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### HSTA 595.01: Special Topics - Gender, Society, and Politics

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## **HSTA 595: Graduate Seminar: Gender, Politics, and Society in U.S. History**

Professor Anya Jabour

Tuesdays, 2-5 p.m.

Office Hours: By Appointment via Zoom

E-mail: [anya.jabour@umontana.edu](mailto:anya.jabour@umontana.edu)

### **Course Description**

This graduate readings course examines the centrality of gender to U.S. society and politics in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The course emphasizes careful reading, in-depth discussion, and analytical writing.

History graduate students may use this course to fulfill their degree requirements.

- M.A. students may use this course as one of the required readings courses in U.S. History.
- Ph.D. students may use this course to prepare for a comprehensive exam in U.S. History in one of the following ways:
  - The course may be used in combination with directed readings to prepare a topical field in U.S. Gender and/or Women's History
  - The course may be used in combination with other courses to prepare a topical field (such as U.S. political, legal, or social history)
  - The course may be used in combination with other courses to prepare a chronological field (such as nineteenth-century or modern U.S. history).

This course also counts toward the [Graduate Certificate in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies](#), which may be combined with any graduate program.

### **Course Outcomes**

Students in this course will:

1. Recognize gender as a factor in politics and society in U.S. history
2. Become familiar with historiography and historical methodology
3. Practice evaluating evidence and argument
4. Learn the conventions of academic book reviews
5. Practice careful and comparative reading skills
6. Develop oral discussion and facilitation skills
7. Practice concise and correct writing skills

### **Course Accessibility**

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and the [Office for Disability Equity](#) (ODE). If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you have not already registered with ODE, please contact ODE 406.243.2243. I will work with you and ODE to provide an appropriate modification.

# Course Requirements

## ***Attendance and Participation (25 percent)***

Class meetings emphasize informed discussion of the assigned readings. I will hold each of you accountable for thorough and thoughtful reading and regular attendance. Please inform me of any emergencies that may prevent you from attending class. Missing more than two classes will cause your participation grade to drop by one letter grade for each additional meeting missed. However, attendance is not a substitute for active and pertinent participation in class discussion. Because this class is a seminar, the quality of your preparation and your contributions are essential to the success of the course. Come prepared to speak, but be sensitive to others' comments. Listening and posing questions, as well as offering insights, are important discussion skills. Listen to your peers, encourage them to expand on their points, offer supporting comments or alternative viewpoints, and above all, always connect your comments to the reading! Everybody brings a different perspective to the class, but the text is our common ground. It is essential that you bring the text, with marked passages, to class with you. If you have concerns or questions about your discussion skills, please see me.

## ***Discussion Lead (25 percent)***

Each of you will lead discussion on one of the assigned books. Leading discussion includes looking up published reviews of the book and sharing them with the class (via Moodle), reading and responding to your classmates' reviews, and facilitating discussion based on a prepared list of questions and topics. You should submit this list to me via e-mail at least 24 hours before the relevant class meeting. Other additional preparation might include reading other books or articles related to the assigned book to provide a broader context for that book, or, for recently published books, watching recorded book talks by the author. You also might wish to consider inviting the author to visit the class (via Zoom). You should schedule a meeting with me well prior to your discussion lead day to discuss how best to prepare for your discussion lead.

## ***Book Reviews (50 percent)***

You will submit six book reviews over the course of the semester. If you wish, you may submit additional reviews, and I will consider only the six best reviews in calculating your final grade. Please post your draft review to Moodle (on the Forum) at least 24 hours before the relevant class meeting to allow your classmates to read your reviews and think about them prior to our class meeting. Book reviews will form the basis for each day's discussion, so you should read your peers' reviews carefully and come prepared to comment on others' critiques and observations as well as your own. Reviews will decrease in length over the course of the semester; overly long reviews will not be graded. I will provide you with a word count for each review; you should include the word count on each review submitted for a grade. Please bring a copy of your draft review to class for reference. You will have the opportunity to revise your review before submitting it for a grade. Submit the final version of the review on Moodle (using the assignment link) by 11:59 p.m. on Friday of the relevant week. I strongly encourage you to exchange book reviews with your classmates for editorial assistance and advice on content prior to submitting them for a grade. Because the Moodle Forum is open to all registered students, this will provide an easy way for you to exchange reviews.

## Guidelines for Book Reviews

Book reviews should do the following:

- identify the book's subject matter;
- provide a concise summary of the book's thesis or main argument;
- situate the book in historiographical context and/or compare to other books;
- explain the sources and methodology (examine the notes and bibliography);
- discuss the organization and/or any tables, graphs, appendices, etc.;
- provide chapter summaries and/or in-depth analysis of important issues;
- comment on the book's strengths and/or weaknesses;
- evaluate the book's overall effectiveness and/or significance, based on the author's stated goals and/or its contribution to the historiography.

I strongly recommend that you read published reviews of the assigned books in professional journals to familiarize yourself with the book review format and gain additional insights into the book and the historiography. Good databases to check for reviews are J-STOR and Project Muse. You may bring these reviews to class and/or post them to Moodle for discussion purposes, but your book review should be your own evaluation of the assigned book.

Book reviews should be written clearly and concisely, using correct grammar, appropriate word choice, logical organization, strong sentence and paragraph structure, and proper punctuation. For tips on concise writing and proper punctuation, I recommend Strunk & White's *Elements of Style* and Lynne Truss, *Eats, Shoots, & Leaves*. Provide page numbers for any quotations from the assigned book in parentheses following the sentence containing the quotation. For quotations from or references to other sources, use footnotes. For proper footnoting, consult Kate Turabian's *Manual of Style* or the *Chicago Manual of Style*. I will evaluate your book reviews based on both form and content, so proofread carefully!

## Learning in the Age of COVID

To protect the health of our class, our campus, and our community, and in accordance with CDC guidelines, the following are required:

- Properly wearing a well-fitted mask to cover the nose and mouth at all times.
  - If you are unable to wear a mask, contact your academic advisor or the Office for Disability Equity.
  - Failure or refusal to wear a mask will result in dismissal from class.
    - Refusing to leave class may result in a disciplinary hearing.
- Recording attendance on a seating chart in case contact tracing becomes necessary.
- Notifying the instructor of potential contagion and/or symptoms of illness promptly.

NB: If you or a household member are quarantined and/or symptomatic, but you are otherwise able to participate in class activities, please let me know ASAP. We can move classes to Zoom as necessary to enable the fullest possible participation as well as preventing transmission of infection.

## Discussion Lead Guidelines:

Typically, a graduate seminar discussion of a book will address the following:

- Title and Thesis
  - How well do the title and subtitle convey the subject, time period, and thesis?
  - What is the thesis?
- Historiography and Contribution
  - How does the historian intervene in scholarly debates?
  - What are her/his most important contributions?
- Sources and Methodology
  - What (types of) sources does the author use (i.e., government documents, periodicals, newspapers, organizational records, personal or family papers, etc.
  - Does the author use any particular methodology, i.e., snowball sampling, interdisciplinary approaches, etc.?
  - How well chosen are the sources and/or how effective is the methodology?
  - What are the strengths and/or weaknesses of the author's research?
- Organization
  - How does the author organize the book? (i.e., chronologically, topically, or some combination?)
  - Is this organization effective? What are the merits and/or drawbacks of the book's organization?
- Writing
  - How effectively does the author convey her/his ideas?
  - What writing strategies do you notice that the author uses? (For instance, providing cameos or anecdotes.)
  - What passages showcase the author's strengths/weaknesses as a writer?

This general discussion may be followed by a chapter-by-chapter discussion, asking specific questions about the contents of each chapter, identifying strongest/weakest chapters, highlighting especially effective/problematic passages, etc.

A discussion lead might also pick up on comments from classmates' reviews to ask follow-up questions, or s/he might invite the author to visit the class (via Zoom) to answer questions about her/his research/writing process, organization/writing priorities, and so forth.

Finally, a discussion leader might ask classmates for take-aways, either about the book's argument, or about something the author has done that class members might wish to either emulate or avoid in their own work.

## Course Schedule

Aug. 31: Introduction to Class

Sept. 7: Jenifer L. Barclay, *The Mark of Slavery: Disability, Race, and Gender in Antebellum America* (University of Illinois, 2021)-Hunter Richardson

Sept. 14: Stephanie Jones-Rogers, *They Were Her Property: White Women as Slave Owners in the American South* (Yale, 2019)-Nikki McLaughlin

Sept. 21: Thavolia Glymph, *The Women's Fight: The Civil War's Battles for Home, Freedom, and Nation* (UNC 2019) - Alex LeVan

Sept. 28: Estelle B. Freedman, *Redefining Rape: Sexual Violence in the Era of Suffrage and Segregation* (Harvard, 2015)-Chris Varney

Oct. 5: Annelise Orleck, *Common Sense and a Little Fire: Women and Working Class Politics in the United States, 1900-1965* (UNC 1995; 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2017)-William Schuman-Kline

Oct. 12: Cathleen D. Cahill, *Recasting the Vote: How Women of Color Transformed the Suffrage Movement* (UNC, 2020)-Devin Marconi

Oct. 19: Brianna Theobald, *Reproduction on the Reservation: Pregnancy, Childbirth, and Colonialism in the Long Twentieth Century* (UNC 2019)-Kym MacEwan

Oct. 26: Katherine M. Marino, *Feminism for the Americas: The Making of an International Human Rights Movement* (UNC, 2019)-Neil Tredray

Nov. 2: Karin L. Zipf, *Bad Girls at Samarcand: Sexuality and Sterilization in a Southern Juvenile Reformatory* (LSU, 2016)-Zachary Rehm

Nov. 9: Anna Lvovksy, *Vice Patrol: Cops, Courts, and the Struggle Over Urban Gay Life Before Stonewall* (University of Chicago, 2021)-Lance Foster

Nov. 16: Danielle L. McGuire, *At the Dark End of the Street: Black Women, Rape, and Resistance—A New History of the Civil Rights Movement from Rosa Parks to the Rise of Black Power* (Knopf, 2010)-Nicholas Ambros

Nov. 23: No Class (Thanksgiving Break)

Nov. 30: Jessica Wilkerson, *To Live Here, You Have to Fight: How Women Led Appalachian Movements for Social Justice* (University of Illinois Press, 2019)-Octavia Jimenez