



History of Women and Gender in the United States to 1880

**History/WGSS 3561, Fall 2015
University of Connecticut
We meet Tu/Th from 3:30-4:45 in Koons**

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Office Hours: Tues 1:30-2:30, Wed. 3:30-4:30 and by appointment

This course is designed to introduce students to major recent studies and historical debates about the workings of “gender” with an emphasis on the changing conditions of women’s lives in the territories that became the United States. Focusing on women means asking questions about men too—about their roles in the family, society, and the polity and how they understood manhood. Questions that we will address include: To what degree have women’s experiences differed according to racial/ethnic heritage, class, religion, and region? How have women participated in shaping their own history? What was the changing nature of patriarchal systems? We will also be attentive to the relationship between gender *ideologies* and on-the-ground *practices*. Another aim of the course is to learn about the methodologies that historians have pursued in studying women’s lives, especially Native American and African-American women for whom sources can be scarce. Note that 3561 leaves off where Hist/WGSS 3562 (often offered in Spring semester by Prof. McElya!) picks up.

Course objectives: We will

- Analyze many of the ways in which women’s and men’s histories and stories have been represented by themselves and others
- Become conversant with a range of historical and theoretical approaches to the study of gender
- Develop our critical reading skills. With primary sources, we will work on how to decode unfamiliar wordings and explore the angles we can use to interpret

historical documents and artifacts. Secondary sources help us understand contexts, historians' methods and uses of evidence, and disagreements over interpretation

- Hone our writing skills and adeptness at verbal expression

Assignments: Each student needs to keep up with the reading assigned for each of our sessions. Indeed, staying on top of the readings is essential for successful performance in the course. Also, note: **Please bring the day's reading to class with you!** This is very important because we will be dissecting, debating, and sometimes writing about or working in small groups with those readings. Be aware that the specifics of reading assignments may change occasionally; announcements will be made in class and via the HuskyCT course site.

- **Two response papers, double-spaced:** You will be responding to a prompt posed by Prof. Dayton; the specific assignments will be posted on HuskyCT. Any response paper that comes in late (**without** prior arrangement for an emergency extension) can earn no more than a B. If it's over 7 days late, it becomes a zero.
- **Blue notebook/journal:** I will hand you a blue book on Day 1: this is a place to write down your reactions to and observations about our readings and class lectures and discussions. Do so regularly! I will be nudging you AND setting aside short periods in class for this. Periodically, I will collect these and give you feedback. Not graded, but your overall thoughtfulness and engagement as shown in your entries makes up nearly half of your Class Participation grade (see below).
- **In-Class or on-line quizzes or short writings:** There will be no more than six in-class writings or quizzes, sometimes announced in advance, sometimes not. You are responsible for completing all of these. (If due to an emergency, a student misses one of these, a make-up assignment is required; contact Prof. Dayton for instructions.) In-class writings will be marked on a check/check-plus/check-minus basis. Note that you will be tested on our Weeks 13-14 readings via a timed, open-book on-line quiz (HuskyCT).
- **Take-home paper due Oct. 17**—this will be an analysis of a primary document(s) you have not been assigned (new to you) that you will be asked to comment on and contextualize in light of our readings and course discussions. Optimal length: 4-5 pages.
- **In-class exam, Nov. 19, on Harriet Jacobs's memoir and other readings since Week 8:** This will consist of a 1-hour essay (with essay questions circulated in advance) and a 15-minute section of short identifications, true/false, matching terms, and similar exercises. You may bring 1 sheet of handwritten or typed, bulleted notes (you may use both sides of the sheet) to the essay section of the exam.

- **Web report and occasional other postings:** according to the schedule below and as announced in class, you are responsible for 1 web report posting and a few other postings on our required reading.
- **Campus event:** Each student is required to attend and report in writing on a lecture or equivalent event related to gender/feminist issues or the history of gender. See our course Calendar page on HuskyCT for campus events I have approved in advance (these will include lectures, discussion panels, film screenings, art exhibits, and plays). One option will be the public lecture given by the History Department's Visiting Scholar in Gender & History, Professor Linda Gordon (on 1970s feminisms) on Thurs Dec. 3 at 4:30. Your posting should be about 1 page long and consist of a two-paragraph summary including thoughtful comment on the event, *plus* a question that you would have liked to ask the speaker(s) or curator/creator (or did ask!). Submit your posting to the dedicated Discussions thread on HuskyCT **within a week of the event**. Campus event postings are part of your Class participation grade. (For students who have a hard time getting to on-campus events, there will be alternative options such as reading an essay or viewing a film and posting about it.)
- **Class participation:** I encourage everyone to develop good speaking skills—this is a very important life-skill. Talk with me about ways to join in, if you are finding it daunting or hard. Note that your class **participation grade** will be calculated as follows: 30%--your contributions to our general class discussions; 40%--your blue notebook; 20%--quality of your postings and web reports, plus your work in groups, and the peer feedback forms you fill out during our poster sessions; 10% your Campus Event posting. In terms of the first, students who attend class regularly but almost never volunteer and are poorly informed when called on will receive a participation grade in the C range or below; those who miss many classes will risk an F in this area. Note that there are additional ways to enhance your participation grade: you can earn participation points by emailing me prior to a class session--before 10 a.m. that day--with discussion questions and points; or post these to the dedicated HuskyCt thread (letting me know by email that you are doing so.)
- **Final project:** Students will become experts on one scholarly book related to our course topic. You will pick from a list of possible books (all are selected by me because they are interesting (and, mostly, not too long!) posted on HuskyCT. In Week 14, you will present your book in one of our **poster session**, modeling how scholars often present their research at professional conferences. Look for the Final Project Instructions on HuskyCT. Your Final Project **Write-up** is due during exam week, Thursday Dec. 17 at 5 p.m. both by hard copy (under my office door) and email attachment.
- There **is no final exam** in this course.

Apportioned grading for the course:

Participation	25%
Take-home Paper, Week 7	15%
Exam, Week 12	15%
Response papers	10%
In-class writings/quizzes	10%
Final project	25%

Note: A student who fails to complete any of the papers, in-class exam, or poster presentation and final project will not pass the course.

Before you start work on your written assignments, I want you to be sure that you know what plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic misconduct are. A brief, pungent definition is: "Presenting someone else's words or ideas as your own--in any form." This includes doing unauthorized academic work for which another person will receive credit or be evaluated; presenting the same or substantially the same papers or projects in two or more courses without the instructor's knowledge or permission; submitting a paper that contains phrases, sentences, ideas that you gathered from a website, book, article, which you did not put in quotation marks and/or properly attribute. When you turn a paper in, *make sure it is your own work* and that you have cited all sources correctly. (As for your instructors, if I am uncertain that a paper is your original work, I will be submitting it to Safe Assign.) Don't be hesitant to bring up your questions, because this helps everyone think through the issues. Note that the UConn library has a helpful webpage and quick checklist/4-answer quiz:

<http://lib.uconn.edu/help/writing/plagiarism-how-to-recognize-it-and-how-to-avoid-it/>

Another good site where you can practice and visualize what works and doesn't work, include the 10 slides at <https://www.indiana.edu/~istd/practice.html>

Classroom rules: Remember to turn off cellphones before the start of class. No texting! Phones used for texting will be ordered to be put away, or else quarantined(!), until the end of the class session. I discourage laptop use because they often make it harder for students to join the classroom conversation and hear what's being said. Come see me in Week 1 if you have a documented disability or other reason for using a tablet or laptop. If I approve the use of a device, you must sit in a designated seat. If a student abuses the terms of the contract, then the device's further use during class sessions will be restricted or banned.

Required Reading (the books will be on 3-hour Reserve at Babbidge Library):

Women's America: Refocusing the Past, Vol. 1, ed. Kerber, De Hart, and Dayton, 8th edition (Oxford University Press, 2015) [You **must** use this edition; the content in previous editions is quite different]

Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl Written by Herself*, ed.

Jennifer Fleischner (Bedford-St. Martin's, 2010) [You **must** use this edition, so that we will all be on the same page!]

Course readings (CR): these will be posted on the course HuskyCT site. Go to "Course Readings," then click on the bookshelf icon

Classroom rules: Remember to turn off cellphones and other electronic equipment before the start of class. No texting! Phones used for texting will be ordered to be put away, or else quarantined(!), until the end of the class session.

Be aware that minor changes may be announced to this syllabus as we progress through the semester.

Schedule of Meetings and Readings

Week 1

Tu Sep 1 Introduction to the Course

Th Sep 3 First Americans' gender ways

Read: Helen Rountree, "Powhatan Indian Women: The People Captain John Smith Barely Saw" (CR, 22 pp.)

Week 2

Tu Sep 8 Haunted by Pocahontas

Read: *Women's America*: Prof. Kathleen M. Brown's essay, "The Anglo-Indian Gender Frontier" (28-37)

Web report and posting (required for Students with Surnames from A-G; optional for others): Become an expert on *The Pocahontas Website*; post per instructions and be ready to report on the site and critique it in class! See instructions on HuskyCT under "Assignments." **Post** by 8 pm Monday, Sep. 7, please.

Th Sep 10 Defining and debating key terms

Read: *Women's America*: Introduction (pp. 1-9); Elsa Barkley Brown, "Polyrhythms and Improvisation: Lessons for Women's History" (CR, 6 pp.)

Write in your journal before and after class: what does the term feminism/feminist mean to you? what is your experience with people's reactions to and embrace of it?

Week 3

Tu Sep 15

Settler culture

Read: *Women's America*: Ulrich essay, plus two Connecticut laws (43-53, 84-87); excerpt from midwife Martha Ballard's diary (CR)

Th Sep 17

Watch film: "A Midwife's Tale"

Tip: jot your observations, ideas, queries in your Blue Notebook. Be sure to watch for clues on how people dressed, slept, spoke, emoted, how hard they worked, etc.

Optional: check out the amazing website about Martha Ballard and her world, including on how the film was made: dohistory.org

Week 4

Tu Sep 22

Among the English: what did they think defined a man, a woman?

Read: *Women's America*: Norton essay (34-43)

In class, we will discuss what surprised and struck us about the docudrama you watched last Thursday.

Web report and posting (required for Students with Surnames from H-P): on the dohistory.org site. See HuskyCt for instructions. **Post by 8 pm Monday, Sep. 21, please.**

HAND in your Blue Notebook in class today, please! (these will be returned to you on Thursday)

Th Sep 24

Disorderly white women

Read: *Women's America*: Document, Trial of Anne Hutchinson (80-83) and Karlsen essay (53-66)

In-class writing quiz on this week's reading (open book)

**** DUE by Friday Sep. 25 at 9 p.m. Response paper #1: email it to Prof. Dayton (use filename: your LAST NAME paper 1.docx)**

Week 5

Tu Sep 29

Gender and the European reinvention of slavery

Read: *Women's America*: Morgan essay (24-33)

Web report & posting (required for Students with Surnames from Q-Z; optional for others): go to

<http://www.inmotionaame.org/home.cfm>: read the text on the Home page, then go to the bottom of the page and click About this Site and read it; last, click on "Migrations" (top of screen), then the Transatlantic Slave Trade, then choose The Middle Passage: read the text and then click on the images (top ribbon) and look at/read

about at least the 1st ten. Take 10+ minutes to explore other parts of the site! Write-up a report as Website Critic—the good and the not-so-good features, how teachers could use the site, what surprised you, etc. And be ready to tell us more in class! Post by 8 p.m. Monday Sep 28, please.

- Th Oct 1 The conditions of survival
Read: *Women's America*: Carney essay, Virginia slavery laws and Massachusetts marriage vows (87-97, 106-109); CR: Sketch of Phyllis Wheatley's life
In class, we will study runaway ads
- **DUE Friday Oct 2 at 9 pm: Response paper #2: Identify two pieces of evidence that powerfully illustrate the special hardships of black women in early America and explain their significance.**

Week 6

- Tu Oct 6 Sex, sexual relations, and sexuality
Read: *Women's America*: Dayton essay (116-133); short documents (CR)
Post by today at 10 a.m.: 2 questions for me as author-expert and/or for class discussion
Optional: visit the website associated with this essay, takingthetrade.org and explain (in your journal or our class discussion) how you would improve it or use it in a lesson plan
- Th Oct 8 No class meeting: devote this time to your paper (due soon)!

Week 7

- Tu Oct 13 Women, gender, and politics
Read: An Address to the Ladies, Edenton tea party cartoon, Seneca women address a 1791 delegation (CR, 5 pp.)
In class: pairs will start to compile a bulleted list of women's political activities in the revolutionary period
- Th Oct 15 Women in the American Revolution
Read: *Women's America*: Documents, Kerber essay, 2 images (110-25, 255-56)

****Paper 1 is due to Prof. Dayton via email by Saturday Oct. 17 at noon****

Week 8

Tu Oct 20

Molly Brant and Sally Hemings: legacies of the revolution

Read: *Women's America*: Gordon-Reed essay (97-105); plus on-line interview with the author (CR web-link)

In-class writing (open book): What were Sally Hemings's options in 1789 in Paris? Explain why or why not you think there is good evidence for Hemings having made a "treaty" with Jefferson as Prof. Gordon-Reed argues.

Pairs: turn in your revised, bulleted list of women's political activities during 1765-83

HAND in your Blue Notebook in class today, please! (these will be returned to you on Thursday)

Th Oct 22

The new nation: tenement living, factories, and women's economic lives

Read: *Women's America*: Boydston essay, document on working conditions at mills (128-39, 158-60)

Week 9

Tu Oct 27

Antebellum plantations: girlhood, womanhood

Read: *Women's America*: Jones-Rogers and Glymph essays (139-57)

Th Oct 29

No class meeting

Tip: Start reading Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents*

Start thinking about a book you'd like to read for your Final project!

Research some of the option on THE LIST online and ask me about book choices to help you finalize the decision. Your top 3 picks are due next week

Week 10

Tu Nov 3

Female friendships

Read: *Women's America*: Smith-Rosenberg essay (189-201); Laura Miller's *Salon* summary of Rachel Hope Cleve's new book, [Charity and Sylvia: A Same Sex Marriage in Early America](#) (June 29, 2014)

In-class short writing: assess the strength of evidence in CSR's essay and identify a 1 or 2-sentence passage that articulates her central thesis/argument

Th Nov 5

Contraception and Abortion

Read: *Women's America*: Mohr essay, the Comstock Law (202-212)

In-class writing or quiz

****EMAIL Prof. Dayton by Friday Nov. 6 at 9 p.m.: Your top 3 book picks for the Final Project, ranked 1-2-3. Results will be posted on HuskyCT next week!**

Week 11

- Tu Nov 10 Terror in the youth of an activist: Harriet Jacobs
Read: Jacobs, *Incidents*: Prof. Fleischner's Preface and Introduction (vii-ix, 1-21), plus Jacobs's text, Chaps. 1-15 (23-108). [Note: the Chronology at the back of the book can be an aid as you read]
- Th Nov 12 Seneca Falls and what followed
Read: *Women's America*: Grimké, Kendall, and Watkins documents (238-46), Lerner essay, plus Seneca Falls and Married Women's Property Acts documents (221-27, 247-252)
In-class writing on Lerner and Seneca Falls (open book)

Reminder: finish reading Jacobs over the weekend!

Week 12

- Tu Nov 17 Trio of reformers: Sojourner Truth, Amelia Bloomer, and Harriet Jacobs
Read: *Women's America*: Truth's visiting card, images of/captions on reformers (252-54, 257-59); Jacobs, *Incidents*, Chaps. 16-41 (to the end of *Incidents*), letters 3 and 4 by Jacobs (109-215, 224-25, 229-30)
In-class: Discussion of the Jacobs memoir, the author's life
HAND in your Blue Notebook in class today, please! (these will be returned to you on Thursday)
- Th Nov 19 In-class exam on Jacobs and our other readings since Oct. 22

Thanksgiving Break: Nov. 23-27, no classes

Week 13

- Tu Dec 1 Borderlands and western lands
Read: Dubois & Dumenil on the multicultural West (including the Gold Rush!), and Eulalia Pérez on work at a California mission (CR); *Women's America*: Stremlau essay (272-81); Jacobs,

Incidents, Chaps. 16-41 (to the end of *Incidents*), letters 3 and 4
by Jacobs (109-215, 224-25, 229-30)

- Th Dec 3 Civil War [we will meet for 45 minutes, so that lots of us can attend the Gender & History series lecture by Prof. Linda Gordon of NYU at 4:30 today! Plan to come and write this up for your Campus Event.]
Read: *Women's America*: McCurry essay and one document (267-76, 287)

Week 14

- Tu Dec 8 Civil War Aftermaths
Read: *Women's America*: Hunter essay and Reconstruction documents, 276-86, 288-89, 292-94); Nancy Woloch on the 1869 split among suffrage activists (CR, read pp. 326-32; pp. 333-35 are optional [on when the split was healed]); Jessica Lynch on "Boston" marriages (CR weblink)
 Be sure to write a journal entry on this week's issues & readings. **HAND in your Blue Notebook in class today, for the final time!**
 N.B.: First 15 minutes of class session: Course Evaluations

****On-line quiz on our Dec 2 & 8 reading, HuskyCT:** You are required to complete this timed, open book quiz by Monday Dec. 14 at midnight

- Th Dec 10 Poster Session
 Note that, with your consent, the History and WGSS communities will be invited

****Your Final Project write-up serves as the final exam in the course.** The Write-up is **due** by hard copy (under Prof. Dayton's office door) **and** email attachment **by Thursday Dec. 17 at 5 p.m.**