Gender and Nation in Modern Europe

This course examines the significance of gender in the construction of modern nation-states in nineteenth and twentieth century Europe and in the daily lives of women and men. Our primary areas of investigation include: industrialization, colonization, nationalism, socialism, fascism, the two world wars, the Holocaust, the Cold War, immigration, the war in the former Yugoslavia, and the New Europe. We will explore how ideas about gender (along with class, sexuality, and race/ethnicity) informed politics and notions of civic identity, the economic and cultural organization of society, social relations, and women’s position within the family. An important part of our examination is the role of philosophy, science, social policy and other discourses in constituting difference (gender, racial, class etc.) and in mobilizing these differences for national, economic, and geopolitical purposes. As a corollary to this, we will examine how women and men responded to and, at times, resisted these discourses and their prescribed roles both through participation in social and political movements and major historical events and in their daily lives. We will also interrogate the notion of modernity, considering how meanings shifted historically.

Readings
Annette Timm and Joshua Sanborn, Gender, Sex, and the Shaping of Modern Europe: A History from the French Revolution to the Present Day (Berg, 2007)
Buchi Emecheta, Second-Class Citizen, (George Braziller; Reprint ed., 1983).
Henrik Ibsen, A Doll’s House
Virginia Woolf, A Room of One’s Own (Harvest Books, reissue, 1989).
**additional readings will be available on e-reserve

Class Participation and Attendance (15%)
You are expected to participate actively in class discussion; therefore it is essential that readings are completed prior to each class meeting. The evening prior to each class meeting students are required to post 1-2 questions about the readings on blackboard (these questions must be posted by 8 pm so that your colleagues will have ample time to read and reflect on them). You are exempt from three posts over the course of the semester.
Essay on Gender in Interwar Western Europe (10%)
Drawing on Woolf’s A Room of One’s Own, Mary Louise Roberts’s, “Samson & Delilah Revisited: The Politics of Women’s Fashion in 1920s France,” Else Herman’s “This is the New Woman,” and the film The Blue Angel, write a 5-6 page essay on gender politics and practices in interwar France and Germany. Was there really a crisis in gender roles as some individuals claimed, or did the interwar period usher in a period of general conservatism; an attempt to return to normalcy? Make sure to address the relationship between women, gender, and the nation during this period.

Essay on Gender during World War II (10%)
Drawing on Elizabeth Harvey’s “ ‘We Forgot All About Jews and Poles,’ Atina Grossman’s, “A Question of Silence: The Rape of German Women by Occupation Soldiers,” Paula Schwartz’s “Redefining Resistance: Women’s Activism in Wartime France,” and Claire Duchen’s “Crime and Punishment in Liberated France: The Case of les femmes tondues,” write a 5-6 page essay on how women experienced, participated in, and were affected by World War II. To what degree did they support or tolerate Nazi policies? To what degree did they resist them and how? In what ways were women held accountable for what their nations’ leaders had done? Make sure to address the relationship between women, gender, and the nation during this period.

Midterm Exam (30%) This will be an in-class exam, covering key figures, terms, events, and ideas examined in class and in the readings up to this point.

Research Paper (35% total: proposal; 5%)
A research paper of 12-15 pages, typed and double spaced will be due during the week of finals. You should use at least six sources, excluding course readings, one of which can be a website. You may select any topic related to gender in modern Europe (mid-1700s to 1990s). For example, you might explore gender and citizenship during the French Revolution, women’s participation in WWI, or the construction of masculinity and sexual identities in post-war West Germany. On Sunday, March 9th you will submit (via email) a 1-2 page (double spaced) research proposal outlining the issue or problem you plan to investigate. Your proposal should be framed around a broader question (e.g. Was Nazism empowering or disempowering for women?) and should include the issues you plan on addressing in answering this questions (e.g. women in the workforce under Nazism, Nazi reproductive policies). You should also include the sources you will be consulting, explaining briefly how these materials will aid you in your research and analysis. Please feel free to consult with me as you prepare your proposal.

Late Grades and Assignments

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Late assignments will be marked down 1/3 of a grade per day (B to B-). Extensions will be granted in cases of documented personal illness and family emergency.
Honor Code All work is governed by the Honor Code. Any student found cheating, plagiarizing, turning in another’s work as his/her own or otherwise violating the instructor’s explicit or implicit instructions will be subject to a hearing before the Student Honor Committee. To learn more about the code, please go to: http://www.oberlin.edu/students/links-life/rules-regs07-08/honorcode.pdf

Services for Students with Disabilities
If you are a student with a documented disability who will require accommodations in this course please contact Jane Boomer, Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities in G27 Peters Hall, ext. 58467.

Week I: Course Introduction

February 5: Course Introduction

February 7: Defining Women’s and Gender History/Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe
Timm and Sanborn, Introduction
Joan Scott, “Gender: a Useful Category of Historical Analysis,” The American Historical Review 91, no. 5 (Dec., 1986), e-reserve

Week II: Gender, Enlightenment, and Revolution

February 12: Women, Gender, and the Enlightenment
Jean-Jacques Rousseau, “Educating Women to Serve the Family and Please Men” (1762) e-reserve
Timm and Sanborn, pp. 17-25

February 14: Gender and the French Revolution
Timm and Sanborn, pp. 25-45
“Declaration of the Rights of Man” (1789) at http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/rightsof.htm
Mary Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of the Rights of Women (letter to Talleyrand) e-reserve

Week III: Gender and Industrialization

February 19: Gender, Work, and Family, East and West
Timm and Sanborn, pp. 55-74
“Chartist Women Demand Equal Political Rights” e-reserve
February 21: Socialist and Feminist Responses
Timm and Sanborn, pp. 64-74
Flora Tristan, “The Workers Union” e-reserve
Jeanne Deroin vs. Paul Proudhon (1849); Jeanne Deroin (1850) e-reserve
Harriet Taylor, “On Marriage” e-reserve

Week IV: Gender, Honor, and Bourgeois Respectability

February 26: Gender, Honor, and Bourgeois Respectability
Timm and Sanborn, pp. 74-78
Robert A. Nye, "Fencing, the Duel and Republican Manhood in the Third Republic,"
*Journal of Contemporary History* 25, no. 2/3 (1990): 365-77
How did the Victorians have fun?
http://www.learningcurve.gov.uk/snapshots/snapshot05/snapshot5.htm

February 28: No Class (I’m at a conference); Work on your paper proposals

Week V: Sex, Gender, and the Politics of Empire/ Sex, Science, Social Deviance

March 4: Sex, Gender, and the Politics of Empire
Timm and Sanborn, chapter 3
Annie Besant “The Education of Indian Girls” e-reserve

March 6: Sex, Science, Social Deviance
Timm and Sanborn, pp. 174-181
Jeffrey Weeks, “Inverts, Perverts, and Mary-Annes: Male Prostitution and the Regulation of Homosexuality in England in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries,” in
*Hidden From History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past*, eds. Martin Baumel Duberman et. al. (New York, 1989), 195-211 e-reserve
Charles Darwin (England 1871) e-reserve
Paul Broca (France 1873) e-reserve
Herbert Spencer (England, 1876) e-reserve

Sunday March 9, Paper Proposals due via email

Week VII: Resisting the Patriarchal Order/Gender, War, and Citizenship

March 11: Resisting the Patriarchal Order
Henrik Ibsen, *A Doll’s House*
Ellen Key (Sweden, 1904) e-reserve
Emmeline Pankhurst “Why we are Militant” e-reserve
Sophia Jex-Blake, “The Medical Education of Women” e-reserve
Madeleine Pelletier (France, 1908) e-reserve
Clara Zetkin (Germany, 1889) e-reserve
March 13: Gender, War, and Citizenship
Read Timm and Sanborn, pp.131-147
And two of the following articles:
Belinda Davis, “Food Scarcity and the Empowerment of the Female Consumer in World War I Berlin” in The Sex of Things: Gender and Consumption in Historical Perspective (Berkeley, 1996) ed Victoria De Grazia, e-reserve

Week VII: Gender and Revolution in Russia
March 18: Gender and Revolution in Russia
TBD
March 20: Midterm Exam

Week VIII: Spring Break

Week IX: Gender and Terror in Stalin’s Russia
April 1: Gender and Terror in Stalin’s Russia/ Gender in Interwar Western Europe
Read: Sofia Petrovna
April 3: Gender in Interwar Western Europe
Elsa Herrmann “This is the New Woman” on e-reserve
Read: Virginia Woolf, A Room of One’s Own
Watch the Film: The Blue Angel (Germany, 1931) on reserve at the library DVD-223
Essay 1 Due

Week X: Gender in Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany
April 8: Gender and Masculinity in Fascist Italy
Read: Benito Mussolini, “What is Fascism” at http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/mussolini-fascism.html
April 10: Gender in Nazi Germany

Week XI: Gender, World War II, and the Holocaust

April 15: Gender and World War II
Read Timm and Sanborn, pp. 156-164
And the following articles
Elizabeth Harvey, “‘We Forgot All About Jews and Poles’: German Women and the Ethnic Struggle in Occupied Poland,” Contemporary European History vol 10, no. 3, 447-461 e-reserve
Claire Duchen, “Crime and Punishment in Liberated France: The Case of les femmes tondues,” in Duchen and Irene Bandhauer-Schoffman, When the War was Over: Women, War, and Peace in Europe, 1940-1956. (Leicester University Press, 2000) e reserve
Essay 2 Due

April 17: Gender and the Holocaust
Ruth Kluger, Still Alive

Week XII: Gender in Cold War Europe

April 22: Normalcy and its Discontents: Gender, the Family, and Welfare during the early Cold War
Read: Two of the following articles:
Pat Thane, “Family Life and “Normality in Postwar British Culture” in Richard Bessel and Dirk Schumann (eds.), Life after Death: Approaches to a Cultural and Social History of Europe during the 1940s and 1950s (Cambridge University Press, 2003): 193-210 on e-reserve
April 24: Gender, Decolonization and Immigration
Buchi Emechta, Second-Class Citizen

Week XIII: Women in Europe: East and West

April 29: Feminism and Sexual Revolution in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s
Read: Timm and Sanborn, pp. 169-174; 189-203
Simone de Beauvoir, The Second Sex (selections) and “I am a Feminist” e-reserve
“Wages for Housework in Italy” e-reserve

May 1: Women and State Socialism in Eastern Europe
TBD

Week XIV: The War in the former Yugoslavia/Women in the New Europe

May 6: The War in the former Yugoslavia
TBD

May 8: Women in the New Europe
Timm and Sanborn, “Conclusion”