

# Mistresses, Mystics, Mothers and Maids: Women in Canada, 1600-1920

WMST 205

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Office Hours: Tuesday 11:15 to 12:30pm

Among Montreal's 1642 founders was a small band of dedicated female educators; some of the girls they educated gained notoriety on the path to sainthood. Other Canadian founders birthed babies by the dozen, aided by hardy midwives who doubled as community leaders. Yet more young pioneers fought bravely for both French and British colonists.

These women, native and newcomer, colonist and colonized, provided the roots of Canadian women's trials, successes, and challenges. In WMST 205 we examine the historical roots of critical aspects of Canadian women's lives, such as changes and continuities in gender activism, women's work, socially constructed notions of sexuality, and the foundations of racialized discourses in Canadian society. With the goal of better understanding these factors in the lives of contemporary Canadian women, we will explore women's interactions, explorations and experiences from Contact to the industrial age, investigating roles within the family, the labour force, and religious, political, social and cultural movements. Topics to be considered include the role of gender in Aboriginal-settler relations, women in European colonization, family economies, cultural constructions of nation, the gendered impact of industrialisation, and campaigns for moral reform.

You will encounter different sources, methods, and theories for accessing, understanding, and interpreting women's lives in specific historical contexts. You will learn to read critically, both primary historical documents and secondary scholarly analyses. You will also hone your critical thinking, writing, and oral communication skills through a series of participation, presentation, writing, and exam assignments.

The class will follow a lecture/discussion format. Tuesdays will be lecture days and Thursdays will be tutorial/activity days. The journal articles assigned for each week will form the basis of our discussions and the textbook will back up the lecture material.

## Required Texts:

- 1) Various articles available online through the UBC library online journals. Students will be required each week to read one of the articles listed below and come to class prepared to discuss that article.
- 2) Gleason, Mona, Tamara Myers and Adele Perry, eds. *Rethinking Canada: The Promise of Women's History* 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2011.

*NB: Each week there are two assigned articles. You are only required to read one (half the class reads one and half the class reads the other).*

## Recommended Text:

- 3) Cuthbert Brandt, Gail et al. *Canadian Women: A History* 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Toronto: Nelson Education, 2011.

## Course Requirements:

Students are required to attend every class and must successfully complete all of the following assignments and exams in order to receive a passing final grade. All assignments are to

be typewritten double-spaced in 12 point Times New Roman font with 1” margins on all sides. Late assignments will not be accepted.

Four Critical Assessments: 15% each

You will be responsible for four critical assessments of maximum four pages each. These assessments are to reflect on class readings, lectures, tutorials and in-class activities with reference to a specific question, given each week at the beginning of class on Tuesday. Assessments are due on the Thursday following the week to which the question pertains (for example, your assessment of the class materials discussed in week two is due on the Thursday of week three). By the end of September you must have handed in at least one assessment. By the end of October you must have handed in at least two assessments. If you wish, you may write more than four and I will include the four with the highest marks in your final grade.

This assignment is designed to encourage you to write critically and effectively within strict word limits. Your writing must be concise, clear and well-organized. You will be graded on content as well as structure, grammar and spelling. Please consult *The Chicago Manual of Style* when referencing and footnoting sources. Late assignments will not be accepted.

Course Attendance and Contribution: 10%

This is a small class, centred on lectures and tutorials. The success of the group relies on everyone doing the week’s readings; please come to class prepared. This means carefully reading the required texts, taking notes on the readings, and developing questions and comments for class discussion. You will be marked most significantly on the quality of your contribution in class. You must make it evident that you have done the assigned readings, thought critically about them, and have come prepared to discuss them.

Students will be forgiven ONE missed class. Remaining absences will affect your grade.

Mid-term Exam: 5%

The mid-term will be a take-home exam, given to you on Thursday the 7<sup>th</sup> of October and due at the beginning of the next class, on Tuesday October 12<sup>th</sup>. It will be designed entirely in the same format as the short answer portion of the final exam.

Final Exam: 25%

The final exam will be a take home exam, to be discussed later in the semester.

**Plagiarism Policy:**

Plagiarism is cheating and will not be tolerated in any form. The UBC Calendar defines plagiarism as follows:

“Plagiarism, which is intellectual theft, occurs where an individual submits or presents the oral or written work of another person as his or her own. Scholarship quite properly rests upon examining and referring to the thoughts and writings of others. However, when another person’s words (i.e. phrases, sentences, or paragraphs), ideas, or entire works are used, the author must be acknowledged in the text, in footnotes, in endnotes, or in another accepted form of academic citation. Where direct quotations are made, they must be clearly delineated (for example, within quotation marks or separately indented). Failure to provide proper attribution is plagiarism

because it represents someone else's work as one's own. Plagiarism should not occur in submitted drafts or final works. A student who seeks assistance from a tutor or other scholastic aids must ensure that the work submitted is the student's own. Students are responsible for ensuring that any work submitted does not constitute plagiarism."

(<http://www.students.ubc.ca/calendar/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,959>).

If you are unclear on what constitutes plagiarism, and for ideas on how to avoid it, please speak with me and consult the UBC Plagiarism Resource Centre at <http://www.library.ubc.ca/home/plagiarism/>.

### **Weekly Schedule:**

#### Week 1: Why and how we study women's history

(September 6, 8)

#### **Required Reading:**

- Gleason et al, "Introduction" pages 1 to 10

#### **Recommended Reading:**

- Brandt et al., "Introduction" pages 1 to 6.

#### Week 2: Native Women in North America and Contact with Europeans

(September 13, 15)

#### **Required Reading:**

- Kathryn Magee, "'They are the Life of the Nation': Women and War in Traditional Nadouek Society" Chapter 1 in *Rethinking Canada*.
- Karen Anderson, "As Gentle as Little Lambs: Images of Huron and Montagnais-Naskapi Women in the Writings of the 17th Century Jesuits." *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 25, no. 4 (1988): 560-576.

#### **Recommended Reading:**

- Brandt et al., Chapter One: "The First Women"

#### Week 3: Women and Families in New France

(September 20, 22)

#### **Required Reading:**

- Molly G. Richter, "Widowhood in New France: Consequences and Coping Strategies." *French Colonial History* 4 (2003): 49-62.
- Jan Noel, "'Nagging Wife' Revisited: Women and the Fur Trade in New France" Chapter 2 in *Rethinking Canada*.

#### **Recommended Reading:**

- Brandt et al., Chapter Two: "Women in New France"

#### Week 4: Early British North America: Transition, Migration

(September 27, 29)

#### **Required Reading:**

- Willeen Keough, "The 'Old Hag' Revisits St. Brigid: Irish Newfoundland Women and Spirituality on the Southern Avalon" Chapter 4 in *Rethinking Canada*.

- Julia Roberts, “‘A Mixed Assemblage of Persons’: Race and Tavern Space in Upper Canada” *Canadian Historical Review* 83, 1 (March 2002): 1-28.

**Recommended Reading:**

- Brandt et al., Chapter Three: “‘Plenty of Work’: Women’s Waged and Unwaged Labour in British North America”

Week 5: British North America: Public and Private

(October 4, 6)

Readings:

- Lynne Marks, “Railing, Tattling, and General Rumour: Gossip, Gender, and Church Regulation in Upper Canada.” *Canadian Historical Review* 81, no. 3 (2000) 380-402.
- Mary Anne Poutanen, “Regulating Public Space in Early Nineteenth-Century Montreal: Vagrancy Laws and Gender in a Colonial Context” *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 35, 69 (2002): 35-58.

**Recommended Reading:**

- Brandt et al., Chapter Three: “‘Plenty of Work’: Women’s Waged and Unwaged Labour in British North America”

Week 6: Citizenship, the Law, and the State

(October 11, 13)

**Required Reading:**

- Shirley Yee, “Gender Ideology and Black Women as Community Builders in Ontario, 1850-1097,” *Canadian Historical Review* 75, 1 (1994): 53-73.
- Bettina Bradbury, “Women at the Hustings: Gender, Citizenship, and the Montreal By-Elections of 1832” Chapter 8 in *Rethinking Canada*.

**Recommended Reading:**

- Brandt et al., Chapter Four: “Women and the Public Order”

Week 7: Western (Re)Settlement and Colonial Contact Zones

(October 18, 20)

**Required Reading:**

- Sylvia Van Kirk, “From ‘Marrying-In’ to ‘Marrying-Out’: Changing Patterns of Aboriginal / Non-Aboriginal Marriage in Colonial Canada” *Frontiers* 23, 3 (2002): 1-11.
- Adèle Perry. “‘Fair Ones of a Purer Caste’: White Women and Colonialism in Nineteenth-Century British Columbia.” *Feminist Studies* 23, no. 3 (1997): 501-524.

**Recommended Reading:**

- Brandt et al. Chapter Five: “Industrial Capitalism and Women’s Work”

Week 8: Industrialization, Urbanization, and Women’s Work

(October 25, 27)

**Required Reading:**

- Sherry Farrell Racette, “Sewing for a Living: The Commodification of Métis Women’s Artistic Production” Chapter 9 in *Rethinking Canada*.
- Magda Fahrni, “‘Ruffled Mistresses’ and ‘Discontented Maids’: Respectability and the Case of Domestic Service, 1880-1914,” *Labour / Le Travail*, no. 39 (1997): 69-97.

**Recommended Reading:**

- Brandt et al., Chapter Five: “Industrial Capitalism and Women’s Work”

Week 9: Moral Panic and Reform

(November 1, 3)

**Required Reading:**

- Eileen O’Connor, “Constructing Medical Social Authority on Dress in Victorian Canada,” *Canadian Bulletin of Medical History* 25, no. 2 (2008): 391-406.
- Lynne Marks, “‘A Fragment of Heaven on Earth’? Religion, Gender, and Family in Turn-of-the-Century Canadian Church Periodicals” Chapter 10 in *Rethinking Canada*.

**Recommended Reading:**

- Brandt et al. Chapter Six: “Woman’s Sphere” and Chapter Seven: “The ‘Woman Movement’”

Week 10: Gendering culture in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century

(November 8, 10)

**Required Reading:**

- Veronica Strong-Boag, “‘A Red Girl’s Reasoning’: E. Pauline Johnson Constructs the New Nation,” in Mary Ellen Kelm and Lorna Townsend, eds., *In the Days of our Grandmothers: A Reader in Aboriginal Women’s History in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 367-396.
- Gerta Moray, “Wilderness, Modernity and Aboriginality in the Paintings by Emily Carr,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 33, no. 2 (Summer 1998): 43-66.

**Recommended Reading:**

- Brandt et al. Chapter Six: “Woman’s Sphere”

Week 11: Regulating Bodies

(November 15, 17)

**Required Reading:**

- Gerald E. Thomson, “‘A Baby Show Means Work in the Hardest Sense’: The Better Baby Contests of the Vancouver and New Westminster Local Councils of Women, 1913-1929,” *BC Studies*, no. 128 (2000-2001): 5-36.
- Dianne Dodd, “Advice to Parents: The Blue Books, Helen MacMurphy, MD, and the Federal Department of Health, 1920-34” *Canadian Bulletin of Medical History* 8 (1991): 203-30.

**Recommended Reading:**

- Brandt et al. Chapter Six: “Woman’s Sphere”

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Week 12: World War One

(November 22, 24)

**Readings:**

- Linda Quiney, “‘Bravely and Loyal They Answered the Call’: St. John Ambulance, the Red Cross, and the Patriotic Service of Canadian Women During the Great War” *History of Intellectual Culture* 5, 1 (2005): 1-19.
- Barbara Roberts, “Women Against War, 1914-1918: Frances Beynon and Laura Hughes” in Janice Williams and Deborah Gorham, eds. *Up and Doing: Canadian Women and Peace* (Toronto: Women’s Press, 1989): 48-65.

**Recommended Reading:**

- Brandt et al. Chapter Eight: “The Dawn of the Century of Feminism”

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Week 13: First Wave of Feminism

(November 29, December 1)

**Required Reading:**

- Anne-Marie Kinahan. “Transcendent Citizenship: Suffrage, the National Council of Women of Canada, and the Politics of Organized Womanhood.” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 42, no. 3 (2008): 5-27.
- Tarah Brookfield, “Divided by the Ballot Box: The Montreal Council of Women and the 1917 Election.” Chapter 12 in *Rethinking Canada*.

**Recommended Reading:**

- Brandt et al. Chapter Seven: “The ‘Woman Movement’” and Chapter Eight: “The Dawn of the Century of Feminism”