



### Sample Title Page in Chicago Style

- Title centered 1/3 down
- Name centered halfway down
- Class, Instructor and Date centered on double-spaced lines 2/3 down

### Sample Page in Chicago Style

- Page one is the title page; this is page two.
- Margins are 1", text is double spaced.
- Last name and page number are at the

Beauty and Frailty: Body Image in the Victorian Period

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HIS 2000  
Professor Spanbauer  
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Center the title. Double-space if it is more than one line.

Name of author

Include the course, instructor, and date you submit the assignment

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Many social critics have decried 21<sup>st</sup>-century American society as obsessed with thinness. Citing models like Kate Moss and actresses like Kiera Knightley, these commentators denounce the value placed on thinness and wonder about the effect these images have on the younger generation. "Today's models," one writer remarks, "grow more minimal by the day."<sup>1</sup> Though this fixation on sickly beauty is seen as a modern-day phenomenon, it is not wholly new. The ideal Victorian woman, for example, was more plump and curvaceous, but 19<sup>th</sup>-century society valued other unhealthy traits in a woman's appearance. Examining Victorian society's attraction to illness and frailty shows that valuing women for an unhealthy appearance is not a new trend.

Women's Changing Role in Victorian Society

In a time of increasing industrialization and urbanization, roles of all members of society were changing rapidly. Many men now left the house to work, and more children were in school due to compulsory education laws. While rural women still had farm work and working-class women worked outside the home, middle- and upper-class women found themselves at home with little to contribute to the family's income. Thus, roles changed as women were expected to become "the primary emotional and physical caretakers of their families."<sup>2</sup> Artists of the day, such as Mary Cassatt, show this idealized picture of motherhood. Even as much as women were supposed to find this new role wholly fulfilling, not all did. Some women did begin to work outside the home for political causes such as promoting women's suffrage or ending child labor. This first wave of feminism provided an outlet for some frustrated women. The common illnesses and complaints of the day show that many other women focused their unhappiness inward, to the point of making themselves ill, or appear ill. Disorders such as dyspepsia, hysteria, brain fever, and "the vapors" were applied mostly to women, or, in some cases, exclusively to

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<sup>1</sup> Sallie Tisdale, "A Weight that Women Carry," *Harper's Magazine*, March 1993, in *The Generation of Ideas*, ed. Quentin Miller (Boston: Thomson, 2005), 617.  
<sup>2</sup> Michelle Stacy, *The Fasting Girl: A True Victorian Medical Mystery* (New York: Tarcher/Putnam, 2002), 25.

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