

POL303HS

Philosophers and Queens: Women in Western Political Thought

Winter/Spring 2022

Lecture and discussion: Wednesday 2 to 4 pm. The first month of the course will be online via Zoom with the link made available in Quercus. After that, on verra....but the room assigned is UC161.

Instructor: Rebecca Kingston, Professor of Political Science

Office hours: Wednesdays 4-5 or by appointment. I will be available online after class through the month of January and until classes go back in person. I may set up another online hour to consult with students if there is enough need for it. Otherwise, just email me at the address below to set up an appointment.

Contact information: Rebecca.kingston@utoronto.ca

“But I ask no favors for my sex. I surrender not our claim to equality. All I ask of our brethren is, that they will take their feet from off our necks, and permit us to stand upright ...”

—Sarah Grimké

Land Acknowledgement:

We acknowledge the land on which our course and the university as a whole operates. Indigenous people have shaped its history over thousands of years. On this land they have developed distinct languages, cultures, economic and political systems and ways of life. It remains a sacred gathering place for many peoples of Turtle Island. We want to show respect for this by acknowledging that the university operates on the land of several Indigenous nations, paying special recognition to the Mississauga’s of the New Credit.

Course description:

This course is designed to introduce students to important and diverse contributions by women to political theory in the Western tradition. While women’s contributions have often been ignored, marginalised and discounted, new lines of research have demonstrated the myriad and complex ways in which women have been integral to the development of political reflection. Thus, in the spirit of Christine de Pizan’s *Book of the City of Ladies* this course offers an exercise in *retrieval*, acknowledging and centering female contributions as one means of reshaping (mis)perceptions. While themes of women’s equality and liberty are often associated with these reflections, it is important to acknowledge a wide range of theoretical contributions as well as the broad array of genres and approaches. We will find that the history of political thought offers a great many resources for women to rethink their history as well as their futures.

Many of the works in this course fall into one of three categories. In the first instance, I have selected works that represent outstanding contributions of women's political reflection on the nature of power and governance (from above as well as from below), including questions of legitimacy, public perception and the wielding of political power by women. Many of the women whose work we will read were intrepid pathbreakers. In the second instance, some of these works are representative of unique forms of sensibility and approach. In the development of Western intellectual traditions, women have not only provided key essential works and insights (sometimes in their own voice and sometimes through the pen of their male partner), they also have developed their own modes of reflection constituted by a broader array of genres and literary approaches. Various forms of poetry and fictional narrative giving voice to different types of women's experience have been dispersed throughout our reading to help give as wide a representation of women's experience in the history of Western political thought as possible. In the third instance many of these works offer direct reflections on the status of women either in general terms or as advocacy for certain groups of women in the family, society, and the state, with some considerations of the complexity of intersectionality.

I have tried to offer as wide a range of texts and writers as possible but given that the course is short, I have inevitably not been able to include all that I would like. Hopefully these readings will give you a taste and understanding of a deeper and broader tradition that is now beginning to be explored more systematically in its own right. The point of this course is that despite a history of women's oppression in social and political terms, women have indeed managed to contribute a great deal and that a great deal of work needs to be done to more fully appreciate and celebrate the established contributions of women in our field of political reflection over the course of history. Through the readings we will pay special attention to the insight and theoretical moves that grounded arguments for gender equality and freedom.

Objectives:

There are two main objectives for this course. The first is to give students a broader understanding of Western traditions of political reflection, both in terms of who can be included as important contributors and in terms of how contributions are understood. Women's contributions to political reflection can be seen to partake in a wide variety of genres alongside the traditional treatise. We will focus on a select group of texts written by women who all have a meaningful place in the evolution of political debate. These represent only a few of a much wider set of women writers, many of whom are still being rediscovered by intellectual historians today.

A second objective is to reflect on the various ways in which women drew on their gender identities to develop their arguments and perspectives on broader political issues with special attention to conditions for equality, freedom and effective leadership. While not all the women studied in the course can be seen as occupying a subordinate position (Elizabeth I was queen after all!) all the thinkers studied here had to navigate their gender and perceptions of the broader community in advancing their political claims or views. In this course we will pay particular attention to how gender is portrayed in these writings, how each thinker seeks to address and modify broadly shared perceptions of women among their contemporaries, and how

attention to gender can serve to open up new perspectives and contributions to more general questions in the history of political reflection.

Course requirements:

Five Reading Reports (5% each) using the form provided in the Assignments section of the course page on Quercus (50-100 words) on the week's assigned reading material to be handed in on Quercus PRIOR to class in the weeks of your choice (TWO of these must be completed by March 2nd). 25%

Major Term Assignment. Choose one of two options. Instructions below. Due April 6th 35%

Final take home exam. In the final assessment period, exact date to be announced. 25%

Participation (in class, learning responses as forms relating to class lecture and discussion to be handed in with 24 hours after class on Quercus and online discussion) 15%

Instructions for course requirements:

- 1) **Reading Reports-** This is a requirement that is designed to encourage students to keep up with the course material throughout term. On five different weeks of the individual student's choosing, each student will fill out the Reading Report form available on the course page on Quercus and offer a summary and/or short analysis of the assigned reading in 50-100 words and post their report prior to class. Students will need to hand in at least two of these reports prior to March 2nd.
- 2) **Major Term Assignment-** Students have *one of two options* for their major term assignment which is due April 6th.
 - Option 1.** Write a 10-page research essay (12 font, double-spaced) on a text or thinker of your choice from the syllabus. You should offer a clearly articulated research question related to themes raised in the course. Please consult with me on your topic, outline and research question. I may distribute a list of suggested topics at mid-term.
 - Option 2.** Write a 10-pp. dialogue between two of the figures studied in the course. The dialogue is of course fictional, but it should highlight some of the key ideas put forward by the authors and signal both the similarities and differences between the two chosen figures as well as their significance for the broader tradition. You may wish to consult both primary and secondary material to develop the background knowledge and information about the figures needed to write a dialogue.
- 3) **Final Take-home exam-** During the final assessment period after classes have ended, I will distribute a take-home exam. Students will have one week to complete the exam and can construct their answers using the various readings assigned in the course.
- 4) **Participation-** Participation grades will be based on both in-class discussion at Zoom sessions, as well as postings on the discussion board on Quercus and/or the posting of

learning responses through the course page (as ongoing contributions to class discussion after class has ended). I will take into account both the quality of participation (thoughtful contributions) along with quantity.

Turnitin:

Students will be required to submit their reading reports, major term assignment and take-home exam to Turnitin.com to ensure a practice of good academic integrity. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com website. If, as a student, you object to using turnitin.com, please see the course instructor to establish appropriate alternative arrangements for submission of your written assignments.

Students are also required to keep their rough and draft work and copies of their assignments until the end of the course when grades are posted on ROSI. University policy regarding plagiarism will be strictly enforced. Please see the University of Toronto's policy on plagiarism on the Blackboard site or at <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize> . Please also consult the writing resources on campus noted in the introductory module of the Quercus page for this course.

Reminders and regulations:

Without prior permission, assignments handed in late will be deducted 5% of the assignment grade per day (including weekends).

The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible: accessibility.services@utoronto.ca or <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca> .

Students Learning Abroad:

International students in areas with internet content restrictions, or who are working remotely on sensitive research, may require access to the University's general purpose virtual private network (VPN). If you do require the U of T VPN to connect to university resources, please see <https://vpn.utoronto.ca> for more information and instructions.

To help students located in mainland China, the University offers the Alibaba Cloud Enterprise Network (CEN) which provides a lower latency connection from mainland China to the U of T's online learning resources. Details can be found at <https://onesearch.library.utoronto.ca/ic-faq-categories/alibaba-cloud-enterprise-network-cen-service> .

Please note that VPNs do not typically enhance a user's underlying internet service connectivity and will not assist with connectivity issues caused by the recent general increase in web traffic.

Copyright and Privacy:

- a) **Video recording to be placed on Quercus (no downloads and reuse):**

The first month of this course, including your participation, will be recorded on video and will be available to students in the course for viewing remotely and after each session. However, this may not be the case for lectures in the second half of the course.

Course videos and materials belong to your instructor, the University, and are protected by copyright. Do not download, copy, or share any course or student materials or videos without the explicit permission of the instructor.

For questions about recording and use of videos in which you appear please contact your instructor.

b) Rules concerning audio recording:

Students may create audio-recordings of the lectures for their personal use. Recordings are intended to permit lecture content review so as to enhance understanding of the topics presented. Audio-recordings are not substitutes for attending class.

Students should note that since audio recordings are to be permitted, their voice may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak to the instructor if this is a concern for you.

In accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, persons who have special needs will be accommodated.

Students agree to the following terms when creating audio recordings of lectures:

Recordings are not to be distributed without the permission of the instructor via the Internet, using social media such as Facebook, peer-to-peer file sharing such as One Drive or Dropbox, or other distribution channels.

Recordings are not to be shared with other classmates unless they are to be used in collaborative assignments, or if the instructor permits for other reasons.

Non-compliance with these terms violates an instructor's intellectual property rights and the Canadian Copyright Act. Students violating this agreement will be subject to disciplinary actions under the Code of Student Conduct.

REQUIRED READINGS:

The books listed below can be purchased at the University of Toronto Bookstore and most will be made available online through the course website on Quercus and the U of T library. Please consult Quercus to see which of those texts will be made available electronically. Still, I generally recommend that students read these works in book format if possible as it offers greater benefits for learning and allows you to easily highlight passages and move back and forth within the text.

Mary Beard. *Women and Power. A Manifesto* (New York: WW Norton, 2017). Copies may be available through the U of T bookstore.

Elizabeth I. *Collected Works*, ed. Leah Marcus et al, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000). A link to a PDF version is available through the course website.

Francoise de Graffigny. *Letters of a Peruvian Woman* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009). A link to this text is available through the U of T library and there is a link to it on the course website.

Christine de Pizan. *Book of the City of Ladies* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2018). A link to a PDF version is available through the course website.

Sappho. *The Pocket Sappho* (Boulder: Shambhala, 2019). A link to required selections from this text are available through the course website.

Jane Johnston Schoolcraft. *The Sound the Stars Make Rushing through the Sky. The Writings of Jane Johnston Schoolcraft*, ed. R D. Parker (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007). A link to a PDF of the specific selections for the course is available through the course website.

Mary Wollstonecraft. *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (New York and London: Penguin, 1992). A link to a different edition is available through the course website.

WEEKLY MEETINGS, READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS:

Please note: All class meetings in January will take place through ZOOM. They will take place synchronously with the first hour devoted to lecture and the second hour a combination of discussion and lecture. These class meetings will be recorded automatically and available for consultation and review on Quercus.

Further fine-tuning of class structure and delivery may occur as the semester progresses.

January 12th (Week 1): Introduction to the course

January 19th (Week 2): Women in and through ancient political reflection

READ: Mary Beard. *Women and Power. A Manifesto*, (New York: WW Norton, 2017), pp. 3-91.

READ: Sappho. *The Pocket Sappho*, (Boulder: Shambhala, 2019), pp. 8 ('To Lady Hera'), 17 ('Moon'), 39 ('Seizure'), 42 ('Supreme Sight on the Black Earth'), 73 ('A Ring'), 76 ('In My Pain'), 87 ('Light'), 109 ('No Oblivion').

January 26th (Week 3): Christine de Pizan.

READ: Christine de Pizan. *Book of the City of Ladies*. (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2018), Part I, pp. 21-96

February 2nd (Week 4): Zahra Nader, special guest

SPECIAL GUEST: Zahra Nader from Ruskshana Media, a media organization devoted to promoting the rights of women in Afghanistan, will speak to the class. In the spirit of Christine de Pizan, Ms. Nader will help us in expanding our circles of solidarity as we learn about the challenges and struggles of women living in Afghanistan today.

READ: “Women’s Day, Afghan Style: Head Scarves and Flowers”

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/15/world/asia/the-worst-place-to-celebrate-international-womens-day.html> and “What Afghanistan’s Women Stand to Lose”, <https://time.com/6091712/afghanistan-women-loss/>

OPTIONAL READING in preparation for next week: Christine de Pizan. *Book of the City of Ladies*. (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2018), Part II c. 12-15, c. 25-33, c. 36-37 c. 53-57 c. 64-69 and Part III, c. 19 and selections from the *Book of the Body Politic*, pp. 111-116, 125-137, 139-142, 164-170, 181-188, 219-221, 225-250. Some of these readings may be pushed to the week of February 9th.

February 9th (Week 5): Christine de Pizan, con’t

READ (as noted last week): Christine de Pizan. *Book of the City of Ladies*. (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2018), Part II c. 12-15, c. 25-33, c. 36-37 c. 53-57 c. 64-69 and Part III, c. 19 and selections from the *Book of the Body Politic*, pp. 111-116, 125-137, 139-142, 164-170, 181-188, 219-221, 225-250.

February 16th (Week 6): Elizabeth I, first of two weeks

READ: Elizabeth I. *Collected Works*, ed. Leah Marcus et al, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), pp. 41-42, 46, 51-55, 58-60, 70-72, 87-89, 94-98, 107-108, 132-134, 167-171, 186-190, 215-217, 261-262.

Possible supplementary viewing: BBC documentary narrated by David Starkey-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jmhak-RI67o>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ivX-RkofpqM>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nD9RHnqLrFo>

February 23rd (Week 7): No Class. Reading week!

March 2nd (Week 8): Elizabeth I, second of two weeks AND the poet Anne Bradstreet

READ: Elizabeth I. *Collected Works*, ed. Leah Marcus et al, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), pp. 325-332, 335-344, pp. 346-354, pp. 363-364.

OPTIONAL READ: Anne Bradstreet, “Prologue” and “The Third Monarchy, being the Grecian, beginning under Alexander the Great, in the 112 Olympiad” In *Several poems ... with an exact epitome of the three first monarchies, viz. the Assyrian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman Common Wealth, from its beginning, to the end of their last king*, 1650.

<https://genius.com/Anne-bradstreet-the-prologue-annotated> AND

<https://genius.com/Anne-bradstreet-the-third-monarchy-being-the-grecian-beginning-under-alexander-the-great-in-the-112-olympiad-annotated>

March 9th (Week 9): Madeleine de Scudéry

READ: Madeleine de Scudéry, “Fictional Orations from Famous women” In *Selected letters, orations, and rhetorical dialogues*, eds. Jane Donawerth and Julie Strongson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), pp. 56-95 - link here: <https://books-scholarsportal-info.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/en/read?id=/ebooks/ebooks2/ucpbooks/2012-03-30/1/9780226144122#page=110>

Optional reading: Madeleine de Scudéry, *The Story of Sapho*, trans. Karen Newman (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), link here- <https://books-scholarsportal-info.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/en/read?id=/ebooks/ebooks2/ucpbooks/2012-03-30/1/9780226144009>

March 16th (Week 10): Françoise de Graffigny. *Letters of a Peruvian Woman* 1747 and Catharine Macaulay *Letters on Education* 1790

READ: Françoise de Graffigny *Letters of a Peruvian woman* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), Foreword, Historical Introduction, Letters 1-5, 7-8, 11, 13-14, 16, 20-21, 29, 32-34, 38, 41.

READ: Catharine Macaulay. *Letters on Education*, Part I, letter 8 (VIII), 22 (XXII) and 25 (XXV); Part II, letter 1 and 7 (VII). Link here: <http://gerritsen.chadwyck.com.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/fullrec/fullrec.do?area=documents&id=Gerritsen-G1079.4&DurUrl=Yes>

March 23rd (Week 11): Mary Wollstonecraft. *Vindication of the Rights of Women* 1792 and *Petition of women of the third estate to the French king* 1789.

READ: Mary Wollstonecraft. *Vindication of the Rights of Women*, chaps. 1, 2, 4, 8, 9 and 12. Link to an online Gutenberg version is here, (<https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/3420/pg3420.html>) but I would recommend that you purchase one of the various versions available in print.

READ: *Petition of women of the third estate to the French king in 1789*
<https://revolution.chnm.org/items/show/571>

March 30th (Week 12): Three American feminist voices *of or on* the early 19th century: Bamewawagezhikaquay (O-bah-bahm-wawa-ge-zhe-go-qua) or Jane Johnston Schoolcraft, Maria Stewart, and bell hooks (a contemporary theorist writing about 19th century black history)

READ: Jane Johnston Schoolcraft. *The Sound the Stars Make Rushing through the Sky. The Writings of Jane Johnston Schoolcraft*, ed. R D. Parker, pp. 92-94, 108, 141 (links to PDF copies available on the course website);

READ: Maria Stewart, “Lecture Delivered at The Franklin Hall,” Boston, September 1832 From *Maria Stewart, American’s First Black Woman Political Writer. Essays and Speeches*, ed. Marilyn Richardson (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), pp. 45-49 (link to a library copy available on the course website).

READ: bell hooks, chap. 1 “Sexism and the Black Female Slave Experience,” In *Ain’t I a Woman* (Boston: South End Press, 1981) (link to a library copy available on the course website).

April 6th (Week 13): Ida B. Wells

Major Term Assignment is due today.

READ: Ida B. Wells, “Functions of Leadership (1885)”, “The Requisites of True Leadership (1892)” and “The Requirements of Southern Journalism (1893)” In Ida B. Wells, *The Light of Truth* (New York: Penguin Books, 2014) pp. 6-8, 35-41 and 88-95.

-Take home exam distributed and due during the final assessment period.