



Gender and Family

Gender and Family in Early Christianity

REL 332 OTTO

FALL 2016

T-TH 2:30-3-45 PM

SMITH 107

Description of Course

A study of the Greco-Roman family life; early Christian moral teachings in the context of Jewish and Greco-Roman popular morality; the early Christian family with a focus on slaves and children, marriage and divorce; gender constructions of masculinity and homosexual behavior and the position of women in the early church.

What were the "family values" of the first Christians? What were their ethics and moral teachings? How did the institution of marriage -- and divorce -- operate in the early church? How did the presence of slaves affect domestic and public affairs? What attitudes did believers hold about their sexuality, body, masculinity or womanhood? Why was ascetic behavior so appealing to many, like Paul? What positions did men hold in congregations? What positions did women hold? Were some women empowered to lead early congregations? Why or why not?

This course seeks to answer these intellectually compelling questions using gender as a category of historical analysis. It takes the concept of gender to family and household experience. Yet this course also connects the concept to other social systems of economy, politics and power, such as slavery. Of particular interest is the role of women in early Christian domestic and political structure. The result yields a revealing look at the daily life of the earliest Christians and their appropriation of "pagan" morality and certain family values found in wider Greco-Roman society.

After an introductory review of the New Testament writings and of the concepts "family" and "gender," we will go in search of the Greco-Roman family. Topics include housing and city life, education and occupations, family relations and the law. We will then examine early Christian moral teachings in the context of Jewish and Greco-Roman popular morality, with special attention to a comparison of Pauline ethics and "pagan" ethics. We will seek to understand the early Christian family as a Greco-Roman family, focusing on slaves and children, marriage and divorce.

An examination of ancient gender constructions of masculinity and homosexual behavior is an integral component of this inquiry. We will then investigate the position of women in the early church, and the challenge of modern feminist theology in the modern church. In the last two weeks of class, the instructor will turn the class over to the students, who will give oral presentations of their research papers.

Required Texts

Dixon, S. (1992) The Roman Family. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. ISBN: 080184200X

Fiorenza, E.S. et al. (1994). In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins. New York: Crossroad/Herder & Herder. ISBN: 0824513576

HarperCollins Study Bible: New Revised Standard Version (with the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books), Wayne A. Meeks, et al., eds. (1993). New York: Society of Biblical Literature. ISBN: 0060655801

Osiek, C. and Balch, D. (1997). Families in the New Testament World: Households and House Churches. Louisville, KY: John Knox/ Westminster Press. ISBN: 0664255469

Williams, C.A. (2010). Roman Homosexuality: Ideologies of Masculinity in Classical Antiquity (Ideologies of Desire), 2nd Edition. New York: Oxford Press. ISBN: 978-0-538874-9

Women & Christian Origins, Ross Kraemer and Mary D'Angelo, eds, (1999). New York: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 978-0-19-510396-0

There are also online articles (in html and pdf formats). You will be expected to read the articles and take careful notes prior to the class period to which they are assigned.

Course Requirements

1. Students will keep a Reading/Reflection Journal. This journal should reflect 1) notes on reading, **constructed prior to the class session for which the reading was assigned** and 2) reflections on class lecture and discussion. Notes on reading should reflect an in-depth analysis of the selections for the day while reflections should be at least one page in length (minimum). Journals will be collected without notice four times during the semester. If you do not have your notebook in class when I request it, you will receive no credit. Notebooks must be up-to-date at time of submission. 100 points possible for each submission; 400 points total. **ALL JOURNAL ENTRIES MUST BE TYPED; NO HAND-WRITTEN ENTRIES WILL BE ACCEPTED.**

JOURNAL ENTRIES MAY ALSO BE SUBMITTED FOR EACH CLASS PERIOD VIA EMAIL (dotto@centenary.edu) AS A WORD DOCUMENT (ACTUALLY THE BEST WAY TO KEEP UP WITH THIS ASSIGNMENT).

2 Tuesday, October 11 will be our **MIDTERM EXAMINATION**. Test shall consist of Fill-in-the-Blank, Identification of Term/Concept, short and long essay questions. 250 points possible.

3. **RESEARCH PAPER (AND ORAL PRESENTATION)**. This is to be 15 pages, plus bibliography (1-2 pages). More on this later. Your paper grade will depend not only on the final written draft, but also the oral presentation in class. Due dates for this staged assignment found in the class schedule below. 900 points possible. Most of this work will be conducted during October, while I am out for brain surgery.

4. **Final Exam**, TBA, same format as Midterm Examination. Worth 250 points possible.

Attendance Policy

I have been encouraged by THE POWERS THAT BE to express my assumptions regarding the topic.

First, I am not your parent, your brother, or your best friend; I am a colleague in both teaching and learning. We need each other for this classroom tribe to function.

Second, when you are not here, you will be missed. Our community will be diminished. Sure, most of us will miss a class. But what happens when somebody misses more than three class periods this semester?

As Convener of this Tribe, I will assume that you have found a new community that requires your presence. So, due to my desire to live a life of total compassion, **I will deduct one letter grade from your final course grade for each additional class period missed, thus encouraging you to be wherever it is you need to be other than our class. I will make NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS POLICY.**

Inclusive Language

Within this course you are encouraged strongly to utilize "inclusive language". What does this term mean? When we speak of humanity, avoid using the gender specific term "man" as a synonym. When you speak of a particular god or goddess, use their proper name. Find ways in which to demonstrate respect and dignity for all persons, both believers and seekers.

Acceptance of Late Papers

It is a requirement of this course that you submit written work on time, that is in class the day a paper is due. A paper submitted after the end of class is late. **Late papers will result in the loss of a one letter grade for every day (additional 24-hour period) after the due date** (e.g., a paper with the grade of B will become a C if one day late, D if two days late, and so forth). A medical excuse *does not* exempt you from your

responsibility to submit work on time. Assignments can be turned in at any time *before* the final deadline.

Internet Policy

While there is an increasing number of web pages devoted to the Bible and scholarly research, the information is often not reliable or better than what is available in the library book and journal collections. Therefore, you are not to use or cite **any source from the Internet** unless you have consulted with the professor (online databases excluded from this policy).

Writing Policy

All writing must reflect proper grammar and syntax. Failure to proofread and edit your work prior to submission (using [The Writer's Cheat Sheet](#) and the [Paramedic Method](#)) will result in a major grade reduction.

Submission of Work

All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the specified day. Late work will be accepted with letter-grade reduction per day penalty. Assignments more than four days late will not be accepted.

All written work (except the midterm exam) must be submitted via a Word document, sent to me via email (dotto@centenary.edu) as an attached **Word** document prior to the start of class. Do NOT paste text into the body of the email. I will confirm all papers received with a message saying that I received the paper and could open the file. This email functions as your receipt. A paper has not been turned in until I acknowledge it.

Office Hours and Making Appointments

Please schedule conferences to discuss work, problems, ideas or anything at all. I maintain an "open door" policy: if my door is open and you see a vacant chair, come on in. My office hours are 8:15 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., Monday through Friday, except when in class, a committee meeting or at lunch (12:00-12:50 p.m.). Check my website for my schedule.

Changes in the Syllabus

The syllabus can change at my discretion. Videos, readings and/or guest speakers may also be added. Changes will be made to the online syllabus.

What about some Extra Credit?

Extra credit does not exist in this course. Make use of the credit available.

Can I Receive an "A" for Effort?

"Trying hard" is usually necessary, but not sufficient, to create good work. In short, I do not base a grade on "effort" but on the finished product.

There is too much reading for this class!

I am well aware of the amount of reading for this course, but, given the subject matter, there is little choice. You are expected to come to class ready to discuss the reading assignment for that day. If you attend class ill-prepared, I will mark you as absent. Remember: three unexcused absences can lead to significant consequences (see "Attendance Policy" for details). Further, I am aware that some of the material will be dense, requiring you to read it more than once. Plan your schedule accordingly. Are you a slow reader? Then plan in advance.

Scholastic Dishonesty & the Honor Court

As a student at Centenary College you agree to adhere to the Centenary Honor Code. I will carefully explain the nature of plagiarism the first day of class and, for each assignment, explain what is and is not permissible in terms of collaboration. If you have any questions, please ask rather than risk a problem. Also, I would advise you to retain all note cards, drafts, final papers etc. for each assignment in your writing record in case asked to prove your case. As explained in the Student Handbook, every assignment you submit must have the following statement written in your own handwriting accompanied by your signature: "I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this paper (or examination), nor have I seen anyone else do so." If you have received unauthorized aid or witnessed an honor code violation, you must follow the statement with: "...except as I shall report immediately to the Honor Court." Please understand that I cannot grade any assignment lacking this honor code statement. Please also read Chapter 16 in the St. Martin's Handbook (it is a book you should have kept from your FYE course).

Disability Accommodation

It is the policy of Centenary College to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal law, state law, and the College's commitment to equal educational opportunities. Any student who has a disability and needs accommodations, should inform the instructor at the beginning of the course. Students with disabilities need to contact Disability Services (a division of Counseling Services), which is located in the ground floor of Rotary Hall to obtain services. The phone numbers for Counseling Services are 869-5466 and 869-5424. Please let me know if you have any disability that requires accommodation. I will work with you to ensure your needs are met. Students with disabilities should also contact Disability Services (a division of Counseling Services), which is located in the ground floor of Rotary Hall to obtain services. Telephone 318-869-5466/5424.

Cellphone and Laptop Policy

Please turn off all cell phones upon entering class. Laptops may be used in class for the explicit purpose of taking notes. If you are caught surfing the Internet without permission (either on your phone or when and if we ever have Wi-Fi) or playing games you will not be allowed to bring the phone or laptop to class for the remainder of the course. Cell phones that ring can be ban from the classroom for the remainder of the semester.

| Assignment Due | Points Possible |
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| Reading/Reflection Journal (x 4) | 400 Points |
| Paper topic Approved - | 50 points |
| Midterm Exam - | 250 points |
| Complete Bibliography - | 100 points |
| Rough Draft - | 250 points |
| Final Copy - | 100 points |
| Oral Presentation - | 200 points |
| Final Exam TBA | 250 points |
| TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE | 1500 POINTS |

| Class Schedule BRING YOUR BIBLE TO EVERY CLASS | |
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| August 25 | Introduction to Course Review Syllabus and Assignments |
| August 30 | Understanding the Concepts of "Family" and "Gender." Read: *Ehrman, <u>New Testament</u> , pp. 51-78. (pdf file) *Joan Wallach Scott, <u>Gender and the Politics of History</u> , 28-50. (pdf file) |
| September 1 | Feminist Theological Reconstruction (I) Read: <u>Fiorenze</u> , Introduction and Chapters 1 and 2 |
| September 6 | The "Family Values" of Jesus (I) Read: The Gospels of Mark and Matthew The Q Source (html link) Secret Gospel of Mark (html link) Gospel of Thomas (html link) Osiek and Balch, pp. 123-155. |
| September 8 | The "Family Values" of Jesus (II) Read: The Gospels of Luke and John Acts of the Apostles 2 Clement (html link) Shepherd of Hermas (html link) |
| September 13 | The World of Clement of Alexandria |

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| | <p>Read for specific ideas of gender, sexuality and family life: Clement's Stromata, Book III (html link) Clement's The Instructor, Book I (html link) Clement's The Instructor, Book II (html link) PAPER TOPIC MUST BE APPROVED BY TODAY</p> |
| September 15 | <p>In Search of the Greco-Roman Family (I) Read: <u>Dixon</u>, pp. 1-60 <u>Osiek and Balch</u>, pp. 5-102</p> |
| September 20 | <p>Marriage and Celibacy Read: <i>1 Corinthians</i> <u>Osiek and Balch</u>, pp. 103-118 Ancient Gynecologists: Galen and Soranus Read: Galen's Comparison of Male and Female Anatomy (html link) Soranus on Conception, Abortion and Menstruation (html link) Soranus on Childbirth (html link)</p> |
| September 22 | <p>Roman Marriage and Laws (I) Read: <u>Dixon</u>, pp. 61-97 Digest, Books 23 and 24 (html link) To find the appropriate text: Step One: Click on the link. Step Two: On the left side of webpage, click on "Lingua Anglica" Step Three: Scroll down on the right side of the page until you find "The Digest of Pandects" Step Four: click on the word "Scott" Step Five: Click on the appropriate book. Latin Terms to know (pdf file)</p> |
| September 27 | <p>Roman Marriage and Laws (II) Read: Justinian Codes on Marriage and Adoption (html link) Musonius Rufus Lectures (html link) Plutarch and the Training of Children (html link) The Twelve Tables (html link) (Out of class for pre-operation appointment)</p> |
| September 29 | <p>Playing House: Gender Roles in the Early Christian Household Read: <i>Ephesians, Colossians, 1 Timothy, 1 Peter</i> <u>Osiek and Balch</u>, pp. 118-123</p> |

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| | <p>Children, Education, and "Pagan" Moral Values (I) Read: <u>Dixon</u>, pp. 118-132 <u>Osiek and Balch</u>, pp. 156-173</p> |
| October 4 | <p>Slaves and Family Life Read: <i>Philemon; 1 Corinthians 7:20-24; Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:22-4:1; 1 Timothy 6:1-2</i> <u>Osiek and Balch</u>, pp. 174-192</p> |
| October 6 | FALL BREAK |
| October 11 | MIDTERM EXAMINATION |
| October 13 | <p>Life Cycle and Family Construction (I) Read: <u>Dixon</u>, pp. 133-163 <u>Osiek and Balch</u>, pp. 193-222 *At this point, start working on your research paper and direct all questions regarding reading to me via email. I will respond as I can.</p> |
| October 18 | <p>Life Cycle and Family Construction (II) Read: Plutarch's Symposiacs (html link) Download to read Philo's On the Contemplative Life (40-63) (html link) BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE TODAY</p> |
| October 20 | <p>Homosexuality in Ancient Rome (I) Read: <i>Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 6:9</i> Dale Martin, "Arsenokoitês and Malakos: Meanings and Consequences," in <u>Biblical Ethics and Homosexuality</u>, ed. R. Brawley, pp. 117-136. (pdf file) Bernadette J. Brooten, "Paul's Views on the Nature of Women and Female Homoeroticism," in <u>Immaculate and Powerful</u>, ed. C. Atkinson et al, pp. 61-87. (Word file)</p> |
| October 25 | <p>Homosexuality in Ancient Rome (II) Slaves, Prostitutes, Wives and the Appeal of Youth Read: <u>Williams</u>, pp. 3-176 "Greek Love in Rome" (pdf file) Hope to be back in class at this point</p> |
| October 27 | <p>Effeminacy and Masculinity (IV) Read: <u>Williams</u>, pp.177-245</p> |
| November 1 | Roman Same Sex Marriages (VI) |

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| | <p>Read: <u>Williams</u>, Read Conclusion, Afterward and Appendixes The Passion of SS Serge and Bacchus (html link) Same-Sex Union Ceremonies (html link)</p> |
| November 3 | <p>Women and Christian Origins (I) Read Kraemer and D'Angelo, Part One</p> |
| November 8 | <p>Women and Christian Origins (II) Read Kraemer and D'Angelo, Part Two</p> |
| November 10 | <p>Women and Christian Origins (III) Read Kraemer and D'Angelo, Part Three</p> |
| November 15 | <p>Women and Christian Origins (IV) Read Kraemer and D'Angelo, Part Four</p> |
| November 17 | <p>Bisexuality and Early Christian Identity (I) Wayne A. Meeks, "The Image of the Androgyne: Some Uses of a Symbol in Earliest Christianity," <i>History of Religions</i> 13 (1974): 165-208. (pdf file) Acts of Paul and Thecla (html link) Daniel Boyarin, <u>A Radical Jew</u>, pp.180-200 (with endnotes) (pdf file) ‘Neither Male nor Female’: Bisexuality and Early Christian Identity (II) Read: <i>Galatians 3:26-28</i> <u>Fiorenze</u>, Chapter 6 ROUGH DRAFT DUE</p> |
| November 22 | <p>Jesus Movements as Gender-Renewal Movements Read: <u>Fiorenze</u>, Chapter 4 and 5</p> |
| November 24 | <p>THANKSGIVING BREAK</p> |
| November 29 | <p>The Church in Her House Read: <u>Fiorenze</u>, Chapter 5</p> |
| December 1 | <p>Patriarchy and Ministry Read: <u>Fiorenze</u>, Chapters 7-8</p> |
| December 6 | <p>Gender and the Politics of Christian Conversion Read: "‘The ‘Attraction of Women’ in/to Early Judaism and Christianity" in <i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i> , No. 72 D 1998, p 5-22 (pdf file) FINAL COPY OF RESEARCH PAPER DUE</p> |
| December 8 | <p>ORAL PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH PAPERS</p> |
| TBA | <p>FINAL EXAM</p> |

