

HTS 3016- History of Women and Gender in the United States

Professor: Laura Bier
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Course Description and Logistics

Putting women at the center of interpretation, this course explores the impact of historical events on the lives of American women and the varied roles women played in shaping American history. A major focus will be to understand how class, ethnicity, and race influenced American women's work, family life, and organized activities from the invasion of North America by Europeans to the 1990s. Students will learn how social, political, and economic forces influence social behavior through an examination of the impact of industrialization on women of different classes, women's political activities including the antislavery movement and the suffrage movement and by tracing the transformations in the lives of modern women including work, politics, sexuality, consumption patterns, and leisure activities.

Area E Approved Learning Outcome:

This course explores the impact of historical events on the lives of American women and the varied roles women played in shaping American history. By the end of this class students will gain the ability to describe how political, economic and social factors have shaped women's lives over the course of American history from pre-colonial times to the present, an understanding of the different economic and political arrangements that structured women's social roles and how different women resisted and accommodated to these arrangements, the ability to describe the ways in which race, class, and ethnicity shaped women's experiences and understanding of the roles which women have played in social movements over the last 200 years of US history. Students will demonstrate that they have met the Area E learning outcome through writing response papers, completing a take home midterm and creating and presenting an academic poster based on original research.

Required Texts (Available at the Engineers Bookstore)

Dubois and Dunenil (ed): *Through Women's Eyes* (TWE)
Linda Kerber (ed): *Women's America* (WA)
Anzia Yezierska: *The Bread Givers*
Harriet Jacobs: *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*
Joan Brumberg: *The Body Project*

Supplementary materials:

Other required readings are available on T-Square in the "Resources" section. They will be located in the folder designated for the week's lesson.

Grading

Participation 30% (Includes reaction papers, leading discussion and in-class assignments)

Midterm: 35%

Research Paper: 35%

Reaction Posts and Leading Discussion

Over the course of the semester, there are thirteen class sessions which will be wholly or partially devoted to discussion of the readings (in addition to whatever informal discussions arise. They are indicated clearly on the syllabus by an asterisk (*) and the title "Discussion of the Readings." To facilitate discussion, students are required to write informal papers based on the readings. These "reaction posts" are designed to get you thinking and to give you an opportunity to reflect on the issues raised by the course. They should be 300-350 words.

You are required to do **seven** of these papers which are due **by 8am the day of discussion.** You should post your reactions in the Forum section of T-Square under the topic indicated. These papers are not intended as summaries; they are exercises in critical thinking and an opportunity to digest and synthesize course material--to formulate questions, suggest alternative interpretations and shape our discussion. They will be graded on a pass/fail basis and will count towards your participation grade. In general, while I expect you to adhere to some basic standards of grammar, spelling and presentation, these posts are more intended to give you an opportunity to reflect critically on the issues raised in lecture and in the course readings than they are to be formal writing assignments.

In addition, you (in cooperation with your fellow students) will be responsible for leading **one** of these discussion sections. I will pass around a sign-up sheet after the first week of class as well as guidelines for discussion leaders.

Final Research Paper

A 2000-2500 word paper (8-10 pages) is due on the day you are scheduled to take your final exam for this class (Apr 29 at 11am)

Course Policies and Procedures

Honor Code

Students in this class will be expected to abide by the Georgia Tech Honor Code and avoid any instance of academic misconduct, including but not limited to the substitution of material that is wholly or substantially identical to that created or published by another individual or individuals; false claims of performance or work submitted by the student; possessing, using, or exchanging *improperly* acquired written or verbal information in

preparation for, or in writing, an exam or paper. If you have any questions, please consult with me and read the Honor Code, which is available at:
www.deanofstudents.gatech.edu/Policy/code.in.sections.htm#AHC .

Communication and E-mail policy

I encourage you to contact me concerning questions or problems you may have in relation to the course by coming to office hours. Office hours provide an extra occasion to discuss the contents of the course and questions you may have about the material. Office hours are also an opportunity to talk broadly about historical or philosophical ideas you may wish to explore further or things which may be outside the confines of the class. I enjoy visitors and office hours are boring if no one comes, so you'll be doing me a favor. Note: *Unless your question requires only a quick (mostly yes or no) answer or you are notifying me of technical problems with T-square, email should be avoided.* If you cannot make it to office hours, we can schedule another time to meet. Also, I do not respond to e-mail after 5 pm in the evening or on Saturday or Sunday, so please try and plan accordingly.

Participation and Classroom Conduct

Participation is a significant part of your grade in this class. You are expected to come to class prepared to contribute actively to classroom discussions and activities. This will not only enhance your own learning experience but the experience of your fellow students. Good participation entails not only speaking and sharing your thoughts on a regular basis, but also being considerate and respecting the views of others. To earn high points in the participation part of the final grade, students will have demonstrated their awareness of the different functions of classroom comments by:

1. varying their discussion strategies,
2. considering what they say before they say it,
3. taking intellectual risks, and
4. always respecting the feelings of peers by not interrupting classmates while speaking and acknowledging interesting ideas.

Any successful learning experience requires mutual respect on the part of the student and the instructor. Neither instructor nor student should be subject to others' behavior that is rude, disruptive, intimidating, or demeaning. The instructor has primary responsibility for and control over classroom behavior and maintenance of academic integrity.

Instructor responsibilities:

- Start and end class on time.
- Treat all students with courtesy and respect.
- Be open to constructive input from students in the course.
- Ensure that opportunities to participate are enjoyed equally by all students in the course.

Student responsibilities:

- Come to class on time, and refrain from packing up belongings before class ends.
- Turn off all electronic devices that might create a disruption in class.
- Be quiet and give full respectful attention while either instructor or another student is speaking.
- When speaking, use courteous, respectful language and keep comments and questions relevant to the topic at hand.

I expect you to fulfill your responsibilities to me and to your fellow students. By the same token, if I am not meeting my responsibilities to you I expect you to let me know. In short, let's make our classroom a comfortable space for real intellectual dialogue, where everyone has the opportunity to contribute.

Introduction: What is Women's History?

Jan. 5 (M): Course introduction

Jan. 7 (W) What is Women's History?

WA: Introduction (on T-sq)

TWE: Introduction (on T-sq)

Colonial Communities

Jan. 9 (F) Readings

TWE: 2-46; 56-88 (on T-sq)

Jan. 12 (M) Readings

WA: Ulrich (47) Laws of Domestic Relations (57) (on Tsq)

T-Sq

"Case of Sarah Taylor, Indentured Servant"

*Jan. 14 (W) Readings

Discussion of Readings

WA: Norton (61) Karlson (76) (on T-sq)

American Revolution, Democracy and Republican Motherhood

Jan. 16 (F) Readings:

WA: Kerber (147)

Jan 19 (M) MLKs Birthday: No Class

Jan. 21&23 (W&F) Film: A Midwife's Tale

TWE: 122-151

*Jan. 26 (M) Discussion of the Film and Readings

Readings:

WA: Dayton (116)

T-SQ

"A Law for Regulating Midwives"

Cult of True Womanhood and Women's Expanding Spheres

Jan. 28&30 (W&F)

Readings:

WA: Block (164) Boydsten (174)

TWE: 187-195

*Feb 2 (M) Discussion of Readings:

WA: Smith-Rosenburg (189)

T-SQ

"Sarah Grimke" "The Peculiar Responsibilities of American Women";

TWE 220-224; 233-239

Gender and Industrial Labor

Feb. 4&6(W&F) Readings

TWE: 185-204; 333-340

*Feb. 9 (M) Discussion of Reading

WA: Working Conditions in Early Factories (186)

TWE: The Woman Who Toils (358)

T-SQ

"Petition for a 10 hour work day"; "The Story of a Sweatshop Girl"; "Speak Out on Domestic Service"

Slavery, the Civil War and Reconstruction

Feb 11&13 (W&F) Readings

WA: Belkin (90); Faust (283) "The Laws of Slavery and Freedom"

TWE: 204-218; 278-286; 326-333

*Feb. 16 (M) Discussion of *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*

*Feb. 18 (W) Discussion of Readings

WA: Counterfeit Freedom (295), Hunter (298)

Medicine, Sexuality and the Body

Feb. 20 (F) Readings

TWE: 263-268

*Feb. 23 (M) Discussion of Readings

WA Mohr

TWE: Prostitution in New York City (220)

T-Sq

"On Female Health in America"; "The Murders of Marriage"; "Abortion in New York"; "Effeminate Men, Masculine Women"

Expanding Boundaries I: Westward Frontiers

Feb. 25 (W) Readings

TWE: 253-262; 389-399

*Feb. 27 (F) Discussion of Readings

WA: Stremlau (272) "Zitkala-Sa" (356)

T-SQ

"Missionary to Indian Territory"; "Reaching Oregon" Domestic life in the Diggings

March 2 (M) No Class-work on midterm

March 4 (W): Take Home Midterm Due

We will talk about your research projects in class

Expanding Boundaries II: Immigration, Race and Social Activism

March 6 (F) Readings

WA: Sklar (402)

TWE: 333-353; 400-407; 456-472

*March 9 (M) Discussion: *The Bread Givers*

Claiming the Rights of Citizenship--Votes and Laws

March 11&13 (W&F) Readings

WA: Edwards (342) DuBois (420); Sarah and Angelina Grimke (233); "The Declaration of Sentiments" (264); The Women's Centennial Agenda, 1876 (331)
TWE: 273-277; 473-491

March 16-20 Spring Break Enjoy!

The New Woman: The 1920s and Post-Suffrage Politics

March 23 (M) WA: Cott (441)

TWE: 523-536; TWE: 573-579

March 25 (W) TBA

*March 27 (F) Discussion of the Readings
WA: Cowan (484); Brumberg (451) Margaret Sanger (432)

T-Sq

"Making Faces: The Cosmetics Industry and the Cultural Construction of Gender"

WW II: Rosie the Riveter

March 30 (M) Film: Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter
TWE: 546-557

*April 1 (W) Discussion on Readings and Film
WA: Milkman (553); Bailey (544);
*'"This Changing World for Women"
*'"Can Women in War Industry be Good Mothers?"

June Cleaver: Was the 1950s Really the 1950s? The Cold War and the New Domesticity

April 3 (F) Readings
WA: Horowitz (577); Payne (631) "The Problem that Has no Name" (691)
TWE: 594-629; 633-635

April 6 (M) Film: Tupperware
Documents from the Tupperware website
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/tupperware/>
Under Special Features "Generation T"; "Women and Work"
Under People and Events "Brownie Wise" "Selling Tupperware" "Home Parties and Jubilees"
Under Positive Thinking: Motivational Writings from the 1950s "How to Sell Tupperware" "Women, Wishes and Wonder"

April 8 (W) In Class Debate: Not June Cleaver?

New Demands: The Sexual Revolution, Second Wave Feminism and Beyond

April 10 (F) Reading
WA Douglas (660); DeHart (672)
TWE: 673-708

April 13 (M) Film: The Pill
Bailey (652);

April 15 (W): Second Wave Feminist Summit

*April 17 (F) Discuss Brumberg, Chap. 1-3

*April 20 (M) Discuss Brumberg Chap. 4-6

April 22 (W) TBA

April 24 (F) Show and Tell

Please bring into class an image, written source, or artifact of women's lives in the year 2015. Come prepared to discuss how your piece of contemporary life fits into the course's themes and issues. Does it represent a significant change in women's lives or is it a reminder of continuity? (Be creative in your choice; we don't want to end up with 30 issues of *Vogue*! Be respectful as well; don't just bring material for its shock value.)