

HISTORY 353: WOMEN AND GENDER IN AMERICAN SOCIETY TO 1870

This course surveys the history of women in the United States from the colonial period to 1870. We will investigate how women understood their lives as individuals and as members of families and communities and how broad discourses of gender framed and were framed by questions of colonialism, nationalism, race, and class.

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COURSE MECHANICS

Readings:

We have ordered the following books at A Room of One's Own Bookstore:

Nancy Cott et al, Root of Bitterness, 2nd edition

The Narrative of Sojourner Truth

Lori Ginzberg, Untidy Origins: A Story of Woman's Rights in Antebellum New York

Readings marked [ON-LINE] are available through the University Library. On the UW home page, click "Libraries" (under "Academics"). Then click the red "Find It" site. You will need to enter the journal name and the article title, both of which are provided in the syllabus below. Additional articles [READER] are available in a packet at Bob's Copy Shop, University Square Mall. (A set of these readings will also be available in the library.) You should have the readings completed by lecture on the date for which they are listed.

Grading:

We expect you to attend all lectures and all discussion sections, to complete all reading and written assignments on time, and to participate in discussions in section and in lecture. We will calculate your final grade as follows:

Attendance/preparation/discussion	20%
Paper 1	20%
Midterm	20%
Paper 2	20%
Final Paper	20%

Unexplained absences, lack of participation, or late assignments will lower your grade.

Assignments:

Papers 1 and 2 will be critical interpretations of primary documents. Each will be 3-4 typed pages in length. We will distribute the specific assignment a week in advance.

The mid-term will be an in-class examination. The questions will be identifications. We will distribute a study sheet a week in advance.

The final paper will be a critical analysis of no more than 5 typed pages (plus citations) on the Ginzberg book. It will be graded on the basis on your ability to offer a well-constructed and convincing argument informed by the readings and lectures of the course. We will distribute the specific assignment sheet on December 8. The paper is due no later than 9:00 a.m. December 19. There will be no separate final exam.

CLASS SCHEDULE

September 6: Introduction

Colonial Encounters

September 8: Gender and the Colonial Project

Jennifer Morgan, "Some Could Suckle over Their Shoulder: Male Travelers, Female Bodies, and the Gendering of Racial Ideology, 1500-1770." The William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd Ser. 54/1 (Jan., 1997): 167-192 [ON-LINE]

September 13: The Everyday Life and Labor of Settler Women North America

Lois Green Carr and Lorena Walsh, "The Planter's Wife: The Experience of White Women in Seventeenth-Century Maryland." The William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd Ser., 34/4 (Oct., 1977): 542-571. [ON-LINE]

Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, "'A Friendly Neighbor': Social Dimensions of Daily Work in Northern Colonial New England," Feminist Studies, 6/2 (Summer, 1980): 392-405. [ON-LINE]

Root of Bitterness: "Ordinary Dealings at Colonial County Courts," pp. 17-28.

September 15: Gender, Colonial Society and Social Disorder

Susan Sleeper-Smith, "Women, Kin, and Catholicism: New Perspectives on the Fur Trade," Ethnohistory, 47/2 (Spring 2000): 423-53. [ON-LINE]

Root of Bitterness: "Examination of Anne Hutchinson," "Church Trial and Excommunication of Ann Hibbens," pp. 3-16.

Ann M. Little, "'Shoot That Rogue, for He Hath an Englishman's Coat On!': Cultural Cross-Dressing on the New England Frontier, 1620-1760," The New England Quarterly, 74/2. (Jun., 2001): 238-273. [ON-LINE]

September 20: Fashioning a Colonial Order in the Southern Colonies

Paul Finkelman, "Crimes of Love, Misdemeanors of Passion: The Regulation of Race and Sex in the Colonial South" in Catherine Clinton and Michele Gillespie, eds., The Devil's Lane: Sex and Race in the Early South (New York, 1997), pp. 124-135 [READER]

Root of Bitterness: Statutes on Slave Descent, pp. 29-31.

September 22: Reading and Writing Critically

September 25: Fashioning a Colonial Order in New England

Carol F. Karlson, "The Devil in the Shape of a Woman: The Economic Basis of Witchcraft" in Linda K. Kerber and Jane DeHart, Women's America: Refocusing the Past (New York: Oxford, 1999), pp. 50-64. [READER]

Root of Bitterness: "Susanna Martin on Trial for Witchcraft," pp. 3-16, 32-35.

Eighteenth-Century Transitions

September 27: Labor and a Commercial Economy

First Paper Due in Class

Root of Bitterness, "A Rape on the Body of Anne Eastworthy," "A Law for Regulating Midwives," Sarah Harlan's Will," "Letter from an Indentured Servant," "Mary Cooper's Diary," "Moll Placket-Hole," and "Learning by Doing Women's Work," pp. 42-46, 56-71, 83-90

October 4: **In-Class Video**: "Mary Silliman's War, Part I"

Linda K. Kerber, "'Women Invited to War': Sacrifice and Survival" from Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America (New York: Norton, 1980), pp. 35-67. [READER]

Root of Bitterness, "Abigail Adams's Letters," pp. 71-76

Judith Sargent Murray, "On the Equality of the Sexes" in Sheila L. Skemp, ed. Judith Sargent Murray: A Brief Biography with Documents (Boston, 1998). [READER]

October 6: **In-Class Video**: "Mary Silliman's War, Part II"

Judith Apter Klinghoffer and Lois Elkis, "'The Petticoat Electors': Women's Suffrage in New Jersey, 1776-1807," Journal of the Early Republic 12 (Summer 1992): 159-193. [READER]

Sharon Block, "Rape without Women: Print Culture and the Politicization of Rape, 1765-1815," Journal of American History 89/3 (December 2002): 849-868. [ON-LINE]

October 11: Assessing the Revolution

“Rise and Progress of the Young Ladies’ Academy” (Philadelphia, 1791): Valedictory Oration of Eliza Shrupp; Valedictory Oration of Miss Molly Wallace; Salutatory Oration of Miss [Pricilla] Mason” [READER]
Cynthia Kierner, “Genteel Balls and Republican Parades: Gender and Early Southern Civic Rituals, 1677-1826,” The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography 104/2 (Spring 1996): 185-210. [READER]

October 13: Midterm Examination

October 18: Race, Gender and Order in Post-Revolutionary America

Nancy Cott, “Passionlessness: An Interpretation of Victorian Sexual Ideology, 1790-1850” in Nancy Cott and Elizabeth Pleck, eds., A Heritage of Her Own: Toward a New Social History of American Women (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979), pp. 162-181. [READER]
Jeanne Boydston, “The Woman Who Wasn’t There: Women’s Market labor and the Transition to Capitalism in the United States” in Paul Gilje, ed., The Wages of Independence: Capitalism in the Early American Republic (Madison: Madison House, 1997), pp. 23-47. [READER]

October 23: Middle-Class White Women and the Power of Domesticity

Catharine Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe, “Introduction,” “The Christian Family” and “A Christian House” from The American Woman’s Home (New York, 1869), pp. 13-42. [READER]

October 25: Middle-Class White Women and the Price of Domesticity

Selected Letters and Writings of Catharine Beecher from Jeanne Boydston, Mary Kelley and Anne Margolis, eds., The Limits of Sisterhood: The Beecher Sisters on Women’s Rights and Woman’s Sphere (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), pp. 35-7, 42-6, 125-9, 236-7, 252-5. [READER]

October 27: Gender Transgressions in the Age of Gender Spheres

Jonathan Ned Katz, “Dear Beloved Trio” in Love Stories: Sex Between Men before Homosexuality (Chicago, 2002), pp. 26-32. [READER]
Karen V. Hansen, “‘No Kisses Is Like Youres: An Erotic Friendship between Two African-American Women During the Mid-Nineteenth Century.” Gender and History 7 (August 1995): 153–182. [READER]
In-Class Video: “She Even Chew’d Tobacco”

Domesticity and Industrial Society

November 1: Becoming Working-Class in Antebellum America

Root of Bitterness, “Women’s Work in the Market Economy,” pp. 105-109.
Mary Blewett, “Women Shoeworkers and Domestic Ideology: Rural Outwork in Early Nineteenth-Century Essex County,” The New England Quarterly, 60/3. (Sep., 1987): 403-428. [ON-LINE]
Jeanne Boydston, “To Earn Her Daily Bread: Housework and Antebellum Working Class Subsistence,” Radical History Review, 35 (1986): 7-25. [READER]
“The Hodgdon Letters,” in Thomas Dublin, ed., Farm to Factory: Women’s Letters, 1830-1860 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), pp. 39-57. [READER]

November 3: Working-Class Women’s Organizing

Thomas Dublin, “Women, Work, and Protest in the Early Lowell Mills: ‘The Oppressing Hand of Avarice Would Enslave Us’” Labor History 16 (1975): 99-116. [READER]
Root of Bitterness, “Striking Tailoresses Speak,” “A Moral Reformer Makes Her Rounds,” “An Afternoon Call,” “A Daughter of Temperance Exhorts her Sex,” pp. 118-122, 198-203, 204-207, 208-212

Gender and the Civilizing Mission

November 8: Women and Reform in Antebellum America

Second Paper Due in Class

November 10: Gender and Authority Overseas

Patricia Grimshaw, "Christian Woman, Pious Wife, Faithful Mother, Devoted Missionary": Conflicts in Roles of American Missionary Women in Nineteenth-Century Hawaii, Feminist Studies 9/3(Autumn, 1983): 489-521. [ON-LINE]

Malini Schueller, "Nation, Missionary Women, and the Race of True Womanhood" in Malini Johar Schueller and Edward Watts, eds., Messy Beginnings: Postcoloniality and Early American Studies (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2003), pp. 155-174. [READER]

November 15: Overland Confrontations with Domesticity

Susan L. Johnson, "'Domestic Life' in the Diggings: The Southern Mines in the California Gold Rush" in Over the Edge: Remapping the American West (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), pp. 107-132 [READER]

Beatrice Medicine, ""Warrior Women': Sex Role Alternatives for Plains Indian Women" in Patricia Albers and Beatrice Medicine, eds., The Hidden Half: Studies in Plains Indian Women (New York: University Press of America, 1983), pp. 267-80. [READER]

Root of Bitterness, "Cherokee Women Address their Nation" "Missionary to Indian Territory," "Reaching Oregon," and "Iron Teeth (Mah-I-Ti-Wo-Nee-Ni) Remembers the Cheyenne Removal," pp. 177-184, 193-197, 224-29.

Women and Slavery

November 17: Slavery

Brenda Stevenson, "Gender Convention, Ideals, and Identity among Antebellum Virginia Slave Women" in David Barry Gaspar and Darlene Clark Hine, eds., More than Chattel: Black Women and Slavery in the Americas (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), pp. 169-190. [READER]

Brenda Stevenson, "Distress and Discord in Virginia Slave Families" in Carol Blesser, ed., In Joy and Sorrow: Women, Family, and Marriage in the Victorian South (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 103-124. [READER]

Root of Bitterness, "James Curry's Mother," "Narratives of Escaped Slaves," "Sarah Parker Remond on American Slavery," and "A Slave Writes to her Former Mistress," pp. 239-42, 252-57, 258-59, 260-61.

November 22: The Bodies of the Enslaved Woman

The Narrative of Sojourner Truth (1st half)

November 24: Thanksgiving

December 1: Race and Slavery in the North

The Narrative of Sojourner Truth (2nd half)

December 6: Black and White Women on Race and Slavery

Margaret M. R. Kellow, "The Divided Mind of Antislavery Feminism: Lydia Maria Child and the Construction of African American Womanhood" in Patricia Morton, ed., Discovering the Women in Slavery: Emancipating Perspectives on the American Past (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1996), pp. 107-126. [READER]

Root of Bitterness, "Maria Stewart Sees Chains on the Soul," "Sarah Grimké on the Condition of Women in the United States," "An Appeal to the Women of the Nominally Free States, by Angelina Grimké," pp. 113-17, 123-27, 246-51.

Women and Citizenship

December 8: Women's Rights

Lori Ginzberg, Untidy Beginnings, pp. 5-48.

December 13: Women's Rights

Lori Ginzberg, Untidy Beginnings, pp. 49-106.

December 15: Conclusions

Lori Ginzberg, Untidy Beginnings, pp. 107-169.

December 19, 9:00 a.m.: Final Paper Due.