

From Suffrage to “The Second Sex”: European Women’s History, 1890s to 1940s

We do not want women to be bad imitations of men; we neither deny nor minimise the differences between men and women. The claim of women to representation depends to a large extent on those differences. Women bring something to the service of the state different from that which can be brought by men.

Let this fact be frankly recognised and let due weight be given to it in the representative system of the country.

Millicent Garrett Fawcett (1889)

To emancipate women is to refuse to confine her to the relations she bears to man, not to deny them to her; let her have her independent existence and she will continue none the less to exist for him *also*: mutually recognizing each other as subject, each will remain for the other an *other*. The reciprocity of their relations will not do away with the miracles--desire, possession, love, dream, adventure--worked by the division of human beings into two separate categories; and the words that move us--giving, conquering, uniting--will not lose their meaning. On the contrary, when we abolish the slavery of half of humanity, together with the whole system of hypocrisy that it implies, then the “division” of humanity will reveal its genuine significance and the human couple will find its true form.

Simone de Beauvoir (1949)

History 4004, Course Number 95478, Fall 2000

MW 2:30-3:45 McBryde 566

Professor Tom Ewing

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This course explores the transformation in the lives of European women from the 1890s, when organized feminist movements sought to win the right to vote, through the end of the 1940s, when the identity of women returned to public attention with the publication of Simone de Beauvoir’s “The Second Sex.” Topics covered in this course include the rise of the women’s movement, the relationship between feminism and socialism, the experience of women in the ‘Great War,’ the “new woman” of the 1920s, gendered images in literature and the arts, women’s involvement in the rise of fascism and the second world war, the impact of the Holocaust on women, and the post-war position of women in a divided Europe.

REQUIRED BOOKS:

Simone de Beauvoir, [The Second Sex](#)

Margaret Higonnet, ed., [Lines of Fire. Women Writers of World War I](#)

Sheila Fitzpatrick and Yuri Slezkine, eds., [In the Shadow of Revolution](#)

Dalia Ofer and Lenore Weitzman, eds., [Women in the Holocaust](#)

Virginia Woolf, [A Room of One's Own](#)

Harold Smith, [The British Women's Suffrage Campaign](#)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

| Assignment | Due date | Proportion of final grade |
|---|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Class participation, assignments, response to papers, and leading discussions of readings | | 30% |
| Primary source paper (7 pages) | October 4 | 10% |
| Draft of paper (12 pages) | November 1 | 20% |
| Presentations (preliminary and final) | Oct 11, 16, 18, Nov 27, 29, Dec 4 | 10% |
| Final paper (20 pages) | December 8 | 30% |

SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS:

| Date | Topic | Assignment | Readings |
|--------------|---------------------------|------------------------|---|
| August 21 | Course introduction | | |
| August 23 | Engendering History | | Joan Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category" <i>American Historical Review</i> Vol. 91 (1986) pp. 1053-1075 available online or in Newman library |
| August 28 | European Feminism | | Offen, "Contextualizing...Feminism" <i>Becoming Visible</i> (on reserve) |
| August 30 | Women and the State | | Cooper, "Women in War and Peace" <i>Becoming Visible</i> (on reserve) |
| September 4 | Women's Character | | Beauvoir, <i>Second Sex</i> pp. 3-60 |
| September 6 | Women's History | Topic statement | Beauvoir, <i>Second Sex</i> pp. 61-138 |
| September 11 | Suffrage Campaigns | | Smith, <i>British Women's Suffrage Campaign</i> pp. 3-27 and documents 1-11 |
| September 13 | Militant Protests | Bibliography | Smith, <i>British Women's Suffrage Campaign</i> pp. 28-42 and documents 12-21 |
| September 18 | Political Activism | | Higonnet, <i>Lines of Fire</i> pp. 5-55 |
| September 20 | Confronting War | | Higonnet, <i>Lines of Fire</i> pp. 60-99 |
| September 25 | On the Front Lines | | Higonnet, <i>Lines of Fire</i> pp. 105-183 |
| September 27 | Families at War | | Higonnet, <i>Lines of Fire</i> pp. 245-319 |
| October 2 | Revolution in Russia | | Higonnet, <i>Lines of Fire</i> pp. 59-60 Fitzpatrick and Slezkine, <i>In the Shadow of Revolution</i> pp. 31-122 |
| October 4 | Narratives of Struggle | Primary document paper | Fitzpatrick and Slezkine, <i>In the Shadow of Revolution</i> pp. 3-30, 123-234 |
| October 9 | Sources of Stability | | Smith, <i>British Women's Suffrage Campaign</i> pp. 43-84 and documents 22-33 Higonnet, <i>Lines of Fire</i> pp. 404-448 |
| October 11 | Preliminary presentations | Outline | |
| October 16 | Preliminary presentations | Outline | |
| October 18 | Preliminary presentations | Outline | |
| October 23 | New Women | | Fitzpatrick and Slezkine, <i>In the Shadow of Revolution</i> pp. 243-341 |
| October 25 | Searching for a Voice | | Woolf, <i>A Room of One's Own</i> |
| October 30 | Women Writing | | |

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|-------------|------------------------|-----------------|---|
| November 1 | Race and Gender | Draft paper | Ofer and Weitzman, <i>Women in the Holocaust</i> pp. 1-67 |
| November 6 | Women in Dictatorships | | Fitzpatrick and Slezkine, <i>In the Shadow of Revolution</i> pp. 342-434 Ofer and Weitzman, <i>Women in the Holocaust</i> pp. 85-100 |
| November 8 | Final Solution | | Ofer and Weitzman, <i>Women in the Holocaust</i> pp. 101-119, 175-222, 273-309, 327-363 |
| November 13 | No Class | | |
| November 15 | Defining Women | | Beauvoir, <i>Second Sex</i> pp. 425-554, 629-678 |
| November 27 | Final presentations | | |
| November 29 | Final presentations | | |
| December 4 | Final presentations | | |
| December 6 | Emancipation | | Beauvoir, <i>Second Sex</i> pp. 679-732 |
| December 8 | | Final paper due | |