

HISTORY OF WOMEN IN THE UNITED STATES

This course is a one-semester survey of four centuries of female experiences in the territory now known as the United States. While time constraints mock any attempt at "exhaustive" coverage, we will strive to grasp some of the central issues that cut across the array of U.S. women's experiences. We will be doing the very thing that all women have had to do throughout U.S. history: switch back and forth between the issues that connect women *as* women and the issues of race, class, and ethnicity that often divide women. We will also be doing the very thing that historians must always do: switch back and forth between data on how differently-situated women have lived their lives and data on how "women" as a category have been treated in law and represented in the culture.

We will be examining issues that women have faced in all societies: how to combine their reproductive with their productive work; how to both bear and rear children and provide food and shelter for themselves and their children, either in partnership with men or not. We will also be examining issues unique to American women: how to use the promises and tools of democracy to demolish both patriarchy and racialized sexism. Thus, our job is to analyze women's experiences with production and reproduction in the context of American-style patriarchy, an American racial system, and an American class system – all three of which defined women's social status by whether they "worked" for wages or had "legitimate" husbands and children. At the same time, our job is to look at strategies women have used to change their circumstances, either by organizing as women with other women, or with men in their ethnic or racial group, or with men as a class group.

So we will be examining the experiences of women and the representation of women as workers, paid and not, in the home and outside of the home; as sexual beings who were sometimes agents, sometimes victims, sometimes mothers, sometimes not; and as political actors who allied with other political actors and achieved improvements in their circumstances, or failed in the effort. To do our job, we will read "secondary sources," i.e. analyses by historians, as well as "primary sources," i.e. texts written at the time we are studying. In addition, you will have varied opportunities to articulate, verbally and in writing, your own grasp of issues pertinent to U.S. women's history.

Required Texts: (available at campus bookstore)

Nancy Woloch, Women and the American Experience, 4th edition (Boston: McGrawHill)

Linda Kerber, No Constitutional Right to be Ladies (NY: Hill & Wang, 1998)

Nancy Woloch, Muller v. Oregon: A Brief History with Documents (Boston: Bedford, 1996)

Additional readings will be available on Blackboard

VBDocs will be distributed in class

Writing Assignments

1. **Short writing assignments.** There are nine short writing assignments listed on the syllabus. Each is worth 10 points. The purpose of these assignments is to focus your reading and give you practice in identifying an author's central argument. Another purpose is to facilitate the day's discussion. Thus, no extensions are allowed on these. Don't ask. Your overall score on these writings is derived from a base of 70 points, so you can skip two writings assignment or drop your two lowest scores.
2. **Two essay exams.** The first is an in-class exam, with two essays, on Monday, February 18; the second is a take-home exam with two essays, due on the Friday of Finals week. For the take-home, we will have a review session and you will receive a study guide; for the final exam, you will receive the questions on the last day of class.
3. **Two Documents Analysis papers.** The first, due on March 14, will be based on a document set you will select from the Women and Social Movements website; the second, due the last day of class, will be based on documents you will select re: the Second Wave Women's Movement of the 1970's, either using the WASM site or other sources of your choosing.

In all the writing you do for this class, you will be evaluated on the clarity of your argument, the organization of your points, the precision of your language, and the "correctness" of your grammar and punctuation.

Evaluation Policy

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| 7 (out of 9) short writings | = 70 points |
| 2 exams | = 200 points (100 points each) |
| 2 documents analyses | = 300 points (150 points each) |
| Participation/contribution | = <u>200 points</u> (i.e. 26% of your grade) |
| Total points possible: | = 770 points |

*****Note: regardless of number of points you have amassed, it is not possible to pass this course if you do not complete and hand in both exams and both papers.**

See Class Contract for extension policy

Class Participation

You are, of course, encouraged to spontaneously contribute your comments and questions to class discussion on a regular basis. But some of you find this difficult, either because there are too many contributors or because you are reticent to speak in a group. My goal is to provide space for your verbal contributions.

The **required** contributions listed below are designed to boost your participation grade and encourage you to make additional, spontaneous contributions.

1. Lecture notes: I will deliver 11 lectures this semester. For nine of those lectures, 2 students will be responsible, as a team, for preparing a set of notes to be sent out to the class before the next meeting. You will submit these notes to me for review before sending them to your classmates. We will spend five minutes at the start of the next meeting correcting and amending the notes. You will be evaluated on the clarity, conciseness, and accuracy of this contribution to the class.

2. Discussion questions and thesis statement: Typically, in the same week that you do lecture notes, you and your partner will also submit 2 discussion questions on the next day's readings and, if we have a thesis statement that day, you will share your writing with the class. You will be evaluated on your questions' capacity for generating actual discussion. You will submit your discussion questions to me before sending them out and will stand ready to revise that evening!

You will receive a score for this two-part contribution. Maximum of 20 points. These points will be part of your overall participation grade and can potentially raise your participation grade.

3. Daily aspects of participation:

- Do you come to class prepared to discuss the text and to refer to the text in making your comments? In other words, do your remarks demonstrate that you've done the day's reading and have thought about it?
- Are your comments relevant to the day's reading and discussion focus?
- Are you willing to ASK as well as ANSWER questions?
- Do you conduct yourself as someone who feels partially responsible for the success of the day's discussion? That means you neither monopolize nor silently observe the discussion; you join in and help out.
- Do you pick up on others' points and develop them?
- Do you interact with others and me in the classroom or confine yourself to more flat, narrow comments?
- Do you endeavor to elevate and expand the discussion by pointing to themes we've seen in prior readings or themes you've seen in other classes?

I will be keeping a record of your participation and will converse with you if I feel you are not using History 222 as well as you could to develop your participation skills.

Students sometimes focus on the points assigned to exams and papers and fail to appreciate the

importance of the points they can continually amass with short writings and consistent contributions to class discussion. If you do the math, you'll realize it's silly to fret over getting an "80" instead of an "85" on an exam and then miss the opportunity to get a "7" or an "8" on a short writing by simply not doing it. If your final grade is important to you, then I strongly advise that you do the short writings and be a regular contributor to class discussion and activities. Attending to *that* part of the work will both prepare you to do well on exams and papers and will give you a solid base of course points.

Participation grading:

"C" in participation = you attended regularly and were reliable about assignments but seldom if ever spoke. In short, you did not *demonstrate* engagement with the day's readings.

"B" = you were regular & reliable about attendance and assignments, and you sometimes contributed in class . . . or you contributed regularly when you were in class, but you were not reliable about attendance and assignments.

"A" = you were regular & reliable about attendance and assignments, and you were a regular, reliable participant in discussion. You demonstrated (every week if not every day) an engagement with the readings and a commitment to making the classroom a lively, interesting place to be.

Overall Grading:

In my experience with grade distributions at Grinnell, it is safe to presume that those who earn 90% or more of all the possible points in History 222 will receive an A or A-; those who earn 80% or more will receive some sort of B grade; and those who earn 70% or more will receive a C grade. I do not mention the grades of D or F here because I do not expect anyone in this class to get into that situation. If I see you headed there, we will talk about how you can change direction.

SCHEDULE OF CLASS ACTIVITIES AND READINGS

Key:

Woloch = Women and the American Experience by Nancy Woloch

Kerber = No Constitutional Right to be Ladies by Linda Kerber

VBDocs = Documents handed out in class

Blackboard = articles on the History 222 Blackboard site

WASM = Women and Social Movements website; see Burling Databases

UNIT ONE: PATRIARCHAL AMERICA

Week One

January 21: Introduction to History 222

Reading: Woloch, Preface; Kerber, Acknowledgments and Preface

January 23: Framing the Issues: A Brainstorming Session

Reading: The Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions. Download and print from: <http://ecssba.rutgers.edu/docs/seneca.html>

January 25: Defining Gender and Patriarchy in Colonized North America

Reading: Woloch, Chapter 2; Blackboard: K. Brown, "Anglo-Indian Gender Frontier," Norton, "Searchers Again Assembled"

Writing assignment: One-paragraph definition of "patriarchy" in the North American colonies as you deduce it from the week's reading.

Week Two

January 28: Lecture: Gender and Race as Tools in Organizing Colonial Society

Reading: Blackboard: Berkin, "African American Women;" and K. Brown, "Engendering Racial Differences;" VBDocs: "The Law of Slavery"

January 30: Discussion: Daughters of Zion and Deputy Husbands

Reading: Blackboard: Ulrich, Good Wives: "Deputy Husbands" and Malmsheimer, "Daughters of Zion"

Writing assignment: One-paragraph statement of Malmsheimer's thesis.

February 1: Discussion: Shifting Obligations in Sex and Marriage: The 18th Century

Reading: Blackboard: Dayton, "Taking the Trade;" Cott, "Eighteenth-Century Family and Social Life Revealed in Massachusetts Divorce Records;" VBDocs: Data on 18th C. Transformations thru Divorce tables

Week Three

February 4: Lecture: Women and the Revolutionary War

Reading: Woloch, Chapters 3 & 4; VBDocs: "Supporting the Revolution" documents thru John Adams to James Sullivan

February 6: Discussion: Women's Status in the New Republic

Reading: Blackboard: Kerber, "The Republican Mother;" Kerber, Chapter 1, No Constitutional Right

Writing assignment: One-paragraph statement of Kerber's thesis in Chapter 1 of book.

Film, Thursday evening, February 7, 8:30-10:00: "A Midwife's Tale." We will view the film and discuss in class. Please read "Martha's Diary and Mine" in VBDocs. Required film. Will be on Reserve in Burling all week.

February 8: Discussion: Comparing Martha Ballard, Abigail Adams and Judith Sargent Murray

Reading: VBDocs: Judith Sargent Murray documents

Week Four

February 11: Lecture: Female Role, Resistance, & Reform in Antebellum America

Reading: Woloch, Chapters 5 & 6; WASM web site for Document Project/1845 re: Sarah Bagley: read Introduction and Documents 1-6, 8-9b,11, 23, 13-15, 30 (*You will receive a Study Guide to instruct you further on accessing this website*)

February 13: Discussion: Separate Spheres in the White Antebellum Economy

Reading: Blackboard: Boydston, "Pastoralization of Housework;" McCurry, "Women's Work;" VBDocs: Recipe for a condom (in time for Valentine's Day)

Writing assignment: One-paragraph statement of Boydston's thesis

February 15: Discussion: Black Women, Work, and Motherhood

Reading: Kerber, Chapter 2; Harriet Jacobs, Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl: excerpts. Study Guide will instruct on what to read from <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~Hyper/JACOBS/hj-site-index.htm>.

Review session for exam immediately after class.

UNIT TWO: CONTESTED AMERICA

Week Five

February 18: ****In-class exam****

February 20: Lecture: Women's Rights Movement, aka "The First Wave"

Reading: Woloch, Chapters 7 & 8; Sarah Grimke, "Letters on the Equality of the Sexes" #1, #3, #4, and #7. See: <http://www.pinn.net/~sunshine/book-sum/grimke3.html>

Film, Thursday evening, February 21, 8:00-9:00 p.m. "One Woman, One Vote, Part I"

February 22: Discussion: Returning to Seneca Falls & the Grounding of Early "Feminism"

Reading: Kerber, No Constitutional Right, Chapter 3; review "Seneca Falls Declaration"

Week Six

February 25: Lecture: GAPE Historians & the Maternalist Dilemma

Reading: Woloch, Chapters 9, 10, 11, 12 = 100 pages

February 27: Maternalism, Race, Class, and Sex

Reading: Blackboard: Pascoe, "Gender Systems in Conflict;" V. Brown, "Jane Addams, Progressivism, and Woman Suffrage;" DG White, "Visible Women: The Cost of Club Work;" Hine, "Rape and the Inner Lives of Black Women"

Writing Assignment: One-paragraph statement of White's thesis.

Guidelines for document analysis will be distributed in class. Due March 14.

February 29: Workshop on Documents Project analysis.

Reading: WASM: How did the Reform Agenda of the Minn. WCTU Change?; Woloch, Muller v. Oregon: A Brief History with Documents, pp. vii-40

Week Seven

March 3: Discussion: The Maternalist Debate in the Courts

Reading: Muller v. Oregon: A Brief History with Documents, pp. 93-150; VBDocs: Tables on Women in the Workforce, 1880-1920

March 5: Lecture: Immigrant Women & Americanization

Reading: Blackboard: Petit, "Breeders, Workers, and Mothers;" Orleck, "From the Russian Pale to Labor Organizing;" VBDocs: "New World Lessons for Old World People"

March 7: Discussion: Immigrant Women's Experiences

Reading: Blackboard: Rosa Cassettari, "From Northern Italy to Chicago;" Mary Paik, "The Childhood of Mary Paik, 1905-1917"

Week Eight

March 10: *Film, "One Woman, One Vote, Part II"*

Reading: Woloch, Chapters 13 & 14

March 12: Lecture: How Women Won the Vote

Reading: Blackboard: Rudnick, "The New Woman;" Trimberger, "The New Woman and the New Sexuality;" VBDocs: "Why I Have No Family"

March 14: Lecture: "The New Woman, 1900-1930"

DOCUMENTS ANALYSIS PAPERS DUE AT 3:15 not 4:05!!!!

Spring Break: *All of us will need to rest and recoup over break, but I encourage you to make the week following break a bit more manageable by reading Woloch, Chapters 15 & 16 and, perhaps, an article or two. You will receive a Study Guide re: post-Break readings.*

UNIT THREE: SEXIST AMERICA

Week Nine:

March 31: Framing the Issues Again

Reading: VBDocs: N.O.W. Statement of Purpose & Bill of Rights; Ladies' Home Journal insert on "Women's Liberation;" "Lilith's Manifesto"

Optional film screening at 4:15: "The Flapper Story" (30 minutes). Will be on Reserve in A-V all week.

****We will have an extra class session one evening this week to discuss guidelines for your second documents analysis re: the second wave women's movement. This 5-7 page paper will be due on May 9.****

April 2: Discussion: Gender Politics in the 1920's

Reading: Woloch, Chapters 15 & 16; Blackboard: Cott, "Equal Rights and Economic Roles," Woloch, Muller v. Oregon, pp. 41-61 and 150-184; VBDocs: Martin, "Women's Votes and Women's Chains"

Writing assignment: One-paragraph statement of Cott's thesis

April 4: Discussion: The Liberated Flapper?

Reading: Blackboard: Simmons, "Companionate Marriage and the Lesbian Threat;" Ruiz,

“The Flapper and the Chaperone;” VBDocs: Bromley, “Feminist – New Style;” Davis, “Why They Failed to Marry;” Eastman, “Now We Can Begin;” Mavity, “The Wife, the Home, and the Job”

Week Ten

April 7: : Discussion: Gender Assumptions in New Deal Policy

Reading: Woloch, Chapter 17 & pp. 440-461; Blackboard: Reagan, “When Abortion Was a Crime;” Kessler-Harris, “Designing Women and Old Fools;” Woloch, Muller v. Oregon, pp. 61-66; VBDocs: Dollinger: “Struggling to Unionize;” editorials by Eleanor Roosevelt and Clarence Stone

Writing assignment: One-paragraph statement of Kessler-Harris’s thesis.

April 9: Lecture: Women’s Experience in World War II

Reading: Woloch, pp. 461-474; Blackboard: Matsumoto, “Japanese American Women During World War II;” Anderson, “Last Hired, First Fired;” VBDocs: Reagan, “Woman’s World” and Pauli Murray recollections

Viewing: “Rosie the Riveter” 65 minutes long; on Reserve in A-V in previous week.

April 11: Discussion: The Impact of World War II on American Women

Reading: Blackboard: Hartmann, “Prescriptions for Penelope;” VBDocs: M. Mead, “What Women Want;” D. Cyrus, “Why Mothers Fail”

Week Eleven

April 14: Lecture: The Fifties/The Decade that Lasted 20 Years, 1945-1965

Reading: Woloch, pp. 497-512; Kerber, No Constitutional Right, Chapter 4; VBDocs: “Modern Woman: Lost Sex” thru “The Problem That Has No Name”

April 16: Discussion: Gender in the McCarthy Era

Reading: Blackboard: Storrs, “‘Attacking the Washington Femmocracy;’” Swerdlow, “Ladies’ Day at the Capitol;” Horowitz, “Betty Friedan and the Origins of Feminism in Cold War America”

Film, Thursday evening, April 17, 8:00-9:00: “Standing on My Sisters’ Shoulders.” Will be on Reserve in Burling during the previous week.

April 18: Discussion: Gender in the Civil Rights Movement

Reading: Woloch, pp. 512-517; Feldstein, “‘I Wanted the Whole World to See;” Crawford, “African American Women in the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party;” Lee, “Anger, Memory, and Personal Power;” VBDocs: Hayden & King, “Sex & Caste: A Kind of Memo” and Washington, “We Came From Different Ends of the Spectrum”

Writing assignment: One paragraph statement of Feldstein’s thesis

**** We will assume that, somewhere in here, I will be gone for a week due to the birth of my granddaughters. In that week, you will work on your second documents paper and I will ask that*

*you come to class to view the documentary, "Step by Step," if we have not already viewed it, a documentary called "Waging a Living," and, perhaps, a documentary on Eleanor Roosevelt.****

UNIT FOUR: FEMINIST AMERICA

Week Twelve

Film, Sunday evening, April 20, 9:00-10:00: "Step by Step: Building a Feminist Movement"

April 21: Lecture: Origins of the Second Wave Women's Movement

Reading: Woloch, Chapter 19 and pp. 517-532; WASM website: selected sections of the Report from the Presidential Commission on the Status of Women, 1963 and VBDocs: Margaret Mead, "Do We Undervalue Full-Time Housewives?"

April 23: Revisiting Women's Rights & Women's Liberation Movements

Reading: VBDocs from March 31 plus Study Guide that will include xeroxed documents and direct you to documents on the Chicago Women's Liberation Union website: <http://www.cwluherstory.com>

April 25: The 1970's, Feminism, and the Energy Crisis

Reading: Blackboard: Chafe, "New Rules, Old Realities;" Morgan, "A Child of the Sixties: The Great Society, the New Right, and the Politics of Federal Child Care"
Writing assignment: One-paragraph statement of Morgan's thesis.

Week Thirteen

April 28: Feminism and the Reagan Revolution

Reading: Woloch, Chapters 21 & 22; VBDocs: Gates, "Hating Hillary"

April 30: Litigating Women's Citizenship and Legal Obligations

Reading: Kerber, No Constitutional Right, Chapter 5

May 2: Backlash and Accommodation

Reading: VBDocs: Stohler, "Can This Marriage Be Saved?" and "MotherLoad"

1970's documents analysis due on the last day of class, May 9.

Final exam = take-home due on Friday, May 16 at 4:00 p.m.