

Instructor: Anna L. Bostwick Flaming (pronounced like “Fleming”)
Class: MWF 10:00-10:50; ARH 120
Office: Mears 315
Office Hours: I am here to help!
M 8:30-9:50am; 11:00-noon; W 8:30-9:50am; 11:00-noon; F 8:30-9:50am
and by appointment: flaminga@grinnell.edu

History of Women in the U.S. F12-HIS222-01

Course Description:

Scholarship on the history of women and gender blossomed in the 1960s and 1970s as feminist activists sought to learn more about the history of women’s activism. The histories that have emerged in the past several decades have illuminated (and continue to illuminate) the broad variety of women’s experiences. This scholarship has also provided analyses that have allowed us to question generalizations about history and a theoretical base for better understanding all power structures. We will explore a variety of primary sources, including autobiographies, fiction, film, and oral history, in order to interact with the real words and experiences of people from all walks of life. We will also examine secondary sources that allow us to enter into current intellectual debates about power, identity, and meaning. Students will draw on both kinds of course materials as well as their own original research so that they participate in the growing body of scholarship on women in the U.S.

Course Objectives:

Although the instructor will give short lectures, this is an interactive, discussion-based class. By the end of this semester, students should be able to:

- confidently discuss the history of women and women’s issues.
- understand the ways in which the categories of race, class, gender, and sexuality are constructed and interrelated.
- explore women’s history as social, economic, and political history
- understand the history of women in terms of both local and national histories.
- identify and analyze secondary sources.
- identify and analyze primary sources.

Required Readings:

Nancy Woloch, *Women and the American Experience*, 5th ed.
Linda K. Kerber, Jane Sherron De Hart, and Cornelia Hughes Dayton, *Women’s America: Refocusing the Past*, 7th ed., documents and essays
Harriet A. Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl. Written by Herself*, one of the few existing narratives written by a woman who was enslaved.
Michelle M. Nickerson, *Mothers of Conservatism: Women and the Postwar Right*, a brand-new monograph in an emerging field.
Louise R. Noun, *More Strong-Minded Women: Iowa Feminists Tell Their Stories*, a series of oral histories with feminists active in the 1960s and 1970s.
Various other reading assignments posted on Blackboard (BB)

Required Films (Shown on optional viewing nights, or else watched on your own):

A Midwife's Tale

One Woman, One Vote

The Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter

Rabbit in the Moon

Step by Step: Building a Feminist Movement

Grades:

Writing Assignments and Quizzes: 20%

Attendance and Participation: 15%

Exam 1: 15%

Primary Source-based Research Paper: 20%

Secondary Source Review Paper: 15%

Final Exam: 15%

Homework and Quizzes: 20%

- **Writing Assignments:** There are 11 short writing assignments listed on the syllabus. Each must be typed and turned in at the start of that day's class. I will only count 10 of these, so you may either skip one, or I will drop your lowest score. (Note that EVERYONE must turn in Writing Assignment XI.) These assignments are designed to focus our thinking and promote discussion, so there are NO EXTENSIONS. If you know that you must be absent, you must turn in your assignment early. Other homework assignments may be announced in class, on Blackboard, or by Grinnell email. **Quizzes:** The number and frequency of quizzes will be determined by the Instructor over the course of the semester. I often do not announce quizzes in advance, so you should always be ready! If you miss a quiz because of an unexcused absence you will receive a 0. Quizzes may require you to demonstrate knowledge of previous class work, not just that day's assignment.

Attendance and Participation: 15%

- **Attendance:** I will take attendance at the beginning of every class period, but participation requires more than your presence! Poor attendance will seriously hurt your grade.
- **Participation:** Discussion-based courses are an opportunity for students to actively engage the course readings and additional teaching materials. I will guide the discussions, but students carry responsibility for the success and productivity of the discussion. Students should prepare carefully before each class and bring in notes, questions, and observations. I expect all students to engage, debate, and help one another to think through questions. I will occasionally ask for discussion leaders to lead small group discussion. Students who eagerly nominate themselves for this task will earn more participation points than those who wait for me to draft them into service.

Papers:

- **Primary Source-based Research Paper: 20%:** This assignment introduces students to archival research on a topic of your choice. I will post specific instructions on Blackboard.
- **Secondary Source Review Paper: 15%:** In 2-3 pages, you will write a review of Michelle M. Nickerson's *Mothers of Conservatism*. I will post specific instructions on Blackboard.

Exams: Exam 1: 15% and Final Exam: 15%: In both cases I will give you some kind of study guide to prepare.

Course Policies:

1. **EMAIL:** Activate and check your Grinnell email account. If I need to contact you, that is the email I will use. I check my email several times a day and usually respond within a few hours.

2. **MY SCHEDULE:** In addition to the posted office hours, I am happy to arrange appointments. I commute to Grinnell, so I am not on campus on Tuesdays or Thursdays. If we need to discuss something in person, please try to visit me in my office. If that is not possible, I am available by Skype.
3. **PLAGIARISM:** Plagiarism and any other activities when students present work that is not their own are academic fraud, and will be taken VERY SERIOUSLY. Please consult your Student Handbook for additional information.
4. **LATE ASSIGNMENTS:** All assignments are due at the beginning of class unless otherwise specified. If you must turn in an assignment late, please note that I will deduct one third of a letter grade per day (including weekends!), and I will not accept an assignment that is more than three days late. For example, a B paper turned in *after* class has begun will become a B- paper. Students should retain all graded materials. They are often useful later as study aids; furthermore, should there be a dispute over the recording of a score, the burden of proof rests with you.
5. **PROFESSIONALISM:** This is a discussion-based class, and I hope you will offer differing opinions. I will expect all students to maintain an open and tolerant learning environment in the classroom. DO NOT bring any items that might distract the class. Be sure that cell phones and other devices are powered down before class begins. Avoid leaving the room during class. If you know you may have to leave or receive an important phone call, please notify me of your situation before class begins and arrange to sit near the door.
6. **HOLY DAYS:** I encourage students who plan to observe holy days that coincide with class meetings or assignment due dates to consult with me in the first three weeks of classes so that we may reach a mutual understanding of how you can meet the terms of your religious observance and also the requirements for this course.
7. **DISABILITIES:** Please let me know early in the semester if you have physical, psychiatric, or learning disabilities that may require accommodations.

Course Plan:

WEEK 1

F 8/31 Introduction: Studying Women's History

Read: Kerber, "Introduction: Gender and the New Women's History";

WEEK 2

M 9/3: *Women's Work in Early America*

Woloch, Chp. 2, "The Seventeenth Century: A Frontier Society"

Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, "The Ways of Her Household" in KERBER

Writing Assignment I:

Part I: Write four specific questions about the subject of this course that you want answered during this semester. I don't expect you to know the answers. (This component will be a completion grade only, but do take it seriously.)

Part II: Identify one of the primary sources used in today's reading assignment, and note on what page it appears.

W 9/5: *Gender and Society*

DOCUMENTS: The Law of Domestic Relations: Marriage, Divorce, Dower “*Examples from Colonial Connecticut*” in KERBER

Mary Beth Norton, “‘Searchers again Assembled:’ Gender Distinctions in Seventeenth-Century America” in KERBER

Writing Assignment II: Locate Norton’s thesis. Write a paragraph in which you explain how Norton uses evidence to back up her argument. Why (or why not) do you find the argument convincing?

F 9/7 *Gender and Race as a Means of Social Organization*

Jennifer L. Morgan, “Some Could Suckle over Their Shoulder:” European Depictions of Indigenous Women, 1492-1750” in KERBER

Carol Berkin, “African American Women in Colonial Society” in KERBER

K. Brown, “Engendering Racial Differences” on BB

DOCUMENTS: The Law of Slavery and Freedom: Virginia Establishes a Double Standard in Tax Law, “*According to the condition of the mother . . .*”, “*For prevention of that abominable mixture . . .*”, *A Massachusetts Minister's Slave Marriage Vows* in KERBER

Writing Assignment III: Locate Brown’s thesis. Write a paragraph in which you explain how Brown uses evidence to back up her argument. Why (or why not) do you find the argument convincing?

WEEK 3

M 9/10: *Women and the Revolutionary War*

Woloch, Chapter 4

DOCUMENTS: Supporting the Revolution: “*The ladies going about for money exceeded everything . . .*”, *Sarah Osborn*, “The bullets would not cheat the gallows . . .”, *Rachel Wells*, “I have Don as much to Carrey on the Warr as maney . . .” in KERBER

****MONDAY NIGHT film, September 10, *A Midwife's Tale*** [in JRC 209]**

W 9/12 *Archives and primary sources: Meet at Special Collections*

Bonnie Smith, “Gender and the Practices of Scientific History” on BB

F 9/14 *The Republican Mother*

Woloch, Chapter 3

Linda K. Kerber, “The Republican Mother and the Woman Citizen: Contradictions and Choices in Revolutionary America” in KERBER

Writing Assignment IV: Identify Kerber’s thesis. Write a paragraph in which you explain how Kerber uses evidence to back up her argument. Why (or why not) do you find the argument convincing?

WEEK 4

M 9/17 *Women, Education, and the Republic*

A. Kristen Foster, "A Few Thoughts in Vindication of Female Eloquence," from *Children and Youth in a New Nation* on BB

Writing Assignment V: Complete Endnote Analysis Table

W 9/19 *Woman's "Sphere"*

Woloch, Chapters 5&6

Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations between Women in Nineteenth-Century America," in KERBER

F 9/21 *Women's Work in Industrializing America*

Jeanne Boydston, "The Pastoralization of Housework" in KERBER

Ruth Schwartz Cowan, "The 'Industrial Revolution' in the Home: Household Technology and Social Change in the Twentieth Century" in KERBER

DOCUMENT: Working Conditions in Early Factories, 1845: "*She complained of the hours for labor being too many . . .*" in KERBER

Writing Assignment VI: Locate Boydston's thesis. Locate Cowan's thesis. In one page, explain what we can learn by thinking about these two secondary sources as a pair. Be sure to include an analysis of how the primary sources shape the argument that each makes.

WEEK 5

M 9/24 *Gender, Race, and Slavery*

Woloch, begin Chapter 8 (pp. 167-74)

Sharon Block, "Lines of Color, Sex, and Service: Sexual Coercion in the Early Republic" in KERBER

Begin reading *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*

W 9/26 *Women who were Enslaved*

DOCUMENTS: The Testimony of Slave Women: *Maria Perkins*, "I am quite heartsick . . .", *Rose*, "Look for some others for to 'plenish de earth" in KERBER

Finish *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*

Writing Assignment VII: Write one page in which you consider the role of agency in *Incidents*. Who had agency? Who didn't? Why?

F 9/28 *Women's Anti-slavery Activism*

Woloch, finish chapter 8 (pp. 175-95)

Susan Zaeske, "Signatures of Citizenship: Debating Women's Antislavery Petitions" in KERBER

DOCUMENTS: Claiming Rights I: "*Sarah and Angelina Grimke: The Connection between Religious Faith, Abolition, and Women's Rights*," *Keziah Kendall*, "What I have suffered, I cannot tell you" in KERBER

DOCUMENT: "Sojourner Truth's carte de visite" in KERBER

WEEK 6

M 10/1 *Women Claiming Rights*

Keziah Kendall, "What I have suffered, I cannot tell you" in KERBER

Gerda Lerner, "The Meanings of Seneca Falls, 1848-1998" in KERBER

DOCUMENTS Claiming Rights II: "Declaration of Sentiments, 1848," "Married Women's Property Acts, New York State, 1848, 1860" in KERBER

W 10/3 **In-class Exam**

F 10/5 *Labor and Wage-earning Women*

Woloch, Chp. 9 & 10

Annelise Orleck, From the Russian Pale to Labor Organizing in New York City in KERBER

DOCUMENTS: Protecting Women Wage-Workers "Muller v. Oregon, 1908," Pauline Newman, "We fought and we bled and we died . . ." in KERBER

WEEK 7: **individual consultations re: research paper**

M 10/8 *Women and Progressivism*

Woloch, Chp. 11 & 12

Kathryn Kish Sklar, "Florence Kelley and Women's Activism in the Progressive Era" in KERBER

V. Brown, "Jane Addams, Progressivism, and Woman Suffrage" on BB

V. Brown, "Queer or Not: What Jane Addams Teaches Us about Not Knowing" on BB

****PAPER TOPIC/RESEARCH QUESTION due!****

W 10/10 *Women's Bodies*

Joan Jacobs Brumberg, "Fasting Girls: The Emerging Ideal of Slenderness in American Culture" in KERBER

Photo Essay: Adorning the Body in KERBER

F 10/12 **No class** because I will be giving a talk in Michigan. Work on your papers!!

WEEK 8

M 10/15 *Bodies and Sexuality*

Tunc, "Deciphering Dialogues of American Female Sexuality" on BB

James C. Mohr, "Abortion in America" in KERBER

Hine, "Rape and the Inner Lives of Black Women" on BB

Mosher Questionnaires will be distributed in class.

****MONDAY NIGHT film, October 15: One Woman One Vote** [in JRC 209]**

W 10/17 *Suffrage*

Woloch, Chp. 13 & 14

Ellen Carol Dubois, "The Next Generation of Suffragists: Harriet Stanton Blatch and Grassroots Politics" in KERBER

Rebecca Edwards, "Pioneers at the Polls: Woman Suffrage in the West" in KERBER

F 10/19 *The Yellow Wallpaper*
Charlotte Perkins Gilman, *The Yellow Wallpaper* on BB

****Thesis statement and outline for research paper due!****

FALL BREAK

WEEK 9:

M 10/29 *Citizenship and Equality*

DOCUMENTS: Dimensions of Citizenship I: “*Mackenzie v. Hare*, 1915,” “*Equal Suffrage (Nineteenth) Amendment*, 1920,” “*Adkins v. Children's Hospital*, 1923,” Margaret Sanger, “I resolved that women should have knowledge of contraception . . .” in KERBER

Eastman, “Now We Can Begin” on BB

Nancy F. Cott, “Equal Rights and Economic Roles: The Conflict over the Equal Rights Amendment in the 1920s” in KERBER

Writing assignment VIII: Pretend that you are living in the 1920s. Write one paragraph in which you support the ERA and another one in which you oppose it. Consider how issues of race, class, and gender might affect your arguments.

W 10/31 *Flappers*

Woloch, Chp. 15 & 16

Vicki L. Ruiz, “The Flapper and the Chaperone: Mexican American Teenagers in the Southwest” in KERBER

F 11/2 *Discussion of Research Findings*

****Research Paper due by the start of class today!****

WEEK 10: **Individual consultations to discuss revisions. Your revision is due exactly one week after YOUR revision meeting**

M 11/5 *The Great Depression and the New Deal, Part I*

Woloch, Chp. 17 & most of Chp. 18: pp. 429-49.

Leslie J. Reagan, “When Abortion Was a Crime: Reproduction and the Economy in the Great Depression” in KERBER

W 11/7 *The Great Depression and the New Deal, Part II*

Jacqueline Jones, “Harder Times: The Great Depression” in KERBER

DOCUMENT Struggling to Unionize: Genora Johnson Dollinger, “. . . Once she understands she is standing in defense of her family--well, God, don't fool around with that woman then” in KERBER

Alice Kessler-Harris, “Designing Women and Old Fools: Writing Gender into Social Security Law” in KERBER

****THURSDAY NIGHT film**, November 8: *The Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter* and *Rabbit in the Moon*** [in JRC 209]

F 11/9 *Women in World War II*

Woloch, pp. 449-62

Valerie Matsumoto, "Japanese American Women during World War II" in KERBER

Beth Bailey and David Farber, "Prostitutes on Strike: The Women of Hotel Street during World War II" in KERBER

Ruth Milkman, "Gender at Work: The Sexual Division of Labor during World War II" in KERBER

Anderson, "Last Hired First Fired – Black Women Workers During WWII" on BB

Writing assignment IX: What can we learn from the various experiences of women in World War II? In what ways did race, class, and gender shape those experiences? Can you think of other categories that might have had an important effect on women's experiences? (One page)

WEEK 11: Paper Revisions Due this week!

M 11/12 *Postwar Sexuality*

Susan K. Cahn, "Mannishness," Lesbianism, and Homophobia in U.S. Women's Sports" in KERBER

Beth L. Bailey, "Prescribing the Pill: The Coming of the Sexual Revolution in America's Heartland" in KERBER

W 11/14 *The Feminine Mystique*

Betty Friedan, "The problem that has no name..." p. 691-94 in KERBER

Daniel Horowitz, "Betty Friedan and the Origins of Feminism in Cold War America" in KERBER

Rebecca Jo Plant, "Mother-Blaming & The Feminine Mystique" on BB

F 11/16 *Gender, Race, and Ethnicity: The Cold War and the Civil Rights Movement in Postwar America*

Joyce Antler, "Imagining Jewish Mothers in the 1950s" in KERBER

Amy Swerdlow, "Ladies' Day at the Capitol: Women Strike for Peace versus HUAC" in KERBER

Ruth Feldstein, "I Wanted the Whole World To See" on BB

Charles Payne, "A Woman's War: African American Women in the Civil Rights Movement" in KERBER

WEEK 12: *Postwar Conservatism*

M 11/19 Nickerson, *Mothers of Conservatism*, Introduction, Chapters 1-3

W 11/21 Nickerson, *Mothers of Conservatism*, Chapters 4, 5, and Conclusion.

Thanksgiving Break

WEEK 13

M 11/26 *Kinwork*

Micaela Di Leonardo, "The Female World of Cards and Holidays: Women, Families, and the Work of Kinship" *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 12:3 (1987): 440-53.

****SECONDARY SOURCE REVIEW DUE BY THE START OF CLASS!****

W 11/28 *Women in Business*

Christina E. Bax, "Entrepreneur Brownie Wise: Selling Tupperware to America's Women in the 1950s" on BB

Regina Lee Blaszczyk's essay "Where Mrs. Homemaker is Never Forgotten": Lucy Malty and Home Economics at Corning Glass Works, 1929-1965" on BB

****THURSDAY NIGHT film, November 29: *Step By Step: Building a Feminist Movement***
[in JRC 209]**

F 11/30 *Feminism in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s*

Various documents in KERBER, pp. 694-718

Amy Farrell, "Like a Tarantula on a Banana Boat: Ms. Magazine, 1972-1989" on BB

<p><u>Writing assignment X:</u> What story would you tell using today's reading assignment? (One page)</p>
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WEEK 14

M 12/3 *The Equal Rights Amendment in the 1970s*

DOCUMENTS: Dimensions of Citizenship III: "*Equal Rights Amendment, 1972; Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972; Frontiero v. Richardson, 1973; Roe v. Wade, 1973*" in KERBER

W 12/5 *Local History and Oral History*

Read the Introduction and any three of the oral histories in *More Strong Minded Women*. Up to two may be among those posted on BB. You will be responsible for discussing one of these essays in depth during class. I will pass around a signup sheet earlier in the semester to determine which woman you are responsible for discussing.

<p><u>Writing assignment XI:</u> Choose one of the Iowa feminists and write one page on how her oral history might be used as a vehicle for better understanding the historical context of her life. (EVERYONE must do this assignment!)</p>
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F 12/7 *Women and Welfare*

Felicia Kornbluh, "A Human Right to Welfare? Social Protest Among Women Welfare Recipients after World War II" on BB.

Document: "Jamala McFadden Tells Her Story of Welfare Assistance in the 1990s," on BB

Gwendolyn Mink, "Feminists and the Politics of Welfare Reform in the 1990s" on BB

WEEK 15

M 12/10 *Culture in the Second Half of the Twentieth Century*

Katherine Jellison, "The White Wedding in American Culture, 1945-2005" on BB.

W 12/12 *Women in Public*
Photo Essay: "Women in Public" in KERBER

F 12/14 YOUR CHOICE!! It is impossible to cover every aspect of the history of women in a single semester. Before Thanksgiving Break, students will nominate topics about which they would like to learn (or learn more). We will vote on the topics and I will post a reading assignment on that topic for us to discuss in class.

Final Exam
