

Early Modern European Women's History

Fall 2019

Dr. Allyson M. Poska

Monroe 219 x1478

Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 1-2pm Tuesday-Thursday 2-3pm

This course will examine the history of women in Europe from approximately 1400 to 1800. Traditionally marginalized or neglected by historical study, women's history has become a thriving and expanding part of the historical discipline. Unlike many other history courses that rely on the traditional historical narrative, this class will be more thematic, exploring key issues in women's lives including religion, family, work, culture, and politics.

Course Goals and Objectives:

- Ability to analyze sources and arguments
- Ability to read critically primary sources and modern authorities
- Ability to write with clarity about the past
- Ability to communicate in a group setting

This course counts as Human Experience and Society. As such, you will learn

- to explain human and social experiences and activities from multiple perspectives
- to draw appropriate conclusions based on evidence
- to transfer knowledge and skills learned to a novel situation.

This course counts in the History major, the Women's and Gender Studies major, and as an IA support course

Books available for Purchase:

Merry Wiesner Hanks, *Convents confront the Reformation* (Marquette)

Catalina de Erauso, *The Lieutenant Nun: The Memoir of a Basque Transvestite in the New World* (Beacon)

Caroline Weber, *Queen of Fashion: What Marie Antoinette Wore to the Revolution* (Pan Macmillan)

John Lynn, *Women Armies and Warfare* (Cambridge)

UMW Honor Code: In accordance with the University's Honor Code, all work submitted for grading must be your own and be pledged as such by writing at the end of the work, "I hereby declare upon my word of honor that I have neither given nor received any unauthorized help on this work. (your signature)" It is your duty as students and ours as faculty to uphold the Honor Code, which is described in detail in the [Guidebook & Constitution](#). Suspected violations of the Honor Code will be addressed according to the policy established by the Honor Council.

Students requiring special accommodations:

The Office of Disability Resources has been designated by the university as the primary office to guide, counsel, and assist students with disabilities. If you receive services through the Office of Disability Resources and require accommodations for this class, make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss your approved accommodation needs. Bring your accommodation letter, along with a copy of our class syllabus with you to the appointment. I will hold any information you

share with me in strictest confidence unless you give me permission to do otherwise. If you have not made contact with the Office of Disability Resources and have reasonable accommodation needs, (note taking assistance, extended time for tests, etc.), please contact them at 540-654-1266. The office will require appropriate documentation of disability.

Sexual and Gender Based Harassment University of Mary Washington faculty are committed to supporting students and upholding the University's *Policy on Sexual and Gender Based Harassment and Other Forms of Interpersonal Violence*. Under Title IX and this Policy, discrimination based upon sex or gender is prohibited. If you experience an incident of sex or gender-based discrimination, we encourage you to report it. *While you may talk to me, understand that as a "Responsible Employee" of the University, I must report to UMW's Title IX Coordinator what you share.* If you wish to speak to someone confidentially, please contact UMW's Title IX Coordinator, who can connect you with support services and help you explore your options. Please visit <http://diversity.umw.edu/title-ix/> to view UMW's *Policy on Sexual and Gender Based Harassment and Other Forms of Interpersonal Violence* and to find further information on support and resources.

Classroom Recording Statement

Classroom activities in this course may be recorded by students enrolled in the course for the personal, educational use of that student or for all students presently enrolled in the class only, and may not be further copied, distributed, published or otherwise used for any other purpose without the express written consent of the course instructor. All students are advised that classroom activities may be taped by students for this purpose. Distribution or sale of class recordings is prohibited without the written permission of the instructor and other students who are recorded. **Distribution without permission is a violation of copyright law.** This policy is consistent with UMW's [Policy on Recording Class and Distribution of Course Materials](#).

LAPTOP POLICY: Laptops may be used in the classroom for *notetaking only*. I reserve the right to prohibit laptop use at any time for any reason. Cellphones must be turned off and remain out of sight at all times.

Course Requirements:

There will be a Midterm (25%) and a Final Exam (25%).

Class participation (25%)

Your class participation grade will be determined by your participation in class activities including in-class writing assignments, group work, and class discussion. You should come to class having completed the readings for the week and prepared to discuss them on paper, in groups, or as a part of class discussion. You are not expected to be brilliant each class period. Questions, comments, and thoughtful opinions are all crucial parts of classroom learning. You are encouraged to participate in whatever form that you are able. This class will include some **serious, scholarly** critiques of some patriarchal institutions, expectations of women as expressed by both men and women in both the past and the present, and the historical discipline. Much of women's history is based on exactly those critiques. However, students should be careful not to base their critiques on gender-stereotyping of either men or women.

PAPERS:

The rest of your grade (25%) will be determined by two five-page papers. You must write five full pages of text to receive full credit.

Paper assignment number 1) You will find a text about religion/spirituality by a woman who lived between 1300 and 1800. Your essay will analyze the following:

- 1) How the author understands women's role in early modern society
- 2) Compare and contrast that with the author's understanding of her religion's (either Protestantism or Catholicism) expectations of women
- 3) How her spirituality or religious activity was influenced by her sex/gender

You will need to do some basic research to know what religious beliefs the author held

This essay is due Tuesday September 24

Paper assignment number 2) You will find a text by a women writer who lived between 1300 and 1800 about something OTHER THAN religion. Most texts focus on either motherhood, marriage, or education

Your five page essay will analyze:

- 1) How the author understands women's role in early modern society
- 2) Compare and contrast that with the author understanding of early modern society's expectations

This essay is due Tuesday November 12.

When you use texts, I prefer that you choose a complete text; however, if the entire piece is not available in translation, you may consult with me about using an excerpt of substantial length.

If the text does not seem to deal with gender in any way, DON'T USE IT. Choose something else. It may be useful for you to do some basic research on the author to ensure that you understand why she wrote the text.

There are many useful collections and websites. I would recommend browsing the website

A Celebration of Women Writers <http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/>

The Emory Women Writers Resource project

<http://womenwriters.digitalscholarship.emory.edu/earlymodern/>

A number of websites available through earlymodernweb.org

I would also suggest works in the *The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe* series, many of which are available in our library (especially on Netlibrary) and all of which are available at Amazon.com

Papers are due at the BEGINNING of the class. Computer breakdowns are NOT an excuse. Late papers (even one minute late), will be penalized one grade for each 24 hour period.

Papers will be in 12 pt font, double-spaced and will have 1" margins. If you have any questions about format or footnoting see The Chicago Manual of Style. Be sure to proofread your papers before turning them in. Be sure to ***Spell check and grammar check.*** This will avoid embarrassing errors.

You must fill out and attach the **Paper checksheet** (at Files on Canvas) to each paper and the **Putting feedback to use** (at Files on Canvas) sheet to your second paper.

Below are examples of correct footnotes:

a first reference

¹John Hope Franklin, George Washington Williams: A Biography (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 54.

a second reference to the same material immediately following the first:

²Ibid., 68.

Check your paper to ensure that

- 1) You have a thesis, something to argue
- 2) The thesis is stated clearly
- 3) Each paragraph asserts something that relates back to the thesis
- 4) This assertion is backed up by specific evidence
- 5) Each paragraph contains some of your own ideas
- 6) The conclusion reasserts the paper's argument clearly and concisely

I encourage you to discuss your papers with me and I am willing to read any drafts, except in the last 24 hours before the assignment is due.

Grade scale

A 95-100; A- 90-94; B+ 87-89; B 84-86; B- 80-83; C+ 77-79; C 74-76; C- 70-73; D+ 67-69; D 63-66

Students with an average of 69 or lower will receive an unsatisfactory on mid-semester reports

Course Schedule:

Week 1 *Introduction*

Thursday: The Aristotelian Model, Christian Theology, and the *Querelle des Femmes*

Discuss: Greek and Christian Excerpts, Swetnam, and Agrippa

Read: Greek and Christian Excerpts, Joseph Swetnam's "The Arraignment of Lewd, idle, froward, and unconstant women or the vanity of them" (1615) and the excerpt from Cornelius Agrippa's *Declamation on the Nobility and Excellence of women* (all on Canvas)

Week 2 *Catholic Women*

Tuesday: Women and Catholicism

Thursday: Female Monasticism and Mysticism Discuss: Excerpts from Julian of Norwich (on Canvas)

Read: Excerpts from Julian of Norwich (on Canvas)

Week 3 *Women and the Protestant Reformation*

Tuesday: Luther and Women Discuss Excerpts from *Luther on Women* (on Canvas)

Thursday: Discuss Wiesner-Hanks, *Convents confront the Reformation*

Read: Excerpts from *Luther on Women* (on Canvas) and Wiesner-Hanks, *Convents confront the Reformation*

Week 4 *Jewish and Muslim Women*

Tuesday: Muslim Life Discuss chapter 2 from Perry *The Handless Maiden* (on Canvas)

Thursday: Jewish Life Discuss excerpts from *The Life of Glückel of Hameln* (online through the UMW library) read pages 13-21 and 31-41

Read: chapter 2 from Perry *The Handless Maiden* (on Canvas) and *The Life of Glückel of Hameln* read pages 13-21 and 31-41

Week 5 *Demography, sexuality and the female body*

Tuesday: Medical knowledge, demography, and the female body

Thursday: Discuss Laura Gowing, "Secret Births and Infanticide in Seventeenth-Century England," *Past and Present* 156 (August 1997): 87-115 (on-line at JSTOR) and "The perils of procreation" (on Canvas)

Read: "Secret Births and Infanticide" at JSTOR and "The perils of procreation" (on Canvas)

Week 6 *Women and the law*

Tuesday: Dowry and Inheritance Discuss: Primary Sources on Property (on Canvas)

Thursday: Women and the Courts Discuss: Chapter 5 of *Words and Deeds in Renaissance Rome* (on Canvas)

Read: Primary Sources on Property (on Canvas) and Chapter 5 of *Words and Deeds in Renaissance Rome* (on Canvas)

Week 7 *Women and Work*

Tuesday: Traditional Occupations, Professions, and Servitude Discuss: Primary sources on work (on Canvas)

Thursday: TBA

Read: Primary sources on work (on Canvas)

Week 8

Tuesday: NO CLASS FALL BREAK

Thursday: Midterm exam

Week 9 *Women and Warfare*

Tuesday: Gendering Conflict and Violence

Thursday: discuss: Lynn, *Women, Armies, and Warfare*

Read: Lynn, *Women, Armies, and Warfare*

Week 10 *Early Modern Queenship*

Tuesday: The problems of queens

Thursday: **No Class** on your own, watch Sophia Coppola's *Marie Antoinette* (2006) the movie is available on DVD in the library or on youtube for \$3.99

Read: Start reading *Queen of Fashion*

Week 11 *Gender, Power, and Fashion*

Tuesday: Discuss Weber, *Queen of Fashion* chaps. 1-5

Thursday: Discuss, Weber, *Queen of Fashion* chaps. 5-end

Read: Weber, *Queen of Fashion* and watch Sophia Coppola's *Marie Antoinette* (2006)

Week 12 *Women and Artistic Production*

Tuesday: Female Artists Discuss Frederika H. Jacobs, "Woman's Capacity to Create: The Unusual Case of Sofonisba Anguissola" *Renaissance Quarterly* vol. 47, No. 1 (Spring, 1994): 74-101 (available at JSTOR)

Thursday: Female Patronage

Read: Jacobs, "Women's Capacity to Create"

Week 13 *Imperial Sexuality*

Tuesday: Transvestites, Lesbians, and Lesbian-like women

Thursday: Discuss *Lieutenant Nun* and excerpt on Thomas Hall (on Canvas)

Read: *Lieutenant Nun* and excerpt on Thomas Hall (on Canvas)

Week 14

Tuesday: White women, Native women, and European imperialism

Thursday: NO Class Thanksgiving

Week 15 *Witchcraft*

Tuesday: Witchcraft

Thursday: Discuss An early modern witchtrial (on canvas) and the confessions etc... at <http://witching.org/content/witches-huntingdon>

Read: An early modern witchtrial (on canvas) and the confessions etc... at <http://witching.org/content/witches-huntingdon>