



The University of Western Ontario
HISTORY 9274B
OH GENDERED CANADA!:
GENDER IN CANADIAN HISTORY
Winter 2026

Instructor: Monda Halpern, Professor

Office Hours: Wednesday, 2:00pm-3:30pm
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Course Description:

This course will explore the ways in which gender has played a role in Canadian history and will examine some of the major historiographical debates that have surrounded this complex approach. These debates often address the related issues of race, class, and sexuality. This course will challenge students to employ gender, itself a contested concept, as an integral tool of historical analysis, and to reconsider conventional narratives in Canadian history.

Graduate Course Level Learning Outcomes/Objectives:

Students should be able to:

- understand the ways in which gender shaped various historical trends and movements.
- understand the ways in which gender intersects with issues of race, class, and sexuality.
- identify past and contemporary historiographical debates in Canadian gender history, and the ways that they have challenged conventional historical assumptions.

Course Timeline and Format:

JANUARY 8 – INTRODUCTION; WHAT IS SOCIAL HISTORY AND WOMEN’S HISTORY?

JANUARY 15 - WOMEN’S HISTORY: Has the move from “universal sisterhood,” to diversity, to contested identities been good for the field?

JANUARY 22 – GENDER HISTORY: Is it the “new” Women’s History? Is the term useful?

JANUARY 29 – PRE-INDUSTRIAL/COLONIAL ABORIGINAL SOCIETIES: To what extent did notions of race and gender influence cultural imposition/resistance/assimilation?

FEBRUARY 5 – CLASS: How did gender inform class formation/consciousness/identity? (WEEK 5, presentations begin)

FEBRUARY 12 – SAME-SEX FEMALE FRIENDSHIPS: Were they sexual? Does it matter?

FEBRUARY 19 – NO CLASS (SPRING READING WEEK)

FEBRUARY 26 - THE FIRST-WAVE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT: Was it classist/racist?

MARCH 5 – WORLD WAR I and II: Does war entrench or revolutionize gender roles?

MARCH 12 – THE 1950s: Was it a decade of gender/sexual over-conforming or quiet revolution?

MARCH 19 – THE SEXUAL REVOLUTION: Who won and who lost?

MARCH 26 – NATIONALISM IN HISTORY: To what extent has gender served its interests (and vice versa)?

APRIL 2 – NO CLASS (PASSEOVER) - READINGS IN LIEU OF CLASS TBA

APRIL 9 – REGIONALISM AND TRANSNATIONALISM IN HISTORY: To what extent has gender served their interests (and vice versa)?

END OF TERM

Enrollment Restrictions:

Enrollment in this course is restricted to graduate students in History, as well as any student that has obtained special permission to enroll in this course from the course instructor as well as the Graduate Chair (or equivalent) from the student's home program. Please contact Kara Brown, the graduate program coordinator (kbrow@uwo.ca) if you are in a department other than History and would like to enroll in the course.

Course Syllabus:

Women's History, since its emergence in the late 1960s, and Masculinity History, since its birth in the 1990s, have contributed to some lively debates in Canadian History. This graduate half-course will explore the ways in which gender has played a role in selected trends and time periods, and will examine some of the major historiographical questions in the last five decades that have surrounded this complex approach. These questions have often addressed the related issues of race, class, and sexuality. This investigation will challenge students to utilize gender, itself a contested concept, as an integral tool of historical analysis, and to reconsider conventional narratives in Canadian History.

Seminar Presentation:

You will sign up for a presentation date beginning in Week 5. On your selected date, you will present one of the scheduled articles. In your presentation, address and critique your article's thesis, main arguments, biases, and sources, and situate your article in the larger historiography. As well, discuss your related essay topic in the context of your reading. Stimulate class discussion by asking questions and fielding comments. You must meaningfully incorporate audio-visual aids such as Power Point. You will be graded on the content of your presentation (it should be substantial and thought-provoking), on your presentation style (it should be polished and professional), and on your facilitation of the seminar discussion (it should convey knowledge and enthusiasm). As you may be "sharing" your presentation

date with a classmate, and in order to prevent overlap in discussion topics, arrange with them which topics/readings that each one of you will present. Your presentation will last 30-40 minutes.

The subject of your essay will coincide with the general seminar topic/themes of your selected presentation date. Your essay, in both hardcopy and electronic format (please email directly to me as a Word attachment), will be due on that same day in class. I will grade the hardcopy and post the electronic copy on Brightspace for the student critiques (see below). As your classmates are relying on the timely submission of your essay in order to write their critiques, essays **MUST** be submitted on your assigned due date. Late research essays will generally not be accepted for grading. If you are facing difficulties, please talk to me. See point #3 above.

Essay:

Your essay should be 18-20 pages. It must include a thesis statement that advances a clear argument and maps the discussion points of the paper. In addition to offering a meaningful examination, your essay must include an introduction, conclusion, endnotes or footnotes, and a bibliography. Endnotes/footnotes should be in a correct and consistent format. The bibliography should include 12-15 sources, 2/3 of which should be secondary sources (contemporary sources, mostly books, written by scholars) and 1/3 of which should be primary sources (written/spoken by observers during the time period under study). Primary sources can be books, articles, government documents, newspapers, etc., but they must be a stand-alone source/document, not simply an excerpt or quotation retrieved from a secondary source; in other words, you must locate your own primary sources (on the internet (on a credible site) or in a library or archive).

Critiques:

Those students who do not present an article and submit an essay on a given week are required to do the assigned readings and participate in the seminar discussion. They are also required to write three essay critiques. Select three student essays (which will be accessible on Brightspace) on which you would like to write a critique. Your critique (in hard copy) is due in class and must be submitted no later than one week following the submission of the essay about which it is written. Submitted critiques will not be seen by anyone other than me; they will be returned with a mark as soon as possible. Critiques should be two typed pages and double-spaced. They should include a concise thesis statement stating the strengths and weaknesses of the essay; they should then discuss those strengths and weaknesses. They should also have an introduction and conclusion. They do not require extra research, sources, or citations. When submitting your critique, please indicate if it is Critique 1, 2, or 3.

Course Materials:

The required readings include online articles (**most of the articles are on JSTOR and can be accessed by using your Western credentials; the other articles are also accessible for free**).

The featured textbook (paperback) is Joan Sangster's *Through Feminist Eyes: Essays on Canadian Women's History*. Edmonton: Athabasca University Press, 2011. **The book is available for purchase through the university bookstore; selected chapters are also accessible online (as indicated below)**. Students can order the required book through the [Book Store's](#) website and the book can be shipped directly to them, or students can pick up the book in-store.

There is also an e-text version, but it is not available through the Book Store's online platform. Attached is a link where students can go to purchase this e-text version if they prefer. Please note there is no affiliation with the Book Store at Western with the following link: <https://www.vitalsource.com/en-ca/products/through-feminist-eyes-joan-sangster-v9781926836409?term=9781926836409>. Please be advised that the Book Store does not provide any supports for external sites; this link is a courtesy the Book Store provides for students should they decide to purchase a digital book format.

Methods of Evaluation:

Research essay (18-20 pages): TBA	40%
Critiques (3, at 2 pages each): TBA	30%
Seminar presentation: TBA	15%
Participation:	15%

Please Note:

1. Students must attend more than half the number of full classes in order to qualify for a passing final grade, regardless of marks received for other assignments.
2. All work submitted in this course must be your own. You may not make use of generative AI tools like ChatGPT for any assignments in this course.
3. Essays and critiques **MUST** be submitted on the assigned due date; however, if you are facing unexpected difficulties (beyond usual time management and workload demands) and are anticipating that your assignment will be late, please talk to me as soon as possible so that we can arrive at an agreed-upon submission date. Late essays and critiques will not be accepted for grading if you neglect to contact me before the due date.
4. During all class lectures, discussions, and presentations, the recreational use of lap-tops (web browsing, texting, etc.), as well as the use of all wireless handheld devices, is discouraged and could adversely affect your participation mark.

Additional Statements

Health/Wellness Services:

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health Support at <https://www.uwo.ca/health/psych/index.html> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Students seeking help regarding mental health concerns are advised to speak to someone they feel comfortable confiding in, such as their faculty supervisor, their program director (graduate chair), or other relevant administrators in their unit. Campus mental health resources may be found at http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/resources.html

Accessibility Options:

Western is committed to achieving barrier-free accessibility for all its members, including graduate students. As part of this commitment, Western provides a variety of services devoted to promoting, advocating, and accommodating people with disabilities in their respective graduate program. Graduate students with disabilities (for example, chronic illnesses, mental health conditions, mobility impairments) are strongly encouraged to register with Accessible Education Western (AEW), a confidential service designed to support graduate and undergraduate students through their academic program. With the appropriate documentation, the student will work with both AEW and their graduate programs (normally their Graduate Chair and/or Course instructor) to ensure that appropriate academic accommodation to program requirements are arranged. These accommodations include individual counselling, alternative formatted literature, accessible campus transportation, learning strategy instruction, writing exams and assistive technology instruction.

Request for Accommodations/Medical Issues:

Students are entitled to their privacy and consequently they do not need to disclose personal information to their course professors. In the event that students feel the need to discuss personal information, they should see the graduate chair. Unlike undergraduate students, graduate students cannot be referred to Social Science Academic Counselling to have their medical or non-medical circumstances evaluated and to receive a recommendation for accommodation. Those facilities are for undergraduates only, and there is no process beyond the department to secure recommendations for accommodation. Our process is that faculty should deal with routine requests for extensions. However, a student's request for accommodation (on medical, non-medical, compassionate grounds) should go to the graduate chair, Prof. Francine McKenzie (historygradchair@uwo.ca) who will consult and communicate with faculty. Additionally, faculty and students should communicate with the grad chair about any case in which work is not submitted before grades are due. In the event that the graduate chair is also the course professor, then a request for accommodation can be taken to the department chair.

Statement on the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI):

All work submitted in this course must be your own. You may not make use of generative AI tools like ChatGPT for any assignments in this course.

Academic Offences:

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Statement on Gender-Based and Sexual Violence:

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website: https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html. To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca

NOTE: See Policies and Statements on the Graduate section of the History Department Website, https://history.uwo.ca/graduate/program_information/graduate_policies_and_statements.html. This includes additional information on academic support services for health and wellness and on other academic policies, including copyright, plagiarism, and accessibility.