

WOMEN IN MODERN EUROPE

History 347
Fall 2015

Sarah Curtis
TTh 2:10-3:25

“I read it [history] a little as a duty; but it tells me nothing that does not either vex or weary me. The quarrels of popes and kings, with wars and pestilences in every page; the men all so good for nothing, and hardly any women at all, it is very tiresome; and yet I often think it odd that it should be so dull, for a great deal of it must be invention.”

Catherine Morland to Mr. Tilney in Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey*

“What one wants, I thought – and why does not some brilliant student at Newnham or Girton supply it? – is a mass of information; at what age did she marry; how many children had she as a rule; what was her house like; had she a room to herself; did she do the cooking: would she be likely to have a servant? All these facts lie somewhere, presumably, in parish registers and account books; the life of the average Elizabethan woman must be scattered about somewhere, could one collect it and make a book of it. It would be ambitious beyond my daring, I thought, looking about the shelves for books that were not there, to suggest to the students of those famous colleges that they should rewrite history, though I own that it often seems a little queer as it is, unreal, lop-sided.”

Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*

Course objectives:

This course surveys the history of European women from about 1750 to the present. In addition to restoring women's voices to history, we will examine well-known historical events from the perspective of women's history, look at ideas about women, and examine the historical roots of issues and debates still informing the lives of European women. We will also give some attention to issues of gender, masculinity, and sexuality. Until we reach the twentieth century, we will be looking exclusively at Britain and France; after 1914, we will also consider women's experiences in Russia, Germany, and (to a lesser extent) Italy and Spain.

Reading:

We will be reading the following books in full:

Mary Wollstonecraft, *Maria or the Wrongs of Woman* (Norton, ISBN 978-0393311693)

Françoise Barret-Ducrocq, *Love in the Time of Victoria* (Penguin, ISBN 978-0140173260)

Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own* (Houghton Mifflin, ISBN 978-0156787321)

Helen Zenna Smith, *Not So Quiet* (Feminist Press, ISBN 978-0935312829)

Erica Fischer, *Aimée & Jaguar: A Love Story, Berlin 1943* (Alyson Publications; ISBN 978-1555834500)

The first three (Wollstonecraft, Shaw, Smith) are on order at the bookstore. The Fischer book is coming out in a new edition on Sept. 1 and there are many older used copies available on Amazon and Abebooks; you are responsible for finding your own copy.

Other readings will be extracts from larger works, available either via the internet (see URL on syllabus or link on iLearn) or electronic reserve (see eReserves button in lower right-hand corner of iLearn page; abbreviated eReserves on syllabus).

Course requirements:

The requirements for this course include regular class attendance, participation in discussions, and completion of all assignments. There will be two papers (due October 6 and November 12) based on course readings, lectures, and discussion, a biography project (due December 8), and a take-home final exam.

Grading:

Grades will be determined as follows: paper #1 20%, paper #2 20%, biography project 20%, final exam 25%, class participation 15%. Students who wish to take the course CR/NC can change their grading status via “My SFSU” by October 19 at midnight.

Papers due on Tuesday and turned into me by Thursday of the same week will be penalized one-half grade (e.g. A to A-), due Thursday and turned in on Tuesday two half-grades (e.g. A to B+), and one week late one full grade (A to B). **Papers more than one week late will not be accepted** without proof of illness or natural disaster.

If you are unable to complete the course requirements by the end of semester, it is your responsibility to withdraw from the course. I will issue no instructor-initiated withdrawals or incompletes. Student-initiated incompletes are reserved for serious medical excuses (with documentation) or other natural disasters within the last three weeks of the semester. The last day to drop a course without a “W” is September 4; the last day with a “W” (except in extreme circumstances) is November 20.

Disability statement policy:

Students with disabilities who need reasonable accommodations are encouraged to contact the instructor. The Disability Programs and Resource Center (DPRC) is available to facilitate the reasonable accommodations process. The DPRC is located in the Student Service Building and can be reached by telephone (voice/TTY 415-338-2472) or by email (dprc@sfsu.edu).

Required university statement on sexual violence:

“SF State fosters a campus free of sexual violence including sexual harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and/or any form of sex or gender discrimination. If you disclose a personal experience as an SF State student, the course instructor is required to notify the Dean of Students. To disclose any such violence confidentially, contact: The SAFE Place - (415) 338-2208; http://www.sfsu.edu/~safe_plc/ Counseling and Psychological Services Center - (415) 338-2208; <http://psyservs.sfsu.edu/>. For more information on your rights and available resources: <http://titleix.sfsu.edu>.”

Office hours and contact information:

Tuesday 1:00-2:00 and Thursday 3:30-4:30, and by appointment

office location: Science 267

phone: (415) 338-2250

e-mail: scurtis@sfsu.edu

website: <https://faculty.sfsu.edu/~scurtis/home>

Schedule:

Week 1 August 25-27 **Women in the Early Modern Era**

Week 2 September 1-3 **The "Woman Question" during the Enlightenment and the Revolution**

Reading for Tuesday :

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile* (on women) (<http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/d/470/>)

Mary Wollstonecraft, *Vindication of the Rights of Women* (response to Rousseau)

(<http://womhist.alexanderstreet.com/awrm/doc1.htm>)

Reading for Thursday:

Olympe de Gouges, "Declaration of Rights of Woman and the Female Citizen"
(<http://www.library.csi.cuny.edu/dept/americanstudies/lavender/decwom2.html>)

Week 3 September 8-10 **Marriage and Citizenship in a Revolutionary Age**

Reading for Tuesday:

Napoleonic Code (<http://www.womeninworldhistory.com/TWR-07.html>)

Barbara Leigh-Smith Bodichon, "Laws Concerning Women"

(<http://womhist.alexanderstreet.com/awrm/doc17.htm>)

Reading for Thursday:

Wollstonecraft, *Maria, or the Wrongs of Woman* (entire)

Week 4 September 15-17 **Sex and the City: The Impact of Industrialization**

Reading for Tuesday:

Flora Tristan, "Factory Workers," "Prostitutes," "The Washerwomen of Nîmes," (eReserves)

Reading for Thursday:

Barret-Ducrocq, *Love in the Time of Victoria*, pp. 1-72

Week 5 September 22-24 **Home Sweet Home: The Cult of Domesticity**

Reading for Tuesday:

Mrs. Beeton's Book of Household Management, chap. 1

(available at <http://etext.library.adelaide.edu.au/b/beeton/household/>)

Flora Annie Steel, *The Complete Indian Housekeeper and Cook* (eReserves)

Reading for Thursday:

Barret-Ducrocq, *Love in the Time of Victoria*, pp. 73-186

Week 6 September 29 - October 1

Independent Women

Reading for Thursday:

Nightingale, *Cassandra* (iLearn)

Week 7 October 6-8

The New Woman

Paper due Tuesday (topics to be handed out in class)

Reading for Thursday:

Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own* (entire)

Week 8 October 13-15

The Suffrage Question

Reading for Thursday:

Emmeline Pankhurst, "My Own Story,"

(<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1914Pankhurst.html>)

Emmeline Pankhurst, "Freedom or Death"

(<http://www.theguardian.com/theguardian/2007/apr/27/greatspeeches>)

Week 9 October 20-22

New Roles: Women during World War I

Reading for Thursday:

Smith, *Not So Quiet* (entire)

Choose biography topic by Tuesday

Week 10 October 27-29

Women and the Communist Revolution

Reading for Thursday:

Kollontai, *Love of Worker Bees*: "Three Generations"; "Sisters" (eReserves)

Week 11 November 3-5

Flappers, Fashion, and Natalism

No class Thursday

Week 12 November 10-12
Women and Fascism
Paper due Thursday
Reading for Tuesday:
Begin Fischer, *Aimée and Jaguar*

Week 13 November 17-19
War and Holocaust
Reading for Thursday:
Finish Fischer, *Aimée and Jaguar*

THANKSGIVING BREAK: November 24-26

Week 14 December 1-3
Postwar Women
Reading for Thursday:
Simone de Beauvoir, Introduction to *The Second Sex*
(<http://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/ethics/de-beauvoir/2nd-sex/introduction.htm>)

Week 15 December 8-10
Second-Wave Feminism
Biography project due Tuesday

Take-home final exam due Thursday, December 17 by 4 p.m. in my office (Science 267).