

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:

Kathleen Brown, *Foul Bodies: Cleanliness in Early America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009). ISBN: 978-0300171556

Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988). ISBN: 978-0520063297

Kate Eichhorn, *The Archival Turn in Feminism: Outrage in Order* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2013). ISBN: 978-1439909522.

Afsaneh Najmabadi, *Women with Mustaches and Men without Beards: Gender and Sexual Anxieties of Iranian Modernity* (University of California Press, 2005). ISBN: 978-0520242630

Katharine Park, *Secrets of Women: Gender, Generation, and the Origins of Human Dissection* (New York: Zone Books, 2010). ISBN: 978-1890951689

Alexander G. Weheliye, *Habeas Viscus: Racializing Assemblages, Biopolitics, and Black Feminist Theories of the Human* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014). ISBN: 978-0822357018.

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)**

Natalie Zemon Davis, "Women on Top," in *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1965), 124-151.

Joan Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis" *AHR* 91:5 (1986): 1053-75.

Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, "African-American Women's History and the Metalanguage of Race," *Signs* 117:2 (1992): 251-274.

Kathleen Canning, "Feminist History after the Linguistic Turn: Historicizing Discourse and Experience," *Signs* 19:2 (1994): 368-404.

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

of Narratives in Gender History,” in *Geschlechtergeschichte und Allgemeine Geschichte: Herausforderungen und Perspektiven*, ed. Hans Medick and Anne-Charlotte Trepp (Göttingen: Wallstein, 1998), 57-98.

9/14 **Sexuality**

Afsaneh Najmabadi, *Women with Mustaches and Men without Beards: Gender and Sexual Anxieties of Iranian Modernity* (University of California Press, 2005).

AND:

Gayle Rubin, “Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality,” in *Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality*, ed. Carole Vance (New York: Routledge, 1984), 267-319.

OR:

Judith M. Bennett, “Lesbian-like and the Social History of Lesbians,” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 9:1-2 (2000): 1-24.

9/21 **Family and Reproduction**

Rayna Rapp, Ellen Ross, and Renate Bridenthal, “Examining Family History,” *Feminist Studies* 5 (1979): 174-200.

Audre Lorde, “Man Child: A Black Lesbian Feminist’s Response,” in *Sister Outsider* (Freedom, CA: The Crossing Press, 1984), 72-80.

Nancy Scheper-Hughes, “Excerpts from *Death Without Weeping: The Violence of Everyday Life in Brazil*,” in *The Path Ahead: Readings in Death and Dying* (Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Pub. Co., 1995), 41-58.

Selections from Charis Thompson, *Making Parents: The Ontological Choreography of Reproductive Technologies* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2007).

9/28 **Food**

Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988).

Selections from Kyla Wazana Tomkins, *Racial Indigestion: Eating Bodies in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: NYU Press, 2012).

10/5 **Non-Human Feminisms**

Alexander G. Weheliye, *Habeas Viscus: Racializing Assemblages, Biopolitics, and Black Feminist Theories of the Human* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014).

AND:

Selections from Donna Haraway, *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007).

OR:

Graham Harvey, "Animals, Animists, and Academics," *Zygon* 41:1 (2006): 9-19.

10/12 **Cleanliness**

Kathleen Brown, *Foul Bodies: Cleanliness in Early America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

AND:

Selections from Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (New York: Taylor, 2002 [orig. pub. 1966]).

OR:

Julie Livingston, "Disgust, Bodily Aesthetics, and the Ethic of Being Human in Botswana," *Africa* 78:2 (2008), 288-307.

10/19 **Post/Decolonial Feminisms**

Gayatri Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 271-314.

Ania Loomba, "Dead Women Tell No Tales: Issues of Female Subjectivity, Subaltern Agency and Tradition in Colonial and Post-colonial Writings on Widow Immolation in India," *History Workshop Journal* 36 (1993): 209-27.

Saba Mahmood, *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011 [orig. published 2004]), 1-39.

Afsaheh Najmabadi, "Teaching and Research in Unavailable Intersections," in *Women's Studies on the Edge*, ed. Joan Wallach Scott (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 69-80.

10/26 **Science and Medicine**

Katharine Park, *Secrets of Women: Gender, Generation, and the Origins of Human Dissection* (New York: Zone Books, 2010).

Londa Schiebinger, "Why Mammals are Called Mammals: Gender Politics in Eighteenth-Century Natural History," *AHR* 98:2 (1993): 382-411.

11/2 **Archives**

Kate Eichhorn, *The Archival Turn in Feminism: Outrage in Order* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2013).

AND:

Marisa J. Fuentes, "Power and Historical Figuring: Rachael Pringle Polgreen's Troubled Archive," *Gender & History* 22:3 (2010): 564-84.

OR:

Martin F. Manalansan IV, "The 'Stuff' of Archives: Mess, Migration, and Queer Lives," *Radical History Review* 120 (2014): 94-107.

11/9 **Open Week: Readings TBA**

11/16 **Transfeminism/Transhistory**

Dean Spade, "Mutilating Gender," in *The Transgender Studies Reader*, ed. Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle (New York: Routledge, 2006), 315-34.

Omise'eke Natasha Tinsley, "Songs for Ezili: Vodou Epistemologies of (Trans)gender," *Feminist Studies* 37:2 (2011): 417-37.

Selections from Anne Enke, ed., *Transfeminist Perspectives in and beyond Transgender and Gender Studies* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2012).

11/23 **Space**

Jürgen Habermas, "The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article (1964)," *New German Critique* 3 (1974): 49-55.

Joan B. Landes, "The Public and the Private Sphere: A Feminist Reconsideration," in *Feminism: The Public and the Private*, ed. Joan Landes (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 135-164.

Lauren Berlant and Michael Warner, "Sex in Public," *Critical Inquiry* 24 (1998): 547-566.

OR:

Barney Warf and Santa Arias, "Introduction: The Reinsertion of Space into the Social Sciences and Humanities," in *The Spatial Turn: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 1-10.

Scott Herring, "I Hate New York," in *Another Country: Queer Anti-Urbanism* (New York: New York University Press, 2010), 1-29.

Anne Enke, "Smuggling Sex through the Gates: Race, Sexuality, and the Politics of Space in Second Wave Feminism," *American Quarterly* 55:4 (2003): 635-667.

11/30 **Teaching**

Selections from bell hooks, *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom* (New York: Routledge, 1994).

Sara Ahmed, "Against Students," available online at <http://feministkilljoys.com/2015/06/25/against-students/>.

Selections from Bully Bloggers on "trigger warnings."

12/7 **Final Projects**