

HISTORY 212: WOMEN IN HISTORY



Spring 2009

CRN 10832 Sec 800 TTH 11:10-12:30 Mahar 201

Professor Geraldine Forbes

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& by appointment

Course Objectives:

History 212 is an introduction to the exciting discipline of Women's History. From the very beginning of written *HISTORY*, men's lives and deeds formed the subject of history. Men, or at least some of them, fought wars, conquered empires, explored the world, wrote religious texts, philosophy, and literature, and cultivated the arts. Women's stories were seldom included in written history. Some have argued that leaving women out of history made sense. After all, what had women accomplished? Wouldn't accounts of women's lives -- marriage, housework, having babies, raising children -- be repetitious and dull? Those who began writing women's history demonstrated that women did all the things men did, but in fewer numbers. At the same time, women participated in activities reserved for women. These also became the subject of Women's History.

During the semester, we will examine a wide variety of materials and documents that belong to women's history. We will begin with the nature-nurture debate since it plays a major role in the discussion of women's history. We will then look at pre-history, and the ancient, medieval, and modern world, focusing on Asia and Europe, as well as Africa for examples of women who made history and women in history. You will learn about the questions historians ask, seek answers in historical records, evaluate historical writing, and formulate answers.

Web-enhanced Course

History 212 is a web-enhanced course, which uses Angel, managed by the SUNY Learning Network (SLN). For Angel, use your Oswego.edu email name and your Oswego.edu password.

Required Reading:

In addition to the daily reading assignments listed on ANGEL, you are required to read two books (available in the College Store in Hewitt Union and at Kraftees)

- Gerd Brantenberg, *Egalia's Daughters: A Satire of the Sexes*, Translated by Louis Mackay (Seattle: Seal Press) ISBN 1878067583
- Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain, *Sultana's Dream : And Selections from the Secluded Ones*. Edited and translated by Roushan Jahan (New York: the Feminist Press) ISBN 0-935312-83-8 9 PBK

Course Requirements: (Total **500** points)

***You must complete all assignments to pass the course.**

***Attendance is required – you will lose points for missing class.**

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|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Mid-term Exam | 100 |
| Final Exam | 100 |
| Assignment #1 -Presentation | 30 |
| Assignment #1 -Essay | 100 |
| Essay Assignment #2 | 100 |
| Participation in class discussion | 70 |

Course Outline: (see Angel for specific reading assignments for each class)

I. INTRODUCTION TO WOMEN'S HISTORY

1. Jan 22 Introduction

II. DEBATES IN WOMEN'S HISTORY

2. Jan 27 Should Women Have Special Treatment?

3. Jan 29 Does Biology Equal Destiny?

4. Feb 3 Women in Hunter-Gatherer Societies and the Beginning of Patriarchy

III. WOMEN IN ANCIENT HISTORY

5. Feb 5 Ancient Egypt

6. Feb 10 Mesopotamia and the Rise of Monotheism

7. Feb 12 The Greek World – Athens

8. Feb 17 The Greek World Sparta and Lesbos

IV. EARLY CENTURIES OF THE FIRST MILLENNIUM

9. Feb 19 Early Christianity: Women Preachers, Gnostics, and Martyrs

10. Feb 24 China: Confucianism, Women Rulers, and Women Warriors

11. Feb 26 The Middle East: Islam

V. MEDIEVAL EUROPE AND THE RENAISSANCE

12. Mar 3 Christian Women: Cloisters and Visions

13. Mar 5 **First Exam**

14. Mar 17 Europe: Renaissance and the Great Witchcraze

VI. WOMEN IN EARLY MODERN HISTORY

15. Mar 19 Middle East: Paths to Power in the Ottoman Empire

16. Mar 24 The New World: European Colonization & Gender Relations

17. Mar 26 Chinese Women Under the Qing Dynasty

VII. REVOLUTIONS

18. Mar 31 The Enlightenment and the French Revolution

19. Apr 2 The Industrial Revolution and Women's Work

VIII. RIGHTS FOR WOMEN

20. Apr 7 The Right to Vote

21. Apr 14 The Solution Offered by Socialism and Communism

22. Apr 16 Women Imagine Change

IX. THE TWENTIETH CENTURY AND BEYOND

23. Apr 21 World War I and the Inter-war Years

24. Apr 23 World War II

25. Apr 28 The Tragedies of War

26. Apr 30 TBA

27. May 5 Second Wave Feminism

28. May 7 The Last Revolution

Course Requirements:

1. Exams: there are two exams, both will involve short answer and essay questions

2. Discussion: on Angel and in class

3. ASSIGNMENT #1 - Presentation and Essay: *Wikipedia and Encyclopedias - What Can I Trust?* (Presentations will be due on dates indicated, the essay is due: Mar 19)

4. ASSIGNMENT # 2: (Due Apr 23) An essay: *Creating Awareness of Gender Roles* using Rokeya Hossain's short story "Sultana's Dream" and Gerd Brantenberg's novel *Egalia's Daughters*.

*It is important to understand SUNY-Oswego's Policy on Intellectual Integrity

http://www.oswego.edu/administration/registrar/policy_text.html#cpjj. For more information, see the Plagiarism Tutorial
<http://www.oswego.edu/library/instruction/plagut/>