Course Description

The field of feminist science studies has expanded dramatically in recent decades. This seminar is designed to introduce a set of questions and analytical tools employed by historians interested in science and gender. As historians, we sometimes look to the past as a means of explaining the present. (In this case, everyone agrees on how to characterize the present—science as a social enterprise is fundamentally gendered and gender, sex, and sexuality are concepts that have been fundamentally shaped by science.) The question then becomes, how did this come to be?

The seminar begins by exploring classic scholarship centered on four time periods, each posited as important moments in the origin of gendered science: medieval Christianity, the early modern scientific revolution, the professionalization of scientists in the late nineteenth century, and twentieth-century second-wave feminism. We then turn to a series of well-developed analytical tools employed by historians of science and gender, and finally to recent scholarship. In all cases, we will seek to analyze the imbricated processes by which science as a social enterprise has been fundamentally gendered and the implicit gendering of the sciences of sex and sexuality.

The wealth of new directions in recent scholarship necessitates some hard choices about the topics we will cover in the final weeks of the semester. To solve this issue, we’ll vote by anonymous doodle poll in Week 2—all the options are described at the end of the syllabus.

Assignments

Over the course of the semester, you will be asked to produce, on topics of your choice, two 3,000-word essay reviews (exploring three to five books each). The final assignment is to produce a 5,000-word research proposal. If you would prefer to write a full research paper, that is also possible (it would substitute for one of the essay reviews and the research proposal).
PART I – ORIGIN STORIES

Week 1 – Generation (Sept. 14)

Further Exploration

Week 2 – Nature (Sept. 21)

Further Exploration
Londa Schiebinger, Gender in the Making of Modern Science (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2004 [1993]).
Week 3 – Bodies (Sept. 28)

*Further Exploration*

Week 4 – Professionalization (Oct. 5)

*Further Exploration*

*First Essay Review due 7 October 2016*
**Week 5 – Revolution (Oct. 12)**


**Further Exploration**


**PART II – TOOLS & INTERVENTIONS**

![Marie Curie](image1.png)

![Rachel Carson](image2.png)

![Grace Hopper](image3.png)

![Jane Goodall](image4.png)

![Rosalind Franklin](image5.png)

**Week 6 – Biography (Oct. 19)**


Further Exploration


*Vol. 3—Forging a New World Since 1972* (2012)


Week 7 – Biology (Oct. 26)


Further Exploration


*Second Essay Review due 4 November 2016*
**Week 8 – Technoscience (Nov. 9)**


*Pick a “classic” feminist science fiction novel …*

Joanna Russ, *The Female Man* (1972)
Doris Lessing, *Shikasta: Re, Colonized Planet 5* (1981)
Margaret Atwood, *Handmaid’s Tale* (1986)

*Further Exploration*


**Week 9 – Colonialism (Nov. 30)**


*Further Exploration*


**Week 10 – Embodiment (Dec. 7)**


*Further Exploration*


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**Research Proposal due 17 January 2016 (Dean’s Date)**

**PART III – NEW(ish) DIRECTIONS**

These are your options for the last two weeks of our discussions. Once I know which topics we’ll explore in seminar, I’ll finalize the readings for those weeks. If you find a topic of gripping interest but it is not one of the two options selected by the seminar as a whole, consider using the readings as a launching point for conceptualizing one of your review essays.

**Option A – Desire**


**Option B – Myths of Gender**


**Option C – Visual Culture**


**Option D – Pills**


**Option E – Sexuality**


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**Option F – Sex**


Elizabeth Fraterrigo, “*Playboy* and the Making of the Good Life in Modern America” (NY: Oxford University Press, 2009)


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**Option G – Kinship**


**Option H – Primatology**

**Option I – Heroes**
Alondra Nelson, ed. *Afrofuturism*, a special issue of *Social Text* 71 (2002).

**Option J – Masculinities**

*P.S. This section is sparse largely because many of the books that could be fruitfully combined with these volumes are already located elsewhere in the syllabus. Systematically mixing and matching is one of my favorite parts of syllabus construction, so let me encourage you to do the same—not only with this Option, but with the others as well.*
FYI – Readers and edited collections ...

Sally Gregory Kohlstedt and Helen Longino, eds. Women, Gender, and Science: New Directions, Osiris 12 (1997).