

RELI 696-055 (9563): Body and Suffering in Christian Mysticism

Days & Times	Room	Instructor	Meeting Dates
TBA	TBA	JESSICA BOON	01/09/2012 - 05/04/2012

The category of somatic spirituality, in which the devotee's body resonates with the bodily experiences of the suffering Christ, was critical in the formation of Christian mystical praxis in the Middle Ages. Modern scholars, however, do not always consider the medieval construction of body, much less the suffering body, within its historical parameters. The first unit of this course pairs modern critical theory concerning bodies with medieval scientific, theological, and artistic inquiries into cognition, gender, and pain. These dual lenses will aid our readings of influential medieval treatises about Passion-centered devotions (both textual and artistic) and of major texts recording embodied mystical experience. Primary source readings may include Hildegard of Bingen, Pseudo-Bonaventure, Julian of Norwich, Angela of Foligno, Heinrich Suso, Meister Eckhart, and Teresa de Cartagena. Critical theory and secondary sources by medievalists may include Elaine Scarry, Georges Bataille, Caroline Walker Bynum, Karma Lochrie, Amy Hollywood, Joan Cadden, and Mary Carruthers.