

Spring 2015
Illinois State University

HIS 262: HISTORY OF WOMEN IN THE UNITED STATES SINCE 1865
Monday/Wednesday 2:00 – 3:15 pm in Schroeder 215

Any student needing to arrange a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability should contact Disability Concerns, 305 Fell Hall, 438-5853 (voice)/438-8620 (TDD)



Instructor: Dr. Kyle Ciani
Office: Schroeder 306B
Office telephone: 438-8062
History dept. office: Schroeder 301
E-mail: keciani@ilstu.edu
Office hours: Mondays & Wednesdays: 8:30-10:00 am
(if you are not available during this time I will work with you to come up with a time that is available for both of us)

Marion Post Wolcott, “Taking a Break from Hoeing Cotton Allen Plantation, Natchitoches, Louisiana,” 1941

NATURE OF THE COURSE

This course will present United States history since 1865 from a woman-centered perspective. We will focus on women’s relationships to and roles in the diverse communities that developed in the U.S., all the while assessing how the strategies used by women to improve their positions in U.S. society have changed over time. Our exploration will include: access to educational, legal, political and economic opportunities; women’s ability to recognize and use their creative, sexual, physical, and intellectual selves; and the consequences of living within or outside of images created for women. We will pay particular attention to how race, ethnicity, religious observation, age, sexual orientation, financial status, citizenship, and home region defined a woman’s ability to maneuver in society. Economic, legal, political, and ideological forces changed the position of all people living in the U.S., so while we will concentrate on the affects experienced by women, we cannot ignore that women lived in communities with men. Thus, this course recasts history to include the everyday happenings among and within all members of a family and its communities.

This course is a core requirement for the Women’s and Gender Studies Minor, which employs gender as an analytical category, along with race, class, ethnicity, ability, age, nationality, and transnationality to focus on women’s contributions to society and the gender implications of cultural, political, and economic processes. For information on how to apply visit: <http://womensandgenderstudies.illinoisstate.edu/programs/undergrad.shtml>

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- 40% Two in-class essay exams on course material (each worth 20%)
- 20% One 6-7 page analytical essay on the Lowe monograph
- 15% In-class group project on the Enke monograph
- 15% Participation and engagement in course (includes periodic reading responses)
- 10% One 3-4 page assessment on a public talk or exhibit (guidelines attached)

- Syllabus, Course Handouts, and Assignments will be posted on ReggieNet and distributed in class. Announcements will be posted in ReggieNet and sent via students' ilstu ulids. Please e-mail to my ilstu account (and not in ReggieNet).

- I will distribute guidelines for each requirement in class several weeks before due dates and I will load them on ReggieNet. However, please be aware that the system may be down so do not depend on it for assignments and guidelines; rather, come to class since I ALWAYS distribute paper copies to students in class and ALWAYS answer student questions in class.

- I don't offer "Extra Credit" nor do I accept late work. A missed assignment receives zero credit.

- Plan to turn in your assignments at the beginning of class on the due date. If you need an extension for a legitimate excuse (i.e. planned or emergency surgery), you must contact me ahead of time and make arrangements. Personal vacations, problems with your technology, RSO/Club commitments, or employment do not constitute legitimate excuses. Please be realistic about your schedules and review the syllabus before you accept an extra shift at work or take on a club responsibility. If you see a conflict with your schedule an easy solution might be to turn in the assignment before the due date.

- Work you do in this course will be held to college-level standards. Papers with spelling and grammatical errors, unorganized or unintelligible theses, or unsupported opinions will not receive a grade higher than a C. I will brainstorm with students, review outlines, and read rough drafts (I will not edit papers) if students allow enough time up front for that involvement. University programs such as those offered by the Julia N. Visor Academic Center at (309) 438-7100, Vrooman Hall, Rm 012, can help students improve their reading and writing skills, and I recommend students take full advantage of these offerings early in the semester.

- Attending class is a minimum requirement; as adult learners you make your own decisions about establishing a "to do" list for the day, the week, month, and semester. Please do so in a responsible manner for history has shown that absences negatively affect student performance.

- Please communicate with me. If you do not understand an assignment, ask me a question about it! If I write a comment on your exam such as "see me about how to better prepare" then follow through on that task. If the readings are confusing, let's talk about them.

- Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated and is cause for dismissal from the course, the student's major program, and the university.

REQUIRED READINGS

- Enke, Anne, *Finding the Movement: Sexuality, Contested Space, and Feminist Activism*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2007.
- Lowe, Margaret A. *Looking Good: College Women and Body Image, 1875-1930*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003.
- Moynihan, Ruth Barnes, Cynthia Russett & Laurie Crumpacker, eds. *Second to None: A Documentary History of American Women, Part II since 1865*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993.

Second to None will serve as our basic reader for the course, and we will tackle it one chapter per week (but not every week). The monographs explain ways in which certain women (especially young adult women) challenged the ways in which societies tried to regulate their lives. Books are available for purchase in University bookstores, for use in Milner Library through the Reserve Desk, or through the Interlibrary Loan System.

CLASS ENVIRONMENT

Our class will be one where students will participate actively and collaboratively in class. Because of that interaction, we need to be conscious of using respectful language and action, and I work to invite and honor the positions of all students, which includes working through ideas and asking questions about class material. Our class will also be an intellectually challenging space. To keep our classroom focused and comfortable for all, please honor the rules of common courtesy:

- Arrive to class on time and stay the entire 75 minutes;
- Listen and respond to each other with respect;
- Stay awake;
- Focus on this class rather than updating your personal calendar or completing assignments for other courses;
- Care about each other's welfare.

AND

- NO texting, e-mailing or social networking during class.
- Silence your electronics when class begins, including your cell phone.
- Do not eat your breakfast, lunch or dinner in class.
- NO use of tobacco products of any kind are permitted in class.

*** Be forewarned: Electronic abuse puts me in a bad mood because it's rude and disrespectful. If people ignore the above courtesies, I'll disallow use of all electronic devices for the rest of the semester for the entire class.**

GRADING SCALE

A = 90-100%

Excellent

Assignment demonstrates excellent analysis that accurately includes lecture material, course readings and ideas generated during the course; is free of errors in all facets, including typos, grammar, and spelling; and demonstrates an accurate understanding of course content. Well written, clear, thorough, and typically interesting. Concepts are placed in an accurate historical context (when, where, why, how, who, and how those characteristics figure together). Work is always a thoughtful articulation of the material.

B = 89.9-80%

Above Average

Assignment demonstrates above average analysis that accurately includes lecture material, course readings and ideas generated during the course; is generally free of errors in all facets, including typos, grammar, spelling, and course content. Work shows a concerted effort to understand the issues but does not always accurately reflect course content. A strong attempt is made to place concepts in an accurate historical context, but some elements of that context may be wrong.

C = 79.9-70%

Average

Assignment demonstrates the minimum: directions generally followed and lecture material and/or course readings generally included in the response. Little to no analysis of the content; rather, assignment merely repeats a fact from the reading or lecture and does not place the fact into a historical context. Typos, misspelled words, and/or poor grammar are present throughout the assignment.

D = 69.9-60%

Below Average

Assignment does not follow directions; lecture material and/or course readings ignored or overlooked in the response; little to no analysis of the content; no attention historical context; typos, misspelled words, and/or poor grammar are present throughout the assignment.

F = 59.9 and below

Assignment does not follow directions; inaccurate and/or absent content.

* I always give students several weeks to work with the material and I'm not about "tricking" you, having hidden agendas, or being unclear. Requirements are designed to help you work with the tools of the history discipline: primary sources, secondary material, and your own intellect. Students need to read the parameters of each prompt, think about the assignment, and use their analytical skills.

WEEKLY PLAN

Please note the Weekly Plan may change a bit—if we need more time on a topic, we’ll take it—but it will not change dramatically. So, students need to use this syllabus to manage your time. If you lose your copy, please access it on ReggieNet.

Plan to complete the assigned reading by Wednesday of each week. Typically I will lecture on Mondays and on Wednesdays we will review key concepts introduced in the reading. I may ask you to respond in writing as homework or in class as a quiz to the week’s query, and we will always have a class discussion about themes in the reading. Students need to read the material and not depend on me to summarize it for you. Students should also get in the habit of taking written notes pinpointing key themes, people, or activities. Discussion in class is an important component of our learning, even if no individual writing component is assigned for that day.

Week 1: Jan. 12 & 14 — Issues in Modern Women’s History in the U.S.

Themes: Interpreting historical sources (primary and secondary)

Readings: *Second to None*, to 10

Query: How can primary sources highlight a society’s attitudes regarding gender roles?

Week 2: Jan. 21 — Women’s Roles in Reconstructing the United States

Themes: Political, Legal, and Educational Rights

Readings: *Second to None*, 11-50, “Equal Rights”

Begin *Looking Good* (I suggest starting it over the MLK holiday)

Query: How did gender shape women’s abilities to problem solve?

Week 3: Jan. 26 & 28 — Living Within Gendered Images

Themes: Organizational strategies; Employment Opportunities

Readings: *Second to None*, 51-93, “Strategies for Achievement”

Continue *Looking Good*

Query: What factors controlled women’s employment options?

Week 4: Feb. 2 & 4 — Regulating Independent Women

Themes: Migrations in Urban Communities

Readings: None—focus on your essay

Query: How did race, class, age, and ethnicity influence regulations of women?

Week 5: Feb. 9 & 11 — Women’s Activism

Themes: Sexual Protection; Improving Public Health

Readings: *Second to None*, 97-148, “Shaping a New Century”

Query: How did women organize to change and improve their positions in society?

DUE: Essay on *Looking Good*, beginning of class on Monday, Feb. 18.

Week 6: Feb. 16 & 18 — Industrial Change

Themes: Social Justice Platforms and Social Welfare Agendas

Readings: *Second to None*, 97-148 (continued)

Query: What differences existed between rural and urban working-class women?

Week 7: Feb. 23 & 25 — Regulating Dependent Women

Themes: Consumerism and Scientific Motherhood

Readings: *Second to None*, 149-175, “Good Times”

Query: Did the benefits offered by technology and science allow for female independence?

Week 8: March 2 & 4 — Review of first half of semester

We will review in class on March 2 and you all will take Exam 1 on March 4

Exam 1 is a handwritten, no notes/no books/no computers assessment.

Mark your calendars for the 20th Annual Women’s and Gender Studies Symposium is Friday, April 17 in Old Main at the Bone Student Center, and I encourage you all to participate by submitting a paper for presentation (**deadline for submission is March 16**) and/or by attending an individual session.

Week 9: March 9-13 — Spring Break

Week 10: March 16 & 18 — Public Maneuverings

Themes: The Great Depression

Readings: *Second to None*, 179-203, “Hard Times”

Query: What strategies did women develop to survive during lean times?

Week 11: March 23 & 25 — The War Years

Themes: Wage Earning; Internment; Peace Activism

Readings: *Second to None*, 205-229, “Wartime Amazons”
Start *Finding the Movement*

Query: How did armed conflict affect women’s lives?

Week 12: March 30 & April 1 — Expectations of a Consensus Society

Themes: Fertility; Suburban Life; Work Limitations

Readings: *Second to None*, 231-265, “Peacetime Angels”
Continue *Finding the Movement*

Query: Why did society feel it needed to define female domesticity in heterosexual terms in this era?

Week 13: April 6 & 8 — Challenging Expectations

Themes: Civil Rights Movement; Considering Choices

Readings: cont. *Second to None*, 231-265
Finish *Finding the Movement*

Query: How did the Civil Rights movement influence women's ability to change their positions in the U.S.?

Week 14: April 13 & 15 — Reproductive Rights

Themes: Pregnancy, Birth Control, Sterilization, Abortion, Infertility

Readings: *Second to None*, 269-318, "Stirring Up the Pot"

Query: How does a woman's socioeconomic position influence her access to reproductive health care?

Try to Attend the Women's & Gender Studies Symposium, Friday, April 17.

Week 15: April 20 & 22 — Diversity of Feminist Agendas

Themes: Second Wave Feminism; Efforts to Effect Policy Changes

Readings: None – focus on your *Finding the Movement* project answers

Query: Did the various forms of feminism affect the majority of women?

DUE: In-class Group Project on *Sexual Reckonings*, Monday, April 22

Week 16: April 27 & April 29 — Backlash to Feminist Solutions

Themes: Moral Majority and Anti-feminism

Readings: *Second to None*, 319-365, "Toward the New Millennium"

Query: How did culture shifts in the 1970s and 1980s influence political, legal, and educational opportunities for women?

DUE: Final Day to turn in a Public Assessment: Monday, April 27

Week 17: Exam 2 in our classroom – date and time to be announced by the University

It will follow the same format as Exam 1

GUIDELINES FOR YOUR ASSESSMENT OF A PUBLIC TALK, PERFORMANCE, EXHIBIT

**Assessments may be handed in throughout the semester
BUT must be handed in by start of class, Monday, April 27**

Each student will attend one public talk, performance or exhibit; reflect on the qualities of that experience; and submit a 3-4 page assessment using the following format:

1. At the top of the assessment provide the name of the talk or performance; the deliverer(s) of that talk; when and where delivered/performed. In the case of a museum exhibit, provide the name of the exhibit as well as the museum in which it is installed. These details are important documentation that must be included in your assessment.
2. Attach a document that indicates you were in attendance such as a ticket stub or handout from the talk. Take initiative to ask for or to track down such a document: think of it as a primary source that records the history of the activity. All legitimate public talks are publicized (often on websites) so print the advertisement as your documentation if it is a free talk with no handouts.
3. Provide a basic description (1-2 paragraphs, not the entire assessment) of the talk/performance/exhibit.
4. Spend the bulk of your assessment (at least 2 pages) reflecting on what you learned from this experience. For instance: Did the activity introduce new ideas or subjects to you? Is the forum (for instance a theatre presentation) a new way of learning for you? If so, how does it differ from a standard question and answer lecture format? Assess the significance of these new ideas, subjects, or learning methods in terms of how we are learning about women's history. Consider the conversations we've held concerning re-thinking primary sources and asking new questions of old sources. Think "outside the box" on this assessment.
5. This assessment is not an exercise in audience critique. It is not valuable for me to know that the speaker "was boring." "Get over it" will always be my response. We are here to learn and most speakers are not actors, comedians, or politicians. You are not assessing the way they deliver the material but rather the ideas and how this information touched your intellect.

A wide variety of options are available to you on – and off-campus, on weekends, during the week, in the evenings and throughout the day; most on-campus events are free or charge nominal entry rates to students. So, no student will be excused from this assignment (worth 10% of one's course grade). The topic, performance, or exhibit must focus on an aspect of female experience. I will announce options as I hear of them and students should feel free to announce options as well. If you are unsure if an event or museum exhibition fits the guidelines please ask me *before* you attend about its appropriateness. I won't know all of the potential possibilities available to you but I will be able to make an informed judgment about an event if you discuss it with me.