

Class, socioeconomic

Class is a changing, challenging, and tricky problem as questions of money, access, education, race, and culture interweave to form layers of privilege and discrimination. For women in religious studies, it is important to realize that academic institutions and many related settings in publishing, library work, and so forth are organized as if white upper-middle-class ways were normative. This involves everything from who can afford to go to graduate school to what fork to use at a faculty dinner, from what your stationery looks like to whether you can pay back your student loans without taking a corporate job.

Women in the field of religion need more frank discussion on such matters. It is often easier to address one's sexuality than one's financial status. In the meantime, structural analysis of class-based oppression in a globalized economy is an integral part of any religious studies program. That means examining our institutions and ourselves to determine how to share resources and recognize and respect substantive differences that result from women's different histories.

Clothing options

Some women colleagues worry about religious *haute couture*. What to wear to interviews, what to wear for professional events, what to wear for teaching, how to dress for office hours, and what to take to the AAR Annual Meeting (toss in a bathing suit, as many hotels have pools) are concerns. Women are creative and one way we show it is by our diversity of dress.

There are guidebooks and academic musings on deciding what to wear. There is also a lot of time lost on the trivial. Does it really matter? Our consensus: Sometimes it does and sometimes it does not. There are horror stories of the results of wearing a too-short skirt for a job interview, or presenting an endowed lecture in pants when a dress/skirt/suit is *de rigueur*. However, who says so? And why do we grant the clothes police such authority? Nonetheless, clothes give a message in a complex social order.