

REL 3293: Topics in Biblical Studies
Women and Religion in the Greco-Roman World

Tues., Thurs. 9:30-10:45
Dodd Hall 0118

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 11am-12pm, and by appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Girls playing the bear. Sacred virgins buried alive. Women starving themselves for God. How does each of these occurrences fit within the religious experiences of ancient women? What, if anything, can they tell us about women's lives?

This course explores these and related questions by considering the place of women within the religious frameworks of the Mediterranean basin from approximately 500 B.C.E. to 600 C.E. We will examine evidence for women's religious practices from literary, material, and legal sources, as well as the intersection of religious polemic and discourses about gender. We will also discuss the challenges of reconstructing women's lives and practices. To do this, we will utilize insights from various disciplines, including religious studies, sociology, gender studies, history, archaeology, and literary studies.



LEARNING OBJECTIVES. This course has been approved to meet FSU's Liberal Studies Humanities and Cultural Practice (LS-CUL) requirements and is designed to help you become a thoughtful patron of and participant in cultural practices. *By the end of the course, students will:*

1. Interpret intellectual or artistic works within a cultural context.
2. Use a cultural, artistic, or philosophical approach to analyze some aspect of human experience.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- *Unreliable Witnesses*= Ross Shepard Kraemer, *Unreliable Witnesses: Religion, Gender, and History in the Greco-Roman Mediterranean* (Oxford, 2012), ISBN 978-0199916511, list price \$31.95
- WR= Ross Shepard Kraemer, *Women's Religions in the Greco-Roman World: A Sourcebook* (Oxford, 2004), ISBN 978-0195142785, list price \$33.95
- Pomeroy= Sarah Pomeroy, *The Murder of Regilla: A Case of Domestic Violence in Antiquity* (Harvard, 2009), ISBN 978-0674034891, list price \$23.00
- Sofroniew= Alexandra Sofroniew, *Household Gods: Private Devotion in Ancient Greece and Rome*. Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2015. ISBN 9781606064566, list price \$25.00.

Additional readings will be made available on the class website or library reserve. Throughout the semester, I will append a list of sources that you might find helpful to our Canvas website.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Participation in Class Discussion. 40%
 - This class is essentially a seminar. While I will generally begin class with a brief lecture to contextualize our readings, a significant portion of our class meeting will involve active discussion.
 - The quality of the course will depend on the sustained commitment and contributions of all its members. Attendance and preparation are essential.
- Research Benchmarks. 10%
 - Proposal
 - Annotated Bibliography
 - Outline
 - Rough Draft (to be circulated and work-shopped in class); if taking option B, you should also present the current stage of your project in class.
- Final Project. 50%
 - Option A: Term Paper. 15-20 pages, with properly formatted notes and bibliography. We will follow the Chicago Manual of Style.
 - Option B: Creative Project. This could be a multi-media presentation, website, artwork, musical composition, etc. It must be accompanied by appropriate research and a shorter paper (5-7 pages) contextualizing the project.

GRADING SCALE

A (100-93)	C (<77-73)
A- (<93-90)	C- (<73-70)
B+ (<90-87)	D+ (<70-67)
B (<87-83)	D (<67-63)
B- (<83-80)	D- (<63-60)
C+ (<80-77)	F (<60-0)

COURSE POLICIES

- According to federal definition, a credit hour consists of “one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit.” Students work at different paces, but most find it necessary to devote more time than specified in the federal definition. My expectation is that you will spend at least three hours preparing for class for every hour that you are in the classroom. Look ahead at your readings as some will take more time than others.
- Readings are listed in the course schedule according to the date they will be discussed. Be sure to read and annotate the assigned readings before coming to class and bring copies of the readings to class for reference.
- Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class meeting. More than two unexcused absences will result in the lowering of your final grade for this class by half a letter grade. Excused absences will be considered on a case-by-case basis. You must contact me in advance regarding an excused absence and provide appropriate documentation, except in the case of emergency. If you experience an emergency, please contact me as soon as possible regarding your absence. In such cases, it is also a good practice to contact the Dean of Students at 850-644-2428.
- You are still responsible for all readings and assignments missed due to an absence. In the event of an extended emergency absence, please be in touch with the Dean’s office so that we can provide you the appropriate support.
- Late assignments will not be accepted without prior arrangement.

ACADEMIC HONOR POLICY

The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to "be honest and truthful and... [to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University." (FSU Academic Honor Policy at <http://academichonor.fsu.edu/policy/policy.html>).

The policy of the Dept. of Religion is that all violations of the FSU honor code, even first offenses, will result in a grade of 0 for the assignment and will be reported to the Office of the Dean of the Faculties. Additional sanctions may be imposed by FSU as part of the procedure for resolving academic honor allegations.

PLAGIARISM IS A SERIOUS OFFENSE. Using someone else's ideas or words without proper documentation, allowing someone else to write your essay, or taking an essay from another person or place (i.e., the Internet) is plagiarism. Plagiarism is but one of several forms in violation of the Academic Honor Policy. If you are uncertain about whether a practice would be considered a violation, do not hesitate to ask me. My interest is not in penalizing you but rather in teaching you how to be part of an academic community and to understand your participation in a lineage of learning.

ADA REQUIREMENTS

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should

- (1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and
- (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type.

Please note that instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodation to a student until appropriate verification from the Student Disability Resource Center has been provided.

This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request.

For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the:

Student Disability Resource Center	(850) 644-9566 (voice)
874 Traditions Way	(850) 644-8504 (TDD)
108 Student Services Building	sdrc@admin.fsu.edu
Florida State University	http://www.disabilitycenter.fsu.edu/
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167	

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

As stated in the Florida State General Bulletin, University regulations stipulate that no student shall be penalized for missing class due to a religious holiday. Please notify the instructor in advance if a religious holiday you plan to observe falls on a day scheduled for class.

UNIVERSITY ATTENDANCE POLICY

Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.

SYLLABUS CHANGE POLICY

Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and subject to change with advance notice.

Additional numbers and websites that you might find helpful:

Dean of Students	850-644-2428
Disability Resources	850-644-9566 http://www.disabilitycenter.fsu.edu/
Academic Center for Excellence	http://ace.fsu.edu
Reading Writing Center	https://wr.english.fsu.edu/reading-writing-center
Victim Advocacy	850-644-7161 850-644-1234 (after hours) https://dos.fsu.edu/vap/
FSU Police	850-644-1234
Counseling Center	850-644-8255 https://counseling.fsu.edu
Crisis Help Line	211 (from local land line) 224-6333 (from local cell) 1-877-211-7005 (toll free)

Outline of Course & Reading Schedule

Always bring a copy of the day's readings to class. NB: The following schedule is subject to change.

Week 1-

8.29	Course Introductions. Categories, Terms, Questions
8.31	Situating Our Work: Definitions <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Sofroniew, Chs. 1, 2 & 3 (pp. 1–44).– R. Orsi, “Belief,” <i>Material Religion</i> 7.1: 10–17.– <i>Recommended:</i> J. Rives, “Identifying ‘Religion’ in the Graeco-Roman World,” from his <i>Religion in the Roman Empire</i>, 13–28, 42–53.

Week 2-

9.5	Situating Our Work: Historical Contexts <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Pomeroy, Chs. 1 & 2.
9.7	– Pomeroy, Chs. 3, 4, & 5.

Week 3-

9.12	Methodology: Where are the Real Women? <ul style="list-style-type: none">– E. Clark, “The Lady Vanishes: Dilemmas of a Feminist Historian after the ‘Linguistic Turn,’” <i>Church History</i> 57.1 (1998): 1–31.– WR #4, 5, 6, 11a–c, 60a–c, 61a–e.
9.14	Methodology: What Can We Know? How Can We Know It? <ul style="list-style-type: none">– <i>Unreliable Witnesses</i>, Introduction.– WR #48a–c, 62a–h.

Week 4-

9.19	Rituals Specific to Women <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Sofroniew, Chs. 5 and 7 (pp. 62–77 and 93–105).– WR #16d–f, 16h, 17a–f, 18, 24, 25.– S. G. Cole, “Domesticating Artemis,” in her <i>Landscapes, Gender, and Ritual Space: The Ancient Greek Experience</i> (2004), pp. 198–231.
9.21	Women’s Festivals (primarily Greece) <ul style="list-style-type: none">– WR, #1, 2, 3, 7, 9, 10, 12, 125.– Aristophanes, <i>Thesmophoriazousai</i> (selections).– S. Isles Johnson, “Demeter, Myths, and the Polyvalence of Festivals,” <i>History of Religions</i> 52.4 (2013): 370–401.

Week 5- **Civic Cult: Limits to Women’s Participation?**

9.26	Limitations to Women’s Engagement in Civic Cult? <ul style="list-style-type: none">– WR, #8, 80, 83a–c, 84.– Sofroniew, Ch. 4 (pp. 47–61).– R. Osborne, “Women and Sacrifice in Classical Greece,” <i>The Classical Quarterly</i> 43.2 (1993): 392–405.– J. Rives, “Women and Animal Sacrifice in Public Life,” in G. Wool and E. A. Hemelrijk, <i>Women and the Roman City in the Latin West</i> (2013), pp. 129–146.<i>Recommended:</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">– C. Schultz, “Roman Sacrifice, Inside and Out,” <i>Journal of Roman Studies</i> 106 (2016): 58–76.
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9.28	<p>The Vestal Virgins</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – WR, #16g, 81, 82. – M. Beard, “The Sexual Status of Vestal Virgins,” <i>Journal of Roman Studies</i> 70 (1980): 12-27. – M. Beard, “Re-reading (Vestal) Virginité,” in R. Hawley and B. Levick, eds., <i>Women in Antiquity: New Assessments</i> (1995), pp. 166-77. <p><i>Recommended:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – E. A. Hemelrijk, “Women and Sacrifice in the Roman Empire,” in Olivier Hekster, et al., <i>Ritual Dynamics and Religious Change in the Roman Empire</i> (2009), pp. 253–67.
9.29	Proposal Due

Week 6-

10.3	<p>Foreign Cults and Magic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – WR #19, 20, 21, 22, 102, 126a–b, 129, 130, 131. – Sofroniew, Ch. 8 (pp. 107–118, although you might be interested in the following pages on Mithras, as well). – S. Matthews, “Crimes of Passion,” in her <i>First Converts: Rich Pagan Women and the Rhetoric of Mission in Early Judaism and Christianity</i> (2001), pp. 10–28.
10.5	<p>Gender Dynamics in the Spread of Christianity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – WR #65a–d, 114. – Celsus, <i>On the True Doctrine</i> (trans. Hoffman), pp. 72–74. – Minicius Felix, <i>Octavius</i> 8–9. – J. Lieu, “The ‘Attraction of Women’ In/To Early Judaism and Christianity: Gender and the Politics of Conversion.” <i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i> 72 (1998): 5–22.

Week 7-

10.10	<p>Women Office Holders in early Judaism and early Christianity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – WR #38, 68, 85a-c, 86, 87, 88a–g, 89a–c, 90a–b, 91a–f – F. Cardman, “Women, Ministry, and Church Order in Early Christianity,” in R. Kraemer and M. R. D’Angelo, <i>Women and Christian Origins</i> (1999), pp. 300–329.
10.12	<p>Silencing Women (Women and Heresy)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 1 Corinthians 14.34–36; 1 Timothy 2.8–3.13. – WR #39, 40, 41, 92a–c, 93, 94, 95, 96a–c, 97. – R. Kraemer, “Heresy as Women’s Religion: Women’s Religion as Heresy,” in her <i>Her Share of the Blessings: Women’s Religions Among Pagans, Jews, and Christians in the Greco-Roman World</i> (1992), pp. 157–73.

Week 8-

10.17	<p>Christian Women in Late Antiquity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – WR #74, 75, 98, 99, 100, 101. – S. A. Harvey, “Revisiting the Daughters of the Covenant: Women’s Choirs and Sacred Song in Ancient Syriac Christianity,” <i>Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies</i> 8.2 (July 2005), online at http://www.bethmardutho.org/index.php/hugoye-author-index/166.html – W. Mayer, “Constantinopolitan Women in Chrysostom’s Circle,” <i>Vigiliae Christianae</i> 53 (1999): 265–288.
10.19	<p>Women in Rabbinic Literature</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – WR #35, 36, 37a-f, 44, 45, 46. – M. Satlow, “Fictional Women: A Study in Stereotypes” in P. Schaefer, <i>The Talmud Yerushalmi and Graeco-Roman Culture III</i> (2002), pp. 225-43, available at:

<http://mlsatlow.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Satlow-Fictional-Women.pdf>

Recommended:

- C. Fonrobert, 2007. “Regulating the Human Body: Rabbinic Legal Discourse and the Making of Jewish Gender,” in Fonrobert and Jaffee, *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud and Rabbinic Literature* (2007), pp. 270-294.

Week 9-

10.24	Asceticism <ul style="list-style-type: none">– WR #73, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124a–c.– Pseudo-Athanasius, “The Life and Activity of Syncletica,” trans. Elizabeth Castelli, in <i>Ascetic Behavior in Greco-Roman Antiquity: A Sourcebook</i>, ed. Vincent Wimbush (1990), pp. 265-311.– R. Krawiec, “The Memory of Melania,” in C. Chin and C. Schroeder, <i>Melania: Early Christianity through the Life of One Family</i> (2016), pp. 130–147. <p><i>Recommended:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– G. Clark, “Domesticity and Asceticism,” in her <i>Women in Late Antiquity: Pagan and Christian Life-styles</i> (1994), pp. 94–118.
10.26	Pilgrimage <ul style="list-style-type: none">– WR #70, 71– Egeria, <i>Diary</i> (selections)– M. Dietz, “Women and Religious Travel,” from her <i>Wandering Monks, Virgins, and Pilgrims: Ascetic Travel</i> (year), pp. 107–154.
10.27	THESIS, OUTLINE, AND ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE

Week 10- Imperial Women

10.30	Empresses and Relics <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Eusebius, <i>Life of Constantine</i> (selection)– <i>Doctrina Addai</i> (selection)– J. W. Drijvers, “The Protonike Legend, the <i>Doctrina Addai</i> and Bishop Rabbula of Edessa.” <i>Vigiliae Christianae</i> 51 (1997): 298–315.– E. Clark, “Claims on the Bones of Saint Stephen: The Partisans of Melania and Eudocia.” <i>Church History</i> 51 (1982): 141–156. <p><i>Recommended:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– N. Lenski, “Empresses in the Holy Land: The Creation of a Christian Utopia in Late Antique Palestine,” in L. Ellis and F. Kidner, <i>Travel, Communication and Geography: Sacred and Profane</i> (2004), 113–124.
11.2	Empresses and Orthodoxy <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Socrates, <i>Ecclesiastical History</i> 7.1–7.3.– K. Holum, “The Controversy Over the Mother of God,” from his <i>Theodosian Empresses: Women and Imperial Dominion in Late Antiquity</i> (1982), pp. 147–174. <p><i>Recommended:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– K. Cooper, “‘Only Virgins Can Give Birth to Christ’: The Virgin Mary and the Problem of Female Authority in Late Antiquity,” in B. MacLachlan and J. Fletcher, <i>Virginity Revisited: Configurations of the Unpossessed Body</i> (2007), pp. 100–115.

Week 11-

11.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– WR #32, 33, revisit #102– <i>Unreliable Witnesses</i>, Ch. 2
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11.9	– WR #13, 14 – <i>Unreliable Witnesses</i> , Ch. 3
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Week 12-

11.14	– WR #105 – <i>Unreliable Witnesses</i> , Ch. 4
11.16	– WR #47 – <i>Unreliable Witnesses</i> , Ch. 5

Week 13-

11.21	Dr. Falcasantos away at Society of Biblical Literature. NO CLASS.
11.23	Thanksgiving. NO CLASS.

Week 14-

11.28	– WR #104a–b, 106, 107, 108 – <i>Unreliable Witnesses</i> , Chs. 6 & 7.
11.30	Project presentations

Week 15-

12.5	Project presentations
12.7	Project presentations

TBA FINAL PROJECTS DUE