The course examines the diverse realities experienced by Canadian women between 1920 and the present. We will explore the specific institutions and systems that have constrained and challenged women, and, focussing on women’s agency, will explore how women have reacted to and resisted those circumstances. Using a broadly chronological approach that allows for the detailed exploration of thematic material, we will explore how class, ethnicity, race, age and location have influenced women’s experiences. Students will read journal articles from the fields of history, anthropology, sociology and political science, and will explore sources as diverse as photographs, literature, drama and popular culture to explore the images of women they present and the impact these images have on women and the society around them.

Course Objectives:
1. A knowledge of women’s lives in Canada between 1920 and the present, and
2. An insight into the images of women presented by popular culture during the period and an appreciation of their impact on women.

Required readings:

A custom courseware package will be available from the bookstore.

Recommended readings

Course requirements:
In addition to weekly participation in class, to successfully complete the course, students will need to:
1. complete an in-class, three-part magazine analysis in collaboration with others in the class
2. present to the class an analysis of the images of women present in one aspect of popular culture for a particular decade, e.g. images of women in popular music during the ‘40s.
3. complete one written research paper
4. write a final take-home examination

Grading Structure:
Class participation 10%
Class presentation 15%
Collaborative project 15%
Research paper 30%
Final examination (take-home) 30%

Prerequisites:
WS 101 or WS 102 (may be taken concurrently).