

# GENDER DISCRIMINATION

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## Abstract of Course

Over prehistory women served as a goddess in society and as superheroes in Sumer to provide the gateway to continuing life. Read the Sumerian tablets capturing the exploits of Inanna and Gilgamesh to discover the earliest stories of the power of sex. Consider the loss of equality and fall from grace in Greek society, and the ensuing fortunes of women branded as icons of sin and weakness by many religious sects. The result is millennia of misogyny and sexual harassment. Is a mutually respectful society based on gender equality a near term possibility?

## Resource Materials

- “When God was a Woman” by Merlin Stone, 1976.
- “Inanna: Queen of Heaven and Earth” by Diane Wolkstein and Samuel Noah Kramer, 1983.
- “Gilgamesh” by Stephen Mitchell, 2004
- A selection of Homer’s “Odyssey” re Penelope; Sophocles’ “Antigone”; Euripides’ “Medea”; Aristophanes’ “Lysistrata” and “The Assemblywomen.”
- “Holy Misogyny: Why the Sex and Gender Conflicts in the Early Church Still Matter” by April DeConick; or GOOGLE “Paul and Misogyny” to discover a variety of positions about women.

## Catalog Abstract

The lack of equal protection and equal opportunity experienced by women around the world is a remnant of millennia of misogyny. The denial of political, cultural, and social equality imposes a major cost on society.

## Schedule

Week 1	Introduction with background and objectives. The prehistoric goddess, the superhero, and the assignment to 2 <sup>nd</sup> class status. The long fight back to equality despite Justice Scalia’s and other originalist views undermining gender equality under the Constitution and the numerous hurdles that exist.
Weeks 2-4	Sex in Uruk, Sumer as experienced by the hero Inanna (with an appearance of Gilgamesh). Equality of the sexes and sexual power prior to the Assyrian/Hittite conquests.
Weeks 5-6	The transition to a misogynistic society. “The Shape of Water” to open the door on “male privilege,” gender harassment, and religious bigotry.

- Week 7 Greek humanist efforts (by Sophocles, Aristophenes, Homer, and Euripides) to stave off misogyny by celebrating the intelligence, ethics, and ingenuity of feisty women as Greek heroes. The emergence of misogyny under Hesiod/Menander and the beginning of organized sexual harassment. See “Of Meat and Men” by Kate Pechenkina.
- Week 8 Misogyny in the Bible. Women as scapegoats for the axial religions. A focus on the writings of Paul, and the modern justification of gender suppression based on biblical authority. Consider Roy Moore’s defense of statutory rape on the grounds “After all, Jesus’ mother was 14.”
- Week 9 The long line of U.S. cases attacking discrimination based on sex and inching toward gender equality.
- Week 10 Legal definition of sexual harassment (on campus, at work, on the street). Is the making of a sexual advance a criminal offense (assault) or a civil offense (tort of assault, harassment). Comments and experiences provided by the Delaware ACLU Legal Staff.
- Week 11 Class views of the impact of gender discrimination and sexual harassment.
- Week 12 What would you tell your granddaughter regarding sexual harassment. Options, resources, and help. The ACLU outline “Know Your Rights” of legal options.
- Week 13 Summary of the course, including comments and suggestions.