Paul Through Jewish and Christian Eyes, Rel. 199  
Mondays/Wednesdays 12:50 – 2:00 PM  
Main PPHAC 103  
Instructor: Kelly Denton-Borhaug, kdenton@moravian.edu, x7104, Comenius 214  
Office hours: M/W 2:10 – 3:30 or by appt. You’re also free to pop by and see if I’m in.

**Description:** This course will introduce students to the wild, complex, perilous and fascinating world of New Testament biblical interpretation through focus on a contemporary and robustly debated topic in the world of religion scholars: how to understand Paul, his letters and his theology in light of the history of Christian antijudaism and antisemitism, and in light of contemporary biblical criticism, archeology and other scientific findings. This course will disturb assumptions of biblical monolithic meaning and expose learners to the ethical challenges and quandaries inherent in biblical interpretation. The purpose and central goal of the course can be summed up with this statement from Paula Fredriksen and Adele Reinhartz in the introduction to their book, *Jesus, Judaism and Christian Anti-Judaism: Reading the New Testament after the Holocaust*:

> Anti-Jewish traditions run deep in church teachings in large part because they rest on particular readings of Christianity’s core canon. . . Throughout the long centuries that stand between the earliest followers of Jesus and ourselves, these readings have come to have the force and weight of historical description. . . Unless we can distinguish between Paul and his historical interpreters, gauge the distance that separates Jesus’ words and acts from the Gospels’ renditions of his teachings, or measure the gap between the Gospels and their subsequent interpretations, we have little hope of overcoming Christian anti-Judaism.

The expectation in this course is that many (or most) students will have had very little contact with New Testament literature. I propose the following questions to guide our study over the semester: 1) what does the biblical text say? 2) How has it been understood at different moments/contexts in history? 3) How have Christians (of varying times) understood the text, and to what ends? 4) What challenges to such understanding are brought to bear by the Jewish/Christian dialogue and historical experiences such as the holocaust and growing awareness of historical Christian anti-judaism and anti-semitism?

**Course Books (available in the bookstore):**

(any student wishing to use a different translation of the New Testament must have it approved by the instructor; I prefer that you use this translation)

*The Letters of Paul: Conversations in Context*, Calvin J. Roetzel

*Jesus, Judaism and Christian Anti-Judaism: Reading the New Testament after the Holocaust*, Paula Fredriksen and Adele Reinhartz, eds.
A Radical Jew: Paul and the Politics of Identity, Daniel Boyarin

Plus additional articles, book chapters as assigned

Required Course Films (to be seen in class)

From Jesus To Christ, Part II,
Frontline, 1998

Peter and Paul and the Christian Revolution, Part II,
PBS Home Video, 2005

Additional Resources:
There are a number of fine websites with great material on Paul, his world, his letters, and the latest on Pauline scholarship. Plan on spending time throughout the semester surfing and exploring these links. These are links you especially will wish to utilize in your group research projects on the Corinthian correspondence.
http://www.textweek.com/pauline/paul.htm
http://ntgateway.com/paul/
http://www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu/Internet/bible_new.htm (find the Paul link)
http://www.thepaulpage.com/

Course Requirements:
1) Your consistent, prepared, engaged and intelligent participation in EVERY class is a must. There are no excused absences for this class, except in cases of serious illness, family emergency and/or religious observance. Please note: any absence you wish to have excused must be cleared with the professor IN ADVANCE of the class missed (I prefer that you call me if you need to inform me about a necessary absence – please call me at the office, x7104). Bring your New Testament to class with you; and whatever other text(s) we are studying every class period. As you thoroughly prepare every reading assignment (in advance of class!), read with a pen or pencil in hand (not a highlighter!) so that you can underline and even more importantly, write notes, summaries, questions and other shorthand in the margin of all your texts (including the New Testament). This will help you to remember and synthesize your reading. Additionally, stretch yourself into the habit of regularly contributing orally in class with your reactions, observations, questions, confusion. We will run the course very much in “seminar” style, with a great deal of class discussion and group study. **25% of your grade will be determined by this component of the course.** Pushing yourself to grow as a class participant who can speak intelligently, raise pertinent questions, listen and respond thoughtfully to others, and raise new ideas all are key ingredients of becoming a life-long, liberal arts learner. Work on these skills in this course! Your grade from your group presentation on the Corinthians correspondence will be included in this component of your grade. Unexcused
absences, non-participation in class and lack of preparation all will severely affect
this component of your grade. I encourage you to speak with me individually if
you want to talk about your performance in any of these areas.

2) Short 15 minute quizzes have been scheduled at regular junctures. These will be
short answer/brief essay quizzes covering all of the material, both reading and
class-oriented. I will provide study guides for each quiz, and encourage students
to study together over dinner or other convenient times. **Quizzes account for 25% of your total grade.**

3) The course mid-term will be a one-hour, twenty minute examination including
both short answer and longer essay questions, and will account for **25% of your total grade.** On the midterm exam you will be responsible for everything we
have studied up to that point of the semester.

4) Each student will write a final 8-10 page paper, not requiring any extra class
research, in which you will demonstrate your own critical grappling with Paul’s
letters, Boyarin’s interpretation of Paul, Eisenbaum and Wright’s responses to
Boyarin, and all this in juxtaposition with our service learning component of
Jewish/Christian text study. More details to come! Your final paper will account
for **25% of your total grade.**

5) Near the end of the semester the entire class will participate in a text-study
opportunity with members of the Jewish community. The date set for this event is
Monday, Nov. 27, in the evening (exact times TBA; plan now on reserving the
whole evening for this event). This is a required service-learning component of
our course, and will heighten our awareness regarding the complexity of
interpreting texts and the impact of one’s religious background and identity on
hermeneutics. If other commitments make it impossible for you to participate in
this opportunity, you should drop the course now. Your learning from this
interaction will form one part of your final paper for this course.

**Schedule of Classes:**

**Week One:**
August 30  Introduction to Course; view selection: *From Jesus to Christ, Part II*
*Before our next class make sure you carefully peruse the resources below:*
- Resource: Paul and his Letters, from online resource:
- Resource: Chronology of early Christianity:
  *(suggestion: print out this timeline and study it carefully – it may very well appear on your first quiz!)*
- Resource: The Spread of Early Christianity

**Week Two:**
Sept. 4 (no classes – Labor Day)
Sept. 6  Read: I and II Thessalonians
Bring with you to class: an outline of each letter; your outline will be organized according to 1) the different types of material contained in the letter; and 2) the different themes/questions/concerns addressed in the letter. Should be no more than 1 page for each letter. Please type your outline; you will hand this in.

*Study Sheet for Monday’s Quiz will be posted in Blackboard Documents*

**Week Three:**

Sept. 11 In class: **Quiz #1 (including all material from first day of class through Sept. 11th’s assignment)**

- Read: from *The Educated Person’s Thumbnail Introduction to the Bible*
  - Chapter 5, “What it Really Really Says: The Meaning of a Text Through Time, and Chapter 7, “Authority and Bible Reading (please check out this book and make your own copy of chapters 5, 7 and 11. Bring your copy with you to class and make sure you have your own shorthand in the margins.)

Sept. 13 Read from *The Letters of Paul:* “Introduction,” and Chapter 1, “Paul and His World,” (pp 1-28)

  - In class: view: *Peter and Paul and the Christian Revolution*
  - Suggestion: Print out the timeline of Paul’s life and mission from the website for the film: [http://www.pbs.org/empires/peterandpaul/history/timeline/index.html](http://www.pbs.org/empires/peterandpaul/history/timeline/index.html)
  - (hint: your next quiz may include questions based on this timeline)

**Week Four:**

Sept. 18 Read from *The Letters of Paul:* pp 29-53; re-read I and II Thessalonians

*Study Sheet for quiz will be posted*

Sept. 20 Read: from *Educated Person’s Thumbnail Introduction*


  In class: **Quiz #2**

  - *In groups: begin working on the Corinthians correspondence (three groups)*

**Group 1:** 1 Cor. (Paul’s 2nd letter)

- (assigned: “Paul as Organic Intellectual: Reshaping Jewish Apocalyptic Myth from the Margins,” from *Paul, a Jew on the Margins,* Calvin Roetzel; and “5: Love Rather Than Integrity,” *Paul Among Jews and Gentiles,* Krister Stendahl; on reserve in Reeve’s)
- Also study: Roetzel on Corinthians; also: go online the websites for this course and find additional material

**Group 2:** 2 Cor. 10 – 13 (plus background material: 2 Cor. 2:3-4, 9, 7:8-12) (Paul’s 3rd letter)

- (assigned reading: “4: Weakness Rather than Sin,” *Paul Among Jews and Gentiles,* Krister Stendahl, on reserve in Reeve’s)
- Also study: Roetzel on Corinthians; also: go online the websites for this course and find additional material

**Group 3:** 2 Cor. 1:1-6:13; 7:2-9:15 (Paul’s 4th letter)

- (assigned: “Death and Resurrection: A Theology Forged at the Margins,” from
Paul, a Jew on the Margins, Calvin Roetzel; on reserve in Reeve’s)
Also study: Roetzel on Corinthians and find online applicable material in our course websites

**Week Five:**
Sept. 25  Group Presentations (see guidelines in Blackboard documents)
Sept. 27  Read: “The Birth of Christianity and the Origins of Christian Anti-Judaism,” *Jesus, Judaism and Christian Anti-Judaism*
also read: “Theological Bulimia: Christianity and its Dejudaization,” Suzanna Heschel, in *After the Passion is Gone*, J. Shawn Landres and Michael Berenbaum, eds. (on reserve)
In class: Anti-Judaism, antisemitism and Mel Gibson’s *The Passion*

**Week Six:**
Oct. 2  Read: “Jesus, Ancient Judaism, and Modern Christianity: The Quest Continues,” E.P. Sanders, *Jesus, Judaism and Christian Anti-Judaism*
In class: begin study of Galatians
Oct. 4 Read: Galatians
And “Paul, the Apostle of Judaism,” John Gager, *Jesus, Judaism and Christian Anti-Judaism*
Also read: Roetzel on Galatians
In class: continue study of Galatians
*Study Sheet for exam will be posted*

**Week Seven:**
Oct. 9  (Fall Recess – no class)
Oct. 11 **mid-term exam**

**Week Eight:** Christian anti-Judaism: Chrysostom and more
Oct. 16  Read: Anti-Semitism document from Wikipedia (in Blackboard documents)
Also read: the homily by Chrysostom (and the introduction) (also in Blackboard)

**Week Nine:** Romans
Oct. 23 Read Romans. Come to class with a two-page outline of the text, in which you identify the lynchpins of the themes and arguments developed by Paul
Oct. 25 Read: Roetzel on Romans
Also review: “Jesus, Ancient Judaism, and Modern Christianity: The Quest Continues,” *Jesus, Judaism and Christian Anti-Judaism*

**Week Ten:**
Oct. 30 Christian Anti-Judaism: selection from Luther, *On the Jews and their Lies*
Study Sheet posted for quiz
Nov. 1  TBA
In class: Quiz # 3

Week Eleven: Paul and the Politics of Identity
Nov. 6  Read: Boyarin, Introduction and Chapter 1
Nov. 8  Read: Boyarin, Chapter 2
Come to class prepared to summarize and respond to the five views of Paul outlined by Boyarin in this chapter

Week Twelve:
Nov. 13  Read: Boyarin, Chapter 4
Study Sheet posted
Nov. 15  Read: Boyarin, Chapter 6
In class: Quiz #4

Week Thirteen:
Nov. 20 (Professor away at conference – no class)
Nov. 22 (Thanksgiving – no class)

Week Fourteen:
Nov. 27  Read: Philemon
Read also: Roetzel on Philemon
*Important Note: Tonight, Monday, Nov. 27 we have set aside for our multifaith text study with Rabbi Melissa Klein and local members of the Jewish community. Please plan on being available between 5:30 – 9:00 pm (the exact time TBA). More details to come!*
Nov. 29  Read: Romans 2 and 11; Boyarin, Chapter 9

Week Fifteen:
Dec. 4  Read: Boyarin, Chapter 10
Dec. 6  Read: Wright’s review of Boyarin’s book; Eisenbaum on Boyarin
(both Wright’s and Eisenbaum’s articles may be found in Blackboard documents)

Week Sixteen:
Dec. 11 (last class)
Discuss the Final Paper: Boyarin, Paul, Eisbaum, Wright, text study/service learning
(guidelines to be posted in Blackboard assignments)
Evaluations and class wrap-up

Final Paper due on Dec. 18 by 9 am at the professor’s office