

CURRENTS: Humanities Work Now

Keeping the Girls in Stitches: Seventeenth-Century Women's Embroidery as Biblical Commentary

Michele Osherow, Associate Professor, English
Spring 2026 Dresher Center Residential Faculty Fellow

This research considers ways early modern women used their needles to engage with biblical text and characters, offering up alternative readings of narratives and challenging dominant interpretations head-on. Women's embroidered pictures of the Bible were not bound to scriptural accuracy; they freely inserted characters into stitched scenes or juxtaposed narratives: what emerges is a stunning complexity of material very much in keeping with the textual intricacies of the Bible itself. Michele Osherow will demonstrate this with a few focused examples, showing how the needlework riffs on biblical narrative, religious commentary, and addresses social and political interests. of micro-histories for a more fine-tuned understanding of life in authoritarian regimes.

Monday, April 6, 2026
Noon to 1 p.m.

In-person, PAHB 216 and. online via WebEx
Advanced registration required for boxed lunch.

