HIST 4310: SELECTED TOPICS IN EUROPEAN HISTORY
SAINTS, WIVES, AND WITCHES IN THE PRE-MODERN WORLD
MONDAY/WEDNESDAY 4:00 – 5:15 PM

FALL 2019
Classroom: University West (UHV) 103
Office and office hours: University West 265. Monday, 11 am – 12 pm; Tuesday, 2 pm – 3:30 pm; Wednesday, 11 am – 12 pm; and by appointment
Professor: Esther L. Cuenca (pronounced *kweng-kah*)
Email: CuencaE@uhv.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines women and gender in the pre-modern world, ranging from the holiest women (saints) to the most wayward (witches and prostitutes), from roughly the 3rd century AD to 1800. Women and gender are examined within the context of social rank and marital status, such as the noblewoman who influenced major political developments, the townswoman who served as merchant and producer, the wife and mother who provided the basis of family life, and the singlewoman who formed her own household independent of male relatives. Particular attention is also paid to women on the religious margins, such as Muslim and Jewish women, as well as non-elite women who were peasants, indentured servants, serfs, and enslaved. The course will also cover attitudes toward women revealed in legal, religious, and secular literature of the period, and explore popular representations of pre-modern women in contemporary film.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Students will learn about some of the major issues in the field of women's and gender studies, especially as they relate to women in the pre-modern world.
- Students will learn to assess different theoretical and disciplinary approaches to women's history.
- Students will strengthen their analytical skills by reading and thinking critically about the primary sources, as well as through class discussion, compiling discussion notes, and writing about select topics.

COURSE BOOKS REQUIRED [AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE AT BOOKSTORE]

- Amt, Emilie, ed. *Women's Lives in Medieval Europe: A Sourcebook*. 2d ed. New York: Routledge, 2010.
- Bardsley, Sandy. *Women's Roles in the Middle Ages*. Westport: Greenwood Press, 2007.
- Rea, Jennifer and Liz Clarke. *Perpetua's Journey: Faith, Gender, and Power in the Roman Empire*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018.
- A Handout of sources (free, to be distributed in class)

READINGS FOR DISCUSSION DAYS [FREE, DOWNLOAD FROM BLACKBOARD]

- David Nirenberg, "Conversion, Sex, and Segregation: Jews and Christians in Medieval Spain," *American Historical Review* 107, no. 4 (2002): 1065-93.
- Caroline Walker Bynum, "Fast, Feast, and Flesh: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women," *Representations* 11 (1985): 1-16.
- Judith Bennett, "'Lesbian-Like' and the Social History of Lesbianisms," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 9 (2000): 1-24.
- Lynn Hunt, "The Many Bodies of Marie Antoinette: Political Pornography and the Problem of the Feminine in the French Revolution," in *Marie Antoinette: Writings on the Body of a Queen*, eds. Dena Goodman and Thomas Kaiser (New York: Routledge, 2003), 117-138.

ONLINE VIDEOS [FREE, LINKS ON BLACKBOARD]

- *Agora.* Feature film, English, 2009. (Link on BlackBoard).
- *Vision: From the Life of Hildegard von Bingen.* Feature film, German, 2009. (Link on BlackBoard).
- *Medieval Lives: Birth, Marriage, Death* (Ep. 2). BBC Four, 2012. (Link on BlackBoard)

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Your participation grade will be reduced by *one half* grade for every two unexcused absences. To receive an excused absence, you must show evidence of a good reason for your absence (for example, a note in writing from your doctor if you miss class because of illness or notifying me at the beginning of the semester that you will be absent on certain religious holidays).

OTHER IMPORTANT POLICIES

- **Turning in work**: All work must be typed, double-spaced, stapled and turned in on the day it is due. Please no emails.
- **Late work**: Late work will be penalized one whole grade each calendar day it is late. If you need extra time on an assignment, please come and talk to me.
- **Tardiness:** Coming late to class is impolite. Please get to class on time. If you are tardy three times I will count that as an unexcused absence.
- **Laptops**: Are allowed during lectures and discussion to take notes, not for anything else (such as checking your social media accounts or surfing the web).
- **Attendance:** I will take attendance right when class begins. See attendance policy above.
- **Office hours:** Come anytime, unannounced, or email me to make an appointment if you can't make it to office hours.

HONOR CODE

All students are expected to abide by the UHV student honor code and academic honor policy, as outlined in the UHV student handbook. No instances of plagiarism, for instance, will be tolerated in this course.

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The University of Houston System complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, pertaining to the provision of reasonable academic adjustments / auxiliary aids for students who have a disability. In accordance with Section 504 and ADA guidelines, the University of Houston-Victoria strives to provide

reasonable academic adjustments / auxiliary aids to students who request and require them. If you believe that you have a disability requiring an academic adjustment/auxiliary aid, please contact the UHV Office of Disability Services; Cheryl Worley, Manager; University North, Suite 214 -H; Office – 361-570-4287; Fax – 361-580-5504; worleyc@uhv.edu; www.uhv.edu/disabilityservices.

TITLE IX: SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

The University of Houston System including UHV seeks to provide an educational environment free from sex discrimination, including non-consensual sexual contact, sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence and stalking. We encourage you to report any sexual misconduct to UHV Title IX Coordinators (361-570-4800; University West 117). If you report any sexual misconduct to me, I am required to share that information with our Title IX Coordinators. For more information about the UHS Sexual Misconduct policy and counseling and support resources available to you, go to http://www.uhv.edu/titleix.

NOTE ON SYLLABUS

The information contained in this class syllabus is subject to change without notice. Students are expected to be aware of any additional course policies presented by the instructor during the course.

METHOD OF INSTRUCTION

Courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student. This class is primarily a mixture of two teaching methods: lecture and class discussion. PowerPoint slides will be put online as PDFs before class on BlackBoard if students should need to download them to facilitate note taking.

GRADE SCALE

A	89.5-100	*EXCELLENT WRITTEN WORK, PERFECT ATTENDANCE, ENGAGED PARTICIPATION*
B	79.5-89	
C	69.5-79	
D	59.5-69	
F	59 and below	

TAKE-HOME FINAL EXAM (15%): I will give out more information once we start approaching the date of the exam. We will be meeting for the entire exam period to discuss your paper, so please do not schedule any vacation or work during this time.

QUIZZES (20%): In lieu of a midterm, there are 3 quizzes that will contain questions about the lectures and readings. They will be averaged for your final score. I will drop the lowest score from your average.

PARTICIPATION (20%): There will be discussion every class day. Your participation is *very* important to your overall grade in class. I want active contributors—not just passive consumers—of knowledge. The best way to prepare for daily discussion is to do the readings and take notes according to the questions in *italics* that follow each excerpt in Amt's *Women's Lives in Medieval Europe* sourcebook.

DISCUSSION NOTES (20%, OR 5% EACH): You will have discussion notes due four times throughout the semester (listed in the schedule below). A template will be passed out for you to follow before the first one is due. They will be individually graded and then averaged for your final score.

RESPONSE ESSAY ON *PERPETUA'S JOURNEY* (15%): You will write a long response, of about 7-8 pages in length, on the graphic novel *Perpetua's Journey*. I will hand out the prompt (and upload to BlackBoard) a week before the assignment is due. This paper is due on Monday, September 16.

SHORT RESPONSE ON AGORA (5%): You will write a short response, of about 3-4 pages in length, on the film *Agora* (2009). I will hand out the prompt (and upload to BlackBoard) a week before the assignment is due on Monday, September 25.

SHORT RESPONSE ON VISION (5%): You will write a short response, of about 3-4 pages in length, on the film *Vision: From the Life of Hildegard von Bingen* (2009). I will hand out the prompt (and upload to BlackBoard) a week before the assignment is due on Monday, October 21.

CLASS SCHEDULE – FALL 2019

Class No. and Date	Topic	Homework, assignments and quizzes due
Mon., 8/26	Introduction to the course	
1. Wed., 8/28	Introduction to pre-modern/medieval history	• Bardsley, 12-26
Monday, Sept. 2: LABOR DAY HOLIDAY		
2. Wed., 9/4	Women, medievalism and popular culture	• Medievalism assignment due (instructions to be given in class – extra credit!)
3. Mon., 9/9	How to think about gender in the pre-modern world	• Bardsley, 1-12
UNIT I: Women and their religious and legal identities, c. 2nd century AD – c. 10th century		
4. Wed., 9/11	Women in the Roman-Christian world	• Bardsley, 27-32 • Amt, nos. 4, 5
5. Mon., 9/16	DISCUSSION: Female sanctity and martyrdom in North Africa	• *Perpetua's Journey*, pp. 5-86 + essays • Response Essay due
6. Wed., 9/18	Women in early Germanic law and society	• Bardsley, 130-40 • Amt, nos. 9, 10
7. Mon., 9/23	Eremitic and cloistered women	• Bardsley, 32-9 • Amt, nos. 64, 65
UNIT II: Non-Christians and religious outsiders, c. 5th century – c. 14th century		
8. Wed., 9/25	Pagan women in late antique Africa: Hypatia of Alexandria	• Watch *Agora* (2009) • Handout, no. 1 • Short response paper due based on 3 questions on Handout
9. Mon., 9/30	Women in Islam	**Quiz 1 (covers classes 1-8)** • Bardsley, 51-5 • Amt, nos. 82, 84

10. Wed., 10/2	Women in Judaism	• Amt, nos. 54, 77
11. Mon., 10/7	LECTURE and DISCUSSION: Jewish and Muslim women in the Mediterranean world: miscegenation, prostitution, and coexistence	• David Nirenberg, "Conversion, Sex, and Segregation: Jews and Christians in Medieval Spain" • Discussion Notes #1 due (typed)
UNIT III: Women's social rank and labor, c. 9th century – c. 14th century		
12. Wed., 10/9	Noblewomen	• Bardsley, 79-85, 193-202 • Amt, nos. 33, 34
13. Mon., 10/14	Peasant women	• Bardsley, 59-68, 202-09 • Amt, nos. 47, 49
14. Wed., 10/16	Townswomen	• Bardsley, 68-79 • Amt, nos. 52, 53, 58
15. Mon., 10/21	LECTURE and DISCUSSION: Mystics and women's spirituality	• Bardsley, 39-49 • Caroline Bynum, "Fast, Feast, and Flesh: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women" • Movie: *Vision: From the Life of Hildegard von Bingen* (2009) • Discussion Notes #2 (typed) and response paper on movie due
UNIT IV: Marital status and life cycle, c. 11th century – c. 15th century		
16. Wed., 10/23	Girls and maidens	• Bardsley, 91-9 • Amt, nos. 38, 61
17. Mon., 10/28	Marriage and motherhood	• Bardsley, 102-17, 147-54 • Amt, nos. 23, 27 • Documentary: *Medieval Lives: Birth, Marriage, Death* (Episode 2: A Good Marriage)
18. Wed., 10/30	Widowhood and lifelong single women: independence for women?	• Bardsley, 99-102, 117-22 • Amt, nos. 35, 71
19. Mon., 11/4	LECTURE and DISCUSSION: Sex and sexuality	• **Quiz 2 (covers classes 9-18)** • Judith Bennett, "'Lesbian-Like' and the Social History of Lesbianisms" • Discussion notes #3 due (typed)
UNIT V: On the margins, c. 14th century – c. 17th century		
20. Wed., 11/6	Heretics	• Bardsley, 49-51 • Amt, nos. 85, 86
21. Mon., 11/11	Prostitution, medieval and early modern	• Bardsley, 140-7 • Amt, nos. 18, 60
22. Wed., 11/13	Medieval sorcery and witchcraft	• Handout, no. 2
23. Mon., 11/18	Early modern witch-hunting	• Handout, no. 3
UNIT VI: Women in the Atlantic world, c. 16th century – c. 18th century		
24. Wed., 11/20	Wives and indentured servants in Colonial America	• Handout, no. 4
25. Mon., 11/25	Enslaved women and their communities	• Handout, no. 5
Thanksgiving Break, Nov. 27-30		
26. Mon., 12/2	LECTURE and DISCUSSION: Women and revolution	• Lynn Hunt, "The Many Bodies of Marie Antoinette: Political Pornography and the Problem of the Feminine in the French

		Revolution” • Discussion notes #4 due (typed)
27. Wed., 12/4	Last day of class: wrapping up	• **Quiz 3 (covers classes 19-26)**
FINAL EXAM DAY - TBD		• **Take-Home Final Essay due**