History 4337.001: United States Women’s History  
Spring 2019

Instructor: Dr. Beth Robinson  
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Course Description  
Where are all the women in American history? Although women were key players in American history, the traditional understanding of what history is all about has obscured their presence. This course restores American women to their proper place in history by reexamining events and institutions that both shaped and were shaped by women’s lives from the colonial era to the present. Throughout the semester we will trace the social, political, and legal construction of womanhood and of woman’s status and roles in American society. We will also examine the diversity of women’s experiences according to such factors as race, class, ethnicity, age, and sexual orientation.

Student Learning Outcomes  
- Trace and interpret major themes in U.S women’s history through the course readings, writing assignments, and in-class discussions.  
- Analyze primary documents and secondary sources by writing a series of analytical essays on the course readings.  
- Present arguments and acknowledge a variety of historical perspectives in written and oral form through written work and in-class discussion.  
- Understand the contributions of various groups of women to America’s past.  
- Analyze how cultural and gendered norms and ideals (like patriarchy, heteronormativity, and shifting expectations of women’s “place” in society) impact diverse women’s lives.

Required Texts  
Course Requirements

Attention and Participation (25%): One or two absences for serious illness or other genuine emergency may be unavoidable, but more than two absences can be severely disruptive both to your own learning and to the intellectual development of the other members of the class. I will be concerned by a pattern of absence regardless of the reason. Students with excessive absences can expect to receive a participation grade no higher than C. Be aware, however, that regular attendance is only the bare minimum. To be adequately prepared for class, students need to have completed the assigned reading listed on the schedule below. Class sessions will be a mix of lecture and discussion, and students are expected to participate regularly in these discussions. I will regularly ask you to do in-class writing or complete group activities. These cannot be made up and will be factored into your participation grade.

“Activist of the Week” (10%): Teams of two students will make oral presentations to the class about an American activist who has done significant work to improve gender equality, connecting that person to themes of the class.

Short Essays (30%): You will write two short essays that analyze and synthesize the material covered in class. I suggest that you approach these essays with the same preparation and seriousness with which they would approach a formal in-class exam.

Oral History Paper (35%): Each student will conduct an oral interview with a woman (family member, friend, colleague, neighbor) who was born before 1970 about some aspect of women’s lives in the last two decades of the twentieth century. You will then use this source material to write an analytical paper on your chosen theme. You will submit a proposal, a draft for peer review, and a final paper.

Grading Scale: A = 90 – 100 B = 80 – 89 C = 70 – 79 D = 60 – 69 F = 59 and below

Late Work/Make Ups
If you need an extension due to an emergency, you must email me your request at least 24 hours before the assignment is due. Extensions will be granted at the discretion of the instructor or as mandated by law or university policy. Late assignments will be penalized by a reduction in grade level for every day they are overdue, i.e., from A to A-, from A- to B+, etc. Assignments that are five days or more overdue will not be accepted. Failure to complete all required components of the course may result in a failing grade for the course as a whole.

Academic Integrity
By enrolling in the university, students are automatically agreeing to abide by its policies, including those on academic misconduct. Academic integrity and scholarship are core values that should guide our conduct and decisions as members of the TAMUCC community. Plagiarism and cheating contradict these values, and so are serious academic offenses. Penalties include a failing grade in an assignment or in the course, or suspension or expulsion from the university. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with and follow citation practices. For more information, consult the Student Code of Conduct: http://studentaffairs.tamucc.edu/handbook.html
Disabilities Accommodations
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

Academic Advising
The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

Dropping a Class
I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. **Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course.** Should dropping the course be the best course of action, **you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class.**

Grade Appeals
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, Student Grade Appeals. These documents are accessible online at: [http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf](http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal in CLA, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, [http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html](http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html)
Schedule of Topics and Readings
The schedule is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

Week 1 // January 15 & 17 // Course Introduction and Indigenous Women
- “Navajo Emergence Story” (Blackboard)
- Chavez-García, “Race, Culture, and Justice in Mexican Los Angeles” (Unequal Sisters)

Week 2 // January 22 & 24 // Colonial and Revolutionary Women
- Boydston, “To Earn Her Daily Bread: Housework and Antebellum Working-Class Subsistence” (Unequal Sisters)
- Morgan, “Deluders and Seducers of Each Other: Gender and the Changing Nature of Resistance” (Unequal Sisters)
- Kerber, "The Republican Mother" (Blackboard)

Week 3 // January 29 & 31 // 19th Century Resistance: Lowell Mills and Seneca Falls
- Orleck, Ch. 1
- Lerner, “The Meanings of Seneca Falls” (Blackboard)

Week 4 // February 5 & 7 // Slavery, the US Civil War, and Reconstruction
- Camp, “The Pleasures of Resistance: Enslaved Women and Body Politics in the Plantation South, 1830-1861” (Unequal Sisters)
- Faust, “Altars of Sacrifice: Confederate Women and the Narratives of War” (Blackboard)
- Tera W. Hunter, “Reconstruction and the Meanings of Freedom” (Blackboard)

Week 5 // February 12 & 14 // Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration
- Gabaccia and Ruiz, “Migrations and Destinations: Reflections on the Histories of U.S. Immigrant Women” (Unequal Sisters)
- Yung, “The Social Awakening of Chinese American Women as Reported in Chung Sai Yat Po, 1900-1911” (Unequal Sisters)

Week 6 // February 19 & 21 // Progressives and Industrial Feminists
- Orleck, “From the Russian Pale to the Lower East Side: The Cultural Roots of Four Jewish Women’s Radicalism” (Blackboard)
- Gordon, “Black and White Visions of Welfare: Women’s Welfare Activism, 1890-1945” (Unequal Sisters)
  → Due: Oral History Proposal

Week 7 // February 26 & 28 // Modernity and Suffrage
• Peiss, “Making Faces: The Cosmetics Industry and the Cultural Construction of Gender, 1890-1930” (*Unequal Sisters*)

**Week 8 // March 5 & 7 // The Great Depression**
- Orleck, Ch. 2
- Weber, “Raiz Fuerte: Oral History and Mexicana Farmworkers” (*Unequal Sisters*)
  → Due: Essay #1

**Week 9 // Spring Break**

**Week 10 // March 19 & 21 // Women and World War II**
- Matsumoto, “Japanese American Women and the Creation of Urban Nisei Culture in the 1930s” (*Unequal Sisters*)
- Milkman, “Gender at Work: The Sexual Division of Labor during World War II” (Blackboard)

**Week 11 // March 26 & 28 // 1950s: The Golden Age?**
- Orleck, Ch. 3 & 4
- Horowitz, “Rethinking Betty Friedan and The Feminine Mystique: Labor Union Radicalism and Feminism in Cold War America” (*Unequal Sisters*)

**Week 12 // April 2 & 4 // Women of Color at the Intersection of Race and Gender**
- Cynthia Griggs Fleming “‘More than a Lady:’ Ruby Doris Smith Robinson and Black Women’s Leadership in the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee” (*Unequal Sisters*)
- Chávez, "Dolores Huerta and the United Farm Workers" (Blackboard)
- McGuire, “Sexual Violence and the Long Civil Rights Movement” (Blackboard)

**Week 13 // April 9 & 11 // Making the Personal Political**
- Orleck, Ch. 5-7
- Boyd, “Bodies in Motion: Lesbian and Transsexual Histories” (*Unequal Sisters*)
- Hanisch, “A Critique of the Miss America Protest, 1968” (Blackboard)

**Week 14 // April 16 & 18 // Backlash: Phyllis Schlafly and Anita Hill**
- Orleck, Ch. 7 & 8
  → Due: Oral History Drafts – to be workshopped in class on Thursday

**Week 15 // April 23 & 25 // Contemporary Issues – The War on Terror, Immigration, and #MeToo**
- Deeb, “Silencing Religiosity: Secularity and Arab American Feminisms” (*Unequal Sisters*)
- Camacho Schmidt, “Migrant Melancholia: Emergent Discourses of Mexican Migrant Traffic in Transnational Space” (*Unequal Sisters*)
Week 16 // April 30 // Course Conclusion
→ Due: Oral History Papers and Presentations
→ Due: Essay #2