Jeanne Mance, Laura Secord, Nellie McClung, Susanna Moodie... The lives of Canadian heroines and of many women whose stories are less well known will be explored in W.S. 201. Using biographies of prominent Canadian women, and journals and letters and other documents left by ordinary mothers, housewives and workers, we will study women's lives at home and on the job, the great issues of women's history, and the details of the continuous routine of every woman's everyday life. We will also consider how historians have discovered and interpreted women's past.

Students will read the writings of several well known Canadian women. Through class presentations and discussion they will be introduced to the biographies of many more individual women. Assigned readings, films and slides, lectures and discussion will also introduce class members to the way ordinary women raised their families, kept their houses, and earned their livings, and the physical, social and legal contexts in which they did so. Students will also read, discuss and criticize articles that show how historians have begun to debate about how to interpret women's past in Canada.

Assignments and Evaluation:

Two short written evaluations of assigned articles 20%
Two book review/essays 40%
Class presentation based on one of the book reviews 15%
Take-home final examination 10%
Class participation 10%

Texts:

Women at Work, 1850-1930
A Not Unreasonable Claim, edited by Linda Keeley
A Harvest Yet to Reap, edited by Rasmussen et al
Roughing it in the Bush, Susanna Moodie

Reprint package available at cost from the instructor. Short original documents will occasionally be distributed for class discussion.

AN EXCELLENT COURSE FOR ANYONE WHO INTENDS TO TEACH - OR STUDY - CANADIAN HISTORY OR WHO WISHES TO BE BETTER ABLE TO UNDERSTAND THE LIVES OF CANADIAN WOMEN TODAY.

This course may be used for History credit (3 lower level).