This is a course about visions of a better world. In the most interesting of these there is a call, not only for a total reorganization of the 'public' life of a society, but for a change in private life as well. Human relationships, sexuality and sexual practices, reproduction, childbearing, parenting and family structure all come into question. In many instances equality for all members of the community, female or male, is one of the explicit goals.

We will look at a number of these utopian visions, some fictional and some actual attempts to create ideal communities. Besides comparing the solutions that each offers in such major areas as production, reproduction, political organization and family structure, we will consider their relationship to utopian ideas arising in the class.

**PART I: The Past (approximately half the course)**

- The Utopian Vision: An overview
- The Shakers and the Oneida Community: A celibate community and one based on group marriage.
- Nineteenth Century Socialist Visions: Communities based on the ideas of Fourier and Owen; the worlds of William Morris and Charlotte Perkins Gilman

**PART II: The Present**

- Modern Utopian Communities: The Kibbutz and some post-60's communes
- Feminist Futures: Differences and common threads in modern feminist utopias

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

- More, Thomas: *Utopia*
- Gilman, Charlotte Perkins: *Herland*
- Morris, William: *News from Nowhere*
- Piercy, Marge: *Woman on the Edge of Time*
- Le Guin, Ursula K.: *The Dispossessed*
- Gearhart, Sally: *The Wandering Ground*
- Barr, Marleen S., ed.: *Future Females*

In addition, xeroxed readings will be available in class.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

- 10% - one short essay based on the reading
- 25% - midterm exam
- 30% - final exam (take home)
- 35% - essay

**Prerequisites:** 60 credit hours or permission of the instructor