GSWS 201-3: COLONIZING WOMEN: CANADIAN WOMEN IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE, 1600-1870S

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Office hours: TBD
Lecture: Wednesdays 14:30 – 17:20; WMC 2200

Course Description:
This course examines how the lives of women from roughly 1600 to 1870 were shaped by the colonial context of the country we now know as “Canada.” The course will begin with a brief discussion of contemporary Canadian national identity and the experiences of various marginalized and oppressed groups of women in Canadian society today. Students will be encouraged to keep this contemporary context in mind while we explore women’s past experiences.

After establishing the contemporary context, we will begin our exploration of women’s lives in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. Throughout the course, students will be encouraged to consider how having an understanding of Canada’s complicated and violent past problematizes uncritical contemporary celebrations of Canada as a country that welcomes and accepts racial, ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity (i.e. the Canadian multicultural ideal). When conducting their readings and in their assignments, students will be encouraged to reflect upon the historical roots of contemporary stereotypes that negatively affect women’s lives. Such explorations will highlight the importance of attending to the social and historical context out of which stereotypes arise when trying to create social change. We will also attend to women’s agency by exploring the diverse survival and resistance strategies employed by various groups of women in the past.

Educational Goals:
For more detailed information please see the GSWS website: http://www.sfu.ca/gsws/courses/Educational_Goals.html

Course Texts and Courseware:
• Cooper, Afua. The Hanging of Angelique: The Untold Story of Canadian Slavery and the Burning of Old Montreal.
• Custom Courseware Package, available at the SFU Bookstore

Course Evaluation and Assignments (SUBJECT TO CHANGE FIRST WEEK OF CLASSES):
• Classroom Assessment (Attendance, Participation, & Active Listening): 10%
• Annotation and Response to 2 Readings: 20%
• Outline of Self-reflexive Research Essay: 10%
• Self-reflexive Research Essay: 30%
• Final Exam: 30%

Prerequisite: Students who have taken WS 201 under the title Women in Canada, 1600-1920 may not take this course for further credit.