Women in Spain
Professor Elena Postigo
Boston University in Madrid

SP 343

A History of Women in Spain: from tradition to modernity
Professor: Elena Postigo Castellanos, PhD
Schedule: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:00am – 10:20am
Office hours: By appointment
Email address: elena.postigo@uam.es

COURSE OVERVIEW

To understand a country and its people, one must take into account their traditions: study the past in order to comprehend the present. Spain has traditionally had a unique way of considering the roles of women and family in everyday life, and the reasons for this can be found in its history. Looking back is perhaps the best way to understand Spanish women of today: their values, ways of thinking, relationships with family, professional interests and goals, understanding of gender, etc. We will also spend time analyzing religion and the role of the Catholic church in developing the models of women, especially between the 16th and 20th centuries.

Throughout this course, we will analyze the following topics and time periods:

- The distinct models of women developed throughout history, their authors and protagonists, and their effects and images in the modern world (8th-20th centuries)
  - The triad of Muslim, Jewish, and Christian women (8th-16th centuries);
  - The model of the Catholic woman: everyone is named María (16th-20th centuries);
  - Women during the Enlightenment. Sofía: a world of feminine hope and learning (18th and 19th centuries);
  - The female trajectory during the 19th and 20th centuries (I). Ana: The angel of the home;
  - The female trajectory during the 19th and 20th centuries (II). My name is Liberty: the woman in Spanish democracy (20th century).
- The historical conditions that led to the rejection of each model while simultaneously setting the stage for the adoption of each subsequent model.

OVERALL LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In addition to course objectives, the following goals are pursued during this course:

- Improve oral and written expression;
- Improve public presentation skills;
- Learn to be responsible for your own education;
- Improve ability to analyze and synthesize;
• Learn to develop comparative analyses.

SPECIFIC COURSE OBJECTIVES:
• For students to understand the role of the Spanish woman in modern society after studying two models during the course: the Catholic model of women and family and vs. the Enlightenment model of women;
• For students to be exposed to some of the basic challenges and difficulties facing Spanish women today;
• To situate the feminine models of Spanish society in a broader context, such as in Europe and beyond, in order to learn to how they relate;
• For students to compare the way of life of Spanish women with that of American women.

COURSE CALENDAR

Part I: Muslims, Jews, and Christian Women (8th-15th centuries)

Week 1: Medieval society on the Iberian Peninsula – three religions, three cultures, three ways of understanding the female.

Week 2: The past in the present. Vestiges of medieval traditions in the Muslim world (I) “Honor Crimes”.

Week 3: The past in the present. Vestiges of medieval times in the Muslim world. (II).
Reading: Ruiz Almodovar “La mujer en la legislación musulmana” in Árabes. Judías y cristianas. Universidad de Granada, Granada 1993, pp. 36-47

Part II: We’re all named María (16th-20th centuries)

Week 4: The Catholic model of women and family.
Week 5: Women in the eyes of the law.


Week 6: The difficult journey from Eve to María. Marian institutions and religious centers.

Reading (1) Manuel Trens, María Iconografía de la Virgen en el arte español. Madrid, 1946, pp. 100-111 (2)Ana Fedele, El camino de María Magdalena Madrid, 2008 pp. 26-31

Movie: The Magdalene Sisters

Week 7: Convents and nuns.

Readings: Selection of texts about convents and nuns in the 16th and 17th centuries. Various authors; Rules of the Saint Clara order. Memories from Confession. The Virtuous Nun


Week 8: The first critiques of the Catholic model of women and family.


Week 9: The past and the present: the legacy of Catholicism and its effects on Spanish women today. Discussing the concept of self-denial/abnegation.

Reading: Inmaculada Cubero, “Pandora: en el origen del logos. Lo femenino como registro del mal” in Mujeres y hombres en la formación del pensamiento occidental, Madrid, vol. I pp.65-

Movie: Solas

Part III: Sofía: A world of feminine hope and learning (18th century)

Week 10: The Enlightenment: a new model of women
**Readings:** Selection of texts by J. J. Rousseau (Sobre Sofía), *El Emilio*. 1760 (+/- 10 pages)

Week 11: Ana: Angel of the home and hearth (19th-20th centuries).
   Reading: Maria Luisa Meijide Pardo, Vicente del Seixo, “Discussion about arts and sciences” in *Reforma agrícola y emancipación de la mujer*. Madrid, 1989

Part IV: Women in dictatorship and democracy (20th-21st centuries)

Week 12: Women in the Francoist Regime
   Reading: (1) Lourdes Benería, *Mujer, Economía y Patriarcado durante la España franquista* Madrid, 2009 (2ª edición), pp. 49-60
   (2) Sección Femenina de la Falange, *Economía doméstica para bachillerato y magisterio*. Madrid 1959 (3 pages)

Week 13: My name is Liberty: Women in Spanish Democracy, 20th century (II).
   Reading: Ana Aguado, “Ciudadanía, mujeres y democracia” *Electronic Journal of Constitutional History Number 6 - September 2005 Copyright: AS-2115-99 ISSN: 1576-4729*
   Movie: *Mujeres al borde de un ataque de nervios*

**Part III Spanish Woman in the 21st Century**

Week 14: How is the Spanish woman in the 12th century?

Week 15: Equality policies and theirs results
   Reading: “El observatorio de la imagen de la mujer: Acciones, Informes, Quejas”.
   [http://www.inmujer.gob.es/observatorios/observimg/home.htm](http://www.inmujer.gob.es/observatorios/observimg/home.htm)
   [http://www.inmujer.gob.es/observatorios/observimg/acciones/home.htm](http://www.inmujer.gob.es/observatorios/observimg/acciones/home.htm)

Week 16: There’s no class

Week 17: Conclusiones

Week 18: FINAL EXAMS

**SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES**
1. Participation in an academic debate entitled "Against mistreatment and cruelty".
2. Visit to the Monasterio de las Descalzas Reales.
3. Depending on scheduled activities in Madrid during the semester, more activities will be added.
PRESENTATIONS – PART OF COURSE SCHEDULE

Students may select their own presentation topics, or choose one of the following:

1. Political parties and women.
2. Violence against women in the family space (21st century).
3. How Spanish women view themselves and each other.
4. Women in the communication field (past and present).
5. Abortion in Spain.

CLASSES

The professor is responsible for explaining all course material and making adjustments to the time assigned to each topic as needed. The explanation of each lesson will be given twice. The first time, a general description of the material will be offered, outlining its content and highlighting the most interesting points. The second time, more detailed attention will be paid to the material, with the depth and clarifications that are considered pertinent, and to concrete aspects of the topic, about which students will have read previously. Additionally, Spanish films related to the topics discussed in class will be used to facilitate analysis.

GRADING

Midterm exam – 25%
Final exam – 25%
Papers – 20%
Discussions on readings – 30%

Midterm exam – 25%

The oral midterm exam consists of a presentation of one topic studied in class. Each student will submit an outline of the presentation topic, with an annotated bibliography.

Final exam – 25%

The written final exam consists of a textual analysis in which students must apply knowledge acquired throughout the semester from readings and discussions.

Papers – 20%

Students will write 3 short papers of about 2500 words each, based on articles read in class.

Discussions of readings – 30%
The discussion of readings is a critical aspect of this class, and will thus be a significant component of the evaluation. This includes daily participation in class, contributions to group debates and discussions, work in group projects, and leadership during film

**BASIC BIBLIOGRAPHY**

At the end of each topic, a selection of bibliographic material will be offered that relates to the issues discussed in class. Obligatory readings will be handed out in class with sufficient time for students to prepare their work at home.

Furthermore, an annotated selection of general works is included here to supplement the specific bibliography.


This is a study of works about women found in the specialized documentation centers of the Barcelona and Valencia libraries.


In one sense, this can be considered a continuation of the work listed above, but with some differences: the 622 included works are limited to work by Spanish authors. It also includes monographic research projects and proposals made at conferences.

**AA VV, El trabajo de las mujeres a través de la historia**, Madrid 1985

This work focuses on Europe and Spain and includes many graphics. It allows for a chronological understanding, from the classic Greco-Roman world to the modern period of economic crisis.

P. Voltes, *Las mujeres en la historia de España*, Madrid

A study of distinct aspects of the female condition throughout the history of Spain, grouping women within distinct frameworks: saints, witches, queens, maids, intellectuals, mothers, prostitutes, etc.


Despite its general and universal character, this work offers guidelines for analysis that are valid for the Spanish case.

S. Madariaga, *Mujeres españolas*, Madrid

A classic, required reference that studies Spanish women from distinct perspectives through concrete examples.

An analysis of the different biblical women of the old and new testaments who were objects of interest for painters in the 16th-18th centuries.


Concepts and categories developed in the feminist genre and theory, from an interdisciplinary perspective.


This is the transcription of a series of courses from a conference given by the Contemporary Humanities department at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid in 1980. It offers a vision of women from different academic and cultural disciplines: women as subject-object of history, women and the church, etc.

R.M. Capel y otras, Mujer y sociedad en España 1700-1975, Madrid 1996

This work discusses the trajectory of the Spanish woman from the 18th century, when the feminine model was first questioned, until the end of Franco’s regime. In the introduction, the status of women at the end of the Old Regime (18th century) is analyzed.

P. Folguera et al., El feminismo en España: Dos siglos de Historia, Madrid 1988

This work gathers the texts of a course taught in 1988 initiated by the Pablo Iglesias Foundation, whose objective was to analyze Spanish feminism in its broadest sense, from the appearance of the first ideas about emancipation to the second wave of feminism in the 70s. In it, the feminist movement is analyzed from different perspectives: ideology, structure, changes in women’s mentality, etc.


A study dedicated to analyzing the evolution of the role of women in society by considering the life of certain women in the 16th-17th centuries (Sor Luisa de la Ascensión, Lucrecia de Lisboa, etc.).

SUGGESTED LIBRARIES

Biblioteca del Instituto de la Mujer del Ministerio de Asuntos Sociales. Calle Condesa del Benedito, number 30

COURSE POLICIES
Students are expected to prepare for and attend all lectures, and participate in class activities. In the event of illness, the student must contact the professor and the BU in Madrid office before the start of the class. Travel is not an excused absence. Students must adhere to the CAS Academic Conduct Code:

“It is every student’s responsibility to read the Boston University statement on plagiarism, which is available in the Academic Conduct Code. Students are advised that the penalty against students on a Boston University program for cheating on examinations or for plagiarism may be “...expulsion from the program or the University or such other penalty as may be recommended by the Committee on Student Academic Conduct, subject to approval by the Dean.””