Colloquium on the History of Women  
26:510:525  
RESEARCH SEMINAR ON U.S. WOMEN’S AND GENDER HISTORY  
Fall 2011

Class Location: Conklin 324  
Class Meeting Times: Wed. 5:30-8:00 p.m.

Professor: Dr. Beryl Satter  
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Office Hours: Mondays, 4-5 p.m. and by appointment

This seminar is devoted to researching and writing a substantial, footnoted research paper (approximately thirty pages in length, typed and double spaced, approximately 250 words per page) on some aspect of U.S. women’s or gender history. We will spend the first few weeks reading influential articles on U.S. women’s and gender history. Class meetings will lead you through the step-by-step process of writing a research paper, including primary source research and analysis, the presentation of polished project proposals and the creation of outlines of your thesis. Some class sessions will be set aside for individual conferences, and others for group discussion.

Your research paper will be due in draft form well before the end of the seminar, so that it can go through several major revisions. Since revision is a process that is crucial to effective historical research and writing, we will devote class time to discussion of each of two drafts of your research project that you must complete a few days before the dates indicated in the syllabus below. Students will meet with the professor on an individual basis to discuss their projects and revisions and also work together on their papers, meeting in small groups with other students to discuss and critique each other’s work.

Course Materials

To Purchase  
Jules R. Benjamin, A Student’s Guide to History, 11th edition (Boston and New York: Bedford/ St. Martin’s, 2010), available at at New Jersey Books, 167 University Avenue (corner of University and Bleecker). The bookstore’s phone number is 973-624-5383. It should also be available at the Barnes and Noble at Rutgers-Newark, located in Bradley Hall, 126 Warren Street. Their phone number is (973) 353-5377.

To Read  
The remainder of our shared reading consists of articles. Those that are on e-reserve are marked with an asterisk on the syllabus. The rest of the articles are available online through Project Muse, JSTOR, Searchlight, or other library databases.
Keep in mind that each of you will be expected to read many books and articles on your individual research topic – easily a dozen or more. You should expect to do more reading for this course than for a standard MA graduate course, in other words, but the reading will be tailored to your project.

Course requirements
1) **Class Participation** (will be taken into account and can raise or lower final grade)

2) **Theory Analysis Paper** (10% of grade), due Sept. 12th. All of the readings for Sept. 19th address theoretical aspects of women’s or gender history. You will write a short paper (four or five pages, typed and double spaced) that reflects your reading of all the essays assigned for this class session, but which focuses on two linked readings (Scott and Boydston, or Stoler and Renda, or Berlant/Warner and Cohen). Summarize and evaluate the arguments of the two linked readings. Explain which of the two might be more useful for scholars attempting to write gender history, and why. Conclude by writing a paragraph or two in which you describe how the two articles you evaluated might enrich your thinking on a topic or issue of interest to you (hopefully, the subject of your research for this course).

3) **Journal Analysis Paper** (10% of grade). Each of you will write a paper, five to seven pages long, that surveys some of the readings assigned for one of the following three weeks of the course (9/19, 9/26, or 10/3). Your paper will focus on three out of the six articles assigned for that week. For each of these three articles, pay careful attention to the sources as well as the analytic framework that the authors used to construct their essay. Include the following points in your paper. 1) State the thesis of the article. What question or questions did the author set out to answer? 2) What sort of theoretical framework did the author draw upon to frame their question? 3) What obstacles – historical, methodological, or source-based – did the author have to overcome in order to answer his/ her question? How did the author deal with those obstacles? What methods did s/he use to overcome them? 4) How does the author situate himself/ herself against what other historians have said about the question? What is new or different about what this author is arguing? 5) What sources did the author use to answer the question? Try to be specific. What sources seemed most fruitful, and why? How did the author “read” his or her sources (including visual sources)? Did the author read “against the grain”? If so, how? 6) You must conclude your paper with an imaginative exercise in which you list at least three short topics that one could explore related to the articles you have reviewed. What would be a small, manageable piece of the research that would spin off of or contribute to the research agenda laid out in the articles that you’ve just read? What sources (ideally) could one consult in order to answer that small piece of the puzzle? Append a list of actual primary sources that could be used to answer your imagined questions. Also append at least one actual source and write a brief (one page) description of how you would use it.

3) **Paper Proposal** (10%)
4) Thesis Outline (10%)

5) Written Comments on other students’ drafts (10%)

6) YOUR RESEARCH PAPER (50%)

RESEARCH OPTION: Queer Newark Oral History Project. On November 12, the History Department along with several other departments and centers on campus is sponsoring a conference, “Queer Newark: Our Voices, Our Histories.” This conference is intended as a launch for an ongoing Queer Newark Oral History Project. Lists of individuals who would like to be interviewed for the oral history project have been compiled. For your research project, you have the option of interviewing several people associated with one social group, age group, or set of interests (for example, queer Catholic or Italian Newark, butch women in Newark, queer religious Newark, queer activist Newark, queer Newark artists). You will need to transcribe the interviews, read appropriate scholarship to put them in context, and use them as the source for a research paper on Queer Newark. If you choose this option, you will be expected hand in source paper, paper proposal, thesis outline, written comments on others’ drafts, and final paper on the same schedule as the rest of the class.

Syllabus

9/8: Introduction

- Chapter One: skim.
- Chapter Two: skip, except for p. 22, “Guidelines for Peer Reviewing,” which you should read.
- Chapter Three: read only what’s useful to you, such as “‘Reading’ Nonwritten Sources” (p. 36) if that’s something you’re not familiar with.
- Chapter Four: this is an important chapter which you should read before you write your first draft.
- Chapter Five: skip, though if you have any confusion about how to compare and analyze primary sources, please read pp. 63-70.
- Chapters Six and Seven: read carefully as you consider how to frame and research your topic.
- Chapter Eight: study so that your endnotes and bibliography are correct.
- Appendix: please familiarize yourself with the resources cited here, especially general and specialized resources in U.S. History (pp. 242-262).
9/12: Theories of Women’s and Gender History


Lauren Berlant and Michael Warner, “Sex in Public,” Critical Inquiry 24 (Winter 1998): 547-566, in Searchlight (when article comes up, clicked on “Get it at R” tab, which is on column to left of article information).


9/19: Gender, Sexuality, Difference


NOTE: You will need to read the endnotes of all journal articles assigned for the first month of the course simultaneously with the text in order to learn what materials the authors use to construct their narratives and analyses.

BRAINSTORM RESEARCH TOPICS: What, why, how! Read Benjamin, 88-92 on choosing a research topic.

9/26: Labor, Law, and Politics


Look at the website created by Dana's reference librarian, Natalie Borisovets, under “My Library” in this class's Blackboard cite. It has numerous primary source possibilities. Also read Benjamin, 94-108, and p. 252.

10/3: Case Studies: Discourse, Power, Culture

*Gail Bederman, "'Civilization,' the Decline of Middle-Class Manliness, and Ida B. Wells’s Antilynching Campaign (1892-94)” in "We Specialize in the Wholly Impossible": A Reader in Black Women’s History," edited by Darlene Clark Hine, Wilma King, Linda Reed (Brooklyn: Carlson Publishing, 1995), 407-432, on e-reserve.


Ruth Feldstein, “’I Don’t Trust You Anymore’: Nina Simone, Culture, and Black Activism in the 1960s,” Journal of American History, JSTOR


TOPIC SELECTION (Preliminary) DUE (a paragraph describing what you would like to write about, and primary sources you’d ideally like to use; also summarize it in one sentence that I can pass on to Natalie Borisovets). See Benjamin, 88-92.

Start gathering your primary sources and your secondary reading. What questions would you like them to answer? What makes your particular primary sources useful? What interpretive problems might they pose (what can’t you learn from them?) What background reading will you need to do to supplement the primary sources and make them more fruitful? Begin a bibliography of secondary sources that you will use to situate your primary sources. On bibliography form, see Benjamin, 174-176.
10/10: Class workshop with Natalie Borisovets at Dana Library

- Start preparing your paper proposal (due October 17, in class). A paper proposal must include four paragraphs covering the following:

A) Your question. B) What others have said about your question. C) What you hope to say or discover that is different from or additional to what others have said. D) What sources you will use to answer your question. (You can include an opening anecdote as well.)

- YOUR PAPER PROPOSAL MUST ALSO INCLUDE AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF BOTH PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SOURCES. This takes time, so please start right away even though the proposal is not due till Oct. 17.


Also read introduction only of Beryl Satter, “Marcus Garvey, Father Divine, and the Gender Politics of Race Difference and Race Neutrality,” American Quarterly 48:1 (March 1996), in Project Muse, as an example of how to frame a comparative research question (pp. 43-47 of the article).

10/17: PAPER PROPOSALS DUE.
You must post your proposals on Blackboard by noon on Sunday Oct. 23 so that they can be available for the rest of the class to download and read before we meet on Oct. 24. We will spend tonight’s class reading and critiquing each other’s proposals.

10/24: Individual meetings with professor. Each of you will sign up for a half-hour meeting with me (we can open additional evenings if you cannot all meet with me the evening of 10/31).

After our meeting, please draft an outline of your thesis. The outline should include the argument you plan to make, and show how you will use your evidence to make that argument. You must post your outlines on Blackboard by 10:00 a.m. on Sunday 10/30 so that they can be available for the rest of the class to download and read before we meet on 10/31. On outlines, see Benjamin, p. 131-135,

10/31: Critiques of Thesis Outlines
We will spend tonight’s class reading and critiquing each other’s outlines.

11/7: Individual Meetings with professor. Each of you will sign up for a half-hour meeting with me (we can open additional evenings if you cannot all meet with me the evening of 11/7).

Saturday Nov. 12: You must post copies of your first draft to Blackboard by no later than 10:00 a.m. today so that your group will have a chance to read and write a typed response to your draft, which they will post on Blackboard by 9:00 a.m. on Mon. Nov. 14.
11/14: FIRST DRAFT MEETINGS
      TYPED RESPONSES TO YOUR GROUP’S FIRST DRAFT DUE.
See Benjamin, Chapter Seven.
      On Blackboard:
      *Marcus, "A Writer’s Checklist: Revising an Essay"
      *Frakes, pp. 56-64 (on how to revise a research paper and on common writing mistakes to avoid)
      *Marcus, pp. 105-108 and 161-173 (on same topics, with an emphasis on grammar)
      **"Student Evaluations of Other Student’s Papers” (You should try to incorporate these basic questions in your typed response to your groups’ first drafts, but you don’t need to follow the form number by number.)

11/21: FIRST DRAFT MEETINGS

UPDATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE

Sat. Nov.26: You must post copies of your second draft to Blackboard by no later than 10:00 a.m. today so that your group will have a chance to read and write a typed response to your draft, which they will post on Blackboard by 9:00 a.m. on Mon. Nov. 28.

11/28: SECOND DRAFT MEETINGS

12/3: SECOND DRAFT MEETINGS

12/12: FINAL RESEARCH PAPER DUE, IN CLASS