

Senior Seminar 508:401 04

Encounters with Christianity

Professor Barbara Cooper

FH A1 10:20-1:30

This seminar invites students to explore history through the traces left by activist Christians and those they hope to assist, thwart, or convert. Students may work on a period and region of their choice, however they will need to be able to identify materials suitable for exploring this history of encounters: mission records, newspapers, diaries, theological arguments, letters, fundraising materials, court cases and so on. Student theses will engage in debate with existing secondary sources on the period and region of interest as well as with theoretical materials about religious encounters more generally.

On your research projects:

You have a little bit of time to think about who, what, when, where and why but you need to settle into a topic quickly to have time to gather materials and write a good thesis. You will want to start with the materials we are reading together and move from those to think about the kinds of sources you want to look for and the kinds of themes you want to pursue. Missions had a hand in everything from medical care to education. They tried to influence the shape of the family, what people wore and ate, and how they had sex and farmed. There was a lot going on that didn't happen in church! But the people they encountered were not passive recipients, so the challenge is to use the sources available to us from missions, which are very rich, as a point of departure to be supplemented and challenged with any other materials we can find relevant to a particular "encounter."

Many of your readings will be short articles about the process of writing. These will be on our course site.

Readings (portions of the following books are likely to be assigned)

Dana L. Robert, *Christian Mission: How Christianity Became a World Religion*. John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated 2009. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/rutgers-ebooks/reader.action?docID=427985&ppg=9>

Scott Sunquist, *Explorations in Asian Christianity: History, Theology, and Mission*. InterVarsity Press, 2017. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/rutgers-ebooks/reader.action?docID=5389316&ppg=7>

Michela Fontana, *Matteo Ricci: A Jesuit in the Ming Court*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2011. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/rutgers-ebooks/detail.action?pg-origsite=primo&docID=673628>

Natalie Zemon Davis, *Women on the Margins*. Harvard 1997. <https://www.fulcrum.org/concern/monographs/44558d48n>

Andreu Martinez d'Alox-Monder, *Envoys of a Human God: The Jesuit Mission to Christian Ethiopia, 1557-1632*. Brill 2015. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/rutgers-ebooks/detail.action?pg-origsite=primo&docID=2028200>

Stephanie Kirk and Sarah Rivett, *Religious Transformations in the Early Modern Americas*. University of Pennsylvania, 2014. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/rutgers-ebooks/reader.action?docID=3442430&ppg=7>

Femi Kolapo, *Christian Missionary Engagement in Central Nigeria, 1857-1891 : The Church Missionary Society's All-African Mission on the Upper Niger*. Palgrave 2019. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/rutgers-ebooks/reader.action?docID=5987460&ppg=1>

Emily Conroy-Krutz, *Christian Imperialism: Converting the World in the Early American Republic*. Cornell 2015. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/rutgers-ebooks/reader.action?docID=4189237&ppg=8>

Owen White and J.P. Daughton, *In God's Empire: French Missionaries and the Modern World*. Oxford 2012. <https://oxford.universitypressscholarship.com/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195396447.001.0001/acprof-9780195396447>

Barbara M. Cooper, *Evangelical Christians in the Muslim Sahel*. Indiana 2006. <https://www.fulcrum.org/concern/monographs/cf95jc041>

We have many librarians who can help with this research, but you will probably want to start here:

James Niessen (Alex) niessen@rutgers.edu 848-932-6103 Humanities in general, World history and Religion

Potential Primary Studies resources via library:

<https://www.researchsource.amdigital.co.uk/MissStudies>

<https://www.churchmissionarysociety.amdigital.co.uk/>

<https://www.aihc.amdigital.co.uk/Introduction/ThematicAreas/MissionariesAndEducation>

https://infoweb.newsbank.com/iw-search/we/HistArchive/?p_product=JPRSX&p_theme=jprs&p_nbid=G50P49TBMTY1NzgzMDM1NC42OTY0Nzc6MT0xMjoxMjguNi4zNi4xMTg&p_action=keyword&p_queryname=5&d_hlTerms=&d_map=&d_searchFilter=&d_customSearchFields=0&f_refresh=all

We also have access to a variety of Congregational, Baptist and Presbyterian mission and church newspapers. We seem to have 101 journals with the word “mission” in them that are available online and another 42 available through Special Collections or on the shelf. But other materials are findable only through databases like those I’ve listed above.

Our Special Collections in Alexander Library (or available by ordering from storage)

<https://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/new-brunswick/visit-study/locations/special-collections-university-archives>