Readings in Women’s and Gender History  
HIST 16:510:560:01  
Thursday 4:30-7:30  
Van Dyck 011

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Description

The purpose of this class is to introduce students to some of the key topics, questions, and debates that have animated the field of women’s and gender history. In keeping with the comparative and global scope of our department’s research interests, we will be reading works about different time periods and geographic regions. I’ve included classic works in women’s and gender history, as well as a number of clusters of new or fairly new works in subfields that take up fundamental questions about gender. This set of readings is intended to help you achieve greater awareness of the diversity of possibilities that can expand your analytic toolbox and strengthen your research and teaching. I hope these readings will also prove useful to those of you preparing for your comprehensive exams in history. As I learn more about students’ interests and experiences, I will likely modify the syllabus to reflect the class’s evolving needs.

Attendance and engaged participation are basic expectations of the course (20%). Students will also be required to write four 1-2 page “responses” to readings (40%). Responses should be submitted via email on the day before the reading is to be discussed (before 8pm, please). A response to a reading summarizes the author’s main argument, narrative strategy, and methodological approach, and it often offers further questions or counter-arguments. Please complete two of your responses in the first half of the term if possible. On the days for which you’ve signed up to write a response, you’ll be asked to start our discussion of that reading (or in some cases, that group of readings). Discussion leaders are generally expected to ground the reading in the context of other assigned texts and to identify a larger theoretical or historiographical framework through which we might understand them. That will likely mean familiarizing yourself with the larger outlines of the surrounding literature and doing extra readings. During class discussion, we’ll analyze both the authors’ arguments and their contributions to the field. I’ll expect all students to come prepared each week with a few questions about the readings to facilitate a lively discussion.

Students will also complete a final essay of approximately 15-20 pages (40%).
Readings

We’ll use the following complete books in this class. Students may buy these books at the bookseller of their choice, or they’re available on reserve at Alexander Library:


Other readings will be posted in PDF format on Sakai. Readings are subject to change as we refine our schedule to reflect the interests and discoveries of students in the class.

Class Schedule

9/8  **Ideas and Approaches (We meet on Tuesday, not Monday, this week)**


Lynn Hunt, “The Challenge of Gender: Deconstruction of Categories and Reconstruction

9/14  **Sexuality**


AND:


OR:


9/21  **Family and Reproduction**


9/28  **Food**


10/5  **Non-Human Feminisms**

AND:


OR:


10/12  **Cleanliness**


AND:


OR:


10/19  **Post/Decolonial Feminisms**


10/26  **Science and Medicine**


11/2 Archives


AND:


OR:


11/9 Open Week: Readings TBA

11/16 Transfeminism/Transhistory


11/23 Space


11/30  **Teaching**


Selections from Bully Bloggers on “trigger warnings.”

12/7  **Final Projects**