

History 937 History of Women and Gender in the U.S. since 1870: Gender and Global Economies of Desire

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Course Description

This seminar will seek to understand various ways that the system or category of “gender” has transformed in the late 19th and 20th centuries, the era of global corporate capitalism. It will explore the questions, how does global capitalism in the long 20th century become part of people’s bodies and selves? How does global capitalism transform and make malleable what “gender” is considered to be? Desire is crucial to this inquiry, because it is what will allow us to delve into large, structural transformations at the level of daily life and subjectivity. We will consider the creation and impact of many, often overlapping kinds of desires: personal or group economic aspirations, sexual desires, imperial desires, political desires. To explore these questions, we will necessarily consider gender as it intersects with class, race, and sexuality. The course explores the “transnational United States,” that is, it takes the United States as its focus but seeks to understand US gender history in a transnational frame.

Required Texts

The following books are on sale at A Room of One’s Own Bookstore located at 307 W. Johnson:

Hendrik Hartog, *Man and Wife in America: A History* (2000)

The Modern Girl Research Group, *The Modern Girl Around the World: Consumption, Modernity, and Globalization* (2008).

Elizabeth Clement, *Love for Sale: Courting, Treating and Prostitution in New York City, 1900-1945* (2007).

Leslie Brown, *Upbuilding Black Durham: Gender, Class and Black Community Development in the Jim Crow South* (2008).

Catherine Ramirez, *The Woman in the Zoot Suit: Gender, Nationalism and the Cultural Politics of Memory* (2009).

Ji-Yeon Yuh, *Beyond the Shadow of Camptown: Korean Military Brides in America* (2004)

R Marie Griffith, *Born Again Bodies: Flesh and Spirit in American Christianity* (2004)

Annelise Orleck, *Storming Caesar's Palace: How Black Mothers Fought their own War on Poverty* (2006).

Anne Enke, *Finding the Movement: Sexuality, Contested Space and Feminist Activism* (2007).

Inderpal Grewal, *Transnational America: Feminisms, Diaporas, Neoliberalisms* (2005).

A *Packet* of required and essential readings is on library reserve; please see My UW. Packet contents are listed near the end of the syllabus. There is one additional on-line reading that is not in the packet.

Course Requirements

1) Participation in Seminar Discussions (10%).

2) Thesis/Analysis Papers (60%) These are three page, *maximum*, 12 point, double-spaced essays on the week's readings. Everyone will write for the first three weeks (9/9; 9/16; 9/23). For the remainder of the semester, everyone will sign up for 3 times to write. (No one will write on 9/30; 10/7; 11/11; 12/9) For further information, see "Writing Thesis/Analyses Papers." Thesis/Analysis papers for each week are always due at the beginning of class. No late papers will be accepted

3) Historical and Historiographical Questions (5%):

Students will sign up for two weeks in which they will be responsible for writing two discussion questions for the class: one historical and one historiographical. These questions must be well crafted to prompt students to engage central themes, debates or methods in the scholarship for that week. Students who write questions should also take responsibility to facilitate quality discussion that week. (No one will write discussion questions for 9/30; 10/7; 11/11; 12/9.) For further information, see "Creating Historical and Historiographical Discussion Questions."

4) For class periods held on 9/30; 10/7; 11/11; 12/9 no one will write papers or discussion questions. Instead, *everyone* will write one paragraph in response to that week's reading that they post to the class listserve history937-1-f09@lists.wisc.edu by noon on Tuesday, the day before class. Paragraphs may pose a question, compare with another reading or discussion we've had, or present a thoughtful critique (positive or negative). Please be substantive-- do not simply tell us whether you liked the book or not or whether you found it well written. Everyone will be responsible for reading the paragraphs of all other class members before the seminar meeting. This aspect of the course will be counted within the participation grade.

5) Seminar Paper (25%). This 15-20 page paper represents focused historical research and analysis of a particular historical artifact (or small set of artifacts) in relation to gender. Topic chosen by student in consultation with professor. Paper should engage theoretical and methodological concerns raised in the course. A proposal will be due Monday November 9 by 5pm. Send via email to Nan and your assigned peer review group. Papers are due December 16 by 5:00 pm in my box--5002.

Course Schedule:

Week 1 9/2 Introductions

Reading:

Toni Morrison, excerpt from *The Bluest Eye* (distributed by email)

Week 2 9/9 Foundations I: Gender and Imperial Desires

Reading:

Paige Raibmon, "Picking, Posing and Performing: Puget Sound Hop Fields and Income for Aboriginal Workers" Packet

Kristin Hoganson, "Cosmopolitan Domesticity: Importing the Am Dream 1865-1920" Packet

Louise Newman, "Introduction: Women's Rights, Race and Imperialism" Packet

Laura Wexler, "The Fair Ensemble: Kate Chopin in St. Louis in 1904" Packet

Week 3 9/16 Foundations II: The Transformation of Marriage

Reading:

Hendrik Hartog, *Man and Wife in America: A History*

Hendrik Hartog, "What Gay Marriage Teaches About the History of Marriage"

<http://hnn.us/articles/4400.html>

Week 4 9/23 Foundations III: Subjectivity

Reading:

Joan Scott, "The Evidence of Experience," Packet.

Judith Butler, "Doing Justice to Someone: Sex Reassignment and Allegories of Trans sexuality" Packet

Kandice Chuh, "Against Uniform Subjectivity: Remembering 'Filipino America'" Packet.

Week 5 9/30 Women's Labor in the Global Economy

Reading:

Jennifer Guglielmo, Excerpt from *Living the Revolution: Italian Women's Everyday Resistance and Working-Class Politics, New York City, 1880-1945*, Packet.

Lisa Lowe, "Work, Immigration, Gender: New Subjects of Cultural Politics" Packet

Week 6 10/7 Globalizing Gender as Modernity

Reading:

Modern Girl Research Group, *The Modern Girl Around the World: Consumption, Modernity, and Globalization*. Read chapters 1,2,3,4,15,16,17 AND AT LEAST 2 additional chapters of your choice.

Week 7 10/14 Sex and the City

Reading:

Elizabeth Clement, *Love for Sale: Courting, Treating and Prostitution in New York City*.

Week 8 10/21 Commerce, Reform and the City

Reading:

Leslie Brown, *Upbuilding Black Durham: Gender, Class and Black Community Development in the Jim Crow South*.

Kevin Gaines, "Pauli Murray in Ghana: The Congo Crisis and an African American Woman's Dilemma,"

Week 9 10/28 Style, Political Subjectivity, and the Constructions of History

Reading:

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

Week 10 11/4 War, Migration and the Politics of Romance and Marriage

Reading:

Ji-Yeon Yuh, *Beyond the Shadow of Camptown: Korean Military Brides in America*

Louisa Schein, "Homeland Beauty: Transnational Longing and Hmong American Video" Packet

FINAL PAPER PROPOSALS DUE MONDAY 11/9 BY 5PM. SEND TO NAN AND GROUP

Week 11 11/11 Transformations in Bodies, Selves, Subjectivities

Reading:

R Marie Griffith, *Born Again Bodies: Flesh and Spirit in American Christianity*

Week 12 11/18 Welfare Rights, Anti-Poverty Activism, Political Longings

Reading:

Annelise Orleck, *Storming Caesar's Palace: How Black Mothers Fought their own War on Poverty*

Week 13 11/25 NO CLASS

Week 14 12/2 Rethinking US Feminist Desires

Reading:

Anne Enke, *Finding the Movement* (2007).

Week 15 12/9 Recontextualizing US Feminist Desires in a Transnational Frame

Reading:

Inderpal Grewal, *Transnational America: Feminisms, Diaporas, Neoliberalisms* (2005).

Seminar Papers are due December 16 by 5:00 pm in my box—5002

Packet Contents:

Paige Raibmon, “Picking, Posing and Performing: Puget Sound Hop Fields and Income for Aboriginal Workers” from *Authentic Indians: Episodes of Encounter From the Late-Nineteenth Century Northwest Coast* (2005).

Kristin Hoganson, “Cosmopolitan Domesticity: Importing the American Dream 1865-1920” *The American Historical Review* 107:1 (Feb 2002).

Louise Newman, “Introduction: Women’s Rights, Race and Imperialism” from *White Women’s Rights: The Racial Origins of Feminism in the United States* (1999).

Laura Wexler, “The Fair Ensemble: Kate Chopin in St. Louis in 1904” in Ann Stoler, ed. *Haunted by Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North America* (2006).

Hendrik Hartog, “What Gay Marriage Teaches About the History of Marriage” on line at History News Network. <http://hnn.us/articles/4400.html>

Joan Scott, “The Evidence of Experience,” *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 17, No. 4. (Summer, 1991), pp. 773-797.

Judith Butler, “Doing Justice to Someone: Sex Reassignment and Allegories of Trans sexuality” *GLQ* 7:4 (2001): 621-636.

Kandice Chuh, “Against Uniform Subjectivity: Remembering ‘Filipino America’” from *Imagine Otherwise: On Asian Americanist Critique* (2003).

Jennifer Guglielmo, Excerpt from *Living the Revolution: Italian Women’s Everyday Resistance and Working-Class Politics, New York City, 1880-1945* (in press).

Lisa Lowe, “Work, Immigration, Gender: New Subjects of Cultural Politics” in Lisa Lowe and David Lloyd, eds., *The Politics of Culture in the Shadow of Capital* (1997).

Kevin Gaines, “Pauli Murray in Ghana: The Congo Crisis and an African American Woman’s Dilemma,” in James T. Campbell, Matthew Pratt Guterl, and Robert G. Lee, eds., *Race, Nation and Empire in American History* (2007).

Louisa Schein, “Homeland Beauty: Transnational Longing and Hmong American Video” *Journal of Asia Studies* 63:2 (May 2004): 433-463.

Writing Thesis/Analysis Papers

Thesis/analysis papers may not exceed three pages, typed, double spaced, 12 pt.

As their name indicates, thesis/analysis papers have two parts. First, write the thesis of the main book or article in your own words, without using quotations from the book. *This should take up no more than 1/2 of the first page of your paper.* Being specific, complete and succinct in stating the thesis or main argument of the work is the goal of this part of the assignment.

Second, write an analysis of the book and/or articles. Since you have already stated the thesis of the central piece, there is *no reason for further summary*. Rather, here YOU critically engage the works and tell me your analysis of it/them. You do not need to "cover" each reading or part of the reading but should focus on what most interests you. Your analysis can take a number of forms. You may ask questions about and discuss the author's purpose or guiding research questions, method, use of sources, particular innovations, and problems or shortcomings. In doing so, you may critically consider historical phenomenon raised by the work. It is often useful to ask yourself what this work contributes to historical studies, and what problems remain. Make sure that this part of the paper is analysis (defined as your thoughts/opinions + reasoning/evidence), not summary. (Another useful definition of "analysis" likens it to taking apart a clock to reveal its mechanisms and explain how it works. You might think of "taking apart" a book's argument to reveal its components and their functions. Then tell me what you think about this and why.)

Creating Historical and Historiographical Discussion Questions

A crucial part of becoming skilled at critical thinking and analysis is learning to ask good questions. Because of this, I will ask you to write TWO questions for two different weeks of the semester (sign up the first week). When you write questions, you should come to class early to put them up on the board. Discussion will begin with question writers explaining what motivated their questions. Question writers should also take responsibility for facilitating discussion that week by being ready with follow-up questions and by relating student comments to each other.

The two questions: The purposes of the questions are to direct the class to delve into the central issues and concerns in the reading for that week. They will be graded by how well they do so. One question will engage the **historical** material presented by the author. For example, for Eric Foner's A Short History of Reconstruction, the historical question will engage some aspect of Reconstruction that he talks about (e.g. questions about the effects of Black political participation). The other question will engage **historiographical** concerns, that is, it will engage not the history itself per se, but how the history was crafted and written. Again, using Foner's book as an example, historiographical questions will engage some aspect of how Foner shaped his book, analyzed his sources or intervened in the established historical debates about Reconstruction, African American history or other fields (e.g. questions about the difference between Foner and the Dunning School, or the place of African Americans in his study, or how he integrates considerations of culture with considerations of politics, or the implications of his study for future studies of reconstruction, etc.).

Some tips: Questions that begin with "who" "what" "where" and "when" can often be answered with specific information. For this reason, they often do not make good discussion questions. Questions that begin with "how" or "why" ask for explanations. They are usually the analytical questions and tend to make for better discussion questions. If you have identified an issue that interests you but do not have a question, try asking "how" and "why" about it and see what happens.

Questions that identify controversies or ambiguities or paradoxes tend to work well.

Make sure that you do not ask a "more information" question that can only be answered with knowledge outside of that in class readings. Perhaps someone will have that information, but it will not make for a good discussion.