American Women’s History since 1865  
MWF 10:00-10:50 in School of Education Building 226  
Instructor: Dr. Mandy L. Cooper  
mlcoope2@uncg.edu  
Office Hours: Monday 11-12 and Wednesday 2-4 in MHRA 2145

Course Description:  
This class examines American women’s history from Reconstruction to the present. Students will examine women’s changing experiences and expectations, as well as the significance of the roles that women have held in the American family and in the public sphere. Students will explore historical issues of gender, race, and region, asking how different facets of identity shaped the way that women experienced and interacted with the political, economic, legal, and cultural forces that shaped their lives. This class will examine women’s role in key moments and events in modern US history, including Reconstruction and the rise of Jim Crow, immigration, industrialization, urbanization, modernization, American imperialism at home and abroad, definitions of citizenship, major wars, the birth of counterculture in the sixties, the Civil Rights Movement and other social movements, and the rise of conservatism. While delving deeper into these key moments and events, students will also become acquainted with the “ordinary” men and women of diverse backgrounds who helped form the nation. This course will both tell history from the vantage point of recognizable figures and move beyond the “great man/woman” perspective to examine women typically left out of the historical narrative.

The course will be divided into four thematic sections, each of which will be structured relatively chronologically. The first section focuses on race, ethnicity, and citizenship in the late nineteenth-century United States, covering topics such as the gender politics of Reconstruction, women under Jim Crow, and Native American women in the West. The second section focuses specifically on politics and activism, examine women’s historical role in the political process, the different ways that women have engaged as political actors (even when disenfranchised), and the issues that became defined as women’s issues from the late nineteenth-century to the present. The third section turns to business and labor, examining women’s work in everything from domestic labor within the household to work in factories, war production, and more. Finally, the last section focuses on culture and society, examining women’s changing roles, opportunities, and expectations.

The readings, lectures, and assignments have been structured to help students think critically about history and not simply memorize facts, dates, places, and names. The course relies on three kinds of sources: lectures, primary materials, and secondary readings. The lectures are intended to introduce analytical ideas: the big themes, questions, and problems from a particular historical moment. Those ideas will then help you analyze the assigned readings. Primary source materials are sources that were created in the historical time period that we’re studying. They allow us, as historians, to enter into that period, to get closer to it, and to get a more direct sense of what was happening at the time. Secondary sources, such as the assigned book chapters and articles, are different: they are written after the fact, are filtered through someone else’s observations, and are thus removed from the actual time period in question. The analysis of the two kinds of sources is also different. With primary sources, we are focusing on materials generated in the past; in learning how to critically analyze those materials, we are also coming to terms with the dynamics of the past. With secondary sources, we would be weighing what other people said about the past and determining which analysis we find most compelling. Students should leave this class with a better and deeper understanding of American history and why the past remains relevant today. While this course is geared toward history majors, students of all fields should find this class helpful in learning how to participate in scholarly discussion and analyze historical arguments.
Learning Goals for this Course:

*Historical Comprehension (Analyze historical duration, succession, and change in terms of human agency and larger systems or structures in a wide variety of places and periods)*:
  - Acquire a general knowledge of women’s history in the United States since 1865
  - Gain a better understanding of the intersections of race, ethnicity, class, and sexuality and how those intersections shaped the way that women experienced and interacted with the political, economic, legal, and cultural forces that shaped their lives

*Historical Analysis (Use historical thinking to contextualize and analyze primary and secondary sources representing different points of view)*:
  - Analyze the intersections of race, class, and gender over time and space
  - Develop skills in analyzing primary sources and historical topics — and apply those skills to develop strong analytical arguments

*Historical Interpretation (Use evidence-based reasoning to interpret the past coherently while developing and presenting an original argument, orally and in writing)*:
  - Demonstrate the ability to communicate analytical ideas effectively — both in discussion and in writing
  - Construct a historical argument
  - Evaluate a scholarly argument and critique scholars’ interpretations of history
  - Participate in an academic discussion

*Historical Research (Conduct original research by investigating and interpreting primary and secondary sources)*:
  - Develop a tour stop on a women’s history tour of UNCG, Greensboro, and the surrounding area that is grounded in primary sources and supported by scholarly literature

Course Texts:

Other readings will consist of book chapters, articles, and primary sources. Book chapters and primary sources will be posted on Canvas or linked on the syllabus, and articles can be found on JSTOR. We will go over how to find and access articles through JSTOR in class.

Class Structure: Each class will begin with a lecture that draws from your readings. At certain points during class, I will stop and ask you to discuss specific points from the readings and lecture. Your response and discussion should reveal your knowledge of the assigned reading. About ten minutes of each class will be devoted to discussing the primary source reading for that day, generally one or two short items; this discussion will usually fall at the end of class. Diverse and strong opinions are welcome; however, I expect students to conduct themselves in a professional and respectful manner at all times.

Reading Assignments: Students will complete the assigned readings for a particular lecture before class. You will need to thoroughly read the book chapters and/or articles (posted on Canvas) and come to class prepared to discuss what you have read. We will discuss strategies for reading analytically (and quickly!) in class. If you miss a lecture, you should ask a classmate if they would be willing to share a copy of their notes for that day. The primary sources are brief (generally only one
to two pages each), and we will go over them in class together. Students are expected to come to class having done the required reading and prepared to thoughtfully engage in the lecture, discussion, and primary source exercise. Discussions, writing assignments, and exams should reflect that you have been attending class and doing the reading.

**Class Leaders:** Each student will be required to lead class discussion once during the semester. These discussions will be held every Friday and should cover all of the week’s material. Before beginning the discussion, the class leaders should open with an overview of the main arguments and theme for that week. You should be prepared to discuss these readings in detail with the class. Your discussion should consist of questions you have prepared as well as the questions posted by your classmates. I will lead the first week (Friday, August 30) to provide an example that you should follow. All students are expected to set up a meeting with me the week before they are scheduled to lead class discussion.

**Response Paper:** Students will write a response paper based on the readings for the week that they lead discussion. The response paper should be a review of several readings (3-4) that have similar themes. For examples, students should refer to *Reviews in American History*, which is available online through the library. The paper should be between three and five pages in length and should contain the following elements: summary, criticism, comparison/contrast, and an assessment of the readings’ major contributions. These response papers should not merely summarize the major arguments of the readings but should make connections between them. Response papers are due by 5:00 PM the day before students lead class discussion and should be emailed to me AND posted online for the class to look over in advance.

**Final Project:** Your final project will be to design a stop on a women’s history tour of UNCG, Greensboro, and the surrounding area. Your stop can focus on people, events, monuments, buildings, sites of former buildings, or outdoor spaces such as parks or cemeteries, as long as it’s related to women’s history. You will turn in a list of three choices for your stop for my approval. The stop should have a central narrative, a logical flow, and historical context. For the site you choose, you will create two things: a pin on Historypin and a separate Word document with a Tour Program. You will receive more information on this project in class.

**Exams:** There will be two take-home exams, a midterm and a final. Students will be provided with essay topics in advance.

**Grading Scheme:**
- Participation: 10%
- Lead Discussion: 15%
- Response Paper: 15%
- Final Project: 20%
- Midterm Exam: 20%
- Final Exam: 20%

**Attendance Policy:** You are expected to attend every class. Please be aware that it will be very difficult for you to succeed in this course if you do not attend class. Consequently, three or more absences will result in a penalty on your participation grade. If you encounter extenuating circumstances that result in three or more absences, you should speak to me personally.
Late Work: All papers and assignments are due at the start of class on the date listed on the syllabus. You must take the midterm and final exam on the dates listed on the syllabus.

Academic Integrity: Plagiarism and academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Enrollment in this course and submission of each written assignment constitute students’ acceptance of UNCG’s Academic Integrity Policy. You can find the full Academic Integrity Policy, here: https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B0rFGGhJvbDHUExSZmFFaWFmb00/view.

Academic Support & Disability Accommodations: The University of North Carolina at Greensboro seeks to promote meaningful access to educational opportunities for all students. Should you have any needs or questions related to disability issues, please contact the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS - https://ods.uncg.edu/), located in the Elliot University Center, #215. As an instructor, I am committed to making this course accessible to all students in it and will work with OARS to accommodate students’ requests. You do not need to disclose details about your disability to the instructor in order to receive accommodations, but you do need to have documentation from OARS for whatever accommodation you have been approved for.

Writing Center: The Writing Center provides support for all types of writing assignments. Since you pay for the Writing Center via your student fees, you should take advantage of it to improve your writing. Visit https://writingcenter.uncg.edu/ to learn more.

Speaking Center: Besides providing help for in-class presentations, the Speaking Center has useful resources and tips for students who are shy about speaking up in class or section. Visit https://speakingcenter.uncg.edu/ for more information.

Office Hours: I am always happy to discuss any questions or concerns you have regarding this course. I am always available during office hours, and you are welcome to schedule an appointment outside of those times by emailing me.

History Department Websites:
History Department website: https://his.uncg.edu
Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/UNCGDepartmentofHistory/

Syllabus Updates: Please note that readings and due dates are subject to change. I will notify you of any changes to the course schedule in class.

Schedule

Wednesday, August 21
Introduction
Major Themes, Questions, Problems, Concerns
In-Class Assignment: Nancy Hewitt, “From Seneca Falls to Suffrage? Reimagining a ‘Master’ Narrative in U.S. Women’s History,” in No Permanent Waves: Recasting Histories of U.S. Feminism

Theme 1: Race, Ethnicity, & Citizenship in the Late Nineteenth Century

Friday, August 23
Race, Gender, and Citizenship – Legacies of the Civil War

**Monday, August 26**

**Reconstruction Politics**

Reading: Faye E. Dudden, “The Fight over the Fifteenth Amendment,” in *Fighting Chance: The Struggle Over Woman Suffrage and Black Suffrage in Reconstruction America*

Primary Sources:
- *Sojourner Truth, “Address to the First Annual Meeting of the American Equal Rights Association”* (1867)
- *Frances Ellen Harper, We Are All Bound up Together* (1866)

**Wednesday, August 28**

**Women under Jim Crow**

Reading: Crystal N. Feimster, “The Gender and Racial Politics of the Anti-Lynching Movement,” in *Southern Horrors: Women and the Politics of Rape and Lynching*.

Primary Sources:
- *Ida B. Wells-Barnett, Lynch Law in America* (1900)
- *Mary Church Terrell, The Progress of Colored Women – Feb. 18, 1898*

**Friday, August 30**

**White Women and Domesticity in the West**


Primary Sources:
- *Mrs. A.M. Green Gives an Account of Frontier Life in Colorado, 1887 (MP)*

**Monday, September 2**

**Labor Day – No Class**

**Wednesday, September 4**

**Native American Women in the West**


- *A Citizen Protests the Rape of Indian Women in California, 1862 (MP)*
- *Zitkala-Sa Travels to the Land of the Big Red Apples, 1884 (MP)*

**Friday, September 6**

**Women, Ethnicity, & the Politics of Citizenship in the West**

Reading: Nayan Shah, “Intimate Ties and State Legitimacy,” in *Stranger Intimacy: Contesting Race, Sexuality, and the Law in the North American West*

Primary Sources:
- Bills of Sale of Chinese Prostitutes, 1875-1876 (MP)
- Mary Tape Protests Chinese Segregation (1885)

**Theme 2: Politics & Activism**

**Monday, September 9**
**Women & Reform in the Progressive Era**


Primary Sources:
- Jane Addams, “The Subjective Necessity for Social Settlements” (1892)
- Margaret Sanger, Chapter 1, “Woman’s Error and Her Debt,” in *Woman and the New Race* (1920)

**Wednesday, September 11**
**The Fight for Suffrage, Part 1**

Reading: Kate Clarke Lemay, “Compelling Tactics, 1913-1916” in *Votes for Women! A Portrait of Persistence*

Primary Sources:
**Examine the visual sources included in the required reading. We will discuss these in class.**

**Friday, September 13**
**The Fight for Suffrage, Part 2**

Reading: Kate Clarke Lemay, “Militancy in the American Woman Suffrage Movement, 1917-1919,” in *Votes for Women! A Portrait of Persistence*

Primary Sources:
- The 19th Amendment
- Crystal Eastman, “Now We Can Begin” (1920)

**Monday, September 16**
**Civil Rights Movement, Part 1**

Reading: Charles M. Payne, “A Woman’s War,” in *I’ve Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle*

Primary Sources:
- Rosa Parks on Life in Montgomery, Alabama (1956-1958)

**Wednesday, September 18**
**Civil Rights Movement, Part 2**

Reading: Danielle L. McGuire, “Walking in Pride and Dignity” in *At the Dark End of the Street: Black Women, Rape and Resistance – a New History of the Civil Rights Movement from Rosa Parks to the Rise of Black Power*

Primary Sources:
- Fannie Lou Hamer: Testimony at the Democratic National Convention 1964
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<th>Reading</th>
<th>Primary Sources</th>
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| Friday, September 20 | Activism and the Fight for Rights          | Reading: Langston, Donna Hightower. “American Indian Women's Activism in the 1960s and 1970s,” *Hypatia*, 18, No. 2 (Spring, 2003), 114 – 132  
Primary Sources:  
-Dolores Huerta, FRONTLINE interview – March 21, 2013  
-Dolores Huerta, Interview with Maria Huffman – Feb. 23, 1968 |
| Monday, September 23 | Second Wave Feminism                       | Reading: Anne M. Valk, “Organizing for Reproductive Control,” in *Radical Sisters: Second-Wave Feminism and Black Liberation in Washington, D.C.*  
Primary Sources:  
-Brochure on the Equal Rights Amendment (1976) |
| Wednesday, September 25 | Conservative Activism                   | Reading: Elizabeth McRae, “White Women, White Youth, and the Hope of the Nation,” in *Mothers of Massive Resistance: White Women and the Politics of White Supremacy*  
Primary Sources:  
-Phyllis Schlafly, “What’s Wrong with ‘Equal Rights’ for Women?” (1972)  
-“Stop Era” Protest (1977)  
-Phyllis Schlafly on Women’s Responsibility for Sexual Harassment (1981) |
Primary Source:  
-Margaret Sanger, Chapter 10, “Contraceptives or Abortion?” in *Woman and the New Race* (1920)  
-Nonconformist Joyce Johnson Recounts Her Experience in Obtaining an Illegal Abortion in New York City, 1955 (MP) |
<p>| Monday, September 30 | Reproductive Justice, Part 2                | No Secondary Reading                                                                      |                                                                                  |
|                    | <strong>Take Home Midterm Due by Class</strong>         |                                                                                           |                                                                                  |</p>
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<td>Friday, October 4</td>
<td>Visit to Special Collections</td>
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The U.S. Supreme Court Upholds a Maximum-Hours Law for Working Women in Muller v. Oregon, 1908 (MP)

Monday, October 21

The Great Depression
Primary Sources:
-Eleanor Roosevelt Applauds the Repeal of the Married Persons Clause of the Economy Act, 1937 (MP)

Wednesday, October 23

Rosie the Riveter – WWII & Women Workers
Reading: Myers, Polly Reed. “Manpower versus Womanpower during World War II,” in Capitalist Family Values: Gender, Work, and Corporate Culture at Boeing
Primary Sources:
-Mary McLeod Bethune Urges President Roosevelt to Turn to Qualified Negro Women for Help in the War Effort, 1940 (MP)
-Mrs. Norma Yerger Queen Reports on the Problems of Employed Mothers in Utah, 1944 (MP)

Friday, October 25

The Industrialization of Housework in the Post-War Period
Reading: Janice Williams Rutherford, “Promoting Industry to Save the Home” in Selling Mrs. Consumer: Christine Frederick and the Rise of Household Efficiency
In-Class Activity – Advertisements

Monday, October 28

The Glass Ceiling
Primary Source:

Wednesday, October 30

Women, Work, and Welfare in the 1990s and Beyond
Reading: Gwendolyn Mink, “Feminists and the Politics of Welfare Reform in the 1990s,”
Primary Sources:
-Southern Poverty Law Center, Section Two: Workplace Exploitation Immigrant Women Powerless in the Face of Abuses, 2010

Theme 3: Culture and Society: Roles, Opportunities, Expectations
Friday, November 1
Female Friendships in the Nineteenth Century

Monday, November 4
Victorian Domesticity across the Country
Primary Source:
- Mrs. Gilpin’s frugalities. Remnants and 200 ways of using them. (1883), pages v-vi.

Wednesday, November 6
Women & Civic Culture during the Progressive Era
Primary Source:
- Anna Julia Cooper, “Women’s Cause is One and Universal” (1893)

Friday, November 8
No Class – Research for Final Projects

Monday, November 11
Women & the Culture of US Imperialism
Reading: Jennifer Thigpen, “Soldiers and Angels for God” and “Gendered Diplomacy” in Island Queens and Mission Wives: How Gender and Empire Remade Hawai’i’s Pacific World
Primary Sources:
- Singer Sewing Machine Advertisement in South Africa, 1893
- Mary Tenney Castle to her namesake Mary Eloise Castle, Honolulu, Sat., Nov. 29, 1884. (p. 15-17 of PDF)

Wednesday, November 13
The “New Woman”
Primary Sources:
- Bulletin of the North Carolina College for Women, Vol. IX No. 1., pages 158-172

Friday, November 15
No Secondary Reading
Primary Source:
- The Vice Commission of Chicago Reports on the Working Conditions in Department Stores that Lead Female Employees into Prostitution, 1911 (MP)
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<tr>
<td>Monday, November 18</td>
<td>The 1920s, the Jazz Age, and Changing Sexual Mores</td>
<td>Fiona I. B. Ngô, “Desire and Danger in Jazz’s Contact Zones,” in <em>Imperial Blues: Geographies of Race and Sex in Jazz Age New York</em></td>
<td>- Ellen Welles Page, “A Flapper’s Appeal to Parents” (1922)</td>
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<td>- Dorothy West, “Amateur Night in Harlem” (1938)</td>
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<td>Friday, November 22</td>
<td>June Cleaver? Domesticity and Suburban Life</td>
<td>In-Class Film Viewing</td>
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<td>Monday, November 25</td>
<td>Feminism and Sexual Deviance in the Cold War and Beyond</td>
<td>No Secondary Reading</td>
<td>- <em>Lillian Hellman Refuses to Name Names</em> (1952)</td>
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<td>- A Letter to the Editor of <em>The Ladder</em> from an African American Lesbian, 1957</td>
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<td>Wednesday, November 27</td>
<td>Thanksgiving – No Class</td>
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<td>Friday, November 29</td>
<td>Thanksgiving – No Class</td>
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<td>Wednesday, December 4</td>
<td>Review Session</td>
<td>Final Projects Due</td>
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