

EMB2204: Bible Study – Learning to Read the Christian Bible in 4D

Fall 2016 (Thursday 11:10am – 1:00pm)

Prof. Leif E. Vaage

EC 202: 416-585-4532

Office hours: By appointment

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Course Description: In this course, students will learn to practice different kinds of reading “styles” or modes of appropriation with a given text of the Christian Bible. The student will also learn to think theoretically about that practice and some of its implications. In other words, we will be exploring possibilities for biblical interpretation beyond the academically conventional (historical-critical-literary) model(s) in search of an expanded repertoire of usable approaches to “Bible Study.”

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, the student will be able to: 1) practice different kinds of reading “styles” with the Christian Bible; 2) explain how these different “styles” entail a certain theoretical posture; and 3) discern with greater confidence in which context or when and where a given reading “style” is likely to be the more appropriate one to use.

Student Assessment: Student assessment will be based upon the timely completion of weekly reading assignments as demonstrated through active and informed participation in classroom exercises and discussion (20%) as well as the timely submission of three written assignments: i) a reflection paper (10%) due at the beginning of class on 6 October 2016; ii) a book review (20%) due at the beginning of class on 3 November 2016; and iii) a final term paper (50%) due at the beginning of class on 8 December 2016.

Textbooks:

The Christian Bible (any translation)

Jonathan Boyarin, ed. *The Ethnography of Reading*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993.

Also Recommended:

Leif E. Vaage, *Borderline Exegesis*. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2014.

Vincent L. Wimbush, *White Man’s Magic*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Course Outline

1. Sept 15: Introduction: Learning to Read with Disease
Job 3:1-26
Boyarin 1-9
2. Sept 22: Job 29:1-31:40
Boyarin 10-37
3. Sept 29: Job 38:1-42:6
Boyarin 38-57

4. Oct 06: Introduction: Learning to Read with Desire
Song of Songs 4:1-5:1
Boyarin 58-79
REFLECTION PAPER DUE
5. Oct 13: Song of Songs 5:2-16
Boyarin 80-97
6. Oct 22: Song of Songs 6:13-8:4
Boyarin 98-138

Oct 29: Reading Week – No Class!

7. Nov 03: Introduction: Learning to Read with Discipline
Genesis 12:10-20
Boyarin 139-155
BOOK REVIEW DUE
8. Nov 10: Genesis 20:1-18
Boyarin 156-179

9. Nov 17: Genesis 26:1-16
Boyarin 180-211

10. Nov 24: Introduction: Learning to Read with Devotion
Revelation 16:17-18:24
Boyarin 212-237

11. Dec 01: Revelation 19:1-20:15
Boyarin 238-269

12. Dec 08: Revelation 21:1-22:5
Boyarin 270-275
FINAL TERM PAPER DUE