

**MEDIEVAL WOMEN MYSTICS AND THEIR
ENVIRONMENT (IS COURSE)
ENGLISH 3026, HISTORY 3990, RELIGION 3990**

Dr. Carmen Acevedo Butcher

Rome Hall 211

706.233.7252

**Office Hours are Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2-4 p.m. and
Wednesdays from 8-9 a.m. and by appointment.**

Email: cbutcher(at)shorter.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION: An Integrative Studies Course exploring the Medieval mind as it is manifested in the Middle English language and as it in turn appears in the poetry, letters, sermons, biographies, other theological writings of the Medieval women mystics, as well as in manuscript history and art.

PREREQUISITES: Junior or senior academic standing.

REQUIRED BOOKS:

Butcher, Carmen Acevedo. *Incandescence: 365 Readings with Women Mystics*. Orleans, MA: Paraclete Press, 2005. ISBN: 1557254184.

Butcher, Carmen Acevedo. *Man of Blessing: A Life of St. Benedict*. Orleans, MA: Paraclete Press, 2006.

Fry, Timothy. *Rule of Saint Benedict in English*. Liturgical Press, 1982. ISBN: 0814612725.

Lacey, Robert and Danny Danziger. *the year 1000*. London: Little, Brown and Company, 1999. ISBN 0316511579.

Srubas, Rachel. *Oblation: Meditations on St. Benedict's Rule*. Orleans, MA: Paraclete Press, 2006. 1557254885.

MULTI-MEDIA RESOURCES:

Hildegard, Video. CBD Stock Number: WW41070. PUBVision Video.
http://www.christianbook.com/Christian/Books/product?p=1013824&item_no=41070

A Feather on the Breath of God: Sequences and Hymns by Abbess Hildegard of Bingen
Margaret Philpot, Howard Milner, et al., Performers. 1993. Audio CD. ASIN:
B000002ZGD.

REQUIRED INTERNET RESOURCES:

Find the Order of St. Benedict website and explore it carefully.

Find the “Umlta” website and explore its profundity, too.

Check your professor’s website regularly for updates and new handouts:
www.carmenbutcher.com

Explore these Medieval history websites:

<http://www.btinternet.com/~timeref/>

<http://members.aol.com/TeacherNet/Medieval.html>

(Medieval English towns) <http://www.trytel.com/~tristan/towns/towns.html>

Take a short online quiz on Medieval history:

<http://www.smr.herefordshire.gov.uk/education/games/medieval%20village%20quiz.htm>

Norton Anthology of English Literature Resources Online—see Middle Ages

<http://www.wwnorton.com/nael/welcome.htm>

Oxford English Dictionary online. <http://www.oed.com/>. Free access is available through the Shorter College portal. We will discuss how to get there.

Warning: The *OED* notwithstanding, information on the Internet is not vetted; therefore, you get multiple opportunities to use your fine brains in assessing whether or not the information you are reading is cogent and reliable. If you’re still not sure, ask a librarian, or come see me.

BOOKS TO BE CONSULTED:

Backhouse, Janet. *The Illuminated Page: Ten Centuries of Manuscript Painting in the British Library*. University of Toronto Press, 1998. ISBN: 0802043461

Bell, Nicolas. *Music in Medieval Manuscripts*. University of Toronto Press, 2002. ISBN: 080208432X

Bettley, James. *Art of the Book: From Medieval Manuscript to Graphic Novel*. Victoria and Albert Museum Studies, 2001. ISBN: 0810965720

Bovey, Alixe. *Monsters and Grotesques in Medieval Manuscripts*. University of Toronto Press, 2002. ISBN: 0802085121

Delogu, Paolo and Matthew Moran. *Introduction to Medieval History*. Duckworth, 2003. ISBN: 0715630792

Hannah, John D. *Charts of Ancient and Medieval Church History*. Zondervan Publishing Co., 2001. ISBN: 031023316X

de Hemptinne, Therese and Maria Eugenia Gongora, eds. *The Voice of Silence: Women's Literacy in a Men's Church*. Medieval Church Studies 9. Turnhout: Brepols, 2004. ISBN: 2-503-51488-X

Hilmo, Maidie. *Medieval Images, Icons, and Illustrated English Literary Texts: From the Ruthwell Cross to the Ellesmere Chaucer*. Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2004. ISBN: 0-7546-3178-8.

Holmes, George. *The Oxford History of Medieval Europe*. Oxford University

Press, 2002.

Kroll, Jerome. *The Mystic Mind: The Psychology of Medieval Mystics and Ascetics*. Routledge, May 2005. ISBN: 0415340519

Mulder-Bakker, Anneke B., ed. *Seeing and Knowing: Women and Learning in Medieval Europe 1200-1550*. Medieval Women: Texts and Contexts, vol. 11. Brepols: Turnhout, 2004. ISBN: 2503514480.

Page, Sophie. *Magic in Medieval Manuscripts*. University of Toronto Press, 2004. ISBN: 0802037976

Saul, Nigel. *The Oxford Illustrated History of Medieval England (Oxford Illustrated Histories)*. Oxford, 2001. ISBN: 0192893246.

Wood, Diana. *Women and Religion in Medieval England*. 2003. ISBN: 1842170988

STRONGLY SUGGESTED TEXTS (BUY THESE OR VISIT THE LIBRARY):

John C. Hodges, et al. *The Harbrace College Handbook*. 15th edition. (with InfoTrac) See website: http://www.newtexts.com/newtexts/book.cfm?book_id=1616

Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary. 11th edition.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

HOW TO SUCCEED IN THIS COURSE: Read all materials assigned, take notes, look up unfamiliar terms, explore the Internet and books, read, read, read, and come to class prepared to ask questions and discuss the material. If needed, there will be mini-quizzes/essays and/or pop tests.

FISH BOWLS:

Soon after drop/add, you will be assigned one of the three required books. Read it, and be prepared to discuss it in detail, with your peers listening in, that is to say, you will lead a “fish bowl” discussion highlighting *the year 1000*, *Incandescence*, or *The Rule of St. Benedict*.

The requirements of a “fish bowl” discussion will be presented in great detail during the first part of the semester. But here are the basics: The class will be divided into three groups. Each group will be assigned one book. Read your book and make notes on what most impressed you about it. Also, what questions did you have? Then you and your teammates will sit in the middle of the class and discuss your book while the rest of the class listens. At the end of your discussion, the rest of the class joins in on the dialogue. You may use your notes as reference, but DO NOT READ FROM THEM VERBATIM, as that would be—shall we say—a trifle boring, meine Freunde. Fish bowl dates: *Rule of Saint Benedict in English* (Timothy Fry) on Thursday, August 24th. *Oblation* (Rachel Srubas) on Thursday, August 31st. *Man of Blessing: A Life of St. Benedict* (Carmen Butcher) on Thursday, Sept. 7th. *the year 1000* (Robert Lacey) on Thursday, September 14th.

INTERNET (OR OTHER) RESOURCES PRESENTATION:

Let this presentation be five to ten minutes long. (These may become group presentations, if the class is large.) That means: Don't let it be shorter than five minutes, nor longer than ten. Penalties (grade reductions) result when the time deadlines are not met. Dr. Butcher is a stickler for time deadlines! The trick is this: You can say much in five minutes if it is a very well-organized five minutes. Think of Jerry Seinfeld's stand-up routine, Abraham Lincoln's speeches, and I Corinthians 13. So prepare beforehand. Dr. Butcher will go over suggestions that will help, and you may make other suggestions to the class, if you have them. Always speak up (please)!

For this solo or group presentation, deeply explore one of the women mystics **or** find and describe five fine medieval websites. If you need to show us the websites, reserve the room in the library for our class, and we'll come to the basement of Livingston and view your websites. Use a fitting visual aid. Be sure to have a handout on which you list the URL's. Introduce us to new online research you have discovered. You are also encouraged to make a PowerPoint presentation. Laptops are available in the library and in the computer lab on campus. Or you can use and must use (are required to use) another suitable visual or aural aid—a poster, piece of music, book, or pictures—use your imagination. **Or**, give us a Powerpoint or other visually-aided presentation on a community-strengthening project you have done fairly recently. Same time limits. Whatever you select, make the report interesting. Remember that minds may be wandering to the nearest greening tree, so spice up your talk with interesting facts and a telling style. Use good speaking form. We will discuss what this is. This presentation will be a bonafide aid to you when you step up to the platform to accept your Nobel Prize. Practice. I will go over "good speaking form" in class in great detail. Your grade for the presentation is 50% content. Was real information passed on to the audience? Was the information correct? Was a mastery of information shown? Was the most salient information chosen? Was there solid content or constant fluff? The other 50% of your presentation is based on style. Was the presentation interesting? Was it attention-getting in the right way? Did it pose memorable questions? Did it make us think? Was it dead boring? Or was it thrilling?

MID-TERM:

Every day I take notes in a notebook concerning what we have covered / discussed that day in class; therefore, the mid-term covers all in my little notebook. It also tests your ability to differentiate between the mystics we have covered thus far. So be sure that as you read the mystics in *Incandescence* that you are making sure you understand their unique ways of writing, their unique metaphors, and their unique voices. The mid-term will be multiple choice, and before the mid-term I will clearly review with the class the possible questions for the mid-term exam.

JOURNAL:

You should immediately start reading all required texts and begin keeping a personal journal on your required readings for this class. You will turn in this journal as your final exam. Your journal will consist of ten double-spaced, typed pages (ten entries). These entries breakdown as follows:

- 1) Do you find any truths in *St. Benedict's Rule* that are helpful to you as a twenty-something student living in America in the twenty-first century? Be specific.
- 2) Caesar said, "Veni, vidi, vici," ("I came, I saw, I conquered"). How does this statement compare with the monastic lifestyle as set out in *St. Benedict's Rule*? Be specific.
- 3) Pick one mystic, and in a journal entry explain why you really like this mystic, or explain why you really dislike her. Enjoy! Be specific.
- 4) Pick another mystic, and in a journal entry explain why you really like this mystic, or explain why you really dislike her. Enjoy! Be specific.
- 5) Pick one last mystic, and in a journal entry explain why you really like this mystic, or explain why you really dislike her. Enjoy! Be specific.
- 6) How would your life have been different if you had been living in the year 1000? Be specific.
- 7) Discuss how Hildegard of Bingen's actual lifestyle substantiated or informed or gave integrity to her many writings. Be very specific.
- 8) In two journal entries, explain how this course has enlarged your understanding of who God is. Be specific.
- 9) See 8).
- 10) Keeping in mind all you have read this semester, answer this question, please: What is Truth? Be specific. (How would a mystic answer this question?)

Detail is encouraged and even required in every entry. This journal should somehow be "bound" (even the simple but elegant staple will do the trick).

Your journals will be graded on content (50%) and writing form (50%). You must demonstrate a knowledge of all reading material (including introductions), and you must do so in a cogent, crisp, summary fashion. Write well. Don't get sloppy with comma splices and such. These will lower the grade because where there are sloppy comma splices there is sloppy thinking. Good writing will elevate your argument. Always determine to write your best, at all times. Also, get to the point. And when you have questions about the material, state them. Questions are wonderful gifts, wonderful like diamonds in the mind. You are expected to have good questions.

Here are your reading assignments:

- *The Rule of St. Benedict*
- Dr. Carmen Acevedo Butcher's introduction for *Incandescence*.
- *Incandescence*, including the "Biographical Information" section at the end of the book.
- *Man of Blessing*.
- *the Year 1000*.
- Srubas's *Oblation* book

The journal is due on the day of your final at the beginning of the hour. Again, write in your best style, with cogency and many, many details. (God is in the details!) **Again, the journal is due on the assigned finals hour, and, if late, it will receive a zero. Please TYPE IT, double-spaced, on unlined white paper.** Do quote apt passages or lines from the mystics. Remember, the journal is to be typed!

There will be other assignments and quizzes as necessary.

HOW THE GRADING WORKS:

33% Class attendance and participation. You must attend class regularly and be active in class and be prepared! Roll will be taken daily aloud. If you are tardy, you must come up after class and tell me. Be responsible. Some tardies are unavoidable, but chronic tardiness is inexcusable and, quite frankly, boring. The more absences a student has, the lower the grade in this category, no exceptions. Come to class. The best students always do, and I'm sure that is each one of you!!! The fish bowls, presentations, and everything else we do in class count towards this grade.

33% Mid-term exam, multiple-choice (perhaps essay, if deemed necessary).

33% Final exam, your journal, typed. See above for guidelines and requirements.

Students writing their capstone papers in this class must see me immediately after class the first day. Thank you.

Please consider these questions during the course:

Are medieval women mystics sane?

What sorts of backgrounds did these women have?

What is the context within which these women wrote and worked?

Did they have alliances / friendships with men or not?

What is their theology?

Does it differ from that preached by the Catholic Church at that time?

What do the medieval women mystics have to say to us today? Or do they have any relevance to the twenty-first century?

Do all these women hail from one country or from various ones? If so, which ones?

What languages did they write in?

Did any of them have musical or artistic (painting, drawing) talents?

How many of them were ill as children?

How many had eating difficulties? Why?

How did these mystics feel about Jesus?

What were their attitudes towards their visions?

How did they determine if their visions were good ones or not?

Who is your favorite medieval women mystic?

Is there any mystic you really dislike?

Did any of them write letters? What sorts? To whom?

Attendance: Attendance is more important than it may first appear. Students are expected to behave professionally. A student who fails to attend at least two-thirds of the total class meetings will be administratively dropped from English 3026. See the Shorter College General Catalog, page 32. For MWF courses, this is 14 absences; for TR courses, it is 10. **Being late three times constitutes one absence. Be on time.**

A 90-100%; B 80-89%; C 70-79%; D 60-69%; F 0-59%

SPECIAL NEEDS POLICY: If you have accessibility questions for which you may need accommodations, you are encouraged to contact the Director of Educational Support in FSU at 219.233.7323 as early as possible in order to discuss these needs.

The Honor Code should be written out as follows and included on all work submitted for grades in this class:

On my honor, I will abstain from all deceit. I will neither give, receive, nor use any unauthorized aid in my academic work, nor will I permit such action by any member of this community. I will respect the persons and property of the community, and will not condone discourteous or dishonest treatment of these by my peers. In my every act, I will seek to maintain a high standard of honesty and truthfulness for myself and for the college.

WARNING!

Academic Dishonesty: It is your responsibility to carefully read page 49 of the Shorter College General Catalog, as well as page A58 of the Shorter College Student Handbook. Students committing academic dishonesty will be punished according to these rules. **Any dishonest work (plagiarism, use of unauthorized assistance, or other dishonest work) will be given the grade of 0 (zero).** It is the student's responsibility to be thoroughly familiar with the complete Academic Integrity Policy listed for your ease of reference at www.carmenbutcher.com under "Handouts," classified alphabetically under "Honesty."

Classroom Behavior: Students will be treated with respect and kindness. Students are always expected to conduct themselves as the professional students they are. Students who disrupt class and obstruct the learning process will be asked to leave and/or drop the course. This course is a learning community; people who make it impossible for others to learn will not be welcome members of that community.

**Do not bring any kind of food or drink to class.
Turn your cell phone off before class.
Turn your brain on.**

Tutoring Services On Campus: USE SHORTER'S ACADEMIC SERVICES TO IMPROVE YOUR RESEARCHING SKILLS! Go to <http://www.shorter.edu/> and click on the icon "ACADEMIC SERVICES" in the bottom righthand corner of the web page. Many student support services are available, such as the excellent writing center, helpful GRAB tutoring, and much more.

STUDENT OUTCOMES:

- Students will learn the history of the Middle Ages and its modern relevance. They will develop proficiency in critical thinking skills. (Educational Principle I, D2 and D3, TPP I-1, 3, 4, 5, 6)

- Students will show a mastery of group discussion and will also strengthen their Internet research skills. (Educational Principle I, D2 and D3, TPP I-1, 2, 4, 6)
- Students will learn to analyze Internet websites for reliability. (Educational Principle I, D2 and D3, TPP I-1, 3, 4, 5, 6)
- Students will learn to analyze complex metaphors and ideas through different media (literature, art, music). (Educational Principle I, D2 and D3, TPP I-1, 4, 5)
- Students will write a cogent interdisciplinary essay on an assigned medieval women mystics analytical topic. (Educational Principle III, D1, TPP I-1, 4, 5, 6)
- Students will learn to integrate their knowledge of medieval history and literature with their knowledge of other subject areas. (Educational Principle IV, D1 and D3, TPP I-2, 4, 6)
- Students will be prepared through conscientiously studying and presenting on topics in medieval literature for careers in education, and their lives will be forever enriched. (Educational Principles VIII and VI, D1, TPP I-1, 4, 5, 6 and TPP IV-6)

FURTHER BACKGROUND MATERIAL:

- Barry, Patrick, O.S.B. *Saint Benedict's Rule: A New Translation for Today*. Herefordshire: Ampleforth Abbey Press, 1997.
- Butler, Lionel, and Chris Given-Wilson. *Medieval Monasteries of Great Britain*. London: Michael Joseph, 1979.
- Chambers, R. W. *On the Continuity of English Prose from Alfred to More and His School*. EETS (Original Series 186a). 1932. London: Oxford University Press, 1950. xlv-clxxiv.
- Chittister, Joan. *Wisdom Distilled from the Daily: Living the Rule of St. Benedict Today*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991.
- . *The Rule of Benedict: Insight for the Ages*. New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1992.
- Christ, Karl. *The Handbook of Medieval Library History*. Trans. Theophil M. Otto. London: The Scarecrow Press, 1984.
- Clark, Willene B. and Meradith T. McMunn, eds. *Beasts and Birds of the Middle Ages: The Bestiary and Its Legacy*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989.
- de Dreuille, Mayeul, O.S.B. *The Rule of Saint Benedict: A Commentary in Light of World Ascetic Traditions*. New York: Paulist Press, 2002.
- Dix, Dom Gregory. *The Shape of the Liturgy*. 2nd ed. Westminster: Dacre Press, 1945.
- Doyle, Leonard, trans. *The Rule of St. Benedict*. Collegeville, MN.: The Liturgical Press, 2001.
- Farmer, David H. *The Oxford Dictionary of Saints*. 2nd ed. 1978. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987.
- Goppelt, Leonhard. *Typos: The Typological Interpretation of the Old Testament in the New*. Trans. Donald H. Madvig. Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1982.
- Hughes, Andrew. *Medieval Manuscripts for Mass and Office: A Guide to Their Organization and Terminology*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982.

- Hulme, William H., ed. *The Middle-English Harrowing of Hell and Gospel of Nicodemus*. EETS Extra Series 100 (c). London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Ltd., 1907.
- James, E. O. *Seasonal Feasts and Festivals*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1961.
- Jungmann, J. A. *The Mass of the Roman Rite: Its Origins and Development (Missarum Sollemnia)*. Trans. Rev. Francis A. Brunner. 2 vols. New York: Benziger Bros., Inc., 1950.
- . *Pastoral Liturgy*. London: Challoner Publications, 1962.
- Kardong, Terrence G. *Benedict's Rule: A Translation and Commentary*. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1996.
- Ker, N. R. *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1957.
- . *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain: A List of Surviving Books*. 2nd ed. Offices of the Royal Historical Society. London: Butler & Tanner, Ltd., 1964.
- Knowles, David M. *Bare Ruined Choirs: The Dissolution of the English Monasteries*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976.
- . *The Monastic Order in England*. 2nd ed. 1940. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963.
- Knowles, David M. and Neville Hadcock. *Medieval Religious Houses: England and Wales*. London: Longman Group, Ltd., 1971.
- Lambert, M. D. *Medieval Heresy: Popular Movements from Bogomil to Hus*. London: Edward Arnold, 1977.
- Lampe, G. W. H. "The Reasonableness of Typology." *Essays on Typology*. London: SCM Press Ltd., 1957. 9-38.
- Lawrence, C. H. *Medieval Monasticism: Forms of Religious Life in Western Europe in the Middle Ages*. London: Longman House, 1984.
- Logeman, Dr. H. ed. *Saint Benedict of Nursia. The Rule of S. Benet: Latin and Anglo-Saxon Interlinear Version*. London 1888. N.c.: Elibron Classics Series, 2003.
- Payne, Ann. *Medieval Beasts*. London: The British Library, 1990.
- Pickering, F. P. "The Calendar Pages of Medieval Service Books: An Introductory Note for Art Historians." Monograph No. 1. Reading Medieval Studies. Reading: Reading University Center for Medieval Studies, 1980.
- Skinner, Patricia, ed. *Jews in Medieval Britain: Historical, Literary, and Archaeological Perspectives*. Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2003.
- Smalley, Beryl. *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*. 3rd ed. 1952. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983.
- Symons, Dom Thomas, ed. and trans. *Regularis Concordia Anglicae Nationis Monachorum Sanctimonialiumque: The Monastic Agreement of the Monks and Nuns of the English Nation*. London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, Ltd., 1953.
- de Waal, Esther and Kathleen Norris. *Seeking God: The Way of St. Benedict*. 2nd edition, Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2001.
- Walsh, Katherine and Diana Wood, eds. *The Bible in the Medieval World: Essays in Memory of Beryl Smalley*. Ecclesiastical History Society Series 4. Oxford: Blackwell, 1985.
- Weber, R. *Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem (104209)*. American Bible Society: 1990.