History 282
The History of Women, 1848 – the present
Thursday evenings, 6:30-9:30 pm, Old Main 210

This course offers a thematic and comparative approach to the history of women after 1848, with a primary focus on the United States and comparisons to other western countries. During the semester we will attempt three central goals:

1) To restore women to the historical record. (We’ll ask such questions as “What were women doing during World War I? Were wars strictly “men’s events”?)
2) To trace changes in gender roles and ideals. (How have women’s roles and identities been transformed between 1870 and today? And how have such factors as race, class, ethnicity and sexuality shaped those identities?);
3) To re-conceptualize history itself. (How must we rethink and re-periodize the major themes of the 19th and 20th centuries when women and gender are placed at the center of the narrative?)

We will pursue these grand goals by employing a roughly chronological approach – tackling the big topics like the world wars, the Depression, and the 1960s – and exploring such topics as women’s changing experience of home and work, courtship and marriage patterns, sexuality, political activity and feminist organizing. The topics and readings have been selected to offer an outline of the history of women and illuminate the varieties of sources and methods used in women's history. Additionally, the course will provide students with opportunities to develop the skills used by historians (and applicable to any number of fields), including the ability to engage in comparative analysis, conduct research, develop clear and logical argumentation, and present findings in both oral and written forms.

By the end of the course, my hope is that you will:

- Know the basic contours of women’s history in western societies since the mid-nineteenth century
- Be able to find, interpret and recognize the importance of primary sources for historical study
- See connections between the stories in our text and the lives of people around you
- Recognize the potential of history as a tool for liberation and empowerment
- Understand the “politics of historical representation”
- Be a pro-active learner
Course Readings: (available for purchase in Augsburg’s bookstore)

Helen Zenna Smith, Not So Quiet… (Feminist Press, 1989)
Mary Lynn Rampolla, A Pocket Guide to Writing in History, 5th edition (Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2007)

Plus the following articles linked to our Moodle website and on reserve in Lindell Library:

1) Margaret and Patrice Higonnet, “The Double Helix” in Behind the Lines (Yale, 1987)

Grade Components:

Midterm 20%
Final Exam 20%
Paper #1 New Woman / New Man 10%
Paper #2 Oral History 30%
Engagement / Discussion 10%
Moodle Postings 10%

Course Requirements:

1) Attendance, Discussion and Engagement: Most classes will be a combination of lecture, source analysis, and discussion. Your participation in class discussion is essential for this class to be successful and enjoyable – so come prepared. Because learning is a discursive activity (that is, it happens as much in group dialogue as it does in solitary study), we must all be present and willing to question, dispute, defend — in other words, to think. Please do not miss more than one class session. See me if you have a problem with this. You can demonstrate your engagement with the course material by:

   * initiating or participating in class discussions
   * posting questions and comments on Moodle
   * raising questions in class about lectures or course readings
*submitting thoughtful written work that goes beyond course expectations
*talking with me about course material outside of class

2) Assignments

A. **Paper / Report:** The New Woman and the New Man (10%) Your second short written assignment will be a 3 pp. paper and 5-minute presentation on one “New Woman” or “New Woman” from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The goal of the assignment is to help us discern WHAT exactly was "new" about these folks (in contrast to their Victorian predecessors) and HOW they broke away from Victorian models and expectations. This week will also be an opportunity for us to think comparatively. Therefore, you are asked to research an individual from Europe or elsewhere for this project (NOT the United States.) Attached below is a list of potential subjects. **Scheduled for February 19.**

B. **Paper: Oral History Project** (30%) Your major written assignment will be an 7-8 pp. oral history interview / analytical essay for which you will interview an elderly friend or female family member (preferable the oldest, living, lucid one) about one particular aspect of her life: her work history, childbearing experiences, courtship and marriage, political involvements, etc. During our course, you will receive training in doing oral histories. Your paper will then discuss and analyze her experience within the context of women’s history. (E.g. Was your grandmother’s occupation fairly typical of her day? What made her become an activist or a female pioneer?). A more thorough description will be provided on another handout. The following deadlines have been set to help you to complete this assignment on time:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 11</td>
<td>Initial contact made (statement of intent due to instructor)</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 11</td>
<td>Interview questions (copies to interviewee and instructor)</td>
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<td>March 25</td>
<td>Interviews completed and progress report due</td>
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<td>April 1</td>
<td>Thesis statement and bibliography due</td>
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<td>April 15</td>
<td>Papers due</td>
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(3) **Midterm / Final Exams** (10% each): The exams will both be take-home. The best way to prepare for the exams is to keep up-to-date on your reading, attend every class, take thorough notes, and pay attention to factual details as well as interpretative issues. Study guides will be available.

(4) **Moodle** (10%): Because the most valuable learning often occurs outside the 3 hours/week you sit in class, we are going to extend our classroom via Moodle. Think of it as a gateway to the past and to peoples and places far away, as well as a handy link to your classmates and instructor. We will be using Moodle in several different ways:

a) As a tool for managing course materials – all course documents, including the syllabus, will be located on our web site.
b) As a portal to important historical documents and other resources, such as web sites, online exhibits, archives, chat groups, etc.

c) As a place to conduct further conversation about course topics. **Toward this end, each week you are expected to log-on by 4 pm on Thursday before class and post a short response to our week’s readings. More guidelines are available on Moodle.**

(5) **Academic Honesty:** All students are required to adhere to Augsburg’s Policy on Academic Honesty found in the Student Guide: <http://www.augsburg.edu/studentguide/>. It is essential that you thoroughly understand the definition of “plagiarism” and, very early in your college career, establish a pattern of recognizing and avoiding it. If you have questions about using proper citations, please raise them in class. If you plagiarize any assignment (either deliberately or unwittingly), you may fail that assignment; if the case is particularly egregious, you may be asked to drop the class.

(6) **Policy on Late Assignments:** I expect you to turn your work in on time. If you need an extension, please talk with me several days before the assignment is due and we will negotiate a different due date in writing. If you turn in an assignment late and have no extension, your work will be penalized ½ grade per day (A to A-, etc.)

**Course Outline**

1/14 **Introduction: Restoring Women to History**  
What is “Women’s History”?

1/21 **White, Female and Middle-Class: Thinking about Victorian Women**

_Reading:_ Woloch, ch. 5 and 6; “Approaches to American Women’s History” (ch.1) in _Major Problems_, pp.1-23

1/28 **Women of Color in the Nineteenth Century**

_Reading:_ Woloch, ch.8, plus, pp.216-226; “African American Women and Slavery” (ch. 7) in _Major Problems_, pp. 175-200

_Viewing:_ “Ida B. Wells: A Passion for Justice” (in class)

2/4 **Women and Gender on the Frontier**

_Reading:_ Woloch, pp. 226-240; “Women in the Trans-Mississippi Frontier West” (ch. 9) in _Major Problems_, pp. 231-258. You should also stop by Lindell Library and peruse the following book, available on 2-hour reserve: Linda Peavy and Ursula Smith, _Frontier Children_

2/11 **Women’s Work in Industrializing Societies**
**Reading:** Woloch, ch. 10: “Women’s Work and Work Cultures in Modern America” (ch. 10) in *Major Problems*, pp. 260-290;

**ORAL HISTORY STATEMENT OF INTENT DUE**

2/18 The “New” Woman and the “New” Man

**Reading:** Woloch, ch. 11 and 12; Kathryn Kish Sklar, “Differences in the Political Cultures of Men and Women Reformers,” (pp.310-319) in *Major Problems*

**SHORT REPORTS / PAPERS DUE:** “The New Woman and New Man”

2/25 Movements for Women’s Suffrage

**Reading:** Woloch, ch. 14 (skim ch. 13); “The ‘New Woman’ in Public Life and Politics, 1900-1930,” in *Major Problems* – selected essays (see Moodle)

**Viewing:** “Iron-Jawed Angels” (HBO, 2004) – excerpts in class

3/4 Oral History Workshop

**Reading:** Susan Geiger, “What’s So Feminist About Doing Women’s Oral History?” [RESERVE]

**MIDTERM EXAM DUE** – at the start of class

3/11 Behind the Lines: War as a Watershed for Women?

**Reading:** Helen Zenna Smith, *Not So Quiet...* (all); Margaret and Patrice Higonnet, “The Double Helix” in *Behind the Lines* [RESERVE];

**INTERVIEW QUESTIONS DUE**

3/18 Off – Spring Break

3/25 Sexuality in History: Flappers, Nymphs and Shoppers in the 1920s

**Reading:** Woloch, ch. 15 and 16; Lea Jacobs, “The Censorship of Blonde Venus” [RESERVE]; Joan Brumberg, “Fasting Girls: The Emerging Ideal of Slenderness in American Culture” [RESERVE]

**Viewing:** “Blonde Venus” (Josef von Sternberg, 1932) – ON YOUR OWN

**ORAL HISTORY PROGRESS REPORT DUE**

4/1 Women, Welfare and the Great Depression in the 1930s

**Reading:** Woloch, ch. 17 and 18; “Women in America During the Great Depression,” in *Major Problems* (ch. 12);
ORAL HISTORY THESIS AND BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE

4/8 The 1940s and Beyond: Feminine Mystiques

Reading: “Women and the Feminine Ideal in Post-War America” in Major Problems (ch.14); Nancy Walker, Women’s Magazines, 1940-1960: Gender Roles and the Popular Press (assigned chapters) + short research assignment

Viewing: “Rosie the Riveter” (1980)

NOTE: On Friday, April 9, Augsburg is hosting the annual ACTC Women’s Studies Student Conference. I hope that some of you will present and even more of you will attend.

4/15 Women’s Liberation in the 1960s and 1970s

Reading: Woloch, ch. 19 and 20; “Second-Wave Feminism in America, 1960-1990” in Major Problems (ch. 15)

Viewing: “Step by Step”

ORAL HISTORY PAPERS DUE

4/22 Contemporary Issues

Reading: Woloch, ch. 21-23; “Women, Social Change, and Reaction from the 1990s to the New Millennium” in Major Problems (ch. 16)

4/29 Final Discussion

EXAM DUE – at the start of class