Sex and European Feminism during the “long nineteenth century”

Bartlett Hall Rm 121
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:00-2:15pm

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Office Hours: Thursdays 2:30-3:50pm
11D Bartlett Hall
Course Description

Why has sex been a central preoccupation for feminism throughout its history? How have feminist attitudes towards sex changed over time, and how have attitudes varied amongst feminists themselves? What connections did feminists make between sexual reform, women’s rights, and broader social, political, and economic change? And what are the legacies of past feminist sexual politics for the present day?

This course addresses these questions by exploring the history of feminist sexual politics in Europe over the course of the “long nineteenth century” (1789-1914), and will focus on developments in Britain, France, and Germany. We will examine feminists’ writings on and activism surrounding sex and sexuality to understand how definitions of sex, feminism, and sexual politics changed over time, and how issues of class and race shaped feminist sexual politics. We will also analyze contradictions, tensions, and continuities within diverse feminist approaches to sexuality, and assess similarities and differences amongst feminists from different national backgrounds. By adopting a focus on feminism and sexuality, this course offers a unique lens on the major events of modern European history.

Requirements and Evaluation

Participation: 30%

This course will combine lecture and seminar formats. Each class, students are expected to complete the readings and actively participate in class discussions. If for any reason a student is unable to participate in this manner, s/he should contact me as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements.

As preparation for discussion, each student is expected to bring to each class meeting:
1. 2 questions about the readings
2. at least 2 passages from each reading they found particularly illuminating, and be prepared to explain why s/he chose those passages
3. 2 things you learned from the readings

Please submit these by the end of the day on Moodle; the cut-off is 8pm on day of class meeting. You don’t need to do this when we don’t have readings to discuss.

Written Work: 70%

The major assignment for this course is a research project, worth 35% of your final grade, to be submitted at the end of the term. This project can be on a topic of your own choosing; however, it should have something to do with sex and European feminism during the 19th century. You are also allowed to do a project that compares developments in Europe to those happening simultaneously in the United States or elsewhere in the world.

Leading up to the submission of the final project, we will complete a number of smaller assignments to help us start and progress on our projects. These include:

a. Project Proposal (5%): due FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6 AT 5PM on MOODLE
b. Primary Source Analysis (5%): due FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27 AT 5PM on MOODLE
c. Annotated Bibliography (10%): due TUESDAY, MARCH 24 AT 5PM on MOODLE
d. Paper Outline (5%): due FRIDAY, APRIL 10 AT 5PM on MOODLE
e. Workshopping Paper Drafts in Class (5%): due TUESDAY, APRIL 21
Instructions on how to do these assignments are appended to this syllabus, and are available on Moodle.

In our last class sessions (Thursday, April 23 and Tuesday, April 28) you will present your project to the class for 5-10 minutes. Presentation = 5% of your grade. Final Project due **May 4.**

**Bonus Opportunity!** The Civil Liberties and Public Policy Reproductive Justice Conference will be held at Hampshire College from April 10 to 12th. Given that reproduction is a topic of great interest to this course, you can receive an extra **2%** towards your participation grade if you attend the conference and prepare a 1-2 page, double-spaced report on your observations and what you learned at the conference.

**Late Policy**

Barring family and health emergencies or major technological disasters, late assignments will not be accepted. Period.

**Readings**

We will read a range of primary and secondary sources related to the theme at hand. It is imperative that everyone completes the readings, every week, both to ensure individual comprehension and to foster vibrant discussion. Almost all of the readings are available through e-reserves and Moodle; the password to access e-reserves is “feminism15.” To access e-reserves, you will need to set up an account. The information needed to set up this account is attached.

The only required text is Lucy Bland, *Banishing the Beast: Sexuality and the Early Feminists* (1995); it should be available through the campus bookstore or other book purveyor. It is also available at the Reserves desk in the library.

**Writing Resources**

For free (!) help with your writing assignments, visit the Writing Center, located in the Learning Commons of the W. E. B DuBois library. For more information about their services, scheduling procedures, hours of operation, etc., please visit: https://www.umass.edu/writingcenter/

**Academic Dishonesty**

This course follows the university guidelines for academic honesty. According to the Dean of Students Office, academic dishonesty is the attempt to secure unfair advantage for oneself or another in any academic exercise. For our course, this includes plagiarism and facilitating dishonesty. If you have any questions about what constitutes academic dishonesty and require further information regarding the Dean of Students’ policy, please see http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/codeofconduct/acadhonesty/#A

**Students with Disabilities**

To arrange accommodation, please contact Disability Services (http://www.umass.edu/disability/index.html) and be in touch with me as soon as possible.
Syllabus

Tuesday, January 20: Introduction

- Introductions to each other, course and its objectives, typical class structure

*LECTURE: Setting the Scene—Why Europe? Why the 19th Century? What is ‘sex’? Why begin in France?

Thursday, January 22: Introduction II

- Doing research on the history of women, gender, sexuality, and feminism in the Pioneer Valley: a visit from UMass Amherst and Smith expert librarians and archivists

Tuesday, January 27: Setting the Stage—the French Revolution

Primary Sources
- Olympe de Gouge, Declaration of the Rights of Woman, 1791
  https://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/d/293/
- Women’s Petition to the National Assembly 1789 https://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/d/629/

Secondary Sources

Thursday, January 29: Saint-Simonian feminism in France 1820s-1830s: Women’s rights, Sexual Reform, and Social Change

*LECTURE: REACTIONS TO THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

Primary Sources

Secondary Sources
- Claire Goldberg Moses, *French Feminism in the Nineteenth Century* (Albany: State University of New York, 1984), Chs. 3 and 4, 41-87 *Available on Moodle

Tuesday, February 3: Setting the Stage: The Industrial Revolution, Class, Gender, and Sexuality

*LECTURE: INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION: EFFECTS AND RESISTANCES

Primary Sources

Secondary Source
Thursday, February 5: Cleavages of sex and class in Popular Working-Class Movements, 1840s-1850s

Primary Sources

Secondary Sources

***FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 5PM EST: PROJECT PROPOSALS DUE***

Tuesday, February 10: Utopian Socialism as Response to the Industrial Revolution 1820s-1830s

Primary Sources

Secondary Sources
- Barbara Taylor, Eve and the New Jerusalem (New York: Pantheon Books, 1983), Introduction, Ch. 2 Ch. 6 *Available on Moodle


*LECTURE: STATE REGULATION OF PROSTITUTION IN BRITAIN

Primary Sources
- Ellen Vokes, “Unjustly accused of prostitution!” in Victorian Women, 423-428

Secondary Sources

Tuesday, February 17: NO CLASS—MONDAY SCHEDULE

Thursday, February 19: British Women’s Campaigns against the state regulation of prostitution and their aftermath, 1870s-1880s
**LECTURE: CAMPAIGNS AGAINST PROSTITUTION**

*Primary Sources*

*Secondary Sources*
- Judith Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society*, Chs. 6 and 7, 113-147 *Available on Moodle*

**Tuesday, February 24: The International Abolitionist Movement: The Spread of Agitation against the State Regulation of Prostitution Across Europe, 1870s-1900**

*Primary Sources*
- Case Studies of Belle Époque Prostitutes, in *Feminisms of the Belle Époque: A Historical and Literary Anthology*, 177-183

*Secondary Sources*

**Thursday, February 26: Aftermath of the Campaigns against Prostitution: Feminists and Moral Regulation in Britain, 1880s-1890s**

*LECTURE: MORAL REGULATION*

*Primary Sources*
- Laura Ormiston Chant, *Why We Attacked the Empire* (1895), 2-16 (available as ebook through UMass Amherst Library)
- Laura Ormiston Chant, *Women and the Streets, Public Morals* *Available on Moodle*

*Secondary Sources*

**Tuesday, March 3: The Woman Question and the rise of the “New Woman”**

*LECTURE: CHANGING UNDERSTANDINGS OF WOMANHOOD*

*Primary Sources*

**Secondary Sources**
• “The Woman Question,” *Nineteenth Century Britain Blog*
  http://nineteenthcenturybritain.blogspot.com/2010/02/woman-question.html

**Thursday, March 5: New Women [and Old Men]**

**Primary Sources**

**Secondary Sources**

**Tuesday, March 10: “Is Marriage a Failure?” Feminists Debate the Fate of Marriage**

*Lecture: Marriage Question*

**Primary Sources**
• Mona Caird, *The Morality of Marriage, and Other Essays on the Status and Destiny of Women* (London: George Redway, 1897): 138-149
• Louise-Marie Compain, selection from *L’Un vers l’autre*, in *Feminisms of the Belle Epoque*, 202-210

**Secondary Sources**
• Lucy Bland, *Banishing the Beast*, Ch. 4

**Thursday, March 12: GO DO SOME RESEARCH!!**

**Tuesday, March 17 & Thursday, March 19: SPRING BREAK!!**

**Tuesday, March 24: Rethinking Female [Heterosexual] Desire: Feminism, Sexual Expression, and Free Love**

*Lecture: Female Desire*

**Primary Sources**
• Jane Clapperton, Annie Besant, and Elizabeth Blackwell in *OsW*, 17-19

***ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE AT 5PM***

**Thursday, March 26: Rethinking Female [Heterosexual] Desire: Feminism, Sexual Expression, and Free Love**

**Secondary Sources**
- Lucy Bland, *Banishing the Beast*, Ch. 7
- Sheila Jeffreys, *The Spinster and her enemies: Feminism and Sexuality 1880-1930* (Pandora Press, 1985), Ch. 5

**Tuesday, March 31: Birth Control: A Feminist Campaign?**

*LECTURE: BIRTH CONTROL IN THE LONG NINETEENTH CENTURY*

**Primary Sources**
- Jane Hume Clapperton and Annie Besant in *OsW*, 31-33
- Frances Swiney, Maud Churton Braby, Cicely Hamilton, Margaret Stephens, Lucy Re-Bartlett, Christabel Pankhurst, Mary Scharlieb, Working Mothers, and Stella Browne, in *OsW*, 73-77
- Madeleine Pelletier on the right to an abortion, *Feminisms of the Belle Époque*, 253-265

**Thursday, April 2: Birth Control: A Feminist Campaign?**

**Secondary Sources**
- Lucy Bland, *Banishing the Beast*, Ch. 5

**Tuesday, April 7: Maternalism and Eugenics**

*LECTURE: MATERNALISM, FEMINISM, EUGENICS*

**Primary Sources**
Secondary Sources
- Ann Taylor Allen, *Feminism and Motherhood in Western Europe, 1890-1970* (2005), Ch. 3 and 4

**Thursday, April 9: Maternalism and Eugenics**

*Primary Source*

*Secondary Sources*
- Ann Taylor Allen, “Feminism and Eugenics in Germany and Britain, 1900-1930: A Comparative Perspective,” *German Studies Review* 23, no. 3 (October 2000), 477-505

***FRIDAY, APRIL 10: PAPER OUTLINE DUE AT 5PM***

April 10-12 CLPP Conference

**Tuesday, April 14: What is ‘female homosexuality’?**

*Lecture: Theories of Homosexuality in the Nineteenth Century*

*Primary Sources*

*Secondary Sources*

**Thursday, April 16: Accounting for the Past: The Legacy of Feminist Sexual Politics**

- Sheila Jeffreys, *The Spinster and Her Enemies*, Ch. 10, Afterword, 186-196

**Tuesday, April 21: Workshopping Papers**

**Thursday, April 23-Tuesday, April 28: Presenting Final Projects**

***MONDAY, MAY 4: FINAL PROJECTS DUE AT 5PM***