WS 307-4: Women in British Columbia

Myra Rutherdale
mrutherd@sfu.ca
Harbour Centre
Office hours: Thursdays 5:00-6:00 pm

This course will focus on various dimensions of women’s lives in British Columbia from the past to the present. We will start the course by considering Aboriginal cultures at the time of contact and the impact of European colonization on women’s lives. We will trace the history of specific dynamics like race, class, ethnicity, location, social relations, and changing opportunities for women in Canada’s most westerly province. Women here have been especially active in social movements, and we will analyze their activism in anti-poverty and environmental work. Shifting understandings of sexuality and fluid gendered roles will also come under our gaze. Class discussions will be held on a weekly basis and students will be expected to be prepared to talk about the reading material. We will have guest speakers and video presentations as well.

Required readings:

- Adele Perry On the Edge of Empire: Gender and Race in British Columbia (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000).
- Lee Maracle I Am Woman (Vancouver: Write On, 1988) (or subsequent editions)
- Bridget Moran A Little Rebellion (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp press, 1992)

Course requirements and Grading Structure:
20% - In Class Essay on Adele Perry’s On The Edge of Empire
15% - Class Discussion and Participation
20% - In Class Essay on Denise Chong’s The Concubine’s Children
20% - Final Exam (to be held on the last night of class or scheduled)
25% - Essay 8 to 10 pg biographical sketch, or a topic of your choice

Prerequisites:
6 credit hours in Women’s Studies including WS 101 or WS 102.

The Department of Women’s Studies encourages clarity of thought and expression and good writing. Students will be evaluated on these skills in all courses given by the Department.