

S&TS 4221/ /FGSS 4220/ History 4450

New York Women

Cornell University

Fall 2009

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Office Hours: Monday 3:00-4:00
(and by appointment)
Rockefeller 331

Over the centuries New York State has been the site of activity for a great many women of consequence. This course is a one-semester survey of the past and present activities and contributions of rural and urban women in a variety of fields of interest to Cornell students--politics, medicine, science, the law, education, business (including hotels, cosmetics and advertising), entertainment, communications, government, labor, the arts and other areas. The goal is to increase students' awareness of New York and women's history and improve their written and oral skills.

The class will meet weekly for a discussion of readings. Most weeks there will also be oral reports on a biography or autobiography of a New York woman chosen from a list to be circulated. (Student presenters should plan to distribute a handout to members of the class and provide a written version of the report for the instructor.) A research paper will be required, possibly using local or university archival sources.

Readings: For students' convenience many of the books listed below are on reserve in Uris Library or can be ordered ten days in advance via BorrowDirect. Most are also available for purchase at the campus store, but there might be better prices online. Those out of print can be found at www.bookfinders.com.

Papers should be 12-15 pages in length and are due the day before the exam period starts.

Grading: Half the final grade will be based upon class participation, including the book review; the other half upon the term paper.

Tentative Schedule

I. **(September 1, 2009)**--Introduction

II. **(September 8)**—Dutch in New Netherlands (Manhattan); British Loyalists;
Westchester landholders

--Jean Zimmerman, The Women of the House (2006).

III. **(September 15)**—Education: Emma Willard, Maria Mitchell, and Cornell University

--Anne Scott, "The Ever-Widening Circle: The Diffusion of Feminist Values from the Troy Female Seminary, 1822-1872," History of Education Quarterly 19(1979), 3-25. Available on JSTOR.

AND

--Sally Gregory Kohlstedt, "Maria Mitchell: The Advancement of Women," New England Quarterly 51(1978), 39-63. Available on JSTOR.

OR

--Charlotte Williams Conable, Women of Cornell: The Myth of Equal Education (1977). For those who haven't read it yet.

IV. **(September 22)**--Abolitionists and Suffragists—Harriet Tubman, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony and others

---watch Ken Burns video, "Not for Ourselves Alone."-- two 90-minute videocassettes on reserve in Uris Library (viewers are in Olin basement) or ILR Library.

V. **(September 29)**—Medicine and Public Health; women physicians and NYC Health Department

--Regina Morantz-Sanchez, Conduct Unbecoming a Woman: Medicine on Trial in Turn-of-the-Century Brooklyn (1999)

AND

--Judith Leavitt, "'Typhoid Mary' Strikes Back: Bacteriological Theory and Practice in Early Twentieth-Century Public Health," Isis 83(1992), pp. 608-29. Available on JST

VI. **(October 6)**—Wealthy Women, Patrons of the Arts, and Gender at Museums

--Dianne Sachko MacLeod, Enchanted Lives, Enchanted Objects: American Women Collectors and the Making of Culture, 1800-1940 (2008), pp. 1-83 and 128-75.

[FALL BREAK]

VII. (**October 20**)—Progressive/Democratic Women in NY Politics--1911 Triangle Shirtwaist Fire to FDR; trade unions or legislation?; expansion of NYS government in the 1920s

---Blanche Wiesen Cook, Eleanor Roosevelt, vol. 1 (1992), esp. pp. 187-428.

VIII. (**October 27**)— Social Scientists, esp. at Columbia University (Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead)

--Rosalind Rosenberg, Changing the Subject: How the Women of Columbia [University] Shaped the Way We Think about Sex and Politics (2004)

IX. (**November 3**)--"Women's Liberation"--Betty Friedan, suburban housewife and more.

--Daniel Horowitz, Betty Friedan and the Making of *The Feminine Mystique* (1998)

X. (**November 10**)-- Journalists, Television, and Publishing--New York Times, Liz Smith, Diana Vreeland at Vogue (fashion editors); Gloria Steiem at Ms.; television--Gertrude Berg, Jessica Savitch, Barbara Walters, Diane Sawyer; publishing--Blanche Knopf, Jacqueline Onassis

--Nan Robertson, The Girls in the Balcony: Women, Men and the New York Times (1992)

XI. (**November 17**)—Lawyers, Judges, and Wall Street

--Cynthia Epstein, Women in Law (1983), chs. 5, 8, 9, and 11.

--Ruth Bader Ginsburg, "Women at the Bar--A Generation of Change," University of Puget Sound Law Review 2(1978), pp. 1-14. Semi-autobiographical.

OR

--Anne B. Fisher, Wall Street Women (1990).

XII. (**November 24**)--NYC Women in Congress, 1970s and after

--Bella S. Abzug, Bella! Ms. Abzug Goes to Washington (1972)
feminist congresswoman; anti-war movement.

OR

--Shirley Chisholm, The Good Fight (1973). Black teacher and first woman nominated by a major party for US Presidency.

OR

--Geraldine A. Ferraro, Framing a Life: A Family Memoir (1998). Italian-American district attorney in Queens, who served in Congress, 1978-84, ran for US Vice-presidency in 1984 and the Senate in 1992.

OR

--Elizabeth Holtzman, Who Said It Would Be Easy?: One Woman's Life in the Political Arena (1996). Harvard Law graduate who served House Judiciary Committee during the Watergate crisis and later as a New York district attorney made domestic abuse a priority.

OR

--Susan Molinari, Representative Mom : Balancing Budget, Bill and Baby in the U.S. Congress (1998). SUNY-Albany grad in women's studies who succeeded her father as Staten Island's representative in the House.

XIII. (December 1)--Other Women in NYS politics-community organizers--Alice Jemison, Lois Gibbs (Buffalo)

--Louis Hauptmann, Seven Generations of Iroquois Leadership: The Six Nations Since 1800 (2008), ch. 5 (on Alice Jemison) and ch. 11 (on Kinzua Dam women, 1966-90).

--Amy Hay, "Recipe for Disaster: Motherhood and Citizenship at Love Canal," Journal of Women's History, vol. 21, no. 1(2009), pp. 111-34.