

**KING DAVID IN HISTORY AND TRADITION:  
PICKER, GRINNER, LOVER, SINNER**

**Classics 335/ Jewish 335/ Relig St 335**

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UW-Madison

Department of Classical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies  
Fall 2015

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Office Hours: Normally, 11:00-1:00 MW or by appointment

**Place and Time:**

Lecture meeting time: MW 2:25–3:15

Lecture meeting place: 5106 Sewell Social Sciences

Section time and place as assigned.

Final performance date: Dec. 19, 2015 (5:05–7:05 pm).

**Course Description:**

King David, known from 1–2 Samuel + 1 Kings 1–2, is an important figure in both Judaism and Christianity. This course will begin by investigating the literary portrayal of David in these biblical texts, focusing on issues of literary composition, character development, and textual transmission. We then move to the historical, archaeological, and social contexts in which the text developed, and which may begin to corroborate (or call into question) some aspects of the text's portrayal of David. In the second half of the course, we discuss and analyze the wide variety of modes in which the text has been received subsequent to the consolidation of the biblical texts. We investigate early Jewish, Christian, and Islamic interpretations of David's role; we consider the representation of David in visual art and recent novels; and we reflect on the role of David in recent dramatic portrayals on the small and silver screens. The historical figure of David presented in Samuel-Kings developed from an already complex literary character into an even more multifaceted amalgam of political aspirations, duplicitous dominance, and unblemished virtuousness.

**Catalogue Description:**

An exploration of the literary and historical aspects of the text of 1–2 Samuel + 1 Kings 1–2; the history and archaeology of Jerusalem during the tenth century B.C.E.; and the varieties of ways in which the figure of King David has been received in subsequent religious and secular literature, visual art, music, television, and cinema.

### **Student Achievement Goals:**

Students will:

1. demonstrate familiarity with the basic methodological approaches to and problems with the text of the Book of Samuel as a literary corpus, historical artifact, product of a long process of composition, and a text considered authoritative by two of the world's major religious traditions.
2. develop a deeper understanding of the historical and social contexts of the biblical text, and exhibit a more self-critical understanding of their own personal approach to the biblical text.
3. hone their close reading and observational skills so as to be able to read literary texts, approach visual art, and view dramatic representations of biblical narrative with deeper attention to detail and sharper interpretive instincts, as well as increase their ability to articulate their observations.

### **Course Requirements:**

As part of the work contributing to their successful completion of this class, students *must* (a) read the assigned readings or view the assigned materials *before* attending class (completion of the readings and observational assignments will provide a solid background for the lectures); (b) attend both lectures and discussion sections diligently, so as to integrate the readings with the lectures; (c) take two 1-hour examinations asking them to analyze, synthesize, and interpret the biblical texts and secondary readings/ listenings/ viewings (no postponements of the exam without extreme extenuating circumstances); (d) submit four short (3 pgs.) interpretive papers providing close readings of receptive materials in light of the represented passages from the books of Samuel (further instructions will be communicated by the TA's; tardiness will be reflected in an automatically lowered grade); and (e) put together—either separately or in small groups—a spoken, visual, musical, or somehow kinetic (i.e., dramatic or dance-based) interpretive project bringing to life an interpretation of some aspect of the David narrative.

#### **The grade will be calculated with the following values:**

1. 20% — Course Participation (see section on **Participation** below)
2. 30% — Periodic Response Papers (5 papers, 5 pgs. each)
3. 20% — Exam on Biblical Texts and Archaeology
4. 20% — Exam on Interpretation
5. 10% — Artistic Presentation

#### **Grading Scale:**

100–92%	A
91.99–89	AB
88.99–82	B
81.99–79	BC
78.99–70	C
69.99–60	D
59.99–	F

***Please Note: There will be no curve in this course. If anybody asks me whether there will be a curve, I will tell them to “Look in the Syllabus”.***

**Please contact me early in the semester if you are registered for honors credit.**

### Additional Policies:

#### **Policy on Diversity of Thought and on the Difficulty of Some of These Texts:**

We all come to this course with different presuppositions and different opinions on the sanctity or profanity of the biblical text. I encourage disagreement and debate within the context of discussion sections, but I ask that you disagree with one another in a respectful manner. I disagree with many of my colleagues on a regular basis—and then we go out for dinner together and argue some more. Diversity of opinion is **not** tantamount to disrespect. However, precisely *because* of the diversity of opinions represented in this class, we must seek a common ground from which to discuss the Bible; that common ground is found in our *humanity*, and it is for this reason that we will discuss the Book of Samuel primarily as a *human-produced text*. That assertion does not preclude the possibility that it is also a *divinely-produced text*; but it does circumscribe the evidentiary basis upon which we will base our arguments. Our arguments must be based on ***what is in the text, or what we can know through reasoned scientific approaches*** (e.g., archaeology, epigraphy, historical reconstruction, etc.).

***Additionally, students will be shocked and appalled at the content of the biblical text. Or, at least, they should be.*** 1–2 Samuel is a difficult, and often painful text to read. This difficulty arises from the fact that the book contains controvertial material—we will do our best to treat with respect the potentially troublesome issues arising from reading this literature and the associated secondary readings. But the professor assumes that students are in college in order to acquire an education that deepens their intellect and challenges them to engage with materials and viewpoints that do not always necessarily coincide with their own. ***Be prepared to be offended in this class—the challenge you face is to grapple with the nature of the offense, and to form productive strategies for understanding the root of your discomfort and for engaging critically with the materials and conversations you have.***

#### **Policy on Participation:**

This is YOUR education. PARTICIPATE! (It's also your job—at least one of them—so please treat it the way you would treat any other job: seriously).

*Students are expected to:*

- Arrive to class and section on time.
- Complete the readings and assignments *before* class. **Late Work will be deducted at the rate of 50% per day late.**
- Consider the suggested study/discussion questions distributed over Learn@UW (discussion board) *before* lecture classes.
- Complete assignments for section in a timely manner (mark-ups, etc.).
- **Not pack up until after the professor has finished talking. Seriously. Just don't do it.**

#### **Policy on Absences:**

- We will be taking attendance by visual inspection in lectures.
- ***A HELPFUL HINT:*** Make sure your TA can see you and recognize you. Please do not come dressed to class like the Unabomber and expect to be recognized. There is a reason he wore a hooded sweatshirt and sunglasses. (You are welcome to wear a hoodie, just please do so without the hood up. Also, kindly remove obscuring ball caps, ski goggles, and hockey masks before entering the classroom...).
- ***JUSTIFIABLE ABSENCES*** (events such as military training exercises, funerals, weddings, religious holidays not provided for by the syllabus in accordance with the University's academic calendar, and other special occasions subject to the approval of the

instructor) must be excused by the professor or the section leader prior to their occurrence. If these absences occur on exam days, exams will be made up on the **first day** the student is back from the absence. **NO EXCEPTIONS**. Other absences (“I don’t feel like coming in today”, “I really needed that day off after my mongo trip to Barbados over the week-end,” and other such nincompoopery) will not be accepted.

**Policy on Contesting Grades:**

We will do our best to grade your work fairly, honestly, and clearly. Nonetheless, we recognize that occasionally there will be (valid) differences of opinion concerning an appropriate grade. We ask that you follow the following procedure to contest a grade:

- *WAIT* 24 hours from the time it was handed back. The grade’s not going anywhere, and you need to take some time to internalize why you received the grade you did.
- *TYPE* up the reason you believe the grade does not accurately reflect your performance in the class, and bring a hard-copy of this document, along with the original work itself to the section leader during office hours (or by appointment). Be prepared for a discussion; grades may be raised, sustained, or lowered.

**Policy on Academic Dishonesty:**

Plagiarism or cheating will not be tolerated. You will find the University’s statement on Academic Dishonesty here: <http://students.wisc.edu/doso/acadintegrity.html>  
Please familiarize yourself with definitions of plagiarism; any instances will receive a failing grade (0) on the assignment, and will be reported to the Dean of Student Life.

**Policy on E-mail:**

I have set up an e-mail list for this class, which I will use to disseminate announcements. Students are welcome to post questions or comments for discussion outside of class, provided that appropriate courtesy is shown and the conversation does not move beyond what is *relevant to the course*. Posts are sent to students’ wisc.edu account, and it is the student’s responsibility to have email forwarded to any alternate addresses they might use.

**Policy on Electronics in Class:**

Unlike many of my peers, I am not experiencing the form of hysteria that holds that electronics are inherently distracting in class. Studies *do* suggest, however, that even when students are fully engaged, they do not learn as well when a screen intervenes between them and their instructor. I *humbly suggest*, therefore, that you use electronics sparingly during lecture class—note-taking is fine, as are other class-pertinent activities. Please do not buy the latest pair of boots or download that new Jay-Z album in class. The T.A.’s may have specific requests that they make of you in regard to electronics in the classroom.

**Policy on Special Requests:**

The Professor does not conduct business concerning special exemptions/assignments, etc. over e-mail, via Twitter, on Facebook, via text message, over the phone, or even via carrier pigeon (as impressive as that feat might be). In order to make any special requests, students must speak with the professor face-to-face, either before or after class, or at a pre-arranged time (it is completely permissible to arrange the meeting through one of the media listed above).

## Textbooks:

### **Required:**

- Joel Baden, *The Historical David: The Real Life of an Invented Hero* (San Francisco: HarperOne, 2013). [Paperback: \$12.78 on Amazon.com].
- Stefan Heym, *The King David Report* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1998). [Paperback: \$16.99 on Amazon.com]
- Joseph Heller, *God Knows* (New York: Scribner Paperback Fiction, 1984). [Paperback: \$10.45 on Amazon.com]
- The New Revised Standard Version of the Bible—this translation is available in a variety of formats, including hardcover, paperback, and now widely available online as well. I have asked that a particular edition be held in bookstores as “recommended” (*The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha*, 3rd. ed. [Oxford: Oxford University Press]), but it is unnecessary for students to purchase this particular edition if they already own or have access to another edition of *the NRSV translation*. (Because we cannot get bogged down in questions of why one student’s Bible translates a verse one way, while another’s takes a different approach, this version will be the standard for our class. Its chief advantage is that it taps the best scholarship regarding both what the “original” Hebrew text was and how that text can best be translated into English.)
- Access to Learn@UW and various video and audio streaming sites.

## Course Schedule:

**The following abbreviations are used below: HD = Baden, *Historical David*; KDR = Heym, *The King David Report*; GK = Heller, *God Knows*; 1-2 Sam, 1 Kgs = Biblical Text, 1 Samuel - 2 Samuel, 1 Kings; passages are cited by indicating the book, followed by the chapter and verse(s), separated by a colon. (For example, “2 Sam 12:1-12” designates 2 Samuel chapter twelves, verses 1 through 12. “2 Sam 1–3” designates chapters one through three of 2 Samuel) Verses are separated by commas (“2 Sam 1:12, 16” = 2 Samuel chapter one, verses 12 and 16), while chapters and parts of chapters are separated by semicolons (“2 Sam 1:12–16; 2:1–3” = 2 Samuel chapter one, verses 12 through 16, and chapter 2, verses 1 through 3).**

### **WEEK 1**

#### **W Sept 2**

INTRODUCTION:

#### **In Class Activity:**

- Michael Jackson’s “Billie Jean,” the Hermeneutic of Suspicion, and the Hermeneutic of Trust.

#### **Section**

#### **Readings:**

- Baden, *HD*, 1–16

### **WEEK 2**

#### **W Sept 9**

THE INAUGURATION OF THE MONARCHY IN ISRAEL (SAUL)

#### **Readings:**

- 1 Sam 1–15

**Section**

**Readings:**

- Baden, *HD*, 17–81

**WEEK 3**

**M Sept 14**

THE HISTORY OF DAVID'S RISE: DAVID ENTERS SAUL'S COURT

**Readings:**

- 1 Sam 16–22

**W Sept 16**

THE HISTORY OF DAVID'S RISE: DAVID IN THE WILDERNESS

**Readings:**

- 1 Sam 23–31

**Section**

**Readings:**

- Baden, *HD*, 82–115

**WEEK 4**

**M Sept 21**

DAVID BECOMES KING

**Readings:**

- 1 Sam 28–2 Sam 6

**W Sept 23 (Yom Kippur)**

DAVID AS KING: THE EARLY YEARS

**Readings:**

- 2 Sam 7–10

**Section**

**Readings:**

- Baden, *HD*, 117–155

**\*\*\*RESPONSE PAPER 1 DUE IN SECTION OF WEEK 4\*\*\***

**WEEK 5**

**M Sept 28**

THE SUCCESSION NARRATIVE (PART 1: FAMILY TROUBLES)

**Readings:**

- 2 Sam 11–14

**W Sept 30**

THE SUCCESSION NARRATIVE (PART 2: ABSALOM'S REVOLT)

**Readings:**

- 2 Sam 15–20

**Section**

- Baden, *HD*, 156–220

## WEEK 6

### M Oct 5

#### THE SUCCESSION NARRATIVE (PART 3: INTERLUDE / SOLOMON'S SUCCESSION)

##### Readings:

- 2 Sam 21–1 Kgs 2
- Baden, *HD*, 221–251

### W Oct 7

#### DAVID'S JERUSALEM IN ARCHAEOLOGY

##### Readings:

[N.B.: All these readings are found in a single document on the course Website titled "DavidsJerusalem\_BAR24"; some scrolling between the beginnings and ending of articles will be necessary.]

- Hershel Shanks (editor), "David's Jerusalem," *BAR* 24.4 (Jul.-Aug., 1998): 24–25.
- Margreet Steiner, "David's Jerusalem: Fiction or Reality?: It's Not There: Archaeology Proves a Negative," *BAR* 24.4 (Jul.-Aug., 1998): 26–33, 62–63.
- Jane Cahill, "David's Jerusalem: Fiction or Reality?: It Is There: The Archaeological Evidence Proves It," *BAR* 24.4 (Jul.-Aug., 1998): 34–41, 63.
- Nadav Na'aman, "David's Jerusalem: Fiction or Reality?: It Is There: Ancient Texts Prove It," *BAR* 24.4 (Jul.-Aug., 1998): 42–44.

### Section

##### Readings:

- Jane Cahill, "Jerusalem in David and Solomon's Time," *BAR* 30.6 (Nov.-Dec., 2004): 20–31, 62–63.
- Eilat Mazar, "Did I Find King David's Palace?" *BAR* 32.1 (Jan.-Feb., 2006): 16–27, 70.

## WEEK 7

### M Oct 12

#### DAVID'S JERUSALEM IN ARCHAEOLOGY

##### Readings:

- Hershel Shanks, "Jerusalem Roundup," *BAR* 37.2 (Mar.-Apr., 2011): 35–45, 70.
- I. Finkelstein, I. Koch, I., and O. Lipschits, "The Mound on the Mount: A Solution to the 'Problem with Jerusalem'," *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 11 (2011). Online: [http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/JHS/Articles/article\\_159.pdf](http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/JHS/Articles/article_159.pdf)

### W Oct 14

#### DAVID'S JERUSALEM IN ARCHAEOLOGY

##### Readings:

- Daniel Pioske, "David's Jerusalem: A Sense of Place," *NEA* 76 (2013): 4–15.

### Section

#### REVIEW FOR EXAM

\*\*\*RESPONSE PAPER 2 DUE IN SECTION OF WEEK 7\*\*\*

## WEEK 8

### M Oct 19

#### EXAM ON BIBLICAL TEXT AND ARCHAEOLOGY (50 MINUTES)

### **W Oct 21**

#### DAVID IN JEWISH, CHRISTIAN, AND ISLAMIC INTERPRETATION

##### **Readings:**

- Psalm 3
- Psalm 89
- 1 Chronicles 19–21
- Matthew 1
- Acts 2
- E. Mroczek, “‘David Did Not Ascend into the Heavens’ (Acts 2:34): Early Jewish Ascent Traditions and the Myth of Exegesis in the New Testament,” *JAAJ* 3 (2015): 219–252.

### **Section**

#### DAVID IN JEWISH, CHRISTIAN, AND ISLAMIC INTERPRETATION

##### **Readings:**

- R. R. Hutton, Manuscript, pp. 6–13 (section on David).
- Qur’ān, 2 (al-Baqara [‘the Cow’]): 246–253
- Qur’ān, 6 (al-An‘am [‘Cattle’]): 82–90
- Qur’ān, 17 (al-Isra [‘the Night Journey’]): 54–57
- Qur’ān, 34 (Saba [‘Sheba’]): 8–11
- Qur’ān, 38 (Ṣād [a letter]): 17–26

## **WEEK 9**

### **M Oct 26**

#### DAVID IN ART

##### **Readings:**

- Sara Kipfer, “Love Turns into Hate: The Rape of Tamar (2 Sam 13:1–22) in Baroque Art,” *SBL Forum* (Feb., 2009): <http://www.sbl-site.org/publications/article.aspx?articleId=800>.
- Sara Kipfer, “Sinner or Redeemer? – David and the Pestilence in 2 Sam 24 and 1 Chr 21,” *Biblical Reception* 1 (2012): 88–108.

### **W Oct 28**

#### DAVID IN LITERATURE: *THE KING DAVID REPORT*

##### **Readings:**

- Heym, *KDR*, 5–68 (chs. 1–7)

### **Section**

#### DAVID IN LITERATURE: *THE KING DAVID REPORT*

##### **Readings:**

- Heym, *KDR*, 69–118 (chs. 8–12)
- \*\*\*RESPONSE PAPER 3 DUE IN SECTION OF WEEK 9\*\*\***

## **WEEK 10**

### **M Nov 2**

#### DAVID IN LITERATURE: *THE KING DAVID REPORT*

##### **Readings:**

- Heym, *KDR*, 119–166 (chs. 13–17)



**W Nov 4**

DAVID IN LITERATURE: *THE KING DAVID REPORT*

**Readings:**

- Heym, *KDR*, 167–208 (chs. 18–21)

**Section**

DAVID IN LITERATURE: *THE KING DAVID REPORT*

**Readings:**

- Heym, *KDR*, 209–252 (chs. 22–25)

**WEEK 11**

**M Nov 9**

DAVID IN LITERATURE: *GOD KNOWS*

**Readings:**

- Heller, *GK*, 1–56

**W Nov 11**

DAVID IN LITERATURE: *GOD KNOWS*

**Readings:**

- Heller, *GK*, 57–121

**Section**

DAVID IN LITERATURE: *GOD KNOWS*

**Readings:**

- Heller, *GK*, 123–178

**WEEK 12**

**M Nov 16**

DAVID IN LITERATURE: *GOD KNOWS*

**Readings:**

- Heller, *GK*, 179–256

**W Nov 18**

DAVID IN LITERATURE: *GOD KNOWS*

**Readings:**

- Heller, *GK*, 257–290

**Section**

DAVID IN LITERATURE: *GOD KNOWS*

**Readings:**

- Heller, *GK*, 290–356

**WEEK 13**

**M Nov 23**

DAVID IN MUSIC: MEDIEVAL, RENNAISSANCE, BAROQUE

**Readings:**

- Siobhan Dowling Long, “Why Weepst Thou? ...And Why Is Thy Heart Grieved? (1 Sam 1,8): Grief and Loss in the Books of Samuel. A Musical Interpretation,” in *Proceedings*

of the 2014 Colloquium Biblicum Lovaniense (ed. Walter Dietrich; BETL 0000; Leuven: Peeters, forthcoming). [MANUSCRIPT]

**Listening:**

- Peter Abelard (1079–1142), “The Lament of David over Saul and David”  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iDtJZfcHJIQ>
- Thomas Weelkes (1576–1623), *O Jonathan*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xPfAqgRkzik>
- Robert Ramsey (1590–1644)  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=45nlaE\\_h3ZM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=45nlaE_h3ZM)
- Henry Purcell (c. 1693), *In Guilty Night*:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c3n-U9mHfaA>
- Johann Kuhnau (c. 1700), “Saul’s Madness Soothed By Music”:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DoTjrGEcVxQ>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k4ALo8z8HAQ>
- David Owen (1709–1739), *David of the White Rock*:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UkOjA2R1\\_hQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UkOjA2R1_hQ)
- G. F. Handel (1685–1759), *Saul*:  
Act 1, scene 5: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=teDVFRjrOvA>  
Act 2 “Oh Fatal Consequence of Rage”:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qWPQ52R3wOs>  
Symphony: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LftK7622O2c>  
“Elegy on the death of Saul and Jonathan”:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=22BdaFiInrc>
- Simon Mayr (c. 1795), *David in Spelunca Engaddi*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2m4WA2am3xM&list=RD2m4WA2am3xM#t=268>

**W Nov 25**

**DAVID IN MUSIC: ROMANCE, CONTEMPORARY**

**Listening:**

- Arthur Honegger (c. 1921), *La roi David: Lamentations of Gilboa* (No. 14)  
“The Incantation”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k2QqfJJPI6A>
- Herbert Howells (1892–1983), *A Garland for de la Mare*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=raX9mBihS8g>
- Randall Thompson (1899–1984), *The Last Words of David*:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nTAUcutcC10>
- Eric Whitworth, “When David Heard”:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dQBNDnrS8HY&feature=youtu.be>
- Leonard Cohen, “Halleluiah”:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YrLk4vdY28Q>  
or as performed by Jeff Buckley:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y8AWFf7EA4>

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**Section: THANKSGIVING BREAK (NO CLASS)**

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## WEEK 14

### M Nov 30

#### DAVID ON TELEVISION

##### Viewing:

- NBC's *Kings* (The selection will be made available through the course's website)
- *N.B.*: This assignment originally included watching ABC's *Of Kings and Prophets* (which was supposed to start in fall of 2015). However, the show has been postponed, and one can see why after watching the trailer at:  
<http://abc.go.com/shows/of-kings-and-prophets/news/updates/preview-the-video-sneak-peek-trailer-for-the-new-drama-series-of-kings-and-prophets-coming-soon-to-abc-150512>

### W Dec 2

#### DAVID IN FILM

##### Viewing:

- "David and Bathsheba" (1951)

##### Section

#### DAVID IN FILM

##### Viewing:

- "David and Goliath" (1960)

\*\*\*RESPONSE PAPER 4 DUE IN SECTION OF WEEK 14\*\*\*

## WEEK 15

### M Dec 7

#### DAVID IN FILM

##### Viewing:

- "King David" (1985)

### W Dec 9

#### DAVID IN FILM

##### Viewing:

- "David and Goliath" (2015)

##### Section

#### CONCLUSION: THE MANY LIVES OF KING DAVID

##### Readings:

- Baden, *HD*, 253–265

## WEEK 16

### M Dec 14

#### **EXAM ON INTERPRETATION (50 minutes, non-cumulative)**

Performance: Dec. 19, 5:05pm–7:05pm

**Date and Time to be determined. In lieu of a 2-hour final exam, we will use this time for students to make their performances. I will schedule a performance space.**