COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines women in Canadian society from contact between First Nations peoples and newcomers to the present. We will discuss the changing roles of women in different economic and social contexts, and how race, class, age, social status, and sexual orientation shaped women’s lives. The lectures will introduce students to key themes in women’s history, as well as historiographical and theoretical debates in the field. In class discussions and written assignments, students will analyze some of the methods and sources that historians use to examine women’s lives.

COURSE TEXTS


GRADE DISTRIBUTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Discussions</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay 1: Memoir as Historical Source</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay 2: Oral History Methodology</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
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All assignments and the examination must be completed to pass the course. Late papers will be penalized.
ASSIGNMENTS

All assignments are to be double-spaced and written in Times New Roman 12 point font. I will not accept assignments that are submitted as an e-mail attachment. All assignments must be submitted in class, or in the Red Box in the History Department on the 6th floor of the Social Sciences Building. Do not submit your essays to the administrative staff in the history department office. Leave them in the Red Box. I will receive them at the end of the day or the next morning.

Deadlines are firm, but students who make arrangements with me in person at least one week before the assignment is due may receive an extension if I deem the circumstances to be appropriate. Late papers will lose 0.5 of the 4.00 grade point system per day.

CLASS DISCUSSIONS (15 %)

There will be class discussions throughout the semester. Students will divide themselves into groups of 4-5, and will use the questions in the course outline to guide the discussion. Each group will select a person to report to the class and will submit a group discussion form, which I will distribute in class, at the end of the discussion. Students must attend class to receive the group discussion grades.

ESSAYS

Essay 1: Memoir as Historical Source (6-8 pages) (30%)
Due: February 14

The purpose of this assignment is to encourage students to think critically about memoirs as an historical source. This short essay will be based on a careful reading and analysis of *Incorrigible*. Velma Demerson was incarcerated at the Mercer Reformatory under the Female Refuges Act because she had a relationship and child with a Chinese man. Her memoir is a valuable source for historians because there are few firsthand accounts about women’s lives written by working-class women.

Students will read *Incorrigible* alongside historical articles and books, based on archival research, that examine the themes Demerson discusses in her memoir. She writes about many issues: the impact of the Female Refuges Act on her life, her interracial relationship, being a single mother, growing up working-class family headed by a single mother, and life at the Mercer Reformatory for Girls. The memoir captures the complexity of the various social relations and reform movements that circumscribed her choices and that helped her to make sense of her life. However, in order to write a focused paper with a clear thesis, students will chose one of the challenges Demerson faced for their papers.

The following book chapters are recommended as secondary sources and are available on blackboard. In addition to these sources, students must find 5 additional sources to contextualize the essay.

Recommended Readings:

Joan Sangster, Chapter 5 in *Girl Trouble: Female Delinquency in English Canada*. Toronto: Between the Lines, 2002.
ESSAY 2: OBACHAN’S GARDEN: ORAL HISTORY METHODOLOGY ASSIGNMENT (6-8 PAGES)
Due: March 27

The purpose of this assignment is to teach students to think critically about the evidence of oral history. One of the challenges of writing women’s history is the lack of textual sources. Because there are so few documents written by women, feminist historians were strong advocates for oral history. In the 1970s, women’s historians used the evidence of oral history somewhat uncritically. Many practitioners thought that oral history was the most reliable record of women’s lives because women themselves took a part in producing these new historical sources. By the 1980s, oral historians, influenced by the literature about the construction of memory, began to analyze how women’s reinterpretation of their past sheds light on gender, race, and class relations.

Students will write a short paper that answers the following question: Oral historians argue that gender, race, and class shape memory. How do the incongruities between Asayo Murakami’s (Obachhan) memory and the historical record help us to understand women’s experiences of oppression and the social relations that shaped Murakami’s account of her life?

On Tuesday, March 18, we will discuss the articles listed below. Students will begin watching Obachan’s Garden after the discussion and will finish watching the film on Thursday, March 13.

In addition to the articles on oral history, students are also required to find five additional sources to contextualize Japanese women’s lives in Canada in the early 20th century.

Read:

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism occurs when one submits or presents one's own work in a course, or ideas and/or passages in a written piece of work, as if it were one's own work done expressly for that particular course, when, in fact, it is not.

As noted in the Department of History Guide to Essay Presentation, plagiarism may take several forms:

1. Failure to cite sources properly may be considered plagiarism. This could include quotations, and wording used from another source but not acknowledged.
2. Borrowed, purchased, and/or ghostwritten papers are considered plagiarism, as is submitting one's own work for more than one course without the permission of the instructor(s) involved.
3. Extensive paraphrasing of one or a few sources is also considered plagiarism, even when notes are used, unless the essay is a critical analysis of those works.
4. The use of notes does not justify the sustained presentation of another author's language and ideas as one's own.
Plagiarism is a serious academic offence. A plagiarized paper will automatically be failed. Plagiarism may also result in a failing grade for the entire course and other penalties as noted in The University of Calgary Calendar.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of this course.

GRADING SCHEME

| Grade | Percentage | Description
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>Outstanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>85-90</td>
<td>Excellent; exceeds course requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>80-84</td>
<td>Superior work that meets course requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>Very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>74-76</td>
<td>Above average; meets, but does not exceed requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>70-73</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>67-69</td>
<td>Satisfactory, but does not meet requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>64-66</td>
<td>Acceptable</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>60-63</td>
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<td>D+</td>
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<td>Passable</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-49</td>
<td>Fail</td>
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LECTURE AND DISCUSSION SCHEDULE

Week 1 (January 15 & 17): Introduction to the Course and Aboriginal Women and Contact with Europeans
Read: “Introduction” and Shoemaker, “Kateri Tekakwitha’s Tortuous Path to Sainthood” in Rethinking Canada

Week 2 (January 22 & 24): Women in Colonial Contexts: New France and British North America

Week 3 (January 29 & 31): Political and Legal Status

Week 4 (February 5 & 7): Women in the Contact Zone
- Class Discussion: February 7 (Based on readings for Week 3 & 4)
Read: Sylvia Van Kirk, “From Marrying-In’ to ‘Marrying-Out’: Changing Patterns of Aboriginal/Non-Aboriginal Marriage in Colonial Canada” in Rethinking Canada
Questions: How did marriage affect women’s legal status in colonial society? How did race and class affect a woman’s status and influence in society? How did region shape women’s legal status, and how did this change over time.

Week 5 (February 12 & 14): Women’s Work in Industrializing Canada
- Essay 1 Due February 14
Read: pp. 1-87 of Discounted Labour

Reading Week: February 18-22

Week 6 (February 26 & 28): Women’s Reform Movements
Read: Janice Fiamengo, “A Legacy of Ambivalence” and Little “Claiming a Unique Place”

Week 7 (March 4 & 6): The Impact of Women’s Reform and the Welfare State on Women
- Class Discussion: March 6 (Based on readings for Week 6 & 7)
Read: pp. 91-157 of Discounted Labour
Questions: What are the historians’ assessments woman social reformers? How did gender, race, and class influence reform movements? What changed and what were the limits of reform? Did the reforms help women?

Week 8 (March 11 & 13): Courtship, Marriage, and Motherhood
Week 9 (March 18 & 20): Obachan’s Garden
- Class discussion: March 18
  Read: Sangster, Polishuk (available on blackboard) and Sugiman
  Questions: Why are inaccurate memories still useful? How do historians use them? How does
  the relationship between the interviewer and the research participant influence the interview?
  How do cultural values and ethnicity influence how people remember our past? Why is it
  important to consider what women do not talk about?
- View Obachan’s Garden: March 18 & 20

Week 10 (March 25 & 27): Women’s Sexuality in Postwar Canada
- Essay 2 Due: March 27
  Read: Sheila L. Cavanagh, “The Heterosexualization of the Ontario Woman Teacher in
  the Postwar Period” and Elise Chenier, “Rethinking Class in Lesbian Bar Culture: Living

Week 11 (April 1 & 3): Postwar Suburban Dreams?
- Class Discussion: April 3
  Read: Franca Iacovetta, “Recipes for Democracy? Gender, Family, and Making Female
  Citizens in Cold War Canada”, Sedef Arat-Koc, “From ‘Mothers of the Nation’ to Migrant
  Workers; Marlene Epp, “Victims of the Times, Heroes of Their Lives”
  Questions: How do everyday activities reinforce gender roles and identities? How did the
  lives of immigrant and refugee women change when they moved to Canada? Given the
  diverse experiences of women, should we conceptualize the postwar period as an age of
  prosperity for women?

Week 12 (April 8 & 10): The Contemporary Women’s Movement and International
Connections

Week 13 (April 15-17): Challenges and Future Directions for Women’s Organizing
- April 15: Class Discussion
  Wavelength” and Nadeau, “Who is Canadian Now?”
  Questions: Is the women’s movement still an effective force in Canadian politics? For whom
do the women’s movement speak? Is the metaphor of “the waves” an effective way to
conceive of feminist activism?
- April 17: Review Questions for Final Examination

Social Science Faculty Rep.: Phone: 220-6551/Rm. MSC 251
SAFEWALK/Campus Security: 220-5333