

HISTORY 4250 (WST 4440) WOMEN IN AMERICAN HISTORY SPRING SEMESTER, 2009

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Office Hours: 2:40-5:15 Th
And by appointment

Class meets: 1-2:40 TuTh
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Purpose

This course is a survey of American women's history from the seventeenth to the twenty-first century. We will emphasize several major themes: women's economic role within and outside the home; the family; women's experiences in wartime; the struggle for legal and political equality; issues of race, ethnicity, and class.

Attendance, Good Citizenship, Disabilities, and Grading Policies

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class period. Chronic tardiness will not be tolerated. If a student has more than four unexcused absences, the instructor will consider dropping that student from the roster. The last day to drop this class is March 2. *Cellular telephones and beepers must not ring or beep during class. Text messaging during class is not allowed.* If you have a disability that requires special services, or if there is something going on in your life that might affect your work and you would like me to know about it, please see me early in the semester. An "A" represents work at or above 93%; A- 90-92; B+ 87-89; B 83-86; B-80-82; C+ 77-79; C 73-76; C-70-72; D+ 67-69; D 63-66; D-60-62; F below 60. Please note that you must receive a C or above to receive credit for this course in the history major.

Readings

The assigned readings for this course are:

Woloch, *Women and the American Experience*
Ulrich, *A Midwife's Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard*
Bynum, *Unruly Women*
Peiss, *Hope in a Jar*

It is very important to keep up with weekly reading assignments. Part of each class period will be devoted to discussion. Some study questions appear alongside the reading assignments below; others will be handed out later.

Films

There will be three films shown during the semester. Please be sure to attend class on these days because there will be no make-up showings of these presentations.

Mary Silliman's War
The Flapper Story
The Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter

Assignments and Make-ups

There will be three exams (primarily essay in format), including a final examination. The final exam will have one essay question pertaining to the entire semester, but it will be selected from a list handed out in advance. Make-up exams will be given only to those students who present compelling reasons for missing a test. Please call me and leave a message the morning of an exam if you are unable to be there. All make-up exams will be given in my office hours on April 23. Each student will select a writing assignment as outlined below. The first two exams each count 20%. The writing project counts 25%, and the final exam counts 25%. The final 10% of your grade will be determined by class participation. This includes attendance, extent and quality of participation. The grade of "Incomplete" will only be given when written evidence is provided of personal problems, such as health or family crisis. An Incomplete becomes an "F" if all course work is not completed one month from the last day of class.

Writing Project select one option

Please note—I am happy to help you individually with research and writing of your essays. Come to see me during office hours or make an appointment at a mutually convenient time. There is a grade penalty for all late work of five points per day of lateness. *Please note that I do not accept papers delivered by email or fax.* Failure to hand in an essay by the last day of classes will lead to a failing grade for this assignment. A plagiarized paper will receive a failing grade.

Option one: Research Essay

Select a topic relating to American women's history that can be researched by using issues of a newspaper or magazine published between 1800-1965 and available through Georgia State's library. Our library has a good collection of these materials, some available electronically and some on microfilm. For example, if you are interested in the nineteenth century, you might study women's health issues or women's attitudes about family life as revealed in Godey's Ladies Book, which can be accessed electronically and searched by subject. If you are interested in the antislavery reform movement, you could look at the Liberator, which our library has on microfilm. The suffrage movement is represented in our holdings by two newspapers, the Revolution, published in New York, and the Woman's Journal, published in Boston. If the modern period interests you, our library has a variety of newspapers and magazines including dailies such as the New York Times and the Atlanta Constitution.

In order to learn some background about your subject, look for secondary (meaning interpretive) sources. Scholarly articles and books help to give context to primary source material. The best secondary works are those published in scholarly journals or books published by university presses or major commercial presses such as Knopf. Feel free to consult with me about the quality of a source. Do not use Internet sites as secondary sources unless they are affiliated with a college/university or a major museum such as the Smithsonian. You may not use an Internet site for your primary research unless it is a site that contains full-text newspapers.

Read 8-10 issues of your publication, along with an appropriate number of secondary books and articles, and write an essay of eight to twelve double-spaced pages using twelve-point type. Be sure to use footnotes or endnotes to document your essay. Please include a bibliography at the end of your essay. A separate handout will be given later in the semester about how to use footnotes/endnotes and bibliography appropriately. In a paragraph or two at the beginning of your essay, define the topic and explain its importance. Next, report your findings. At the end of your essay, briefly summarize your research and draw conclusions.

On **February 3**, please hand in a brief (one to two typed paragraphs) summary of your topic which will receive my comments but no grade. Your summary should demonstrate that you have looked at your newspaper and have made progress in researching your topic. When you hand in your essay on **April 21**, please include an envelope containing your research materials. I will return these materials to you after I have graded the papers. On **April 21** each class member will be asked to give a brief (about 5 minutes) oral report sharing essay conclusion with the rest of the class.

Option Two: Manuscript Research Essay

Students will write a research essay based on manuscript material in Special Collections, located on the 8th floor of Library South. Select a topic from among the many options available, including labor archives and the papers of twentieth century activists in the Equal Rights Amendment movement. Write an essay of eight to twelve double-spaced pages using twelve point type. Begin with an introductory paragraph defining your topic and conclude by summarizing your findings. Consider these questions. What seemed to motivate your subject in this movement? Did your subject represent the interests of a group such as a religious denomination or a labor union? How effective was your subject as a leader? Be sure to document your essay with footnotes/endnotes and a bibliography. A separate handout regarding documentation will be given out later in the semester. Consult secondary sources to give context. As with Option One, with this option I require a topic summary on **February 3** and an oral report on **April 21**, the day this assignment is due. Please hand in your research materials in an envelope. There is a penalty of five points per day of lateness. No emailed or faxed papers are allowed.

Tentative Weekly Reading Assignments, Important Dates, Lecture and Discussion Topics

<u>Week</u>	<u>Readings</u>	<u>Topics</u>
Jan. 6	-----	17 th century women in native cultures
Jan. 8	Woloch 2	17 th century women in the South
Jan. 13	Woloch 1	Puritan Women—Why was Mary Rowlandson loved and Anne Hutchinson despised?
Jan. 15	Woloch 3-4	18 th century women—Why was Eliza Lucas Pinckney a poster child for Republican

		Motherhood?
Jan. 20	-----	Inauguration day; no class
Jan. 22	Ulrich	Film: <i>Mary Silliman's War</i>
Jan. 27	Ulrich	Discussion: <i>A Midwife's Tale</i>
Jan. 29	Woloch 5-6	Industrial transformation—"Woman's Sphere": a new name for the same old thing?; frontier women
Feb. 3	Woloch 7	Reform—Why were the Grimkes extraordinary?
Feb. 5	Woloch 8	Origins of the woman's rights movement
Feb. 10	-----	Exam 1
Feb. 12	Bynum	Old South and Slavery
Feb. 17	Bynum	Civil War and Reconstruction
Feb. 19	Woloch 10	Discussion: <i>Unruly Women</i>
Feb. 24	Woloch 9	Working and immigrant women; Shirtwaist strike
Feb. 26	Woloch 11, 12	Middle class women: club, college, reform, settlement—committed or just bored?
March 2-9	Spring Break—no class!	
March 10	Woloch 13	Suffrage movement: NWSA/AWSA—which was right?
March 12	Woloch 14	World War I and 19 th Amendment
March 17	-----	Exam 2
March 19	Woloch 15	1920s—new freedom or new conformity?
March 24	Woloch 16	Film: <i>The Flapper Story</i>
March 26	Woloch 17	Depression and New Deal
March 31	Woloch 18	Women in World War II
April 2	Peiss	Film: <i>Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter</i>

April 7	Peiss	Women in the 1950s
April 9	Peiss	Discussion of <i>Hope in a Jar</i>
April 14	Woloch 19, 20	Civil Rights and modern feminism
April 16	-----	free day to finish your essay; no class ☺
April 21	Woloch 21,22	Research Essay due; informal oral reports
April 23	Woloch 23	American women since 1980
April 28 (Tues.) 12:30-2:30		Exam 3