

**Women of the American West**  
Spring 2014

Instructor: Kathi Nehls  
Class Meeting: T/TH 10:00-11:40 a.m., Language Hall 201  
Office: Humanities, 205  
Office Hours: 12:00-1:30 T/TH and by Appointment  
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**Course Description:** This course is intended as an introductory survey of U.S. Women's history refracted through the rich and varied cultural perspectives and experiences of the women who have called the American West home. It is an exciting and compelling story of intercultural conflict, cultural adaptation, and change. Using the themes of conquest and colonialism, immigration and migration, reform and activism, we will explore how western women's lives and gender systems have changed over time. Readings, class discussions, and collaborative projects, are designed to encourage and advance students' critical thinking, oral presentation, research, and writing skills.

**Required Texts:** There are five required texts for this course. They are available in the Oxford bookstore/Online/and on reserve in the library. Additional readings will be available on blackboard as designated in the syllabus.

- Armitage and Jameson *Writing the Range: Race, Class, and Culture in the American West*
- Deloria, *Waterlily*
- Yung, *Unbound Feet: A Social History of Chinese Women in San Francisco*
- Deutsch, *No Separate Refuge: Culture, Class, and Gender on an Anglo-Hispanic Frontier in the American Southwest, 1880-1940*
- Nickerson, *Mothers of Conservatism: Women and Post War Right*

**Course Requirements:**

**Exams:** There will be two exams: a midterm (March 6) worth 25% of your grade and a comprehensive final (April 30) worth 25%. Although, I will provide study guides a week prior to the exams, your own reading and class notes will also be critical sources for exam prep.

**Short Papers:** (2): 1000-1250 words due February 11 and April 15. The two papers will be averaged for 25% of your grade.

**Participation:**

This class will follow a modified seminar format. While I will provide mini-lectures to frame the period under discussion, most of our attention will focus on the issues and concepts raised in the assigned reading. Therefore, the success of this class depends on your active engagement and participation. For each class where readings are assigned each student will submit at least two (2) questions that address the issues and questions raised in the assigned readings. The question

should be synthetic, that is, they should consider broadly the larger issues addressed in each set of readings. You will also submit one (1) question about something that you did not understand or with which you disagreed. Questions should be e-mailed to me at knehls@emory.edu by 11:00 p.m. the evening before discussion. I will consolidate the questions and circulate the questions via e-mail before class. We will use these questions to help organize and generate meaningful discussion.

Each of you will be responsible for facilitating 2-3 discussions over the course of the semester depending on final enrollment. As a facilitator you will be responsible for beginning class with a short (approximately 5 minutes) presentation that: 1) outlines the readings; 2) explains what you consider to be the most important points raised in the readings and 3) prepare questions to initiate class discussion. The discussion leader's role will be to get class started and keep the conversation going but will not be responsible for carrying the conversation. I will circulate a sign up sheet after drop/add. In the meantime, you should peruse the topics and select a few discussions that you might be interested in facilitating. Participation will be 25% of your final grade.

Make-up Exams: There will be no make-up exams without written evidence that missing the exam was unavoidable, for example, you were hospitalized or there was a death in your immediate family. You will need to furnish written documentation of the situation on your return and you must notify me at least two hours prior to the exam. Leaving town early for the holiday weekend will not be considered unavoidable, therefore, please make your mid/end of the semester travel plans accordingly. If a make-up exam becomes necessary it will differ in content from the original exam, it will reflect a significantly greater degree of difficulty, and it will offer less choice than original exams. Make-up Exams will be scheduled at the convenience of the instructor.

#### Grading:

Grades will be based on a 100 point scale as follows: A/94-100, A-/90-93, B+/88-89, B/84-87, B-/80-83, C+/78-79, C/74-77, C-/70-73, D+/68-69, D/64-67, D-/60-63, F/59 and below.

Final grades will be determined as follows:

Midterm	25%
Final Exam	25%
Short Papers (2)	25%
Participation (as detailed above)	25%

Below is a general outline of how I will grade written work:

A – Excellent Work is: original, exceptionally insightful, very well written/presented, efficiently organized, and thorough, with very few mistakes and a professional appearance.

B – Good Work is: insightful, clearly written/presented, organized, and thorough, with few mistakes and a professional appearance.

C – Satisfactory Work is: solid but unremarkable in terms of insight, lacking some organization and/or clarity, and adequately written/presented, with several mistakes.

D – Poor Work is: un-insightful, disorganized, poorly written, mistake-ridden, and reflective of a general lack of effort.

F – Failing Work is: work that fails to meet the most basic requirements of the assignment.

Digital Paper Submission and Retention Requirement: Please submit a digital copy of all papers and bring a hard copy to class. You must submit both a digital and hard copy in order to receive any credit. **Please retain all returned graded work until the end of the semester in the event there is a question about missing assignments, grading, or catastrophic loss of data.**

Attendance Policy: You are expected to attend all classes. You may miss up to three (3) classes without penalty. Thereafter, each absence will result in a two-point deduction from your final grade. If you are late, this counts as a half-absence. In the event a situation should arise where you experience extended illness or extraordinary circumstances, I require a written explanation describing the nature of the situation and supporting documentation. You will be responsible for any missed information and assignments.

Classroom Behavior:

Please refrain from behaviors that would disrupt the learning environment including, but not limited to, eating, sleeping, reading newspapers, visiting with your neighbor while I or other students are speaking – you get the idea. Since students arriving late to class are disruptive, please be on time. Should you come in late please be seated as quickly and quietly as possible. Habitual tardiness is not acceptable.

Academic Honesty:

As a student of Oxford College you have agreed to abide by the university's student honor code. All academic work must meet the standards described in the student honor code found at: [http://oxford.emory.edu/audiences/current\\_students/Academic/academic-success/student-honor-code/](http://oxford.emory.edu/audiences/current_students/Academic/academic-success/student-honor-code/). Lack of knowledge of the student honor code is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor. It is imperative that you familiarize yourself with this policy if you have not already done so. **Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated.** Any work in infringement of the university's student honor code will at a minimum receive a "0" grade and be given extra weight in calculating the final grade, which makes failing the course almost certain.

ADA Accommodations: Students who require accommodations - accessibility, seating, note-taking, or testing accommodations etc., please notify me as soon as possible after the start of the semester and provide appropriate documentation.

Changes to the Syllabus: The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

**Class Schedule:**

**Tues/Jan. 14:** Course Introduction

**Thurs/Jan. 16:** Western Woman in the American Imagination

Turner's Thesis: <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/turner/chapter1.html>

**Tues/January 21:** Historiographical Overview I

Read:

- Elizabeth Jameson, “Toward a Multicultural History of Women in the Western United States” (Blackboard)
- Joan Jensen and Darlis Miller, “Gentle Tamers Revisited: New Approaches to the History of Women in the American West” (Blackboard)

**Thurs/Jan. 23:** Historiographical Overview II

Read:

- Peggy Pascoe, “Race, Gender, and Intercultural Relations: The Case of Interracial Marriage” (WTR)
- Antonia I. Casteñeda, “Women of Color and Rewriting of Western History: The Discourse, Politics and Decolonization of History” (Blackboard)

**Tues/Jan. 28:** Native American Women

Readings:

- Ramona Ford, “Native American Women: Changing Statuses, Changing Interpretations” (WTR)
- Rayna Green, “The Pocahontas Perplex” (Blackboard)
- Ackerman, “Complimentary but Equal: Gender Status in the Plateau” (Blackboard)

**Thurs/Jan. 30:**

Reading: Deloria’s *Waterlily*

**Section Two: Women of the Southwest Borderlands**

**Tues/February 4:** Women and Gender in the Desert Southwest

Readings:

- Gutierrez, “Tell Me with Whom You Walk and I Will Tell You Who You Are” (Blackboard)
- Leyva, “ ‘A Poor Widow Burdened with Children’: Widows and Land in Colonial New Mexico,” (WTR)

**Thurs/Feb. 6:** Women in Spanish California

Readings:

- Hurtado, Albert L., “When Strangers Met: Sex and Gender on Three Frontiers” (WTR)

**Tues/Feb. 11:** Women and the Fur Trade

Readings:

Van Kirk, “The Role of Native Women in the Fur Trade Society of Western Canada, 1670-1830” (Blackboard)

**\*\*First Essay Due in class**

### **Section Three: Settler Colonialism: Overland Migration and Manifest Destiny:**

**Thurs/Feb. 13:** Texas and Oregon

Readings:

- Welter, “The Cult of Domesticity” (Blackboard)

**Tues/Feb. 18:** Mormon Women

- Madsen, “At Their Peril”: Utah Law and the Case of Plural Wives, 1850-1900” (Blackboard)
- Coleman, “Is There No Blessing for Me: Jane Elizabeth Manning James, A Mormon African American Woman.” (Blackboard)

**Thurs/Feb 20** Overland trails and Mining Towns

Readings:

- Women’s Diaries (Blackboard)

**Tues/Feb. 25:** *A Thousand Pieces of Gold*

**Thurs/Feb. 27:** Prostitution/Violence/Gender

Readings:

- Murphy, “The Private Lives of Public Women: Prostitution in Butte, Montana, 1878-1917” (Blackboard)
- White-Parks, “Beyond the Stereotypes: Chinese Pioneer Women in the American West” (WTR)
- Boag, “Known to All Police West of the Mississippi”: Disrobing the Female-to-Male Cross-Dresser” (Blackboard)

**Tues/Mar. 4:** Home and Community

Readings:

- Mercier, “We Are Women Irish”: Gender, Class, Religious, and Ethnic Identity” (WTR)
- Bragg, “Anxious Foot Soldiers”: Black Women and Education in Nineteenth Century California” (Blackboard)
- Yung, *Unbound Feet*, pp. 15-51

**Thurs/Mar. 6:**

**Midterm Exam**

**Spring Break March 10-14 Have Fun!**

### **Section Four: Reform and Activism**

**Tues/Mar. 25:** Western Suffrage and the “New Woman”

Readings:

- Stefanco, “Networking on the Frontier: The Colorado Women’s Suffrage Movement, 1876-1893” (Blackboard)

- Dickson, “*Lifting As We Climb*”: African American Women’s Clubs of Denver, 1880-1925 (WTR)
- Clements, “The New Era and the New Woman: Lou Henry Hoover and “Feminism’s Awkward Age” (Blackboard)
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**Thurs/Mar. 27:** Progressive Reform: Federal Mothers, Social Housekeepers, and Civilizers  
Readings:

- Yung, *Unbound Feet* pp. 51-177
- Emmerich, “Save the Babies” (WTR)

**Tues/April 1:** War and Depression

- Yung, *Unbound Feet*, pp. 178-292
- Weisiger, “A Woman’s Place” (Blackboard)

**Thurs/April 3:** Deutsch, *No Separate Refuge*

**Tues/April 8:** Labor Activism

“Salt of the Earth”

**Thurs/April 10:** Labor WWII

Readings:

- Moore, “Not in Somebody’s Kitchen: African American Women Workers in Richmond, California, and the Impact of World War II” (WTR)
- Conte, “Changing Woman Meets Madonna: Navajo Women’s Networks Sex-Gender Values in Transition, (WTR)

**Tues/April 15:** Japanese Internment

- **\*\*Second Essay Due in Class**

**Thurs/April 17:** 1960s Activism

Readings:

- Essays from the Chicana Movement (Blackboard)
- Essays from the American Indian Movement (Blackboard)

**Tues/April 22:** Women of the New Right

Readings: Nickerson: *Mothers of Conservatism*

**Thurs/April 24:** Course Wrap-up/Evaluations

**Final Exam: 2:00-5:00 p.m., Wednesday, April 30.**