



Course Syllabus Wycliffe College Toronto School of Theology

Course Identification

Course Number: WYB 33314HF/6314HF

Course Name: Bad Boys and Bad Girls in the Old Testament: Studies
in Scriptural Biography

Campus: St. George

Instructor Information

Instructor: Marion Taylor PhD

E-mail: m.taylor@utoronto.ca

Office Hours: By appointment: Wycliffe College, Rm 227

Course Description

This class will be delivered remotely as **Synchronous online sessions, 9-12 with an hour break for lunch and 1-3**. Wycliffe has Zoom channels that allow us to connect online. One Zoom session can host up to 100 connections and allow users to share PowerPoints and all other applications on the desktop. Each participant will require a webcam and microphone, a default on laptops but desktops require the installation of a webcam. We will be able to divide into small discussion break out groups.

This remotely-offered course will examine techniques and strategies used for reading Old Testament narratives through history. Special attention will be given to interpretations of the following bad boys and bad girls: Adam and Eve; Sarah, Abraham, and Hagar; Dinah; Rahab; Deborah, Sisera, and Jael; Abimelech, Jephthah and his daughter; Samson and Delilah; the Levite and his concubine; David and his family members. We will ask questions about how to read and interpret texts in the church today. The pre-course assignment is described below. This class will be delivered remotely as **Synchronous online sessions**. Wycliffe has Zoom channels that allow the faculty and students to connect online. One Zoom session can host up to 100 connections and allow users to share PowerPoints and all other applications on the desktop. We will be able to divide into small discussion break out groups using zoom.

Course Methodology

A pre-course assignment, lectures, small group discussions, readings, and a final paper will be used in this course. **The course will use Zoom as the platform. Each participant will require a webcam and microphone, a default on laptops but desktops require the installation of a webcam.**

Course Outcomes

COURSE OUTCOMES	COURSE ELEMENT	PROGRAM OUTCOMES
By the end of this course, students	This outcome will be achieved through these course elements:	This course outcome corresponds to these aspects of Wycliffe’s statements of outcomes (MTS, MDiv)
Select and interpret Old Testament narratives featuring bad boys and bad girls	reading the primary texts, commentaries and secondary readings; through lectures; and the final assignment	MTS: 1.1 M.Div: 1 a; 1 e
Evaluate various ways Old Testament texts have been interpreted throughout history, including current issues in Old Testament scholarship	reading secondary articles; lectures	MTS: 1.2; 1:4; 1:5 M.Div: 1.a
Interpret a biblical book and suggest ideas for its application for the church today	class discussions and final assignment	MTS: 1.2, 1.3 M.Div: 1a, 1e
Evaluate how knowledge of the biblical world and our own world influences our reading of Old Testament.	Written assignments and class discussion	MTS: 1.1 M.Div: 1.a; 1e

Learning Outcomes: Advanced Degree

The Advanced Degree Council has developed detailed statements of “learning outcomes” for each of the advanced degree programs (ThD, MA and ThM). They are available as appendices in the respective Handbooks. “Learning outcomes” have to do in part with the level of knowledge and skill that will be characteristic of a typical graduate of the program. In accordance with this overall statement, instructors are required to develop a statement of learning outcomes for each course. These outcomes will provide one of the benchmarks for evaluation and grading.

COURSE OUTCOMES	COURSE ELEMENT	PROGRAM OUTCOMES
By the end of this course, students will be able to:	This outcome will be demonstrated through these course elements:	This course outcome corresponds to this aspect of the TST outcomes statement for the individual graduate programs:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpret selected narratives using a variety of traditional and innovative interpretive techniques and strategies (including narrative criticism). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • course requirement as a whole 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PhD: 1.1 • MA: 1.1,2,3 • ThM: 1.1

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose and compare the content and critical issues surrounding the interpretation of a biblical text featuring a bad boy or bad girl 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in-class discussion • final paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PhD: 1.1 • MA: 2.3, 5 • ThM: 1.1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and deliver an oral presentation in a clear and effective manner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • leading in-class discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PhD: 5 • MA: 2.5 • ThM: 2.5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select and prepare a research project and present the assembled results in a clear and cogently argued manner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • final paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PhD: 2 • MA: 2.5 • ThM: 3.1

Required Course Texts:

As the pre-course reading:

Amanda Benckhuysen, *The Gospel according to Eve*, Grand Rapids: IVP, 2019. This book is available through Amazon as a paperback, on Kindle, and as an audiobook or audio CD. If you have any trouble getting the book, please contact the professor.

If you have already read ***The Gospel according to Eve***, I suggest you choose to read Yairah Amit, ***Reading Biblical Narratives*** (available through Amazon in a kindle edition or as a paperback). If you have read Amit, read relevant sections of ***The Oxford Handbook of Biblical Narrative*** [electronic resource] /edited by Danna Nolan Fewell.[This book is a comprehensive resource of 644 pages and covers both OT and NT; it is an excellent for AD students in particular and available online through the University of Toronto Library].

A modern translation of the Old Testament is also required (e.g. ESV, NRSV, RSV, TNIV, NIV, NJPS, NET, or NASB). The NET Bible offers extensive textual notes and is available for use online or as a free download from www.bible.org.

All other readings will be accessed through Quercus

Course Website

Quercus: <https://q.utoronto.ca/> This course uses Quercus for its course website. To access it, go to the U of T Quercus login page at <https://q.utoronto.ca/> and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to Quercus Page 3 of 7 using your UTORid and password, look for the My Courses module, where you'll find the link to the website for all your Quercus-based courses. (Your course registration with ACORN gives you access to the course website in Quercus.) Information for students about using Quercus can be found at: <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701>.

Email All UofT students are required to have a valid UTOReil email address. You are responsible for ensuring that your UofT email address is properly entered in the ROSI system.

Class Schedule

Day 1 (April 20) Introduction to Reading Old Testament Narratives. Reading the creation narratives through history and today.

Special Guest; Dr. Amanda Benckhuysen

Please read Benckhuysen's book **before** the class and if you have already read it, read Amit's *Reading Biblical Narratives* or relevant sections of *The Oxford Handbook of Biblical Narrative*. We will discuss your reflections on Benckhuysen's book and on Amit's approach to narrative criticism. If you are not able to complete the assignment before the first class, do as much reading before class as possible. Please let me know, if you are having trouble getting either of the books.

- What were the most significant insights that you gained from the book?
- What methods were interpreters from the past using to interpret the characters of Adam and Eve in Genesis 2-4? What methods do you use to interpret this text?
- Using the tools of narrative criticism discussed in class, what insights do you gain from a close narrative reading of the story of Adam and Eve?
- See posted readings on Eve

Day 2 (April 21) More Bad Boys and Girls: Sarah, Abraham and Hagar and Rahab, Abimelech
Special Guest on Abimelech: Dr. Gord Oeste

***Read** Genesis 12, 16, 18, 20, 21, Joshua 2, Judges 9

***Read** the posted readings by Thompson, Trible, and England as well as posted 19th readings on Sarah, Abraham, Hagar and Rahab.

John Thompson, "Patriarchs Behaving Badly" in *Reading the Bible with the Dead*, 71-92.

Phyllis Trible, "Hagar: The Desolate Rejection," *Texts of Terror*, 9-35.

Yaffa England, "The Expulsion of Hagar: Reading the Image, (Re)viewing the Story in *Religion and the Arts* 22 (2018) 261-293.

https://brill.com/view/journals/rart/22/3/article-p261_1.xml?language=en

Day 3 (April 22) More Bad Boys and Girls in Judges: Deborah, Sisera and Jael, and Jephthah and his daughter

Special Guests: Dr. Joy Schroeder and Dr. Chris de Groot

*Read Judges 4-5, 11-12

*Read "A "Heroick and Masculine-Spirited Championess": Deborah in Early Modern Gender Debates," in Joy A. Schroeder, *Deborah's Daughters' Gender Politics and Biblical Interpretation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014, pp.106-138. <https://www.oxfordscholarship.com.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199991044.001.0001/acprof-9780199991044-chapter-5?print=pdf>

*Read posted readings of Deborah, Jael and Jephthah and his daughter

Day 4 (April 23). More Bad Boys and Girls: Samson and Delilah, The Levite and his Unnamed Concubine, Dinah, and Jehu

Special Guest on Jehu: Professor Lissa Wray Beale

*Read: Judges 13, 16, 19-21, Genesis 34, 2 Kings 9-10

*Read Thompson, "Reading Sex and Violence" in *Reading the Bible with the Dead*, 185-214.

*Read Schroeder, "Fallen Virgin, Violated Daughter: The Rape of Dinah (Genesis 34)" In *Dinah's Lament: The Biblical Legacy of Sexual Violence in Christian Interpretation*, 11-55.

*Read posted readings on "Delilah" and "The Levites Concubine"

Day 5 (April 24). More Bad Boys and Girls in Samuel, Kings and Esther: David and Bathsheba, Amnon and Tamar, Vashti and Esther

*Read 2 Sam 11-13, Esther 1-2, 9.

On David and His Wives and Family Read

*Katharine Doob Sakenfeld, "Michal, Abigail and Bathsheba: In the Eye of the Beholder," *Just Wives? Stories of Power and Survival in the Old Testament and Today*, 2003, 69-90.

*Danna Nolan Fewell and David Gunn, "In the Shadow of the King," in *Gender, Power and Promise*, 140-163.

*Joy Schroeder, "Violated Sister: The Tears of Tamar (2 Samuel 13)" In *Dinah's Lament: The Biblical Legacy of Sexual Violence in Christian Interpretation*, 153-190.

Miriam J. Bier, "Colliding Contexts: Reading Tamar (2 Samuel 13:1-22) as a Twenty-First Century Woman," in Andrew Sloane ed. *Tamar's Tears: Evangelical Engagements with Feminist Old Testament Hermeneutics* (Eugene OR: Pickwick 2012) 171-190.

*Mark Boyer, "David: Leader of Abandon," in *Biblical Reflections on Male Spirituality*, 52-54

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qqLlneJOvC0> (14:55-31, 1:08-13)0

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5FO91Ay1H8Y>

<https://www.bibleodyssey.org/en/passages/related-articles/bathsheba-bathing>

*Read selected readings on Vashti and Esther

Katharine Doob Sakenfeld, "Vashti and Esther: Models of Resistance," in *Just Wives? Stories of Power & survival in the Old Testament & Today*, 27-49.

Dorothy Sawyer, "Queen Vashti's No and what it can tell us about gender tools in the biblical narrative," in Yvonne Sherwood, *The Bible and Feminism: Remapping the Field*, Oxford: DOI:

10.1093/oso/9780198722618.001.0001 You can download the PFD from the library link on Quercus or go directly to the library site.

Madipoane Masenya, "Limping yet made to climb mountains, rereading the Vashti character in the HIV and AIDS South African context" in Yvonne Sherwood, *The Bible and Feminism: Remapping the Field*, Oxford DOI: 10.1093/oso/9780198722618.001.0001 You can download the PFD from the library link on Quercus or go directly to the library site.

Marion Taylor, "Esther," 86-92.

Evaluation

Requirements

1) Class Participation (20%) Students are expected to attend every class **remotely through zoom** and to involve themselves fully through preparatory reading and active participation in discussion, including preparing questions for the class discussions on one of the required articles.

2) Reading Reflection Paper (30% BD, 15% AD) In preparation for the class, each student will read **EITHER** Amanda Benckhuysen, *The Gospel According to Eve*, Grand Rapids: IVP, 2019 **or** Amit's *Reading Biblical Narratives* **or** relevant sections of *The Oxford Handbook of Biblical Narrative*. The reflection paper on your chosen book (2-4 pages, double spaced) should contain your thoughts on the ideas presented in the book and reflections on how these ideas challenge or confirm affect your own readings of **either** the story of Adam and Eve or your approach to interpreting OT narratives. *****Ideally you will have read the book before the course begins**
The Reflection paper can be written before the class starts but it is due June 4th.

3) Term Paper (50%)

The final paper can be exegetical or topical in nature. It may take the form of a traditional essay on a character or text or on the history of the interpretation of a particular character or text (10-12 pages BD; 15 pages+ AD). For BD students, final paper may take the form of a series of studies on biblical characters to be used in a small group or parish. Please consult with the professor. This assignment is due **August 9**.

4) AD Only (15%). Book report on a book on narrative criticism or on a book that applies narrative criticism to a particular text of biblical book (i.e. Keith Bodner, *1 Samuel: A Narrative Commentary* or one of the books found in electronic form at the U of T library). **Due July 1.**

Additional Bibliography

Narrative Criticism

Relevant Books available online through the U of T Library

**The Oxford handbook of biblical narrative* [electronic resource] / edited by Danna Nolan Fewell. [a comprehensive resource 644 pages both OT and NT; excellent for AD students]

*S. Min Chun, *Ethics and Biblical Narrative* [electronic resource]: a literary and discourse-analytical approach to the story of Josiah / (OT focus, Hebrew an asset)

*Susan Zeelander, *Closure in Biblical Narrative* [electronic resource] (OT focus)

*Eric Douglass, *Interpreting New Testament narratives* [electronic resource] : recovering the author's voice [New Testament focus]

Other resources

- Alter, Robert and Kermode, Frank (eds). *The Literary Guide to the Bible*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1987.
- Alter, Robert. *The Art of Biblical Narrative*. New York: Basic Books, 2011.
- Amit, Yairah. *Reading Biblical Narratives: Literary Criticism and the Hebrew Bible*. Translated by Yael Lotan. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001.
- Auerbach, Erich. *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1953 and 2003.
- Bal, Mieke. *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*. 2nd ed. Translated by Christine Van Boheemen. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997.
- Bar-Efrat, Shimon. *Narrative Art in the Bible*. London: T&T Clark International, 2004.
- Berlin, Adele. *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative*. Sheffield: Almond Press, 1983.
- Berlin, Adele. "8 Literary approaches to the Hebrew Bible", (eds.) Chapman, Stephen B. and Sweeney, Marvin A. *The Cambridge companion to the Hebrew Bible and Old Testament*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2016. Pp.163-83.
- Fokkelman, J. P. *Reading Biblical Narrative: An Introductory Guide*. Translated by Ineke Smit. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999.
- Graybill, Rhiannon ed. "Literary Criticism, Literary Theory and the Bible", *Oxford Encyclopedia of Interpretation*. Oxford Biblical Studies online, Feb 4, 2017. <<http://www.oxfordbiblicalstudies.com/article/opr/t373/e101>>
- Gunn, David M. "Narrative Criticism." In *To Each Its Own Meaning: Biblical Criticisms and Their Applications*, edited by Steven L. McKenzie and Stephen R. Haynes, Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1999. Pp. 201-29.
- Gunn, David M. and Danna Nolan Fewell. *Narrative in the Hebrew Bible*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- Longman III, Tremper. *Literary Approaches to Biblical Interpretation*. Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation. Vol. 3. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987.
- Miscall, Peter D. *The Workings of Old Testament Narrative*. SBLSS. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983.
- Moore, Stephen D. "Biblical Narrative Analysis from the New Criticism to the New Narratology." In *The Oxford Handbook of Biblical Narrative*, edited by Danna Nolan Fewell, New York, NY: Oxford, 2016. Pp. 27–50.
- Polzin, Robert. *Biblical Structuralism: Method and Subjectivity in the Study of Ancient Texts*. Semeia Supplements. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977.
- Powell, Mark Allan. *What is Narrative Criticism?* Guides to Biblical Scholarship. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990.

- Sternberg, Meir. *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985.
- Sumner, George and Wells, Samuel, *Esther & Daniel*. Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2013.
- Tull, Patricia K. "Narrative Criticism and Narrative Hermeneutics", (ed.) Mckenzie, Steven L. *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Biblical Interpretation*. Vol. 1. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. Pp. 37-46.
- Walsh, Jerome T. *Old Testament Narrative: A Guide to Interpretation*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009.

Grading System

Letter Grade	Numerical Equivalents	Grade Point	Grasp of Subject Matter
A+	90–100%	4.0	Profound & Creative
A	85–89%	4.0	Outstanding
A-	80–84%	3.7	Excellent
B+	77–79%	3.3	Very Good
B	73–76%	3.0	Good
B-	70–72%	2.7	Satisfactory
FZ	0–69%	0	Failure

Policy on Assignment Extensions

Basic Degree students are expected to complete all course work by the end of the term in which they are registered. Under **exceptional circumstances**, with the written permission of the instructor, students may request an extension (SDF = "standing deferred") beyond the term. An extension, when offered, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. An SDF must be requested no later than the last day of classes of the term in which the course is taken. The request form is available on the college website or from the Registrar's office.

Two One percentage point per day will be deducted on the course grade if an extension has not been requested by the stated deadline.

Course grades. Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor's college before being posted. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University grading policy

(<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/grading.pdf>) or college grading policy.

Policies

Accessibility. Students with a disability or health consideration are entitled to accommodation. Students must register at the University of Toronto's Accessibility Services offices; information is available at <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/>. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

Plagiarism. Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* (linked from <http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks> and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>), a student who plagiarizes in this course. Students will be assumed to have read the document “Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing” published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges (http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm).

Other academic offences. TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>).

Writing Style. Chicago Manual of Style as adapted in Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 9th edition.