This course surveys the history of U.S. women since 1865, with particular attention to women’s experience and impact as citizens. Gender classification, central to the economic and social organization of U.S. society, presented an ongoing challenge to the American constitutional order as the country transitioned away from the pre-industrial economy out of which that liberal, Enlightenment order had developed. Notwithstanding severe constraints formalized in law as well as imposed by custom, American women participated fully in the nation’s rapid economic development, which operated sometimes to lighten, and sometimes to increase, the burdens of their civic inequality. We will explore the constraints that women confronted in their demand for full American citizenship; evaluate the several, at times competing, strategies feminist activists pioneered for challenging those constraints; consider the development of woman-oriented activism; and inquire after the reasons underlying its ebb and flow.

Learning Objectives

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

Subject matter objectives –

- Use gender perspectives in making critical evaluations of historical change in the post-1865 American polity.
- Identify major phases of U.S. women’s activism post-1865 and the factors which shaped them.
- Identify factors in post-1865 U.S. society which shaped women’s lives differently from those of men and the consequences for women’s social and civic experience.

Analytic objectives –

- Articulate a valid research question within the discipline of history.
- Construct a workable analytic strategy for responding to an historical research question.
- Marshal secondary source evidence in support of a response to an historical research question.

Grading

Students will be evaluated on their mastery of the materials presented in course readings and, most importantly, on the development of their skills in using that material in engaging in historical analysis.

Three or more unannounced short-answer quizzes will be administered during the term to measure mastery of the readings and with the intention of rewarding students for keeping up with the reading schedule.

The majority of the course grade is based on students’ work in developing a secondary-source research project over the course of the term. This project is broken down into weekly “research project assignments” (RPAs) during Weeks 3-8 and 10 and culminates in completion of a 5000-word paper, due Week 12 and revised for re-submission Week 14.

Course grade will be calculated as follows:
Your participation in discussion is valued and your attendance at each of our sessions is required. One unexcused absence is permitted; 1 point (1 % of your grade) is deducted for each absence thereafter.

I am delighted to meet with you outside of class to continue discussion of topics raised during our sessions or to discuss the development of your research project. Please message (clement@gwu.edu) and we'll set a meeting.

Readings

Articles listed in this syllabus are available online via JSTOR. We will be using excerpts from the following books, which will be available on Gelman reserve [R] or electronic reserve [E], and may be available for purchase in electronic editions [K].

DuBois, Ellen Carol. 1998. *Woman Suffrage and Women’s Rights*. [R] [E] [K]
Gordon, Linda, and Dorothy Sue Cobble. 2014. *Feminism Unfinished* [R] [K]
Hoff, Joan. 1991. *Law, Gender, and Injustice* [R] [K]
Kessler-Harris, Alice. 1982. *Out to Work* [R]
May, Elaine Tyler. 2008. *Homeward Bound* [R] [E] [K]
Self, Robert O. 2012. *All in the Family* [R] [K]

Class Sessions

1. Historiography: Approaches to the Study of the History of Women in the U.S.

   JANUARY 13 and JANUARY 15, 2015

   - Issues in interpreting U.S. women’s history (Kerber, Isenberg)
   - Gender analysis as a radical critique of history (Scott)

   Readings


   Scott, Joan W. “Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis.” *The American Historical Review* 91, no. 5 (December 1, 1986): 1053–75.
2. Women’s Legal Status; Negotiating Citizenship, 1865-1875

JANUARY 20 and JANUARY 22, 2015

- Gender classification creates a dynamic challenge for American constitutional government
- American women’s citizenship status derived from common law
- Effort to renegotiate American women’s citizenship via the Civil War amendments

Readings

Gender, the Constitution, and Citizenship


Civil War Amendments


Recommended


3. Industrialization and Renegotiation: Women’s Work, 1865-1890

JANUARY 27 and JANUARY 29, 2015

- Industrialization makes traditional gender organization untenable
- Renegotiation of gender organization disadvantages women

RESEARCH PROJECT ASSIGNMENT #1:
Topic proposal due 5 p.m., Monday January 26, clement@gwu.edu

Readings

Women’s Productive Work

Kessler-Harris, Alice. “Industrial Wage Earners and the Domestic Ideology”; “Why is It can a Woman Not be Virtuous If She Does Mingle with the Toilers?”; and “Women’s Choices in an Expand-

**Recommended**

**Women’s Reproductive Work**


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4. **Women’s Civic Culture in the Progressive Era, 1890-1920**

FEBRUARY 3 and FEBRUARY 5, 2015

- Women accumulate civic influence through forms of activism tailored to their status

**RESEARCH PROJECT ASSIGNMENT #2:**
Report on topic exploration due 5 p.m., Monday February 2, clement@gwu.edu

**Readings**


**Recommended**


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5. **The Suffrage Victory and Its Consequences**

FEBRUARY 10 and FEBRUARY 12, 2015

- Suffragism in context as an element of Progressive Era activism
- Impact of suffragists’ success on subsequent feminist organizing

**RESEARCH PROJECT ASSIGNMENT #3:**
Proposed thesis statement due 5 p.m., Monday February 9, clement@gwu.edu
Readings


Recommended


6. 1920s and Changing Sexual Mores

FEBRUARY 17 and FEBRUARY 19, 2015

■ Interaction between regulation of reproduction and women’s civic status

RESEARCH PROJECT ASSIGNMENT #4:
Report #1 on sources due 5 p.m., Monday February 16, clement@gwu.edu

Readings


Recommended


7. Global Crisis and Women’s Status

FEBRUARY 24 and FEBRUARY 26, 2015

■ Was labor organizing of the depression and war years “feminist” ?

RESEARCH PROJECT ASSIGNMENT #5:
Report #2 on sources due 5 p.m., Monday, February 23, clement@gwu.edu
Readings

Recommended

8. “Nuclear Family” and Consumerism in the 1950s
MARCH 3 and MARCH 5, 2015
- Changes in women’s civic status as the American polity re-aligns around consumerism

RESEARCH PROJECT ASSIGNMENT #6:
Project outline due 5 p.m., Monday March 2, clement@gwu.edu

Readings

Recommended

9. Second Wave Feminism and the 1960s
MARCH 17 and MARCH 19, 2015
- Origins and objectives of the “second wave”
- Second wave views of women’s citizenship

Readings

Recommended
10. Responses to Feminism, 1980-

MARCH 24 and MARCH 26, 2015

- Origins and objectives of opposition to second wave feminism

RESEARCH PROJECT ASSIGNMENT #7:
Revised project outline due 5 p.m., Monday March 23, clement@gwu.edu

Readings

11. Women, the Family, Regulation of Reproduction

MARCH 31 and APRIL 2, 2015

- Women and contemporary policy

Readings

12. Feminism, Race, and Class

APRIL 7 and APRIL 9, 2015

- Women and contemporary policy

RESEARCH PROJECT ASSIGNMENT #8:
Project due 5 p.m., Monday April 6, clement@gwu.edu

Readings

Recommended
13. Women’s Liberation and D.C.

APRIL 14 and APRIL 16, 2015

Readings


14. Third Wave and Historical Perspective

APRIL 21 and APRIL 23, 2015

RESEARCH PROJECT ASSIGNMENT #9:
Revision due 5 p.m., Monday, April 22, clement@gwu.edu.

Readings


Academic Protocol

Disability Support Services (DSS)

Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250 in the Marvin Center, Suite 242, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to: http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/.

University Counseling Center (UCC): 202-994-5300

The University Counseling Center (UCC) offers 24/7 assistance and referral to address students' personal, social, career, and study skills problems. Services for students include: crisis and emergency mental health consultations; confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small group), and referrals. See: http://gwired.gwu.edu/counsel/CounselingServices/AcademicSupportServices.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to know and to abide by the GW Code of Academic Integrity, which states: “Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.” For the remainder of the code, see: http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html.

Academic Problems

If you are having problems with the reading assignments, with class participation, or with any other facet of the course, please come and see me before or after class, or message (clement@gwu.edu) and we’ll arrange a time to meet that suits your schedule.