

Women in European History

Western Michigan University
HIST-3360, CRN 42305, Fall 2006

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REQUIRED BOOKS

Bridenthal, Renate, Susan M Stuard.; Merry E. Wiesner, eds. *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*. Third edition only. Houghton Mifflin, 1998.
Davies, Margaret Llewelyn ed. *Life as We Have Known It by Cooperative Working Women*, 1931; Norton, 1975.
Rossi, Alice S., ed. *The Feminist Papers*. Northeastern University Press, 1973

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Reading and preparation to discuss assigned material before each class. Participation will be an informal factor in grading, with the exception of cases in which a student misses more than four classes, which will lower the grade by one-half of a letter (e.g. from a B to a CB). Seven absences will lower the grade by one letter (e.g. from a B to a C). Ten absences = 1 ½ letters, etc. This is designed as a means of relating the grade to the learning experience. Your presence in class will mean that you are learning more than those who are not there. Attendance will be taken.
2. Two essays written out of class and based primarily on previously assigned material. You will select your own topic, but I will be available to consult with you. Guidelines are found at the end of the syllabus. The essays should be 1000-1500 words (four to six pages) in length, typed, double-spaced. Each will constitute 16.67% of the final grade. Please see the guidelines, p. 4 of syllabus.
3. Six unannounced quizzes over daily readings. The lowest grade will be dropped. Make-up quizzes will not be given. The average of the five quizzes will constitute 16.67% of the final grade.
4. Three half-hour exams. Each is 16.67% of the final grade.
5. Instructor letters. Evaluated on a pass/fail system. The letters will not be graded, but failure to turn one in will deduct three points from the final average. See below, p. 3, of syllabus.

CALENDAR OF ASSIGNMENTS

I. Women in Pre-Industrial Societies

SEPTEMBER

- T. 5: Introduction: What Is Women's History? Chronology and Gender in European History. What are your questions about gender and history?
- R. 7: *Becoming Visible*, Ch. 4. What was women's status in the early Middle Ages? What questions do we ask in order to evaluate women's place? 01 Early Medieval
- T. 12: *Becoming Visible*, Ch. 5. How did the construction of gender change between the early and the high Middle Ages? 02 High Middle Ages
- R. 14: *Becoming Visible*, Ch 6. Did women have a Renaissance? 03 Renaissance
- T. 19: *Becoming Visible*, Ch. 7. The Reformation of Women. Preliminary discussion of papers: techniques, topics. In class: view the film, "Day of Wrath," made in 1943 by the acclaimed filmmaker Carl Dryer. It portrays documented cases of alleged witchcraft in a Danish village in 1623. What does this account reveal about the relationship between gender and power in early modern society? 04 Reformation
- R. 21: This is the only day with no reading or writing assignment. We will view the end of "Day of Wrath."
- T. 26: *Becoming Visible*, Ch. 8. Women's Work in Pre-Industrial Europe. 05 Early Modern Economy

R. 28: *Becoming Visible*, Ch. 9. What was the "Enlightenment" and what was its meaning for the construction of gender? 06 Enlightenment

OCTOBER

T. 3: **IN-CLASS HALF-HOUR EXAM**; Discussion of Household Economy

II. Political and Industrial Revolutions

R. 5: *Becoming Visible*, Ch. 10. The Meaning of the French Revolution for Women. 07 French Revolution

T. 10: *The Feminist Papers*, pp. 25- 54. (Assignment ends at the ellipse on the top of p. 54.) A Feminist of the Enlightenment Era: Mary Wollstonecraft. Class time for discussion of paper topics. 08 Wollstonecraft

R. 12: *The Feminist Papers*, pp. 54-85. Wollstonecraft and "Radical" Solutions"? **First Instructor Letter due.** 09 Wollstonecraft2

T. 17: *Becoming Visible*, Ch. 11. The Industrial Revolution and women's work. 10 Industrial Revolution

R. 19: **Papers Due. Bring your paper to class. Be prepared to discuss its main interpretive points.**

T. 24: *Becoming Visible*, Ch. 12. European Feminism. 11 Feminism

R. 26: *The Feminist Papers*, pp. 182-214. Liberal Ideology and Gender: John Stuart Mill. 12 Mill

T. 31: *The Feminist Papers*, pp. 214-238. What were Mill's proposed *solutions* to "the subjection of women"? 13 Mill2

NOVEMBER

R. 2: **IN-CLASS HALF-HOUR EXAM**; Gender at the Turn of the Century: Feminism and Female Suffrage

T. 7: *Life as We Have Known It*, pp. ix-xiii; 1-55. Daughters and Wives of the Modern Working Class. 14 Life as we have known

R. 9: *Life As We Have Known It*, pp. 67-101 and 136-141. Patterns of Life and Possibilities for Change 15 Life as We have known2

T. 14: *The Feminist Papers*, pp. 496-516. August Bebel and Emma Goldman: Socialism and Other Radical Ideals of Emancipation of Women. 16 Bebel + Goldman

R. 16: *Becoming Visible*, Ch. 16. Women in War and Peace (the two World Wars) **Second Instructor Letter due.** 17 World Wars

III. Women in the Twentieth Century

T. 21: **Article to be obtained from Waldo Library, Course Reserve Section:** Atina Grossman, "Abortion and Economic Crisis: The 1931 Campaign Against Paragraph 218," in Renate Bridenthal, Atina Grossman, and Marion Kaplan, eds., *When Biology Became Destiny: Women in Weimar and Nazi Germany*, (New York, 1984), 66-86. Article will be available on-line from library reserve. Who Controlled Women's Bodies in the Historical Context of the Early 1930s? 18 Reproductive Choices

[R. 23: Thanksgiving Recess]

T. 28: *Becoming Visible*, Ch. 17. Women and Fascism. 19 Gender and Fascism

R. 30: *Becoming Visible*, Ch. 18. Women and the Welfare State. 20 Welfare State

DECEMBER

T 5: **IN-CLASS HALF-HOUR EXAM**

R. 7: *Becoming Visible*, Ch. 19. Women under Socialism. 21 Socialism + Gender

Monday, December 11, 10:15-12:15 a.m. Final Papers due. Class will meet to discuss them as usual. (Equivalent to final exam. Attendance taken as usual.)

Academic Integrity

A fundamental principle of university life is academic integrity. A university is "a purposeful community a place where faculty and students share academic goals and work together to strengthen teaching and learning on the campus." (WMU Student Code) This requires that every individual does his or her own work and that graded work is based on one's own knowledge and skills. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. The following constitute academic dishonesty: cheating, fabrication, falsification, forgery, plagiarism, complicity, and computer misuse. . Please familiarize yourself with the definitions of these terms as used in the Student Code. See p. 274 of the *2003-05 Undergraduate Catalog* or the flow chart on the Office of Student Conduct website: <http://www.osc.wmich.edu/academicintegrity/index.html>

Grading System

92-100%= A (exceptional)
88-91% = BA (excellent)
82-87% = B (very good)
78-81% = CB (good)
72-77% = C (satisfactory)
68-71% = DC (acceptable)
60-67% = D (poor)
below 60% = E (failing)

Communication with Professor Gray

I am in my office (Friedmann 4301) daily from 8:00-5:00 except for scheduled appointments, meetings, and out-of-town obligations. I am happy to meet with you at your request to discuss the course or your work. Because my schedule is very full, please make an appointment. The best way to do so is to contact me by e-mail: marion.gray@wmich.edu. I am also glad to discuss your issues via e-mail. You may contact me by phone or voice mail: 387-4650.

Required Communication by E-Mail

I may send important information about the class by e-mail. Please check your e-mail regularly. The only email address that should be used for communication between WMU students and WMU faculty and staff is the email address associated with a BroncoNet ID. This email address typically takes the form "firstname.middleinitial.lastname@wmich.edu." An example is buster.h.bronco@wmich.edu. Students cannot automatically forward email from this address to other addresses. Students can access this email account or get instructions for obtaining a BroncoNet ID at GoWMU.wmich.edu.

Special Accommodations:

I will be happy to make any accommodations necessary for any student requiring such under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Please contact me promptly if this is the case.

Instructor Letters:

Twice during the semester (October 12 and November 16) instructor letters are due. This is your opportunity to communicate with me about any topic that you wish to discuss. The instructor letters will not be graded. The only requirement is that you turn one in by the dates indicated. In your own words, evaluate the class and tell me your concerns.

Guidelines for Out-Of-Class Essays

A. General criteria for historical writing

1. **Development of an argument or interpretation.** Good history does not merely tell "what happened." It *interprets* events of the past. Given the nature of your assignments, writing interpretive essays will not be difficult, but be sure that you convey clearly the argument or interpretation you wish to make. A descriptive title, a clear thesis-sentence in an opening paragraph, and a conclusion are important elements of communication. (25%)
2. **Substantiation of your argument with historical data.** While interpretation is the ultimate goal, every interpretation of a historical subject is meaningful only if it rests solidly on concrete evidence. In writing history it is important to demonstrate your evidence, not only to support your argument, but also because the details of human activities give history its interest and bring readers into the historical situation. Merely restating the conclusions of historians is *not* a good way to substantiate your argument. Using the data you find in their work is what is important. The use of primary sources is also important. (25%)
3. **Utilizing historical perspective.** History is characterized by a concern with *change over time*. Historians deal with all facets of human experience including economics, culture, religion, politics and social customs, but they always focus on how the issues they are investigating are shaped by the particular *historical context*. For example, historians know that they cannot explain the division of labor by gender in medieval Europe without particular attention to cultural, legal, political, religious and social factors unique to the Middle Ages. Moreover, historians always avoid judging historical situations by standards belonging to an era different from the one they are investigating. One would not, for example, judge a pre-industrial European practice on the grounds that it was undemocratic, since only by the eighteenth century did Europeans begin to value and strive for democratic institutions. (25%)
4. **Clear communication.** Use a precise, grammatical, well-organized writing style. (25%)

B. Techniques to use in this assignment.

1. **Choice of topics.** Essays are to be written primarily from assigned reading material and discussions. They are not research papers in which the object is to uncover new material from library sources. The essays should give you the opportunity to make sense of a topic that personally interests you.
2. **Using non-assigned material.**
 - a. If you find that, in order to substantiate your argument, you need data not found in assigned readings, it is legitimate to use library resources. However, the major thrust of your argument should come from material you have read and discussed. Be extremely careful of sources found on the world wide web. Examine their origin and use them *only* if you can verify their reliability. Document them carefully.
 - b. *One of your three essays may be on a topic not specifically covered in the syllabus, although it should be within the confines of the geographical and chronological material discussed during the unit of study. This will allow class members to pursue their own interests and will broaden the scope of the course. All topics of this type must be discussed with me prior to the writing of the paper.*
3. **Documenting sources.** Formal footnotes are not required. However, it is *essential* to identify the sources of your information in order to convey your method of utilizing information and to avoid the fact or appearance of plagiarism. The simplest way to do this is to indicate sources and page numbers in parentheses, *giving a complete bibliographical listing at the end of the paper*. For those sources assigned in class, abbreviated references can be made. For other sources, give complete bibliographical information. If you find it simpler to do so, use footnotes. *Documentation of sources is a requirement.*
4. Place your name at the end of the paper, not on a title page. *Print a word count on the paper.* The essays should be 1000-1500 words (four to six pages) in length.