WOMEN'S STUDIES PROGRAM

SPRING 1991
HARBOUR CENTRE
EVENING

ROSALIE HAWRYLKO
Lec. Wed. 18:30-20:20
Tut. Wed. 20:30-21:20

W.S. 203-3
FEMALE ROLES IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

This course is an interdisciplinary study of definitions of self/other as derived from sex roles and the psychological mechanisms by which such definitions are acquired and maintained. The course begins with sociological and historical material briefly documenting both context and actual roles occupied by women of diverse backgrounds in Canada today, including work, mothering, families/friendship networks, schooling and leisure-time activities. We then look in-depth at specifics of women's psychological functioning, covering sex differences and similarities, women's identity, sexual orientation, sense of self in relation to others, the reproduction of mothering, selflessness, merging (particularly in relation to other women), survival, problems associated with the female sex-role or simply with being female in a sexist society (such as eating disorders, incest or multiple personality), well-being, sexuality and aging.

Particular attention is given to the role of psychiatry, the drug industry and psychology as professional business institutions and as academic disciplines in developing theory and practice concerning women and women's roles. The effect of the feminist movement is examined in terms of transformation of these institutions, and the emergence of methodologies and theories about women which serve to empower and to inform us more fully.

In examining contemporary female roles, Canadian sources are used wherever possible, in addition to American and European background material. Explicitly included and integrated within the course themes are some of the issues raised by aboriginal women, women of Asian descent, and other women of colour, enhancing our understanding of the relationship between race, ethnicity and gender roles.

REQUIRED READING


Selected Readings, compiled by the instructor.

(over)
ASSIGNMENTS

Two Interviews: the interviews must follow guidelines given in class, and the reports must integrate reflections about course content and the role of gender in your interviewee's life.

15% Interview a woman or girl of a different generation from your own and submit a 4-5 page written report.

15% Interview a woman your own age who is similar to you in at least one major respect and different from you in another, in terms of a psychological dimension or role such as femininity, androgyny, independence, career choices, choices concerning motherhood, cultural or class background, sexual orientation, physical abilities or lifestyle, and submit a five page written report.

30% Research Project: either a solo or collaborative research project linking two different topics on the course content, 10-15 pages.

10% Oral Presentation: small group discussion of research projects and presentation of conclusions to class.

30% Final Exam: take-home essay exam, choice of two questions.

Prerequisite: Women's Studies 100 (may be taken concurrently with the approval of the W.S. Coordinating Committee)

THIS COURSE MAY BE APPLIED TO THE CERTIFICATE IN LIBERAL ARTS.

THIS COURSE MAY BE USED AS AN ELECTIVE FOR THE CERTIFICATE IN FAMILY STUDIES.

TUTORIALS WILL BE HELD DURING THE FIRST WEEK OF CLASSES