3213. Women and Religion in England

Professor Dale Johnson

Spring Semester, 2000

Wednesdays, 3:10-5:00 pm

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The history of the engagement of women and religion in British history from the Reformation to the present. Perceptions of womanhood, debates concerning the religious foundations of such perceptions, and the way in which the arguments are used. Contributions to the subject of such diverse movements as the Quakers, the Evangelical revival, and the Oxford Movement.

Course Expectations and Options:

1. Preparation for and responsible participation in seminar sessions. The pass/fail option is available to Divinity students who qualify for it.

2. For ten class sessions, each student will be expected to read one article in addition to the reading assignments listed for the weekly meetings (these will be for all dates except January 12, March 1, March 29, and April 5), normally on a topic that connects in some way with the general theme of the week. Students should be prepared to report in class on these readings and turn in to the instructor a short precis of the article, with commentary as appropriate (no longer than one double-spaced typed page). On the last class period (April 19), turn in your collection of these materials to the instructor for one final overview of the usefulness of this assignment. Ideas for such readings will be found on the "Recommendations" pages accompanying this syllabus and in the larger bibliography noted below. Students are encouraged to locate and use substantial articles published since 1993.

3. Each student will choose among several types of writing assignments, toward the end of accumulating a portfolio of papers on the larger topic, the minimum total number of pages being 20 for Divinity and M.A. students and 25 for Ph.D. students (a "page" here means more than a half-page of typed material using normal-sized fonts; endnote pages and bibliography pages will not count). Some of these types include brief biographical studies (3-4 pages), book reviews (5-6 pages), exploration of a focused question or problem (10 pages, using limited sources), and a term paper making use of primary sources (20-25 pages). Qualifiers: Persons making use of the shorter papers cannot accumulate their total number of pages doing only one kind of paper, and only one book review will count toward the total (and not the book read for April 12th). Students will be expected to submit a proposal for such work to the instructor that includes due dates,
preferably spread over the course of the semester. As student interests become clear, some topics will be included in class sessions as brief reports as this is feasible.

Papers should be correctly spelled and punctuated and inclusive language used in papers and discussion. In view of the structure of requirements, flabby writing should be avoided. Consult a writer's guide for proper form for footnotes, bibliography, etc.

The Honor Code of Vanderbilt University applies to all work done in this course.

For all of this work and for additional references on various topics, consult the instructor's Women and Religion in Britain and Ireland: An Annotated Bibliography from the Reformation to 1993 (1995), in the Divinity Library Reference Room or stacks (HQ1394 .J646 1995).

Schedule:

January 12 - Introduction

January 19 - The Sixteenth Century: Reformation, Puritanism


January 26 - Beliefs and Spirituality

Crawford, Part II


February 2 - Women and Radical Religion, mid-17th Century

Crawford, Part III

Graham, selections 3, 5, 6


February 9 - Gender and Spirituality in Early Quakerism

Mack, Part Two

   Margaret Fell, "Womens Speaking Justified" (photocopy)

February 16 - Patterns and Perspectives, Restoration Era
Mack, Part Three

Crawford, Part IV

Graham, selections 8-12

February 23 - The Eighteenth Century; Women and the Evangelical Revival


March 1 - Eighteenth-century Radical Feminism

Mary Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of the Rights of Woman (1792)

March 4-12: Spring Vacation

March 15 - Nineteenth-century Views

Johnson, Chapter 3

March 22 - What Shall Women Do? The Issue of Work

Johnson, Chapter 4

Florence Nightingale, Cassandra (1852)

March 29 - Nineteenth-century Issues

Johnson, Chapter 5

John Stuart Mill, The Subjection of Women (1869)

April 5 - Monographs on Nineteenth-Century Topics

Select one of the following books, read it, and report on it in class (the choice is not to be included in the paper possibilities listed above, #3):

Barbara Caine, Victorian Feminists (1992)


Alex Owen, The Darkened Room: Women, Power and Spiritualism in Late Victorian England (1990)


Deborah Valenze, Prophetic Sons and Daughters: Female Preaching and Popular Religion in Industrial England (1985)

April 12 - Ministries of Women

Johnson, Chapter 6

April 19 - Twentieth-century Issues//Reports on Longer Papers//Course Evaluations