

HIS 3423: Women in American History
Instructor: Dr. Allison Fredette
Fall 2016, Sec. 101

Meeting Times: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 12-12:50pm

Room: Anne Belk Hall 242

Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday 1-3pm (or by appt)

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Course Description

From the beginning, women have played a central role in shaping the American experiment. Not merely side actors, women of all races, ethnicities, and sexual identities have left their mark in the public and private world and on history. This course will explore American history from the perspective of these women – from their daily lives to their public struggles for reform, equality, and power. The course begins with the experiences of the first American women in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and concludes with a discussion of feminism and gender identity in today's global world. As we cover this timeline, we will focus on three themes: work, politics, and family and personal life.

While this class focuses on gender as a vital lens into identity, it assumes that this identity is socially constructed and malleable. During the semester, we will explore how gender has been defined, contested, and molded throughout American history, as well as the ways in which race, class, ethnicity, and sexual orientation create a multitude of experiences for American women. In other words, we will not only look at gender but how it intersects with other facets of identity to shape a person's perspective and history. Although this class focuses on history, many of these issues are highly relevant to contemporary social debates, as well as our own lives. My hope is that we can have lively, respectful, and fruitful discussions about these issues in ways that make us all more knowledgeable about history and identity. Additionally, this course has a very heavy reading load, and students should be prepared to read more than 150 pages a week to prepare for these extended class discussions.

This class has a number of goals and objectives. After taking this course, students should be well versed in the latest debates and arguments in the field of women's history, develop a stronger understanding of the process of historical research based on both primary and secondary sources, and have the tools to conduct such research on their own.

History Skill Guide

According to our department's history skill guide, this 3000-level course will meet the following pedagogical goals and practices:

- Provide intensive training in the craft and communication of history.
- Research methods:
 - identification, analysis, and use of primary and secondary sources
 - Chicago-style documentation
 - historiographical essays
 - oral presentations
 - reading and writing book reviews
 - identification and comparison of different interpretations
 - introduction to theory
 - use of interdisciplinary methods

Required Books

These books are available for purchase at the university bookstore and, of course, online.

- Linda K. Kerber, Jane Sherron De Hart, and Cornelia Hughes Dayton, *Women's America: Refocusing the Past*, 7th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011) -- **RENTAL**
- Victoria Bynum, *Unruly Women: The Politics of Social and Sexual Control in the Old South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992).
- ONE additional book of your choosing from the weekly list provided below.
- All other articles and primary documents listed in the syllabus will be posted on AsULearn.

Important Dates

September 9 – Book analysis #1 due

September 26 – Midterm exam

October 12 – Divorce research project due

October 21 or 28 OR November 4, 11, or 18 – Book analysis #2 due

December 7 – Final exam

Course Requirements and Grades

Students are expected to attend all classes, keep up with all assigned readings and films, participate fully and positively in class discussion, take unannounced reading quizzes, complete one short research project, write two book analyses, and take a midterm and a final. I will provide more information on the research project as the semester progresses.

Final grades will be calculated as follows:

Participation	10%
Reading quizzes	15%
Book analysis #1	10%
Book analysis #2	15%
Divorce research project	15%
Midterm	15%
Final	20%

Grading Scale

A	93-100
A-	90-92.4
B+	87-89.4
B	83-86.4
B-	80-82.4
C+	77-79.4
C	73-76.4
C-	70-72.4
D+	67-69.4
D	63-66.4
D-	60-62.4
E	0-59.4
I	Incomplete

Class Policies

Participation, Quizzes, and In-Class Behavior

Students must attend all class meetings. Material for the two exams (35% of your grade) come from both the assigned readings AND the lectures. You cannot do well on those exams without attending class and taking good notes. I do not, under any circumstances, provide copies of the lectures or slides. If you have an excused absence, please come to my office hours to discuss the missed material.

It goes without saying that you cannot do well on your participation grade (10% of your final grade) if you do not attend class. In addition, this class involves extensive discussion, and your participation is expected and required. You must complete all readings before class and come prepared to engage with both the professor and your fellow students in a lively discussion of the day's topic. Disagreement is expected, and often encouraged, but students must remain respectful at all times of their fellow classmates and professor. Additionally, throughout the semester, I will give unannounced quizzes in class. They will be short in duration (5-10 minutes) and consist of short answer questions dealing mainly with the issues raised in lecture and in the readings. In order to do well on these quizzes, you must read ALL assigned material.

Your grade is contingent on your full attention being given while in the class. Please refrain from facebooking, tweeting, instagraming, etc. while in class. If you are found doing so, it will seriously hurt your grade in the course. Above all, please turn off your cell phone when you enter class. We only have a short amount of time together. Let's make the most of it!

Assignments

A rubric for each assignment will be given out two weeks before it is due. All written assignments should be done in 12-point double-spaced font (Times New Roman or comparable font) with one-inch margins. All papers must be turned in by class time via ASULearn. I do not accept hard copies.

Late papers and assignments will be penalized 10 percentage points for every day past the due date.

Book analysis #1

During the first half of the semester, everyone in the class will read Victoria Bynum's *Unruly Women*. After reading it, students will write a short analysis (3 pages) of the book, its argument and contribution, and its use of sources. This analysis is intended to situate Bynum's argument in the larger historiography on women and help the student and the class better understand the scholarly narrative. It is not intended to be a review of whether or not the book was boring, exciting, or worth recommending to your next-door neighbor. Upon completion of these reviews, we will discuss the book in class and evaluate one another's analyses, offering constructive criticism for future papers.

Book analysis #2

During the second half of the semester, students will choose a book from one of the weekly categories and write another analysis (3 pages), following the model from the Bynum paper, as well as the suggestions made by the professor and their classmates. This analysis is worth slightly more than the previous one because students should be improving upon their skills as an historian and their ability to write these reviews. Additionally, students are expected to give a brief (3-5 minute) overview of their book and its argument to the class on the day they submit their paper. In this way, the class will form a more complete collective understanding of the historiography.

Divorce research project

This project gives students the opportunity to analyze local court records, specifically those of divorce cases from southern counties in the mid-nineteenth century. I will provide students with two sets of primary documents: (1) the state statutes describing divorce law and (2) a sample of divorce cases from three southern states. Using these sources, students will write a 6-8-page research paper, addressing what historians can learn about women's lives from these legal records. Students will be asked to formulate a specific argument about the role of women and marriage in southern society, differences in attitudes toward women by class, race, or region, or a theme of their own choosing. I will provide more information on this assignment as the deadline approaches.

Academic Integrity

As a community of learners at Appalachian State University, we must create an atmosphere of honesty, fairness, and responsibility, without which we cannot earn the trust and respect of each other. Furthermore, we recognize that academic dishonesty detracts from the value of an Appalachian degree. Therefore, we shall not tolerate lying, cheating, or stealing in any form and will oppose any instance of academic dishonesty. This course will follow the provisions of the Academic Integrity Code, which can be found on the Office of Student Conduct Web Site: www.studentconduct.appstate.edu.

Statement on Student Engagement with Courses

In its mission statement, Appalachian State University aims at "providing undergraduate students a rigorous liberal education that emphasizes transferable skills and preparation for professional careers" as well as "maintaining a faculty whose members serve as excellent teachers and scholarly mentors for their students." Such rigor means that the foremost activity of Appalachian students is an intense engagement with their courses. In practical terms, students should expect to spend two to three hours of studying for every hour of class time. Hence, a fifteen-hour academic load might reasonably require between 30 and 45 hours per week of out-of-class work.

Disability Services

Appalachian State University is committed to making reasonable accommodations for individuals with documented qualifying disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Those seeking accommodations based on a substantially limiting disability must contact and register with The Office of Disability Services (ODS) at <http://www.ods.appstate.edu/> or 828-262-3056. Once registration is complete, individuals will meet with ODS staff to discuss eligibility and appropriate accommodations.

Religious Observances Policy

Faculty members are required to make reasonable accommodations for students requesting to miss class due to the observance of religious holidays. All ASU students are allowed a minimum of two absences per year for religious observances. Up to two absences for such observances will be excused, without penalty to the student, provided that the student has informed the instructor in the manner specified in the syllabus. Notice must be given by the student to the instructor before the absence occurs and no later than three weeks after the start of the semester in which the absence(s) will occur. Arrangements will be made to make up work missed by these religious observances, without penalty to the student. For the purposes of this policy, ASU defines the term "religious observance" to include religious holidays, holy days, or similar observances associated with a student's faith that require absence from class. Faculty, at their discretion, may include class attendance as a criterion in determining a student's final grade in the course. On the first day of class, faculty must inform students of their class attendance policy and the effect of that policy on their final grade; both policies must be clearly stated in the class syllabus.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1, August 17, 19

Introduction

- Read for Friday: Estelle Freedman, "A Personal History of Women's History;" Mia Bay, "Black Women Historians and Black Women's History"

Week 2, August 22, 24, 26

Women on the Front Lines of Cultural Contact in Early America

- Read for Monday: WA 25-46
- Read for Wednesday: WA 47-89
- Read for Friday: WA 90-102

Week 3, August 29, 31, September 2

All Men(?) Are Created Equal: Independence

- Read for Monday: WA 103-133
- Read for Friday: WA 134-153

Week 4, September 7, 9

Our Family – Black and White: Southern Women in the 19th Century

- Read for Monday: WA 159-173; Thavolia Glymph, "Women in Slavery: The Gender of Violence"
- DUE Friday: Victoria Bynum, *Unruly Women*

Week 5, September 12, 14, 16

Reformers, Workers, and Wives in the Early 19th Century

- Read for Monday: Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860"
- Read for Wednesday: WA 174-204
- Read for Friday: WA 214-282

Week 6, September 19, 21, 23

War and Expansion in Women's Lives

- Read for Monday: WA 283-297; Nina Silber, "Domesticity Under Siege in Union States"
- Read for Wednesday: WA 298-308; Hannah Rosen, "How Southern Black Women During Reconstruction Claimed Citizenship by Testifying to Violence"

Week 7, September 26, 28, 30

Women in an Expanding America

- Take on Monday: **MIDTERM**
- Read for Friday: WA 363-367, 378-385; Cathleen D. Calvill, "Native Men, White Women, and Marriage in the Indian Service"

Week 8, October 3, 5, 7

Sex, Marriage and Suffrage in the Late-19th Century

- Read for Monday: WA 205-213, 314; Karen V. Hansen, "An Erotic Friendship between Two African American Women"
- Read for Wednesday: WA 349-362, 368-377

Week 9, October 10, 12

Sex, Marriage and Suffrage in the Late-19th Century, cont.

- DUE Wednesday: Divorce research project

Week 10, October 17, 19, 21

Women at the Start of the Century

Book analysis (due Friday):

Robyn Muncy, *Creating a Female Dominion in American Reform, 1890-1935*

Elaine S. Abelson, *When Ladies Go A-Thieving: Middle-Class Shoplifters in the Victorian Department Store*

Nancy Hewitt, *Southern Discomfort: Women's Activism in Tampa, Florida, 1880s-1920s*

Kathy Peiss, *Cheap Amusements: Working Women and Leisure in Turn-of-the-Century New York*

Stephanie Shaw, *What a Woman Ought to Be and to Do: Black Professional Women Workers during the Jim Crow Era*

Alison Sneider, *Suffragists in an Imperial Age: U.S. Expansion and the Woman Question, 1870-1930*

Joanne L. Goodwin, *Gender and the Politics of Welfare Reform: Mothers' Pensions in Chicago, 1911-1929*

- Read for Monday: WA 386-419
- Read for Wednesday: WA 383-404
- Read for Friday: WA 342-348, 420-431

Week 11, October 24, 26, 28

Feminism in the Roaring '20s and Depressing '30s

Book analysis (due Friday):

Anastasia Curwood, *Stormy Weather: Middle-Class African American Marriages between the Two World Wars*

Estelle Freedman, *Redefining Rape: Sexual Violence in the Era of Suffrage and Segregation*

Susan K. Cahn, *Sexual Reckonings: Southern Girls in a Troubling Age*

Ruth Alexander, *The "Girl Problem": Female Sexual Delinquency in New York, 1900-1930*

Kathleen Blee, *Women of the Klan: Racism and Gender in the 1920s*

Barbara Melosh, *Engendering Culture: Manhood and Womanhood in New Deal Public Art and Theater*

Linda Gordon, *Dorothea Lange: A Life Beyond Limits*

Annelise Orleck, *Cannery Women, Cannery Lives: Mexican Women, Unionization, and the California Food Processing Industry, 1930-1950*

- Read for Monday: WA 451-483, 432, 506-511; Cheryl D. Hicks, "Mabel Hampton in Harlem: Regulating Black Women's Sexuality in the 1920s"
- Read for Wednesday: WA 484-505
- Read for Friday: WA 441-450, 512-529

Week 12, October 31, November 2, 4

War: Both Hot and Cold

Book analysis (due Friday):

Maureen Honey, *Creating Rosie the Riveter: Class, Gender, and Propaganda during World War II*

Beth Bailey and David Farber, *The First Strange Place: Race and Sex in World War II Hawaii*

Amy Bentley, *Eating for Victory: Food Rationing and the Politics of Domesticity*

Catherine S. Ramírez, *The Woman in the Zoot Suit: Gender, Nationalism, and the Cultural Politics of Memory*

Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era*

Jessica Weiss, *To Have and to Hold: Marriage, the Baby Boom, and Social Change*

Stephanie Coontz, *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap*

- Read for Monday: WA 530-543
- Read for Wednesday: WA 544-565

Week 13, November 7, 9, 11

Women's Rights NOW: The Sixties and Seventies

Book analysis (due Friday):

Sara Evans, *Personal Politics: The Roots of Women's Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement & the New Left*

Ruth Rosen, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America*

Susan Douglas, *Where the Girls Are: Growing Up Female with the Mass Media*

Elaine Tyler May, *America and the Pill: A History of Promise, Peril, and Liberation*

Amy Erdman Farrell, *Yours in Sisterhood: Ms. Magazine and the Promise of Popular Feminism*

Alice Echols, *Daring to be Bad: Radical Feminism in America, 1967-1975*

- Read for Monday: WA 575-590, 617-630, 672-695
- Read for Wednesday: WA 652-663

Week 14, November 14, 16, 18

Women's Rights NOW: The Sixties and Seventies, cont.

Book analysis (due Friday):

Jennifer Nelson, *Women of Color and the Reproductive Rights Movement*

Barbara Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement: A Radical Democratic Vision*

Anne Valk, *Radical Sisters: Second Wave Feminism and Black Liberation in Washington, D.C.*

Vicki Ruiz, *From Out of the Shadows: Mexican Women in 20th-Century America*

Benita Roth, *Separate Roads to Feminism: Black, Chicana, and White Feminist Movements in America's Second Wave*

Suzanne E. Tallichet, *Daughters of the Mountain: Women Coal Miners in Central Appalachia*

Donald Critchlow, *Phyllis Schlafly & Grassroots Conservatism*

Lillian Faderman, *Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers: A History of Lesbian Life in Twentieth-Century America*

- Read for Monday: WA 631-651, 664-671, 704-718; Daniel L. McGuire, "Sexual Violence and the Long Civil Rights Movement"
- Read for Wednesday: WA 591-616, 696-703

Week 15, November 21

Women's Rights NOW: The Sixties and Seventies, cont.

- No reading this week

Week 16, November 28, 30

Where Are We Now?

- Read for Monday: WA 777-780; Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo, "Domésticas Demand Dignity;" Ashraf Zahedi, "Muslim American Women After 9/11"

Final Exam: Wednesday, December 7, 9-11am