

**HISTORY 281:
HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES ON WOMEN, HEALTH, AND SEXUALITY
Wilson 112
T, R, 11-12:15 (SPRING 2010)**

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#13

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to the history of women, health, and sexuality in the United States from the late 18th century to the recent past. We will explore how medical ideas about women's health, nature, and sexuality have changed over time; women's experiences as patients; and women's experiences as health-care providers, especially as midwives, nurses, and physicians. The format of the course is lecture/discussion.

GRADING AND DUE DATES

Class participation and attendance	5%	Every class
Brief analyses of readings	15%	Throughout semester
Paper #1	25%	February 11
Selection of topic for final research paper	no grade	March 2
Paper #2	25%	March 22
Description of research question for final paper	no grade	March 26
Final research paper	30%	April 16

Class participation and attendance

You are expected to attend class regularly and participate in classroom activities, which include large and small group discussions, as well as short presentations. We will circulate attendance sheets during every class. Each student may miss two classes during the semester without penalty.

Brief analyses of readings

On a regular basis, you will be asked to prepare short (1 page) written responses to questions based on the readings. It is your responsibility to check OAK before every class to see whether there is a writing assignment.

Two papers

For two of the three monographs we will be reading this semester (Brumberg, Schoen), you will be asked to write a 5-page paper. A detailed assignment will be distributed several weeks before the papers are due.

Final research paper

An 8-10 page research paper analyzing one of the following sources. (Additional sources may be added during the course of the semester.)

Edward Clarke, Sex in Education (1875)

Available at: <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/18504/18504-h/18504-h.htm>

Margaret Sanger, The Woman and the New Race (1920)

Available at: http://books.google.com/books?id=AywKAAAAIAAJ&dq=margaret+sanger+woman+and+the+new+race&printsec=frontcover&source=bn&hl=en&ei=Zsg4S9f1G46Ytge10pmjBg&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=4&ved=0CBcQ6AEwAw#v=onepage&q=&f=false

Martha Ballard's diary (1785-1812)

Available at: <http://dohistory.org/diary/index.html>

You may also write this paper on a topic of your choice, but you must get my approval by March 2.

POLICIES AND PENALTIES

Late assignments: Any paper handed in late will be lowered one grade per day. In other words, a B will drop to a B- after the first day, to a C+ after the second day, etc. This applies to all written work. If you are having difficulty with the material in this course, do not wait until the end of the semester to come see me or your TA. It is possible to learn how to write good papers, and we are willing to help you do so.

Vanderbilt's Honor Code governs all work in this course. If you have any questions, please ask me--not another student--for clarification.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- Charlotte Perkins Gilman, The Yellow Wallpaper
- Joan Jacobs Brumberg, Fasting Girls. The Emergence of Anorexia Nervosa as a Modern Disease
- Janet Golden, Message in a Bottle. The Making of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
- Johanna Schoen, Choice & Coercion. Birth Control, Sterilization, and Abortion in Public Health and Welfare
- Course documents (CD) Access through OAK
- E-Reserve material (ER) Access through OAK

SCHEDULE OF LECTURES AND READINGS

Introduction

1/14 Introduction to the course

Discovering Sexual Difference

- 1/19 Anatomy
Schiebinger, "Skeletons in the Closet" (CD)
- 1/21 Physiology
1. Beecher, Letters to the People on Health and Happiness (1856) (CD)
2. Clarke, Sex in Education, Parts I & II (1875) (CD)
- 1/26 Medical theories
1. Smith-Rosenberg, Rosenberg, "The Female Animal" (CD)
2. Martin, The Woman in the Body, pp.27-53 (ER)

Gendered Experience of Disease

- 1/28 Infectious disease
Rothman, Living in the Shadow of Death, pp.76-88, 105-127 (ER)
- 2/2 Cancer
Burney, "A Mastectomy" (1811) (CD)
- 2/4 Mental illness
Gilman, The Yellow Wallpaper (1892)
- 2/9 Anorexia nervosa
Brumberg, Fasting Girls
- 2/11 Anorexia nervosa
1. Brumberg, Fasting Girls
2. O'Connor, Van Esterik, "De-Medicalizing Anorexia" (CD)
- 2/15 **First paper due (note that this is a Monday)**
Please drop off your paper in the History Department office no later than 3pm.

Treating Disease

- 2/16 Internal medicine
1. Wood, "The Fashionable Diseases" (CD)
2. Morantz, "The Perils of Feminist History" (CD)
- 2/18 Surgery

Medicalizing Sexualities

- 2/23 Normative sexuality
1. Hellerstein, Victorian Women, pp.174-82 (ER)
2. Degler, "What Ought to Be and What Was" (CD)
- 2/25 Same-sex relationships
Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual" (CD)
- 3/2 Prostitution
1. Dall, "Open letter in The Liberator (1850) (CD)
2. Rolfe, "Biological Aspects of Prostitution" (1937) (ER)
- Submit topic for research paper**

Family Planning

- 3/4 Voluntary Motherhood
1. Toner, "Abortion in its Medical and Moral Aspects" (1860/61) (CD)
2. Sanger, Woman and the New Race, pp.1-8, 72-84, 93-100, 118-129, 226-234 (1920)
(ER)

3. Schoen, Choice and Coercion, Introduction and Chapter One

SPRING BREAK

- 3/16 Abortion before Roe v. Wade
Schoen, Choice and Coercion, Chapters Two and Three
- 3/18 Reproductive politics in the 20th century
Finish Schoen, Choice and Coercion
- 3/22 **Second paper due (note that this is a Monday)**
Please drop off your paper in the History Department office no later than 3pm.

Health-Care Practitioners

- 3/23 History of childbirth
- 3/25 Midwifery (clips from film)
1. Excerpts from Ballard's diary. Go to <http://dohistory.org/diary/> and read the entries for the following: August 1-31, 1787; November 1-December 7, 1793; February 1 – March 6, 1801.
 2. Channing, Remarks on the Employment of Females (CD)
- 3/26 **Submit 1-paragraph description of research question for final paper**
- 3/30 FILM: Sentimental Women Need Not Apply
- 4/1 Nursing
- 4/6 Women physicians before Flexner
1. Anon., "Female Practitioners of Medicine" (1867) (ER)
 2. Morantz, "The 'Connecting Link'" (ER)
- 4/8 Women physicians after Flexner

Women's Bodies in the Recent Past

- 4/13 PMS
Henig, "Dispelling Menstrual Myths" (CD)
- 4/15 Breast cancer
Lerner, "Great Expectations" (CD)
- 4/16 **Research paper due (note that this is a Friday)**
Please drop off your paper in the History Department office no later than 3pm.
- 4/20 FAS
Golden, Message in a Bottle
- 4/22 FAS
Golden, Message in a Bottle
- 4/27 Conclusion