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**HIST 410/510**  
**Women & Revolution**  
Winter 2013  
T/Th 12-1:20 Lillis 175  
CRN 27722

This class will take gender as a central category of analysis in comparing liberal, socialist, and anticolonial revolutions in world history since the eighteenth century. Comparative themes will include gendered rhetoric, women's material involvement, and social outcomes. Why have women, who have figured so powerfully in revolutionary ideologies and actions, so rarely shared fully in the rewards of post-revolutionary societies? What historical patterns can we discern as we compare relationships between women and states, families and nations? What can a global study of women and revolution teach us about the gender of the polity and the potential for transforming gendered power?

### **Structure**

After one week of theoretical overview, the remaining class sessions will be divided into three clusters: three weeks on liberal revolutions, three weeks on socialist revolutions, and three weeks on anticolonial revolutions. We will conclude by considering the lessons that transnational feminists have drawn by comparing these histories of revolutionary politics.

The liberal-socialist-anticolonial framework is intended to emphasize thematic analysis over strict chronology, but it does not imply a strict line of demarcation around each category. Some revolutions have included two or even all three of these guiding principles. Nor is this framework intended to be exhaustive: it does not account for *all* forms of transformative political thought and action in world history. However, since these three basic revolutionary impulses have profoundly shaped gender ideologies and practices since the eighteenth century, this framework encourages comparative and transnational approaches to modern women's history.

Each cluster will revolve around one book, three lectures, and three discussions of primary sources and supporting articles. Given the small size of our class, we have an excellent opportunity for substantive discussions. Each student will prepare a set of 3-5 discussion questions prior to the weekly discussion and bring a typed, paper copy of them to class. The questions should directly engage the assigned readings for that week and take an analytical, comparative approach.

The final exam will consist of a set of essay questions that ask students to compare the histories of revolutionary women we have encountered. This task involves selecting and synthesizing information from lectures and readings in order to support an original, coherent argument. Since it is an exam, this work must be completed independently. Do not include information from any

outside sources (e.g., encyclopedias, websites, or other classes). Keeping these instructions in mind throughout the term will help you listen and read strategically.

Every student will complete a project on any aspect of the class theme: as long as women and historical revolutions are core areas of inquiry, the project may take the form of history, oral history, cultural studies, museum studies, journalism, or documentary film. Project proposals are due at the end of week 4 via email; projects are due at the end of week 8. Please make time to see me for guidance in office hours between these deadlines, if not earlier. Graduate students: please set up an appointment to discuss your objectives and workload for this class.

### Readings

Note: You may use kindle or other electronic versions of these texts, as long as you download and read the entire text (i.e., a preview on Google books is not adequate) and are able to bring it with you to class for discussion.

1. Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, ed. Miriam Brody (Penguin, 2004).
2. Anchee Min, *Red Azalea* (Anchor, 2006).
3. Assia Djebar, *Children of the New World: A Novel of the Algerian War* (SUNY: Feminist Press, 2005)
4. Additional readings to be posted online and/or distributed in class.

\*Recommended reference text: Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks, *Gender in History: Global Perspectives*, Second ed., (Wiley-Blackwell, 2011).

### Assignments

Discussion 15%  
 Reading responses 30% @ 10% each  
 Independent project 25%  
 Final exam 30%

The small size of our class affords a valuable opportunity for group discussion and individualized assignments. Each week, one of our meetings (usually Tuesday) will be devoted to lecture and the other (usually Thursday) will be devoted to discussion.

Your participation grade will evaluate your ability to verbally engage in historical analysis based on the material presented in this class. Prior to each discussion, please write at least three open-ended, analytical questions based on the assigned readings. Bring them to class and pose them to the group. I will collect the discussion questions at the end of the discussion. Do your best to answer—or at least consider—the questions posed by classmates, as well. This will require bringing a print-out of primary sources and the textbook to each class. If the document is longer than five pages, you may bring written notes instead of a print-out.

For each assigned book other than the textbook, read the whole text, including the introduction, and write a four-page response. This assignment has four goals:

1. Show that you read the whole book and understood its major themes/contentions.
2. Show that you can interpret a primary source, place it in context, and discern its historical significance (see “How to read a primary source” handout for guidance).
3. Demonstrate your ability to think analytically about women and gender in history (e.g., apply concepts that we have defined in class).

Lectures are designed to provide information that will help you interpret the readings and give your analysis a historical foundation. More than half of the exam material will be drawn from lectures.

Please submit written work via blackboard (Safeassign) prior to class on the due-date, unless otherwise directed. Uploaded papers should use size 12, Times New Roman font and format pages with standard margins.

All work should be completed independently. Plagiarized assignments will fail, and I will report all instances of plagiarism. By plagiarism, I mean representing the words or ideas of another writer as your own. For more details, go to:

<http://studentlife.uoregon.edu/StudentConductandCommunityStandards/tabid/68/Default.aspx>

### **Policies**

My grading practices adhere to the History Department’s standards, copied below. I do not change grades retroactively.

A+: Work of unusual distinction. Therefore, in the History Department, this grade is rarely awarded.

A: Work that distinguishes itself by the excellence of its grasp of the material and the precision and insight of its argument, in addition to being well executed and reasonably free of errors.

B: Work that satisfies main criteria of the assignment, and demonstrates command of the material, but does not achieve the level of excellence that characterizes work of A quality.

C: Work that demonstrates a rudimentary grasp of the material and satisfies at least some of the assigned criteria reasonably well.

D: Work that demonstrates a poor grasp of the material and/or is executed with little regard for college standards, but which exhibits some engagement with the material.

F: Work that is weak in every aspect, demonstrating a basic misunderstanding of the material and/or disregard for the assigned question.

Lecture attendance is optional, and I will not take attendance. When you choose to attend lecture, please be prepared to focus on the subject at hand. Show respect by listening to and acknowledging what others say; don't leave abruptly or talk while others are speaking. Come on time, stay awake, silence your phone, and don't touch it during class. Texting, web-browsing, and other side conversations are distracting and disrespectful. Whether they occur during lectures or discussions, these behaviors will damage your participation grade.

Although I am not constantly online, I will return emails within 24 hours. I am also committed to meeting the needs of students with disabilities who are registered with Disability Services and who may need individual arrangements.

Over the course of the semester, I look forward to meeting individually with all of the students in this course, either during my regular office hours or by appointment. Office visits can help you understand and digest information covered in class, provide additional resources for pursuing independent work, and, ideally, spark intellectual curiosity. Please do not attend office hours in order to ask me to repeat a lecture that you did not attend.

## Tentative Schedule

### Week 1: Course introduction

- T. Jan. 8. Course introduction
- Th. Jan. 10. Discussion: "Gender and the politics of history"
- Read: Joan Scott, "Gender as a category of historical analysis"; Manisha Sinha, "Gender and Nation" (online)

### Cluster I. Gender in the creation of modern republics

#### Week 2: Before

- T. Jan. 15 Lecture: Women in the pre-revolutionary Atlantic world
- Th. Jan. 17 Discussion: Enlightenment, colonialism, and gender
- Read: selections from *Transatlantic Feminisms in the Age of Revolutions* and *Lives and Voices* (online)

#### Week 3: During

- T. Jan. 22 Lecture: Women in American, French, and Haitian revolutions
- Read: *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, intro, pp. 1-98
- Th. Jan. 24 Discussion: *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*
- Read: *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, pp. 99-163

#### Week 4: After

- T. Jan. 29 Lecture: Backlash, empire, and the shifting ground of women's activism
- Read: *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, pp. 164-242
  - Reading response due: *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*
- Th. Jan. 31 **Class cancelled; attend Sharon Block lecture instead.**
- Deadline to email topic proposals for independent projects.

## **Cluster II. Women, Marxism, and socialist revolutions**

### **Week 5: Before**

T. Feb. 5 Lecture: Prerevolutionary contexts: Russia, China, and Cuba

Th. Feb. 7 Discussion: Materialist analyses of women's oppression

- Read: Friedrich Engels, *The Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State*; Alexandra Kollontai, *The Social Basis of the Woman Question* (selections online).

### **Week 6: During**

T. Feb. 12 Lecture: Women's revolutionary ideas and actions

Th. Feb. 14 Discussion: *Red Azalea*

### **Week 7: After**

T. Feb. 19 Lecture: Outcomes for Soviet and Chinese women

- Reading response due: *Red Azalea*

Th. Feb. 21 Discussion: Outcomes for Cuban women

- Read: "Thesis Three," "The Working Woman Maternity Law," and "Regulations of Law 1263" (online)

## **Cluster III. Anticolonial revolutions and the gender politics of nationalism**

### **Week 8: Before**

T. Feb. 26 Lecture: Imperial and anti-imperial gender ideologies in sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East

- Read Franz Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*; Irene Ropa Rinopfuka Mahamba, "Woman in Struggle" (selections online).

Th. Feb. 28 Discussion: Your projects.

- **Projects due**

### **Week 9: During**

T. Mar. 5 Lecture: Women in African Independence Movements

Th. Mar. 7 Discussion: *Children of the New World*

### **Week 10: Continuing**

T. Mar. 11 Lecture: Gender & nationalisms from the Algerian War to the Arab Spring

- **Assia Djebar reading response due**

Th. Mar. 13 Discussion: How revolutionary lessons have shaped transnational feminism

- Read: Nayereh Tohidi, "The Woman's Movement and Feminism in Iran"; Chandra Mohanty, *Feminism without Borders* (selections online).

Final exam due Tuesday, March 19, at 10:15 a.m. via safe-assign.