EUROPEAN MA/PH.D WRITTEN EXAM
March 28, 29, 30, 2006

EUROPEAN WOMEN SINCE CA. 1450

Answer any two questions from the list below. You have a total of four hours. You are on your honor not to consult any other materials, including notes or papers stored on your computer. Please return your completed exam to the graduate office by 5:00 pm today. Good Luck.

1) Was the French Revolution “bad” for women? Give some sense of the competing arguments and defend your own position with concrete references to events, laws, individuals, etc.

2) Did women have a Renaissance? Be sure to discuss which kinds of evidence can be made pertinent to this question.

3) Old textbooks (and some new ones too) describe the eighteenth century as “woman’s century.” Do you agree or disagree?

4) That women were excluded from full citizenship by the Revolution of 1789 seems clear; that this was a “loss” is not so clear. Did women have any political power under the old monarchy? Were women included in or excluded from public life before 1789?

5) Christianity has both encouraged and frustrated women’s autonomy. Show how this paradox has unfolded in Europe since the Protestant/Catholic Reformations. You can concentrate on either Protestant or Catholic churches or both.

6) What impact did urbanization and the process of industrialization have on the lives of European women, and to what extent did their experiences differ from those of men?

7) French, German and British feminist movements differed in many important respects. In what ways did these movements differ and how do you account for these differences?

8) Some historians argue that the First World War transformed the lives of European women in fundamental ways. Would you concur with this assessment? Why or why not?

9) Some historians have remarked on the so called “feminization of religion” in Europe in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. What does this term mean? To what extent do you find it useful? And what were some of its implications for European political culture?

10) Who was the so-called “New Woman” in fin-de-siècle Europe, and what did she represent?
11) If women's history is meaningful, then it will produce a new chronology. Do the old signposts of European history -- 1517, 1789, 1871, 1914, 1941 and 1989 -- stand up if we consider women? How does seeing history from women's standpoint alter the chronology of history? Are there alternative dates or events that should be substituted for those listed above?

12) You have been asked to teach a course in European women's history (1348 to the present) at an undergraduate institution which observes the 15 week semester. Your class will meet either two or three times a week and the students must read at least five books during the quarter. They will take a mid term and a final exam. Prepare the syllabus giving titles for every lecture and a very brief description of the material covered in each lecture. Also, assign the books and provide questions/study questions for both the mid term and the final exam.