WOMEN AND THE FAMILY IN WESTERN EUROPE c 1700-1920

CONTENT: This course examines women's roles in the changing family patterns of Britain and France from 1700 to the 1920s. We consider life cycles, marriage customs and nuptuality, fertility and childbirth, as well as women's roles in reducing family size. A central question is whether women passively accepted or actively promoted the "cult of domesticity" and the child-centred family? We assess how their work inside and outside the home altered as the family moved from a productive unit, to a wage-earning unit, to a consumption unit. We analyze the ideology of the family and ideals of feminine beauty, fashion, and sexuality. Last we study the biographies of prominent women, notably but not exclusively feminists, to learn their views on marriage, divorce, childbirth, mothering and birth control in relation to their positions on suffrage and public life.

GRADING: Students will also prepare two short (7 to 10 pages) or one major (15 to 20 pages) paper(s) on topics suggested by the instructor.

Tutorial participation 30%
* First paper; due week 7 30%
* Second paper; due week 13 40%

Students who choose to do the longer paper will have to submit a research proposal, outline, and bibliography in week seven; this will be worth 20% of the final grade. The finished paper will therefore account for 50% of the final grade.

TEXTS: M. J. Boxer and J. H. Quataert, (eds.) Connecting Spheres: Women in the Western World, 1500 to the Present (Oxford University Press, 1987)

CREDIT FOR THIS COURSE MAY BE APPLIED TOWARDS THE CERTIFICATE OF LIBERAL ARTS