

Gender, Science and Technology in the Modern World Hist 628 - Spring 2015

Professor Alison Lefkovitz

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Class time: Tuesday, 5:30-8:10 pm

Class room: Conklin Hall 338

Office hours: MR 4:00-5:30 and by appointment

Office hours location: Cullimore Hall 327

Historians have repeatedly reminded us that science is not value-neutral. Instead it inevitably reflects the context in which scientists work. This course examines the history of science with particular attention to the critical insights of historians of gender and sexuality. We will consider not only how and why women were marginalized in scientific and technological fields, but also the broader relationship between science and structures of gendered power. Finally we will consider how science helped create and recreate our gender and sexual identities. The course is primarily US-based. Readings will focus on birth control, Darwin, household technology, eugenics, the nature of sexual desire, scientific management, ecofeminism, and other topics.

Course Requirements

1. Attendance, careful reading of the assigned texts, and active participation. I expect thoughtful analysis of the texts assigned and of your peers' comments. (200 points)
2. Weekly response papers. These should be 1-2 page reflections on the assigned reading. You can evaluate the reading either on its own terms or in comparison with other readings. These responses are due the Monday night (by 8 pm) before we will discuss that reading. They are due every week except the week you sign up for the book review. (200 points)
3. Book review. 5 pages. You will sign up to write a book review of one of the assigned readings. The book review is due the Monday night (by 8 pm) before we will discuss that reading. The review should summarize the arguments and main bodies of evidence from the book, highlight its contributions, and identify its largest flaws. You should also identify the audience that the book will appeal to most. Each component of the review is required even if each section is not given equal weight. (200 points) You will also present the reading to the class on that day. Presentation will include all of the components of your review and an opening question. (100 points).
4. Final Historiographical Essay. 15-20 pages. You should select one of the books from the course (it can be the book you wrote the review on) and place it in its historiographical context using at least 2 books not assigned in class. (300 points)

Required Readings

Most short readings will be available on Blackboard. The following required texts will be available at NJ Books for purchase. They are also available on reserve at Dana library:

- Laurel Thatcher Ullrich, *A Midwife's Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard, Based on Her Diary, 1785-1812* (New York: Vintage Books, 2010). 978-0679733768.
- Marie Jenkins Schwarz, *Birthing a Slave: Motherhood and Medicine in the Antebellum South*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010). 978-0674034921.
- Kimberly Hamlin, *From Eve to Evolution: Darwin, Science, and Women's Rights in Gilded Age America*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014). 978-0226134611.
- Ruth Cowan, *More Work for Mother: The Ironies of Household Technology from the Open Hearth to the Microwave*. (New York: Basic Books, 1985). 978-0465047321.
- Sarah Dubow *Ourselves Unborn: A History of the Fetus in Modern America*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011). 978-0195323436.
- Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1: An Introduction* (New York: Vintage Books, 1990). 978-0679724698.
- Laura Briggs, *Reproducing Empire: Race, Sex, Science, and U.S. Imperialism in Puerto Rico* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002). 978-0520232587.
- Vera Norwood, *Made from this Earth: American Women and Nature* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993). 978-0807843963.
- Joanne Meyerowitz *How Sex Changed: A History of Transsexuality in the United States*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004). 0674013794.
- Wendy Kline, *Bodies of Knowledge: Sexuality, Reproduction, and Women's Health in the Second Wave* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010). 978-0226443089.
- Stephen Epstein, *Impure Science: AIDS, Activism, and the Politics of Knowledge* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996). 978-0520214453.

1. Introduction

Tuesday, January 20

2. Women as Practitioners and Patients

Tuesday, January 27

* Laurel Thatcher Ullrich, *A Midwife's Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard, Based on Her Diary, 1785-1812*.

3. Slavery and Sexuality

Tuesday, February 3

* Marie Jenkins Schwarz, *Birthing a Slave: Motherhood and Medicine in the Antebellum South*.

4. The Theory of Gender Difference in the Age of Darwin

Tuesday, February 10

* Kimberly Hamlin, *From Eve to Evolution: Darwin, Science, and Women's Rights in Gilded Age America*.

5. Victorian Notions of Sex

*Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1: An Introduction*.

6. The Rise of the Homosexual

Tuesday, February 17

* Siobhan Somerville, "Scientific Racism and the Emergence of the Homosexual Body," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* (October 1994), 243-266.

* George Chauncey, Jr., "From Sexual Inversion to Homosexuality: Medicine and the Changing Conceptualization of Female Deviance," *Salmagundi*, nos. 58-59 (1982-83): 116.

*Lisa Duggan, "The Trials of Alice Mitchell: Sensationalism, Sexology, and the Lesbian Subject in Turn-of-the-Century America," in *G&SA*

7. Technology, Progress, and Gender

Tuesday, February 24

* Ruth Cowan, *More Work for Mother: The Ironies of Household Technology from the Open Hearth to the Microwave*.

8. The Fetus

Tuesday, March 3

* Sarah Dubow *Ourselves Unborn: A History of the Fetus in Modern America*.

*Lauren Berlant, "America, 'Fat,' and the Fetus" in *Queen of America Goes to Washington City: Essays on Sex and Citizenship*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997).

9. Eugenics

Tuesday, March 24

* Laura Briggs, *Reproducing Empire: Race, Sex, Science, and U.S. Imperialism in Puerto Rico*.

* Edward Larson, *Sex, Race, and Science: Eugenics in the Deep South*, 1995. Chapter 5.

10. Gender and the Environment

Tuesday, March 31

*Vera Norwood, *Made from this Earth: American Women and Nature*.

11. Transsexuality

Tuesday, April 7

* Joanne Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed: A History of Transsexuality in the United States*.

*Suzanne Kessler, "The Medical Construction of Gender: Case Management of Intersexed Infants," *Signs* 16 (August 1990), pp 3-26.

12. Gender during the Second Wave

Tuesday, April 14

* Wendy Kline, *Bodies of Knowledge: Sexuality, Reproduction, and Women's Health in the Second Wave*.

*Donna Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century," in *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York; Routledge, 1991), pp.149-181.

13. The Specter of AIDS

Tuesday, April 21

* Stephen Epstein, *Impure Science: AIDS, Activism, and the Politics of Knowledge*.

*Stephen Pemberton, *The Bleeding Disease: Hemophilia and the Unintended Consequences of Medical Progress* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011), chapter 7.

14. Presentations

Tuesday, April 28