The New Woman in American History

This seminar explores the rise of the New Woman in American society. It examines the opportunities for gender equality, as well as the persistence of gender difference, in women’s public and private lives.

Required Readings

Drachman, Sisters in Law

Gilman, The Yellow Wallpaper

Showalter, ed. These Modern Women

Additional readings to be handed out in class.

Course Requirements

--Leading one class discussion. Discussion questions to be emailed by discussion leaders prior to class meeting. (Precise schedule to be arranged)

--Three essays. Please note that both a first and final draft of each paper is required.

--Attendance and active participation at every class meeting. Since this class meets once weekly, if you miss a class, you miss an entire week. This is a small class, so everyone’s presence is important all of the time. Please notify me in advance if you need to miss a class.
Class Schedule

9/9  Introductory remarks

I. Victorian Womanhood

9/16  The Limits of Woman’s Place
Discuss:  *Sex in Education*, pp 5-8; 118-161

9/23  Challenging Victorian Womanhood
Discuss:  *The Yellow Wallpaper*, pp 41-59

9/30  The Victorian Woman in Public Life
Discuss:  “The Woman Lawyer”
*Sisters in Law*, chapters 3, 4

II. The New Woman in Public life

10/7  Law
Discuss:  *Sisters in Law*, chapters 5-9

10/14  The voices of women lawyers
Discuss:  Equity Club Letters, BVI questionnaires
First draft of essay #1 due.

10/21  Women’s Suffrage
*Iron Jawed Angels*
Final draft, essay #1 due.

III. The New Woman in Private Life

10/28  Companionate Marriage
Discuss:  *Portia Marries*

IV. The New Woman in the Tufts Archives

11/4  Learning the archives and defining the research
First draft of essay #2 due.

11/9  Research day in Tufts archives
Final draft of essay #2 due

11/18  Analysis of archival documents
Written description and explanation of favored documents
The New Woman’s Thanksgiving celebration
11/25  Happy Thanksgiving
12/2  Reunion of the women of the *Nation* (based on *These Modern Women*)
      First draft of essay #3 due.

12/9  Last class (tba)
      Final draft of essay #3 due