WOMEN IN MODERN AMERICA: U.S. WOMEN’S HISTORY SINCE THE 1890s

This course explores the transition from Victorian to modern womanhood in the U.S. by introducing students to the history of women's economic, personal, and political lives. Secondary and primary source readings emphasize the experiences of Native, European, African, Mexican, and Asian American women within the contexts of historical change in the U. S. (including the economy, race relations, sexuality, and social movements). A major goal of the course is to present women's history both as an integral part of American history and as a unique subject of historical investigation. Students will learn to think critically about historical arguments as well as to understand the difference that gender makes in history and the way that gender interacts with class, race, ethnicity, and sexuality.

The class meetings on Mondays and Wednesdays will combine lectures, discussion, films, visuals, and some music. The one-hour sections will explore in depth the required readings (secondary sources and primary documents). Students are required to attend and encouraged to participate in both formats; please come to each class prepared to discuss the readings.

Major questions addressed in this course include:

1. How, when, and why did the majority of American women become wage earners over the course of the twentieth century? What were the implications of this transition for economic and family life? What continuities and discontinuities characterized women’s lives as their public roles as producers and consumers expanded?

2. How, when, and why did American women gain full citizenship; how did different groups of women enact their political opportunities, before and after suffrage?

3. How, when, and why did race- and class-specific ideals of womanhood change, particularly in relation to reproductive labor and sexual expression? How did ideas and popular culture influence gender ideals? How did migrant and immigrant women adapt to and transform American culture?

READING AVAILABLE AT SU BOOKSTORE AND GREEN LIBRARY:
Anzia Yezierska, Bread Givers (Persea Books, 2003) $10
Other required readings appear on CourseWork (CW), under Materials/Documents:Readings, by week
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Prompt attendance and participation at each class session and completion of all reading and writing assignments on time are all critical and contribute to the final grade. Students will write regularly to encourage thought and discussion. Weekly ungraded writing assignments allow instructors to provide feedback where needed to help improve analysis and style without the pressure of grades. Other assignments receive letter grades, but prompt and thoughtful completion of the ungraded assignments does contribute strongly to the section grade.

WRITTEN WORK:
Weekly secondary/primary source analyses (ungraded 1-2 pages) for section
Each student may skip one week’s analysis after the midterm. (See guidelines below page 9)
First graded (mid-term) essay (5-7 pages) due 5/6 in class
The instructions for this essay appear on p. 5 of the syllabus, so that students can prepare for the assignment during the first half of the quarter.
Oral history analysis (5-7 pages) due 6/5 in class (See guidelines pp. 9-10)
Second graded (final) essay (5-7 pages) due 10 a.m. 6/11 for graduating seniors, 10 a.m. 6/12 for all others. A selection of topics for this essay will be distributed at the last lecture.
Students may submit suggestions for topics to instructors by 6/2.

ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE COMPLETED ON TIME; late papers will be downgraded a full grade per day and will not be accepted after two days. An extension or incomplete will be granted in the case of medical or family emergency. If you must miss a section meeting for these reasons, inform your section leader in advance and submit a report on the week's readings (3-5 pages) before the next section meets. If you must miss an in-class film screening, view the film on reserve and submit a 1-2 page ungraded response before your section meets.

APPROXIMATE GRADING GUIDELINES (improvement over the quarter also counts)
30% Section (attendance, promptness, participation, written responses)
30% First graded (midterm) essay, evaluated on: relevant/accurate content, power of analysis, clarity of structure/style
30% Second graded (final) essay, evaluated on: relevant/accurate content, power of analysis, clarity of structure/style
10% Oral history analysis, graded on your analysis—the historical contexts you bring to the paper—NOT on the life of your subject!

ACCOMMODATIONS: Students with disabilities should register with the Disability Resource Center (563 Salvatierra Walk, Stanford 94305; 723-1066 or 723-1067/TTY); please inform Professor Freedman during the first week of class if you will need any accommodations (confidentiality assured).

PLEASE TURN OFF CELL PHONES DURING CLASS; LAPTOPS SHOULD BE USED FOR NOTE TAKING ONLY.
DATES, TOPICS, READINGS/FILMS

4/1 WHY WOMEN’S HISTORY?
An overview of approaches to the study of women in history; introductions, overview of course and requirements.

Peggy Pascoe, “Ophelia Paquet, a Tillamook Indian Wife: Miscegenation Laws and the Privileges of Property,” WA, 363-68

4/3 VICTORIAN LEGACIES
How did nineteenth-century ideas about women influence the “New Woman,” and what critiques of American gender and racial systems emerged during the 1890s?

“A Jury of Her Peers” (in class film screening/discussion)
Docs: Elizabeth Cady Stanton, “The Solitude of Self” (1892, Link CW)
Anna Julia Cooper, A Voice from the South (excerpts) (1892, Link CW)
Start reading Bread Givers for section discussion next week.

Sign up for sections on CourseWork by 9 a.m. on 4/5

4/8 IMMIGRANTS, MIGRANTS, WORKERS IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY
4/10 NEW EDUCATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL OPPORTUNITIES
What challenges did immigrant and working-class women face in America’s expanding urban and industrial economy? How did race and class influence their opportunities? Why was education so important to these women? How did women from working-class and middle-class backgrounds interact?

Yezierska, Bread Givers
Judy Yung, “Unbound Feet: From China to San Francisco’s Chinatown” WA, 378-86
Docs: WA 356-362 (Zitkala-Ša and Mary McLeod Bethune), 417-419 (Pauline Newman) Indian Boarding School Letters (1907, 1910, CW)

Rec: Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, “Forging Interracial Links in the Jim Crow South,” WA, 368-378; Annelise Orleck, “From the Russian Pale to Labor Organizing in New York City,” WA, 386-402
Rec website: http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/trianglefire/
First section meetings this week; 1-2 page reading response (see Guidelines, p. 9 below).

4/10 12:00 -1:00 p.m., History Corner Room 307: Optional talk by Elizabeth H. Pleck, ”Not Just Roommates: Cohabitation after the Sexual Revolution” (sign up in class by 4/8 for lunch)
SEXUALITY, REPRODUCTION, AND WOMEN’S HEALTH

CONSUMERISM AND POPULAR CULTURE
How did the consumer economy of the early twentieth century influence cultural meanings related to women’s bodies—including health, contraception and abortion, and sexuality—for working-class and middle-class women? How did the meaning of women’s same-sex relationships change when heterosexual and lesbian identities emerged?

Charlotte Perkins Gilman, “The Yellow Wallpaper” (Link CW)
Gilman, “Why I Wrote the Yellow Wallpaper” (Link CW)
Vicki Ruiz, “The Flapper and the Chaperone: Mexican American Teenagers in the Southwest” WA 477-484

“IT” (in class film screening/discussion)

Docs: WA 432-40 (Margaret Sanger)
Sanger, “Morality and Birth Control” (1918, Link CW)
Cora Anderson/Ralph Kerwin (1914, Link CW)

Rec: Joan Jacobs Brumberg, “Fasting Girls: The Emerging Ideal of Slenderness in American Culture,” WA 451-459
Rec website: http://www.nyu.edu/projects/sanger

FROM SOCIAL REFORM TO SUFFRAGE
FEMINISM BEFORE AND AFTER SUFFRAGE
What experiences politicized American women to bring about national suffrage by 1920? What were the radical and conservative alternatives to suffrage and women’s rights? What happened to women’s movements after national suffrage?

Kathryn Kish Sklar, “Florence Kelley and Women’s Activism in the Progressive Era,” WA, 402-414

Docs: WA, 415-416 (Muller v. Oregon), 431-432 (Adkins v. Children’s Hospital)
Emma Goldman, “The Tragedy of Women’s Emancipation” (1910, Link CW)
Charlotte Hawkins Brown, Speech at Interracial Conference (1920, Link CW)
Mary Kilbreth, “The New Anti-Feminist Campaign” (1921, Link CW)

Rec websites: (links to suffragist scrapbooks, 1913 parade)
http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/awhhtml/aw01e/aw01e.html
http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/suffrage/millerscrapbooks/index.html
How did national economic trends—such as consumerism and the Great Depression—affect women’s entry into wage labor and family/personal life? How did women’s concerns influence the New Deal? Did women’s activism cross race lines?


“Women of Summer” (in class film screening/discussion)


Docs: NAACP, "Plan Organization of 1,000,000 Women to Stop Lynching in United States," (1922, Link CW)
Jessie Daniel Ames, “Southern Women and Lynching” (1936, Link CW)
Rose Pesotta, “Subterranean Sweatshops in Chinatown” (1934, Link CW) WA, 516-518 (Dollinger)


Rec webpage: http://ehistory.osu.edu/osu/mmh/clash/NewWoman/newwomen-page1.htm

FIRST GRADED PAPER DUE IN CLASS 5/6 by 1:15 p.m.

Complete guidelines will be posted on CourseWork, but to give you food for thought as you review the first half of the course: in this paper use relevant primary documents and secondary sources to explain both change and continuity in women’s activities in the public sphere from the 1890s to the 1930s. Choose a specific topic (such as wage labor, sexuality, or reform) but synthesize materials over the first half of the course, not just from one or two weeks’ worth of readings and lectures.

In reviewing your topic, think about what changed and why, what patterns persisted and why, in the transition from Victorian to modern womanhood. Draw on the ideas, activities, and images in the required readings, lectures, and films make your points. (You may also use recommended readings and documents if you feel they will enhance the treatment of your topic, but you are not required to do so.) Choose several specific examples and show how they support your overall argument. Be sure to take into account any important distinctions, such as those rooted in class, race, ethnicity, and region.

You should consult with your section leader about the topic, and if you wish to get feedback on an outline please submit it by 4/30; for feedback on a first draft, please submit it by 5/2.

Important instructions: Submit hard copy in class on May 6 and send an email attachment to your section leader. PLACE YOUR NAME ON THE COVER PAGE ONLY; DO NOT INCLUDE YOUR NAME IN THE BODY OF THE PAPER OR IN HEADERS/FOOTERS.
WWII: MOBILIZATION AND DEMOBILIZATION

“The Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter” (in class screening/discussion)
Was World War II a turning point in women’s labor history? If so, for which women?

Lemke-Santangelo, Abiding Courage: African American Migrant Women and the East Bay Community, pp. 1-21, 33-152, 179-182
Docs: Pauli Murray, “I had entered law school . . .,” WA, 635-44
"Equal Rights: How Not to Get Them" (1943, Link CW)
Mary Anderson, Congressional Testimony on Equal Pay Act (1950, Link CW)

Rec webpage (30 minute audio documentary on the WASPS) Link CW

By 5/10: Submit to your section leader the name and year (or decade) of birth of your oral history subject and the scheduled date of the interview. Be sure to complete the interview before the end of May! See interview guidelines on p. 9 and questions/forms on Coursework.

COLD WAR AMERICA: SYMBOLS, SEX, AND POLITICS

WOMEN’S LABOR AND FAMILY LIFE

How accurate are the popular images of Cold War America as an era of revived domesticity in light of the history of labor and family life? Who did not fit the ideal?

Susan K. Cahn, “‘Mannishness,’ Lesbianism, and Homophobia in U.S. Women’s Sports,” WA, 598-607
Joyce Antler, “Imagining Jewish Mothers in the 1950s,” WA, 607-16
Susan J. Douglass, “Why the Shirelles Mattered,” WA, 660-63 (longer version on CW)
Docs: Percentage of Adult Women in U.S. Paid Labor Force by Ethnicity/Race, 1900-2000 (Link, CW)
Lundberg and Farnham, Modern Woman: The Lost Sex, in FM 346-50
Helen Gurley Brown, Sex and the Single Girl, in FM 374-6

Rec website:
http://www.outhistory.org/wiki/Lesbians_in_the_Twentieth_Century:_1900-1999
5/20  “Salt of the Earth” (in class film/discussion)
Can we detect the seeds of a new women’s politics in the post-war decades, particularly in labor, civil rights, and peace movements?

Deborah Rosenfelt, “We, the Women,” in Salt of the Earth CW
Daniel Horowitz, “Rethinking Betty Friedan and the Feminine Mystique” FM 454-465

Docs:  WA, 645-49 (Hoyt, Taylor cases)

Rec docs:
Interview with Dorothy Height (Link CW)
Report of the President's Commission on the Status of Women (1963, Link CW)

5/27  NO CLASS; BEGIN READING FRIEDAN, FEMININE MYSTIQUE
Why a feminist revival now? How did civil rights and radical movements influence the variety of feminist politics that emerged after the 1960s?

Betty Friedan, The Feminine Mystique, esp. chaps 1-6, 9-11, 13-14
Letters to Friedan, FM, 379-81
Susan Ware, Game, Set, Match... Prologue CW

Docs: WA 694-703 (Hanisch, Redstockings, Radicalesbians, Mainardi) and 719-725
(ERA, Title IX, Frontiero v. Richardson)

Rec docs: FM 382-86 (Pauli Murray, from the autobiography Proud Shoes)
The Ladder (1972), Link CW
Debate over sex amendment to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Link CW)

Rec website: http://www.cwluherstory.org/

Last sections meet this week; we will discuss readings for next week in the lecture class
Student suggestions for final essay topics (optional) due 6/2.
In what ways was “sisterhood” complicated by race, class, and sexuality? By politically conservative women? How did gender systems and family life change in the late twentieth century? *Come to class prepared to apply the documents to these questions!* At the last class we will have a (participatory) musical review of themes of the class, share oral history reports, and look both backwards over course themes and towards the future.

**Photo Essay, WA, 460-476**

**FM 423-429 (Faludi)**

**Docs:**  
WA 704-711 (Chavez, “Women in the Asian Movement,” Combahee River Collective); 714-718 (Schlaflay); 725-734 (*Roe v. Wade; Planned Parenthood v. Casey*); 773-76 (*Goodridge v. Mass Dept of Health*); 779-80 (Clinton); 743-45 (VAWA)

Smeal and Symonds Congressional Testimony re: Violence Against Women Act (1993) [Links CW]


Rebecca Walker, Naomi Wolf, Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards [FM 429-38]

**Rec docs:**  
WA 766-776 (Rethinking Marriage)

Sister Joan Chittister, "Working for Gender Justice Saves Lives" [Link CW]

**Oral history analysis due in class 6/5; prepare five-minute report on major themes of your oral history, to present in small groups in class.**

**Paper topic choices and instructions for the second graded essay will be distributed in class.**  
Please submit hard copies of your final essays to the history department office and be sure to send a copy by email to your section T.A. by the deadlines: **graduating seniors due 10 a.m. 6/11; all others due 10 am. 6/12.**

**REMEMBER TO PLACE YOUR NAME AND THE QUESTION NUMBER ONLY ON THE COVER PAGE; DO NOT INCLUDE YOUR NAME IN THE BODY OF THE PAPER OR IN HEADERS/FOOTERS.**
GUIDELINES FOR SECTION READING RESPONSES

Section leaders may give you specific prompts to help focus your weekly reading responses, but the following general advice applies to all of the assignments:

Secondary sources: What questions does the author ask? What sources does the author use to answer them? What is the central argument? How does it relate to other interpretations we have read? How effective is the author’s use of sources, the argument, and the structure/style? What else would you want to know about the subject? What questions do you hope to discuss in section?

Primary sources, including novel (Bread Givers): Identify and provide historical context for the author. What is the purpose of the document or intent of the author? To whom is it addressed/who is the intended audience? How do the author and/or document make its points (through what kinds of arguments or rhetoric? How effectively)? What does the source reveal about the author, women’s history, and the period in which it was written? What questions does it raise for you?

GUIDELINES FOR THE ORAL HISTORY ASSIGNMENT

The purpose of this assignment is to encourage you to relate the history we have studied in class to the life of an individual woman who has experienced a part of this history. Early in the quarter you should identify an older woman, preferably someone born before 1935, who will agree to meet with you. You can interview an older female relative, a resident of a local retirement community or home, a retired worker at Stanford, or anyone you know who has lived through the events of the past eighty years. In advance, set up an appointment of around an hour and a half. Please submit the name of your subject and the date of your interview to your section leader by MAY 6. (If you have difficulty locating a subject, please let instructors know by APRIL 21; we have some contacts with older women in the Bay Area.) A set of oral history interview questions that you can adapt appears on CourseWork. If you do not already know your subject, have a preliminary phone conversation to gauge what kinds of topics will be most appropriate (e.g. for a homemaker, activist, wage laborer, etc.). You may interview a distant relative by phone of Skype, but face to face is preferable.

To prepare for the interview, review course readings relevant to your subject’s life. We will view excerpts from oral interviews in films and read secondary sources based on interviews, so you should have a sense of the kind of interchange to expect. Consult the suggested oral history questions on CourseWork (under Course Materials/Oral History) and then prepare a set of questions by selecting a particular focus or two that seem appropriate for your subject’s life (e.g., work history, paid and unpaid; political activity; religious life; motherhood; sexuality; depression and war; the impact of feminism).

When you meet with your subject, take good notes and if possible record the interview. Be sure to have the subject sign the permission form that is available on CourseWork and submit this form with your paper. Begin with a very brief family background and questions about the subject's
mother's life (place of birth, education, age of marriage, unpaid or paid work experience) to give perspective on generational change. Then focus on specific (though open-ended) questions you have prepared on your chosen topic(s). Some women may claim that they are not historically important enough to be interviewed. You can assure them that you are interested in anything about their lives that may illuminate the times in which they lived. You may want to ask some questions about the life of the subject’s mother.

The paper you submit on what you learned about women's history from this experience should not be a chronological report on the subject's entire life. Rather, it should highlight the most important themes you discovered, relating them to what we have studied in the class. Note especially the impact of historical events on personal life and how your subject’s story confirms or challenges the historical interpretations we have read and seen. The paper, which is due in class on June 5, will be graded on the quality of the historical context you provide—how you apply what we have learned in class—and not on the subject’s life. Like other papers, it cannot be handed in late. The paper must include the signed permission form.

If you are able to record the interview, please offer a copy of the recording to the subject. You may or may not want to offer a copy of your paper, depending on whether you think you might censor your analysis or writing. During the last week of classes students will present the most important insights from the interviews.