

HIST 4910: Women and Gender in the US West

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Course Description

This course will examine the interconnected histories of women in the US west, exploring how gender, race and class shaped their experiences. Moving from pre-contact through the mid twentieth century, students will explore how colonialism and migrations impacted the lives of diverse groups of women, including but not limited to their family lives, how they made a living, and the types of communities they built.

Upon completion of this class students will:

- appreciate the ways that gender shaped systems of power and cultural experience in the West
- compare the ways that class, race and ethnicity shaped the lives of women in the West in different ways.
- build critical thinking skills through analysis of a variety of texts, including historical documents and visual materials.
- employ those insights to construct historical arguments.

You will be required to read the assigned readings, attend video showings, and come to class prepared to integrate what you have learned in class discussions. Attending class is very important! What we discuss in class will not be easy to "look-up" in a textbook or on a website. It is your responsibility to participate in creating a dynamic and respectful intellectual climate by coming to class on time, prepared, and ready to discuss the assigned readings.

Please note: Plagiarism policy

Plagiarism is a serious offense and will not be tolerated. According to USU policy, plagiarism is "knowingly representing, by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person as one's own in any academic exercise or activity without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials." Please see the USU academic affairs website for a description of penalties (which are severe) and for more information. URL: <http://www.usu.edu/aia/ACADEMIC/syllabusres.cfm#plagiarism>

Required Books:

- Elizabeth Jameson and Susan Armitage, *Writing the Range: Race, Class and Culture in the Women's West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997).
- Willa Cather, *My Ántonia* (NY: Random House, 1994).
- Frank B. Linderman, *Pretty-Shield: Medicine Woman of the Crows* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003).
- Additional readings are posted on the class webct page. These pdf files are indicated on the syllabus by "📄".

Assignments and Grading:

1. Term Paper, (100 points) 1700-2000 words.
2. Film review (50 points) 500 words. Chose one of the following films:



<i>Thousand Pieces of Gold</i>	<i>Joy Luck Club</i>
<i>Heartland</i>	<i>Thelma and Louise</i>
<i>Ballad of Little Jo</i>	<i>McCabe and Mrs. Miller</i>
<i>Deadwood (choose two episodes)</i>	<i>Cat Ballou</i>
<i>Unforgiven</i>	<i>My Darling Clementine</i>
<i>Salt of the Earth</i>	<i>The Searchers</i>
<i>Mi Familia</i>	<i>Lakota Woman</i>
3. Mid term (100 points)
4. Final (100 points)

Reading Assignment Schedule

I. Why study women in the West? Methodological and Theoretical Questions

January 9: Introductions and Expectations.

January 11: Historiographical Issues

- Antonia Castañeda, "Women of Color and the Rewriting of Western History, the Discourse, Politics, and Decolonization of History," *Pacific Historical Review* 61(November 1992), 501-533. 
- Susan Lee Johnson, "A Memory Sweet to Soldiers": The Significance of Gender in the History of the "American West," *Western Historical Quarterly*, (November 1993): 495-517. 

II. American Indian Women and Their Pre-Colonial Context

January 16: Interpretations and Differences


- Ramona Ford, "Native American Women: Changing Statuses, Changing Interpretations," in *Writing the Range*, 42-68.

January 18: A Pueblo Example

- Ramón Gutiérrez, "The Pueblo Indian World in the Sixteenth Century." 

III. Gender and the Colonial Economy

January 23: Agriculture

- Joan Jensen, "Native American Women and Agriculture: A Seneca Case Study." 

January 25: Fur Trade

- Sylvia Van Kirk, "The Role of Native American Women in Fur Trade Society." 

IV. Gender and Migrations: The Development of Settler Societies

January 30: Spanish Colonial Societies – New Mexico


- Yolanda Chávez Leyva, "'A Poor Widow Burdened with Children:' Widows and Land in Colonial New Mexico," in *Writing the Range*, 85-96.
- James Brooks, "'This Evil Extends Especially to the Feminine Sex': Captivity and Identity in New Mexico, 1700-1846," in *Writing the Range*, 97-121.

February 1: Spanish Colonial Societies – California


- "Testimonio of Apolinaria Lorenzana" 

February 6: Film: *Nobody's Girls: Five Women of the West*



February 8: Film: *Nobody's Girls: Five Women of the West*, part 2 and discussion

- Barbara Y. Welke, "Rights of Passage: Gendered-Rights Consciousness and the Quest for Freedom, San Francisco, California, 1850-1870;" "Willianna Hickman's Nicodemus Saga;" and "Homesteading on the Plains: the Ava Speese Day Story;" from *African American Women Confront the West, 1600-2000*, ed. Quintard Taylor and Shirley Ann Wilson Moore (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2003), 73-93; 117-121. 

February 13: Women and US frontier societies – the Oregon Trail

- John Mack Faragher, "Men's and Women's Work on the Overland Trail," 
- "Luzena Stanley Wilson, '49er." See link on webct: [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/calbk:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(calbk089div2\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/calbk:@field(DOCID+@lit(calbk089div2))):

February 15: Women and US frontier societies – the Mormon Migration

- Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, "Women's Work on the Mormon Frontier," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 49(Summer 1981): 276-290. 
- The Personal Writings of Eliza Roxcy Snow, "A Growling, Grumbling, Devilish, Sickly Time." 

February 20: Gender and the Mexican War


“Testimonio of Teresa de la Guerra” 

February 22: Mid Term Review

February 27: Mid Term

V. Gender and Industrialization

March 1: Entrepreneurial Women of the Gold Rush

- Albert L. Hurtado, “Sex, Gender, Culture and a Great Event: The California Gold Rush,” *Pacific Historical Review* 68(February 1999): 1-19. 

March 6: From Mining Camp to Company Town

- Laurie Mercier, “We are Women Irish’: Gender, Class, Religious and Ethnic Identity in Anaconda, Montana,” in *Writing the Range*, 311-333.

March 8: Asian Women’s migration experiences

- Annette White-Parks, “Beyond Stereotypes: Chinese Pioneer Women,” in *Writing the Range*, 258-273.

March 13 – 15 no class, Spring Break

March 20: Discussion of *My Ántonia*

March 22: Homesteading Life and Rural Labor

Film: *A Jury of Her Peers*

No reading assignment today

March 27: Gender and the Industrialization of the Family Farm

- Dee Garceau, “I Got a Girl Here, Would You Like to Meet Her?: Courtship, Ethnicity, and Community in Sweetwater Country, 1900 – 1925,” in *Writing the Range*, 274-297.

March 29 – no class – conference

April 3: Reservation Life – class discussion


- Frank B. Linderman, *Pretty-Shield: Medicine Woman of the Crows*.

IV. Gender and Reform in the West

April 5: Temperance and Suffrage in the West

- Term paper due
- No reading assignment today

April 10: Reform and "Rescue," part 1



- Peggy Pascoe, chapters 1 and 2 from *Relations of Rescue: The Search for Moral Authority in the American West* 

April 12: Reform and "Rescue," part 2


- Margaret Jacobs, "Resistance to Rescue: The Indians of Bahapki and Mrs. Annie E.K. Bidwell," in *Writing the Range*, 230-252.
- Lisa E. Emmerich, "'Save the Babies!' American Indian Women, Assimilationist Policy and Scientific Motherhood, 1912-1918," in *Writing the Range*, 393-409.
- Wendy Wall, "Gender and the 'Citizen Indian,'" in *Writing the Range*, 202-229.

V. Twentieth Century Migrations and Social Movements


April 17: Rural Women

- Annie Diggs, "Women of the Alliance Movement," 1892 
- Mary Sullivan's "Sunny California" (a ballad about the migrant experience – mp3 file on webct)
- Caroline Henderson, "Dust to Eat," from *Letters from the Dust Bowl*, ed., Alvin O. Turner (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2001). 
- Cynthia Orozco, Alice Dickerson Montemayor: Feminism and Mexican American Politics in the 1930s," in *Writing the Range*, 435-456.

April 19: World War II

- Shirley Ann Wilson Moore, "'Not in Somebody's Kitchen': African American Women Workers in Richmond, California and the Impact of World War II," in *Writing the Range*, 517-532.
- Valerie Matsumoto, "Japanese American Women During World War II," 

April 24: Postwar West

- Terry Bryan, "Southeast Asian Refugee Women, War, and Resettlement," in *Writing the Range*, 569-584.
- Wilma Mankiller, "Returning the Balance." 

April 26 – last day of class, review

Final Exam: Thursday, May 3: 1:30 to 3:20 pm.