

TESP 82, **Witches, Saints, and Heretics:**
Religious Outsiders
Spring, 2017
William J. Dohar



COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Description: This course *is* about its title but the underlying subject is religious difference, the nature of these differences and, especially, how men and women experience religious boundaries and the identity of ‘the other’ – outside and within religious traditions. Since the ‘religious other’ is such a vast topic, we focus on one major religious tradition—Christianity—and then further narrow a global religion down to **core beliefs** (heretics), the inter-relationship of **religion and nature** (magic and witchcraft), and the human quest for moral and **spiritual perfection** (saints).

Core Learning Objectives: Since our main focus is on religious outsiders and how the boundaries are established within various historical and cultural settings, our first Core Learning Objective (CLO 1) is to **analyze diverse (and divergent) religious phenomena** including the ways in which these phenomena are judged. So, for example, what distinguishes an act of magic (witches) from a miracle (saintly intervention)? Secondly, we approach these phenomena from a **variety of textual and iconic perspectives**

including, sacred texts (the Bible), law (civil and canon), fiction, folk-tale, theological and scientific treatises, biography, letters and personal journals (CLO 2). Since ventures into the realms of magic, religious dissent, and holiness touch upon the core beliefs of others, we're invited **to consider our own world-views, ways of believing, and ways of marking boundaries** as to what is acceptable and unacceptable (CLO 3). Particular emphases on each of these learning objectives are noted in the course schedule below.

Assessment, Evaluation and Feedback: course learning objectives are assessed in three main ways—examination, reflective and critical writing, and participation in various discussion forums, in and outside the classroom.

- Two brief **quizzes** chart student retention of basic material drawn from the texts and lectures;
- a **final exam** (essay form and take-home) invites a more synthetic view of the course's major themes and learning objectives;
- **writing** occurs mainly in **two essays** (3-5 pages) drawn from a list of paper topics and due dates (see below). **Every student has to have at least one of these papers submitted by May 4.**
- Lastly, **participation** is central to a course of this nature; every student brings a vital perspective to the content of the course and this is made apparent through **regular in-class discussions** and four **online exercises**. In-class participation is aided by five brief writing assignments (a few sentences at most) each worth one point. These are meant to promote in-class discussion, are spontaneously announced, and cannot be made up.

Texts: All readings for this course are in Camino as are nearly daily announcements with suggested reading questions and prompts for online discussions. Students should have access to a Bible (hard copy or an e-version) for a few reading assignments. All sources **should be brought to class** the day they're assigned in order to 'work them' to best effect. Failure to do so will result in some loss of participation credit.

Instructor feedback reaches students through written comments on papers and online discussions (managed through Camino's speed-grader) and, in more general ways, during office hours. I am happy to consult with students on papers before, during or after they're written in mentoring the practices of critical thinking and written communication. In addition, students will be encouraged to assess critically their own experience of the course in a mid-quarter survey and in the standard end-of-term narrative evaluation. To help keep the lines of communication open, I'll arrange **'mandatory' office hours starting the third week** of the quarter. This will give me a chance to meet of you individually and to discuss how the course is going so far.

Course Credit is apportioned in the following ways:

Writing	30%
Quizzes	15%
Online Exercises	20%
In-class Participation	20% (including 5% for in-class writing)
Final Exam	15%

Due-dates and plagiarism: All assignments—reading and writing—are due the day assigned. Late work will entail some appropriate loss of credit. **Plagiarism** in any form will result in certain failure of the effort in question and may result in a failing grade for the course according to University policies and procedures. Please see the “**Academic Integrity Pledge**” and other University norms at the end of this syllabus.

COURSE MEETINGS

4/4 “Witches, Saints, and Heretics”: An Introduction to the Course

MODULE 1: HERETICS

4/6 HERETICS: Who’s In, Who’s Out? – Marking Boundaries (CLO 1, 2, 3)

- ‘A Class Divided’ (YouTube video)
- *Eve’s Various Children* (from the Brothers Grimm)

4/11 Religion and Exclusion in an Age of Anxiety: Heretics and the Apocalypse (CLO 1, 2, 3)

- C. Berlet, “Dances With Devils: the Logic of Oppression”

*4/13 How to Become a Heretic: a Case Study (CLO 2, 3)

- NPR, ‘This American Life’: “Heretics” (podcast)

Online discussion #1: *based on what you’ve learned about heresy, its definitions and conclusions, what happens in the case of Carlton Pearson? When does he first ‘appear’ to be a heretic? Who decides? What’s heresy ‘from the inside’ look like? What does it *feel* like? (CLO 2, 3)*

4/18 Hunting Heretics (CLO 1, 2, 3)

- Bernard Gui, ‘Manual for the Inquisitor’

Paper Option 1

MODULE 2: WITCHES

4/20 WITCHES: From Heresy to Witchcraft

- “Witches” from Jeffrey Richards, *Sex, Dissidence and Damnation*

Paper Option 2

- Sorcerers in Java,' *New York Times*, June, 1992
- 4/25 'Daughters of Eve': the Iconography of Witchcraft **Quiz 1**
- K. Briggs, *A Sampler of British Folk-Tales* (specific tales TBA)
- 4/27 Sexuality, the Feminine and the Making of Witches
- The *Malleus maleficarum*, ('Hammer of Witches'), Part I
- *5/2 'Witches on the Web'
- Online discussion #2:** For this discussion, first read the New York Times article, 'Sorcerers in Java.' Then search the web for another contemporary account of witchcraft somewhere on the globe. Guide questions for the discussion will appear on Camino. (CLO 1, 2)
- 5/4 Witches and the Law I: Women and the Devil **Paper Option 3**
- The *Malleus maleficarum* (Part II)
- 5/9 Witches and the Law II: Judicial Procedure
- 'The Trial of Suzanne Gaudry' (France, 1652)
 - Frederick Spee, SJ, 'Cautio Criminalis' (Germany, 1637)
- *5/11 Witches at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba?
- NPR, 'This American Life': 'Habeas Schmabeas' (podcast)
- Online discussion #3:** Listen to "Habeas Schmabeas." How do detainees at the American military base compare with suspects arraigned on charges of witchcraft in the pre-modern era? (CLO 1, 2)

MODULE 3: SAINTS

- 5/16 SAINTS: God's Presence or Divine Madness? **Paper Option 4**
- 'Investigating Saints: the Current Procedure'
- 5/18 Before They Were Saints: Holiness on the Edges (CLO 1, 2)
- Christina of Stommeln, "Letters" (1272)
 - 'Was Mother Teresa Really Saintly?' (2016)
- 5/23 Folk Saints and the Ambiguous Hero (CLO 1, 3) **Quiz 2**
- 'St. Pancho Villa?' (J. Griffith, *Folk Saints on the Borderlands*)
 - 'A List of Patron Saints'

5/25 Saints and the Body (CLO 3)

- K. Harrison, 'What Remains: The Lure of Relics in a Faithless Age'

Online discussion #4: *based on Kathleen Harrison's article, what is it about personal remnants, mementos and relics that keeps our hold on them? Is this something we humans need to outgrow or is it another important aspect of spirituality and personal connection? (CLO 3)*

5/30 Praying to Saints (CLO 1, 2, 3)

- Sandra Cisneros, 'Little Miracles, Kept Promises'

6/1 Saintly Iconography (CLO 2)

No readings

Paper Option 5

6/6 Saintly Phenomena: Magic or Miracle? (CLO 3)

- Mark Garvey, 'A Date with a Virgin' (from *Searching for Mary*)

6/8 Witches, Saints and Heretics: A Retrospect

Essay Topics for TESP 82

Before you write a paper, even as you're considering which topic to choose, **make sure you read in the 'Administration' module on our course page the document titled 'How to Write a Paper for TESP 82.'**

Below are five options to consider for your writing assignments in TESP 82. Look at them carefully and **choose two** that you want to do. Make sure you take into consideration their due-dates. You have to have **at least one of these essays** completed by Option 3 (5/4).

1. The 'logic of oppression': a case study. Apply C. Berlet's logic of oppression to some person or group in *contemporary* society. Try to describe as many of the stages in the logic of oppression as your chosen subject can illustrate. Push yourself a little in the selection of the group or individual that you choose; creativity and imagination here get an automatic positive 'bump' in the score. **Due 4/18**

2. Discuss social and/or sexual 'heretics' in one of the following films (or any other that you think may fit the category—just clear it with me in advance). If you've seen any of these films already, don't rely on a dated viewing; your thinking about the film and its topic will change in light of this course. Questions to consider: What *makes* them heretics? Who does the judging? **Due 4/20**

Saved!
Jesus Camp
The Pianist
Boys Don't Cry
Monster
Captain Fantastic

3. Images of the witch: choose one of the folktales from Katherine Briggs' collection on witches and analyze the story based on *qualities of the witch* that you've learned about in this course. **Due 5/4**

4. Having read 'The Trial of Suzanne Gaudry,' take a look at the film 'Witch' (2016). What comparisons can you draw between a court trial of an accused witch and the fictional goings-on in (and around) this New England household? **Due 5/16**

5. Using Sandra Cisneros's work of fiction, *Little Miracles, Kept Promises* as a 'window' into religious devotion and saintly intercession, choose one or several of these votives—prayer messages—and discuss them. What's going on in them? What do they tell us about saints? What do they tell us about the kind of people who pray to saints...and for what? **Due 6/1**

Assignment Scoring Rubric:

Most course assignments in TESP 82 have a 5-point value (5, 10, 15 points-worth of credit). Reaching the maximum of any of these categories represents '**outstanding**' work matched with the letter-grade A. The evaluation of each assignment also focuses on three areas: **critical thinking**, **expression** and **participation** (both in timeliness and overall quality). The final score of any one assignment is the average of all points scored in each of these three areas. Here follow more specific descriptions of the scoring rubric:

Critical Thinking:

15, 10, 5 The work shows that the student has a real grasp of the key concepts in a reading or presentation; there's an independence of thought and a willingness to critique respectfully the work of others as well as provide **solid evidence for points made**. This evidence appears in the form of references to content from the readings, audio presentation, videos, etc. It also helps to raise questions and comments that take the discussion to a **deeper** level.

- 13, 9, 4 The student has a good idea of the key concepts but shows a tendency to withhold rather than follow through with his or her ideas.
- 12, 8, 3 There's more summary of basic points than there is critical thinking.
- 10, 6, 2 Effort is minimal and overly casual or repetitious of points others have made; simple agreement with a point rather than engagement.
- < 10, 6, 2 There's very little by way of critical thinking or personal involvement in the assignment. The student was a no-show.

Expression:

- 15, 10, 5 The student uses well-constructed, grammatically correct sentences; expression is creative, clear, concise and logical. The writer uses vocabulary emergent in the course. There are no mistakes in spelling, usage or grammar. (This kind of correctness is **not so much expected** in discussion forums, though too little attention paid to form in those settings can soften the impact a student wants to make in those discussions.)
- 13, 9, 4 There's an effort at sound and creative expression, but there's too much imprecision or mistakes in form.
- 12, 8, 3 The student makes his or her point but without much originality or quality of expression.
- 10, 6, 2 A minimalist contribution with too many errors in form; lacks focus.
- < 10, 6, 2 The argument or points are sketchy and rushed; many errors in form.

Participation (in timeliness and overall quality):

- 15, 10, 5 Contributions are prompt, relevant and proactive; remarks are posted freely on all assignments within the guidelines set out for the assignment.
- 13, 9, 4 The overall quality of participation is good but some critical contribution is missing such as thoughtfulness, creativity, promptness, etc.
- 12, 8, 3 Something of the above but with greater compromises to the quality of participation.
- 10, 6, 2 The contribution is sketchy, hasty or off-point; errors in form make it difficult to understand or respond to

<10, 6, 2 Some important aspect of the activity is missing (e.g., one response is given when two are asked for); the central point of the discussion has been lost or not understood; contributions are minimal and the content hard to follow.

Grading Scale:

A	100-95	exceptional
A-	94-90	excellent
B+	89-87	very good
B	86-83	good
B-	82-80	solid performance
C+	79-76	average
C	75-72	
C-	71-69	
D	68-64	
D-	63-60	
F	< 59	

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APPENDIX

The following statements are an important part of course experience and learning at SCU. Please read carefully:

Academic Integrity

The Academic Integrity pledge is an expression of the University's commitment to fostering an understanding of -- and commitment to -- a culture of integrity at Santa Clara University. The Academic Integrity pledge, which applies to all students, states:

I am committed to being a person of integrity. I pledge, as a member of the Santa Clara University community, to abide by and uphold the standards of academic integrity contained in the Student Conduct Code.

Students are expected to uphold the principles of this pledge for all work in this class. For more information about Santa Clara University's academic integrity pledge and resources about ensuring academic integrity in your work, see www.scu.edu/academic-integrity.

Disabilities Resources

If you have a disability for which accommodations may be required in this class, please contact Disabilities Resources, Benson 216, <http://www.scu.edu/disabilities> as soon as possible to discuss your needs and register for accommodations with the University. If you have already arranged accommodations through Disabilities Resources, please

discuss them with me during my **office hours (TR 9:00 am – 10:00 am and by appointment: 305 Kenna)**.

While I am happy to assist you, I am unable to provide accommodations until I have received verification from Disabilities Resources. The Disabilities Resources office will work with students and faculty to arrange proctored exams for students whose accommodations include double time for exams and/or assisted technology. (Students with approved accommodations of time-and-a-half should talk with me as soon as possible). Disabilities Resources must be contacted in advance to schedule proctored examinations or to arrange other accommodations. The Disabilities Resources office would be grateful for advance notice of at least two weeks. For more information you may contact **Disabilities Resources at 408-554-4109**.

Accommodations for Pregnancy and Parenting

In alignment with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and with the California Education Code, Section 66281.7, Santa Clara University provides reasonable accommodations to students who are pregnant, have recently experienced childbirth, and/or have medical needs related to childbirth. Pregnant and parenting students can often arrange accommodations by working directly with their instructors, supervisors, or departments. Alternatively, a pregnant or parenting student experiencing related medical conditions may request accommodations through Disability Resources.

Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct (Title IX)

Santa Clara University upholds a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination, harassment and sexual misconduct. If you (or someone you know) have experienced discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, domestic/dating violence, or stalking, I encourage you to tell someone promptly. For more information, please consult the University's Gender-Based Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct Policy at <http://bit.ly/2ce1hBb> or contact the University's EEO and Title IX Coordinator, Belinda Guthrie, at 408-554-3043, bguthrie@scu.edu. Reports may be submitted online through <https://www.scu.edu/osl/report/> or anonymously through Ethicspoint <https://www.scu.edu/hr/quick-links/ethicspoint/>