This course will be structured largely along standard albeit reformist art-historical lines -- that is to say, it will stress the concrete achievements and professional output of individual artists -- but it will be energetically prefaced and interpenetrated by the discussion of certain crucial operational and ideological factors which place that very approach in context and in many ways call it into question. Thus on the one hand we will discuss the lives and work of such major figures as Artemisia Gentileschi, Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun, Mary Cassatt, Emily Carr, Kathe Kollwitz, Louise Nevelson, and Judy Chicago, but we will also discuss such issues as: prevailing conditions vs. exceptions; the contribution made by male support; the changing role of patronage and the concomitant changes in artists' "autonomy" and choice of subject matter and method; the enduring image bondage of women as a group exemplified by treatment of the nude, the doctrine of idealization, etc.; the social rewards and hazards of leisurely amateurism as opposed to "full-time" commitment; the role of formal training in the forging of a viable career and/or level of accomplishment; changing attitudes towards and definitions of art and craft; and so on. Some basic facts and truths about women's place, in general, will need to be established before launching into a chronological survey.

Reading:

Mary Conroy, 300 Years of Canada's Quilts. (Required reading).
Germaine Greer, The Obstacle Race. (Recommended reading).
Judy Chicago, Through the Flower. (Optional reading).
Plus a selection of articles and excerpts from books.

Assignments:

a) A JOURNAL - summaries and discussions of the readings, plus any questions, comments, artwork, collages, reviews, or additional material the students may wish to add (60% of the final grade)
b) One EXAM - two essay questions based on slide comparisons (40% of the final grade)

Suggestion:

If students have had no exposure whatsoever to the history of art, it would be highly advisable to at least leaf through one of the standard textbook histories. The preferred choice is Gardner's Art Through the Ages, (SEVENTH EDITION 1980) by de la Croix and Tansey. A more conservative but very available choice is History of Art by Janson.

Prerequisite:

60 credit hours or permission of instructor.