

Archives of Women in Theological Scholarship  
The Burke Library  
(Columbia University Libraries)  
Union Theological Seminary, New York

**Finding Aid for**

**Phyllis Trible Papers, [195?]-2006**



Finding Aid prepared by Leslie Reyman, May 2001  
Revised with additions by Michelle Nickens, August 2008

**Summary Information**

Creator: Phyllis Trible, 1932-  
Title: Phyllis Trible Papers  
Inclusive dates: [195?]-2006  
Bulk dates: 1980-2005  
Abstract: Lecturer, Professor, and biblical scholar at Union Theological Seminary; books, lecture notes, book reviews, articles, and correspondence related to Trible's publications and speaking engagements.  
Size: 17 boxes, 7.0 linear feet  
Storage: Onsite storage  
Repository: The Burke Library  
Union Theological Seminary  
3041 Broadway  
New York, NY 10027  
Phone: 212-851-5612  
Fax: 212-851-5613  
Email: [archives@uts.columbia.edu](mailto:archives@uts.columbia.edu)

## Administrative Information

- Provenance: Phyllis Tribble donated her papers to the Archives of Women in Theological Scholarship in 1998, with later additions in May 2007.
- Access: Archival papers are available to registered readers for consultation by appointment only. Please contact archives staff by phone, fax or email [archives@uts.columbia.edu](mailto:archives@uts.columbia.edu) as far in advance as possible.
- Access restrictions: This collection is unrestricted
- Preferred Citation: item description, title, series #, box #, folder #, Phyllis Tribble Papers, Archives of Women in Theological Scholarship, The Burke Library, (Columbia University Libraries), at Union Theological Seminary in the City of New York.

## Biography

Phyllis Tribble is an internationally known lecturer and biblical scholar. She is a leading authority on what is now known as feminist hermeneutics, as well as literary and rhetorical methods of biblical criticism. Tribble's first two books, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality* (1978) and *Texts of Terror: Literary-Feminist Readings of Biblical Narratives* (1984) are considered to be groundbreaking works in feminist biblical scholarship.

Tribble, born in 1932, is originally from Virginia. In 1954, she earned a BA degree at Meredith College (Raleigh, North Carolina), graduating *magna cum laude*. She earned a master's degree from Union Theological Seminary in New York City in 1956. In 1963 she received a joint PhD from Union Theological Seminary and Columbia University (1963) with an emphasis in Old Testament.

Tribble began her teaching career at Wake Forest University (1963-1971), in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. She moved to Newton-Centre, Massachusetts to teach at Andover-Newton Theological School (1971-1979). In 1980 she was appointed Professor of Old Testament at Union Theological Seminary in New York City. In 1981 she became the first woman to hold the post of Baldwin Professor of Sacred Literature, a post that she held until leaving Union Theological Seminary in 1998.

Professor Tribble left Union to become associate dean and professor of Biblical Studies at Wake Forest University's new School of Divinity. She was instrumental in designing the divinity school's curriculum. Tribble has also been a visiting professor at several other theological schools, including Vancouver School of Theology in British Columbia, Canada, and Iliff School of Theology in Denver, Colorado. In May of 1999, Tribble received an honorary doctor of divinity degree from Wake Forest University.

In the forward to her first book, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality* (1978), Tribble writes the following as a way of explanation:

Using feminist hermeneutics, I have tried to recover old treasures and discover new ones in the household of faith. Though some of these treasures are small, they are nonetheless valuable in a tradition that is often compelled to live by the remnant. This understanding has guided my vision since events symbolized by

1963 muted the proclamation of the mighty acts of God in history. Thus I dare not despise the day of little things (see Zech. 4:10). She continues that thought in an article written for *The Christian Century* in 1982. "Perhaps I have said enough to show that in various and sundry ways, feminist hermeneutics is challenging interpretations old and new. In time perhaps, it will yield a biblical theology of womanhood . . . with roots in the goodness of creation female and male."

Tribble also wrote *Rhetorical Criticism: Context, Method, and the Book of Jonah* (1994) and contributed "Jonah" to the *New Interpreters' Bible Commentary Series*. She has written numerous articles, book reviews and columns for various publications. In 2006, Tribble and Letty M. Russell co-edited a collection titled *Hagar, Sarah, and Their Children*, which grew out of the 2004 Tribble Lecture Series held at Wake Forest. The book received a 2007 Catholic Press Award in the category of scripture. Tribble also appeared on television as part of Bill Moyer's PBS special "Genesis." As an expert commentator she participated in two episodes, "The Test," and "Blessed Deception." She has also served as president of the Society of Biblical Literature (1994).

### Collection Scope and Content Note

The Tribble papers contain drafts and manuscripts of Tribble's books, lectures, book reviews, and articles. In addition to these writings, the papers also include related correspondence.

The collection is divided into seven series:

- **Series 1: *Jonah, the New Interpreters' Bible*, 1991-1996 and undated (2 boxes, 1.0 lin.ft.)**  
This series consists of drafts of the introduction to *Jonah*, and the text of *Jonah*. Correspondence between Tribble and the publisher is also included.
- **Series 2: *Texts of Terror*, 1983-1992 and undated (2 boxes, 0.5 lin. ft.)**  
This Series consists of drafts of the book *Texts of Terror*. Also included is correspondence between Tribble and the publisher.
- **Series 3: *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, undated (2 boxes, 0.75 lin.ft.)**  
This series consists of drafts of the book *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*. Also included is correspondence between Tribble and the publisher.
- **Series 4: *Rhetorical Criticism*, 1977-1977 (1 box, 0.25 lin. ft.)**  
This series consists of drafts of the book *Rhetorical Criticism*. Also included is correspondence between Tribble and the publisher and others.
- **Series 5: *Lectures, Reviews, Articles*, 1985-1998 (7 boxes, 3.25 lin. ft.)**  
This series consists of drafts of lectures, book reviews, and articles.

- **Series 6: Manuscripts, 1994 and undated (2 boxes, 0.75 lin. ft.)**  
This series consists of final draft copies of three manuscripts, *Rhetorical Criticism*, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, and *Texts of Terror*.
- **Series 7: Publicity, 1963-2006 (1 box, 0.5 lin. ft.)**  
This series consists of press clippings, articles, programs, and bulletins from speaking engagements, as well as a folder of correspondence from 1999

## **Processing**

When the Burke Library acquired Tribble's papers, an attempt was made to maintain the original order she imposed throughout the course of her career. Folded materials were flattened. Newspaper clippings were photocopied on acid free paper. Staples, rubber bands, and metal clips were removed. All materials were placed in acid-free folders and boxes.

Note: Series 2, Box 1 contains folded materials to be transferred to legal folders for preservation

## Contents List

### **Series 1: *Jonah, The New Interpreters' Bible***

Series	Box	Folder	Contents
1	1	1	Jonah in NIB, draft
1	1	2	Jonah in NIB, 1st draft, part 1
1	1	3	Jonah in NIB, 1 <sup>st</sup> draft, part 2
1	1	4	Jonah in NIB, Introduction
1	1	5	Jonah in NIB, 2 <sup>nd</sup> draft, part 2
1	1	6	Jonah in NIB, 3rd draft, part 2
1	1	7	Jonah in NIB, 5 <sup>th</sup> draft, part 2
1	1	8	New Interpreters' Bible correspondence
1	1	9	New Interpreters' Bible correspondence
1	2	1	Jonah in NIB, copy edited version
1	2	2	Jonah in NIB, 1 <sup>st</sup> draft, (typed)
1	2	3	Jonah in NIB, 2 <sup>nd</sup> draft
1	2	4	Jonah in NIB, 3 <sup>rd</sup> draft, part one
1	2	5	Jonah in NIB, 4 <sup>th</sup> draft, part one
1	2	6	Jonah in NIB, 5 <sup>th</sup> draft, part one
1	2	7	Jonah in NIB, 6 <sup>th</sup> draft, part one
1	2	8	Jonah in NIB, 7 <sup>th</sup> draft, part one
1	2	9	Jonah in NIB, 9 <sup>th</sup> draft, part one
1	2	10	Jonah in NIB, notes
1	2	11	Jonah in NIB, miscellaneous

### **Series 2: *Texts of Terror***

2	1	1	Fortress Correspondence and Catalog
2	1	2	Covers and Memorabilia
2	1	3	Preface, Table of Contents
2	1	4	Tombstone graphics
2	1	5	Chapter One
2	1	6	Hagar-early draft
2	1	7	Hagar drafts
2	1	8	Hagar drafts
2	1	9	Hagar, next to final draft for book manuscript
2	1	10	Hagar distribution copies
2	1	11	Tamar, II Sam. 13-rough drafts
2	2	1	Tamar, II Sam. 13-3 <sup>rd</sup> draft
2	2	2	Tamar
2	2	3	Extravagance of Violence
2	2	4	Concubine, an unnamed woman
2	2	5	An unnamed woman, chap. 3, distribution copy
2	2	6	Concubine, 1 <sup>st</sup> draft

**Series 2: Texts of Terror (Cont'd)**

Series	Box	Folder	Contents
2	2	7	Chapter 4-New Bedford Rape
2	2	8	Jephthah
2	2	9	Jephthah

**Series 3: God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality**

3	1	1	Final text, introduction, chapters 1, 2, 3
3	1	2	Journey of a Metaphor, chapter 2
3	1	3	Passages along the way, chapter 3
3	1	4	Love Story, chapter 4
3	1	5	Final Text, chapter 4, 5, 6
3	1	6	Song of Songs
3	1	7	Song of Songs
3	1	8	Notes from articles and books
3	1	9	Womb of God (handwritten manuscript)
3	2	1	1 <sup>st</sup> draft (handwritten)
3	2	2	1 <sup>st</sup> draft (handwritten)
3	2	3	1 <sup>st</sup> draft (handwritten)

**Series 4: Rhetorical Criticism**

4	1	1	Part One
4	1	2	1 <sup>st</sup> draft (typed)
4	1	3	Correspondence

**Series 5: Lectures, Reviews, Articles**

5	1	1	Tempest in a Text - Bellamine Lecture drafts: 1996
5	1	2	Transfiguration of the Mount -- Santa Clara University Lecture
5	1	3	NY Times Review 'Unauthorized Versions' 1996
5	1	4	Bible in Bloom (Book of J) 1991
5	1	5	Exegesis for Storytellers and Other Strangers: SBL Address: Drafts 1994
5	1	6	Exegesis for Storytellers and Other Strangers: SBL Presidential Address 1994
5	1	7	The Odd Couple: Elijah and Jezebel 1994
5	2	1	Subversive Justice – Harrelson Festschrift 1987
5	2	2	Subversive Justice – Harrelson Festschrift 1987
5	2	3	Huldah's Holy Writ 1985
5	2	4	Ruth, Miriam for <i>Women in Scripture</i> : drafts 1996
5	2	5	Ruth: A Text in Therapy 1998

**Series 5: Lectures, Reviews, Articles (Cont'd)**

Series	Box	Folder	Contents
5	2	6	<i>Suspicious Narratives and a Trustworthy God</i> : drafts May 1997
5	2	7	<i>Struggles and Strangers – Genesis 32: 22-32</i> : drafts 1-3, 2005
5	2	8	<i>Struggles and Strangers – Genesis 32: 22-32</i> : drafts 4-7, 2005
5	2	9	Bible in the Round for Letty Russell <i>Festschrift</i> : drafts 1998
5	2	10	Meeting Mary through Luke 2001
5	2	11	<i>NY Times</i> Review: The Bible Unearthed by Finkelstein & Silberman 2001
5	3	1	Wisdom <i>Abscondita et Revelata</i> drafts 1-4, 2004
5	3	2	Wisdom <i>Abscondita et Revelata</i> drafts 5-7, 2004
5	3	3	Preface to Terrien's <i>Till The Heart Sings</i> : drafts 1-2, 2003
5	3	4	Preface to Terrien's <i>Till The Heart Sings</i> : drafts 3-5, 2003
5	3	5	Preface to Terrien's <i>Till The Heart Sings</i> : drafts 6-9, 2003
5	3	6	"Genesis 22: The Sacrifice of Sarah" for <i>Feminism and Theology</i> , ed. Soskice & Sipton: drafts
5	3	7	"Genesis 22: The Sacrifice of Sarah" for <i>Feminism and Theology</i> , ed. Soskice & Sipton: drafts 2-3
5	3	8	"Not a Jot, Not a Tittle: Genesis 2-3 After Twenty Years" for <i>Eve and Adam: Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Readings on Genesis and Gender</i> : drafts with 5-inch floppy disk 1995
5	3	9	Treasures Old and New: Biblical Theology and the Challenge of Feminism, Kings College Lecture 1992
5	3	10	Ruth – Anchor Bible Dictionary 1988
5	3	11	The Hour Cometh – Feminist Theology & the Old Testament: drafts and notes 1984-85
5	4	1	Qohelet Drafts for <i>Books of the Bible</i> (Scribner) drafts 1-2 1988
5	4	2	Qohelet Drafts for <i>Books of the Bible</i> (Scribner) drafts 3-4 and manuscript 1988
5	4	3	<i>NY Times</i> Book Review: What God Meant to Say (Kugle), 1997
5	4	4	<i>NY Times</i> Book Review: A Flawed Character" (Miles) 1995
5	4	5	<i>NY Times</i> Book Review: Creation of a Feminist Theology (Ruether, Fiorenza) 1983
5	4	6	Five Loaves and Two Fishes 1988
5	4	7	Authority of the Bible for New Interpreters' Study Bible 2003
5	4	8	Divine Incongruities in the Book of Jonah – Brueggeman <i>Festschrift</i> drafts 1-4 1997
5	4	9	Divine Incongruities in the Book of Jonah – Brueggeman <i>Festschrift</i> drafts 5-7 and correspondence 1997
5	4	10	Haunting and Elusive Presence 1968
5	4	11	Words of Silence 1968
5	4	12	Face of Man in the Old Testament: notes
5	4	13	Intolerance of God

**Series 5: Lectures, Reviews, Articles (Cont'd)**

Series	Box	Folder	Contents
5	5	1	New Testament Notes – Meredith College [195?]
5	5	2	Introduction to New Testament Notes – Masters School
5	5	3	Subversive Prophets
5	5	4	Bamboos and Sour Grapes 1968-69
5	5	5	Embarrassment of Historical Revelation [196?]
5	5	6	Failures of God [196?]
5	5	7	“Rhetorician for Righteousness” for <i>Christianity and the Social Crisis</i> (Rauschenbusch) drafts 2006
5	5	8	If You are Elijah, then I am Jezebel, Tribble Lecture Series 2006
5	5	9	Jephthah’s World View: Vow, Victory, Victim 2006
5	5	10	Response to John Collins’ <i>The Bible After Babel</i> 2005
5	5	11	Book Review: <i>Reading the Women of the Bible</i> (Frymer-Kensky) 2002
5	5	12	Eve & Adam: One Version 1990
5	5	13	Eve – New Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible 2006
5	5	14	Manuscripts: Articles, Paper
5	5	15	Manuscripts: Reviews, Papers, Articles
5	5	16	Jephthah – New Interpreter’s Dictionary of Bible 2006
5	6	1	God’s Enmity (Living Pulpit) 2003
5	6	2	Ecclesiastes for <i>The Books of the Bible</i> (Anderson) 1987
5	6	3	Hagar, Sarah, and their Children, Preface 2005
5	6	4	Hagar, Sarah, and their Children -- Unto the Thousandth Generation (Tribble & Russell): drafts 1-2, 2004
5	6	5	Hagar, Sarah, and their Children -- Unto the Thousandth Generation (Tribble & Russell): drafts 3-4, 2005
5	6	6	Hagar, Sarah, and their Children – drafts 5-6, drafts 2005
5	6	7	Hagar, Sarah, and their Children – Chapters 5-7, 2005
5	6	8	Hagar, Sarah, and their Children – Complete chapter drafts, 2005
5	6	9	Ominous Beginnings for a Promise of Blessing: drafts 1, 3, 2004
5	6	10	Ominous Beginnings for a Promise of Blessing: drafts 4-6, 2004
5	6	11	Ominous Beginnings for a Promise of Blessing: drafts 5-7, 2004
5	7	1	Ominous Beginnings for a Promise of Blessing: drafts 10-12: 2005
5	7	2	Ominous Beginnings for a Promise of Blessing: drafts 13-15, 2005

**Series 6: Manuscripts**

6	1	1	Rhetorical Criticism—title page-p. 156
6	1	2	Rhetorical Criticism—p. 157-303
6	1	3	Rhetorical Criticism—p. 304-340
6	1	4	God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality—title page-p.69
6	1	5	God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality—p. 70-148



**Series 6: Manuscripts (Cont'd)**

Series	Box	Folder	Contents
6	1	6	God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality—p. 149-231
6	1	7	God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality—p.232-indexes
6	2	1	Texts of Terror—title page—p.103
6	2	2	Texts of Terror—p.104-Hebrew words p. 20
6	2	3	Texts of Terror-subject index

**Series 7: Publicity**

7	1	1	Correspondence 1999
7	1	2	Publicity 1963-79
7	1	3	Publicity 1980-89
7	1	4	Publicity 1980-89
7	1	5	Publicity 1980-89
7	1	6	Publicity 1980-89
7	1	7	Publicity 1990-99
7	1	8	Publicity 1990-99
7	1	9	Publicity 1990-99
7	1	10	Publicity 1990-99
7	1	11	Publicity 1990-99 with photographs
7	1	12	Publicity 2000-06
7	1	13	Publicity 2000-06