This seminar will explore the history of women and the family in China in the late imperial period (10th-19th centuries), in the period of transition (late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries), and in the People's Republic of China (since 1949). The seminar has three related purposes: to explore issues about women and families in Chinese history, to see how a focus on women and the family informs our understanding of social and cultural history, and to understand how different representations (perspectives, sources, values, etc.) can affect and alter the meaning of history.

The seminar is organized around the weekly readings and discussions. It is extremely important that you be fully prepared for each class, and participate in discussions. A large component of the final grade will be based on the quality of your contribution to the discussions. Discussion questions will be distributed in advance.

There will be no midterm or final exam in this course. The written work will consist of four essays, each of about 5 pages. Each essay will be based on the readings for the previous two or three weeks of class. The essays will be due on September 17, October 8, November 5, and November 19 (all Fridays). There will be a final paper of 10-15 pages due during examination period. Instructions for the papers will be distributed later. There is no W.A. assigned to this course, but you are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the Writing Center as you are preparing your papers.

Principal Books for the Course

The main texts for the course are available for purchase at the College Bookstore. They are all in paperback editions. They are listed here in the order in which they are used in the course.

Marriage and Inequality in Chinese Society, ed. by Rubie S. Watson and Particia Buckley Ebrey (U of Cal, 1991)
Spence, Jonathan D. The Death of Woman Wang (Viking, 1978)
Sommer, Matthew H. Sex, Law, and Society in Late Imperial China (Stanford, 2000)
*A Daughter of Han, trans by Ida Pruitt from the story told to her by Ning Lao T'ai-t'ai, (Stanford, 1945)
Engendering China: Women, Culture and the State. ed. by Christine Gilmartin et al. (Harvard, 1994)
Honig, Emily and Gail Hershatter. Personal Voices: Chinese Women in the 1980's (Stanford, 1988)
*Chang, Jung. Wild Swans (Touchstone, 1991)

All books for the course will also be found on General Reserve at McCabe Library. Books marked * can be read quickly. Additional copies of some readings -- chapters or articles marked **-- will be found on Blackboard.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1 (Sept 1)

**History, Culture, and Gender: Some Perspectives.**

Film: "Small Happiness"

Readings
Become familiar with a Chinese history textbook, and keep using it as a reference. John K. Fairbank, China: Tradition and Transformation is easy to read. On reserve.
**Joan Kelly, Women, History, and Theory (Chicago, 1984), Chap. 1 (The Social Relations of the Sexes: Methodological Implications of Women's History)
Dorothy Ko, Teachers of the Inner Chambers, Introduction, pp. 1-26

Week 2 (Sept 8)

**Confucianism and "Family Values"**

Readings
Hui-chen Wang Liu, The Traditional Chinese Clan Rules, Chap. III (Clan Rules on Family Relationships) (one copy on honors, one on general reserve)
Martin C. Yang, A Chinese Village, Chaps. 5-11 (Chaps on family relations)

Week 3 (Sept 15)

**Marriage, Lineage, and Property in the Imperial period (elite families and ruling families)**

Readings
Ebrey, Inner Quarters, Chaps. 4-5, 8-10, 12, and 15. Other chapters optional.
Marriage and Inequality, Introduction and one other chapter (Chap. 1, 2, 3, and 5)
Supplementary

*Paper #1 due Friday, September 17*

**Week 4 (Sept 22)**

**Women Warriors and Deities**

Readings
- Spence, *The Death of Woman Wang*, Chap 1 end (pp. 21-32), Chap. 2 (The Land), & Chap 3 (The Widow)
- Ono, Ch. 1 (Women Who Took to Battle Dress)
- Chun-fang Yu, *Kuan-yin: The Chinese Transformation of Avalokitesvara* (Columbia, 2001), Chap 8 (Princess Miao-shan and the Feminization of Kuan-yin), pp. 293-351. Ch. 10 is also excellent (Feminine Forms of Kuan-yin).

Supplementary
- “Mulan” [videorecording][DVD] / Walt Disney Pictures [1999?]

**Week 5 (Sept 29)**

**Women Writing, Women Working**

Readings
- Ko, *Teachers of the Inner Chambers*, Chapter 2

Supplementary
- Ellen Widmer and Kang-i Sun Chang, ed., *Writing Women in Late Imperial China* (Stanford, 1997)
- Francesca Bray, *Technology and Gender: Fabrics of Power in Late Imperial China* (UCal, 1997)
Week 6 (Oct 6)

**Sexual Crimes and the Cult of Chastity – and the Qing State**

Readings
Matthew H. Sommer, *Sex, Law, and Society in Late Imperial China*, Introduction and Chaps 1-4. *The Death of Woman Wang*, Chap. 5 (The Woman who Ran Away) and Epilogue


Suggested
**Mark Elvin, "Female Virtue and the State in China," Past and Present, no. 104 (Aug. 1984), 111-152.


**Paper #2 due Fri., October 8**

October Break

Week 7 (Oct 20)

**Footbinding: Chinese Atrocity or Mother’s Love?**

Readings
(Review Ebrey, pp. 37-42)
Ko, The Teachers of the Inner Chambers, From Chap 4, pp. 147-151, 169-171, 263-64.

**C. Fred Blake, "Foot-binding in Neo-Confucian China and the Appropriation of Female Labor", *Signs* 19:3 (Spring 1994), 676-712.


Supplementary
Howard S. Levy, *Chinese Footbinding: The History of a Curious Erotic Custom*
Week 8 (Oct 27)

**The Transitional Period: Working Women**

Readings
- Ono, Chap. 6 (Rise of Women Workers)
- Supplementary
- Pearl Buck, *The Good Earth* (1932).

Week 9 (Nov 3)

**Western Impact and the May 4th era**

Readings
- Ono, Chap. 2 (Between Footbinding and Nationhood), Chap 5 (Casting Off the Shackles of the Family).
- **Ding Ling, “A Woman and a Man,” short story in *I Myself am a Woman*, ed. by Tani Barlow and G. Bjorge, pp. 82-103.
- Christianity in China from the Eighteenth Century to the Present, ed. by Daniel H. Bays., Chaps. 12 and/or 13.

Supplementary
Paper # 3 due Fri., Nov. 5

Week 10 (Nov 10)

**Women and Revolution**

*(women revolutionaries, and women as the object of revolution)*

Readings

Ono Kazuko, Chap. 4 (Women in the 1911 Revolution), Chap. 7 (The Transformation of Rural Women)

Mary Rankin, "The Emergence of Women at the end of the Ch'ing: the Case of Ch'iu Chin", in *Women in Chinese Society*, pp. 39-66


Jung Chang, *Wild Swans*, Chap. 5-8 (pp. 115-169) (Chaps 1-4 highly recommended)

Supplementary


Week 11 (Nov 17)

**Women, Family and the Communist State in the 1950s-70s**

Video: “Small Happiness” (view again, on reserve)

Readings


Lavely, "Marriage and Mobility undere Rural Collectivization," in *Marriage and Inequality*, Chap. 9.

Ocko, Women, "Property, and Law in the PRC," in *Marriage and Inequality*, Chap. 10


Judith Stacey, *Patriarchy and Socialist Revolution in China* (1983), Ch. 6 (Patriarchal Socialism)

Jung Chang, *Wild Swans*, Chaps. 9-17 (pp. 170-308), Ch. 21 (pp. 362-78). Chaps 18-20 optional.

Supplementary


William L. Parish and Martin King Whyte, Village and Family Life in Contemporary China (1978)
Margery Wolf, Revolution Postponed: Women in Contemporary China (1985)

Paper # 4 due Friday, Nov. 19

Week 12 (Nov 24)

Matters of Life and Death: Female Infanticide and the One-Child Policy

Readings
**Lillian M. Li, "Life and Death in a Chinese Famine: Infanticide as a Demographic Consequence of the 1935 Yellow River Flood", Comparative Studies in Society and History 33:3 (July 1991), 466-510.

Supplementary

Week 13 (Dec 1)

Being female, feminine, and/or feminist in the 1980s and 1990s

Readings
Honig and Hershatter, Personal Voices, Chaps. 1-8.
Engendering China, Introduction and Chap. 16 (Li Xiaojiang, "Economic Reform and the Awakening of Chinese Women's Collective Consciousness")

Optional

Final papers due anytime between December 10-17. (No Extensions beyond Dec. 17)