This upper division class will focus on women and gender in America from the colonial period to the present. Researching women’s history and including gender as a historical construct not only helps us preserve the distinctive contributions of women to American history but also forces us to rethink historical categories of class, race, region, and periodization. The course will highlight how prescriptions of womanhood have varied over time and how diversity among women has affected experiences with gender roles and sexism.

We will learn about the specific, historical dimensions of gendered society in America through focusing on topics such as Witch-hunting; Slavery; Work and Class; Pregnancy, Birth, and Abortion; Immigration; Sexuality; Radicalism and Politics; Health and the Environment, and Feminisms as we build upon our chronology from the seventeenth century to the present. The units will be presented in roughly chronological order, though we will also work backwards in time; for example the unit on Marriage and Motherhood will focus on the 1950s, but will include readings from earlier periods so that we can make comparisons and see how ideas about women and gender have changed over the years. Similarly, the unit on pregnancy and birth will focus on the decline of midwifery in the nineteenth century, but will also look ahead to include the renaissance in natural childbirth in the 1970s.
**Multicultural Requirement:** The course will emphasize the diversity and change among the various social classes and races that comprise U.S. women’s history, as well as explore representative voices from varying social and cultural standpoints. Therefore, it will satisfy the University’s multicultural requirement (Category B, Identity, Pluralism, and Tolerance).

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Requirements include a short document analysis paper (30%), a reading quiz (5%), an oral history paper (30%), and a final exam (25%). Attendance will be counted for 10% of your grade. You may earn extra credit by completing weekly summaries of the reading assignments. These weekly summaries (approximately one page in length) should be submitted via Blackboard by Tuesday at 4:00 p.m. of each week. They will not be graded, per se, but you will receive extra credit points as well as immeasurable educational benefits from keeping up with the reading. If you do these successfully each week, you can raise your grade by 1/3 of a grade (at the most) at the end of the quarter. It really helps! [I don’t give A+ and so if you already have an A, you’ll still have an A, even with the extra credit points. Think of it this way: doing the extra credit summaries probably accounts for the fact that you have an A in the first place.]

Late papers will be penalized. Please email me as soon as possible if you are seriously ill and need an extension. All assignments must be completed in order to pass the class.

**REQUIRED TEXTS: BOOKS ARE AT UO BOOKSTORE**


Articles and Primary Sources on Blackboard

**RULES AND REGULATIONS**

You are expected to come to class on time and stay until the end. ☺ If you must leave early, please let me know before class that you’re going to do this, and sit near the door, so that you can leave unobtrusively. Please respect your classmates; this means you should be actively listening to the lectures and discussions, as opposed to reading the paper, or writing notes to your friends. **No computers/tablets/cell phones are allowed in class unless you have a documented disability and need a computer to take notes.**
Students with Disabilities
I will make every effort to accommodate students with disabilities. If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with me as soon as possible.

Plagiarism: All work completed for this class must be your own. If you cheat (hand in your friend’s work or copy directly from the internet or a book, etc.) you will (at the very least) fail the class, and your name will be registered with the University. For guidelines and University rules on this very serious matter, see: http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/

Attendance Policy: Attendance is required and will be calculated into your final grade. If you miss zero or 1, you’ll get an A in attendance; if you miss 2-3 you’ll get in the B range; if you miss 4-5 you’ll get in the C range; if you miss 6 you’ll get a D. If you miss more than six (6) classes you will be assigned the final grade of F or NoPass for the entire class. If you miss more than 6 classes before the last official date to withdraw from classes with a W (Feb. 22), you must formally withdraw from the class. If you get sick or have an emergency that keeps you from coming to class, please be in touch with me right away so you don’t fall further behind and the policy can be modified accordingly.

Week 1 – Gender Norms and Gender Crossing

Primary Sources (we’ll read this in class): H.R. Mcllwaine, ed., Minutes of the Council and General Court of Colonial Virginia, 1622-1632 (1670-76; Richmond, Va.: Colonial Press/Everett Waddey, 1924), 194-95.

Read for Thursday, January 8:

Read 10 FAQs from this site: http://www.isna.org/faq/
read any ten pages of Sabine Lang, Men as Women, Women as Men: Changing Gender in Native American Cultures. Click “excerpts” and browse the book with Google preview, http://www.utexas.edu/utpress/excerpts/exlanmen.html#ex1
In class film excerpt: Two Spirit

Week 2 – Witchcraft and Rape Trials: Women in Early New England

Read for Tuesday, January 13: Elizabeth Reis, “Gender and the Meanings of Confession” Organization of American Historians, Magazine of History 17 (July 2003), 15-20. [Blackboard]

Primary Sources: Confessions and Denials from the Salem Witch Trials, 1692
Read for Thursday, January 15:

Sharon Block, excerpt from *Rape and Sexual Power in Early America* [Blackboard]

Trial of Ephraim Wheeler *(bring the document to class on Thursday)* [Blackboard] (this document is at the end of the Block article)

Week 3 – Abortion and Birth Control

Read for Tuesday, January 20 and print this out to bring to class on Tuesday:

“A Colonial Abortion Drama” (Blackboard)

**Read for Thursday, January 22:** slave narratives from *Major Problems in American History* [Blackboard]

Read this website, paying special attention to the personal narratives and letters (click on “original documents” and then “correspondence” for those).

Start reading Octavia Butler, *Kindred*.

Week 4 – Women Enslaved

For Tuesday, January 27:

**Read for Thursday, January 29: Paper Due.** Finish Octavia Butler, *Kindred* and be prepared for class discussion on the novel.

Week 5 – Work and Labor (reproductive and otherwise)

*Read for Tuesday, February 3:*

Read excerpts from Martha Ballard’s diary by reading through this website: [www.dohistory.org](http://www.dohistory.org) Read (at least) “Who was Martha Ballard?”
In class film excerpt: “All My Babies: A Midwife’s Own Story”

**Primary Sources:** Lowell Mills documents:

http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5714

Brandeis/Oregon documents: Webster, George W. *A Physiological basis for the shorter working day for women.* Washington: G.P.O., 1921, pp. 10-end

http://pds.lib.harvard.edu/pds/view/2588704?n=10

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**Week 6 – European and Asian Immigration**

**Read for Tuesday, February 10:** Leona Tamarkin: *Memoir of a Jewish Immigrant Woman* [There will be a QUIZ about this book today]

**Read for Thursday, February 12:** Primary sources: Ellis Island website and Angel Island websites  
(Questions and Bibliography Due Thursday, February 12)

http://www.nps.gov/elis/ (click on History and Culture)

http://www.angel-island.com/history.html (read the oral histories, click on the left)

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**Week 7 – Radicalism, Politics, and Sexuality**

**Read for Tuesday, February 17:** Primary sources: Suffrage and Anti-Suffrage cartoons

http://www.nwhm.org/online-exhibits/rightsforwomen/cartoons.html

Charlotte Perkins Gilman, “The Yellow Wallpaper” (Blackboard)

In class Film: “Iron-Jawed Angels”

**Read for Thursday, February 19:** From Emma Goldman to Betty Friedan

http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/Goldman/

Emma Goldman, Marriage and Love (Blackboard)

Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique, chapter 1* (Blackboard)

Birth Control documents: (Blackboard)

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**Week 8: Feminisms, Feminist Health Centers, The Pill, and Roe v. Wade**

(Oral History Papers due Tuesday, Feb. 24)
No reading for Tuesday.

Read for Thursday, Feb. 26:

Gloria Steinem, “If Men Could Menstruate”
Mary Ann Weathers, “An Argument for Black Women’s Liberation as a Revolutionary Force,” [Blackboard]

Mary Crow Dog, excerpt from Lakota Woman [Blackboard] –

“Victims Speak Out About North Carolina Sterilization Program,” [Blackboard]

**Primary Sources:** [http://www.feminist.org/research/chronicles/part2.html](http://www.feminist.org/research/chronicles/part2.html) (this is just a timeline; read the page for the year 1968 [http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/wlm](http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/wlm) (we’ll read some of these documents in class, but glance through it beforehand)

Week 9: Sexuality, Pleasure, Disease

Read for Tuesday, March 3:


Recommended for a fun read: Anne Koedt, “The Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm,” [BB]

Read for Thursday, March 5:

Start Reading Toxic Bodies, pp. 1-60

Film excerpt: Orgasm, Inc.: The Strange Science of Female Pleasure

Week 10: Health and Environment

Read for Tuesday, March 10: Toxic Bodies: 61-133

Film excerpt: A Healthy Baby Girl

Read for Thursday, March 12: Finish reading Toxic Bodies, 133-166
Final Exam: Wednesday, March 18 at 12:30 p.m.