



# Course Syllabus

## Wycliffe College

### Toronto School of Theology

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#### **Course Identification**

Course Number: WYB3/6314H

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

Campus: St. George

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#### **Instructor Information**

Instructor: Marion Taylor PhD

E-mail: m.taylor@utoronto.ca

Office Hours: By appointment: Wycliffe College, Rm 227

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#### **Course Description**

This 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; 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.

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#### **Course Methodology**

A pre-course assignment, lectures, small group discussions, readings, and a final paper will be used in this course.

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#### **Course Outcomes**

COURSE OUTCOMES	COURSE ELEMENT	PROGRAM OUTCOMES
<b>By the end of this course, students</b>	<b>This outcome will be achieved through these course elements:</b>	<b>This course outcome corresponds to these aspects of Wycliffe's statements of outcomes (MTS, MDiv)</b>
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	<b>MTS: 1.1</b> <b>M.Div: 1 a; 1 e</b>
Evaluate various ways Old Testament texts have been interpreted throughout history, including current issues in Old Testament scholarship	reading secondary articles; lectures	<b>MTS: 1.2; 1:4; 1:5</b> <b>M.Div: 1.a</b>

Interpret a biblical book and suggest ideas for its application for the church today	class discussions and final assignment	<b>MTS:</b> 1.2, 1.3 <b>M.Div:</b> 1a, 1e
Evaluate how knowledge of the biblical world and our own world influences our reading of Old Testament.	Written assignments and class discussion	<b>MTS:</b> 1.1 <b>M.Div:</b> 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.

<b>COURSE OUTCOMES</b>	<b>COURSE ELEMENT</b>	<b>PROGRAM OUTCOMES</b>
<b>By the end of this course, students will be able to:</b>	<b>This outcome will be demonstrated through these course elements:</b>	<b>This course outcome corresponds to this aspect of the TST outcomes statement for the individual graduate programs:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interpret selected narratives using a variety of traditional and innovative interpretive techniques and strategies (including narrative criticism).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>course requirement as a whole</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PhD: 1.1</li> <li>MA: 1.1,2,3</li> <li>ThM: 1.1</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choose and compare the content and critical issues surrounding the interpretation of a biblical text featuring a bad boy or bad girl</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>in-class discussion</li> <li>final paper</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PhD: 1.1</li> <li>MA: 2.3, 5</li> <li>ThM: 1.1</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design and deliver an oral presentation in a clear and effective manner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>class presentation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PhD: 5</li> <li>MA: 2.5</li> <li>ThM: 2.5</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Select and prepare a research project and present the assembled</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>final paper</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PhD: 2</li> <li>MA: 2.5</li> <li>ThM: 3.1</li> </ul>

results in a clear and cogently argued manner		
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### Required Course Texts

- Amanda Benckhuysen, *The Gospel according to Eve*, Grand Rapids: IVP, 2019.
- *Women of War, Women of Woe: Joshua and Judges through the Eyes of Nineteenth-century Female Biblical Interpreters*, eds., Marion Ann Taylor and Christiana de Groot, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, May 2016.
- 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](http://www.bible.org).

### 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

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#### **Day 1 (April ) Introduction to Reading Old Testament Narratives: How to the Story of Adam and Eve**

The pre-assignment for the class is listed below (see under Evaluation: 2). We will discuss your reflections on Benckhuysen's book.

- 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?

#### **Adam and Eve**

- 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?

#### **Day 2 (April 19) More Bad Boys and Girls: Sarah, Abraham and Hagar and Rahab**

**\*Read** Genesis 12, 16, 18, 20, 21 and Joshua 2

**\*Read** the posted readings by Thompson, England, Tribble, and Frymer-Kensky as well as selected 19<sup>th</sup> readings on Sarah, Abraham, Hagar and Rahab.

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

Phyllis Tribble, "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](https://brill.com/view/journals/rart/22/3/article-p261_1.xml?language=en)

Tikva Frymer-Kensky, "Hagar. My Other, My Self," *Reading the Women of the Bible*, 225- 237.

\* Taylor and De Groot, "Rahab" in *Women of War, Women of Woe*, 19-54.

**Day 3 (April 20) Bad Boys and Girls in Judges: Deborah, Sisera and Jael, and Jephthah and his daughter**

\*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 selected interpretations of Deborah, Jael and Jephthah and his daughter in *Women of War, Women of Woe*.

**Day 4 (April 21). More Bad Boys and Girls: Samson and Delilah, The Levite and his Unnamed Concubine and Dinah**

Read: Judges 13, 16, 19-21 and Genesis 34

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

\*Read selected readings on "Delilah," "The Levites Concubine," from *Women of War, Women of Woe*.

\*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.

**Day 5 (April 22). More Bad Boys and Girls in Samuel, Kings and Esther: David and Bathsheba, Amnon and Tamar, Vashti and Esther**

\*Read 2 Sam 11-13, 1 Kgs 12:25-13:34, 21, 2 Kgs 9; 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.

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

\*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

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

Marion Taylor, "Esther," 86-92.

## Additional Bibliography

### Narrative Criticism

- 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*. 2<sup>nd</sup> 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.

## Evaluation

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### Requirements

**1) Class Participation (20%)** Students are expected to attend every class and to involve themselves fully through preparatory reading and active participation in discussion, leading a class discussion on a reading.

**2) Reading Reflection Paper (30% BD, 15% AD)** In preparation for the class, each student will read and write a reflection paper on Amanda Benckhuysen, *The Gospel according to Eve*, Grand Rapids: IVP, 2019. The reflection paper (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 the story of Adam and Eve. **\*\*\*Note you must read the book before the course begins. Ideally, you can complete the first assignment before the first class. Please ask for an extension if you need one. If you have recently read this book, please speak to the professor about a possible substitution\*\*\***

### 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 (9-12 pages 10-12 pages BD; 15 pages+ AD) or for BD it 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 (see bibliography attached) or on a book that applies narrative criticism to a particular text of biblical book (i.e. Keith Bodner, *1 Samuel: A Narrative Commentary*). Due July 1.

### 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

**Late work (BD).** Basic Degree students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the course outline. Under exceptional circumstances a student may request a short extension to be negotiated with the instructor. Instructors are not obliged to accept assignments that are

late. If the instructor chooses to accept an assignment, where an extension has not been requested and approved before the due date, then **one percentage point per day will be deducted**. The absolute deadline for the submission of assignments is the examination day scheduled for the course or the last day of exam week for the semester in which the course is taught, whichever is sooner.

Students with documented medical or compassionate difficulties or exceptional reasons (e.g., a death in the family or a serious illness) who are unable to submit their work by the end of the term are requested to consult with their instructor and request an SDF. The form is available on our website at this link

<https://www.wycliffecollege.ca/sites/default/files/Basic%20Degree%20Request%20For%20Extension.pdf> or can be collected from the registrar's office. An SDF request must be submitted, with instructor approval and with an agreed deadline, to the registrar's office no later than the last day of the exam week or the last day of class in which the course is taken. The SDF, when approved, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond one year. If a student has not completed work and has not been granted an SDF, a final mark will be calculated that reckons a grade of zero for that component of work that was not submitted.

### **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**

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**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](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*, 9<sup>th</sup> edition.

DRAFT