History 326 History of Gender in the United States

This seminar investigates the histories of women and gender in the United States through primary and secondary source analysis. Our inquiry into the past will be framed around the theoretical and methodological questions of the field of U.S. Women’s and Gender History. Particular attention will be paid to how the activities of diverse groups of women, both publically and privately, transformed their lives and opportunities, as well as shaped gender roles. We will also explore how historians themselves began to write women’s history differently as they incorporated the concept of gender.

Course objectives
By the end of this course students will have developed an analysis of how gender functioned in the past, how gender intersected with other identity factors, and how the concept of gender has shaped historical writing.

Course Outcomes
- Students will explain how gender ideals have changed over time
- Students will interpret gender conventions from differing racial, economic and regional perspectives within the US
- Students will analyze how women’s history and gender history have developed historiographically

Course Learning Activities
- Students will compare selected primary source documents from US history both in formal written assignments and in asynchronous small group discussions.
- Students will evaluate various historical approaches and arguments about gender in secondary sources through formal written assignments and asynchronous presentations.

Books:
A History of Gender in America: Essays, Documents, and Articles 1st Edition by Sylvia D. Hoffert and selected readings available online

Schedule
Each topic is introduced by a short instructor podcast that gives an overview of key concepts and relates content to prior content.

1. Gender as a Historical Category.
2. Gender Identities in the English Colonies (1600-1760).
3. Gender Identities in the Age of Revolution and the Early Republic (1760-1820).
5. Femininity in the Nineteenth-Century North (1820-1890).
7. Femininity in the Nineteenth-Century South (1820-1890).
8. Gender Identities in the Trans-Mississippi West (1820-1890).
9. The New Woman and the New Man at the Turn of the Century (1890-1920).

Assignments

Asynchronous online discussion in small groups (30%)
During some week, students will participate in asynchronous online discussion in open small groups (students will respond only to their group mates, but will be able to view discussions in other groups). In each small group, students will be assigned specific roles to play as the group collaboratively creates a response to the assigned topic that they will then share with the larger class.

Primary source document analysis assignments (30%)
During some weeks, students will individually produce close readings of primary source documents to share with the class.

Final paper (40%) students will either write a historiographical essay or one based on primary sources.

Grading
Grading Scale, please note I do not “round up”

A 4.00
A- 3.67
B+ 3.33
B 3.00
B- 2.67
C+ 2.33
C 2.00
C- 1.67
D+ 1.33
D 1.00
D- 0.67
F 0.00