

## HIS/EAS 295

### GENDER AND POWER IN CHINESE HISTORY (QING TO PRESENT)

FALL 2023

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Instructor      Xiao Chen (he/him) History Dept. | [chenxiao@grinnell.edu](mailto:chenxiao@grinnell.edu)

Time & Room              MWF 11:00-11:50 HSSC N3118

Office Hour              Wednesday 14-16:00 or By Email Appointment

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#### COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

What kinds of expectations and rules shaped the idea of "men" and "women" in Chinese history? How did these notions change over time? This course introduces the power dynamics of gender relations in China from the seventeenth to the twentieth century. We will also discuss how gender has intersected with various other categories of identity, including: sexuality; social status; ethnicity; race; religion; class; citizenship and so forth. Prior knowledge in Chinese history or Chinese language is not required.

By the end of this course, students will:

1. **Achieve an understanding of gender history (its basic theories and uses).**
2. **Explain how and why some gender practices and beliefs in China have changed over time; critically appraise gender issues in "Chinese" history in light of social power dynamics.**
3. **Comprehend and debate major recent trends in the historiography of gender and women's history from late imperial (particularly the Qing) to modern China.**
4. **Research on a topic relevant to gender history in China, formulate research questions, and write a solid piece of scholarly work. The paper rests on primary source analysis and relevant historiography.**

#### ASSIGNMENTS

**Participation and Attendance 30 %**

Active participation in discussion is essential to the success in this course. For our class discussions, please do the readings, take notes (yes! This is so important), and prepare at the beginning of class with at least TWO questions provoked by the readings and/or the topics being discussed. I do not expect you to master the readings before our discussions. This class is very collaborative. Listen carefully and speak to each other. I will distribute a brief reading guide 2 days in advance on Blackboard.

Your participation grades are assessed 3 times, each accounting for 10%. By the end of week 3, 7, and 11, you will write a short self-report (one par.) reflecting on your participation in class discussions up to that point and send it to me. The reports will NOT be factored into your final grades. They are reminders for improving future participation.

Attendance is important. Please attend if at all possible. You have 2 “grace” absences without penalty. Any absence (beyond that) without a legitimate reason will cost a deduction of 2% of the final total grade. If you need to miss class for a religious holiday or an athletic event, please let me know in advance.

### **Summary/Response essays 10%**

Write two short summary essays (5% each). Each about 2 pages long (double space, 12-pt font). They are meant to help you digest the readings and synthesize them with the lectures and class discussions.

### **Gender analysis essay 10% DUE SEPT 22**

Primary source analysis is a key skill that is required for historical research. In this short essay, you will practice analyzing the ideas about gender expressed in historical primary sources. Choose ONE primary source, write a 700-word essay on **“How does the representation of masculinity and femininity in the primary source relate to the historical context in which it was written?”** In order to answer this question, you will need to conduct research on the historical context of the primary source. A grading rubric on how your essay is assessed will be distributed later.

### **Final essay proposal and annotated bibliography 15% DUE OCT 27**

Choose a **topic** relevant to gender history from late imperial to modern China, then develop a **research question** based on your reading of both primary and secondary sources collected, brainstorm your preliminary **main argument**. An annotated bibliography is a list of sources (both primary and secondary) with annotations explaining why the source is relevant to your essay following each source. Find TEN

sources in total. An **annotation of 50 words** should be included following each referenced source. This annotation should not only state what the source is about, but also explain **why it is relevant to your research**. This assignment will prepare you for your major essay assignment by giving you the chance to receive feedback on your project.

### **Final Project 35%**

A 12-page research paper (30%) that should build on your previous works and a presentation of your project (5%). A detailed prompt will be distributed later.

## REQUIRED BOOKS

Books (you may purchase from the bookstore or other channels):

Mann, Susan. *The talented women of the Zhang family*. Univ of California Press, 2007

Hershatter, Gail. *Women and China's Revolutions*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2018.

## COURSE POLICIES

### **Accessibility Resources**

I will make every effort to work with students to implement accommodations that are presented to me through the College process (as outlined in the Student Handbook and the Office of Accessibility and Disability Services). Students with disabilities will also need to have a conversation about their disability with the Coordinator for Disability Resources. To learn more about this process, and the rights and responsibilities of students in this area, please consult:

<https://www.grinnell.edu/about/offices-services/accessibility-disability/students>

### **Academic integrity**

Please familiarize yourself with these policies (<https://www.grinnell.edu/doc/2023-2024-academic-honesty-booklet>) to avoid misunderstandings. Do not hesitate to ask me

if you are ever in doubt about what constitutes plagiarism, cheating, or any other breach of academic integrity.

### Extension

Everyone is allowed 1 extensions of 24 hours on 1 writing assignments without penalty. 2 or more late submissions (regardless of reasons) will incur grade deduction.

### Statement on Gender Inclusivity

I will make my best efforts to refer to you in the pronoun of your choice and I expect class mates to respect each other's pronoun preference.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

This syllabus represents my current plan. I will communicate changes, if any, clearly.

# Week 1 Theoretical Background	
Aug 25 (Fri)	Class Introduction
Aug 28 (Mon)	Rose, Sonya O. <i>What is Gender History?</i> Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010, 1-35, 102-121.
Aug 30 (Wed)	Depending on your interests, read at least ONE chapter among Ch. 3, 4, and 5 from Rose, Sonya O. <i>What is Gender History?</i> Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010.
Sep 1 (Fri)	Mann, Susan. 2000. "Presidential Address: Myths of Asian Womanhood," <i>The Journal of Asian Studies</i> , Vol. 59, No. 4. (Nov. 2000), 835-862.
# Week 2 Confucianism and Women I	
Sep 4 (Mon)	Ban Zhao, "A lesson for women"; Pang-White, Ann A. "Confucius and the Four Books for Women (Nü Sishu «女四書»)." <i>Feminist encounters with Confucius</i> . Brill, 2016. 15-39.
Sep 6 (Wed)	Bray, Francesca. "The inner quarters: oppression or freedom." <i>House home family: living and being Chinese</i> (2005): 259-279.
Sep 8 (Fri)	Lydia H. Liu, Rebecca E. Karl, and Dorothy Ko, <i>Introduction to The Birth of Chinese Feminism: Essential Texts in Transnational Theory</i> (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013): 2-26.
# Week 3 Confucianism and Women II	

Sep 11 (Mon)	Mann, Susan. <i>The talented women of the Zhang family</i> . Univ of California Press, 2007.
Sep 13 (Wed)	Mann, Susan. <i>The talented women of the Zhang family</i> . Univ of California Press, 2007.
Sep 15 (Fri)	Wrap-up discussion on Confucianism and women
	1 <sup>st</sup> self-evaluation of participation is due

## # Week 4 Politics of Chastity

Sep 18 (Mon)	Chow, Kai-wing. <i>The rise of Confucian ritualism in late imperial China: Ethics, classics, and lineage discourse</i> . Stanford University Press, 1996: 204-223.
Sep 20 (Wed)	Theiss, Janet. <i>Disgraceful matters: The politics of chastity in eighteenth-century China</i> . Univ of California Press, 2005 (excerpts).
Sep 22 (Fri)	Sommer, Matthew Harvey. "The uses of chastity: Sex, law, and the property of widows in Qing China." <i>Late Imperial China</i> 17.2 (1996): 77-130.
	<b>Gender analysis essay DUE</b>

## # Week 5 Foot-binding: competing views

Sep 25 (Mon)	Ko, Dorothy. <i>Cinderella's sisters: A revisionist history of footbinding</i> . Univ of California Press, 2005, (excerpts); "The Three-inch Golden Lotus of My Great-grandma" (25 min., available at Youtube).
Sep 27 (Mon)	Shepherd, John Robert. <i>Footbinding as Fashion: Ethnicity, Labor, and Status in Traditional China</i> . University of Washington Press, 2019 (excerpts).
Sep 29 (Mon)	Melissa J. Brown et al., "Marriage Mobility and Footbinding in Pre-1949 Rural China: A Reconsideration of Gender, Economics, and Meaning in Social Causation," <i>The Journal of Asian Studies</i> , Vol. 71, No. 4 (2012): 1035-1067

## # Week 6 Gender, Technology, and Medicine

Oct 2 (Mon)	Bray, Francesca. <i>Technology and Gender: Fabrics of Power in Late Imperial China</i> . Univ of California Press, 1997 (excerpts).
Oct 4 (Wed)	Furth, Charlotte. "Concepts of Pregnancy, Childbirth, and Infancy in Ch'ing Dynasty China." <i>The Journal of Asian Studies</i> , vol. 46, no. 1, 1987, pp. 7-35

Oct 6 (Fri)	Selected chapter from Johnson, Tina Phillips. <i>Childbirth in republican China: delivering modernity</i> . Lexington Books, 2011 OR Shemo, Connie A. <i>The Chinese medical ministries of Kang Cheng and Shi Meiyu, 1872-1937: On a cross-cultural frontier of gender, race, and nation</i> . Rowman & Littlefield, 2011.
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## # Week 7 Gender and Law I

Oct 9 (Mon)	Introduction and one chapter from Sommer, Matthew Harvey. <i>Sex, law, and society in late imperial China</i> . Stanford University Press, 2000.
Oct 11 (Wed)	Epstein, Maram, Mark McNicholas, and Joanna Waley-Cohen. "THE FAILURE OF 'CONFUCIAN' FAMILY VALUES." In <i>True Crimes in Eighteenth-Century China: Twenty Case Histories</i> , edited by Robert E. Hegel, 122–46
Oct 13 (Fri)	Excerpts from Bodde, Derk, and Clarence Morris. <i>Law in Imperial China: exemplified by 190 Ch'ing Dynasty cases (translated from the Hsing-an hui-lan)</i> , with historical, social, and juridical commentaries. Harvard University Press, 1967.
	2 <sup>nd</sup> self-evaluation of participation is due

## Fall Break

## # Week 8 Gender and Law II

Oct 23 (Mon)	Sommer, Matthew H., 'Dangerous Males, Vulnerable Males, and Polluted Males: The Regulation of Masculinity in Qing Dynasty Law', 67-88.
Oct 25 (Wed)	<b>Guest Lecture?</b>
Oct 27 (Fri)	<b>Class cancelled (TBA)</b>
	<b><u>Final essay proposal and annotated bibliography is Due</u></b>

## # Week 9 New Culture and New Women

Oct 30 (Mon)	Choose ONE writing from <i>Introduction to The Birth of Chinese Feminism: Essential Texts in Transnational Theory</i> .
Nov 1 (Wed)	Susan Glosser, "'The Truths I have Learned': Nationalism, Family Reform, and Male Identity in China's New Culture Movement, 1915-1923," <i>Chinese Femininities Chinese Masculinities</i> , 120-144
Nov 3 (Fri)	<b>TBA</b>

# Week 10 Women in Revolution	
Nov 6 (Mon)	Hershatler, <i>Women and China's Revolutions</i>
Nov 8 (Wed)	Hershatler, <i>Women and China's Revolutions</i>
Nov 10 (Fri)	Diamant, Neil J. "Re-examining the impact of the 1950 marriage law: State improvisation, local initiative and rural family change." <i>The China Quarterly</i> 161 (2000): 171-198.
# Week 11 Gender, Labor, and Markets	
Nov 13 (Mon)	TBA
Nov 15 (Wed)	Honig, Emily. <i>Sisters and strangers: Women in the Shanghai cotton mills, 1919-1949</i> . Stanford University Press, 1992. (excerpts)
Nov 17 (Fri)	Ngai, Pun. <i>Made in China: Women factory workers in a global workplace</i> . Duke University Press, 2005. (excerpts)
	3 <sup>rd</sup> self-evaluation of participation is due
# Week 12 Study Week-No Class	
Nov 20 (Mon)	This week we have a study week so that you can work on your final essay.
Nov 22 (Wed)	
Nov 24 (Fri)	<b>Thanksgiving Break</b>
# Week 13	
Nov 27 (Mon)	<b>Presentations of Final Projects</b>
Nov 29 (Wed)	<b>Presentations of Final Projects</b>
Dec 1 (Fri)	<b>Presentations of Final Projects</b>
# Week 14	
Dec 4 (Mon)	<b>Presentations of Final Projects</b>
Dec 6 (Wed)	<b>Presentations of Final Projects</b>
Dec 8 (Fri)	<b>Presentations of Final Projects</b>
<b><u>Dec 16 (Fri) **Final Paper Due**</u></b>	