

SYLLABUS – HISTORY 610: Women in the U.S. South

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Course Description

The course provides a historical survey of the experiences of women in the U.S. South from the colonial period to the present. Students will examine the various demographic and cultural factors that determined gender identities, roles, and relations in the region.



Course Goals

Through analyzing and synthesizing a variety of sources – written, oral, and material – students will develop a heightened understanding of the ways that gender, race, and class affect the history of women in the U.S. South. The analytical paper will reflect students' ability to interpret primary documents dealing with gender roles, identities, and relations and to place them in their historical context.

Readings

In addition to excerpts from primary documents such as diaries, letters, travel accounts, censuses, and wills (see links below), the class will read and discuss the follow texts:

- Carol Bleser, *In Joy and in Sorrow: Women, Family, and Marriage in the Victorian South, 1830-1900* (Oxford UP, 1992).
- Catherine Clinton and Michele Gillespie (eds.), *The Devil's Lane: Sex and Race and the Early South* (Oxford UP, 1997).
- Susie Mee, *Downhome: An Anthology of Southern Women Writers* (Harvest Books, 1995).
- Deborah Gray White, *Ar'N't I A Woman?: Female Slaves in the Plantation South* (W.W. Norton & Co., 1999, rev. ed.).

Links to Primary Documents

- American Life Histories: <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/wpaintro/wpahome.html>
- American Slave Narratives: <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/wpa/wpahome.html>
- First Person Narratives of the American South:
<http://docsouth.unc.edu/fpn/tgm.html>
- Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*:
<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/JACOBS/hjhome.htm>
- Mary Boykin Chesnut, *A Diary From Dixie*:
<http://docsouth.unc.edu/southlit/chesnut/menu.html>
- Virtual Jamestown
http://www.virtualjamestown.org/images/white_debry_html/jamestown.html
- Women in South Carolina Industries:
<http://pds.lib.harvard.edu/pds/view/2586356?n=1&s=4>
- Women Soldiers of the Civil War by DeAnne Blanton:
<http://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/1993/spring/women-in-the-civil-war-1.html>
<http://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/1993/spring/women-in-the-civil-war-2.html>
<http://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/1993/spring/women-in-the-civil-war-3.html>
- WPA Life Histories from South Carolina (Depression):
<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/wpaintro/sccat.html>

Assessment

Assessment will be based on class participation in discussions (25 percent), one-page critical reviews of assigned readings (25 percent), a 25 – 30 page paper analyzing a primary document by or about a Southern woman (40 percent), and a presentation highlighting the analysis of the primary document (10 percent).

Grading scale is as follows: 90 – 100 = A; 86 – 89 = B+; 80 – 85 = B; 76 – 79 = C+; 70 – 75 = C; 0 – 69 = F.

Weekly Topics and Reading Assignments

- 14 January** Course Introduction; Southern Distinctiveness; First Southerners
http://www.virtualjamestown.org/images/white_debry_html/jamestown.html
- 21 January** Martin Luther King Day Holiday
- 28 January** Discuss *Devil's Lane*; read introduction, assigned chapter
- 4 February** European and African Legacies; Material Culture and Daily Life (Film: *Digging for Slaves*)
- 11 February** Discuss *Ar'N't I A Woman?*
<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/JACOBS/hjhome.htm>, chapter X
- 18 February** Discuss *In Joy and in Sorrow*, ix – 124
- 25 February** Women and the Civil War

<http://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/1993/spring/women-in-the-civil-war-1.html>

<http://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/1993/spring/women-in-the-civil-war-2.html>

<http://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/1993/spring/women-in-the-civil-war-3.html>

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/snhtml/snhome.html>; read “An Introduction to the WPA Slave Narratives” by Norman R. Yetman

<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/wpa/wpahome.html>, “Reading the Narratives”

<http://docsouth.unc.edu/southlit/chesnut/menu.html>. viii - 41

3 March Spring Break at College of Charleston

10 March Discuss *In Joy and in Sorrow*, 125 - 259

17 March Race and Gender in Post-bellum South;

<http://pds.lib.harvard.edu/pds/view/2586356?n=1&s=4>, 1 - 16

<http://docsouth.unc.edu/fpn/pringle/menu.html>, vii – ix, 1 - 38

24 March Depression and War

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/wpaintro/sccat.html>; choose any two “Life Histories” from SC

31 March Discuss *Downhome*; read introduction, assigned story

7 April Civil Rights and Women’s Movements

<http://www.usca.edu/aasc/clark.htm>

<http://www.crmvet.org/nars/robinson.htm>

http://www.the-declaration.com/1999/12_02/features/sorority.shtml

<http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/meridians/v007/7.1finney.pdf>

14 April Southern Women Today; Discuss *Downhome*; read assigned story; Final Paper Due

21 April Paper Presentations

23 April* Paper Presentations

* This Wednesday class is to compensate for the MLK Day holiday.