

WST3930: Women and Diversity in U.S. History

Finding the Historical Roots of Contemporary Issues

Fall 2016

Section 07C2 MWF 5 (11:45-12:35) Classroom: TUR 2319

Instructor: Mallory Szymanski

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Office: Ustler Hall 303 (next to Student Recreation and Fitness Center)

Office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 10:40-11:30 and by appointment

Course Description

This course is designed to place four contemporary issues related to gender in historical context with an eye to diversity and difference: women in politics, the medicalization of sexuality and pleasure, the policies and practices of abortion and birth, and experiences and activism of transgender people in the U.S. This approach will facilitate an in-depth exploration of these areas to attend to the ways race, class, nation of origin, gender identity, sexual identity and other intersections of identity created different experiences for women. As a result, students will gain a historical explanation of four important contemporary controversies and understand the ways the past has shaped our current debates about policy, work, sexuality, health, gender, childrearing, activism, medicine, and the law. This narrow and thorough approach to four topics precludes a comprehensive overview of women's history; in other words, this course is **not** a survey course. It is an upper-level course that assumes students have familiarity either with women's studies or U.S. history (for those who have neither, see the recommended text). This course will closely examine how people of all genders understood politics, sexuality, reproduction, and transgender identity differently based on their social location and historical context.

Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to

- contextualize contemporary controversies in history
- understand how historical actors were shaped by race, class, gender, and other intersections of identity
- understand that the boundaries of difference (such as racial categories) change over time
- articulate the relationship between the past and the present of a particular issue they have selected to research in detail
- express informed opinions about contemporary controversies
- analyze the degree to which women's experiences today are similar to and different from those of women in the U.S. in the past.
- discuss the significance of the inclusion or exclusion of different voices and histories in the U.S.
- understand the richness and breadth of transgender history

Required Readings:

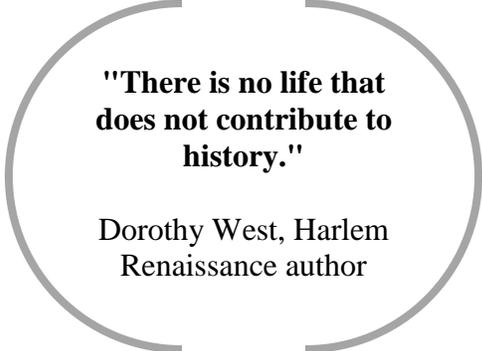
Women, Race, and Class by Angela Davis

Technology of Orgasm: "Hysteria," the Vibrator, and Women's Sexual Satisfaction by Rachel P Maines

When Abortion was a Crime: Women, Medicine, and Law in the United States, 1867-1973 by Leslie Reagan

Transgender History by Susan Stryker

Additional readings can be found online or on Course Reserve



**"There is no life that
does not contribute to
history."**

Dorothy West, Harlem
Renaissance author

Assignment Descriptions

- 1) Student Panel: Students will select one of the four themes of the course: politics, health, reproduction, and partnership. They will select a specific contemporary issue related to this theme on which they will research, write, and present to the class. Together with the other students who are presenting on the same theme, students will form an expert panel and share their findings with the class guided by a coherent, organized theme. Panel projects will be graded in two independent parts: written work and presentation. Further instructions in subsequent pages of the syllabus.
- 2) Open-book tests: These 4 in-class exams will involve short-answer questions from the reading material. They will assess reading comprehension and critical thinking. You may use your book and handwritten notes. Printed items or electronic devices will not be permitted.
- 3) Closed-book unit exams: Each of the 4 unit exams will comprise multiple choice and short-answer questions that incorporate reading and lecture materials. Questions will assess fact recall and analytical skill.
- 4) Future History Project: Students will select from three prompt options for generating a primary source that deals with a contemporary gender-related issue of their choice. Modeled after the primary sources we will encounter in the course, the prompt options will ask students to address a contemporary gender issue in one of three forms: writing activist fiction, composing a manifesto, or conducting a survey. Further instructions will be given in class.

“[Normal is nothing more than a cycle on a washing machine.](#)”

[Whoopi Goldberg](#), actor

Grade Weights

1. Student Panel 15% (50 points for paper, 50 points for presentation)
2. Book Tests 30%
3. Unit Exams 40%
4. Term Project 15%

Classroom Policies The foundation of a productive learning environment is RESPECT. In order to maximize our experience, students must:

Be on time. Tardiness distracts the instructor and other students so do your best to avoid being late. If you expect you are going to be missing class on a day an assignment is due, please arrange with your instructor *ahead of time*. Almost any problem can be solved in advance but it is often difficult to resolve these kinds of issues after the fact. If you missed lecture material, consult a classmate to get the notes. Your instructor cannot reiterate lectures for students who missed class.

Be attentive in class. This course requires active listening and interaction. Do not distract others by reading other materials, using your cell phone, or engaging with a laptop or tablet. The instructor will ask repeat violators of this policy to leave class for the day.

Come with an open mind. Many of the topics discussed in this course are deeply personal but also highly political. We will discuss issues like race, gender identity, love, sex, reproduction, etc. that you may already have knowledge and opinions about. This course will offer varying viewpoints on many issues and some may challenge what you already know. Also, not everyone will agree on all matters. It is important that the classroom be a safe space for all perspectives and that students are able to respectfully express their views. Offer the same respect to others that you would have for yourself. Conversations and debates may become intense, but aggressiveness, name-calling, or other forms of hostility will not be tolerated.

Use email effectively and appropriately. Email exchanges in the academic context are considered professional correspondences and their tone and structure should reflect that. Please note the following when sending any professional email, including messages sent through Canvas:

- Your email must have a subject written in the subject line indicating the main topic of the email. Academic emails to instructors should include the course title (WST3930) and the assignment/topic your email is about.
- Address an email the same way you would a letter and include a salutation, a body that includes capital letters and punctuation, and a signature with your name.
- Emails formal communications and leave an impression of your personality and level of professionalism on the recipient; be sure to treat them accordingly.
- Be sure to consult all course documents to locate your answer before contacting your instructor. Your answer is likely found in the syllabus, a Canvas announcement, or in class notes. It is the student's responsibility to avail themselves with all of the material the instructor provides.

“[If I didn't define myself for myself, I would be crunched into other people's fantasies for me and eaten alive.](#)” -Audre Lorde, black lesbian feminist poet

What students can expect:

This course entails a rigorous and demanding reading load from diverse sources. To succeed, students will need to read early and often, work diligently to comprehend the reading, and take responsibility for information they do not understand by asking questions. Students should expect to complete 2-3 hours of work outside of the classroom for every hour the class meets.

The instructor values prompt email replies. Students can anticipate an email reply within 24 hours during the week. If an emailed question has been answered elsewhere, the student may expect a terse reply. The instructor will not be available on email during weekends or evenings.

This class requires a lot of discussion. Students who do not like to participate in discussion or who feel like listening to their peers is a waste of their time should consider a different course.

Students are strongly encouraged to attend office hours to discuss progress in the course, upcoming assignments, or any concerns or questions a student may have—no appointment is needed. If a student is unable to attend the preset office hours, they may request an appointment by emailing the instructor at least 48-hours in advance of the proposed appointment.

Students will be expected to bring hard copies of the course material to class, including books and internet sources. We will often refer directly to these sources to analyze and clarify. Students should prepare for class by highlighting or underlining key points/terms in the text, making comments in margins, and taking notes on separate paper.

Students can expect their instructor to be fair and consistent with course policies. Please do not ask for exceptions from course policies; the instructor will not give an unfair advantage to one student over others. All students deserve fair treatment.

Students will receive messages from the instructor and must check their UFL email address and Canvas (these things can be linked together). The instructor reserves the right to change the syllabus at any point. Changes will be announced in class and posted on Canvas. Students are responsible to keep up with assignments, due dates, and information

presented in class.

Late Assignment Policy: All graded work is expected to be turned in on time. Any graded assignment that is turned in late will still be eligible for half credit if it is received by the beginning of the following class period. For example, a paper that is due Tuesday at the beginning of class can be turned in by Thursday at the beginning of class for half credit. After one class meeting passes, however, late work is no longer accepted and the student will receive a zero (0) for the assignment. If a student has an unforeseen emergency, such as severe illness or death in the family, the student must provide documentation of the event to be eligible for full credit on missed work.

“Don’t let the past steal your present.”
-Cherríe Moraga, Chicana feminist writer

Make-up Tests/Exams: Make-up exams will not be granted without verifiable, documentable and legitimate excuse of dire circumstance such as severe illness, death in the family, court appearance, or university-sponsored event. All other missed exams will result in a grade of zero (0). Make-up exam will be given upon receipt of official documentation.

Evaluations: Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results> .

Students with Disabilities: The University of Florida complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students requesting accommodation should contact the Students with Disabilities Office, Peabody 202. That office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

Honor Code and Plagiarism : It is a student’s responsibility to be familiar with the University honor code. Plagiarism is a serious offense and will not be tolerated. Plagiarism can be loosely defined as taking credit for work that is not your own and can include but is not limited to: copying and pasting from any other source without citation, using another student’s work as your own, quoting from a book or article without citation. To maintain the high level of academic integrity that is expected of University of Florida students it is imperative that students avoid plagiarism. The honor code can be found at the Office of the University Registrar website: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/scsr/honorcodes/honorcode.php>. For a user-friendly resource about how to determine whether or not you are committing plagiarism, see the OWL Purdue website: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/02/>. A good rule of thumb is: “when in doubt, drop a citation.” Students are expected to be familiar with the University honor code and will be held responsible to it; claims of ignorance of the policies will not excuse acts of cheating. **STUDENTS WHO PLAGIARIZE WILL BE AUTOMATICALLY FAILED FROM THE COURSE AND WILL BE FILED ON RECORD WITH THE DEAN OF STUDENTS OFFICE**

Plagiarism includes (but is not limited to):

- Copying and pasting from internet sources without citation
- Copying and pasting from another student
- Turning in one’s own work the student received credit for in a previous course
- Using another student’s work as “inspiration” but changing the words
- Giving your work to another student to use as “inspiration”
- Writing the information out of the assigned material word-for-word into your homework without citation

For more info about what constitutes plagiarism so you can be sure to keep yourself out of hot water, see this website:

[What is plagiarism?](#)

Instructions for Student Panel Presentations

Each unit will conclude with a student panel that will highlight a variety of contemporary issues related to the theme. The project total of 100 points has two components: Individual (80 points) and Group (20 points):

Individual Components (80 points)

Issue analysis paper (40 points): Each student will select a contemporary issue relevant to the unit theme. Students are encouraged to be creative and diverse in their selection: variety is the spice of life! The themes are broad, so do not be confined simply to the way we discuss things in class—branch out, and consider various populations, experiences, perspectives, and outcomes. The only requirements are that the issue must relate to gender, be tied to the unit theme, and be focused on the present. Students will research an issue and decide how they think the issue should be handled. Their paper will provide background information on the issue (what it is, who is affected, why it occurs), argue why the issue is important and/or in need of our attention, and conclude by speculating, based on research, what should or will likely happen in the future.

Presentation (40 points): Students will give a 2-3 minute summary of their paper. Each student will be scored individually for their presentation on the following: information, relevance, delivery.

Group evaluation: Students will provide feedback of the group effort following their presentation. This feedback will be emailed to the TA and will not be shared with other members of the group. This is ungraded, but project grades will not be released until all members' feedback is received.

Group components (20 points)

Panel Introduction (10 points): Brief 1-2 page statement introducing the theme, the reading/film assigned to the entire course, and the presentations. The goal is to unify the presentations in a coherent way. This statement will be given at the beginning of the panel presentation. (Consider this to be similar to the introduction paragraph to a paper.)

Key points outline (5 points): 1-page outline of the panel, including a panel title, the title of the individual papers and their authors, and the key points from each presenter. This will be posted to the panel Canvas page no less than **48 hours prior to the presentation.**

Exam question (5 points): At the beginning of the presentation, each panel will write a short-answer question on the board that will be answered by the presentation. The class should be prepared to answer some form of one of these questions on the exam the following class period.

“In some parts of the world, students are going to school every day. It's their normal life. But in other part of the world, we are starving for education... it's like a precious gift. It's like a diamond.”

-Malala Yousafzai, teenage Pakistani activist for education rights

Panel Presentation Themes and Topics

Below are some suggested issues students may consider addressing in their Panel Presentation Projects. Students are not limited to these suggestions, but may use them as a guide to help them decide how they rank their panel preferences.

Unit 1 Politics

Gender disparity in political representation; gendered voting trends; gender and media coverage of candidates; differences in political ideologies based on gender and other intersections of identity; state-level barriers to voting (violations of Voting Rights Act); political issues identified as “women’s issues.”

Unit 2: Sexuality, health, and medicine

The “orgasm gap,” asexuality, bisexuality, sex education that includes discussions of pleasure and consent, elderly sexuality, internet pornography and its potential health impact, the controversy over HPV vaccine for girls, medical perspectives on impotence (for men), disability and sexuality.

Unit 3: Pregnancy, abortion, and birth

Florida’s abortion laws and accessibility, comparison/contrast different states’ abortion policies, the connections between sex education and abortion rates, Plan B controversy (over-the-counter), contemporary challenges to abortion laws (especially in the South), reproductive technology (such as in vitro), campaigns promoting breastfeeding, foster care in Florida, private versus public adoptions.

Unit 4: Transgender History

Healthcare access for trans people, agender identities, parenting trans youth, public school policies regarding trans youth, trans people and safe access to public bathrooms; intersectional trans experiences, gender-neutral parenting, ENDA, hate crimes and violence towards trans people, trans activism.

(Detach and return to class on 8/29)

My name: _____

Rank your options 1-4 (one being most preferred, 4 being least preferred)

___ Unit 1 Politics, Intersectionality, and exclusion

___ Unit 3 Pregnancy, abortion, and birth

___ Unit 2 Sexuality, health, and medicine

___ Unit 4 Transgender history

WST3930 Fall 2106 Calendar

| Wk | Dates | Topic | Readings to be completed <i>before</i> class on this day | Assignments due |
|---|-------|--|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | 8/22 | Intro | | |
| | 8/24 | Intro to gender and sexuality studies | Print and bring to class: CR: Joan Scott, "Gender: a Useful Category of Analysis" | |
| | 8/26 | NO CLASS MEETING | Watch at home: Iron Jawed Angels | |
| Unit 1: Politics, Intersectionality, and Exclusion | | | | |
| 2 | 8/29 | Intro to women's political activism | Angela Davis, <i>Women, Race and Class</i> , Ch 1-3 | 8/29 Panel Options Due due in class |
| | 8/30 | Women's political activism, continued | Angela Davis, <i>Women, Race and Class</i> , Ch 4-5 | |
| | 9/1 | Activism in the 20 th century | Angela Davis, <i>Women, Race and Class</i> , Ch 6-9 | 9/1 Panel 1 Topics due |
| 3 | 9/5 | NO CLASS – LABOR DAY | | |
| | 9/7 | Book Test--DAVIS | Angela Davis, <i>Women, Race and Class</i> , to end (skim ch 10) | 9/7 Book Test--DAVIS |
| | 9/9 | Fragmented "Second Wave" | Print and bring to class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combahee River Collective Statement 1977 • Mirra Vidal, Chicanas Speak Out 1971 | |
| 4 | 9/12 | The Movement for Black Lives | http://blacklivesmatter.com/who-we-are/ Read: "Who we Are," "Our Herstory" and "Principles" Pages http://www.joincampaignzero.org/problem/ Read "Problem" and "Solutions" tabs (no need to print) | |
| | 9/14 | Student Panels | Film(watch at home): MissRepresentation | 9/14 Panel 1 Paper due |
| | 9/16 | Exam 1—In class | | 9/16 Exam 1 |
| Unit 2: Sexuality, health, and medicine | | | | |
| 5 | 9/19 | History of medical treatment of women | Maines, <i>Technology of Orgasm</i> Chs 1 and 2 | |
| | 9/21 | Hysteria | Maines, <i>Technology of Orgasm</i> chapters 3-4 | 9/21 Panel 2 Topics due |
| | 9/23 | Men's sexual (dys)function | | |

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| 6 | 9/26 | Book Test--MAINES | Maines, <i>Technology of Orgasm</i> chapters 5 | 9/26 Book Test--MAINES |
| | 9/28 | Medicalization of Sexuality | | |
| | 9/30 | Medicalization of Sexuality | | |
| 7 | 10/3 | Medicalization of Sexuality | | |
| | 10/5 | Student Panel | Student Panel 2 | 10/5 Panel 2 Essays due |
| | 10/7 | Exam 2 | | 10/7 Exam 2 |
| Unit 3 Pregnancy, abortion, and birth | | | | |
| 8 | 10/10 | Early American sex, marriage, and pregnancy | | |
| | 10/12 | Abortion | <i>When Abortion Was a Crime</i> Intro, Chapters 1-3 | |
| | 10/14 | NO CLASS-HC | | |
| 9 | 10/17 | Eugenics | | 10/17 Panel 3 Topics due |
| | 10/19 | Midwifery, physicians, sterilization and abortion | <i>When Abortion Was a Crime</i> Ch 4 | |
| | 10/21 | Advocacy for abortion rights | <i>When Abortion Was a Crime</i> Ch 5-7 | |
| 10 | 10/24 | Book Test--REAGAN | <i>When Abortion Was a Crime</i> Ch 8 | 10/24 Book Test__REAGAN |
| | 10/26 | Pregnancy Crisis Centers | 12th & Delaware | |
| | 10/28 | Birth and medical authority | | |
| 11 | 10/31 | Birth and medical authority | | |
| | 11/2 | Student Panel 3 | | 11/2 Panel 3 Papers due |

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|-----------------------------------|-------|---|---|--------------------------|
| | 11/4 | Exam 3 | | 11/4 Exam 3 |
| Unit 4 Transgender History | | | | |
| 12 | 11/7 | Early history of non-binary genders | Stryker, Ch 1 | |
| | 11/9 | Early history of non-binary genders (continued) | Stryker, Ch 2 | |
| | 11/11 | NO CLASS-VETERAN'S DAY | | |
| 13 | 11/14 | Medicalization of gender and sexuality | | |
| | 11/16 | Gender and sexuality early 20 th century | CR: George Chauncey, chapter 3 from <i>Gay New York</i> , "Trade, Wolves, and the Boundaries of Normal Manhood" pp 65-98 (Note: full text of this book is available as e-book at uflib.ufl.edu) | |
| | 11/18 | Midcentury Activism | Stryker Ch 3 http://mic.com/articles/121256/meet-marsha-p-johnson-and-sylvia-rivera-transgender-stonewall-veterans | |
| 14 | 11/21 | Book Test-STRYKER | Stryker Ch 4-5 | 11/21 Book Test--STRYKER |
| | 11/23 | NO CLASS- GOBBLE GOBBLE | | |
| | 11/25 | NO CLASS- GOBBLE GOBBLE | | |
| 15 | 11/28 | Trans visibility and activism | | 11/28 Due: Final Project |
| | 11/31 | Trans visibility and activism | | |
| | 12/2 | Trans representation in media | | |

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| 16 | 12/5 | Student Panel 4 | | |
| | 12/7 | Exam 4 | | |

Important Dates

8/26 Drop/Add ends 11:59pm

9/5 No class – Labor Day

10/14 No class-Homecoming

11/11 No class- Veteran’s Day

11/23-26 No class – Thanksgiving Day

11/21 Withdrawal deadline

12/7 Last day of classes