

Winter, 2004

History 266

***WOMEN IN
UNITED STATES
HISTORY***

A LINFIELD GUIDED STUDY COURSE

3 Credit Hours

PREPARED BY

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Dear Student,

Welcome to the History of Women in the United States. If your response is similar to others who have already taken this course, you can be assured that it is one that you will find very interesting and enjoyable.

I would like to introduce myself to you. I moved to Oregon from Chicago, Il. in the 1970s. After raising four children, I became a non-traditional college student at Lane Community College in Eugene, Oregon. I continued my studies at the University of Oregon where I also worked as an academic adviser. My interest and love for studying history led me to my current career as an instructor of history. I teach history at Lane Community College and through Linfield's Division of Continuing Education. The courses I enjoy teaching the most are the history of women and minorities, Latin American history, and the history of the United States and Western Civilization.

This course on women in the United States is my favorite and I look forward to working with you as you enter the past and discover the history of those who came before you.

Sincerely,

Sheila Broderick

COURSE INFORMATION

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REQUIRED COURSE TEXTS:

Norton, Mary Beth & Ruth M. Alexander, eds. Major Problems in American Women's History, Third Edition (2003).

Woloch, Nancy. Women and the American Experience, Third Edition (1999).

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course explores the distinctive experiences of women in the United States from its earliest period to current time. The course will follow a chronological framework as we focus on themes and topics such as Native American women, women and witchcraft, slavery, women's rights movement, women and work, women and war, the "feminine mystique," and personal politics. We will also take into account the implications of race, class, and ethnic differences among women over time.

GENERAL COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Throughout the course, you will be asked to critically reflect on how women's experience, perspective, and actions change our understanding of U.S. History. You should consider such questions such as: Was women's experience at different times in our past unique to a specific period or was their condition the same over time? Were women's experiences similar to men's during different periods of our historical past, or did the fact that they were women create a separate experience for them? What was the effect on women of being in different social and economic classes and racial categories from each other?

COURSE FORMAT:

Readings: There will be assigned readings with study questions to help you focus. It is suggested that you write the answers to these questions as a means of learning the material and to help you with your exams. You will not be graded on these questions and do not have to turn them in - they are to help you to think critically about the information and can serve as a "discussion" or "thought" session for you.

Readings include:

1. Primary sources - these are articles, essays, diary entries, poems, etc. that have been written by or about women. They are first-hand accounts written during the distinct historical time of the women under study.

2. Secondary sources - these are essays and narratives written about women and placing them in their historical context. They have been written by historians who have read the primary sources and interpreted them for us.

Exams:

There are two essay examinations. Each essay should be approximately five to seven double-spaced typed pages. Included in your syllabus is a two page general instruction sheet to help you write an essay.

Due Dates:

Your essay exams must be postmarked by the following dates:

First essay exam: Sunday, January 18

Second essay exam: Tuesday, February 5

These are **absolute** due dates. Please organize your schedule and set goals so that you meet these deadlines.

GRADING:

First Exam: 45%

Second Exam: 55%

Grading Scale:

A+ 100-98

A 97-94

A- 90-93

B+ 89-87

B 86-83

B- 82-80

C+ 79-77

C 76-73

C- 72-70

D 69 - 65

THE ESSAY!

Every essay has three major parts: an introduction that states the thesis; a middle section, structurally a large block, made up of several smaller blocks of argument; the conclusion, a broad base generalization related to the rest of the essay.

THE INTRODUCTION:

What should you say in your first words in an essay? The functions of the introduction are several. The first function is to demonstrate that you have read the questions in a critical way and that you understand what is required to answer it. Second, the introduction provides the opportunity to set up the categories of your answer. Finally, if the test question requires you to take a position, you can use the introduction to state your position, thus, setting up the rest of the paper for the presentation of your answer.

One brief paragraph is usually sufficient to introduce an essay. The structure of this paragraph is different from the structure of any other paragraph in the essay. The function of the introductory paragraph is simply to introduce the subject and come to the point. The paragraph should open with a broad, general statement related to the thesis and then gradually narrow to a single point - the thesis itself. It moves from the general to the specific.

THE MIDDLE SECTION:

The middle section of your essay - everything between the introduction and the conclusion - can be almost any length. The number of paragraphs in it depends entirely upon how many points you want to cover and how thoroughly you want to cover them. (All sorts of influences begin working on you when you start writing. You will find yourself thinking, "I'd better use an example here . . . explain a little more clearly there . . . add this point . . . take that one out . . .") The basic rule you can follow is this: Write as much as you need to write in order to present your case clearly and completely and persuasively.

The real power of your essay is in this middle section. It is where you argue your thesis with specific details and examples as supporting evidence for your position. The middle section is where you put forward the reasons that will convince the reader that your point of view is the right one. You must be organized and logical in this section and refer back to your thesis because that is the point you are arguing.

THE CONCLUSION:

You have introduced your subject, presented your thesis, and defended it. One step remains. You must wrap things up in one last paragraph - you must write a conclusion. You must connect this paragraph to your original thesis and to the middle paragraphs, your argument. The structure of the conclusion is the reverse of the introduction. The conclusion begins with the thesis (the specific point) and widens gradually toward a final broad statement.

To get started, then, simply restate your thesis sentence, adding an appropriate word or phrase, if necessary, to tie it in properly with the paragraph that preceded it (a transition). Next, begin to broaden towards your final sentence. As you do so, you can make a stronger connection with your introduction by picking up any significant word or phrase in it and working it into your conclusion. Every time you do this, you create echoes in a reader's mind, and when you do that, the reader does not have to guess at what you mean. Instead, there will be a particular sense of satisfaction and completion that comes to all of us when we feel that everything is falling into place.

You must also tie your conclusion to your middle paragraphs. But, do not do this by merely listing the points you made. Borrow meanings from those paragraphs, but do not be bluntly repetitive. Say what you have already said, but say it sharply, quickly, and in different words.

Thus, the conclusion borrows from everything that has gone before, summarizes without repeating exactly, and gives the essay its final shape by making it into a whole.

THE PARAGRAPH:

Every paragraph, just like an essay, has three parts: a beginning, a middle, and an end. The beginning is called the topic sentence - an announcement of the particular point of the paragraph (one that you have listed in your full thesis statement, or a related sub-point of that thesis statement). Follow this topic sentence with several sentences that explain and illustrate your point. That's your paragraph's middle section. As you write, you will naturally get to the end of your information on that point, and thus, you will write the concluding sentence.

IMPORTANT WORDS IN ESSAY QUESTIONS:

DISCUSS: Examine, analyze carefully, and give reasons pro and con. Be complete and give details and examples.

EXPLAIN: Clarify, interpret, and spell out the material you present. Give reasons for differences of opinion or of results, and try to analyze causes.

LESSON ONE: WHY STUDY WOMEN'S HISTORY?

Reading Assignment: Norton, Chapter 1(pp. 1-19)

Objectives: To understand that the history of women is complex and to learn the various issues that historians must take into account when they research and write women's history. To understand that issues of race and class must intersect with issues of gender when considering the history of all women in the United States.

LESSON TWO: COLONIAL WOMEN

Reading Assignment: Woloch, Chapters 1 & 2
Norton, Chapter 2 (pp. 20-26) & Chapter 3 (pp.49-54)

Objectives:

Learn about the role of women in Early America. Understand the role of Christian missionaries and European settlers on the Native American women and African American women during the early colonial period. Understand the strengths of all colonial women.

Study Questions: What did the Christian missionaries first think of Native American women? Did Native American women accept the European gender roles the missionaries were teaching them? What were the ultimate results of the meeting of European missionaries with Native American women? What is patriarchy and how did it affect colonial women? How did captivity affect women? Was Mary Rowlandson a weak woman? What can we learn from her descriptions of her captivity. Was her account biased in any way? What were women's contributions to colonial society? What is the meaning of "spiritual equality?" According to Woloch, what are some of the reasons for the Witchcraft Trials of 1692?

LESSON THREE: WOMEN DURING THE LATE COLONIAL ERA THROUGH THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Reading Assignment: Woloch, Chapters 5 & 6; Norton, Chapter 4 (pp. 69-76)

Objectives: To understand what role of the American Revolution in women's lives. Learn about the differences between women during the revolutionary period. Learn about the role of education in women's lives.

Study Questions: Was Eliza Pinckney's role the norm for all women? Were women judged on their own abilities? Did they have many rights? What was the main point of Abigail Adams' request to "remember the ladies?" What did Sarah Osborn do during the Revolution? Did women make any gains as a result of the Revolution? What were they? What is "republican motherhood" and how did Benjamin Rush describe this new "civic role" for women? Were all women considered to be equal to each other?

LESSON FOUR: WOMEN'S SEPARATE SPHERE & THE CULT OF DOMESTICITY

Reading Assignment: Woloch, Chapters 5 & 6; Norton, Chapter 5 (pp. 101-108)

Objectives: To learn how industrialization affected women in the first half of the nineteenth century. Understand the meaning of woman's "separate spheres" and the "cult of domesticity."

Study Questions: What was the expectation for a middle-class wife? What was the woman's sphere? What role did Sarah Josepha Hale have in creating this "separate sphere?" What was Catherine Beecher's idea? Did all women conform to the "cult of domesticity?" What did Sarah Josepha Hale think about women who wanted the right to vote? What about the women of the Lowell textile mills? Did women think they were oppressed? Do you think they were? Explain using specific details.

LESSON FIVE: REFORMS, SLAVERY, & THE WEST

Reading Assignment: Woloch, Chapters 7 & 8
Norton, Chapter 6 (pp. 132-140) & Chapter 8 (pp. 187-197)

Objectives: Learn how women became part of the reform movement of the early 19th century. Understand how African American women were treated as slaves. Learn about the first women's rights movement. Learn about women in the West.

Study Questions: What kind of woman was Frances Wright? Was she an abolitionist like the Grimke sisters? What was their background? What did Lydia White think about slavery? What was it like to be a female slave? What is the connection between the anti-slavery movement and the women's rights movement that started in 1848? What was life like for women in the West? How did issues of race, gender, and ethnicity affect women in the West?

LESSON SIX: WOMEN AND THE CIVIL WAR CRISIS & WOMEN AND WORK

Reading Assignment: Woloch, Chapters 9& 10
Norton, Chapter 7 (pp. 160-168) & Chapter 9 (pp. 213-229)

Objectives: Understand the role of women during the Civil War. Understand working women's lives after the Civil War. Learn about women and labor unions. Learn about African American women lives after slavery.

Study Questions: Did the type of work that women performed change after the Civil War? Why and/or why not? What was life like for free black women after the war? What were some of the experiences of the shirtwaist workers? Explain the patterns of the different groups of immigrant women. What effects did the industrial revolution have on women? Were women accepted into unions?

ESSAY EXAM 1: Lessons 2 through 6 Deadline: Postmarked – January 18)

Review the assigned readings and your answers to the study questions before you take this exam. Next, write a well-organized analytical essay starting with an opening statement that answers the question (the thesis or argument you are going to make). Support this thesis with specific examples and details from the readings. Conclude your essay with a brief summary of your analysis and argument.

You will be graded on the strength of your argument and the support (specific details and examples from readings) you provide for your thesis.

NOTE: When you use quotes or paraphrase the words and ideas of others, be sure to cite the author's last name and the page number in parenthesis. (Eg. Norton, p. 239) If you use a source other than the assigned texts, be sure to add a bibliography in which you cite the title and other appropriate information.

Answer the following question:

The “ideal woman” and the reality of women’s every day lives frequently conflict. Write an essay in which you compare and contrast the ideal woman from the real women in two of the historical periods that you have studied.

When you have finished writing your essay, please mail it to me and start to work on the following lessons.

LESSON SEVEN: THE "NEW WOMAN": SUFFRAGE AND REFORMS

Reading Assignment: Woloch, Chapters 11, 12, 13, & 14; Norton, Chapter 10 (246-262)

Objectives: Learn about educated women and social work through the Settlement House movement. Learn about the Women's Club movement. Understand the Suffrage movement and the nineteenth amendment to the Constitution. Understand the significance of the concept of "female moral superiority."

Study Questions: What was the Hull House? How did a change in birthrate affect women's lives? What did a college education mean for women? What did it mean to be a clubwoman? Were African American women part of the clubwomen movement? What was Mary Church Terrell's point in her essay on lynching? What was a "social housekeeper?" What was the difference between the American Woman Suffrage Association and the National Woman Suffrage Association? Who were some of the women associated with the Suffrage movement? What were their roles. Who was Alice Paul and how did she fit into the movement

LESSON EIGHT: VICTORIAN SEXUALITY AND BIRTH CONTROL

Reading Assignment: Woloch, Chapters 15 & 16; Norton, Chapter 11 (pp. 285-299)

Objectives: Learn the role of physicians in determining women's sexual patterns. Understand the birth control movement led by Margaret Sanger. Learn what women did after they achieved the right to vote in 1920.

Study Questions: Did doctors believe that women desired sex? What did Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell have to say about women's sexuality? What was Margaret Sanger's background? Was she a feminist? Why was discussing contraception such a big deal? Did women make any gains during the 1920s? What was the difference between the National Woman's party and the League of Women Voters? What was the ERA?

LESSON NINE: FROM DEPRESSION TO A NEW DEAL & WORLD WAR II

Reading Assignment: Woloch, Chapters 17 & 18;
Norton, Chapter 12 (pp. 329-340) & Chapter 13 (pp.358-366)

Objectives: Learn how the economic depression of the 1930s affected women. Understand what the New Deal meant for women. Learn what World War II did for women in the labor force. Understand women's position in postwar America.

Study Questions: What happened to women in the labor force in the 1930s? What was the role of Eleanor Roosevelt during the New Deal? Did her activities have an effect on women's roles? Who was Mary McLeod Bethune? Who was Frances Perkins? What did the Social Security Act provide for women? Who was "Rosie the Riveter"? Did she change society's view of women in the workforce? What changed after World War II?

LESSON TEN: THE "FEMININE MYSTIQUE": CIVIL RIGHTS - WOMEN'S RIGHTS (1945-1975)

Reading Assignment: Woloch, Chapters 19 & 20
Norton, Chapter 14 (pp. 394-407) & Chapter 15 (pp. 427-448)

Objectives: Learn about African American women's role in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. Understand the connection between that movement and the Women's Rights Movement. Learn about the "Feminine Mystique," and the feminist movement of the 1970s.

Study Questions: What connection can be made between Anne Moody, Betty Friedan, and Eleanor Roosevelt? What was the "suburban housewife"? Was it the same as "Republican Mother"? What role did mothers play in the life choices of their daughters? What was the "sexual revolution"? Did women gain more freedom as a result of it? Were African American women's experiences the same as white women's? What about Chicana women? What is NOW?

LESSON ELEVEN: POLITICS AND QUESTIONS OF EQUALITY

Reading Assignment: Woloch, Chapters 21 & 22; Norton, Chapter 16 (pp. 476-495)

Objectives: Learn about the reversal of the feminist movement during the antifeminist backlash of the 1970s. Learn why the ERA failed. Understand the various issues that feminists faced in the 1980s. Understand the concerns of working class women and immigrant women.

Study Questions: What were the arguments for and against the ERA? Who is Phyllis Schlafly? What was the feminist crusade against pornography? What agency did Clarence Thomas head? What are some of the problems that African American women face? What does the issue of "power" have to do with the relationship between Thomas and Anita Hill? Explain the "feminization of poverty." Do immigrant women encounter problems unique to their particular cultural background? What is the "gender gap"? Are you familiar with the term "the mommy track"? What is "cultural feminism"? What was the overall effect on women of the Clarence Thomas and Anita Hill hearings? Was the issue of sexual harassment solved successfully?

The second and final essay exam follows this lesson.

ESSAY EXAM 2: Lessons 7 through 11 (Deadline: Postmarked – February 5)

Review the assigned readings and your answers to the study questions before you take this exam. Next, write a well-organized analytical essay starting with an opening statement that specifically answers the question (the thesis or argument you are going to make). Support this thesis with specific details and examples from the readings. Conclude your essay with a brief summary of your argument and analysis.

You will be graded on the strength of your argument and the support you provide for your thesis.

Answer the following question:

Women won the right to vote in 1920, yet there seemed to be a need for a second women's rights movement in the 1970s? Why? And, considering the present position(2004) of women in the United States, can we assert that the second movement was more successful than the first?

When you are finished, please mail the essay to me and sit back and relax!

VIDEO SUGGESTIONS TO ACCOMPANY U. S. WOMEN'S HISTORY COURSE

1690s - 1840s:

Three Sovereigns for Sarah
A Midwife's Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard
Mary Silliman's War
Sins of our Mothers: The Story of Emmiline

1848 – 1920:

Not For Ourselves Alone: The Story of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony

1890s - 1940s:

Ida B. Wells
The American Experience: One Woman, One Vote (Two Parts)
Margaret Sanger and The Birth Control Movement
With Babies and Banners

You May Call Her Madam Secretary (Frances Perkins)
Rosie The Riveter

1950s - 1990s:

Fundi: The Story of Ella Baker
Frontline: Clarence Thomas and Anita Hill: Public Hearing, Private Pain

Twentieth Century:

A Century of Women: Image and Popular Culture
A Century of Women: Sexuality and Social Justice
A Century of Women: Work and Family
History of the Miss America Pageant