Christian feminists have read the texts of our tradition with eyes both 
*critical* and *constructive*. Our gendered readings are stunned, affronted, insulted by the dominance of patriarchy in our sacred and historical texts. We are stunned one moment, but pleasantly surprised the next by the stories that emerge in texts by women and men who challenge or bend or defy the prevailing views of sexuality and gender roles. Constructive feminist theology has rediscovered, retrieved and reread those texts that would defy the ways males and females are valued and devalued within a patriarchal framework.

Our rereadings have also revealed, uncovered other readings and rereadings. Women of spirit--uppity, spunky ones (and at times their allies) are tamed, reframed, put in their place, re-masculated or deflowered. Because the tradition itself is thoroughly patriarchal, any text or story or personality who would defy or deviate from traditional genderings is recast or reframed, discounted or ravished. Even those who are valued by the tradition are firmly set in a safe place. Tamar, Mary Magdalene, Perpetua, Julian, Teresa--these and others have been read and reinterpreted by church fathers, schoolmen, exegetes and masters to fit neatly into the gendered norms of Christian Tradition.

Where does this leave us? Along with our *critical* and *constructive* readings, our eyes must gaze also on *canonical* and *contextual* questions. As scholars and teachers, we might just canonize those texts and authors who defy or differ from the patriarchal norms of gendered relationships; we can put them in our syllabi, our bibliographies, our reading lists and teach them to students who will read them with new or open eyes. As postmodern people, we are bound to see the radical contextualization of these surprising, defiant, deviant texts. Patriarchal norming is alive and well and ripe to be deconstructed.