

Misbehaving Women: Transgressing Victorian Gender Ideals

Syllabus 407 Senior Seminar Spring 2019

Emily Gilkey
egilkey2@uoregon.edu
Office: 340X McKenzie Hall
Office Hours: 11-12 Tu/Th

Course Description:

Historian Laurel Thatcher Ulrich famously observed that “well-behaved women seldom make history.” This phrase has become a feminist rallying cry, but in its original context the quote states a simple fact in studying the history of women. Historically, the women whose lives appear in the historical record are those who were somehow extraordinary or transgressive, such that male record-keepers took note. The women who were “well-behaved” often disappeared entirely. This course will look at European women of the 19th century and the ways in which they both transgressed and reinforced the gender norms of their day.

Course Requirements:

History 407 is a course designed to be the capstone of a major in history at the University of Oregon. The main requirement for the course is to write a historical research paper of 20-25 pages. Your goal is to choose a topic and write a paper that offers a strong and well-organized thesis in response to a good historical question, bases its argument on primary sources and clearly explains its relationship to the work of other historians. Students will also complete weekly assignments that are designed to serve as building blocks for the final paper.

Each class session will be split between a topical lecture, a discussion of the week’s readings, and a research and writing workshop in which we will discuss topics, research strategies, how to organize a paper and other relevant writing skills.

Grade Breakdown:

5% Discussion Questions
20% Writing Assignments
15% Participation
60% Final Paper

Discussion Questions

Each week you should prepare open-ended questions for group discussion. They will need to be posted to Canvas the night before our class. These questions will be based on the primary source reading and should demonstrate that you have completed the assigned passages and have engaged thoughtfully with them.

Writing Assignments

Each week you will need to complete an assignment that will help you toward completing your final paper. All of these assignments are available on Canvas. Some of them will also require printing copies of your work to bring to class for our writer's workshop.

Participation

Actively engaging in class discussion is an important part of our class. There will be very few students in the class and so it will be incumbent upon you to participate several times in each class period. The participation grade will also reflect whether you remained engaged and on-task even when you weren't talking. Fooling on your computer or doing other work will have a negative impact on your grade.

Final Paper

The object of this course is to produce a work of original research that is 20-25 pages long.

Class Plan:

How to read this class plan:

Each week we will meet for three hours straight, but I have divided that time into three chunks, each of which will have its own focus, and for which you will need to prepare.

Part I: Lecture topic. For the first part of each class I will give a lecture about a specific aspect of the history of women in the long 19th century. For this portion of the class you'll be assigned a section of the textbook to read as background. You do not have to have this read before lecture, I intend the reading assignment as a companion to what I tell you verbally.

Part II: Discussion. The second part of our class will be spent discussing an article (secondary source) and some primary documents. In order to prepare for this part of class you will need to write discussion questions based on those readings and post them to Canvas *before* class. Be prepared to discuss these readings in class. Bring your book with you to class. For weeks when documents are posted to Canvas, be prepared to bring either a hard copy or a device that allows you to access them.

Part III: Writer's workshop. Each week you will have an assignment that I designed to prepare you to complete your research paper. You will need to submit some of these online, while others should be brought to class. For some weeks I will also assign a chapter from *A Short Guide to Writing About History*. This is intended as a companion to your assignment and to what we discuss in class.

Week 1: April 2

Lecture Topic: The Victorian Ideal

- Background reading *Women in Nineteenth-Century Europe* chapter 3, “Family Life”

Discussion:

- Primary Documents:
 - *Women in Public* p 6-22

Writer’s Workshop: Introduction to primary sources

- I will provide an overview of some of the places to look for primary sources.
-

Week 2: April 9

Lecture Topic: Working Women

- Background reading *Women in Nineteenth-Century Europe* chapter 4 “Working for Wages”

Discussion:

- *Women in Public*:
 - p. 60-84
 - p. 109-125

Writer’s Workshop: Paper Topics

- Writing Assignment: Paper Topics due
 - Read for background: Short Guide to Writing About History (SGWAH): Chapter 1 “Writing and History”
-

Week 3: April 16

Lecture Topic: Gender and Empire

- Background reading *Women in Nineteenth-Century Europe* chapter 7 “On the move”

Discussion:

- *Women in Public*: p 33-41

Writer’s Workshop:

- Writing Assignment: Primary Source Report due
 - SGWAH Chapter 3 “Preparing for Writing”
-

Week 4: April 23

Lecture Topic: Education and Professional women

- Background reading *Women in Nineteenth-Century Europe* chapter 5 “Education

Discussion:

- *Women in Public*: p 90-105; 137-153

Writer’s Workshop:

- Writing Assignment: Secondary Source List
 - SGWAH Chapter 2 “Thinking about History”
-

Week 5: April 30

Lecture Topic: Prostitution and Social Purity

- Background reading Women's history review.: Prostitution and Victorian Society Revisited: the Contagious Diseases Acts in Kent

Discussion:

- *Women in Public*: 199-218

Writer’s Workshop:

- Writing Assignment: Annotated Bibliography
 - SGWAH Chapter 4 “Notes and Drafts”
-

Week 6: May 7

Lecture Topic: Criminality: Women on the wrong side of the law

- Background reading CALLAHAN, KATHY. “Women Who Kill: An Analysis of Cases in Late Eighteenth. and Early Nineteenth-Century London.” *Journal of Social History* 46, no. 4 (Summer 2013): 1013–38.

Discussion:

- Canvas: Primary Sources

Writer’s Workshop:

- Writing Assignment: One page introduction Due (Bring 4 copies)
 - Outline Due (Bring 4 copies)
-

Week 7: May 14**Lecture Topic: Maternity and Birth Control**

- Background reading *Women in Nineteenth-Century Europe* Chapter 2 “Reproduction and Sexuality”

Discussion:

- Article: Rachel Fuchs, “Legislation, Poverty and Child-Abandonment in Nineteenth-Century Paris” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 18 (1987)
- *Women in Public: 23- 30*
- 157-188

Writer’s Workshop:

- Writing Assignment: Topic Sentences Due
-

Week 8: May 21**Lecture Topic: Suffrage**

- Background reading *Women in Nineteenth-Century Europe* Chapter 9 “Feminism and Politics”

Discussion:

- *Women in Public: p. 292-323*

Writer’s Workshop:

- Writing Assignment: Citations List due
 - SGWAH Chapter 6 “Documenting Sources”
-

Week 9: May 28**Lecture Topic: Birth of a Lesbian Identity**

- Background reading: Canvas: Between Women: Friendship, Desire and Marriage

Discussion:

- Primary Documents: Documents Krafft-Ebing

Writer’s Workshop:

- Writing Assignment: Rough Draft for Student Exchange (Bring 4 copies to class)
 - SGWAH Chapter 5 “Voice and Style”
-

Week 10: June 4

Lecture Topic: Women at War: World War I

- Background reading:
 - Article on Canvas: Martin, Nancy. 2012. "'the Rose of no Man's Land ?]'1: Femininity, Female Identity, and Women on the Western Front." *Journal of International Women's Studies* 13 (6) (12): 5-17.

Discussion:

- Canvas: Primary Sources

Writer's Workshop:

- Writing Assignment: Rough Draft Commentary of others due
- Class presentations on papers

Final Paper Due: 12:30, Thursday June 13th