation, introduced early, actually captures the main theme of other quotations as well.

2. A: “Profeminist is a term used to describe the male who works toward feminist goals” (p. 8)

I often have difficulty explaining to people why I am reluctant to call myself a feminist, when other men do. Part of it is that “feminist” means many different things, so I want to know what people mean before I affirm it of myself. More basically, I think I risk claiming too much and perhaps even silencing other voices if I claim I am a feminist, as this author suggests. So I usually choose, “ally” – “Profeminist” also works.

Jones, chapter 1:

1. Feminist theology “is a theology that articulates the Christian message in language and actions that seek to liberate woman and all persons, a goal that Christian feminists believe cannot be disentangled from the central truth of the Christian faith as a whole” (p. 14).
2. A: “Feminist systematic theology also identifies ‘fitting connections’ between doctrine and concrete actions in the Christian community” (p. 18).

# “I don’t have time to do the reading!”

Obviously, in order to do well in a course, you will eventually have to complete the readings very carefully—typically this will require *between 3 and 4 hours* of preparation for each and every class. However, particularly as we come to the end of the term, you may not always be able to commit this time before each class.

So what do you do if you cannot complete the reading?

## BRING THE READINGS TO CLASS

First and foremost, please **bring the readings with you to class**. If you have not read, and you do not have the readings with you, you make yourself a completely passive learner . . . which, for most students, means that you are unlikely to do much learning at all. There are exceptions to this rule, but they are few. Most people learn most effectively through engagement.

If you do not have time to complete the readings, however, you can still engage with them. Here are some suggestions:



- If you have only **5 minutes** for preparation: take a quick look at *handouts* and/or *secondary source* assignments to get a sense of the reading. A secondary source may summarize a primary source very succinctly.
- If you have only **15-20 minutes** to prepare: Do the above, plus read all of the *chapter headings* in the reading, if they exist. Often, this will allow you to hone in on a short statement of the most essential points: for example, a section labelled "The Main Point of My Argument" is very likely to be of central importance to whatever we will discuss in class. This doesn't help with every source but it is a good tool to keep in your academic kit.
- If you have an **hour**: read the *first and last paragraph of each chapter* of a selection, and the *first and last sentence of every paragraph*, and slow down here and there to read passages that are obviously central. For most authors, this will give you a very good idea of the main argument.
- What if you have **no time at all**? *Bring the reading with you to class.*



(Adapted from an email rant by Prof. Reid Locklin; used with permission)

## ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHICAL CITATIONS FOR SMC322H1F

(Adapted, with permission, from class materials developed by Jennifer A. Harris)

### *Definition*

A bibliography is a list of sources (books, journals, websites, periodicals, etc.) one has used for researching a topic. A bibliography usually just includes the bibliographic information (i.e., the author, title, publisher, etc.).

An annotation is a critical summary and evaluation. Therefore, an annotated bibliography includes a summary and evaluation of each of the sources. Your annotations should do the following:

**Summarise:** What are the main arguments? What is the point of this book or article? What topics are covered? If someone asked what this article/chapter is about, what would you say?

**Assess:** After summarising a source, you must evaluate it. How effectively does the author make her argument? Is it a useful source? How does it compare with other sources in your bibliography? Is the information reliable? Is it this source biased or objective? What is the goal of this source?

**Reflect:** Once you have summarized and assessed a source, you need to ask how it fits into this course and/or your own research. Was this source helpful to you? Has it changed how you think about the feminist theory, Christian feminism, or the specific topic at hand? In this reflection, you should feel free to refer to other sources from your research and/or from the shared reading for the course.

### *Format*

1) The bibliographic information: Generally the bibliographic information of the source (the title, author, publisher, date, etc.) is written in the University of Chicago style.

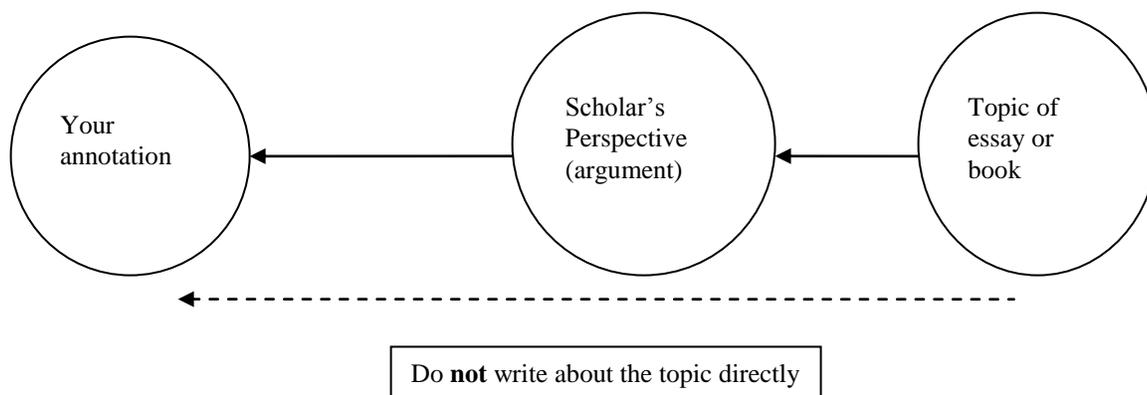
2) The annotation: The annotations for each source are written in paragraph form. The lengths of the annotations should be one to two pages (300-400 words).

3) **\*\*Total word count for the annotation.**

### *Tips for your reading*

- Read the first and last paragraph of each section—or chapter of each book—very closely: this is where you are likely to encounter the scholar's argument, i.e., the case she is trying to make in the work;
- Keep in mind that every scholar has a unique perspective on her topic of choice; your job is to discern this perspective and to describe it in your summary paragraph.
- The summary is a description of the author's argument, not of the essay itself. Be careful to omit unnecessary details.

You may wish to think of your annotation as a reading exercise, rather than a writing exercise; your task is to read carefully and critically to discover the scholar's perspective. You are not simply reading for information about the topic (although you are to keep track of this information, as needed). Be sure to focus your comments on the author's argument, rather than focusing merely on the topic of the chapter or essay.



Be sure to leave time between the completion of a penultimate draft and the final draft of your annotation: with time comes perspective on what is necessary and what is extraneous.

Here is a descriptive model of an annotation:

1) Summary:

A critical summary of the main argument put forth by the author. This first sentence of your summary may be a general description of the work, but the rest of the summary paragraph should focus on the author's argument, beginning with a *status quaestionis* or "state of the question," followed by the argument. This is *not* a summary of all the data presented by the author, but of her argument.

**Summary paragraph**

[a. descriptive sentence] In his message to the Communion and Liberation meeting (August 2002), Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger discusses the meaning of beauty and truth in the Christian tradition.

[b. state of the question] Christian discourse on beauty, he says, is paradoxical: Christ is both "the fairest child of man," and has "no beauty ... to attract our eyes." And this paradox allows us to navigate between the temptations to equate truth and ugliness and to equate superficial beauty with true beauty.

[c. argument summary] A theological beauty, which is truth itself, must encompass the attractiveness of the gospel, with the suffering at its core. Only in balancing these two elements can a Christian notion of beauty avoid the temptation to ugliness or superficiality.

[Word count: 112]

2) Assessment:

Does the author answer the question raised in her introduction? Is the *status quaestionis* adequately addressed? These are the questions you should consider as you embark on your assessment of your source. Again, keep your attention focused on the author's argument (above all, do not criticize the author for her writing style, unless it is a true impediment to understanding).

**Assessment paragraph**

Ratzinger invites us to consider the beauty of Christ. While he refers to scripture and theology, Ratzinger also point to beauty in art. His example is the experience of listening to a cantata by Bach. This choice, however, it not entirely helpful: as an experience of beauty, music may be an apt example of abstract theology, yet it does not aid the debate about visual aesthetics to which he alludes. When averring to the Passion itself, as suffering that beauty-as-truth must encompass, he points to the Shroud of Turin as its visual depiction, rather than to an artistic work. As such, Ratzinger's essay remains at the level of abstraction that does little to negotiate the path between ugliness and superficiality. [Word count: 120]

3) Reflection:

In this final section, you are invited to offer general comments on the usefulness of your source to a study of the course topic (in the case of the example: the Passion). Be careful to keep your comments at a general level, rather than bringing them directly into the realm of your own project. Write, therefore, to assist anyone who reads your annotation, and wishes to write on this topic.

**Reflection paragraph:**

Ratzinger's meditation on beauty draws beautifully from poetry, music, and philosophy. His argument invites us to include the suffering of the Passion within a theology of beauty. His argument for an expansion of the notion of beauty beyond its obvious physical manifestation is useful for the consideration of depictions of the Passion in art. In particular, Ratzinger's argument against ugliness as the key to truth invites a careful consideration of depictions of the Passion in art, inviting us to consider what balance the work promotes between the horror of the event and the beauty of its meaning. [Word count: 97]

**Total word count: 329**

**MAJOR RESEARCH PROJECT**

Project proposal due no later than 1:00 pm on Monday, 4 November 2013

Paper due no later than 1:00 pm on Monday, 2 December 2013

In the first two units of this course, we have been studying a variety sources and historical moments in the interaction between feminist and Christian intellectual traditions. Some of these sources have been critical of various aspects of Christian traditions, whereas others have offered Christian critiques or Christian reinterpretations of feminist themes. Our major resources for this study have been selected primary sources from first, second and third wave feminist thinkers, as well as Serene Jones' *Feminist Theory and Christian Theology*.

**For this assignment**, you will be asked to write a research paper of approximately 2500-3000 words length (8-10 pages). In this paper, you will take up some topic related to our shared study, situate that topic in the context of recent scholarly conversations, and articulate your own constructive engagement with the research question(s) that arise therefrom. The Project is worth a total of 40% of your final mark for this course – 10% for the Project Proposal, 30% for the Final Paper.

- ☞ **NOTE:** Students may work on this project individually, or in groups of up to 3 – see the handout “Group Project Agreement.” This decision must be made before submission of the Proposal, and it cannot be changed thereafter.
- ☞ **NOTE:** Students may propose an alternative assessment tool if they wish – see the handout “Alternative Assessments.” This decision must be made before submission of the Proposal, and it cannot be changed thereafter

**To complete this assignment**, you will need to:

- ☑ **Select a topic.** This is really entirely up to you – you can research any theme or topic related to our studies in the course. See the attached handout, “How Do I Identify a Research Topic?”
- ☑ **Develop this topic into a research question(s) and build a bibliography of scholarly sources.** The best papers will draw on a variety of sources and go beyond mere reporting of these sources to critical assessment, constructive engagement and creative synthesis related to the chosen topic or theme.
- ☑ **Draft a Research Project Proposal**, including 1) a short paragraph (100-200 words) summarizing the “state of the question” on the topic in recent scholarship, 2) a second short paragraph describing the approach you wish to take to the question in your project, 3) a bibliography of 5-7 scholarly sources (including at least one book and one journal article), and 4) full Annotated Bibliographical Citations for **two** of these sources. **Where relevant, also include:** 1) a Group Project Agreement, and/or 2) an alternative assessment description, rationale, and revised marking protocol.
- ☑ **Formulate a clear thesis statement and select the evidence you will use to illustrate and/or support your thesis.** Your final paper will present your research question(s), your findings and your own development of the topic.

**See the marking protocol on the reverse of this page, the handout “What Should My Essay Be,” as well as resources from the University of Toronto writing centres for further guidelines.** *Your papers will not be read for some “party line” or “doctrinal fidelity”—they will be evaluated according to the clarity of your thought and quality of your writing!*

---

**Turning in the Project Proposal and Research Paper:**

- 📁 **No later than 1:00 pm on Monday, 4 November**, please hand-deliver your Project Proposal to the strongbox next to Alumni Hall 311. Please **staple the different parts of your proposal together** and **make sure your name(s) and the course number are on every page** (just in case things do get separated).
- 📁 **Before 1:00 pm on Monday, 2 December**, submit the electronic version of the paper to Turnitin.com, on Blackboard.
- 📁 **No later than 1:00 pm on Monday, 2 December**, please hand-deliver the hard copy of the paper to the strongbox next to Alumni Hall 311. Again, please **staple the different parts of your paper together** and **make sure your name and the course number are on every page**.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Topic/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>**Assignment-Specific Objectives:</b>	Strong	Satisfactory	Weak
<b>RESEARCH QUESTION(S):</b> Beyond merely selecting a research topic related to Christianity and feminism, you have also narrowed that topic appropriately, addressed its treatment in recent scholarship, and clearly identified a central research question for your paper.			
<b>SCHOLARLY RESEARCH:</b> You have drawn on a minimum of 5-7 appropriate sources related to your research question(s), including scholarly books and articles. Facts used are accurate, background details are provided as necessary, and you demonstrate grasp of the material.			
<b>ARGUMENT:</b> You have articulated a clear and original thesis that responds to your research question(s), and your paper stresses analysis of sources and arguments rather than merely recounting information from them.			
<b>CRITICAL SYNTHESIS:</b> Your use of sources, argument, and conclusion reveals significant original insight(s), creative connection(s) among disparate materials, and/or an original response to the research problem.			
<b>General Academic Writing Standards:</b>	Strong	Satisfactory	Weak
<b>INTRODUCTION:</b> Your introduction establishes a context and background, clearly defines the question or problem you will address in the paper, and offers a strong statement and/or outline of your argument.			
<b>STRUCTURE:</b> Your paper has a logical structure, in which the paragraphs flow from one idea to the next and support the overall argument. This is maintained throughout the paper.			
<b>CONCLUSION:</b> Your conclusion sums up the preceding arguments, draws together the paper, and adds insight to the discussion.			
<b>GRAMMAR AND USAGE:</b> The paper displays a command of standard written English, with few errors in grammar or usage.			
<b>TONE AND STYLE:</b> The tone of the paper is reasonable, well-written and flows well from one section to the next. When referring to human beings, you avoid using gender-exclusive or prejudicial language.			
<b>USE OF SOURCES:</b> Your paper uses a combination of direct quotation, paraphrase and summary. Direct quotations are not overused and are relevant to your discussion. They are properly introduced and formatted.			
<b>CITATION STYLE:</b> The sources of direct quotations and paraphrased material are correctly cited using the University of Chicago style.			
<b>LENGTH:</b> Paper is the proper length, without sacrificing content or style.			

\*\*These criteria will be given approximately double weight in evaluating the paper.

Base Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Late Penalty (if any): \_\_\_\_\_ Final Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Comments:**

# How Do I Identify a Research Topic?

For SMC322H1F: Christianity and Feminism

What is a research paper? It is a paper in which *its author joins a scholarly conversation about one or more well-defined research question(s)*. The author does not merely line up evidence in support of a particular argument or point of view: she or he does this in specific reference to a conversation already underway in the scholarly literature. Similarly, the author of a research paper does not merely report such a scholarly conversation: she or he *joins* this conversation by offering an original response to the research question(s) that is the focus of enquiry.

Because a good research paper joins an existing scholarly conversation, students are well-advised not to identify a topic in the abstract and then begin searching for sources, but rather to familiarize themselves with current scholarly conversations and see what research question(s) arise out of those conversations.

Here are four different strategies you might use for beginning your research:

- 1) **Survey the articles published in the last 3-5 years in a standard scholarly journal in the field, and select one article as the starting point for your own research.**

The best articles will be those that clearly identify an “emerging consensus” or a well-defined body of scholarly literature to which the author’s argument is directed, usually surveyed in the first part of the article and/or summarized in a dense footnote. This will give you a good starting-point for your own research. Your research paper may offer a further defense, scholarly critique or refinement of the argument of the article itself, or it may take up a different research question related to the same body of scholarship.

Standard scholarly journals suitable for research projects in SMC322H1F include:

*Feminist Review*

*Feminist Theology*

*Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*

*Journal of Women’s History*

- 2) **Identify a “classic text” in the field, and study the ongoing reception, critique and reinterpretation of that text by subsequent scholars – including, in some cases, the author her- or himself.**

“Classic texts” are works—usually scholarly books, but sometimes also particularly influential articles or even works of art—that have generated their own body of scholarship, consisting of creative applications of the author’s methods to new areas, critiques of the work and/or attempts to respond to the questions raised by it. Generally “classic works”

are not contemporary, but old enough to have been widely discussed; to work for a research paper, the scholarly conversation generated by the work should continue into the present. In this case, the research paper will include a treatment of the work itself, as well as the continuing scholarly conversation and debate around it.

“Classic” works suitable for research projects in SMC322H1F include, but are not limited to:

Elizabeth Cady Stanton, *The Woman’s Bible* (1895, 1898)  
Matilda Joslyn Gage, *Woman, Church and State* (1893)  
Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (1949)  
Valerie Saiving, “The Human Situation: A Feminine View” (1960)  
Mary Daly, *Beyond God the Father* (1973)  
Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk* (1983)  
Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her* (1983)  
Sallie McFague, *Models of God* (1987)  
Pope John Paul II, *Mulieris Dignitatem* (1988)  
Jacqueline Grant, *White Women’s Christ and Black Women’s Jesus* (1989)  
Chung Hyun Kyung, *The Struggle to Be Sun Again* (1990)  
Elizabeth Johnson, *She Who Is* (1992)  
Rebecca Chopp, *The Power to Speak* (1993)  
Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz, *En La Lucha* (1993)  
Carol P. Christ, *Rebirth of the Goddess* (1997)  
Grace Jantzen, *Becoming Divine* (1998)  
Marcella Althaus-Reid, *Indecent Theology* (2000)

**3) Select one of the topics from the syllabus and study the discussion of that topic in recent scholarship – including, where relevant, sources assigned and discussed in class.**

In many cases, the assigned readings for a given week are illustrative of broader conversations. In some cases, where the student chooses to start from one of the assigned sources for that week, the paper may resemble either option #1, above—if the selected source is quite recent—or option #2—if the selected source is a few years old and/or if it was selected due to its significant influence on the field. In other cases, the student may wish to take the selected topic in a different direction entirely, in dialogue with other scholarly conversations.

**4) Select another topic of your choice, related to the themes of the course.**

Students inevitably bring their own interests to any class, and you should feel free to explore these interests. Please recall, however, that the requirements of the paper are the same: to identify a scholarly conversation in the literature and to join this conversation. *Being interested in a topic is not sufficient to justify a research paper: the student must also identify a scholarly conversation.*

## ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENTS

For SMC322H1F: Christianity and Feminism

Reid B. Locklin

The final research project for SMC322 is described as a research paper. This makes good sense: most of the scholarship you will be engaging in your research is in the forms of scholarly papers (articles) or ordered compilations of a number of related scholarly papers (books). Particularly if you are considering further work in graduate school, strengthening your skills in writing research papers is a sensible thing to do.

Nevertheless, it is also true that not all scholarship, even at the highest level, is communicated in the form of research papers. When scholars attend conferences, for example, they usually present their research verbally: some do this simply by reading prepared texts, but others develop more sophisticated (and audience-friendly) presentation methods. Some scholars, particularly in the sciences or natural sciences, present their research at conferences in the form of carefully developed and executed posters. While not all methods of communication are equally effective at communicating a research argument, there are more different ways to do this than is often conceded by university professors of a certain age – including Generation X-ers like your instructor for this course.

Given the actual diversity of methods that scholars use to disseminate their work, for this project you have the option of specifying an alternative assessment tool, other than a paper, to present your research and submit it for assessment by the instructor. You have to make the case for the method that you wish to use: in addition to the two short paragraphs required of all students in the project proposal, you must include a third paragraph describing and justifying the tool that you wish to use. In addition, you have to supply the instructor with a **revised rubric** that can be used to assess your project. Note that the assignment-specific objectives are invariable: no matter what tool you select, you will have to articulate a research question, engage scholarly research, construct a persuasive argument and add insight to the discussion. You will need to edit the general academic standards (highlighted in yellow), with a few restrictions: you must include the same number of standards and they should roughly approximate the existing standards. The instructor retains the right to accept, reject or amend the rubric that you provide with your project proposal.

### EXAMPLE: PECHA KUCHA PRESENTATION

I (we) have decided to present our research argument in the form of a Pecha Kucha presentation (<http://www.pechakucha.org/>), consisting of 20 PowerPoint slides of 20 seconds each, accompanied by continuous narration. The total length of the presentation will be 6 minutes, 40 seconds. Though this is a very short presentation, it requires a great deal of discipline to do it well – as much discipline, I (we) contend, as a scholarly paper. In order to maintain a high level of academic rigour, I (we) will provide two sheets to accompany the presentation: 1) a complete bibliography; 2) a separate sheet that relates specific citations from these sources to individual presentation slides. We will also answer questions about our argument for 5-10 minutes after the presentation.

See sample revised rubric overleaf ↻

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Topic/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>**Assignment-Specific Objectives:</b>	Strong	Satisfactory	Weak
<b>RESEARCH QUESTION(S):</b> Beyond merely selecting a research topic related to Christianity and feminism, you have also narrowed that topic appropriately, addressed its treatment in recent scholarship, and clearly identified a central research question for your paper.			
<b>SCHOLARLY RESEARCH:</b> You have drawn on a minimum of 5-7 appropriate sources related to your research question(s), including scholarly books and articles. Facts used are accurate, background details are provided as necessary, and you demonstrate grasp of the material.			
<b>ARGUMENT:</b> You have articulated a clear and original thesis that responds to your research question(s), and your paper stresses analysis of sources and arguments rather than merely recounting information from them.			
<b>CRITICAL SYNTHESIS:</b> Your use of sources, argument, and conclusion reveals significant original insight(s), creative connection(s) among disparate materials, and/or an original response to the research problem.			
<b>General Academic Standards – for Pecha Kucha</b>	Strong	Satisfactory	Weak
<b>INTRODUCTION:</b> Your initial 1-3 slides establish a context and background, clearly define the question or problem you will address in the presentation, and offer a strong statement and/or outline of your argument.			
<b>STRUCTURE:</b> Your presentation has a logical structure, in which the slides flow from one idea to the next and support the overall argument. This is maintained throughout the presentation.			
<b>CONCLUSION:</b> Your conclusion sums up the preceding arguments, draws together the paper, and adds insight to the discussion.			
<b>CLARITY OF PRESENTATION:</b> Individual slides are well-selected to illustrate the ideas under discussion; if text is included, it does not clutter the slide. The discussion points remain in parallel to the proper slide, throughout the presentation.			
<b>PRESENTATION TONE AND STYLE:</b> Presenters speak at an appropriate tone and speed, with minimal use of notes. A professional, scholarly attitude toward the material is maintained throughout the presentation.			
<b>USE OF SOURCES:</b> The presentation makes effective use of material drawn from research sources. Quotations are not overused, either in the narration or in the slides. Accompanying the presentation, presenters have provided a list of slides, accompanied by citations from the relevant sources.			
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY:</b> The presenters provide a bibliography of research sources used to prepare the presentation in correct University of Chicago style.			
<b>LENGTH:</b> Presentation consists of 20 slides of 20 seconds each.			

\*\*These criteria will be given approximately double weight in evaluating the project.

Base Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Late Penalty (if any): \_\_\_\_\_ Final Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Comments:**