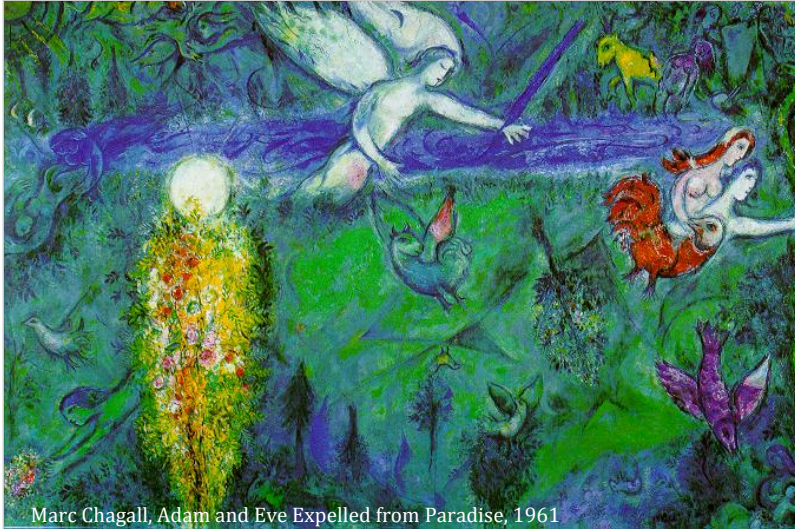


TH162.08: The Religious Quest II: Christianity and Judaism in Conversation

Spring 2014



Marc Chagall, Adam and Eve Expelled from Paradise, 1961

Instructor:
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<http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/schools/cas/theology/graduate/currentgrads/doctoral-candidates/jsmaxey.html>

Time and Location:
M-W-F 12pm-12:50pm Cushing 331

Office Hours:
Wednesday 1-2, and by appointment

This is the second semester of a year long course that continues the comparative study of Jewish and Christian theologies, ethics, and spiritualities. We will continue to study the fundamental texts, key figures, and lived practices of each tradition. Special emphasis will be placed on the historical relationship between Christianity and Judaism, as well as the contemporary character of the conversation between the traditions.

The course is designed to put you, the student, into conversation with Christianity and Judaism, into conversation with your fellow students, and into conversation with your own beliefs, assumptions, and spiritual questions. We will be guided by a number of questions throughout the semester: What is religion, spirituality and faith? Why are they important in the contemporary world and how do they inform your own self-identity? What is the Jewish or Christian worldview; that is how do Jews and Christians view the world and the human condition and how do these beliefs shape practices, teachings, responses to social justice issues, political conversations and other important aspects of modern life?

You are encouraged not only to understand the two traditions as their believers do (whether or not you consider yourself to be one), but to bring them into conversation with you own context.

The classroom is a place for learning, conversation, challenge and community. In addition to lectures, we will spend a significant amount of time in discussion and small groups. With the fall's themes (the global religious landscape, religious identity, biblical narratives, suffering, sin and redemption) as a foundation, the spring term will investigate how this all plays out in the world. Theological topics for investigation include human nature, sin and repairing sin. In several successive units, we will look at Jewish and Christian attitudes towards procreation, marriage, homosexuality and same sex marriage, healthcare, wealth and poverty, ecology and religious diversity.

This course is an exercise in interreligious learning and conversation. Students are encouraged to draw upon their own experiences and to suggest particular topics that interest them.

A Note on the Core: This course satisfies one semester of the two semester core requirement in Theology. Please note clearly that in order to complete this requirement students must have taken the first semester of THIS core sequence, Religious Quest I. One semester of two different theology sequences, e.g. Religious Quest I and Exploring Catholicism II, will NOT satisfy the theology core requirement (Academic Catalogue, p. 217). Students who are unclear as to this regulation should consult their instructor or the Theology Department.

Texts (Required):

Various links to articles and websites are included on the syllabus

Various required readings are available online through QUEST or in the shared Google Drive folder for the course (Note: There will not be a Blackboard site for this course, instead you will be given access to folder through Google Drive. If you have questions about accessing or downloading files, please ask!)

1. Bible: Catholic Study Bible, The New Oxford Annotated Bible (or another Christian Bible)*

2. Lisa Sowle Cahill, *Theological Bioethics: Participation, Justice and Change* (Georgetown UP, 2005)

3. *Eve & Adam: Jewish, Christian and Muslim Readings on Genesis and Gender*, ed. Kristen E. Kvam, Linda S. Shearing and Valerie H. Ziegler (Indiana UP, 1999)

4. *Irreconcilable Differences? A Learning Resource for Jews and Christians*, ed. David F. Sandmel, Rosann M. Catalano, Christopher M. Leighton (2001)*

5. Jonathan Sacks, *The Dignity of Difference: How to Avoid the Clash of Civilizations*, 2nd ed (Continuum 2003).

*Texts from Fall semester

Attendance: Each students is expected to attend class regularly and punctually. Three unexcused absences are permitted. More than three absences and/or excessive tardiness will result in the lowering of a student's grade for every absence beyond those allotted. Excused absences require an email to the professor and are allowed for illness, athletic team travel, family emergencies and religious observances.

Grading:	C+ 79-77
A 100-94	C 76-74
A- 93-90	C- 73-70
B+ 89-87	D 69-60
B 86-84	F 59-0
B- 83-80	

Class Participation: 10%
Reading Responses: 25%
Essay: 15%
Ethics Presentation and paper: 25%
Final Exam: 25%

Grading Guidelines:

The class participation grade is derived from three factors: 1) the degree to which a student has prepared for and remained active in class, and 2) contributed to group discussion, 3) attendance at site visits and required lectures. A student will receive an A for this grade if s/he contributes to small/large group discussion, asks questions in class, and is consistently prepared for the day's readings. A student will receive a low B or C for participation if the professor cannot identify ways in which the student contributed to the classroom discussion. Please do not sleep in class, use your phone, or use your laptop for non-class related activity. This doesn't go unnoticed, it is a distraction and it will negatively impact class participation grades. The professor can modify laptop practices and privileges if this guideline is not met.

The following is a description of the letter grading for written assignments:

A range= Superior, exceptional, outstanding. The assignment demonstrates critical, informed, and creative theological inquiry that reflects superior understanding of essential theological/historical concepts. This means that the students demonstrates depth of insight beyond what is normally expected. Carefully nuanced reasoning and writing, free from material, structural and grammatical errors are presupposed in this grade.

B range= Good. The assignment demonstrates ready command of a full range of concepts and shows some critical, informed and creative inquiry that reflects above average understanding of essential theological/historical concepts. This means the student has produced an assignment that is free from material, structural, and grammatical errors.

C range= Acceptable. The assignment demonstrates satisfactory ability to describe overall concepts. This means the student has completed the assignment in a manner involving no significant errors. Material may not be free from structural and grammatical errors. Nuances reasoning is demonstrated.

D range= Below average. This assignment demonstrates reasoning that is neither carefully nuanced nor coherently presented; writing is insufficient in depth of insight and/or use of texts; presentation is not free from material error in structure, spelling and grammar. This means that the student failed to respond adequately to the assignment and its intentions.

F range = Unsatisfactory. In one or more of the following ways the student: 1) failed to turn in the assignment; 2) did not respond to the assignment as given; 3) submitted work so thoroughly flawed as to indicate that the student did not make a serious effort.; 4) was involved in plagiarism or cheating

Extensions on assignments are rarely granted, but in instances where they are, requests must be made in advance of the due date in writing (via email) and a specific date for submission must be suggested and agreed upon by the professor. Late papers will be penalized a half letter grade per day.

Extra credit: Extra Credit may be earned and applied to the participation grade by attending lectures and events relevant to the course and submitting a 1 pg summary and reflection on the event. The professor will suggest various opportunities, but students are encouraged to seek out and suggest events as well.

Disabilities: Students with documented learning needs should approach the professor and provide official notification within the first two weeks of class. The Connors Family Learning Center offers special services to students with learning disabilities and tutoring and skills workshops to all Boston College Students. For information visit: <http://www.bc.edu/libraries/help/tutoring.html>

Academic Integrity: Please take note of the university's Academic Integrity Policy in all your academic work. Plagiarism MUST be reported to your dean and you MAY fail the course. See: <http://www.bc.edu/publications/ucatalog/policy.shtml#integrity>.

The syllabus may be modified throughout the semester. Please consult the most up-to-date version in the shared Google Drive folder for the course.

UNIT I: Revisiting Eden: Genesis 1-3 and commentaries

1) Monday Jan. 13: Introductions and Syllabus

2) Wednesday Jan. 15: Gen. 1-3

Read Gen 1-3 in your bible

(Reread) Ch. 4 Irreconcilable Differences? "How Do Jews and Christians Read the Bible? Pp. 53-74

3. Friday Jan. 17: *Eve & Adam* Introduction, Chapter 1

Eve & Adam (EA) General Introduction p. 1-14; Ch. 1 Hebrew Bible Accounts Introduction p. 15-21

Reading response 1: 1 pg, What is the purpose of this edited volume? What are its major themes? What surprised you? What did you learn? What questions do you have?

Monday Jan 20: Martin Luther King Jr. Day (No Class)

4. Wednesday Jan. 22 Genesis: Selections and Commentaries

****END OF DROP/ADD****

Read: *EA* p. 22-40

Reading response 2: 1pg, What surprised you? What did you learn? What questions do you have?

5. Friday Jan. 24: Jewish Postbiblical Interpretations (200s BCE-200CE)

Read: selections from *EA* Chap 2

Introduction: p. 41-47

Enoch: p. 47-48

Sirach: p. 48-50

Jubilees: p. 50-54

Reading response 3: How do each of these writings interpret Gen 1-3? How do they depict Eve, Adam, the serpent, God, the tree/fruit? What is sin and what are its consequences? What new elements or interpretations are introduced?

6. Monday Jan. 27: Jewish Postbiblical Interpretations (200s BCE-200CE)

Read: selections from *EA* Chap 2

Wisdom of Solomon: p. 54-55

2 Esdras: p. 55-56

2 Baruch: p. 56-57

Life of Adam and Eve: p. 57-63

Reading response 4: How do each of these writings interpret Gen 1-3? How do they depict Eve, Adam, the serpent, God, the tree/fruit? What is sin and what are its consequences? What new elements or interpretations are introduced?

7. Wednesday Jan. 29: Jewish Postbiblical Interpretations (200s BCE-200CE)

Read: selections from *EA* Chap 2

Philo of Alexandria: p. 64-66

Josephus: p. 67-68

Reading response 5: How do each of these writings interpret Gen 1-3? How do they depict Eve, Adam, the serpent, God, the tree/fruit? What is sin and what are its consequences? What new elements or interpretations are introduced?

8. Friday Jan. 31: Rabbinic Interpretations (200-600s CE)

Read: selections from *EA* Chap 3

Introduction: p. 69-77

Midrash and Talmud on Humankind's Creation: p. 77-85

Reading response 6: How do each of these writings interpret Gen 1-3? How do they depict Eve, Adam, the serpent, God, the tree/fruit? What is sin and what are its consequences? What new elements or

interpretations are introduced? **9. Monday Feb. 3: Rabbinic Interpretations (200-600s CE)**

Read: selections from *EA* Chap 3

Midrash and Talmud on 'The Disobedience': p. 85-98

Midrash and Talmud on 'Humankind in the Post-Edenic World': p. 98-100

Reading response 7: How do each of these writings interpret Gen 1-3? How do they depict Eve, Adam, the serpent, God, the tree/fruit? What is sin and what are its consequences? What new elements or interpretations are introduced?

10. Wednesday Feb. 5: Early Christian Interpretations (50-450 CE)

Read: selections from *EA* Chap 4

Introduction: p. 108-116

New Testament: p. 116-119

The Gospel Accord to Thomas: p. 119-121

The Gospel Accord to Philip: p. 121-123

The Acts of Paul and Thecla: p. 123-128

Reading response 8: How do each of these writings interpret Gen 1-3? How do they depict Eve, Adam, the serpent, God, the tree/fruit? What is sin and what are its consequences? What new elements or interpretations are introduced?

11. Friday Feb. 7: The Church Fathers

Read: selections from *EA* Chap 4

Tertullian: p. 131-133

Origen: p. 133-135

Ambrose: p. 135-141

John Chrysostom: p. 141-147

Augustine: p. 147-155

Reading response 9: How do each of these writings interpret Gen 1-3? How do they depict Eve, Adam, the serpent, God, the tree/fruit? What is sin and what are its consequences? What new elements or interpretations are introduced?

12. Monday Feb 10: Medieval Readings (600-1500 CE)

Read: selections from *EA* Chap 4

Introduction: p. 156-177

ESSAY PROPOSAL DUE IN CLASS

13. Wednesday Feb 12: Medieval Jewish Commentaries

Read: selections from *EA* Chap 4

Midrashic themes: p. 203-208

Rashi: p. 208-212

Nahmanides: p. 212-215

Maimonides: p. 216-220

Isaac Koen: p. 220-222

The Zohar: p. 222-225

14. Friday Feb 14: Medieval Christian Readings

Read: selections from *EA* Chap 4

Thomas Aquinas: p. 225-236

Christine de Pizan: p. 236-241

Malleus Maleficarum: p. 241-248

15. Monday Feb 17: Class Discussion

Class Discussion on medieval texts

UNIT II: Sin, Repentance and Growth

16. Wednesday Feb 19: Sin and Repair Intro

Irreconcilable Differences? Ch. 8, "How Do Jews and Christians Understand Sin and Repentance?"

17. Friday Feb 21: Sin and Repair: Catholic Readings:

James Keenan, *Moral Wisdom*, Chapter 2 "Conscience" and Chapter 3 "Sin" (Google DRIVE)

Bishop Morrie interview with Bill Maher: <http://nronline.org/blogs/soul-seeing/bill-maher-interview-bishop-morrie-youll-never-see#.UwDx9xhOx3m.facebook>

18. Monday Feb 24: Sin and Repair: Jewish Readings:

Rabbi Louis Jacobs, "Repentance"

http://www.myjewishlearning.com/holidays/Jewish_Holidays/Yom_Kippur/Themes_and_Theology/Repentance.shtml?p=0

Gilbert Rosenthal, "Is the Concept of Conscience Found in Judaism?" *Conservative Judaism* (Winter 2013) (Google DRIVE)

**SUNDAY FEB 24: COMPARATIVE ESSAY ON GEN 1-3
DUE VIA EMAIL BY 6PM**

UNIT III: Life Continues After Eden

19. Wednesday Feb 26: Intro to Ethics

Background: *Irreconcilable Differences?*, Ch. 5, Where do Jewish and Christian Ethics Differ and Where Do They Overlap?

Kammer, What is Catholic Social Teaching?

http://www.loyno.edu/jsri/sites/loyno.edu.jsri/files/WhatisCST-Spring2009jsq_o.pdf

Jewish Ethics: Some basic concepts and ideas:

http://www.myjewishlearning.com/practices/Ethics/Caring_For_Others/Ethical_Behavior/Concepts_and_Ideas.shtml

Friday Feb 28: No class

March 3-7: Spring Break

20. Monday March 10: Catholic and Jewish Perspectives on Marriage

Catholic readings:

The Sacrament of Matrimony, Catechism of the Catholic Church

http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_ess/archive/catechism/p2s2c3a7.htm

The Rite of Marriage: <http://catholicweddinghelp.com/topics/text-rite-of-marriage-mass.htm>

Jewish Readings:

(short articles from My Jewish Learning—next page)

Background on Jewish Weddings:

http://www.myjewishlearning.com/life/Life_Events/Weddings/Weddings_101.shtml

The Sheva Berakhot:

http://www.myjewishlearning.com/life/Life_Events/Weddings/Liturgy_Ritual_and_Custom/Sheva_Berakhot.shtml

Ketubah:

http://www.myjewishlearning.com/life/Life_Events/Weddings/Liturgy_Ritual_and_Custom/Ketubah.shtml

Modern Customs:

http://www.myjewishlearning.com/life/Life_Events/Weddings/Liturgy_Ritual_and_Custom/Modern_Customs.shtml

Articles via Flipboard in the magazine “Marriage”: <https://flipboard.com/profile/jillsmax>

21. Wednesday March 12: Gender and Sexuality—Contemporary Conversations

Ann Fausto-Sterling, The Five Sexes: Why Male and Female are Not Enough (Google DRIVE)

Articles via Flipboard, “Gender”: <https://flipboard.com/profile/jillsmax>

22. Friday March 14: Catholic Attitudes toward Homosexuality and Same-Sex Marriage

Ministry to Persons with Homosexual Inclinations: Guidelines for Pastoral Care (USCCB): <http://www.usccb.org/about/doctrine/publications/homosexual-inclination-guidelines-page-set.cfm>

Considerations Regarding Proposals to Give Legal Recognition to Unions Between Homosexual Persons (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, June 3, 2003): http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20030731_homosexual-unions_en.html

Articles via Flipboard, “Homosexuality and Same Sex Marriage”:
<https://flipboard.com/profile/jillsmax>

23. Monday March 17: Jewish Attitudes towards Homosexuality and Same-Sex Marriage

Homosexuality in Jewish Thought:

http://www.myjewishlearning.com/life/Sex_and_Sexuality/Homosexuality.shtml?LFSS

Same Sex Marriage:

http://www.myjewishlearning.com/life/Life_Events/Weddings/Contemporary_Issues/Same-Sex_Marriage.shtml?LFLE

Declaration On The Torah Approach To Homosexuality (Orthodox):

<http://www.torahdec.org/Default.aspx>

Rabbi Elliot Dorff, Homosexuality, Choice and Jewish Law (Conservative):

http://www.myjewishlearning.com/life/Sex_and_Sexuality/Homosexuality/Homosexuality_and_Halakhah/Choice_and_Jewish_Law.shtml [more on next page]

Articles via Flipboard, "Homosexuality and Same Sex Marriage":

<https://flipboard.com/profile/jillsmax>

Reading Response II: (2-3pp.) Compare and Contrast an aspect of Jewish and Christian approaches to Homosexuality and Same Sex Marriage

24. Wednesday March 19: The Economy, Wealth and Poverty

Catholic:

Kammer, Catholic Social Teaching and Distributive Justice:

http://loyno.edu/jsri/sites/loyno.edu.jsri/files/CST_Distributive_Justice_o.pdf

Kammer, Catholic Social Teaching and Poverty:

http://www.loyno.edu/jsri/sites/loyno.edu.jsri/files/CSTandPoverty-Winter2009jsq_o.pdf

Economic Justice for All (excerpts on Google DRIVE)

Evangelii Gaudium (excerpts on Google DRIVE)

Articles via Flipboard, "Economy, Wealth and Poverty":

<https://flipboard.com/profile/jillsmax>

25. Friday March 21: The Economy, Wealth and Poverty

Jewish:

Seymour Siegel, "A Jewish View of Economic Justice," in Donald G. Jones, ed., *Business, Religion, and Ethics* (Cambridge, MA, 1982; rpt. In *Contemporary Jewish Ethics and Morality: A Reader*, ed. Dorff and Newman, Oxford, 1995), pp.336-343 (Google DRIVE)

Bible: Leviticus 19

Maimonides' Eight Levels of Tzedakah:

http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/Levels_of_Giving.html

Articles via Flipboard, "Economy, Wealth and Poverty":

<https://flipboard.com/profile/jillsmax>

26. Monday March 24: Bioethics and Healthcare: Introduction to Jewish Approaches

Elliot Dorff, *Matters of Life and Death*, Ch. 2 "Fundamental Beliefs Underlying Jewish Medical Ethics," p. 13-34 (Google DRIVE)

27. Wednesday March 26: Bioethics and Healthcare: Introduction to Christian Approaches

Lisa Sowle Cahill, *Theological Bioethics: Participation, Justice and Change*, Ch.2 "Participatory Theological Bioethics in Action," p. 43-69

Reading response 12: 2-3 pg. Compare and contrast Dorff's and Cahill's approaches to Bioethics.

28. Friday March 28: Conception and Contraception: Catholic Approaches

Cahill, *Theological Bioethics: Participation, Justice and Change*, Ch. 6 "Reproduction and Early Life," p. 169-210

Articles via Flipboard, "Family Ethics": <https://flipboard.com/profile/jillsmax>

29. Monday March 31: Conception and Contraception: Jewish Approaches

Elliot Dorff, *Matters of Life and Death*, Ch. 5, "Preventing Pregnancy," p. 116-133 (Google DRIVE)

Articles via Flipboard, "Family Ethics": <https://flipboard.com/profile/jillsmax>

30. Wednesday April 2: Comparative approaches to Infertility: Invitro Fertilization and Artificial Insemination

Student Presentations

Readings TBA

31. Friday April 4: Comparative approaches to Infertility: Adoption and Surrogacy

Student Presentations

Readings TBA

32. Monday April 7: Comparative Approaches to Stem Cell Research and Organ Donation/Transplants

Student Presentations

Readings TBA

33. Wednesday April 9: Comparative Approaches to Decline and Dying: Euthanasia and Physician-Assisted Suicide

Student Presentations

Readings TBA

34. Friday April 11: Concluding Bioethics: Class Discussion

35. Monday April 13: Globalization, Dialogue and Social Justice

Jonathan Sacks, *The Dignity of Difference: How to Avoid the Clash of Civilizations*, Preface, Ch 1 "Prologue, Ch. 2 "Globalization and its Discontents", p. vii-44

Reading response 13: 1 pg: What surprised you? What did you learn? What questions do you have?

Wednesday April 15: No Class

EASTER BREAK April 18-21

36. Wednesday April 23: Globalization, Dialogue and Social Justice

Jonathan Sacks, *The Dignity of Difference: How to Avoid the Clash of Civilizations*, Ch. 3 “The Dignity of Difference: Exorcizing Plato’s Ghost,” p. 45-66.

Reading response 14: 1 pg: What surprised you? What did you learn? What questions do you have?

37. Friday April 25: Globalization, Dialogue and Social Justice

Jonathan Sacks, *The Dignity of Difference: How to Avoid the Clash of Civilizations*, Ch. 10 “Conciliation: The Power of a Word to Change,” and Ch. 11 “A Covenant of Hope,” p. 177-209.

Reading response 15: 1 pg: What surprised you? What did you learn? What questions do you have?

38. Monday April 28: Revisiting Religious Identity, Conclusion to the Course

Jeannine Hill-Fletcher, “We are All Hybrids” *Monopoly on Salvation: A Feminist Approach to Religious Pluralism*, p. 82-98.

39. Wednesday April 30: Course wrap-up and discussion

*****Final Exam: Fri, May 9, 12:30 p.m.*****

Thank you for a wonderful year and good luck on
your finals!