

The University of Western Ontario
Department of History
2026-2027
Winter 2027

HIST 9274B
OH GENDERED CANADA!: GENDER IN CANADIAN HISTORY

Professor Monda Halpern

TIME: Thursday, 9:30 AM-11:30 AM

LOCATION:

EMAIL: halpern@uwo.ca

OFFICE HOURS: Wednesday, 2:00 PM-3:30 PM, Lawson Hall 2266, and by appointment in person or on Zoom

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

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.

REQUIRED READINGS:

The required readings include all of the online articles cited below (**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 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.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

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 laptops (web browsing, texting, etc.), as well as the use of all wireless handheld devices, is discouraged and could adversely affect your participation mark.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

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.

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 the latter 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 with exact page numbers. 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); the bibliography should be organized into these two sections. 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 not presenting an article and submitting 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 hardcopy) 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.

CLASS SCHEDULE:

JANUARY 7 – INTRODUCTION; WHAT IS SOCIAL HISTORY AND WOMEN’S HISTORY?

JANUARY 14 - WOMEN’S HISTORY: Has the move from “universal sisterhood,” to diversity, to contested identities been good for the field?

Through Feminist Eyes, “Reflections on Thirty Years of Women’s History,” pp. 1-48.

Gail Cuthbert Brandt, “Postmodern Patchwork: Some Recent Trends in the Writing of Women’s History in Canada,” *Canadian Historical Review*, 72 (1991): 441-70.

<http://web.a.ebscohost.com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=1&sid=8c9a81dd-0e5f-4214-abed-dd35232d1682%40sdc-v-sessmgr03>

Julie Dinh, “Ethnic, Immigrant, and Racialized Women in Canada: A Historiography,” *Constellations*, 3 (2012): 175-85.

<https://ejournals.library.ualberta.ca/index.php/constellations/article/viewFile/17205/13703>

JANUARY 21 – GENDER HISTORY: Is it the “new” Women’s History? Is the term useful?

Through Feminist Eyes, “Telling Our Stories: Feminist Debates and the Use of Oral History,” 213-42

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/09612029400200046?needAccess=true>

Joan Sangster, “Beyond Dichotomies: Re-Assessing Gender History and Women’s History in Canada,” *Left History*, 3 (Spring/Summer 1995), 109-21

<http://pi.library.yorku.ca/ojs/index.php/lh/article/viewFile/5312/4507>

Karen Dubinsky and Lynn Marks, “Beyond Purity: A Response to Sangster,” *Left History* (1996)

<http://pi.library.yorku.ca/ojs/index.php/lh/article/viewFile/6967/6151>

Franca Iacovetta & Linda Kealey, “Women’s History, Gender History and Debating Dichotomies,” *Left History* (1996): 1-17.

[PDF] [Women’s History, Gender History and Debating Dichotomies](#)

JANUARY 28 – PRE-INDUSTRIAL/COLONIAL ABORIGINAL SOCIETIES: To what extent did notions of race and gender influence cultural imposition/resistance/assimilation?

Sylvia Van Kirk, "The Role of Native Women in the Fur Trade Society of Western Canada, 1670-1830," *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*, 7 (1984): 9-13.
<http://www.jstor.org.proxy2.lib.uwo.ca/stable/3346234>

Carol Devens, "Separate Confrontations: Gender as a Factor in Indian Adaptation to European Colonization in New France," *American Quarterly*, 38 (1986): 461-80.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2712677>

Sylvia Van Kirk, "From "Marrying-In" to "Marrying-Out": Changing Patterns of Aboriginal/Non-Aboriginal Marriage in Colonial Canada," *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*, 23 (2002): 1-11.
<http://www.jstor.org.proxy2.lib.uwo.ca/stable/3347329>

Saliha Belmessous, "Assimilation and Racism in Seventeenth and Eighteenth-Century French Colonial Policy," *The American Historical Review*, 110 (April 2005): 322-49.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/531317>

FEBRUARY 4 – CLASS: How did gender inform class formation/consciousness/identity? (WEEK 5, presentations begin)

Through Feminist Eyes:

"The 1907 Bell Telephone Strike: Organizing Women Workers," pp. 53-80
https://www.erudit.org/en/journals/lt/1978-v3-ilt_3/ilt3art03.pdf

"The Softball Solution: Female Workers, Male Managers, and the Operation of Paternalism at Westclox, 1923-1960," pp. 135-72
https://www.erudit.org/en/journals/lt/1993-v32-ilt_32/ilt32art04/

Steven Maynard, "Rough Work and Rugged Men: The Social Construction of Masculinity in Working-Class History," *Labour / Le Travail*, 23 (Spring 1989): 159-69.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/25143139>

Elise Chenier, "Rethinking Class in Lesbian Bar Culture: Living 'The Gay Life' in Toronto, 1955-1965," *Left History*, 9 (Spring/Summer 2004): 85-115.
<http://pi.library.yorku.ca/ojs/index.php/lh/article/viewFile/5608/4801>

FEBRUARY 11 – SAME-SEX FEMALE FRIENDSHIPS: Were they sexual? Does it matter?

Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations Between Women in Nineteenth-Century America," *Signs*, 1 (Autumn 1975): 1-29.
<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=00979740%28197523%291%3A1%3C1%3ATFWOLA%3E2.0.CO%3B2-H>

Karen Duder, "The Spreading Depths: Lesbian and Bisexual Women in English Canada, 1910-1965," PhD Dissertation, Department of History, University of Victoria,

2001. Chapter 3, "Questions of Sex: Female-Female Relationships and Physical Sexuality," pp. 177-270.

[View/Open](#)

Steven Maynard, "Hell Witches in Toronto: Notes on Lesbian Visibility in Early-Twentieth-Century Canada," *Left History*, 9 (Spring/Summer 2004):191-205.

<http://pi.library.yorku.ca/ojs/index.php/lh/article/viewFile/5612/4805>

FEBRUARY 18 – NO CLASS (SPRING READING WEEK)

FEBRUARY 25 - THE FIRST-WAVE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT: Was it classist/racist?

Linda M. Ambrose and Margaret Kechnie, "Social Control or Social Feminism?: Two Views of the Ontario Women's Institutes," *Agricultural History*, 73 (Spring 1999): 222-37.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3744661>

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: The British Columbian Quarterly* (2000): 5-35.

[https://search-proquest-](https://search-proquest-com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/docview/196876144?rfr_id=info%3Axri%2Fsid%3Aprimo)

[com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/docview/196876144?rfr_id=info%3Axri%2Fsid%3Aprimo](https://search-proquest-com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/docview/196876144?rfr_id=info%3Axri%2Fsid%3Aprimo)

Janice Fiamengo, "Rediscovering our Foremothers Again: the Racial Ideas of Canada's Early Feminists, 1885-1945," *Essays on Canadian Writing*, 75 (Winter 2002): 85-117.

[https://search-proquest](https://search-proquest-com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/docview/197251421?rfr_id=info%3Axri%2Fsid%3Aprimo)

[com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/docview/197251421?rfr_id=info%3Axri%2Fsid%3Aprimo](https://search-proquest-com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/docview/197251421?rfr_id=info%3Axri%2Fsid%3Aprimo)

Nancy Forestell, Maureen Moynagh, "Mrs. Canada Goes Global: Canadian First Wave Feminism Revisited," *Atlantis*, 30 (2005): 7-20.

<http://journals.msvu.ca/index.php/atlantis/article/viewFile/855/848>

MARCH 4 – WORLD WAR I and II: Does war entrench or revolutionize gender roles?

Ruth Pierson, "Women's Emancipation and the Recruitment of Women into the Canadian Labour Force in World War II," *Historical Papers / Communications historiques*, 11 (1976): 141-73.

[\[PDF\] Women's Emancipation and the Recruitement of Women into the Canadian Labour Force in World War II](#)

Jeff Keshen, "Revisiting Canada's Civilian Women During World War II," *Social History/Histoire Sociale* (1997): 239-66.

<http://pi.library.yorku.ca/ojs/index.php/hssh/article/viewFile/4702/3896>

Tim Cook, "Wet Canteens and Worrying Mothers: Alcohol, Soldiers, and Temperance Groups in the Great War," *Social History/Histoire Sociale* (2002): 311-30.

<http://pi.library.yorku.ca/ojs/index.php/hssh/article/viewFile/4457/3654>

Tim Cook, "Fighting Words: Canadian Soldiers' Slang and Swearing in the Great War," *War in History*, 20 (July 2013): 323-44.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/26098507>

MARCH 11 – THE 1950s: Was it a decade of gender/sexual over-conforming or quiet revolution?

Through Feminist Eyes, "Girls in Conflict with the Law: Exploring the Construction of Female 'Delinquency' in Ontario, 1940-1960," pp. 251-92.

Franca Iacovetta, "Recipes for Democracy? Gender, Family, and Making Female Citizens in Cold War Canada," *Canadian Woman Studies*, 20, 2 (2000): 12-21.

<http://pi.library.yorku.ca/ojs/index.php/cws/article/viewFile/7604/6735>

Bonnie Huskins and Michael Boudreau, "Irresponsibility, Obligation, and the Manly Modern: Tensions in Working-class Masculinities in Postwar Saint John, New Brunswick,"

Labour / Le Travail, 78 (Fall 2016):165-96.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/44817639>

MARCH 18 – THE SEXUAL REVOLUTION: Who won and who lost?

Through Feminist Eyes, "Words of Experience/Experiencing Words: Reading Working Women's Letters to Canada's Royal Commission on the Status of Women," pp. 359-90.

Becki Ross, "The House That Jill Built: Lesbian Feminist Organizing in Toronto, 1976-1980," *Feminist Review*, 35 (Summer 1990): 75-91.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1395402>

Christabelle Sethna, "The University of Toronto Health Service, Oral Contraception, and Student Demand for Birth Control, 1960-1970," *Historical Studies in Education*, 17 (Fall 2005): 265-92.

http://historicalstudiesineducation.ca/hse/index.php/edu_hse-rhe/article/view/79

Stuart Henderson, "Toronto's Hippie Disease: End Days in the Yorkville Scene, August 1968," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*, 17 (2006): 205-34.

<http://www.erudit.org/revue/jcha/2006/v17/n1/016108ar.pdf>

MARCH 25 – NATIONALISM IN HISTORY: To what extent has gender served its interests (and vice versa)?

Christopher Gittings, "Imaging Canada: The Singing Mountie and Other Commodifications of Nation," *Canadian Journal of Communication*, 23, 4 (1998).

<http://cjc-online.ca/index.php/journal/article/viewArticle/1062/968>

Eva Mackay, "'Death by Landscape': Race, Nature, and Gender in Canadian Nationalist Mythology," *Canadian Woman Studies*, 20 (2000): 125-30.
[PDF] "["Death by Landscape": Race, Nature, and Gender in Canadian Nationalist Mythology](#)"

Ken Osborne, review of Jack Granatstein, *Who Killed Canadian History?* (1998), *The Canadian Historical Review*, 80 (1999): 114-18. [direct online access through Weldon Library]
https://ocul-uwo.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL_UWO/t54l2v/cdi_proquest_journals_1518294994

APRIL 1 – REGIONALISM IN HISTORY: To what extent has gender served its interests (and vice versa)?

Gail G. Campbell, "Canadian Women's History: A View from Atlantic Canada," *Acadiensis*, 20 (Autumn 1990): 184-99.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/30303364>

Deborah Gorham, "From Bonavista to Vancouver Island: Canadian Women's History as Regional History in the 1990s," *Acadiensis*, 28 (Spring 1999): 119-125.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/30302821>

APRIL 8 – TRANSNATIONALISM IN HISTORY: To what extent has gender served its interests (and vice versa)?

Franca Iacovetta, "Gendering Transnational Historiographies: Feminists Rewriting Canadian History," *Journal of Women's History* 19 (2007): 206-13.
(posted)

Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks, "Crossing Borders in Transnational Gender History," *Journal of Global History*, 6 (2011): 357–79.
http://docenti2.unior.it/doc_db/doc_obj_19781_28-04-2012_4f9c1a7c1c144.pdf

J.T.H. Connor, "'For her own safety and the good of society at large': Eugenics, Sterilization, and Anglo-American Transnationalism in Newfoundland, 1928-1934," *Acadiensis*, 48 (Spring 2019): 32-59.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/26732860>

END OF TERM

ADDITIONAL STATEMENT:

Please review the Department of History's shared policies and statements for all undergraduate courses at: https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_module_information/policies.html for important information regarding accessibility options, make-up exams, medical accommodations, health and wellness, academic integrity, plagiarism, and more.