Professor/Dr. May
E-mail: vanessa.may@hunter.cuny.edu
Office: W1519A
Office Hours: M/R 1-2:30 and by appointment
Our class: M/R, 11:30-12:45, North Bldg, C107

HIST 25086/WGSS 29087 Women in America to 1869

Course Description: This course will examine women's role in American History beginning before European settlement and ending in 1869, the year that the women's suffrage movement split over the issue of race. Over the course of the semester we will answer the following questions: How have women of different races, regions, and backgrounds influenced the American political narrative? How have shifting cultural ideas about gender affected women's experience in the American past? Finally, how does our understanding of the past change when we view it through women's eyes? We will pay close attention to the experiences of diverse groups of women and consider the ways in which race and class have shaped women's interaction with one another as well as with the American state.

Required Texts

- Amy Srebnik, *The Mysterious Death of Mary Rogers*
- Kathryn Kish Sklar, *Women's Rights Emerges within the Anti-Slavery Movement, 1830-1870*

Course Learning Outcomes:

- Gather, interpret, and assess primary sources from a variety of points of view.
- Evaluate historical evidence and arguments critically or analytically.
- Produce well-reasoned written and oral arguments using evidence.
- Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and methods of history to explore the U.S. experience in its diversity.
- Analyze and explain one or more major themes of U.S. history from more than one informed perspective.
- Analyze and discuss common institutions and patterns of life in contemporary U.S. society and how they influence, or are influenced by, gender, race, class and other forms of social differentiation.

Graded Assignments: Rather than one or two high-stakes tests, grading in this class is weighted to reward consistent effort over the course of the semester.

1. Annotations: Due before we discuss the readings in class. (15% of final grade)
2. Title of the Document Project (Due Thurs. Sept. 25), Primary Source Analysis (Due Thurs. Oct. 30), Argument (Due Mon. Nov. 10), Revised Argument and Outline (Due Thurs. Nov. 20), and Final Paper (Due Mon. Dec. 15)*:* (20% of final grade)
3. Midterm: Thurs. Oct. 16 (22.5% of final grade)
4. Final: Mon., Dec. 22, 11:30-1:30 pm (22.5% of final grade)

Class Participation: Class Participation: (20%! of final grade): It takes engagement from the whole community to make this class interesting and fun. If there is no discussion or only a few people participate, the most important, interesting, and engaging part of this class will be lost. I grade class participation as follows:

- Absent: 0% (F) (See Absence Policy below)
- Present, no participation: C-/D+
- Contributed once or twice, responded to other students' points, used examples from the reading: B- to B+
- Contributed thoughtfully more than once, responded to other students' points, used examples from the reading: A- to A

Course Policies:

Computers and Cell Phones: You may use a computer to take notes on the lecture (although there are lots of reasons (backed by science!) to use a paper notebook). If it seems like you're not paying attention or you are distracting other students (online shopping, game playing, social media etc), I reserve the right to revert to notebooks and pens. *You may not use a computer or any other electronic device when we discuss the readings. Please bring physical copies of the reading or notes on paper for discussion days.*

Please do not text or scroll your phone during class—it's rude. Silence notifications and put your phone away in your bag.

Absences: If you are sick, please do not come to class. If you missed a lecture, arrange to get the notes from one of your classmates. I do not give PowerPoints or lectures to students or post them on online.

You may miss up to 2 classes without penalty (think of these like personal days at work). You do not need to tell me in advance or explain why you were absent (unless you miss an exam). After that, you will receive a zero (0) for class participation on the days you missed. If you are more than 15 minutes late for class, it will be counted as an absence. If you are consistently late, this will also be reflected in your class participation grade. The subway can be unpredictable—build extra time into your schedule!

Late Papers and Assignments: The assignments in this class are designed to build on one another. To be effective, they need to be done in order and roughly on time. If you need an extension, please discuss one with me before the assignment is due (you do not need to divulge personal information). If you have not reached out to ask for an extension, late assignments will receive a lower grade. I will not accept any work that is more than a week late.

Plagiarism is defined by using the ideas or words of someone else without attribution. Other people's ideas, even if you put them in your own words, must be cited either in parentheses or in a footnote. If you use more than *three words* in a row from another source, you must use quotation marks and cite either parenthetically or in a footnote. You must also cite when paraphrasing other people's ideas. If you are unsure about proper

citation methods for writing assignments please speak to me or consult a style manual. The first instance of plagiarism or any other kind of academic dishonesty will result in a zero for the assignment; a second will result in an F for the course.

A Note on AI: The purpose of writing assignments in this class is to help you develop your own narrative voice and to allow you to think through historical arguments in writing. Using AI defeats this purpose. Any AI use in this class will be treated as plagiarism.

This includes using AI, ChatGPT, or any of the AI tools embedded in apps like Grammarly at any point in the writing process. If AI detection software shows that more than 60% of your paper is AI, the burden of proof is on YOU to show that it's your work. Therefore, make sure to save multiple drafts and your notes on the sources.

Hunter College/CUNY and Hunter History Department's Statements on Academic Integrity:
CUNY: Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, obtaining an unfair advantage, and falsifying records or documents, whether intentional or not. Hunter College upholds the right to promote academic integrity on its campus as an educational institution of the City University of New York. The College has the responsibility to review all charges of academic dishonesty and implement sanctions, including, but not limited to, failing the course, official transcript notation, suspension or expulsion from the College when it has been determined that academic dishonesty did occur.

Hunter College History Department: Plagiarism is a very serious academic offense which will result in penalties ranging from reduction of class grade to failure in the course. Plagiarism occurs when the ideas and words, published or unpublished, of others are presented as one's own without citing the original source. Plagiarism also occurs when the papers, research, or works of another person are presented as one's own work.

Hunter History Department's Statement on Plagiarism:
https://hunter.cuny.edu/artsci/history/courses/#statementonplagiarism

The CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity:
https://hunter.cuny.edu/students/student-affairs/office-of-student-conduct/academic-integrity/

The RWC Explanation of Documentation Citation and Plagiarism:
http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/rwc/repository/files/the-documented-essay/guides-to-research-and-writing-from-sources/Quotation-Paraphrase-Plagiarism.pdf

Institutional Policies:
Accommodations for Students with Disabilities
In compliance with the ADA and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Hunter is committed to ensuring educational access and accommodations for all its registered

students. Hunter College's students with disabilities and medical conditions are encouraged to register with the Office of AccessABILITY for assistance and accommodation. For information and appointments, contact the Office of AccessABILITY located in Room E1214, or call (212) 772-4857/or TTY (212) 650-3230. Email: AccessABILITY@hunter.cuny.edu
Web: http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/studentservices/access

College Policy on Sexual Misconduct

In compliance with the CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct, Hunter College reaffirms the prohibition of any sexual misconduct, which includes sexual violence, sexual harassment, and gender-based harassment retaliation against students, employees, or visitors, as well as certain intimate relationships. Students who have experienced any form of sexual violence on or off campus (including CUNY-sponsored trips and events) are entitled to the rights outlined in the Bill of Rights for Hunter College.

a. Sexual Violence: Students are strongly encouraged to immediately report the incident by calling 911, contacting NYPD Special Victims Division Hotline (646-610-7272) or their local police precinct, or contacting the College's Public Safety Office (212-772-4444).

b. All Other Forms of Sexual Misconduct: Students are also encouraged to contact the College's Title IX Campus Coordinator, Dean John Rose (jtrose@hunter.cuny.edu or 212-650-3262) or Colleen Barry (colleen.barry@hunter.cuny.edu or 212-772-4534) and seek complimentary services through the Counseling and Wellness Services Office, Hunter East 1123.

The CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct can be found here:
https://hunter-undergraduate.catalog.cuny.edu/policies-and-requirements/institutional-policies/cuny-policy-on-sexual-misconduct

Class Schedule

Thu., Aug. 28: Introduction

Mon., Sep. 1: Labor Day—No Class

Thu., Sep. 4: Lecture: Native American Women before and after European settlement

Mon., Sep. 8: Discussion:
- Nancy Shoemaker, "Kateri Tekakwitha's Tortuous Path to Sainthood,"
- Theda Perdue, "Columbus Meets Pocahontas in the American South"

Thu., Sep. 11: Lecture: Women in the Chesapeake

Mon., Sep. 15: Discussion:
- Mary Beth Norton, "Searchers Again Assembled"
- Jennifer L. Morgan, "'Some Could Suckle over Their Shoulder:' European Depictions of Indigenous Women, 1492-1750"

Thu., Sep. 18: Lecture: Puritan Women

Mon., Sep. 22: No Class

Thu., Sep. 25: Discussion:
- Cornelia Hughes Dayton, "Taking the Trade"
- Elaine Breslaw, "Tituba's Confession: The Multicultural Dimensions of the 1692 Salem Witch Hunt"
- **DUE By Midnight**: The title of the document project on which you would like to write your final paper.

Mon., Sep. 29: Lecture: Women and the Revolution

Thu., Oct. 2: No Class

Mon., Oct. 6: Discussion:
- Ullrich, "Exceedingly and Dangerously Ill"
- Pearsall, "Recentering Indian Women in the American Revolution"

Thu., Oct. 9: Lecture: 19th Century Domestic Culture

Mon., Oct. 13: No Class

Tue., Oct. 14 (This Tuesday is running on a Monday schedule): Discussion:
- Haynes, "The Gender of the Solitary Vice"
- Catharine Beecher, *An American Woman's Home* (excerpts)

Thu., Oct. 16: Midterm Exam

Mon., Oct. 20: No class

Thu., Oct. 23: Paper Prep

Friday, Oct. 24: (This Friday is running on a Monday Schedule): Lecture: African-American Women and Slavery

Mon., Oct. 27: Discussion:

- Nikki Taylor, *Brooding over Bloody Revenge*, excerpt
- Stephanie Jones-Rogers, "Mistresses in the Making"

Thu., Oct. 30: Writing Day:

- Come to class with your primary source analysis. Be prepared to discuss the source with your group: Where does it fit in the document project? What do you know about the author? How does this author's views fit with the other views expressed in the document project? What does it tell you about this historical moment? You will be presenting on ONE document, but you should have read all of them.
- **DUE IN CLASS: Primary Source Analysis**

Mon., Nov. 3: Lecture: Women's Work in the Industrializing North

Thu., Nov. 6: Discussion:

- Amy Srebnik, *The Mysterious Death of Mary Rogers*, Introduction and chapters 1-3, 5.
- *No Annotations due today. Come to class prepared to answer the following questions:* What is Phoebe's story? How does it compare to Mary's story? What had changed over time with regard to women's possibilities in the Northeast? How would Mary's story have been different if she had gotten pregnant in rural Connecticut? What kind of work is available to Mary? What are the advantages and disadvantages of these jobs? Who are the men in this story? Who is Madame Restelle? Why does abortion suddenly become illegal in the 1860s?'

Mon., Nov. 10: Lecture: Western Women

- **DUE By Midnight**: Argument for final paper

Thu., Nov. 13: Discussion:

- Tiya Miles, "A Narrative of Nancy, a Cherokee Woman"
- Moore, "Lozen: An Apache Woman Warrior"

Mon., Nov. 17: Lecture: Abolition and Suffrage

Thu., Nov. 20: Discussion:

- Sklar, *Women's Rights Emerges within the Anti-Slavery Movement, 1830-1870*, You do not need to read the introduction, read the documents ONLY
- *No Annotations Today. Come to class prepared to answer the following questions:* What are the various arguments here? Which documents agree? Which disagree? What are the various "camps?" How do these various camps see women's role in politics? In the family? What do they see as the connection between abolition and women's rights? What do they see as obstacles to women's equality (if that's what they are advocating)? Which is your favorite document? What did you like about it?
- **DUE by Midnight: Revised Argument and outline**

Mon., Nov. 24: Writing Day—Come to class ready to talk about your arguments with your groups and to ask for help with any problems you've run into.

Thu., Nov. 27: No class

Week 10: Mon., Dec. 1: Lecture: The Civil War

Thu., Dec. 4: Discussion:
- Tera Hunter, "Reconstruction and the Meaning of Freedom"
- Jim Downs, "The Other Side of Freedom: Destitution, Disease, and Dependency among Freedwomen and their Children during and after the Civil War"

Mon., Dec. 8: Lecture: The Fifteenth Amendment and Women's Right to Vote

Thu., Dec. 11: Discussion:
- Lisa Tetrault, "Movements without Memories
- Martha S. Jones, "Something Very Novel and Strange"

Mon., Dec. 15: Conclusion
- **Due by Midnight: Final Paper**

Final Exam: Mon., Dec. 22, 11:30-1:30

Graded Assignments:

NOTE: All written assignments should be submitted in Word.

Annotations: We will use software called Perusall to annotate the readings (linked in Brightspace). Annotations are due BEFORE the class in which we discuss the reading. No late annotations will be accepted. Annotations should have *3 elements*—you must do all three of these to get full credit:

- Highlight the argument. Where is it stated fully and most clearly?
- Highlight and comment on your favorite piece of evidence. Why is it your favorite? What part of the argument does it support?
    - NOTE: Evidence means primary source evidence. It can be data or it can be an example or quotation from a primary source. Be careful to distinguish between the primary source evidence and the author's argument.
    - You must choose something nobody else has chosen—it pays to start this assignment early.
- Make helpful annotations and comments: Highlight words or passages you did not understand; or comment on any parallels or contradictions you see with other reading we've done or with course lectures; or comment on other students' annotations: Did someone choose the piece of evidence you wanted to choose? Can you explain the difficult passage? Do you think the argument is better stated someplace else? Is some element of the article funny? Does it make you mad? Did it surprise you? Did it change the way you thought about some aspect of history?

***Final Paper*:** A 5-8 page (double-spaced, Times New Roman font, size 12) research paper examining one of the "document projects" in the *Women and Social Movements* Database, which you can access through Hunter's library.

While you may use course readings and lectures as background information, your paper must use the primary sources in the document project you chose to prove all major claims. Make sure you pay attention to what is a primary source document and what is the editor's introduction to each document (which is not a primary source). Please do not do any outside secondary research. Please also look at the rubric at the end of this syllabus to understand the specific elements of a good history paper.

You will also find helpful information in the Paper Prep Powerpoint that I will post on Brightspace. I'm always available via Teams or during office hours to talk about your paper—I can help you come up with an argument, interpret evidence, refine your ideas, give you advice about what to do next or anything else you need.

Scaffolding Assignments: To help you write the final paper, there are **four** scaffolding assignments (choosing the document project, a primary source analysis, a statement of argument, and an argument revision plus outline) that will be due over the course of the semester. *These assignments will not be graded individually.* Instead, you'll receive written feedback on each assignment. *Students who need more practice with historical*

analysis and writing will be asked to resubmit their assignment until they are ready to move on to the next one. The final paper grade will reflect both your writing, argument and use of evidence in your paper and your effort over the semester on the scaffolding assignments. If you do not hand in these assignments, you will lose 3 letter grades on your final paper.

- *Title of the document project* you are interested in (Due Sept 19). Go to the *Women and Social Movements Database* in the list of databases at the Hunter College Library (linked on Brightspace). Look at the list of Document Projects. Record the title of the Document Project you choose on a Word Document with your name. The document project **must** fall in the period before 1869.
- *Primary Source Analysis:*
    - Choose *one* of the primary sources from your document project.
    - Print the document and annotate it, *by hand*. You should:
        - Highlight or underline the source's date and its author.
        - Highlight or underline the sentence that best articulates the source's argument or point of view,
        - At the bottom of the page do the following:
            - In one sentence, summarize this source.
            - In one sentence, connect this source to a course reading or lecture. How does the lecture or reading help you understand the source?
            - In one sentence, explain what you learned about this historical time period by reading this source.
            - Come up with a question that would help you understand this source better. What other perspectives would be helpful here?
            - Submit this assignment in class.
- *Argument/thesis statement* of your paper (Due Nov 3): Write one paragraph in a Word document laying out your paper's central argument. Keep in mind that a good argument is supported by a close analysis of primary source evidence (good arguments come from reading the sources--do not attempt to find sources to fit the argument!). Do not merely explain what happened but answer more critical questions like *why* something happened or *why* a historical event is important or *how* something changed over time. A good argument is innovative, surprising, or new. Pay attention to how the professional historians we've read craft arguments and how we discuss them in class. Those are all good examples of historical arguments. Do *not* just summarize the introduction to the documents (in fact, you don't even need to read it) or merely summarize the documents. Instead, you should seek to make an analytical argument, relying on the primary source documents contained in the document project for evidence.
- *Revised argument and outline* (reflecting my comments on the previous assignment) plus a brief outline (Due Nov. 17).
    - Review my feedback on the Argument you submitted on Nov. 8. Revise your argument to address any questions I raised.

- Create an outline for the body of the paper which shows me the main points you'll make in your paper and how you'll organize them. You might include a topic sentence for each paragraph in the body of the paper.

Final Essay Rubric

Does this paper…	**Excellent**	**Good**	**Needs Improvement**	**Poor**	**Absent**
1. Clearly state your main argument in the first paragraph?					
2. Have a thesis statement that interprets primary sources and is debatable?					
3. Use each body paragraph to support that argument, with each paragraph making one clear point in a coherent argument?					
4. Use examples from the primary documents in every paragraph to support major claims?					
5. Introduce and interpret all quotes for the reader?					
6. Use quotes and other examples from the core texts that are *particularly* good support for your argument?					
7. Take historical context into account in both the argument and the interpretation of evidence?					
8. Have a clear and effective organization, including **topic sentences** that relate specifically to the main argument?					
9. Use proper citations (in this case, the number of the document in parentheses (i.e. (Doc 9)) and a works cited page with the Document Project Title)?					
10. Follow instructions for the assignment, including using specified sources, submitting a Word document, and adhering to page limits?					
11. Remain free of proofreading errors, including: capitals vs. lowercase; italics/underlining vs. quotation marks; possessive case vs. plural?					
12. Show skill and style in historical writing: past tense, active voice, and appropriately formal language (no slang, contractions, abbreviations, or clichés) in grammatical sentences?					

Comments: