

## Gender and Class in Nineteenth-Century Europe

History 740  
Sarah Curtis

Fall 2011

This seminar will examine the workings of class and gender in nineteenth-century Europe, focusing on Britain and France. The historical literature in this period is dominated by classic works, such as E.P. Thompson's *The Making of the English Working Class*, as well as more recent contributions. Over time, the focus of historians has shifted from social understandings of class and gender to cultural interpretation, so we will also have an opportunity to discuss the "cultural turn" in modern European history. Finally, we will consider how the choice of source material has influenced the historical conclusions. The reading material is restricted to Britain and France for two reasons: first, historians of those two countries have been extraordinarily prolific in studying gender and class, and second, it gives us an opportunity to compare and contrast two national traditions.

This class can be used for credit in either Europe after 1500 (pre- or post-1815) or the gender history fields, depending on the choice of texts for the final project.

### Prerequisites:

This is a graduate history seminar. Graduate standing in history or permission of the instructor is required for enrollment. In most cases, it is expected that students will have already taken History 700.

### Readings:

The following books are available for purchase at the bookstore and are on (24-hour) reserve at the library.

Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850*

Bonnie G. Smith, *Ladies of the Leisure Class: The Bourgeoises of Northern France in the Nineteenth Century*

E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*

\*Anna Clark, *The Struggle for the Breeches: Gender and the Making of the British Working Class*

Carolyn Steedman, *Master and Servant: Love and Labour in the English Industrial Age*

\*Françoise Barret-Ducrocq, *Love in the Time of Victoria: Sexuality and Desire among Working-Class Men and Women in Nineteenth-Century London*

Alison Light, *Mrs. Woolf and the Servants: An Intimate History of Domestic Life in Bloomsbury*

\*These books are also e-books available through the Investigator catalogue at SFSU.

**Electronic reserves and article databases:**

Other readings will be available via one of SFSU's article databases, generally JSTOR or on electronic reserve (ER) as indicated on the syllabus. Article databases can be found at <http://www.library.sfsu.edu/eresource/choosedb.html> (looking the article up first in Historical Abstracts is usually the fastest path to a full-text copy). Electronic reserve readings can be accessed at the following address: <http://eres.sfsu.edu/> (or by the link on the library web page or my web page). The password for this course is Victoria. Several books are available as e-books via the library catalogue (Investigator).

**Course requirements:**

Attendance at seminar sessions is required. If you have to miss a class, please inform me *in advance* of the meeting by telephone or e-mail. More than one absence will affect your grade. You should come to class prepared to discuss that week's reading, and I expect every student to participate in every class.

Until Thanksgiving break, we will pursue a course of common readings as shown on the schedule. For each of these class periods, you will prepare a response to the question listed on the syllabus using the appropriate readings from that day. The response should be no more than one-page in length, single-spaced, with one inch margins and no smaller than 11-pt font. (Please leave a double-space between paragraphs.) I will not accept responses that exceed this limit. You are required to turn in eight such responses over the course of the semester.

The final project in this class is a 12-15 pp. analysis of a substantial (published) primary source text. Text should be at least 50 pp. in length. Suggestions for such texts are given at the end of this syllabus or you may consult with me about a different text. Using both the common readings for this class and other relevant secondary sources, the essay should analyze the class and gender dynamics in the text.

**Grading:**

Grades will be determined as follows: participation/presentation 30%, short responses 40% (5% each), final essay 30%.

If you are unable to complete the course requirements by the end of semester, it is your responsibility to withdraw from the course. I will issue no instructor-initiated withdrawals or incompletes. Student-initiated incompletes are reserved for serious medical excuses (with documentation) or other natural disasters within the last three weeks of the semester. The last day to drop a course without a "W" is September 6, and the last day to withdraw with a "W" (except in extreme circumstances) is November 15.

**Office hours and contact information:**

Tuesday and Thursday, 1:30-3:00, and by appointment

office location: Science 267

phone: (415) 338-2250

e-mail: [scurtis@sfsu.edu](mailto:scurtis@sfsu.edu)

website: <http://bss.sfsu.edu/scurtis>

**Schedule:**

**August 25** Introduction

**September 1**

Sarah Maza, *The Myth of the French Bourgeoisie: An Essay on the Social Imaginary, 1750-1850*, introduction, chap. 1 (ER)

Amanda Vickery, *The Gentleman's Daughter: Women's Lives in Georgian England*, introduction, chap. 1 (ER)

Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes*, prologue, setting the scene, part 1

Question: Can we talk about the “middle classes” before the nineteenth century?

**September 8**

Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes*, parts 2-3, epilogue

Question: What were the sources of the new domestic ideology?

**September 15**

Bonnie G. Smith, *Ladies of the Leisure Class* (entire)

Margaret H. Darrow, “French Noblewomen and the New Domesticity,” *Feminist Studies*, vol. 5, no. 1 (Spring 1979): pp. 41-65 (JSTOR)

Question: How did noble and bourgeois women's roles change from the late eighteenth- to the mid-nineteenth centuries?

**September 22**

E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, parts 1- 2

Question: Under what political, economic, and social conditions did the industrial working class emerge in England?

**September 29**

E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, part 3

Question: How did the working class develop a “class consciousness”?

**October 6**

No class

Make an appointment with instructor to discuss final project.

**October 13**

Anna Clark, *The Struggle for the Breeches* (entire)

Question: Why did working-class men adopt middle-class standards of domesticity?

**October 20**

William Sewell, *Work and Revolution in France*, chaps. 1, 8, 9 (ER)

Mark Traugott, *The French Worker*, introduction (Google Books), chaps. 1 (Bédé), 2 (Voilquin) (ER)

Joan Scott, “Women in *The Making of the English Working Class*”; “Work Identities for Men and Women: The Politics of Work and Family in the Parisian Garment Trades in 1848” in *Gender and the Politics of History* (ER)

Question: What were the components of working-class identity for French men and women?

**October 27**

Carolyn Steedman, *Master and Servant: Love and Labour in the English Industrial Age* (entire)

Sarah Maza, *Servants and Masters in Eighteenth-Century France*, intro, chap. 7, conclusion (ER)

Question: To what extent were servants members of the working class?

**November 3**

No class

**November 10**

Françoise Barret-Ducrocq, *Love in the Time of Victoria* (entire)

Rachel Fuchs, *Poor and Pregnant in Paris*, introduction, chaps. 1-2 (e-book)

Question: How did young women in England and France cope with out-of-wedlock pregnancy?

**November 17**

Alison Light, *Mrs. Woolf and the Servants* (entire)

Question: How does the story of Virginia Woolf’s servants change our understanding of her intellectual output?

**November 24**

THANKSGIVING

**December 1**

presentations

**December 8**

presentations

**December 15**

final paper due

Suggestions for primary-source texts (a very preliminary list)

**Before 1815**

Jacques-Louis Ménétra, *Journal of My Life* (Columbia University Press)  
Fanny Burney, *Journals and Letters* (Penguin)  
Jane Austen, *Letters* (Oxford)  
Hannah More, *Letters of Hannah More*

**After 1815**

In *Factory Lives: Four Nineteenth-Century Working-Class Autobiographies* (ed. James R. Simmons, Jr., Broadview Editions):  
John Brown, *A Memoir of Robert Blincoe, An Orphan Boy* (1832)  
William Dodd, *A Narrative of the Experience and Sufferings of William Dodd, A Factory Cripple. Written by Himself* (1841)  
James Myles, *Chapters in the Life of a Dundee Factory Boy* (1850)

In Mark Traugott, ed. *The French Worker: Autobiographies from the Early Industrial Era*  
Agricol Perdiguier, *Memoirs of a Compagnon*  
Martin Nadaud, *Memoirs of Léonard, a Former Mason's Assistant*  
Norbert Truquin, *Memoirs and Adventures of a Proletarian in Times of Revolution*  
Jean-Baptiste Dumay, *Memoirs of a Militant Worker from Le Creusot* (combine with another memoir)  
Jeanne Bouvier, *My Memoirs*

*Flora Tristan: Utopian Feminist: Her Travel Diaries and Personal Crusade* (ed. Doris and Paul Beik, Indiana University Press)

See also *Peregrinations of a Pariah, Promenades in London, Tour of France*

*The Diaries of Hannah Cullwick, Victorian Maidservant* (ed. Liz Stanley, Virago)

Elizabeth Fry, *Memoir of the Life of Elizabeth Fry*

Annie Besant, *Autobiographical Sketches* (Broadview)

Harriet Martineau, *Autobiography* (Broadview)

See also the Victorian Women Writer's Project at  
<http://webapp1.dlib.indiana.edu/vwwp/welcome.do>