Gender and the History of Psychiatry

WST 301/501, SOC 340, HTY 398

Online- Summer 2014
July 7- August 8
3 credit hours

Instructor: Mary Okin, PhD
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Office hours: Available for email consultation.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will examine the history of women’s interactions with the psychiatric profession in Western society over the past two hundred years. From the inception of the psychiatric field, there have been clear gender biases in the description and treatment of mental disorders, such as S. Weir Mitchell’s prescribed treatment for “neurasthenic” women, Jean-Martin Charcot’s colorful descriptions of “hysterical women,” or Sigmund Freud’s theories on gender differences. This course will explore the role the psychiatric field has played in defining and shaping what has been considered normal or abnormal female behavior, ending with a discussion of the modern gender biases that are still found in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. We will examine the biological explanations that have often been used to explain mental disorder in women as well as former psychiatric practices, including the gynecological surgery that was performed on “insane” women. We will also look at the ways in which diagnoses have changed over time and at the ways in which certain diagnostic categories like “hysteria” and “nymphomania” have shifted. A key point of focus will be to look at the ways in which mental disorder in women may have served as form of social protest at various times and at the ways in which, historically, women who deviated from their expected
gender roles were more likely to be labeled as insane. Finally, we will explore the idea of whether or not mental illness is a “female malady” and look at the ways in which gender roles and gender stereotypes in Western society have contributed to a greater association between women and mental illness.

TECHNICAL FORMAT:

This course will occur “on-line” through the FirstClass conference system. You are expected to have a FirstClass account set up and you should make sure that you have the class icon on your desktop a week before class starts. If you do not have the icon prior to class starting, please contact the instructor or CED tech help. The class will basically run on a Mon/Wed/Fri schedule with journal postings due on the readings each Monday, Wednesday, and Friday of the five week session.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS:

*Students will post their daily journal postings by 9:00 am each M/W/F of the course.

*Students will complete all the assignments that are listed on this syllabus on time. Late assignments will not be accepted.

*The instructor will provide feedback for all written assignments within one or two days of receiving the assignment.

*All written work, including journals should be well written with attention to grammar. Please write your own journal before reading other students’ journals. If your journal is very similar to one posted before yours, you may not receive credit.

*Please review the University of Maine codes for what is considered civil conduct and etiquette for the online classroom.
ACADEMIC HONESTY/ PLAGIARISM:

Academic dishonesty includes cheating, plagiarism and all forms of misrepresentation in academic work, and is unacceptable at the University of Maine. As stated in the University of Maine’s online undergraduate “Student Handbook,” plagiarism (the submission of another’s work without appropriate attribution) and cheating are violations of The University of Maine Student Conduct Code. An instructor who has probable cause or reason to believe a student has cheated may act upon such evidence, and should report the case to the supervising faculty member or the Department Chair for appropriate action.

ACCOMMODATION OF DISABILITIES:

If you have a disability for which you may be requesting an accommodation, please contact Ann Smith, Director of Disabilities Services, 121 East Annex, 581-2319, as early as possible in the term.

CONTINGENCY PLAN:

In the event of the disruption of normal classroom activities, the format of this course may be modified to enable completion of the course. In that event, you will be provided with an addendum to this syllabus that will supersede this version.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

1. *The Female Malady* by Elaine Showalter.


All texts listed above will be available on reserve at Fogler Library on the Orono campus. All the articles listed on this syllabus will be posted to the class folder on FirstClass.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. **Journal postings:** The course will center on our readings. Each student is expected to do journal postings on Monday and Wednesday and Friday of each week of the five-week course to the First Class conference folder with a summary and discussion of the readings for the day, including any questions about the readings and reactions to it. Students are also expected to read each others' journal postings as well and respond to at least two other students respectfully agreeing or disagreeing as appropriate. This is meant to take the place of class discussion and is an opportunity to see what others thought about the readings. Journals of undergraduate students should be one-to-two pages long. Journals of graduate students should be two-pages long (and I will expect a higher level of quality from graduate students). The journal postings will not be graded each week, but an overall grade will be given at the end of the semester based on timeliness of journal entries and their quality. Another note on your journals- please copy and paste your journal directly into email instead of posting attachments. Many students have trouble opening certain attachments. **Please also note that journal postings are due by 9:00 am on the day they are due- so please plan ahead. I will not be able to give credit for consistently late journal entries and this is not a self-paced course. Students must complete their assignments each week.**

**Research Essay:** In this course you will be asked to pick a topic, such as a particular period of psychiatric history or a particular psychiatric practice, such as sexual surgery, or a diagnosis, such as hysteria., nymphomania, bipolar disorder, anorexia nervosa, bulimia, or depression, and research this topic more in depth. You will be asked to write a research essay on a topic that specifically addresses the theme of the history of women's interactions with the psychiatric profession. For undergraduate students this essay should be 5-6 pages long and for graduate students it should be 6-8 pages long. Your paper should include
an introduction, a conclusion, and a Works Cited (or Bibliography). Please use citations in your paper and you may choose which style manual you prefer- but please just use it consistently. This is meant to be a research paper, but you may also offer your opinion at the end of the paper. This essay will be due on Monday of the last week of class.

**Final Exam**: There will be a take-home (open-book) Final Exam that will be posted to the conference during the last week of the course and will be due by Friday at 9 am of the last week of class (Friday August 8th). The exam will consist of answering some specific questions from the readings, some short answers and essay questions. The exam will be posted to the folder and students will be expected to email their completed exams directly to the professor.

**COURSE EVALUATION:**

- Journal Postings: 33.3%
- **Research Essay**: 33.3%
- Final Exam: 33.3%

**COURSE SCHEDULE:**

**Jul 7 Course Introduction and Gender and Madness from the 16\textsuperscript{th} to the 18\textsuperscript{th} Century**

- Reading: “Women and Madness in Tudor and Stuart England” by Michael Macdonald, and “The Feminization of Madness in Visual Representation” by Jane Kromm. Both articles will be posted to the class folder.

**Journal post due by 9:00 am.** In your first journal response for today please introduce yourself to the class, mentioning your year and major and any exposure that you have had to women's studies, psychology, history, or sociology. Please also discuss the reading for today, summarizing and reacting to the main themes
July 8 *The Nineteenth Century*

Reading: *The Female Malady* by Elaine Showalter, pp. 1-50

No journal due today.

July 9 *The Nineteenth Century*

Reading: *The Female Malady* by Elaine Showalter, pp. 51-98

Journal due by 9:00 am – please respond to all the reading for July 8 and 9.

July 10 *The Female Malady* by Elaine Showalter, pp. 101-144

No journal due today.

Proposal for research essay due. Please email your proposal directly to the instructor by

9:00 am.

July 11 *The Nineteenth Century*

Reading: “Dysfunctionl Domesticity” by Marjorie Levine-Clark, and “The Rise and Fall of Battey's Operation” By Lawrence Longo (both articles posted to class folder)

Journal due by 9:00 am – please respond to all the reading for July 8 and 9.

July 14 *The Nineteenth Century: “Nervous Women”*

Reading:, *Crazy for You* by Jill Astbury, pp. 29 (starting with the second to last paragraph on the page) -36 and “The Rest Cure: Repetition or Resolution of Victorian Women’s Conflicts?” by Ellen Bassuk. (All articles posted to the class folder)
Journal response due by 9:00 am.

July 15 The Nineteenth Century: Hysteria

Reading: *The Female Malady* by Elaine Showalter, pp. 144-164, and

“The Hysterical Woman: Sex Roles and Role Conflict in Nineteenth-Century America” by Carroll Smith-Rosenberg.

No journal response due.

July 16 The Nineteenth Century: Nymphomania

Reading: “The Eberbach Asylum and the Practice(s) of Nymphonmania in Germany, 1815-1849” by Ann Goldberg, and “Nymphomania: The Historical Construction of Female Sexuality” by Carol Groneman.

Journal response due by 9:00 am- please respond to all the reading for July 15 and 16.

July 17 The Nineteenth Century: France


No journal response due.

July 18 The Nineteenth Century: Canada


Journal response due by 9:00 am- please respond to all the reading for July 18 and 19.
July 21  *The Nineteenth Century: Women's Biology*


Journal response due by 9:00 am.

July 22  *Women in American Asylums: The Nineteenth Century*

Reading: *Women of the Asylum* by Jeffrey Geller and Maxine Harris, Foreword, pp. 1-31 and pick two women’s stories to read.

No journal response due.

July 23  *Women in American Asylums: The Nineteenth Century*

Reading: *Women of the Asylum* by Jeffrey Geller and Maxine Harris, pp. 89-107 and pick two women’s stories to read.

Journal response due by 9:00 am- please respond to all the reading for July 22 and 23.

July 24  *Women in American Asylums: The Twentieth-Century*

Reading: *Women of the Asylum* by Jeffrey Geller and Maxine Harris, pp. 171-188, 249-264, 326-328, and pick two women’s stories to read from each period.

I suggest that one of the readings for the later period be Frances Farmer's story, pp. 314-325. No journal response due.

July 25  *The Twentieth Century: “Psychiatric Modernism and Antipsychiatry”*
Reading: *The Female Malady* by Elaine Showalter, pp. 195-250.

Journal response due by 9:00 am- please respond to all the reading for July 24 and 25.

**July 28 The Twentieth Century: Sigmund Freud and his legacy**

**Reading:** Excerpt from *Crazy for You* by Jill Astbury, pp. 67 (start on the second-to-last paragraph from the bottom of the page) -117.

Journal response due by 9:00 am.

**July 29 The Twentieth Century: Sigmund Freud and his legacy**

**Reading:** Excerpt from *Crazy for You* by Jill Astbury, pp. 117-158, and

excerpt from *Men, Women, and Madness* by Joan Busfield, pp. 166-175.

No Journal response due.

**July 30 The Twentieth Century: Gender and Social Control Theory**

**Reading:** *Men, Women, and Madness* by Joan Busfield, pp. 1-22, and 51-75.

Journal response due by 9:00 am- please respond to all the reading for July 29 and 30.

**July 31 The Twentieth Century: Gender and Mental Disorder**

**Reading:** *Men, Women, and Madness* by Joan Busfield, pp. 98-118, and “Adult Sex Roles and Mental Illness” by Walter Gove et al.

No journal response due.
Aug 1  

*Biology as Destiny: Postnatal Depression, PMS, Menopause, and Sexuality*

**Reading:** Busfield, pp. 143-165, “Toward a Feminist Understanding of Postnatal Depression” by Natasha Mauthner, “Biology as Destiny” by Jane Ussher, and "The history of 'Female Sexual Dysfunction" by Katherine Angel.

Journal response due by 9:00 am- please respond to all the reading for July 31 and Aug 1.

***Final Exam will be posted to the class folder.***

Aug 4  

*The Twentieth Century: Eating Disorders*

**Reading:** Excerpt from *Men, Women, and Madness* by Busfield, pp. 175-185, “Fasting Girls: Reflections on Writing the History of Anorexia Nervosa” by Joan Jacobs Brumberg, “A Way Outa No Way” by Becky Wangsgaard Thompson, and "Eating Like an Ox: Feminist and Dualistic Constructions of Anorexia and Bulimia" by Maree Burns.

***Final Research Essay Due. To be emailed directly to the instructor by 9:00 am. No journal response due .***

Aug 5  

*The Twentieth Century: Sexual Abuse and Trauma and Mental Disorder*

**Reading:** *Men, Women, and Madness* by Joan Busfield, pp. 222-229, *Crazy for You* by Jill Astbury, pp. 159-191, “Impact of Child Sexual Abuse on Females” by Penelope Trickett et al- read only pp. 81-84 of this article (end before section on Psychobiological Development), and please read short online article "*Posttraumatic Stress Disorder: A History and a Critique"* here:  
http://www.brainline.org/content/2011/01/posttraumatic-stress-disorder-a-history-and-a-critique_pageall.html

No journal response due.
Aug. 6 *The Twentieth Century: Diagnostic Labels*

**Reading:** Excerpts from *Pigeon-holing Women's Misery* by Hannah Lerman, read pp. 37-58 and pp. 62-85, and “A Woman's View of the DSM-III” by Marcie Kaplan.

Journal response due by 9:00 am - please respond to all the reading for Aug 4, 5, and 6.

Aug. 7 *The Twentieth Century: Diagnostic Labels*

Reading: “Gender, Race, and the DSM-IV” by Marti Loring et al. (read only pages 1-3 of article), “Defining Normal...” by Jill Cermele et al, and “A Dangerous Symbolic Mobility” by Janet Wirth-Cauchon.

Final Journal response due by 9:00 am. In your response please comment on the readings for today and include any final comments on the course as a whole.

Aug. 8 Last class

No journal response due.

**Final Exam due by 9:00 am. Please email your completed exam directly to the instructor cut and paste directly into email (and also as an attachment if you wish).

You will receive your corrected exam over the weekend and grades for the course will be posted by this weekend.

Late exams will not be accepted.

Have a great rest of your summer!