

HIST 2384.001

U.S. Women from Settlement to Present

Fall 2020 | M/W 4:00pm - 5:15pm | Online

Prof. Anne Gray Fischer | AnneGrayFischer@utdallas.edu

Remote student office hours: Email or GroupMe text me to set up a time to chat!

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[Course homepage \(eLearning\)](#)

[Course GroupMe](#)

Course Description:

How have women, and people who identify as women, changed the world we live in today? This introductory course critically analyzes gender and women's history through the experiences of those born as or living as female, from colonial North America to the contemporary United States. We will examine the perspectives of Indigenous women and women of European, African, Latinx, and Asian descent within the contexts of historical change in the U.S. Working with primary sources—any material or written text produced by someone from the past—this course is organized around three key questions in women's history: What are the intersections of race, class, gender, and sexuality? How has the concept of citizenship been gendered? And how have diverse groups of women worked to influence the ideologies, culture, and policies that shaped their lives? The course will examine how women's history provides a crucial perspective on broader American history, and also how and why it is a dynamic and unique area of study. We will study a variety of primary sources, including letters, political speeches, photographs, and music. In the process, you will hone your skills of written analysis and oral communication.

1. What This Course is Designed to Help You Do:

- This course is NOT about memorizing dates and names, but rather identifying historical connections and concepts.
- Develop a deeper understanding of how women's experiences—as well as ideas about sex and gender—in the United States are historically contingent, that is, dependent upon their historical moment for definition and meaning.
- Develop a deeper understanding of women as *historical actors*, that is, as people who sought to change their circumstances and shaped history in the process.
- Learn how to read, contextualize, interpret, and make well-informed claims about historical evidence.
- Engage a diversity of viewpoints in a civil and constructive fashion.
- Demonstrate in writing and conversation how to synthesize a broad range of sources and evidence.

2. Notes on How to Access and Read the Course Materials:

All course readings are available online in clearly marked folders on eLearning.

You will be reading “primary sources,” which are essentially any artifact from the past that can be contextualized and interpreted to make a historical argument: written documents, maps, oral histories, art, music, film, and material culture (pottery, clothing, furniture). Primary sources that we will investigate include letters, journal entries, political speeches, laws, newspaper ads, songs, paintings, and more.

You will find that the readings are quite short. However, do not be deceived by the length! These short primary sources will require a good deal of concentration and active reading in order to understand the perspective of the historical actor that produced each document, what this piece of evidence can teach us about the past, and why this document matters in the broader sweep of history. We will discuss techniques to read primary sources in class.

3. How Should We Approach Each Other?

College offers you the unique opportunity to think deeply about what you believe and why. This can be an uncomfortable process, but it can yield lasting rewards, and a lifetime of inspiration and inquiry. In this course, you will develop the skills of inquiry and critical thought in the most challenging, yet essential way: in conversation with others. We learn best when we learn together.

This course necessarily involves issues of discrimination, political conservatism and radicalism, labor and capital, power struggles, and multiple forms of gender-based oppression, violence, and exploitation. Together, we are walking directly into some of the most combative and controversial issues in the U.S. today. How will we respond to these difficult issues—and to each other? What kind of democracy do we want to model?

Let’s begin with honest intentions. A student might ask a question that offends or upsets another student. If the question was asked in a sincere effort to understand a concept or get clarification, then we are on the path to reducing harm and mending connections. As our brains expand, we will feel growing pains, and that is okay—we will live to face another day and come out on the other side stronger and smarter. However, if the question was asked to provoke hurt, shame, or hatred, then I will intervene. Deliberate efforts to troll, dehumanize, or degrade another human are not okay in our shared learning space.

Next, let’s add simple kindness to honest intentions. Students will surely disagree with each other and with me. This is a good thing, and it is necessary for our shared intellectual and analytical growth. Students should feel comfortable to challenge themselves, each other, and me. But we must disagree with each other as we would want to be disagreed with: with respect, honest intentions, and everyday decency. This is not about being “politically correct”—this is about learning to function in a diverse democracy where every day we encounter people who hold ideas and beliefs that are different from our own.

Together in class we will develop a culture of respect unique to our learning group that we will agree to honor. But let’s start by practicing honest intentions and everyday kindness.

4. Note on Content and Language in This Course:

U.S. history necessarily involves written and sometimes visual depictions of physical violence and verbal expressions of hatred. We will also encounter primary sources produced by historical actors who used language that would be considered offensive today. If you are worried about the material troubling you, please reach out to me to discuss your concerns at any time. If you find any material especially upsetting during class, please feel free to step out of class for the duration.

5. Learning During Covid-19:

What is a “normal” learning environment? Will we ever return to the “normal” as we knew it before Spring 2020? Is this the “new normal”? None of us can say for sure.

There is a tremendous amount of uncertainty and precarity this semester. As I write this syllabus, over 150,000 people have died due to Covid-19 in just four months. The U.S. has the highest rate of infection in the world. The pandemic has intensified and exacerbated existing vulnerabilities in this country: poverty; lack of access to housing, healthcare and childcare; and a glaring absence of any social safety net more broadly. Marginalized people—people targeted because of their ancestry, country of origin, religion, or gender and sexual identity and people experiencing disabilities, addiction, mental illness, and homelessness—confront the most lethal and acute forms of vulnerability.

In order to have a valuable learning experience under these conditions, we must balance flexibility with accountability. I have designed this class to be flexible: all synchronous classes will be recorded and I will not take attendance. However, in order to stay accountable to ourselves and to each other, I have built in group assignments that are designed to overcome the isolation of remote learning.

If you experience any disruptions of your health and wellness of any kind, please be in touch with me. You do not have to share details. But I cannot help you, provide support, or offer any accommodations in the course if I do not know what you are going through. Please stay in touch. I am available by email, Teams chat, and GroupMe text.

6. Course Assignments:

Peer Reading Response Journals (10%): Most weeks, students will work in small groups to discuss the primary source readings. This is designed to help you work through the challenges of reading primary sources in conversation with your peers; to overcome the isolation of remote learning; and to stay accountable to the reading.

You must make TWO entries in your group response journals:

- First, you will provide at least one quote from the text and offer a substantial comment, question, or confusion about the quote. (See grading rubric below.)
- Second, you will add at least one comment responding to a peer’s original post. (See grading rubric below.)

You will be assigned to a small group (posted on eLearning and Teams) and post your work in a shared document on Teams.

We will make new groups after the midterm.

All of your original posts and responses are due Wednesday before class at 4pm.

Grading rubric for reading response journals:

- Everyone will receive half credit (5 out of 10 points) for posting one comment/question/confusion and one response.
 - Original comment/question/confusion:
 - +2 points: Comments, questions, or confusions provide a quote from the text, explain the reasoning for sharing that quote, and offer a thoughtful and informed question or remark that connects the readings to previous lectures or course materials using other examples from the course materials.
 - +1 point: Comments, questions, or confusions do not directly cite or quote the text and do not explain why they consider this point important or relevant to materials we are discussing.
 - +0 points: Posts are tangential, unrelated to the reading, or simply say “I enjoyed this reading.”
 - Response:
 - +2 points: Responses substantially engage with the students’ ideas and offer examples from the source or course materials to support the claims.
 - +1 point: Responses restate the original post but do not advance the discussion, offer an evidence to support the claim, or explain why the original post was important/raised an interesting point.
 - +0 points: Responses are vague or incomplete or simply say “Good point” or “I enjoyed your response.”

Please note: I love reading students’ responses, and Mathieu and I will read everyone’s journal entries. However, due to the size of the class, we will be unable to respond to everyone’s comments and questions. However, we will read all posts available by Wednesday at noon to incorporate major questions/confusions into the lectures. If you post after Wednesday at noon, I won’t see it before class, but I will check back to see if there are any questions/confusions I should address the next time we meet.

Newsflash Responses (10%): Twice, instead of your reading response, you will identify a recent article and talk about how it connects to the history we have discussed so far. You will provide your peer groups with a discussion that connects your contemporary event with an issue, theme, or historical event/figure we have discussed. Some prompts for this essay can include: In what way has the history we learned in the class changed your understanding of a contemporary issue or event? What are the similarities or differences you see between the past and the present, and why are these similarities or differences important to understanding the issue at hand?

Weekly eLearning Quizzes (30%): Most weeks, students will complete a short quiz on eLearning. Quizzes will cover the materials we discussed in class that week. These quizzes are designed to help you stay on top of the course materials and check your weekly comprehension of key terms and concepts.

All quizzes are due by Thursday at 11:59 p.m. There are two amnesty deadlines to complete late quizzes, listed below.

Primary Source and Midterm and Final Exams (25% each): For the midterm exam, students will be asked to interpret ten primary sources and to discuss how these sources connect to the course's key terms. Students will take the midterm on eLearning.

Extra credit opportunities:

- Make a Meme (2%): Create a meme related to class. If you would like, you can share it with the class.
- Newsflash Essay (3%): Write a 1000-word essay connecting something we have learned in class to a contemporary event. Choose one contemporary event and respond to this prompt: In what way has the history we learned in the class changed your understanding of a contemporary issue or event? What are the similarities or differences you see between the past and the present, and why are these similarities or differences important to understanding the issue at hand?

7. Useful Campus Resources:

Accommodations

If you require accommodations related to a disability please register with the Office of Student AccessAbility as soon as possible. You do not need to disclose anything to me. I will work directly with OSA to accommodate you as best as possible while still meeting the aims of the course. You can access the OSA here, independent of any conversation with me at <https://www.utdallas.edu/studentaccess/>

Student Success Center

Additionally, Success Coaches are available for individual student appointments to discuss study skills, time management, note taking, test taking and preparation, and other success strategies. More information is available at <https://www.utdallas.edu/studentsuccess/>

Student Wellness

The Student Wellness Center assists and encourages students to adopt responsible behaviors related to various health topics through evidence-based educational programs, resources and individual consultations. Programs include alcohol and other drug education, sexual assault prevention, sexual responsibility, suicide prevention, tobacco education, bystander intervention and public health initiatives. The Student Wellness Center has a registered dietitian on staff to aid students in healthy meal planning and also coping with eating disorders. The Student Wellness Center is located in the Student Services Building, SSB 4.500, and can be contacted at 972-883-4275 or on the web at www.utdallas.edu/studentwellness

Mental Health and Counseling Services

The Student Counseling Center is staffed by licensed psychologists and counselors who are available to help students with personal and interpersonal problems. Services include individual counseling, couple counseling, group counseling, crisis intervention and special workshops/programs relevant to student needs. In addition, a psychiatrist is available to provide Student Counseling Center clients with medications when necessary. All counseling services and records are held confidential to the extent permitted by law. The Student Counseling Center is located in the Student Services Building, SSB 4.600. For more information call 972-883-2575 or go to www.utdallas.edu/counseling

Sexual Harassment and Assault Experiences

Title IX and UTD prohibit sexual misconduct in any form, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, and dating and domestic violence. If you have experienced sexual misconduct, or know someone who has, the University can help.

The Student Wellness Center offers information about reporting options and support services available to students. The center refers students who need support to the Student Counseling Center, the Galerstein Gender Center, or off-campus organizations as needed. For more information, visit the Sexual Assault Prevention program of the Student Wellness Center at <https://www.utdallas.edu/studentwellness/sexual/sexualassaultprevention.html>

Other Links and Resources

- For a complete list of campus resources, please visit <https://catalog.utdallas.edu/now/undergraduate/resources/index>.
- A complete list of UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures—including the Academic Integrity Policy— is available at <https://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>.

Course Schedule:

Week 1: August 17 | August 19 **Course Introduction and Primary Source Ice-Breakers**

What is due this week and when:

- Quiz #1 (Syllabus Quiz): Thursday August 20 at 11:59 pm

Week 2: August 24 | August 26 **Patriarchy and Colonization**

Reading:

- Letter from Hernán Cortés to King Charles V, 1519
- Carmen Tafolla, “La Malinche,” 1978
- Excerpt from John Smith, *General History of Virginia, New England, and the Summer Isles*, 1624

What is due this week and when:

- Peer Journal Post and Response: before class on Wednesday August 26
- Quiz #2: Thursday August 27 at 11:59 pm

Week 3: August 31 | September 2 **Race and Sex in the Colonies**

Reading:

- Letter from Elizabeth Sprigs to Mr. John Sprigs, 1756
- “A Report of a Committee from an Assembly Concerning the freedome of Elizabeth Key,” 1656
- Virginia Slave Law, 1662

What is due this week and when:

- Peer Journal Post and Response: before class on Wednesday September 2
- Quiz #3: Thursday September 3 at 11:59 pm

Week 4: September 9 **Whose Revolution?**

Reading:

- Correspondence between Abigail and John Adams, 1776
- Excerpt from New Jersey State Constitution, 1776

What is due this week and when:

- Peer Journal Post and Response: before class on Wednesday September 9
- Quiz #4: Thursday September 10 at 11:59 pm

NO CLASS ON SEPTEMBER 7 DUE TO LABOR DAY

Week 5: September 14 | September 16
Separate Spheres and Women's Labor

Reading:

- Excerpts from Lewis and Clark's journals, 1805-1806
- William Cullen Bryant's description of Charity and Sylvia's relationship, ca. 1847
- Excerpt from Harriet Jacobs, "Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl," 1861

What is due this week and when:

- Peer Journal Post and Response: before class on Wednesday September 16
- Quiz #5: Thursday September 17 at 11:59 pm

Week 6: September 21 | September 23
Moral Reform and Abolitionism

Reading:

- Elizabeth Cady Stanton, "To the American Anti-Slavery Society," 1860
- Maria Stewart, "Why Sit Ye Here and Die," 1832
- Compare two versions of Sojourner Truth's "Address at the Woman's Rights Convention in Akron, Ohio," May 29, 1851

What is due this week and when:

- Peer Journal Post and Response: before class on Wednesday September 23
- No quiz: study for your midterm exam

MIDTERM EXAM DISCUSSED IN CLASS ON WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 23

**AMNESTY DEADLINE FOR INCOMPLETE QUIZZES 1-5:
THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 24 AT 11:59PM**

Week 7: September 28 | September 30
Expansion and War

Reading:

- "Barbara Longknife Writes Home to Indian Country," 1854, 1857
- Excerpt from Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman, 1869

What is due this week and when:

- No peer journal posts due to midterm exam
- No quiz due to midterm exam
- Midterm exam: Friday October 2 at 11:59 pm

MIDTERM EXAM DUE ON ELEARNING BY FRIDAY OCTOBER 2 AT 11:59 P.M.

Week 8: October 5 | October 7
Reconstructing Women's Lives

Reading:

- Three primary sources on the 15th Amendment Debates:
 - Elizabeth Cady Stanton letter to the editor, 1865
 - Frederick Douglass address to the American Equal Rights Association, 1869

- Sojourner Truth address to the American Equal Rights Association, 1867
- Ida B. Wells, “A Red Record,” 1895

What is due this week and when:

- Newsflash #1: before class on Wednesday October 7
- Quiz #6: Thursday October 8 at 11:59 pm

Week 9: October 12 | October 14

Women and Empire

Reading:

- Letter from Queen Liliuokalani to U.S. President William McKinley, 1897
- Amelia Quinton, Women’s National Indian Association, 1894
- Excerpts from Zitkala-Sa, “School Days of an Indian Girl,” 1921

What is due this week and when:

- Peer Journal Post and Response: before class on Wednesday October 14
- Quiz #7: Thursday October 15 at 11:59 pm

NOTE: NEW PEER GROUPS START THIS WEEK!

Week 10: October 19 | October 21

Labor, Suffrage, and Sex in the Progressive Era

Reading:

- *Muller v. Oregon*, 1908
- Lucy Parsons speech, 1905
- “On the Policewoman’s ‘Beat,’” 1936

What is due this week and when:

- Peer Journal Post and Response: before class on Wednesday October 21
- Quiz #8: Thursday October 22 at 11:59 pm

Week 11: October 26 | October 28

Poverty, Welfare, and War

Reading:

- Ella Baker and Marvel Cooke, “The Bronx Slave Market,” 1935
- Beatrice Morales oral history from Sherna B. Gluck, *Rosie the Riveter Revisited: Women, the War, and Social Change*

What is due this week and when:

- Peer Journal Post and Response: before class on Wednesday October 28
- Quiz #9: Thursday October 29 at 11:59 pm

Week 12: November 2 | November 4

Beyond the Feminine Mystique, 1945-1965

Reading:

- Excerpt from Betty Friedan, *Feminine Mystique*, 1963
- Excerpts from Audre Lorde, *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*,

- Ella Baker, “Developing Leadership Among Other People,” 1960

What is due this week and when:

- Peer Journal Post and Response: before class on Wednesday November 3
- No quiz due to election

ELECTION DAY IS TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3. WE WILL PAUSE THE QUIZ THIS WEEK TO GIVE EVERYONE SOME BREATHING SPACE.

Week 13: November 9 | November 11

Modern Feminism and Reproductive Justice, 1965-1980

Reading:

- *Roe v. Wade*, 1973
- Young Lords Party, “Position Paper on Women,” 1970
- WARN, “Theft of Life,” ca. 1979

What is due this week and when:

- Newsflash #2: before class on Wednesday November 11
- Quiz #10: Thursday November 12 at 11:59 pm

Week 14: November 16 | November 18

The Rise of Sexual Conservatism, 1975-1995

Reading:

- Phyllis Schlafly, “What’s Wrong with ‘Equal Rights’ for Women?,” 1972
- Jerry Falwell, “Rise Up Against the Tide of Permissiveness and Moral Decay,” 1980
- “African American Women in Defense of Ourselves,” 1991

What is due this week and when:

- Peer Journal Post and Response: before class on Wednesday, November 18
- No quiz due to final exam

AMNESTY DEADLINE FOR INCOMPLETE QUIZZES 6-10: THURSDAY NOVEMBER 19 AT 11:59PM

Week 15: November 23 | November 25

Violence Against Women and Closing Reflections

- Watch an [excerpt from an interview](#), “The Deadly Cost of Pipelines in Native Land: Winona LaDuke on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women,” 2018

What is due this week and when:

- No peer journal posts
- No quiz due to fall holiday

FINAL EXAM DUE BY THURSDAY DECEMBER 3 AT 11:59PM