

Women and Health in American History
Gender and Women's Studies 531
Medical History 531
History of Science 531
Spring 2019

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When did women in the United States start using birth control? How does gender influence the experience of illness? Were nineteenth-century women expected to enjoy sex? How have women served their communities as healthcare providers and activists? These questions and others guide our exploration of women and health in American history. In particular, it explores the personal experiences and the medical views of women's life-cycle events, the role of women as health care providers and activists, and the effect of gender on the perception and experiences of illness. The course also explores the diversity of expectations and experiences within the category of "woman."

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- To learn how and why women's experiences of health and illness have changed over time.
- To learn how and why experiences of health and illness vary among women.
- To learn how social, cultural, and political forces shape the experience of health and illness.
- To learn how the roots of women's current experiences of health and illness are embedded in the past.
- To understand the varied ways women have shaped the experience of health and illness as patients, activists, advocates, and health care workers.
- To learn historical research skills.
- To learn to craft and develop historical arguments.

CREDITS: 3

This class meets for two 75-minute class periods each week over the fall semester and carries the expectation that students will work on course learning activities (reading, writing, research) for about 3 hours out of classroom for every class period.

REQUIRED COURSE TEXTS:

Course Reader, Social Science Copy Center, 6120 Social Science Building.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:

Participation:	20%
Secondary Source Analysis	20%
Primary Source Worksheet	5%
Research Question and Plan	10%
Thesis Statement and Bibliography	5%
Historical Research Paper	40%

1) Participation:

Because the discussion of readings is a major component of this course, you will be graded on your preparation for and involvement in class. This approach asks that you engage fully with the material and explore your own beliefs about historical events and processes. I evaluate participation by how well you talk about your ideas, listen and respond to others' ideas, remain sensitive to the feelings of other class members, and take responsibility for moving class discussion forward. Expressing one's ideas and getting reactions from others can help you evaluate your own opinions and ultimately sharpen your thinking. Although I set the grading criteria, you assign your own participation grade daily. (I do reserve the right to revise the grades.) Please note that the most valuable participation does not necessarily come from the student who speaks the most. Students who do not listen to their classmates, who do not make room for various viewpoints and speakers, should not earn the highest participation.

As part of your participation grade, I expect you to complete reading guides before you come to class and turn them in at the end of the discussion. I will provide the reading guides the class session before they are due. These are to help you approach the reading, provide a starting point for class discussion, and guide your study before the exams. **You will be expected to turn in 18 of these**, but feel free to do them all. For the days I do not provide reading guides, I have attached a few general guidelines (Appendix II) to help you think about the texts.

2) Historical Research Paper

The culminating assignment for this class is a 12-15 page historical research project. In order to help you succeed with the final paper, I have designed four small assignments to help you develop the necessary skills. For more details and deadlines, see Appendix IV.

3) Grading Criteria

For general grading criteria on the research paper see Appendix III.

4) Writing Fellows

To help with the writing assignments this semester, we have the opportunity to work with the Undergraduate Writing Fellow Program. The Writing Fellows are gifted undergraduates who have received special training to offer critical evaluation and helpful suggestions on your drafts. After you turn in your drafts, I will give them to the Fellows who will read and provide written comments. You will then meet with your Fellow to discuss the paper and strategies for the rewrite. These meetings are mandatory. Your fellows are Emily Atseff (atseff@wisc.edu) and Miranda Dam (mdam@wisc.edu).

This is a terrific opportunity for several reasons. First, our work is always improved by input from others. While the Fellows have no special training in the content of the course, they are trained to help you develop a well-constructed and persuasive essay. Second, good writing comes through practice and rewriting. The two-draft policy provides a chance for both. Finally, it may help your grade. Many of you will be writing your first historical research paper for this class, and it can be surprisingly challenging. Getting two chances to get it right will improve the quality of your final product.

Late Paper Policy:

Assignments that are late, for whatever reason, will be docked 5 points per day unless I have granted prior approval. This applies to all final assignments, including the take-home exams. Assignments a week or more late will not be accepted. Late drafts will be accepted only in extraordinary cases and only with my prior approval. If you do not turn in a draft, your final paper will be lowered by a minimum of 10 points.

GRADING SCALE

93-100	A
88-92	AB
83-87	B
78-82	BC
70-77	C
60-69	D
0-59	F

If you have questions about a grade, speak first to the instructor (Houck). If the question is not resolved, speak with the chair of the Department of Gender and Women's Studies (Aili Tripp). She will attempt to resolve the issue informally and inform you of the Appeals Procedures if no resolution is reached informally.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UW-Madison's community of scholars in which everyone's academic work and behavior are held to the highest academic integrity standards. Academic misconduct compromises the

integrity of the university. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these acts are examples of academic misconduct, which can result in disciplinary action. This includes but is not limited to failure on the assignment/course, disciplinary probation, or suspension. Substantial or repeated cases of misconduct will be forwarded to the Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards for additional review. For more information, refer to studentconduct.wiscweb.wisc.edu/academic-integrity/.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

McBurney Disability Resource Center syllabus statement: “The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform me of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. I will work either directly with you or in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA.”

<http://mcburney.wisc.edu/facstaffother/faculty/syllabus.php>

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Institutional statement on diversity: “Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world.” <https://diversity.wisc.edu/>

COURSE SCHEDULE

Tuesday, January 22	Introduction to Women and Health in American History
Thursday, January 24	Menstruation
Tuesday, January 29	Body Shape
Thursday, January 31	Fitness
	Paper Topic Due
Tuesday, February 5	Library workshop, 1220 Health Sciences Learning Center (HSLC)
Thursday, February 7	Sexuality
Tuesday, February 12	Sexuality
Thursday, February 14	Library workshop, Wisconsin Historical Society, Lobby
	Polished Draft of Secondary Source Analysis Due
Tuesday, February 19	Birth Control
Thursday, February 21	Abortion
	Primary Source Worksheet Due
Tuesday, February 26	Lesbian Health and Reproduction
Thursday, February 28	Trans Identity and Health Care
	Final Draft of Secondary Source Analysis Due
Tuesday, March 5	Sterilization
Thursday, March 7	Pregnancy
	Research Question and Plan Due
Tuesday, March 12	Childbirth
Thursday, March 14	Childbirth
March 16-March 24	Spring Break
Tuesday, March 26	Violence against Women
Thursday, March 28	Menopause
	Thesis and Bibliography Due
Tuesday, April 2	Physicians
Thursday, April 4	Nurses
Tuesday, April 9	Midwives
Thursday, April 11	Domestic Health Workers
	Polished Draft of Research Paper Due
Tuesday, April 16	Feminist Health Workers
Thursday, April 18	Women and Illness
Tuesday, April 23	Venereal Disease
Thursday, April 25	Mental Illness
Tuesday, April 30	Breast Cancer
	Final Draft of Research Paper Due
Thursday, May 2	Wrap-up and Evaluations

Tuesday, January 22

Introduction to Women and Health in American History

Catherine Beecher, *Letters to the People on Health and Happiness* (1855) in *Roots of Bitterness: Documents of the Social History of American Women*, eds. Nancy Cott, et al (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1996), 293-297.

Sarah Pratt's Diary, 1846-7 (excerpts).

UNIT I: WOMEN AND THEIR BODIES

Thursday, January 24

Menstruation

Edward H. Clarke, *Sex in Education, Or a Fair Chance for the Girls* (Boston: James R. Osgood and Company, 1873), 11-19.

George Wythe Cook, "Puberty in the Girl," *American Journal of Obstetrics and Diseases of Women and Children* 46 (1902): 804-807.

W. A. McKeever and T. W. Shannon, "Mothers Talks to Girls: The Dawning of Womanhood," in *The Science of Living: The Home League Reading Course* (Cincinnati, OH: The World Purity Federation, 1930), 736-741.

Joan Jacobs Brumberg, "Something Happens to Girls: Menarche and the Emergence of the Modern American Hygienic Imperative," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 4 (1993): 99-127.

"Advice to Women Who are Once-A-Month Witches," *Redbook*, April 1969, 94+.

Tuesday, January 29

Body Shape

Katharina Vester, "Regime Change: Gender, Class, and the Invention of Dieting in Post-Bellum America," *Journal of Social History* 44 (2010): 39-70.

Elizabeth Matelski, "(Big and) Black is Beautiful: Body Image and Expanded Beauty Ideals in the African American Community," in *Reducing Bodies: Amass Culture and the Female Figure in Postwar America* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 108-128.

Robin Stevens, "The Unmaking of a Fat Girl," *Seventeen Magazine*, May 1971, 122-23+.

Thursday, January 31

Fitness

Wendy Rouse and Beth Slutsky, "Empowering the Physical and Political Self: Women and the Practice of Self-Defense, 1890-1920," *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 13 (2014): 470-499.

Pamela Grundy, "From Amazons to Glamazons: The Rise and Fall of North Carolina

Women's Basketball, 1920-1960," *Journal of American History* 87 (2000) 112-146.

Tuesday, February 5

Library Workshop, 1220 Health Sciences Learning Center (HSLC)

Thursday, February 7

Sexuality I

Mary Ries Melendy, "Sex Life During Marriage," in *Viviflore: The Pathway to Mental and Physical Perfection* (Chicago: W.R. Vansant, 1904), 309-319.

E. Azalia Hackley, "Love," in *The Colored Girl Beautiful* (Kansas City: MO: Burton Publishing Company, 1916), 61-68.

Elizabeth Alice Clement, "The Treat: Transforming Sexual Values at the Turn of the Century," in *Love for Sale: Courting, Treating, and Prostitution in New York City, 1900-1945* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2006), 45-75.

Cheryl D. Hicks, "'Bright and Good Looking Colored Girl': Black Women's Sexuality and 'Harmful Intimacy in Early Twentieth-Century New York,'" *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 18 (2009): 418-456.

Tuesday, February 12

Sexuality II

Jane Gerhard, "Revisiting the Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm: The Female Orgasm in American Sexual Thought and Second Wave Feminism," *Feminist Studies* 26 (2000): 449-476.

Isabel Emslie Hutton, "Sex Life During Marriage," in *Sex Technique in Marriage* (New York: Emerson Books, 1944), 86-98.

Marabel Morgan, *The Total Woman* (New York: Pocket Books, 1977), 111-133.

Thursday, February 14

Library Tour, Wisconsin State Historical Society

Birth Control

Andrea Tone, "Black Market Birth Control: Contraceptive Entrepreneurship and Criminality in the Gilded Age," *Journal of American History* 87 (2000): 435-459.

Tuesday February 19

Birth Control

Johanna Schoen, "Fighting for Child Health: Race, Birth Control, and the State in the Jim Crow South," *Social Politics* 4 (1997): 90-113.

Elizabeth Siegel Watkins, "Physicians, Patients, and the New Oral Contraceptives," in *On the Pill: A Social History of Oral Contraceptives* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 34-52.

Letters from Women to the *Birth Control Review* 1917-1918.

"A Negro Number," *Birth Control Review* 16 (1932): 163-167.

Frederic C. Wood, "Should Birth Control Be Available to Single Women," *Good Housekeeping*, February 1967, 12+.

Thursday, February 21

Abortion

Advertisements, 1841, 1856, 1866, 1932, 1937. Miscellaneous newspapers.

Jennifer A. Nelson, "'Abortions under Community Control': Feminism, Nationalism, and the Politics of reproduction among New York City's Young Lords," *Journal of Women's History* 13 (2001): 157-180.

Karissa Haugeberg, "'How Come There's Only Men Up There?': Catholic Women's Grassroots Anti-Abortion Activism," *Journal of Women's History* 27 (2015): 38-61.

"Jane," *Voices*, June-November, 1973

D. L. Cuddy, "Black Genocide," *America*, October 3, 1981.

Tuesday, February 26

Lesbian Health and Reproduction

Francie Hornstein, *Lesbian Health Care* (1974).

Katie Batza, "From Sperm Runners to Sperm Banks: Lesbians, Assisted Conception, and Challenging the Fertility Industry, 1971-1983," *Journal of Women's History* 28 (2016): 82-102.

Judith A. Houck, "Medicine and Health for Sexual Minorities," *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 2nd Edition, 2015):110-117

Thursday, February 28

Trans Identity and Health Care

Joanne Meyerowitz, "From Sex to Gender," in *How Sex Changed: A History of Transsexuality in the United States* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), 98-129.

Leslie Feinberg, "Trans Health Crisis: For Us It's Life or Death," *American Journal of Public Health* 91 (2001): 897-900.

Nancy W. Selix and Stefan Rowiak, "Provision of Patient-Centered Transgender Care," *Journal of Midwifery and Women's Health* 61 (2016): 744-51.

Tuesday, March 5

Sterilization

Johanna Schoen, "Between Choice and Coercion: Women and the Politics of Sterilization in North Carolina, 1929-1975," *Journal of Women's History* 13 (2001): 134-156.

Meg Devlin O'Sullivan, "Informing Red Power and Transforming the Second Wave: Native American Women and the Struggle against Coerced Sterilization in the 1970s," *Women's History Review* 25 (2016): 965-982.

"To Halt the Imbecile's Perilous Line," *The Literary Digest*, May 21, 1927, 11.

"Upholds Operating on Feeble-Minded," *New York Times*, May 3, 1927, 19.

Fred P. Graham, "The Law: 'Sterilization or Jail,'" *New York Times*, May 29, 1966, E8.

Thursday, March 7

Pregnancy

Lynn M. Paltrow and Jeanne Flavin, "Arrests of and Forced Interventions on Pregnant Women in the United States, 1973-2005: Implications for Women's Legal Status and Public Health," *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law* 38 (2013): 299-343.

Sarah A. Leavitt, "'A Private Little Revolution': The Home Pregnancy Test in American Culture," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 80 (2006): 317-345.

Tuesday, March 12

Childbirth, Nineteenth Century

Letters from Nettie Fowler McCormack to Anita McComick Blaine, from Anita to Nettie, and from Miss. Hammond to Mrs. McCormick, 1890 (McCormick papers).

Letters from Jane Savine to Elizabeth Gordon, 1846.

Miriam Rich, "The Curse of the Civilised Woman: Race, Gender and the Pain of Childbirth in Nineteenth-Century American Medicine," *Gender and History* 28 (2016): 57-76.

Thursday, March 14

Childbirth, Twentieth Century

Charles Anthony Robinson, "Extern: How the Babies of the Slums are Brought into the World," *Century* 115 (1882): 551-60.

Judith Walzer Leavitt, "Birthing and Anesthesia: The Debate Over Twilight Sleep," in *Mothers and Motherhood: Readings in American History* ed. Rima Apple and Janet Golden (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1997), 242-258.

Carolyn Herbst Lewis, "'At Home, You're the Most Important Thing': The Chicago Maternity Center and Medical Home Birth, 1932-1973," *Journal of Women's History* 30 (2018): 35-59.

Tuesday, March 26

Violence Against Women

Sean T. Moore, "'Justifiable Provocation': Violence against Women in Essex County, New York, 1799-1860," *Journal of Social History* 35 (2002): 889-918.

Danielle L. McGuire, "'It Was like All of Us Had Been Raped': Sexual Violence, Community Mobilization, and the African American Freedom Struggle," *Journal of American History* 91 (2004): 906-931.

L. S., "Pardoning the Crime of Rape," *The Woman's Journal*, May 25, 1878, 164.

L. S., "Crimes against Women," *The Woman's Journal*, June 16, 1877, 188.

"Favors Whipping Post," *Wisconsin Weekly Advocate*, September 17, 1903.

Susan Griffin, "Rape: The All-American Crime," *Ramparts*, September 1971, 26-35.

Thursday, March 28

Menopause

Robert A. Wilson, "A Key to Staying Young," *Look*, January 11, 1966, 66+.

Letter from Mrs. Blindt to the American Medical Association, November 9, 1970.

Survey responses re menopause c. 1950, Dorothy Brush Papers.

Letters and questionnaire responses to Women in Midstream, c. 1975.

Judith A. Houck, "'What Do These Women Want?': Feminist Responses to *Feminine Forever*, 1963-1980," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 77 (2003): 103-132.

UNIT II: WOMEN HEALTH CARE WORKERS

Tuesday April 2

Physicians

Arleen Marcia Tuchman, "Situating Gender: Marie E. Zakrzewska and the Place of Science in Women's Medical Education," *Isis*, 95 (2004): 34-57.

Ellen S. More, "'A Certain Restless Ambition': Women Physicians and World War I," *American Quarterly* 41 (1989): 636-660.

Florence Brown Sherbon, "Women in Medicine," *The Medical Woman's Journal* (1925): 240-243.

Isabella Vandervall, "Some Problems of the Colored Woman Physician," *The Woman's Medical Journal* 27 (1917): 156-158.

"Can a Colored Woman Be a Physician," *The Crisis*, February 1933, 33-34.

"Dear Mrs. _____," September 2, 1964 letter from unnamed medical school.

Thursday, April 4

Nurses

Emily K. Abel, "'We Are Left So Much Alone to Work Out Our Own Problems': Nurses on American Indian Reservations During the 1930s," *Nursing History Review* 4 (1996): 43-64.

Charissa J. Threat, "'The Hands That Might Save Them': Gender, Race and the Politics of Nursing in the United States during the Second World War," *Gender and History* 24 (2012): 456-474.

Nina Gage and Alma Haupt, "Some Observations on Negro Nursing in the South," *Public Health Nurse* 24 (1932): 674-680.

Tuesday, April 9

Midwives

"Official Midwife" and "Birth Practices," in *Listen to Me Good: The Life Story of an Alabama Midwife*, Margaret Charles Smith and Linda Janet Holmes (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1996), 63-112.

Susan L. Smith, "Medicine, Midwifery, and the State: Japanese American and Health Care in Hawai'i, 1885-1945," *Journal of Asian American Studies* 4 (2001): 57-75.

Thursday, April 11

Domestic Health Workers

Eileen Boris and Jennifer Klein, "Neither Nurses nor Maids," in *Caring for America: Home Health Care Workers in the Shadow of the Welfare State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 19-39.

Elena Conis, "A Mother's Responsibility: Women, Medicine, and the Rise of Contemporary Vaccine Skepticism in the United States," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 87 (2013): 407-435.

Tuesday, April 16

Feminist Health Workers

Wendy Kline, "'Please Include This in Your Book': Readers Respond to Our Bodies Ourselves," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 79 (2005): 81-110.

Judith A. Houck, "The Best Prescription for Women's Health: Feminist Approaches to Well-Woman Care," in *Prescribed: Writing, Filling, Using, and Abusing the Prescription in Modern America*, Jeremy A. Greene and Elizabeth Siegel Watkins, eds. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), 134-156.

Bylye Y. Avery, "Breathing Life Into Ourselves: The Evolution of the National Black Women's Health Project," in *Black Women's Health Book: Speaking for*

Ourselves, new, expanded edition, ed. Evelyn White (Seattle: Seal, 1994), 4-10.
West Coast Sisters, *Self-help Clinic I and II* (1971).

UNIT III: GENDER AND DISEASE

Thursday, April 18

Women and Illness

Judith Walzer Leavitt, "Gendered Expectation: Women and Early Twentieth-Century Public Health," in *Women and Health*, 612-633.
Susan Cahn, "Come Out, Come Out, Whatever You've Got; or Still Crazy After All These Years," *Feminist Studies* 29 (2003): 7-18.

Tuesday, April 23

Venereal Disease

Alexandra Lord, "'Naturally Clean and Wholesome': Women, Sex Education, and the United States Public Health Service, 1918-1928," *Social History of Medicine*, 17 (2004): 423-441.
Paul A. Lombardo, "A Child's Right to Be Well Born: Venereal Disease and the Eugenic Marriage Laws," *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine* 60 (2017): 211-232.
Prince A. Morrow, "The Relations of Social Disease to the Family," *American Journal of Sociology* 14 (1909): 622-37.

Thursday, April 25

Mental Illness

Charlotte Perkins Gilman, *The Yellow Wallpaper* (1892).
Laura D. Hirshbein, "Science, Gender, and the Emergence of Depression in American Psychiatry, 1952-1980," *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 61 (2006): 187-216.

Tuesday, April 30

Breast Cancer

Robert Aronowitz, "Do Not Delay: Breast Cancer and Time, 1900-1970," *Milbank Quarterly*, 79 (2001): 355-386.
Barbara Ehrenreich, "Welcome to Cancerland: A Mammogram Leads to a Cult of Pink Kitsch," *Harper's*, November 2001, 43-53.

Thursday, May 2

Wrap-up and Evaluation

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Women and Health in American History
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Appendix I: How to Grade Your Participation

1) Attendance points 3

If you show up on time and stay the whole class period, you earn full credit.
If not, adjust accordingly.

2) Attention points 2

If you pay attention to the conversation, give yourself full credit.
If you read a magazine, do a crossword puzzle, or take a nap, adjust accordingly.

3) Preparation points 2

If you read all the readings, give yourself full credit. If not, adjust accordingly.

4) Participation

Participation points gauge several aspects of course involvement. They reflect whether you have understood the basic issues, engaged with the material, volunteered your opinions, and listened to your classmates. Choose the category (and the point assignment) that best fits your situation.

Category A--no participation 0

did not participate in discussion

Category B--good participation 1

answered a question when directly asked
volunteered an item for a board list

Category C--better participation 2

asked a question
participated in small groups discussion
voluntarily offered an interpretation of an event or reading
voluntarily offered a summary of a reading

Category D--best participation 3

advanced the conversation by building on the efforts of your peers
brought two comments or articles in conversation with each other
helped clarify a confusing text or claim
offered to play the devil's advocate

I generally accept the grade you offer, but I have the final authority. Make sure you describe on the participation chart how you arrived at your number.

The discussion format is based upon the notion that students can and do learn from each other. To acknowledge this, **one bonus discussion point will be assigned by your peers**. After every discussion, you will indicate which two people you believe contributed most valuably to discussion that day and explain why. Please note that this is not a reward for sheer quantity. Instead, perhaps someone asked one question that you made you rethink an issue. Perhaps somebody brought two disparate strains together in a way that enlivened discussion. Perhaps somebody dared to offer a contrary opinion. Perhaps someone rephrased what you were trying to say in a way that helped others understand. Maybe someone helped you finally understand discourse analysis. Carefully consider which of your classmates helped you engage, understand, and analyze the material.

Attendance is part of your participation grade. You cannot participate in the conversation if you are not present for it. Participation grades will be figured to allow you one absence without penalty. Any absences beyond one may affect your participation grade. If you notify me within 12 hours before class or after class that you will be unable to attend, I **may** waive any missed-class penalty. If you are sick, please don't come to class and do notify me.

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Appendix II: Approaching Texts

As you read:

Decide whether the source is a primary source or a secondary source. (In general, a primary source is a text generated at the time of the event or issue or person discussed. A secondary source is a document that analyzes that event, issue, or person from a historical perspective. If the topic of discussion is tuberculosis in the early 19th century, primary sources might include medical literature, newspaper articles, journal entries, short stories, domestic health guides, and personal letters from the early 19th century. Secondary sources might include a historian's account of tuberculosis in the early 19th century that was written in the 20th century. There are cases where the differences are more fuzzy, but start from this rough distinction.

If the source is a primary source:

- a) Note the date. What else happened at the same time? Make sure you understand the chronology of the sources for any given topic.
- b) What perspective does it illuminate? Was it written by a middle-class woman facing childbirth? Was it written by a physician advising women how to cope with childbirth?
- c) What is the author's goal? Is she trying to persuade? Inform? Seduce? Scold?
- d) Who is the intended audience for the piece?
- e) Look up words and phrases you don't know.
- f) Can you identify a take-home message?

If the source is a secondary source:

- a) Figure out the author's argument. Every article has a main point. Make sure you know what it is. (Knowing the argument is different than knowing what the article is about).
- b) What kind of evidence does the author use? (Prescriptive literature, diary entries, medical journals?) Is the evidence appropriate for the argument?
- c) Is the argument persuasive? Has the author proven his or her claim?
- d) Keep track of the chronology. In other words, if the author is describing change over time, make sure you understand how, when, and why things change.
- e) Look up words and phrases you don't know.

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Paper Grading Criteria
Appendix III

Grading Criteria:

The paper will be evaluated on the specificity of its thesis, the soundness of its organization, the strength of its analysis, the effectiveness of its evidence, the originality of its ideas, and the grace of its style.

Thesis: A thesis is the reason a paper exists; it is the point you are trying to make. A thesis should not merely describe what the paper does (“This paper examines the validity of the biological understandings of gendered behaviors”). Instead, your thesis statement establishes your claim (“The efforts to link gendered behavior and biology always rely on culturally and historically specific notions of gender. The failure to recognize the culture-bound definitions of gender weakens the claims that gendered behaviors--such as playing with truck--are biologically based.”)

Organization: The organization of your paper should revolve around your thesis. Each paragraph should build an argument in support of the thesis. Consider every paragraph a mini-argument. It should have one main idea (presented in the topic sentence) and three to five sentences (or so) that clearly support the topic sentence. Each paragraph should be connected to the one above it by a transition. End with a conclusion that explains how your paper contributes to the history of the American body.

Evidence: For the critical reaction paper, your evidence will come from the course reader. For the research project, you will need to track down the evidence yourself. In both cases, I will evaluate the appropriateness of the evidence for the claims you are trying to make.

Analysis: Your paper should analyze and interpret the evidence to support your claim. Imagine for a moment a courtroom drama on TV. The gun, the barking dog, the tire tracks are all deployed by the prosecutor to support her case. But she does not merely describe the evidence; she uses it to make a point. She claims that the fingerprints on the gun, coupled with the tire tracks that match Jane Doe’s car prove that Jane murdered Hello Kitty. Or pretend you are the defense attorney who analyzes the same evidence to prove Jane is innocent. The defense attorney notes that the fingerprints provided only a three-point match, and besides, Jane shoots regularly at the firing range. Further, he claims that Jane loaned her car to her friend Willy that night so he could attend a “Dance, Dance Revolution” tournament. In other words, evidence does not speak for itself; your analysis gives evidence meaning. In the same way, you must analyze your sources, you must interpret them, to make a convincing case.

Originality: A first-rate essay will not just reiterate the claims made in the readings or the ideas raised in discussion. Instead, the best essays will use the readings and discussions as the starting point to explore and create your own interpretations of a topic.

Style: The best ideas can fail to impress if packaged carelessly or imprecisely. Vague or messy prose tends to leave the reader puzzled and frustrated rather than persuaded and enlightened. Take care that your prose illuminates your ideas rather than obscures them. Take your work seriously enough to pay attention to the way it is packaged.

Some particular items to keep in mind.

Strive for clarity

If a reader must read a sentence three times to understand it, the writing hinders the idea.

Sometimes hazy prose reflects hazy thinking. Make sure you know exactly what you are trying to say before you say it.

Strive for precision

Avoid claims like “people thought,” “doctors argued,” “women dieted.” Which people, doctors, or women? All of them?

Avoid baggy sentences

Good prose is direct prose. As a result, good writers rid their sentences of all extraneous words. For example, I could advise you that if there is any way at all to get rid of extra words in your sentences that are not absolutely necessary, they should be gotten rid of if you can. Or in the words of Strunck and White, “Omit needless words.”

Use active voice

Instead of saying “The study was conducted,” try “Mr. Smith conducted the study.” This is desirable for several reasons. 1) It often allows you to omit needless words. 2) It forces you to identify the historical actors. “It was generally believed...” is a dead give-away that you only have a vague ideas who believed. 3) Active voice forces you to use punchy verbs rather than the drab and generally unhelpful form of the verb “to be.” (See next point.)

Use vigorous verbs

Verbs provide the foundation of good writing. Unfortunately we often use verbs that provide no action such as forms of the verb “to be” or its helper verbs (am, is, was, were, are, be, been, being, have, has, had, do, does, did). These are perfectly fine, but try replacing them with something jazzier or omit them altogether. “She was a good student,” provides basic but bland information. “She excelled in math and science,” adds verve and specificity. Further, “he laughed” can usually replace “he was laughing.” Finally, avoid turning perfectly good verbs into nouns. Consider the following: “The mirror *had* a *reflection* of the lake on it.” “The mirror reflected the lake,” is stronger.

Avoid careless stuff

Run a spell check. Check for run-on sentences and sentence fragments. Proof-read.

What do grades mean?

- A (93-100) For outstanding papers only. Thesis and argument are clear, thought-provoking, and persuasive; research is thorough, appropriate, and creative; relationships drawn between evidence and ideas are sophisticated, subtle, and/or original. The paper also connects to larger trends addressed by the course. Writing is grammatically correct and succinct. The argument flows well from point to point, without any puffery or wasted words.
- AB (88-92) For very good papers that for some reason fall short of the criteria listed above. For example, the argument may be murky in one place; information may be presented that doesn't directly or clearly contribute to the argument; writing style may be awkward here and there, or flawed by one or two consistent (if minor) grammatical errors.
- B (83-87) Your basic good grade. The paper may pursue a straightforward but not especially deep or sophisticated argument; it is okay as far as it goes, but it doesn't penetrate the material very far. It may lack enough primary research to make the argument completely persuasive. It may have a flash of brilliance that is unfulfilled, counterbalanced by minor grammatical problems, a weakness in argumentation, and/or a significant misunderstanding of events or chronology.
- BC (78-82) The paper shows some of the basics of the ideal paper, but is weakened by a lack of serious think-work, evidence gathering, or writing problems. It may make superficial connections without offering sufficient evidence to make the connections plausible or persuasive, or it may have what is in principle a good argument supported by incorrect facts or chronology. Alternatively, it may provide a fairly solid argument with minor flaws, from which the reader is repeatedly distracted by awkward or ungrammatical prose.
- C (70-77) A grade signifying some serious problems in paper design, expository writing, or primary research. It may deliver facts without a recognizable thesis or argument; it may wander away from the point; or it may be a thoughtful attempt so weakened by writing problems (grammar, punctuation, word choice) that it is difficult for the reader to understand a crucial point you are trying to make. Alternatively, it may offer a strong thesis without providing sufficient primary evidence. Also used for papers that do not ask historical questions.
- D (60-69) A marginal grade. This grade usually indicates a paper does not meet the requirements of the assignment in two or more ways: the paper does not ask a historical question, lacks an original thesis, and/or relies almost exclusively on secondary sources. There may be some evidence of reading in the secondary literature, but the paper indicates no effort at synthesis or critical engagement. Also used for essays that are just barely coherent.
- F (0-59) For unacceptable essays. An essay may be judged unacceptable if it contains plagiarism (see below); if it fails to meet three of the major requirements for the paper; if it consists primarily of content inappropriate to the themes of the course; or if the writing fails to meet standard college-level requirements of basic communication in English.

Women and Health in American History
HISTORICAL RESEARCH PAPER ASSIGNMENTS
Appendix IV

The culminating assignment in this class is a historical research paper. Historical research papers are always demanding assignments, requiring time and the development of a variety of skills, many of which may be new to you. To make this task manageable, I have broken the process into several discreet assignments that help you build the final paper.

STEP I: PICK A TOPIC

Due January 31

The topic of your research paper must address the history of women's health (or gender and health) in United States. The paper's focus must be historical; the paper may be inspired by contemporary topics, but you must ask historical questions.

How to find a topic

Review the syllabus. Do any of the topics make you want to know more? Look more closely at individual readings. Do they raise any compelling questions? Leave interesting aspects unexplored? Provide tantalizing ideas about sources? Inspire you to challenge the author's interpretation of the past?

Look for places where there are gaps in the syllabus. The class does not cover the history of infertility or miscarriage, for example. While it looks at contraception, many forms of contraception will not be discussed. There are many diseases and conditions that could benefit from a historical analysis. These might include conditions where women's experiences are central to the construction and understanding of the disease or condition. These include anorexia nervosa, hysteria, toxic shock syndrome, and premenstrual syndrome. But there are stories of gender in almost all histories of disease; your project might be to write a history of women with AIDS or tuberculosis. How are girls with autism or ADHD treated differently than boys?

There are endless topics that focus on women as health care providers. The categories on the syllabus are a rich beginning. Perhaps you are interested in the first twenty women who graduated from UW Madison medical school. Or the role of nurses in the influenza epidemic of 1918. Or the immigrant midwives in Milwaukee. But think beyond these categories. You could write on women caregivers of gay male AIDS patients, or the women who founded Mothers Against Drunk Driving in Madison.

Be as specific as you can. I realize that your paper's focus may narrow or change as you begin your research, but try to think small at the start. Rather than choosing the history of women and venereal disease, for example, perhaps you could research the government publications directed to men about the dangers of prostitutes. Or you could study government anti-VD publications written for girls and women. Or you could study quarantine centers for women who tested positive for STIs.

Also think about perspective. Let's say you are interested in writing about PMS. Do you want to study medical debates about it? Self-help books promoting it? Its use as a criminal defense? Feminist responses to it? Its coverage in sex education or health classes? Now is the time to consider these options since perspective often determines our sources.

In addition to the material covered on the syllabus, some possible very general topics include:

Toxic Shock Syndrome
PTSD
Menopause
Premenstrual Syndrome
ADHD
Autism
Gender Identity disorder
Obesity
Alcoholism
Sex Addiction
Inhibited Sexual Desire
Chronic Fatigue
Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome
Fibromyalgia
Anorexia Nervosa
Lupus
Masturbation

Leprosy
German Measles
Depression
Melancholia
Polio
Lung Cancer
Cirrhosis of the Liver
Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasia
Nurses in the civil rights movement
Women workers at free health clinics
La Leche League
Operation Rescue
Crisis pregnancy centers
Home birth midwives
Sickle Cell Anemia
Feminist Health Clinics
Lay Health Workers

STEP TWO: FIND OUT WHAT HAS BEEN WRITTEN ABOUT YOUR TOPIC

Secondary Source Analysis

First Polished Draft: Due February 14

Final Draft: Due February 28

When you begin a historical research paper, one of your first steps is to find out what has already been written on the topic by historians. We call these historians' accounts secondary sources. Secondary sources are historians' reconstructions and interpretations of the past. Most of what any of us know about the past comes from reading (or somehow engaging with) secondary sources. These include museum displays, podcasts, books, documentary films and articles in magazines and academic journals. Secondary accounts build arguments about and offer interpretations of the past based on primary evidence (see below). Historians attempt to persuade through evidence and argument that their account of history is correct.

By writing a historical research paper, you will be essentially creating a secondary source. This assignment, then, is to analyze a secondary source on your topic to better understand how a history paper is constructed.

Find three secondary sources, preferably two journal articles and one book. When looking for secondary articles, I urge you to start with two databases, *America: History and Life*, and *History of Science, Technology and Medicine*. Micaela Sullivan-Fowler might suggest other places to look. List all three sources, using Chicago/Turabian Bibliography citations.

(<https://writing.wisc.edu/handbook/documentation/docchicago/notes-bibliography/>)

Using one of your sources, assess in 3-5 double-spaced pages, the success of the author's argument. Your assessment, framed as a thesis of your own, should include a description and analysis of the following: the author's thesis, the shape of the argument (how the author attempts to demonstrate the thesis), the nature and use of the evidence. Questions to keep in mind include: Is the nature of the evidence appropriate for the argument? (Why or why not?) Does the author deploy and interpret the evidence convincingly? Whose perspective does the author center? Does the author seem to have a particular agenda that influences their interpretation or choice of evidence? Could the author (or the reader) have reached a different conclusion from the evidence? What questions does the author ignore? What kinds of sources does the author neglect?

STEP THREE: PRIMARY SOURCE WORKSHEET

Due February 21

Before you think about historical sources, start to think about historical questions. What did physicians think about abortion before *Roe v Wade*? What were girls told about menstruation before 1970? How have black churches responded to high rates of maternal and infant mortality in African American communities? How did nurses participate in the civil rights movement? To answer each of these questions, you'll need to rely on different *kinds* of sources.

Historians build their arguments on primary sources. A crude way to understand the distinction between primary and secondary sources is to think of primary sources as things generated during the era under study and secondary sources as things created by historians looking back in time. There are more kinds of primary sources than I can possibly list, but some that might be relevant for this class include personal letters and diaries, patient records, government documents and records, advice

literature, sex education curricula, advertisements, educational films, articles in academic journals (including medical journals), newspaper articles (even student newspapers), manifestos, protest posters, pamphlets, sermons, newsletters, magazine articles, books, congressional testimony, immigration records, licensing records, and organization records. Some are written for scholarly audiences, some for popular audiences, some for no audience at all. Some are meant to create a historical record; some are meant to last a day or a week. Whew!

This assignment has two parts.

Part One: Find three primary source documents on your topic, choosing one each from three of the following six categories.

- 1) a source targeted to a medical audience (e.g., a medical text book or an article in a medical journal);
- 2) an unpublished source (e.g., a personal letter or diary, meeting minutes, patient records);
- 3) something targeted to a popular female audience (e.g., an advertisement, a magazine article in a women's magazine, a pregnancy advice book, a menstruation filmstrip);
- 4) something created by a government (e.g. Congressional debates on the Hyde Amendment, Wisconsin midwifery licensing applications, WWII anti-venereal disease films);
- 5) a newspaper article (national, small town, ethnic, university);
- 6) ephemera (e.g. posters, flyers, pamphlets)

Part Two: For each of your three sources, answer the following questions:

What is the title?

Who was the author/creator?

What kind of source is it?

When was it created?

Where did you find it?

Why was this source created? Who is the intended audience?

Is the information in the source reliable? (How do you decide?)

Whose point of view does this source convey? Does it demonstrate obvious bias?

What can you tell about the context for the document?

What kinds of questions about your topic does this source help you answer?

STEP FOUR: RESEARCH QUESTION AND PLAN

Due March 7

In no more than one single-spaced page, describe your research question and your plan for answering it. Your question should be situated in the secondary literature on your topic and it should reflect your preliminary research.

Your discussion of your research question is where you move from your initial topic on birth control to a paper that looks at when and how University Health Services at UW Madison began to offer oral contraceptives to its unmarried students. This is where a paper on body image becomes a paper that examines the coverage of anorexia nervosa in women's magazines in the aftermath of Karen Carpenter's death. This is where a paper on alcoholism becomes a paper that asks how the Women's Christian Temperance Union addressed the needs of women drinkers.

Your discussion of your *research question* should 1) reflect how your project fits with and is different from other research on the topic (that is, how it relates to the secondary literature), 2) anchor the topic in time and place, 3) describe its perspective (whose point of view does it illuminate?), and 4) explain why the question is important.

Your research plan provides a road map for how you intend to answer your question by identifying the kinds of sources you plan to use. Your discussion of your *research plan* should 1) provide an overview of your research to date (successful and unsuccessful), 2) describe the sources you still need to locate and analyze, and 3) explain why you think these sources will provide the evidence you need to answer your question.

STEP FIVE: THESIS AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

Due March 28

In this assignment, you need to 1) articulate your thesis (that is, the answer to your research question) and 2) describe how you will build the argument that supports it. Put very crudely, this will take the form of "I am going to demonstrate x by describing and analyzing a, b and c." In no more than one single-spaced page (one double-spaced page might suffice) describe your thesis and how you intend to support it.

In order to complete this exercise, you must have waded quite deeply into your evidence. (How will you know what you can conclude from your evidence before you have seen and analyzed it?) Sometimes your thesis will become sharper and more nuanced after you write a draft of your paper. Your thesis will often shift a bit before it reaches its final form, but you should have an informed working thesis.

Attach a bibliography that includes at least two secondary sources and at least five primary sources that you have already found useful. (The number of primary sources a paper requires is extremely variable. It depends on the nature of your question and the nature of your sources. I can imagine a paper that relies on three primary sources (self-help manuals on natural childbirth, for example) or a paper that needs more like twenty sources (local Wisconsin newspaper coverage of women and AIDS, for example). My assessment of your bibliography will consider whether you seem to have identified a sufficient number of sources

STEP SIX: RESEARCH PAPER

First draft due April 11

Final draft due April 30

This is where you put it all together. Aim for 12-15 pages. Use Chicago/Turabian footnotes.

RESOURCES

I do not expect you to write a great history paper all on your own. This campus has many resources to help, and I urge you to use them.

- 1) Me. I have experience with historical research and writing, and I very much want to see you all succeed. Do come visit in office hours or make an appointment.
- 2) Librarians. We are visiting two different libraries on campus during the first few weeks of the semester, and you will receive instruction from librarians. Outside of our class, I encourage you

all to have at least one consultation with a librarian. It often helps to set up a meeting in advance.

- 3) The Writing Center. We have one of the best writing centers in the country. Writing tutors can help everyone become a better writer—good writers and weak writers alike.
<https://writing.wisc.edu/>
- 4) The History Lab. This is a place to get help with all aspects of the history paper writing process. Visit. They are great and so helpful. <https://history.wisc.edu/undergraduate-program/the-history-lab/>
- 5) Writing Fellows. We are working with writing fellows on the first and last assignment. They provide excellent advice on how to make a paper better. Take advantage of this opportunity.