FROM A WOMAN'S POINT OF VIEW: AUTOBIOGRAPHIES, MEMOIRS AND JOURNALS

Downtown Evening: Instructor: Mary Lynn Stewart-McDougall
Lectures: Thursdays, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Office phone: 291-3150
Tutorials: Thursdays, 5:30 and 8:30 p.m. Home phone: 732-5889

This course examines three genres adopted by women to learn what women reveal about their self-perceptions and perspectives on the world in three different forms. We will address three major questions. First, to what extent do the conventions of the genre or the period determine the content? Second, how does the "audience" influence the content, or what difference does it make that women write for their own eyes, as in journals, or for their family, as in many memoirs, or for a mass audience, as in autobiographies? Third, is theirs a specifically "feminine" imagination at work, or are there recurring themes or symbols that distinguish women's from men's point of view.

The course includes lectures which will outline the conventions of genre and period and indicate the range of self-expression, male and female, within the three forms in three discrete historical and geographic limits defined by the assigned readings. In tutorials as well as in the lectures, we will discuss a memoir describing the experiences of a Jewish woman in early modern Europe, an autobiography of a woman in early twentieth century Canada, and thematic excerpts from contemporary (largely American) women.

Required Texts:

The Memoirs of Gluckel of Hameln (Schocken, 1977)
Salverson, Laura, Confessions of an Immigrant's Daughter (University of Toronto Press)

Assignments and Grading:

- Tutorial participation: 30% *
- Journal (on reading assignments): 25%
- First short paper (5-7 pages): 20%
- Second short paper (7-10 pages): 25%

* This includes 15% for an oral report.