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1. Course Staff and Contact Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Convenor (Lecturer/Tutor)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Dr Hélène Bowen Raddeker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>02 9385 2335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room</td>
<td>Morven Brown 361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td><a href="mailto:hbowenr@unsw.edu.au">hbowenr@unsw.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation Time</td>
<td>THURS 11-12 am &amp; 3-4pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Course Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Units of Credit (UoC)</th>
<th>Six</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Description</td>
<td>ARTS3900 is designed both as a ‘capstone’ sort of course for students in the Women’s and Gender Studies minor, and as a pre-honours course both for them and for history majors with an interest in WGS topics. The course would also be a valuable addition to the degrees of students who expect to do honours in other programs such as Sociology, English etc, especially if they are considering doing a feminist/gender/queer (hereafter FGQ) topic for their theses. Since the course is taught by an historian it will often focus on the discipline of History, but the FGQ theory, critiques, scholarly approaches and debates discussed are generally interdisciplinary and just as pertinent to other disciplines. The course focuses on FGQ critiques of, and alternatives to history and other traditional disciplines. We consider different styles of FGQ history (or studies) today, and the history and interdisciplinary theories and debates that have informed them. What is most important, however, is the course’s emphasis on ‘praxis’ (theorized practice) with a view to helping students prepare in a practical way for honours or higher research. Hence, the course is centred on a research project of a student’s own choice, comprised of a ‘thesis’ proposal (see assignments below) and, ultimately, a paper written in the form of an introduction to a research thesis. Students are also encouraged to consider different examples of written FGQ history and other scholarship, focusing on topics of interest to them. This will benefit those who are already considering a particular honours research project (e.g., women/gender in ancient history, the history of sexology, contemporary Indigenous women’s life-writing, or whatever), but it also gives students the opportunity to draw upon their own expertise: their own knowledge of history or other scholarship derived from previous studies.</td>
</tr>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Course Aims</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>The main aim is reflected in the central question that the course will encourage students to reflect upon: ‘If I were to embark on a major (e.g., honours) research project in feminist/gender or queer history or another discipline, how would I approach it?’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>‘How can I turn my honours thesis into a work that demonstrates conceptual polish, through a scholarly awareness of the state of the field today, especially with regard to contemporary feminist/gender/queer thinking on historiography and interdisciplinary theory, method and ethics?’</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### Student Learning Outcomes

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.</strong></td>
<td>The successful completion of this course will furnish students with a deeper understanding of feminist and queer historiography and interdisciplinary scholarship (important issues and debates, theory, approaches and ethics). This will benefit students intending to do honours research on a related topic in History or another discipline, as well as history majors in training for a career in secondary teaching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.</strong></td>
<td>Through completing a research proposal and presentation and then virtual thesis introduction, the course will help prepare students for independent higher research, whether it be in the academy (for an honours or masters degree) or outside it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.</strong></td>
<td>With particular reference to feminist/gender/queer critiques of History and other disciplines in the Human Sciences, completing the course successfully will help students refine their critical skills and add conceptual polish to their research.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Graduate Attributes

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.</strong></td>
<td>the ability to engage in independent and reflective learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.</strong></td>
<td>a respect for ethical practice and social responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.</strong></td>
<td>an in-depth engagement with the relevant disciplinary knowledge in its interdisciplinary context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.</strong></td>
<td>the capacity for analytical and critical thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5.</strong></td>
<td>an appreciation of, and respect for, diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6.</strong></td>
<td>an appreciation of, and a responsiveness to, change</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Learning and Teaching Rationale

The skills students can expect to refine include:

- theoretical understanding and critical thinking;
- the ability to evaluate debates and arguments, particularly with respect to different styles of FGQ historiography and other scholarship;
- working collaboratively and effectively in seminars;
- research methods (including attention to feminist ethics);
- preparatory writing of the sort found in an introduction to a thesis (for example with respect to demonstrating a knowledge of the research topic’s field and situating one’s own research work in relation to scholars in the field, theoretically, epistemologically, methodologically).

Some expected learning outcomes are:

- a refined awareness of contemporary historiography and interdisciplinary theory, FGQ and other;
- preparation for other aspects of thesis writing (or of other major research projects) such as methodology and ethics;
- critical thinking of the sort that does not involve the mere regurgitation of orthodoxies;
- an understanding of common expectations of honours and other research theses, both in History and other arts and social science disciplines.

4. Teaching Strategies

The teaching philosophy at work in this advanced-level course involves the expectation that students will be self-motivated and also committed to collaborative learning in their conduct in the course—

- that they will submit assignments on time; and contribute substantially to weekly seminar discussions through careful individual preparation;
- that to this end they will also seek to work effectively with their peer-group (in small collaborative 'work-groups') in determining weekly seminar contributions and preparing for research assignments;
- and that they will contribute to the knowledge gained by all in the course by drawing upon their own prior knowledge and expertise (for e.g., by at times introducing the seminar group to works of FGQ scholarship or relevant topics in their own cultural/geographical and disciplinary fields of interest).
5. Course Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Task</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Learning Outcomes Assessed</th>
<th>Graduate Attributes Assessed</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facilitation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>1 to 3</td>
<td>1 to 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Assessment</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>1 to 3</td>
<td>1 to 6</td>
<td></td>
<td>Week 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Presentation</td>
<td>5-7 minutes</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>especially 2 &amp; 3</td>
<td>especially 1, 3 and 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Proposal &amp; Bibliography</td>
<td>max 750w.</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>especially 2 &amp; 3</td>
<td>especially 1, 3 and 4</td>
<td>1 April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper (thesis Introduction)</td>
<td>max. 3000w.</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>especially 2 &amp; 3</td>
<td>especially 1, 3 and 4</td>
<td>1 June</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please Note: The Arts and Social Sciences Protocols and Guidelines state:

A student who attends less than 80% of the classes/activities and has not submitted appropriate supporting documentation to the Course Authority to explain their absence may be awarded a grade of UF (Unsatisfactory Fail).

The Attendance Guidelines can be found in full at: https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/Protocols-Guidelines/

ASSIGNMENT & ASSESSMENT DETAILS

Facilitation (10%)

Students are expected to prepare properly for seminar discussions by doing the reading set for all to read and discuss; and by working out with their work-groups what extra material each group and individual will read and present to the coming seminar. The emphasis is not just on your ability to respond to questions I put to the group either in class or in the weekly seminar guide, but on how much you help to facilitate discussion (by raising pertinent topics/issues, and so on).

In the study kit for each week there is usually no more than one article or chapter, but in an advanced course such as 3900 this is not all the weekly reading students are expected to do. In the seminar the week before, each group will nominate which question/s and/or further reading they will handle as a group and themselves determine what each individual student in their group will contribute. I hope that students will try to collaborate effectively with others in the work-groups.

I will award each student a mark out of 10 for facilitation. Of course, the mark will be based not just on the frequency of hi/r contributions but also on their quality (e.g., articulateness and precision, the degree of theoretical awareness, conceptual sophistication, pertinence or ability to stick to the point etc), and this partly depends on doing adequate preparation each week. Remember that at the end of the course both the coordinator and the students in your group will be assessing your contributions.
Peer Assessment (10%)

In the last seminar in Wk12 I will ask each group to provide a mark out of 10 for the seminar contributions of each of that group’s members. This must be handled maturely and realistically, according to the above criteria. If it is not, I shall reduce my own facilitation marks accordingly. (Obviously, not all students in a group could convincingly be assessed as so outstanding that all would get high distinctions of 8.5 or more).

Verbal Presentation of Research Topic (10%)

In the last part of the course each student will be expected to give a short research presentation (5-7 mins). Since the major essay (thesis intro., discussed below) will be due by the Wednesday of Wk13, this represents another opportunity to get some final feedback on your research project from the lecturer and other students. Students who fail to turn up to the seminar in which they have volunteered to give a presentation will be penalized.

Research (Thesis) Proposal & Tentative Bibliography (30%)

In week five (Wed, 1 April) you will have to submit a written research proposal or plan together with a tentative bibliography. In effect, this is just like a research proposal you might be expected to submit with an honours or postgraduate application. It represents the first step toward the (‘virtual’) thesis introduction required as your major written assignment. Submitting the plan will enable me to give you written feedback on the feasibility of the research project of your choice—the availability of sources, workable approaches, whether your topic and approach would be feasible for a thesis (typically, of 15-20,000 words, if honours), and so on.

The plan itself must be no longer than a few pages of double line spacing, the main text no more than about 750 words (i.e., not including notes and biblio.). In it you simply set out:

- your general topic (e.g. women in contemporary Iran; gender histories of colonial Australia; feminist and queer tensions, as seen in so-called ‘sex-positive’ feminism or queer challenges to conventional identity and identity politics; or whatever. There are many possibilities.);
- state the central issue or question you will address;
- comment on sources (the available literature in the field, noting any gaps or problems);
- and on the historiographical/scholarly and/or political significance of the issue as well as how it would be theorized—i.e., your likely approach and its relation to the existing literature (as per some of the points listed below re intros to theses).

Feel free to ask me for advice in the proposal, if you are uncertain of how to proceed with your topic or are facing any potential problems with sources, etc. Remember that this is merely a plan, and I don’t expect it to be ‘set in stone’. It is in the nature of research projects that you will refine your focus and approach as you gain more familiarity with the field, sources, issues debated, and so on. Also, don’t forget that ALL academic writing must be
referred properly (with footnotes or in-text notes that include the exact page number of the book/article from which the quote or information is derived, as well as a bibliography). If you fail to do this you will incur a penalty.

Research Paper/Thesis Introduction (40%)

The research paper (3000 w. max) due on the Monday of Wk13 (1 June) accounts for a significant proportion of the assessment, since learning how to prepare for advanced research is the main rationale for the course. Students will have ample opportunity to prepare for the final paper, through writing the proposal for me to look over and give written feedback on; through discussing problems with your peer group; by doing a formal research presentation in the second half of the course; and through informal discussion of possible research topics and questions in seminars, if required.

I expect the research essay to be a ‘virtual’ thesis introduction: that is, you write the essay as if it were really an introduction to an honours thesis. (As noted above, typically such a thesis is expected to be from 15,000 to 20,000 words, so an introduction to such a thesis would probably be no longer than 3000 words.)

For example, you might decide to write a thesis on women in Iran, paying particular attention to women and paid work. Beyond explaining in a thesis introduction what has inspired the topic (its scholarly significance, your interest in it, etc), you would also want to comment on the scholarship in the field at both the general and more specific level. That is, how much research in English has been done on issues surrounding Iranian women and work? And what about scholarship generally on Iranian women? Doubtless, scholarship on women in Islamic societies where Sharia law is followed would be pertinent, too.

You would then need to situate your own work in relation to or, invariably, partly in opposition to the available literature, since one is expected to demonstrate the originality of a thesis, with respect to topic and/or approach. In order to do this, you’d need to introduce readers to the sort of theoretical, methodological and/or political issues raised by such a topic. For example, postcolonial and/or Islamic feminist scholarship would be applicable to a topic such as women in Iran—e.g., debates on Westcentric feminist perspectives. Have Iranian women themselves critiqued these? And how are you going to avoid being ‘orientalist’ or imperialist, and so on? What other political/ethical considerations are there?

For some histories, another question could be whether yours will be based on oral sources such as the memoirs/memories of living informants? (a topic addressed in the identity week) On that note, in an introduction to a history thesis, one would generally be expected to comment on the primary vs secondary sources to be utilized, unless the thesis is to be a purely historiographical/theoretical work where secondary sources are your ‘primary’ ones. Finally, typically toward the end of an introduction, thesis introductions contain at least a brief explanation of what each of the thesis chapters will contain (and why—i.e., how it is pertinent to the central topic, question and approach, or what each chapter will contribute to your thesis).
You would profit by looking over the intros to a few past honours theses in history or other disciplines. History ones are available from the School office staff; I also have several History and WGS ones in my office (the latter in various disciplines).

RETURN OF ASSIGNMENTS

The proposals will be handed back in class with detailed feedback. I will try to return them within a few weeks from the due date. Since the research essay is due in the last week, a stamped, self-addressed A4 envelope must be provided on submission if students want them to be posted back to their home addresses. Assignments should not be enclosed in any sort of folder.

Requirements for ALL written work (referencing, format etc):

First, please note that:

- Two assignment copies must be submitted for every written assessment: one paper copy and one ‘soft’/electronic copy. The hardcopy should be posted into the Assignment Drop Boxes at the School of Humanities, level 2, Morven Brown Building by 4pm on the due date. A completed and signed cover sheet must be securely attached to assignments.
- A soft copy must also be uploaded to Moodle/Turnitin by 4pm on the due date. Note, however, that hardcopies not submitted on time will be subject to penalties for lateness. It is the hardcopy that is marked, but since Turnitin is used to check for plagiarism, the hardcopy will not be marked if the paper has not been uploaded to Moodle/Turnitin.
- The coordinator will NOT accept assignments sent by email.

Otherwise:

- Please include a word-count on your cover-sheet or elsewhere in your assignment.
- Written work should be typed in double line-spacing.
- Written work must include references and a bibliography. Essays without references (parenthetical in-text references or footnotes) will be penalized because this constitutes plagiarism. You must use either footnotes or parenthetical in-text references, but not both. If your references consistently fail to include the page number of the text being cited, you will incur a penalty.
- Internet sites that are not legitimate academic ones should NOT be used unless they are the focus of a research project—i.e., if there is a special reason to consult online public opinion.
- Work must not be plagiarized. That is, your work must be in your own words except where you (occasionally) quote the exact words of an author using quotation marks and acknowledging your source with a reference. When you draw on another author for information or an argument but do not quote them, you must paraphrase or change the author’s words substantially (express the information or point in your own words) whilst still acknowledging your source with a reference. Plagiarizing (presenting someone else’s words or ideas as your own) the first time will mean loss of marks (or failing the essay if it is extensive); you risk failing the course if you plagiarize a second
time after a warning. For more on plagiarism, see the University’s statement below.

- Papers that are *significantly* longer (or a *lot* shorter) than required will be penalized.

**Grades**

All results are reviewed at the end of each semester and may be adjusted to ensure equitable marking across the School.

The proportion of marks lying in each grading range is determined not by any formula or quota system, but by the way that students respond to assessment tasks and how well they meet the objectives of the course. Nevertheless, since higher grades imply performance that is well above average, the number of distinctions and high distinctions awarded in a typical course is relatively small. At the other extreme, on average 6.1% of students do not meet minimum standards and a little more (8.6%) in first year courses. For more information on the grading categories see: [https://student.unsw.edu.au/grades](https://student.unsw.edu.au/grades)

The following is a guide to marking compiled by History staff, which may prove helpful.

**High Distinction** 85% +

An outstanding essay, excellent in every regard. A High Distinction essay shows flair, originality and creativity in its analysis. Based on extensive research and reading, it engages with complex historiographical issues, demonstrates theoretical acumen and involves both the critical analysis of argument and innovative interpretation of evidence. This essay is a delight to read and the prose is of exceptionally high standard. A High Distinction essay shows the potential to undertake post-graduate studies in History.

**Distinction** 75%-84%

An essay of a superior standard. Well written, closely argued and based on wide, thoughtful and critical reading, a distinction essay answers the question convincingly and shows an understanding of complex historiographical issues. At its best, it is elegantly expressed and pursues an argument with subtlety and imagination. Distinction students are encouraged to progress to Honours in History.

**Credit** 65%-74%

A credit essay is work of a high degree of competence. It answers the question well, demonstrating a sound grasp of subject matter, and arguing its case with clarity and confidence. It engages critically and creatively with the question, attempts to critique historical interpretations and positions itself within the relevant historiography. A credit essay demonstrates the potential to complete honours work in history.
Pass 50%-64%
A pass essay is work of a satisfactory standard. It answers the question but does not do so fully or particularly well. It has a coherent argument, and is grounded in the relevant reading but the research is not extensive and the argument fails to engage important historiographical issues. The prose is capable but could be much improved. A pass grade suggests that the student can (with application) complete a satisfactory pass degree; it does not qualify a student for admission to honours. There is a world of difference between a bare and a high pass essay. The latter signals far more reading and a much deeper understanding of the question. With work, a high pass essay can achieve credit standard.

Fail Under 50%
This is work of unacceptable standard for university study. It fails to answer the question and/or is based on inadequate reading. A failed essay usually has serious faults in terms of prose, presentation and structure.

Submission of Assessment Tasks
Assignments which are submitted to the School Assignment Box must have a properly completed School Assessment Coversheet, with the declaration signed and dated by hand. The Coversheet can be downloaded from https://hal.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/courses/course-outlines/. It is your responsibility to make a backup copy of the assignment prior to submission and retain it.

Assignments must be submitted before 4:00pm on the due date. Assignments received after this time will be marked as having been received late.

Late Submission of Assignments
The Arts and Social Sciences late submissions guidelines state the following:

- An assessed task is deemed late if it is submitted after the specified time and date as set out in the course Learning Management System (LMS).
- The late penalty is the loss of 3% of the total possible marks for the task for each day or part thereof the work is late.
- Work submitted 14 days after the due date will be marked and feedback provided but no mark will be recorded. If the work would have received a pass mark but for the lateness and the work is a compulsory course component a student will be deemed to have met that requirement. This does not apply to a task that is assessed but no mark is awarded.
- Work submitted 21 days after the due date will not be accepted for marking or feedback and will receive no mark or grade. If the assessment task is a compulsory component of the course a student will automatically fail the course.

The Late Submissions Guidelines can be found in full at: https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/Protocols-Guidelines/
The penalty may not apply where students are able to provide documentary evidence of illness or serious misadventure. Time pressure resulting from undertaking assignments for other courses does not constitute an acceptable excuse for lateness.

6. Extension of Time for Submission of Assessment Tasks

The Arts and Social Sciences Extension Guidelines apply to all assessed tasks regardless of whether or not a grade is awarded, except the following:

1. any form of test/examination/assessed activity undertaken during regular class contact hours
2. any task specifically identified by the Course Authority (the academic in charge of the course) in the Course Outline or Learning Management System (LMS), for example, Moodle, as not available for extension requests.

A student who missed an assessment activity held within class contact hours should apply for Special Consideration via myUNSW.

The Arts and Social Sciences Extension Guidelines state the following:

- A student seeking an extension should apply through the Faculty's online extension tool available in LMS.
- A request for an extension should be submitted before the due time/date for the assessment task.
- The Course Authority should respond to the request within two working days of the request.
- The Course Authority can only approve an extension up to five days. A student requesting an extension greater than five days should complete an application for Special Consideration.
- The Course Authority advises their decision through the online extension tool.
- If a student is granted an extension, failure to comply will result in a penalty. The penalty will be invoked one minute past the approved extension time.

7. Attendance

The Arts and Social Sciences Attendance Guidelines state the following:

- A student is expected to attend all class contact hours for a face-to-face or blended course and complete all activities for a blended or fully online course.
- If a student is unable to attend all classes for a course due to timetable clashes, the student must complete the Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences Permitted Timetable Clash form (see information at Item 8 below). A student unable to attend lectures in a course conducted by the School of Education can apply for “Permission to Participate in Lectures Online”.
- Where practical, a student’s attendance will be recorded. Individual course outlines/LMS will set out the conditions under which attendance will be measured.
• A student who arrives **more than 15 minutes late** may be penalised for non-attendance. If such a penalty is imposed, the student must be informed verbally at the end of class and advised in writing within 24 hours.

• If a student experiences illness, misadventure or other occurrence that makes absence from a class/activity unavoidable, or expects to be absent from a forthcoming class/activity, they should seek permission from the Course Authority, and where applicable, should be accompanied by an original or certified copy of a medical certificate or other form of appropriate evidence.

• Reserve members of the Australian Defence Force who require absences of more than two weeks due to full-time service may be provided an exemption. The student may also be permitted to discontinue enrolment without academic or financial penalty.

• If a Course Authority rejects a student’s request for absence from a class or activity the student must be advised in writing of the grounds for the rejection.

• A Course Authority may excuse a student from classes or activities for up to one month. However, they may assign additional and/or alternative tasks to ensure compliance.

• A Course Authority considering the granting of absence must be satisfied a student will still be able to meet the course’s learning outcomes and/or volume of learning.

• A student seeking approval to be absent for more than one month must apply in writing to the Dean and provide all original or certified supporting documentation.

• The Dean will only grant such a request after consultation with the Course Authority to ensure that measures can be organised that will allow the student to meet the course’s learning outcomes and volume of learning.

• **A student who attends less than 80% of the classes/activities and has not submitted appropriate supporting documentation to the Course Authority to explain their absence may be awarded a final grade of UF (Unsatisfactory Fail).**

• A student who has submitted the appropriate documentation but attends less than 66% of the classes/activities will be asked by the Course Authority to apply to discontinue the course without failure rather than be awarded a final grade of UF. The final decision as to whether a student can be withdrawn without fail is made by Student Administration and Records.

**Students who falsify their attendance or falsify attendance on behalf of another student will be dealt with under the Student Misconduct Policy.**

### 8. Class Clash

Students who are enrolled in an Arts and Social Sciences program (single or dual) and have an unavoidable timetable clash can apply for permissible timetable clash by completing an online application form. Students must meet the rules and conditions in order to apply for permissible clash. The rules and conditions can be accessed online in full at: [https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/media/FASSFile/Permissible_Clash_Policy.pdf](https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/media/FASSFile/Permissible_Clash_Policy.pdf)
For students who are enrolled in a non-Arts and Social Sciences program, they must seek advice from their home faculty on permissible clash approval.

9. Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's thoughts or work as your own. It can take many forms, from not having appropriate academic referencing to deliberate cheating.

In many cases plagiarism is the result of inexperience about academic conventions. The University has resources and information to assist you to avoid plagiarism.

The Learning Centre assists students with understanding academic integrity and how to not plagiarise. Information is available on their website: https://student.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism/. They also hold workshops and can help students one-on-one.

If plagiarism is found in your work when you are in first year, your lecturer will offer you assistance to improve your academic skills. They may ask you to look at some online resources, attend the Learning Centre, or sometimes resubmit your work with the problem fixed. However, more serious instances in first year, such as stealing another student's work or paying someone to do your work, may be investigated under the Student Misconduct Procedures.

Repeated plagiarism (even in first year), plagiarism after first year, or serious instances, may also be investigated under the Student Misconduct Procedures. The penalties under the procedures can include a reduction in marks, failing a course or for the most serious matters (like plagiarism in an Honours thesis) or even suspension from the university. The Student Misconduct Procedures are available here: http://www.gs.unsw.edu.au/policy/documents/studentmisconductprocedures.pdf
10. Course Schedule

Seminars: Wednesdays 11-2pm (Morven Brown LG2)
To check course timetable, please visit: http://www.timetable.unsw.edu.au/

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wk</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Seminar Content</th>
<th>Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4 Mar</td>
<td>Introductory Seminar</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>11 Mar</td>
<td>What's in a name: 'Women’s/Feminist/Gender’ Studies?</td>
<td>See the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>18 Mar</td>
<td>The Traditional Disciplines: Feminist Critiques and Alternatives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>25 Mar</td>
<td>Studying Sexualities &amp; Queering History (or scholarship in general)</td>
<td>detailed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1 Apr</td>
<td>Queer Studies/Politics ‘versus’ (?) Feminism</td>
<td>weekly</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mid-Semester Break</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>15 Apr</td>
<td>a) The 'Linguistic Turn' and History; and b) 'Objective/Impartial' Vs 'Positioned’ Scholarship</td>
<td>guide to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>22 Apr</td>
<td>What’s in a Category/Concept? (egs: 'experience/difference/agency' etc)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>29 Apr</td>
<td>Decentering (e.g., queering) Subjectivity; &amp; Gender and (Self/Life-) Writing</td>
<td>topics,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>6 May</td>
<td>‘Postcolonial’ Feminist Studies &amp; Intersectional Theory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>13 May</td>
<td>Race, Gender and the ‘Representation Debate’; &amp; Feminist Oral History and Ethics</td>
<td>Issues &amp;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>20 May</td>
<td>Whither History after Postmodernism? Writing 'Experimental' FGQ History</td>
<td>readings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>27 May</td>
<td>(Remaining) Research Presentations</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. Course Resources

Study Kit

A Study Kit will be available from the bookshop. It will often contain only the equivalent of one article or chapter each week for general discussion. However, this is an advanced seminar course, so you are also expected to choose something further to read each week and present to the class, both as a group and individually. You must liaise with other members of your work-group concerning your group and individual contributions (cf., ‘facilitation’ above).

Textbook Details

Note that at the end of some readings, both under ‘textbook’ and other reading in this section and in my weekly seminar lists, a large cross (X) denotes works not in the UNSW library, while ‘x1 or x2 etc’ indicates the number of copies there (last I checked). Of course, many journals are now accessible online, and a fair number of books also available as e-books.
Works such as Readers that are especially useful and ‘important’ authors/works (influential internationally) are in bold.

Students with little background in FGQ and history/interdisciplinary (‘critical’) theory would do well to have a ‘textbook’ on hand to draw on through the course. The following would be the most helpful. A few copies of each of the first four should be in the bookshop, as well as in the library.

For history majors:
Morgan, Sue, The Feminist History Reader, London and New York: Routledge, 2006 (UK-based, x2, plus some in the bookshop)
Bowen Raddeker, Hélène, Sceptical History: Feminist and Postmodernist Approaches in Practice, London and New York: Routledge, 2007 (x2, plus some copies in the bookshop; the discussion is not only pertinent to history, especially the chaps on ‘difference’ and ‘the positioned subject’. There will be a few sections from this in the Kit)
Scott, Joan W. (ed.), Feminism and History, Oxford University Press, 1996 (U.S.-based, x2)

For other majors:
Weedon, Chris, Feminism, Theory and the Politics of Difference, Blackwell 1999 (and/or her earlier book. See also the lists below for other readers or collections of essays in FGQ Studies; as well as some important ‘other’ works on history theory.)

Also:
(A queer or sexualities reader would be useful for those with a particular interest in queer studies. See further lists below.)

Additional works on women/gender & history:
Spongberg, Mary, Writing Women’s History since the Renaissance, Hampshire and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002 (x1, Australian author)
Offen, Karen, Ruth Roach Pierson and Jane Rendall (eds), Writing Women’s History: International Perspectives, Hampshire and London: Macmillan, 1991 (x2)
Curthoys, Ann and John Docker, Is History Fiction?, Sydney: UNSW Press, 2006 (x3, only one chapter is on feminist history, but reading more of this would be helpful, especially with postmodern history; Curthoys is a well-known Australian feminist)
Smith, Bonnie, The Gender of History: Men, Women, and Historical Practice, Cambridge, Mas. & London: Harvard University Press, 1998 (x1; her other works useful, too)

Journals

Australian Feminist Studies
Critical InQueerries (Melb Uni, queer and feminist journal)
Feminist Studies
Feminist Review
Gender and History
GHQ: a Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies
Hecate (feminist, Australian: U of Q)
History and Theory
History Workshop
Intersections (Murdoch uni e-journal, gender/Asian studies)
Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion
Journal of Gender Studies
| **Journal of Interdisciplinary Gender Studies** |
| **Journal of Social History** |
| **Journal of the History of Sexuality** |
| **Journal of Women’s History** |
| **Lilith** (two: U.S.; Aust. one is feminist history) |
| **Outskirts** (UWA feminist e-journal) |
| **Representations** |
| **Radical History Review** |
| **Rethinking History** |
| **Sexualities** |
| **Signs** (feminist, interdisciplinary) |
| **Thirdspace** |
| **Women’s Historical Review** |
| **Women’s Studies International Forum** |

### Websites (e-journals under Journals):

- Diotima: Materials for the Study of Women and Gender in the Ancient World: [http://stoa.org/diotima/](http://stoa.org/diotima/)
- Internet Women’s Source Book: [http://fordham.edu/halsall/women/womensbook.html](http://fordham.edu/halsall/women/womensbook.html)
- Women’s History Resources: [http://www.library.wisc.edu/libraries/WomensStudies/hist/html](http://www.library.wisc.edu/libraries/WomensStudies/hist/html)
- ViVa: A Bibliography of Women’s History in Historical and Women’s Studies Journals: [http://www.iisg.nl/~womhist/vivabout.html](http://www.iisg.nl/~womhist/vivabout.html)
- Les Online: [http://www.lespt.org/lesonline](http://www.lespt.org/lesonline)
- Sex and Gender in Premodern Europe: Bibliography of the History of Western Sexuality 1700-1945: [http://univie.ac.at/Wirtschaftsgeschichte/sexbibl/](http://univie.ac.at/Wirtschaftsgeschichte/sexbibl/)

Note that to help you find more sources for essays, you can access **Subject Guides** (Women’s & Gender Studies, and several others, depending upon your research interests: Ancient History, American History, German Studies, and so on) prepared by the UNSW library’s Social Sciences and Humanities desk (via the library’s homepage). These contain helpful information, including lists of: Reference Resources, Databases & Indexes, Major Journals & Web Sites

### Reference Works

These include dictionaries, encyclopedia and chronologies. There are many available, so the following are just a few examples:


**Additional Readings**

**FEMINISM IN THE ACADEMY:**

**On Women’s Studies** (some on ‘Gender Studies/History’ listed under relevant week)

(on women’s studies and the women’s movement in Sth Africa, see Hassim and Walker under postcolonial section)


Curthoys, Ann, ‘Gender Studies in Australia: a History’, *Australian Feminist Studies*, vol 14, no. 30 (1999), pp. 19–38 (also article in this issue on the status of women in universities in Aust., by Marion Sullivan) (essays in this can be downloaded)

Gunew, Sneja, ‘Is Academic Sisterhood an Oxymoron?’, *Women’s Studies International Forum*, vol. 10, no. 5 (1987), pp 533-536 (this too can be downloaded)

—— (ed.), *A Reader in Feminist Knowledge*, London and New York: Routledge, 1991—includes 1986 essays by Susan Sheridan on Australian Women’s Studies and by Linda Gordon on women’s history (below)


Richardson, Dianne and Victoria Robinson, *Introducing Women’s Studies*, Hong Kong: Macmillan Press, 1993

Rowland, Robyn, ‘What are the key questions which could be addressed in Women’s Studies?’, *Women’s Studies International Forum*, vol. 10, no. 5 (1987), pp. 519-524


## FEMINIST INTERDISCIPLINARY SCHOLARSHIP

### a) Historiography/History Theory & Method


Boris, Eileen and Nupur Chaudhuri (eds), *Voices of Women Historians: the Personal, the Political, the Professional*, Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, 1999


Colebrook, Claire, ‘Feminist Ethics and Historicism’, *Australian Feminist Studies*, vol. 11, no. 24, 1996

**Davis**, Natalie (Zemon), ‘History’s Two Bodies’, *American Historical Review*, vol. 93, no. 1 (Feb 1988) (very influential)


Jenkins, Keith (ed.), *The Postmodern History Reader*. London, New York, Canada: Routledge, 1997 (essays by Friedman, Elam, Ermarth, Spiegel etc)


Jones, Jacqueline, ‘Race and Gender in Modern America’, *Reviews of American History*, vol. 26, no. 1 (1998), March 1998, pp. 220 – 238 (available online: focus is on work, labour and poverty, yet, typically of today—and American historiography!—it is not really a class analysis)

—— *The Dispossessed: America’s Underclasses from the Civil War to the Present* (New York, 1992).


Newton, Judith, ‘History as usual? Feminism and the “New Historicism”’, *Cultural Critique* 9 (Spring 1988), pp. 93–?


**Scott**, Joan Wallach, ‘Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis’, *The American Historical Review*, vol. 91, no. 5 (Dec 1986), pp. 1053-1075 (a ‘classic’, very influential postmodern feminist!)


—— *Only Paradoxes to Offer: French Feminists and the Rights of Man*, Cambridge Mas. and London: Harvard University Press, 1996 (on feminism in France, 18thC. to 1940s)

—— her classic essay on ‘Experience’ is in *Feminists Theorize the Political and Practicing History*

—— another very good one, ‘After History?’ is in *The Nature of History Reader.*

—— ‘Deconstructing Equality-Versus-Difference: Or, The Uses of Poststructuralist Theory for Feminism,’ in Anne C. Herrman and Abigail J. Stewart (eds), *Theorizing Feminism: Parallel Trends in the Humanities and Social Sciences*, Boulder:

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Westview Press, 1994
—— Feminism’s History’, in Sue Morgan (ed.), Feminist History Reader, Routledge, 2006


b) Interdisciplinary Feminist Theory/Scholarship


Butler, Judith and Scott, Joan (eds), Feminists Theorize the Political, New York and London: Routledge, 1992 (at least one copy)


Fraser, Nancy, Unruly Practices: Power, Discourse and Gender in Contemporary Social Theory, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989


Hesse-Biber, Sharlene, Christina Gilmartin and Robin Lyndenberg (eds), Feminist Approaches to Theory and Methodology: an Interdisciplinary Reader, New York: Oxford University Press, 1999


Stanton, Domna C. and Abigail J. Stewart (eds), Feminisms in the Academy, Michigan, University of Michigan Press, 1995

Rebecca Walker (ed.), To Be Real: Telling the Truth and Changing the Face of Feminism, New York, Anchor, 1995

c) Feminism and Foucault

Bizzini, Silvia Carporale, ‘Sara Suleri’s Meatless Days and Maxine Hong Kingston’s The Woman Warrior: writing, history and the self after Foucault’, *Cultural Review*, vol. 7, no. 1 (Spring 1996), pp. 55-65

Diamond, Irene and Lee Quinby (eds), *Feminism and Foucault: Reflections on Resistance*, Boston, Northeastern University Press, 1988


Hekman, Susan J., *Feminist Interpretations of Michel Foucault*, University Park, Penn State Univ Press, 1996


Ramazanoglu, Caroline (ed), *Up Against Foucault: Explorations of Some Tensions Between Foucault and Feminism*, London: Routledge, 1993


d) Feminism & ‘Sexual Difference’ (the French Feminists etc & psychoanalytic feminism)

Readers (‘French Feminists’: Julia Kristeva, Luce Irigaray, Hélène Cixous; also Monique Wittig)

Note that Marks & de Courtivron (eds), *NFF*, contains a lot of short selections from many French feminists, not just the most famous 3 (Kristeva, Irigaray and Cixous)


Braidotti, Rosi, *Metamorphoses: Towards a Materialist Theory of Becoming*, Cambridge: Polity, 2002, (Chap. 1: ‘Becoming Woman, or Sexual Difference Revisited’), pp. 11–64 [RB is an Australian theorist of the French Feminism school; interviews with her such as those contained in *Feminism Meets Queer Theory* are also instructive on their differences with/from Butler]


Gunew, Sneja Anna Yeatman (eds), *Feminism and the Politics of Difference*, Sydney, Allen & Unwin, 1995


Irigaray, Luce, *je, tu, nous: Toward a Culture of Difference*, London and New York: Routledge, 1993 (especially intro and essays entitled ‘The Culture of Difference’, ‘Writing as a Woman’, and ‘So When are We to Become Women?’)


Marks, Elaine and Isabelle de Courtivron (eds), *New French Feminisms: An Anthology*, Sussex; Harvester Press, 1981—particularly ‘Creations’ section, pp. 159 ff (e.g., ‘Xavière Gauthier, ‘Is there such a thing as women’s writing?’, pp. 161–4)


Riley, Denise, ‘Does sex have a history?’, in *FHR*, pp. 149–59 (good on the various
grounds on which the category of ‘woman’ is now being contested in feminist scholarship.
Roper, Lyndall, Oedipus and the Devil (psychoanalytic feminist reading of witchhunt phenomenon….)

**e) Feminism on the Body—Theorizing Corporeality & Materiality**

Braidotti, Rosi, Metamorphoses: Towards a Materialist Theory of Becoming, Cambridge U.K., Polity Press, 2002 (x1)
—— & Robyn Ferrell (eds), Cartographies: Poststructuralism and the Mapping of Bodies and Spaces, Sydney, Allen & Unwin, 1991
Kevin, Catherine (ed.), Feminism and the Body: Interdisciplinary Perspectives, Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009
Kirby, Vicky, Telling Flesh: the Substance of the Corporeal, New York, Routledge, 1997
Landry, Donna, Materialist Feminisms, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993
and another entitled Material Feminisms, 2008
Sawicki, Jana, Disciplining Foucault: feminism, power and the body, New York: Routledge, 1991
Stafford, Barbara, Body Criticism, Cambridge, MA, MIT Press, 1991
—— “Introduction: Somatic Compliance—Feminism, Biology and Science”, Australian Feminist Studies, vol. 12, no. 29 (April 1999)

‘OTHER’ SCHOLARSHIP: i.e., not specifically feminist or queer but potentially useful for some topics. The list includes important material—for example, works by well-known male theorists who have influenced FGQ scholarship/history (Foucault, Barthes, Derrida, to name a few).

**a) Historiography/History Theory and Method**

Barthes, Roland, ‘The Discourse of History’, short extract in The Postmodern History Reader, pp. 120-23 (a very influential work)


de Bolla, Peter, ‘Disfiguring History’, *Diacritics*, Issue 16 (Winter 1986), pp. 49-58


—— ‘Telling it as you like it: postmodern history and the flight from fact’, in *The Postmodern History Reader*, Routledge, 1997, pp. 158-74


Hunt, Lynn (ed.), *The New Cultural History*, Berkeley, 1989


Iggers, Georg, *Historiography in the Twentieth Century: from scientific objectivity to the postmodern challenge*, Wesleyan University Press: Hanover, 1997 (his 70s book is good on Marxist and social history)


Jenkins, Keith (ed.), *The Postmodern History Reader*. London, New York, Canada: Routledge, 1997 (x2)
——and Munslow, Alun (eds), *The Nature of History Reader*, London and New York: Routledge, 2004 (X)


LaCapra, Dominick, *History and Criticism*, Ithaca, Cornell Univ Press, 1985 (deconstructionist ‘dialogic’ approach; (influential: chapter titled “Rhetoric and History” often cited)
——‘History and Psychoanalysis’, in Francoise Meltzer (ed.), *The Trials of Psychoanalysis*, University of Chicago Press, 1988
——*History and Reading: Tocqueville, Foucault, French Studies*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press (Melbourne University Press reprint), 2000 (and other works)

Lorenz, C., ‘Historical Knowledge and Historical Reality: A Plea for Historical Realism’ in *History and Theory*, vol 33, no 3 (1994), pp. 297-327 (reconstructionist method)


Roberts, Geoffrey (ed.), *The History and Narrative Reader*, Routledge, 2001


——also essays on ‘culture’ and ‘structure’ in *Practicing History*...

Spiegel, Gabrielle M., *Practicing History: New Directions in Historical Writing after the Linguistic Turn*, New York and London: Routledge, 2005 (X, on order, important new collection: both defences and critiques of empiricist history)


—— ‘History and postmodernism,’ in *The Postmodernist History Reader*, pp. 255-59


**b) Interdisciplinary Theory (e.g., on postmodernism)**


**Lytard**, Jean-François, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi, trans.; foreword by Frederick Jameson), Manchester University Press, 2004

Norris, Christopher, “Postmodernizing history: right-wing revisionism and the uses of theory,” in *The Postmodern History Reader*, pp. 98-102

**c) Identity, ‘Experience’, and Self-Representation in Life-Writing:**


d) Postcolonial theory/scholarship:


Bhabha, Homi K. (works by)

——(see Subaltern Studies & Postcol Readers below for his famous essay on who can speak for ‘Indian pasts’)


12. Course Evaluation and Development

Courses are periodically reviewed and students’ feedback is used to improve them. Feedback is gathered using various means including UNSW’s Course and Teaching Evaluation and Improvement (CATEI) process.
13. **Student Support**

The Learning Centre is available for individual consultation and workshops on academic skills. Find out more by visiting the Centre’s website at: [http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au](http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au)

14. **Grievances**

All students should be treated fairly in the course of their studies at UNSW. Students who feel they have not been dealt with fairly should, in the first instance, attempt to resolve any issues with their tutor or the course convenors.

If such an approach fails to resolve the matter, the School of Humanities and Languages has an academic member of staff who acts as a Grievance Officer for the School. This staff member is identified on the notice board in the School of Humanities and Languages. Further information about UNSW grievance procedures is available at: [https://student.unsw.edu.au/complaints](https://student.unsw.edu.au/complaints)

15. **Other Information**

**myUNSW**

myUNSW is the online access point for UNSW services and information, integrating online services for applicants, commencing and current students and UNSW staff. To visit myUNSW please visit either of the below links:

- [https://my.unsw.edu.au](https://my.unsw.edu.au)
- [https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/ABC.html](https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/ABC.html)

**OHS**

UNSW’s Occupational Health and Safety Policy requires each person to work safely and responsibly, in order to avoid personal injury and to protect the safety of others. For all matters relating to Occupational Health, Safety and environment, see [https://www.ohs.unsw.edu.au/](https://www.ohs.unsw.edu.au/)

**Special Consideration**

In cases where illness or other circumstances produce repeated or sustained absence, students should apply for Special Consideration as soon as possible.

The application must be made via Online Services in myUNSW. Log into myUNSW and go to My Student Profile tab > My Student Services channel > Online Services > Special Consideration.

Applications on the grounds of illness must be filled in by a medical practitioner. Further information is available at: [https://student.unsw.edu.au/special-consideration](https://student.unsw.edu.au/special-consideration)

**Student Equity and Disabilities Unit**

Students who have a disability that requires some adjustment in their learning and teaching environment are encouraged to discuss their study needs with the course convener prior to or at the commencement of the course, or with the Student Equity Officers (Disability) in the Student Equity and Disabilities Unit (9385 4734).
Information for students with disabilities is available at: http://www.studentequity.unsw.edu.au/

Issues that can be discussed may include access to materials, signers or note-takers, the provision of services and additional examination and assessment arrangements. Early notification is essential to enable any necessary adjustments to be made.
**Weekly Seminar Guide**

**Wk 1 (4 Mar) Introductory Seminar**

This week will be devoted to familiarizing students with the content, approach and assessment of the course; and to getting ourselves organized. It is mandatory for students to attend the first seminar; those who fail to turn up will doubtless feel lost/unprepared in week two (and I will not be repeating explanations given in week one).

In week one we’ll need to organize work-groups, each comprising five or more students, so we can facilitate effective seminar discussions, and cover more reading each week than any one of us can do alone. We will all read a selected article or book chapter each week (or equivalent) from the Study Kit, but each individual will be expected to read an extra article/chapter and be ready to discuss it in the seminar. I’ll try to remember to allow some time at the end of each seminar for you to work out with your group what further reading you’ll do for the following week.

**Wk 2 (11 Mar) What’s in a Name: ‘Women’s/Feminist/Gender’ Studies?**

First, we should note that while this week is focused on the debate surrounding ‘women’s’ versus ‘gender’ history (or studies in general), some authors do not present their works as specifically one or the other. In addition, as ‘gender’ became the more trendy term, it was not uncommon for authors to refer to ordinary women’s histories as gender histories even where the analysis of gender constructs was not central.

Re debates on women’s vs gender (specifically as an aspect of postmodern) history, some examples are reprinted in the *Feminist History Reader*, and will be considered in the week on the ‘Linguistic Turn’ (Joan Wallach Scott has led the field of gender+postmodern history).

Among the general questions to consider this week is why some feminist scholars in Women’s History/Studies would have been critical of the trend to change the name of ‘Women’s Studies’ to ‘Gender Studies’. Some still are. Another question is whether gender history/studies (centred on the analysis of social constructions of gender) necessarily represented an entirely new or more radical or necessarily superior approach. For example, in her book *History Matters: Patriarchy and the Challenge of Feminism* (2006), Judith Bennett accuses ‘gender’ history and the language used in it of diluting feminism or making it more acceptable to the ‘malestream’; coopting feminism, in other words. It’s not unusual to find people claiming that gender history/studies is more ‘inclusive’ as it does not ignore men, as if women’s studies ever did that and as if there’s no need still today for studies focused on women.
Clearly, we do still need to try to redress the imbalance caused by treating males as the human ‘norm’, thereby rendering women invisible.

One work-group could perhaps read some of Mary Spongberg’s history of women’s history (and/or a chapter from Bonnie Smith, on pre- and early 2nd Wave women’s histories). Another could bring to the discussion some reflections on apparent differences between earlier and more recent feminist histories. Is it really the case, as conventional wisdom would have it, that ‘women’s’ histories are necessarily less feminist or less theorized/sophisticated than ‘gender’ histories? I’ve included some potential examples below, but the possibilities are endless.

For a reading that defines gender history at length (Q1 below); Joan Scott’s famous ‘manifesto’ is the most obvious example (Scott, Joan Wallach, ‘Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis’, American Historical Review, vol. 91, no. 5 (1986), pp. 1053–75. This is also the intro to her book: Gender and the Politics of History, New York: Columbia University Press, 1988. Otherwise, the other questions listed below should provide some guidance for reading up on gender history/studies and debates surrounding its difference from women’s history/studies (its value, its ostensible superiority, the dangers attached to it, and so on). Of course, The Feminist History Reader would be very useful this week, too.

Kit Reading

Judith M. Bennett, History Matters: Patriarchy and the Challenge of Feminism, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006 (Ch. 2: ‘Feminist History and Women’s History’), pp. 6-29

Questions for Discussion:

1. What should a gender history be about? (cf. Scott, Cranny-Francis, Jay, the FHReader etc.)

2. It has frequently been assumed that gender history is a superior form of feminist history to women’s history. Why? And is it necessarily? (One way of tackling the question might be to compare two recent feminist histories, one that purports to be a ‘gender history’—albeit focused centrally upon women—and another that is about women and not centrally about gender constructs. Is the ‘gender history’ necessarily superior with respect to its scholarship, level of conceptual sophistication or the understanding it offers of the topic under consideration?)

3. Some feminists were wary of ‘gender history/studies’ because it could, once again, render women invisible. The increasing popularity of histories/studies of masculinities in recent years (often by men) could be taken to be a case in point. Consider the example of one or more works focussed upon masculinities. How valuable a contribution to feminism or feminist history does it/they make?

4. A pioneer of women’s studies in the U.S. once observed of the trend toward ‘gender’ studies (i.e., even calling women’s studies departments ‘gender studies’) that the problem is that no one has ever liked the word ‘woman’. It is liked even less in feminist studies today (as we will see in later weeks) with some (e.g., in postcolonial feminism) arguing against the feminist tendency to
universalize ‘women’. On different grounds others dismiss the traditional ‘biologist’ approach of feminists to sex/the sexual body as natural/biological and gender (‘woman/man’, ‘fe/male’) as cultural/conditioned. The well-known article below by Moira Gatens predated Judith Butler’s entry onto the stage of feminist/queer scholarship, with the implication that ‘sex’ is already ‘gender’ (as did Monique Wittig & Gayle Rubin). Apart from her contention that the body is not a blank slate but always already sexed (or gendered), what did Gatens want to achieve by problematizing the sex-gender distinction? Perhaps the central question raised by all this, however, is whether such critiques render our use of the term ‘woman’ untenable, and what the political implications of this are for feminism.

On Women’s History:


Grimshaw, Patricia, Colonialism, Gender and Representations of Race: Issues in Writing Women’s History in Australia and the Pacific, 1994 (x1)

Scott, Joan W., Afterword: ‘Feminism’s History’, in Sue Morgan ed.) The Feminist History Reader, London and New York: Routledge, 2006, pp. 387–98 (first published as part of a roundtable discussion on ‘The Future of Women’s History’ in the Journal of Women’s History, 2004; Scott was one of the prime advocates of both gender and postmodernist history)


Spongberg, Mary, Writing Women’s History since the Renaissance, Hampshire and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002


Wohr, Ulrike, ‘Women’s History in Japan: The Reconstruction of the Past in Takamure Itsue's 'The History of Woman' (Josei no rekishi)’ (German title but article in English), Monumenta Nipponica – vol. 60, no. 2 (Summer 2005), pp. 272-275

Some examples of women’s history:

Ackroyd, Joyce, ‘Women in Feudal Japan: Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan, 3rd Series, vol. 7 (November 1959), pp. 37–68 (PhD early fifties, but not on women, Prof. of J’ese language and literature at UQ by the 1970s)
Beard, Mary Ritter, *Woman as Force in History: A Study in Traditions and Realities*, New York: Persea Books, 1987 (x1, first pub’d 1946 by an American historian who influenced the 2nd Wave—‘Woman is and makes history.’—but who, according to Spongberg, was ‘quite anti-feminist in its rhetoric, although not perhaps in sentiment’, p. 169)


Frances, Rae (works on the history of prostitution; Rae describes her approach as both women’s and gender history)

Johnson-Odim, Cheryl & Margaret Strobel (eds), *Expanding the Boundaries of Women’s History: Essays on Women in the Third World*, Indiana University Press, 1992 (x1)

Keddie, Nikki R. and Beth Baron (eds), *Women in Middle Eastern History: Shifting Boundaries in Sex and Gender*, Yale University, 1991 (x2, look at the essays that are not ‘gender’ analyses)


(I’ve included above some material on Takamure Itsue, prewar anarcho-feminist & founder of women’s history in Japan; however, Germer’s essay, which can be downloaded from *Intersections*, only contains bits on her and women’s history in a broader piece on ‘feminist history in Japan’).

**On Gender & Gender History:**


Lake, Marilyn, ‘Women, Gender and History’, *Australian Feminist Studies*, nos 7 & 8 (Summer 1988)


Cranny-Francis, Anne *et al*, *Gender Studies: Terms and Debates*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2003 (x3)


Wittig, Monique (there doesn’t look to be much by her in English—just *The Straight Mind and Other Essays*, 1992, or *The Lesbian Body*, 1986; Butler’s debt to her is discussed in Rosi Braidotti’s *Metamorphoses*, Polity, 2002, however)

Some examples of ‘Gender History’:

Andaya, Barbara Watson, *Other Pasts: Women, Gender and History in Early Modern Southeast Asia*, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, University of Hawai’i at Manoa, 2000 (essays in this could be contrasted with each other with respect to women’s vs gender history approaches)


Dearborn, Mary V. *Pocahontas’s Daughters: Gender and Ethnicity in American Culture*, 1986

Frances, Rae (works on the history of prostitution; Rae describes her approach as both women’s and gender history)


Hansen, Debra Gold, *Strained Sisterhood: Gender and Class in the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society*, 1993


Murphy, Peter F. (ed.), *Fictions of Masculinity: Crossing Cultures, Crossing Sexualities*, New York, N.Y. University Press, 1994

O’Brien, Anne, ‘The Case of the Cultivated Man: Class, Gender and the Church of the Establishment in Interwar Australia’, *Australian Historical Studies*, no 107 (October 1996)

Perdue, Theda, *Cherokee Women: Gender and Culture Change, 1700–1835*, Lincoln Nebraska, University of Nebraska Press, 1998


Sanders, Eve Rachele, *Gender and Literacy on Stage in Early Modern England*, 1998

Scates, Bruce, ‘Mobilizing Manhood: Gender and the Great Strike in Australia and Aotearoa/New Zealand’, *Gender and History*, vol. 9, no. 2 (August 1997), pp. 285-309
Sinha, Mrinalini, Colonial Masculinity: The 'Manly Englishman' and the 'Effeminate Bengali' in the Late Nineteenth Century, Manchester University Press, 1997
Wiesner, Merry E., Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe, Cambridge University Press, 1993, 2000

**Wk 3 (18 March) The Traditional Disciplines: Feminist Critiques & Alternatives**

The topic this week concerns ways in which feminist scholars have critiqued ‘malestream’ disciplines. (Queer critiques of heteronormativity in traditional scholarship could also be considered, though week four is on that topic). Students not majoring in History are encouraged to find works on challenges mounted in other disciplines (Philosophy, English/literary criticism, Sociology, and so forth).

For reading this week, apart from debates reproduced in The Feminist History Reader, essays in older, interdisciplinary collections such as Feminist Challenges (1986) or A Reader in Feminist Knowledge (1991) would be useful. The latter’s Part Two contains essays on Women’s/Feminist Studies and mainstream academia, Part Five is on Philosophy with well-known essays by Elizabeth Grosz and Moira Gatens, and Part Ten contains essays relevant to questions below on socialist feminist ‘interventions’.

Allen’s article may have been written as early as the mid-1980s, but it represents a good critique of conventional empiricist history—namely, the positivist demand for empirical evidence on the part of conservatives such as Geoffrey Elton, which, she argues, has contributed to the marginalization of histories of women. The critique is of course relevant to other disciplines as well.

**Kit Reading**


**Questions for Consideration/Discussion:**

I. Even by the mid-70s feminist scholars were critiquing much more than the traditional silences/exclusions concerning women in history and other disciplines. How did works such as those by leading historians, Joan Kelly, Judith Allen, Natalie Zemon Davis, illustrate this? (eg., periodization in history was one issue challenged by both Kelly and Davis as androcentric; and while empiricism or positivism has long been critiqued by postmodernists, Allen criticized it as androcentric)

II. How have feminist scholars challenged traditional disciplines other than History?
III. Traditional political ideologies such as Marxism also came under fire from feminists, Campioni and Gross being amongst them. Does their critique of Marxism seem applicable to socialist-feminist approaches such as Rowbotham’s or Kelly’s?

IV. More recently, feminist historians are of course still critiquing the androcentrism of History’s ‘malestream’. What do Bonnie Smith, Mary Spongberg etc have to say about the discipline’s androcentric or masculinist biases still today? (These are books, so students in one work-group might like to pick one each, and not necessarily read it all.)

V. Use an example of queer scholarship (e.g., an article) to demonstrate queer challenges to academia and central concerns.

Readings:
For queer scholarship, see the Wk4 list, or queer/GLBT readers; for feminist critiques of other disciplines see above list, section b, Interdisciplinary Feminist Theory/Scholarship.

Note that Feminist Challenges (above: library x4 copies) contains critiques of other disciplines as well; e.g., Liz Grosz on traditional Philosophy versus Feminist Studies, specifically French feminism: Luce Irigaray, Julia Kristeva etc)


Spongberg, Mary, Writing Women’s History since the Renaissance, Hampshire and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002


Curthoys, Ann, ‘Women’s Liberation and historiography’, Arena, April 1970 (on Australian history)

Davis, Natalie Zemon, ‘Women on Top: Symbolic Sexual Inversion and Political Disorder in Early Modern Europe’, in Barbara A. Babcock, ed., The Reversible World: Symbolic Inversion in Art and Society, pp. 147-190. Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell University Press, 1978 (x2, Davis is/was a highly respected feminist, new cultural historian of early modern France; among other things, this famous essay signposted the trend toward gender history).

Gross (later Grosz), Elizabeth, ‘Conclusion: What is Feminist Theory?’, in Carole Pateman and Elizabeth Gross/Grosz (eds), Feminist Challenges: Social and
*Political Theory*, Sydney, London and Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1986, pp. 190–204 (an important essay, and not specifically on history)

Kearns, Katherine, *Psychoanalysis Historiography, & Feminist Theory*, Cambridge U.K., New York & Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1997—X, not easy reading, but good on gendered history, e.g., in Bloch, Elton etc, and often amusing, eg., on their masculinist demands for the ‘plain language of butchers and bakers’ (as she puts it) in works of history


Kelly-Gadol, Joan, ‘The Social Relations of the Sexes: Methodological Implications of Women’s History’, in Sandra Harding (ed.), *Feminism and Methodology: Social Science Issues*, Indiana University Press, 1987 (x1, first published, mid-70s, a classic, good on things like androcentric periodization in history and Marxist-style class analyses of women’s oppression; also an early advocate of ‘gender’ analysis)

Rowbotham, Sheila (early works by her such as *Women, Resistance and Revolution* and *Woman’s Consciousness, Man’s World* were very well-known examples of socialist-feminist history, and could be considered in connection with the second and third questions—several copies in library)

Smith, Bonnie, *The Gender of History: Men, Women, and Historical Practice*, Harvard University Press, 1998 (e.g., chapter on ‘men and facts’)

Spongberg, Mary, *Writing Women’s History since the Renaissance*, Hampshire and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002

**Wk 4 (25 Mar)  Studying Sexualities; Queering Scholarship**

While this week is partly on Sexuality Studies—its development, importance and concerns—we also begin to consider that part of it that goes by the name of ‘Queer Studies’. Important things to note about queer politics and studies are firstly that it represented a political reaction against the ‘identity politics’ of Second Wave Women’s Liberation and also Gay Liberation (i.e., embracing an identity as a ‘woman’, or ‘gay/lesbian’) which queer advocates see as conservative because too exclusive, constrictive, conformist, and so on.

However, the queer approach to identity or subjectivity as decentred/acentric, hence multiple and fluid rather than being fixed (on some centre, core or essence) has also been just one expression of postmodern approaches to identity. We will focus on changing approaches to subjectivity in a later week after the week generally on postmodernism/the ‘Linguistic Turn’, but it will help you to understand the material this and next week if you understand that ‘identity politics’ has been critiqued on philosophical/logical grounds for being essentialist (and thus too narrow, constricting etc); on practical grounds Gay Lib or radicalesbian feminism has also been seen as a mirror image or mere inversion of institutionalized heterosexuality in some respects (for e.g., their not being inclusive enough of intersex or transsexual individuals).

As suggested above, there have been tensions with some feminists (not only, but perhaps especially radicalesbian-feminists), an issue we focus on next week.
Note that this week there are two articles in the Kit, unusually, because I wanted to set Donna Penn’s article on issues in lesbian history partly as an introduction to ‘queer’ approaches to scholarship, but also felt that Judith Butler (the ‘queen of QT’) could not be excluded from a week such as this. This article by JB is not specifically about QT, however, but rather about the political dangers involved in treating ‘gender’ as the preserve of feminists and sexuality as the proper concern of gay/lesbian/queer scholars. Different groups could nominate which of the two articles they’ll read.

**Kit Reading**


OR


**Questions for Discussion:**

I. Why do authors of studies in sexuality/s see it to be an important focus of study? What approaches or methods do they recommend?

II. The debate on lesbian history from the *Feminist History Reader* (Faderman, Jeffrey and Vicinus) partly concerns the question of whether lesbian (or lesbian-like) historical subjects really did ‘it’. Which is the more heterocentric approach: centring women’s intimate relationships and sexual identities upon ‘compulsory genital activity’ or ‘desexualized reading[s] of lesbian relations’? (editor, p. 212)

III. When Carolyn Williams asked the question of whether feminism and queer theory are ‘allies or antagonists’, she was probably referring partly to a phenomenon noted by Judith Butler (feminist & the so-called ‘queen of queer theory’) that, according to some gay or queer scholars, gender is the ‘proper object’ of feminist inquiry whilst sexuality is their own. For Butler, however, ‘it would be as much a mistake to hand over the thinking on sexuality to feminism…as it would be to hand it over to lesbian and gay studies’, Explain Butler’s position (in ‘Against Proper Objects’).

IV. What, according to Donna Penn and other feminist advocates of ‘queering history’, are its advantages over more conventional gay/lesbian approaches?

V. Though postmodern feminist and queer theory constitute recent exceptions to the rule, the contents ‘blurb’ for Richardson’s book acknowledges that ‘little attention has traditionally been given to theorising heterosexuality’ because it is ‘taken for granted, as something that is “natural” and “normal”. Theorising Heterosexuality questions this assumption….’ If, indeed, heterosexual roles and relations had remained fixed through time and had not been differentiated also according to culture, there would be little point in writing histories of heterosexuality. Demonstrate the importance of historicizing
heterosexual norms and practices by reference to this or other works of history.

On the history/studies of sexualities/

(Note that texts specifically on queer studies, and feminist-queer relations/tensions are listed for next week)

Jeffreys, Sheila, ‘Does it matter if they did it?’, in Sue Morgan ed.) The Feminist History Reader, London and New York: Routledge, 2006, pp. 212–18 (another essay by her in Richardson)
Richardson, Diane (ed.), Theorising Heterosexuality: Telling it Straight, Buckingham: Open University Press, 1996-x2, includes essays on the heterosexualization of gender (by Jeffreys), or homosexual relations such as 'Which one's the man? The heterosexualisation of lesbian sex' by Tamsin Wilton
Segal, Lynne, Straight Sex; The Politics of Pleasure, London: Virago, 1994
Walker, Michelle Boulous (ed.), Performing Sexualities, Brisbane, 1994
Weeks, Jeffrey, Sexuality, New York: Routledge, 2003
— et al (eds), Sexualities and Society: A Reader, Cambridge; Polity, 2003

Examples of the history/study of sexualities:

Damousi, Joy, Depraved and Disorderly: Female Convicts, Sexuality and Gender in Colonial Australia, 1997
Frances, Rae, ‘Sex Workers or Citizens? Prostitution and the Shaping of Settler Society’, *International Review of Social History* (November 1999)

Gutiérrez, Ramon A., *When Jesus Came the Com Mothetrs Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality and Power in New Mexico*, 1500–1846, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1991 (x1, plus online access; famous work)


Lavrin, Asunción (ed.), *Sexuality and Marriage in Colonial Latin America*, Lincoln, Nebr., University of Nebraska Press, 1989

Manderson, Lenore and Margaret Jolly (eds), *Sites of Desire, Economies of Pleasure: Sexualities in Asia and the Pacific*, Chicago University Press, 1997 (x1)


Oram, Alison and Annmarie Turnbull (eds), *The Lesbian History Sourcebook*, Routledge, 2001


—— *Christianity and Sexuality in the Early Modern World: Regulating Desire, Reforming Practice*, New York and London, Routledge, 2000 (X, or other works on gender or sexuality)

Weeks, Jeffrey et al (eds), *Sexualities and Society: A Reader*, Cambridge; Polity, 2003 (and other works)

**On Queer Theory, Trans-... etc**


—— *Undoing Gender*, Oxfordshire U.K. and New York: Routledge, 2004 (and other works)


Halberstam, Judith, *Female Masculinity*, Duke University Press, 1998 (on female or feminine masculinity, drag kings etc, see also Marjorie Garber, Eve Sedgwick, Judith Butler)


**Jeffreys**, Sheila (a leading lesbian feminist critic of queer theory)

Joan Nestle (ed.), *The Persistent Desire: A Femme-Butch Reader*, Boston: Alyson, 1992 (x1)


Weed, Elizabeth and Schor, Naomi (ed.), *Feminism Meets Queer Theory*, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1997 (x1).

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**Week 5 (1 Apr) Queer Studies/Politics ‘Versus’ (?) Feminism**

It is not surprising that some feminists have been suspicious of a political approach to liberation that not only blurs the boundaries between male and female—in a critique of biological essentialism and too binaristic views of just two sexes or genders—but rejects the very categories of ‘male/female’ or ‘woman/man’. After all, First and then Second Wave Feminism set out to liberate women from the oppression/subjugation, discrimination, second-class status etc that has long been typical of patriarchy/s. Although she is generally regarded as a feminist, Judith Butler has been explicit about how ‘Woman’ (and thus ‘women’s oppression’ etc) can no longer be the organizing political principle of feminism.

The question is therefore whether there still is any place/need for feminism or for individuals who identify as ‘feminists’. However, one obvious feminist objection to queer critiques is that one might accept that splitting the world into (only) two distinct sexes/genders (and sexualities) is too neat, binaristic and also implicitly heteronormative, while also accepting that an identity as a woman is only one of a number of possible identities for any individual (e.g., race, class, religion, sexuality etc), YET still recognize that the world categorizes some of us as ‘female/women’ and continues to discriminate against or marginalize us on that basis. *Whose* interests will our refusing to identify as and with women actually serve?

Apart from those who identify as queer feminists such as Butler, amongst the feminists who have critiqued queer or postmodernist politics there have been liberals and leftists and also (especially) radical feminists and radicalesbian feminists. Sheila Jeffreys is a leading example of the latter—a trenchant critic of queer politics and the related (so-called) ‘sex-positive’ trend in feminism since the latter eighties.

However, there have also been theoretical/political tensions between Butler and ‘French Feminism’ (headed by Luce Irigaray, Hélène Cixous, Julia Kristeva). One might describe the latter as a European variant of radical feminism in its ‘sexual difference’ style, albeit one that was/is focused on (Freud, Lacan &) psychoanalysis and considerably more refined conceptually than the North American etc politics.
normally termed radical feminism. Tensions can certainly be seen in the interview in *Feminism Meets QT* between Butler and Rosi Braidotti (an Australian adherent of the ‘FF’ school of thought), though they were smoothed over to some extent in later works such as Butler’s *Undoing Gender* and Braidotti’s *Metamorphoses*.

**Kit Reading**


Questions for consideration:

I. What have some of the tensions been between feminism (in general) and advocates of ‘queer’ politics and scholarship? (c.f. Rudy)

II. From a feminist point of view, is queer theory/politics essentially radical and liberatory, or reactionary (and, some have suggested, ‘male-identified’)?

III. Trace the differences between Butler and Braidotti. (For e.g., was Butler correct in seeing ‘French Feminist’ theory as biologically essentialist about the sexes/genders? At times they can sound that way: e.g., Kristeva, in ‘Women’s Time’), but according to FF theory one acquires a gender identity not due to biology but through the acquisition of language and identification with the roles of a mother or father.) Were their differences overcome entirely in their later works (mentioned above)?

IV. C. Jacob Hale (listed below) has observed—citing Gayle Rubin’s essay, ‘Of Catamites and Kings: Reflections on Butch, Gender, and Boundaries’—that ‘there are more ways to be butch’ than ‘there are ways for men to be masculine’. Explain what they mean while also elaborating on whether and how ‘queer’ politics has had more of an impact on the sexual minority communities discussed than ‘lesbian feminist’ politics.

**Readings**

(for a list of works on the ‘sexual difference’ school of ‘French Feminism’—i.e., the psychoanalytic feminism of Irigaray, Cixous, Kristeva, Braidotti, Grosz etc—see the introductory section of this Outline)


Halberstam, Judith, *Female Masculinity*, Duke University Press, 1998 (on female or feminine masculinity, drag kings etc, see also Marjorie Garber, Eve Sedgwick, Judith Butler)


**Jeffreys**, Sheila (works by: a leading radicalesbian feminist critic of Queer politics/)


Rudy, Kathy, ‘Radical Feminism, Lesbian Separatism, and Queer Theory’, *Feminist Studies*, Spring 2001, vol. 27, no. 1, 191–22 (good introductory piece based on Rudy’s personal experience of separatism and then preference for queer politics)


Weed, Elizabeth & Naomi Schor (ed.), *Feminism Meets Queer Theory*, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1997 (library x1). There are interesting interviews in this book with Butler & Braidotti that illustrate the tensions between these two schools of feminist thought.


Williams, Carolyn, ‘Feminism and Queer Theory: Allies or Antagonists?’, *Australian Feminist Studies*, vol. 12,, no. 26 (1997), pp. 293-298

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**MID-SEMESTER BREAK**

**Wk6 (15 April) a) The ‘Linguistic Turn’ (i.e., postmodernism/structuralism)**

There are two parts to this week’s topic, so please don’t forget about the second section on critiques of empiricist expectations of scholarly objective and impartial scholarship.

First, let me note that the term ‘postmodern’ is commonly used as a blanket term covering more specific terms such as ‘poststructuralist’ thinking and ‘deconstruction’—associated with the ‘linguistic turn’ which is called that because of its central focus on language/discourse (and representation). This week we’ll all read some of the first chapter of my book, *Sceptical History*, which seeks to introduce tertiary students of history in particular to ‘Feminist and Postmodern Approaches in Practice’ (the book’s subtitle). This chapter focuses specifically on the postmodern critique of conventional empiricist history, but other chapters in the book (on identity/subjectivity and ‘difference’, and the ‘positioned’ subject) discuss interdisciplinary feminist and other theory. Note that I couldn’t include the whole chapter in the Kit due to copyright issues, but the ‘6 principles/guidelines' mentioned below are discussed/explained in detail after p. 33.
A likely piece for further reading and discussion is a rather spirited debate on poststructuralist readings of gender from 1994 to 1996 from the Women's History Review (U.K.), which has been reproduced in The Feminist History Reader.

**Kit Reading**


**Questions for Discussion**

I. Which of the 6 principles/guidelines for a postmodernist practice of history that are set out by HBR on p. 33 do you see to be potentially the most useful for your own research? (not necessarily in History)

II. Joan Wallach Scott is famous not just as an advocate of feminist poststructuralist history, but for leading the field. What are the methods that she sees as central to the practice of this type of history? (cf. Scott’s ‘After History?’ and/or my chapter’s commentary on it, after p.33)

III. Imagine you were embarking on some particular research project in gender history (or other scholarship), and seeking to apply the 3 principles Scott sets out. What would your central focus and approach be?

IV. The exchange between Hoff and others in the pages of the Women's History Review was not just ‘spirited’ but at times vitriolic. Why? What was at stake in the debate for women/feminists, at least in the minds of critics of poststructuralism?

V. Jane Flax is not discussing history but her account of ‘postmodernism and gender relations’, which includes a critique of (humanist, rationalist, empiricist) Enlightenment thought, is certainly pertinent. What does she see to be the benefits to feminist scholarship of postmodern analyses?

VI. What does Chris Weedon see as central to postmodern approaches to gender (in the chapter of that name)?

VII. As a work of postmodernist history, consider Scott’s *Only Paradoxes to Offer* (about the history of feminism in France), discussing what makes it ‘postmodernist’.

**Readings:**

(also, see list on feminism and postmodernism earlier in the Guide, for general works that could also be useful)

On Feminism & Postmodernism (or Deconstruction/Poststructuralism):
(See introductory section of Outline for works on feminism and Foucault)
Bowen Raddeker, *Sceptical History*, Chap. 1


Himmelfarb, Gertrude (a conservative: anti-feminist and anti-postmodernist) vs others on postmodernism and history in *Postmodern History Reader* (e.g. Elam, Ermarth, Kelly, Spiegel)


Rose, Sonya, Kathleen Canning, Anna Clark & Mariana Valverde, ‘Gender History/Women’s History: Is feminist scholarship losing its critical edge?’, in Sue Morgan (ed.), *The Feminist History Reader*, London and New York: Routledge, 2006, pp. 160–74 (debate on the impact of poststructuralism upon feminist history from the U.S.-based *Journal of Women’s History*, 1993; since it partly concerns ‘experience’ there’s a question on it under that week)


—— and Natalie Zemon Davis, ‘Response to G.R. Elton on Feminist History,’ *American Scholar*, vol. 55, no. 2 (Spring 1986), p. 286

Spiegel, Gabrielle (ed.), *Practicing History: New Directions in Historical Writing after the Linguistic Turn*, New York and London: Routledge, 2005 (X, on order, featured under experience and differentiation week; books contains essays for and against postmodernism)


Also:


Butler, Judith and Scott, Joan (eds), *Feminists Theorize the Political*, New York and London: Routledge, 1992

Caine, Barbara, E.A. Grosz, and Marie de Lepervanche (eds), *Crossing Boundaries: Feminisms and the Critique of Knowledges*, Sydney, Allen & Unwin, 1985


**Wk6 b) ‘Objectivity’ vs ‘Positioned’ (eg., feminist/queer) Scholarship**

Scepticism about the claims of traditionalist (‘empiricist/positivist’) historians about ‘good’ history's hingeing upon consideration of the available evidence by impartial (dis-interested) scholars has long predated so-called ‘postmodernism’. Even decades ago leftist historians (Marxists, anarchists), including some feminists, were suspicious of the conservative liberal pretensions involved in the view that only others are positioned or ‘ideological’ in their scholarship. Unlike Marxism, feminism etc, it seems that liberalism is not an ‘ideology’, just as capitalist liberal democratic systems are supposedly ‘classless’. Hence, since the purported ‘death of Marxism’ (and advent of ‘postmodernity’) many hold that we are now living in a ‘post-ideological’ age—where class differences and tensions, not surprisingly, are often overlooked.

‘Feminist history’ or studies, however, is by definition positioned, as is queer history or studies. Though some have wanted to retain the mantle (‘cloak’?) of objectivity, perhaps partly to gain respectability in a field that was once more obviously dominated by empiricism, feminist historians have often been amongst the most forthright in acknowledging their political standpoints. Joan Scott, Somekawa and Smith, and the many others who see no reason to deny their politics in their practice of history or other disciplines, have not been without their disagreements, however.

In the Kit reading, the authors cite the narrative theorist Hayden White, not surprisingly, since he long led the field of (radical/postmodernist/sceptical) history theory. Something by him would be good reading for this week (see the lists at the end of the guide). One of the central points White emphasized is that historians ascribe meaning (in a moral or political fashion) to the events or processes they are seeking to interpret through the selection of conventional narrative plot structures for the stories they tell about the past (for example, heroic epic, tragedy, or farce). Because of this, history is essentially a literary (and fictive, and moral/political) endeavour; it’s essentially about representation, not facticity.

**Kit Reading**
Questions for consideration


II. What do you think of Somekawa’s and Smith’s proposition that the grounds for ‘good’ history should be shifted from the writer’s ability to access the truth, objectively or disinterestedly, to the political ethics of an interpretation? There are dangers associated with such a position, as is illustrated in the ‘history wars’ (discussed by Ann Curthoys and John Docker).

III. Bowen Raddeker (citing postmodernist historian/theorist, Keith Jenkins, Rethinking History, pp. 17–18) notes how, still, we seldom find amongst undergraduate history courses ones designed and taught from a self-proclaimed ‘black Marxist-feminist’ (or perhaps anarchist, or feminist or queer) perspective. We don’t see courses entitled ‘A Liberal History of Australia’ either, however many of the latter there are in existence. Why is this?

IV. Dominick La Capra (deconstructionist ‘dialogic’ historian, in History and Reading, p. 60) is one of many these days who criticize and try to circumvent the empiricist pretensions to authorial invisibility that are implicit even in the way histories are still commonly written (cf. readings in experimental history week on self-reflexivity). And of course this is not only the case with the discipline of History. An obvious example is the notion amongst traditionalists that ‘Good’ history is that in which history itself appears to be doing the speaking, hence the proscription of the subjective ‘I’. The famous essay, ‘The Discourse of History’, by the very influential (‘high’/late structuralist) cultural critic, Roland Barthes, comes to mind, since in this he criticized empiricist/positivist history for its recourse to a reality effect; i.e., for imagining that written history is a reflection of the ‘Real’, that we can reconstruct/recover past realities. With the help of Barthes (or Raddeker, chap. 1, part 2), discuss the linguistic/rhetorical conventions in history that reinforce the illusions of realism and objectivity.

V. One need not be a ‘postmodernist’ to practise ‘interested’ or frankly positioned history, but feminist history is that by definition. Discuss the various ways in which your own research will be frankly ‘feminist’ (or queer)?

Readings:
(See the ‘other scholarship’ list in the introductory section; material listed in the feminist oral history week would be pertinent, too)

Appleby, Joyce, Hunt, Lynn and Jacob, Margaret, Telling the Truth about History, New York and London: W.W. Norton and Company, 1994
Boris, Eileen and Nupur Chaudhuri (eds), Voices of Women Historians: the Personal, the Political, the Professional, Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, 1999

Colebrook, Claire, ‘Feminist Ethics and Historicism’, *Australian Feminist Studies*, vol. 11, no. 24, 1996


Friedman, Susan Stanford, ‘Making History: reflections on feminism, narrative, and desire’, in Keith Jenkins (ed.), *The Postmodern History Reader*, Routledge, 1997, pp. 231-36 (good on contradictory approaches within feminism re restoring the truth about women/feminism Vs a more or less PM, self-reflexive approach)


Lang, Berel, ‘Is it possible to misrepresent the Holocaust?’, in *PHR*, pp. 426–33

Morgan, Sue & Keith Jenkins & Alun Munslow (eds), *Manifestos for History*, Routledge, 2007

Somekawa, Ellen and Elizabeth Smith, ‘Theorizing the Writing of History or “I Can’t Think Why It Should Be So Dull, For A Great Deal Of It Must Be Invention”’, *Journal of Social History*, 1988, vol. 22, no. 1, p. 156.


Gross/Grosz, Liz (the classic essay by her in *Feminist Challenges*, listed above)

**Wk 7 (22 Apr) What’s in a Category/Concept?**

(*experience*, ‘difference’, ‘agency’ etc)

First, we should note that some historians have been embracing a ‘practical turn’ in History, but a mere glance at the authors included in Gabrielle Spiegel’s edited collection, *Practicing History: New Directions in Historical Writing after the Linguistic Turn* (2005) indicates that this reaction against post-modernism/structuralism is hardly restricted to historians. Perhaps the feature in this sort of scholarship that is most telling is its countering to a purportedly narrow postmodernist focus on language/discourse and representation, the categories of human ‘practice’, ‘agency’ and ‘experience’. The Linguistic Turn’s emphasis on language/discourse as ‘prior to’ human experience or subjectivity, that is, is taken to be too deterministic—so much so that it can be seen to rule out human agency or free will (more on this below).

Whatever we think of this particular issue, the debate reminds us that analytical categories are not ‘innocent’ or empty but premised upon certain assumptions or conceptual approaches. This proposition itself calls to mind the work of Joan Scott,
once again, and not only her famous essay in the Kit on the analytical category of
‘experience’ and its foundational status in traditional/empiricist history (i.e., personal
experience as the basis upon which identities are built, and the basis for claims
about the ‘truth’ of our perceptions/ideas, and those of our subjects of historical
enquiry). The issue is intimately connected with identity, of course, and that in turn
with ‘difference’.

Scott, however, is representative of poststructuralist thinking in another way: the
manner in which she wants us to focus our histories not so much on ‘difference’, as
upon ‘processes of differentiation’: i.e., competing representations of difference
in an effort to circumvent essentialism in representations of sexual, cultural—indeed,
any sort of ‘identity’. This approach is often criticized by those who are wary of the
basic principle seen to be associated with the Linguistic Turn, that everything is
discourse and representation (‘discourse unto death’, as Catherine MacKinnon once
put it; ‘the world as text’ etc). The book, Practicing History, basically engages with
this (perceived) problem, contributors often doing so in the belief that, with such a
‘narrow’ focus, i.e., upon language/discourse/representation, what is overlooked is
the ‘real material world’, material practices (‘lived experience’, e.g., of oppression)
and, importantly, human agency, as I noted above. In part, what Scott and others
challenged is the empiricist notion that one’s lived experience constitutes evidence
for ‘the truth’.

‘Agency’ has been a significant category of analysis in feminism for quite some time,
basically posited in an effort to overcome the putative ‘victim’ approach of much of
early Second Wave feminism that—for obvious and arguably legitimate activist
reasons—pictured women mostly as the victims of ‘patriarchy’ (and/or capitalism)
etc. Connected with this I have also included a question related to Second Wave
debates within Feminist Studies concerning the problems associated with, and
scholarly/political efficacy of, the concept of ‘patriarchy’.

Kit Reading

Gabrielle M. Spiegel (ed.), Practicing History: New Directions in Historical Writing
after the Linguistic Turn, New York and London: Routledge, 2005 (part of her
introduction) pp. 18-26, & notes pp. 28-31

AND

Joan W. Scott, ‘Experience’, in Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott (eds), Feminists
Theorize the Political, New York and London: Routledge, 1992, pp. 26–40

OR

Elizabeth Deeds Ernarth, ‘Agency in the Discursive Condition’, in Gabrielle M.
Spiegel (ed.), Practicing History: New Directions in Historical Writing after the
Linguistic Turn, New York and London: Routledge, 2005, pp. 103-110

Questions for discussion

I. What does it mean to say that experience is not pre-discursive, as Scott does,
and that the trouble with this empiricist category of analysis is that it naturalizes
other categories such as ‘man/woman’, ‘white/black’ or ‘hetero/homo- sexual’?

II. Ruth Roach Pierson could be taken as a representative example of feminists who
are loath to dispense with a focus upon the ‘lived experience’ of women, past and
present. Does a feminist project necessarily have to depend upon the ‘lived reality
as knowledge/truth’ view? (cf. debate in the Feminist History Reader)
III. What are some of the problems and paradoxes associated with the emphasis today on ‘difference’? (cf., Suleri, or Weedon, or Bowen Raddeker, Ch. 3: ‘Negotiating “Difference”’)

IV. Should our concern be rather with (processes of) differentiation, as Scott recommends (e.g., in ‘After History?’; and elsewhere)

V. Does a focus upon language/discourse/representation necessarily rule out attention to ‘material realities’ or women’s ‘agency’? (cf. Bowen Raddeker, end of Ch. 4, and essays in Practicing History)

VI. A feminist debate began in the 1970s (reproduced in The Feminist History Reader) about the efficacy of central conceptual terms in feminism such as ‘patriarchy’. What were the different positions taken on this by the 3 socialist-feminists, Rowbotham, Alexander and Taylor (and perhaps also Judith Bennett’s book above)? Though the term is not today so fashionable, would you use it in your theses?

On difference/differentiation:
(cf. sexual difference and postcolonial lists etc)


Bowen Raddeker, Sceptical History, Chap. 3: ‘Negotiating Difference’, particularly parts I and VI


Irigaray, Luce, je, tu, nous: Toward a Culture of Difference, London and New York: Routledge, 1993


On the Category of ‘Experience’
(essays in Spiegel’s Practicing History, above—also on ‘practice’, agency etc)

Bowen Raddeker, Sceptical History, Chapter IV: ‘The “Positioned” Subject’, part III on Scott and ‘experience’, and part VI on the debate over postmodernism, linguistic determinism (focus on discourse/representation) vs agency


Smith, Sidonie and Julia Watson (eds), Getting a Life: Everyday Uses of Autobiography, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1996 (especially Introduction)


—— ‘Other things are never equal: a speech,’ Rethinking Marxism, vol 12, issue 4 (2000), pp. 37–?


Wk 8 (29 Apr) Decentering Subjectivity & Gender and (Self/Life-) Writing

Though some of the reading and issues last week are relevant, this week is specifically about postmodern critiques of conventional western (Christian>humanist) conceptions of individual identity. (The term ‘subjectivity’ is now preferred). These critiques, which have been taken up by postmodern feminists and (especially) queer theorists, have been carried over into a rejection of the traditional identity politics embraced by post-1960s movements for gay, black and women’s liberation.

The conventional conception of identity referred to is premised on a unitary, centred, static Self, that is, moreover, envisioned in Western ‘bourgeois’ terms of individuality and separateness from the world. Feminist critics such as Sidonie Smith, however (in The Poetics of Women’s Autobiography), were quick to point out that this individualism has typically been seen as the property of men; hence, women have tended to follow social/gender expectations in representing their selves in terms of relationality (with other people) and connectedness with the world.

The practical issue for scholars is basically how we write about the people we study: do we represent them in the essentialist (and, some would say, masculinist) terms outlined above? The alternative is by reference to the multiple, intersecting and changing ‘subjectivities’ that people are subject to and embrace. The issue would be especially pertinent to writers of biographies or even autobiographies (‘life-writing’ in general), but also to any work of history or other scholarship that deals with questions of identity. Gendered subjectivity has of course been a topic of particular interest to feminists, for example in the genre of autobiography criticism (exemplified by Sidonie Smith) where much has been published in recent decades on women’s
self-representations. However, as Smith’s own career suggests, the emphasis (especially in postcolonial feminism) has increasingly been on how women are positioned and position themselves not only in terms of gender but in terms of multiple markers of identity based on race, class, sexuality, religion and other factors.

Kit Reading

OR (especially for English majors)


Questions for Consideration

I. **What constitutes the ‘out-law’ autobiography discussed by Kaplan?** That is, how does self/life-writing by feminists, women, racialized and other ‘colonized’ subjects, political prisoners and the like typically resist the ‘law’/canon of the genre? (Note that essays by Beverley and others in the *De/Colonizing the Subject* collection, on this sort of ‘resistance literature’, are very pertinent, too.)

II. The leading African-American feminist, bell hooks, embraces postmodernist critiques of identity, but in a somewhat ambivalent manner (in *Yearning*, 1993, see below). Explain her position.

III. Cathy Cohen (essay listed below) begins her article with the observation that ‘the concept of group identity in its essentialist core is in crisis’ for ‘identities of difference (race, class, gender, sexuality) are themselves fragmented, contested, and, of course, socially constructed’ (p. 46). How have homogenized visions of ‘blackness’ in the U.S. worked to marginalize black gay men further and also been contested?

IV. **Does an effective politics of liberation—whether in women’s, black, or queer movements, or in scholarship—necessarily have to be premised upon traditional identity politics?**

V. Literary historians or others researching a female subject who wrote a memoir might be called upon to ponder a question once raised by Sidonie Smith (intro to *Poetics*, p. 18). Connected with how women’s autobiographical narratives often unfold through ‘their relationship to a significant “other”: husband, child, God’, Smith observed that traditional autobiography criticism had overlooked women’s difference to the humanist male canon that was fixated on separateness, distinctiveness or individuality. Given that women have more often represented their selves through their relationships with/to others, she asked: ‘Is female preoccupation with the other an essential dynamic of female psychobiography or a culturally conditioned manifestation of the ideology of gender that associates female difference with attentiveness to the other?’ What she was basically asking is whether this preoccupation is essential to the female psyche (a reference to
French feminist psychoanalytic theory) or the product of social conditioning in
gender roles and identities. Consider this question in relation to one or more
works of women’s self-representational writing.

VI. Trace Sidonie Smith’s publishing career, pondering the question of how her
focus and approach has changed since The Poetics of Women’s
Autobiography.

On identity and identity politics:

(for other queer works that focus upon identity; cf., sexualities list; for non-
feminist/queer critiques, the list at the end of the guide)
Adams, M. L., ‘There’s no place like home: On the Place of Identity in Feminist
Politics’, Feminist Review, no. 31 (Spring 1989), pp. 22–33
Alcoff, Linda, ‘Cultural Feminism versus Post-Structuralism: The Identity Crisis in
Feminist Theory’, Signs, vol. 13, no. 3 (Spring 1988)
Allyn, Jennifer and David, ‘Identity Politics’, in Rebecca Walker (ed.), To Be Real:
Telling the Truth and Changing the Face of Feminism, New York, Anchor, 1995
Bacchi, Carol L., Same Difference: Feminism and Sexual Difference, Sydney: Allen
and Unwin, 1990
Bowen Raddeker, Sceptical History, Chap. IV: ‘The “Positioned” Subject’
Butler, Judith, Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity, New York
and London: Routledge, 1990, 1999, esp chapter one
Cathy J. Cohen, ‘Contested Membership: Black Gay Identities and the Politics of
AIDS,’ in Robert J. Corber and Stephen Valocchi, Queer Studies: An
Interdisciplinary Reader, Malden U.S.A., Oxford U.K. etc: Blackwell Publishing,
2003 (intro and Part I is on identity issues), pp. 46–60
Dillon, Michele, ‘Sexuality and Religion: Negotiating Identity Differences’, in Mark
Jacobs and Nancy Weiss Hanrahan (eds), The Blackwell Companion to the
Griffiths, Morwenna, Feminisms and the Self: The Web of Identity, London and New
York: Routledge, 1995
hooks bell, Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics, Boston, South End Press,
1990 (Chaps 2 & 3, on ‘radical black subjectivity’ and ‘postmodern blackness’)  
Jagose, Annamarie, Queer Theory, Melbourne University Press, 1996 (Chap. 6: ‘Limits of Identity’) 
Moreton-Robinson, Aileen, Talkin’ Up to the White Woman: Aboriginal Women and
Feminism, Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 2000
Rudy, Kathy, ‘Radical Feminism, Lesbian Separatism, and Queer Theory’, Feminist
Sabbioni, Jennifer, ‘Aboriginal Women’s Narratives: Reconstructing Identities’,
Australian Historical Studies, no. 106 (April 1996)
Stuart, Andrea, ‘Feminism: Dead or Alive?’, in J. Rutherford (ed.), Identity:
Community, Culture, Difference, London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1990 (and
other essays).
Suleri, Sara, ‘Woman Skin Deep: Feminism and the Postcolonial Condition’, in Bill
Ashcroft et al (eds), The Post-colonial Studies Reader, London and New York:
week)

Theory on, readings of, & examples of: women’s self-writing
Aboriginal women’s autobiographies: there are many available, for e.g., Glenyse Ward,
Elsie Roughsay, Ruby Langford, Patsy Cohen and Margaret Somerville, Kath
Walker, Roberta Sykes, Ella Simon, Maya Tucker; cf. Reader by Sabbioni et al below; also Anne Brewster on indigenous women’s writing
Hecate, vol. 30, no. 1 (2004)—whole issue useful, partly on ethics and method (e.g., Zohl dé Ishtar, ‘Living on the Ground Research: Steps Towards White Women Researching in Collaboration with Indigenous People’ or Margaret McDonell, ‘...Indigenous Life-Writing and Non-Indigenous Editing’)
Heilbrun, Carolyn G., Writing a Woman’s Life, New York, Ballantine, 1989
Loftus, Ronald (ed.), Telling Lives (writings/memoirs by radical women in Japan’s modern past)
Long, Judy, Telling Women’s Lives: Subject, Narrator, Reader, Text, New York University Press, 1999
Moreton-Robinson, Aileen, Talkin’ Up to the White Woman: Aboriginal Women and Feminism, Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 2000
Sabbioni, Jennifer, Kay Schaffer & Sidonie Smith (eds), Indigenous Australian Voices: a Reader, Rutgers University Press, 1998
—— Getting a Life, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1996
—— Women, Autobiography, Theory: A Reader, The University of Wisconsin Press, 1998 (some of the other works on this list are reproduced in this: e.g., Stanton and Suleri)
—— Women, Autobiography, Theory: A Reader, University of Wisconsin Press, 1998
Wk 9 (6 May) ‘Postcolonial’ Feminist Studies & Intersectional Theory

In terms of the conceptual approaches utilized, it is not always easy to distinguish postcolonial from ‘Third World’ or Black or Indigenous feminism/s. This is because what’s called ‘intersectional theory’ is found in all of them to a more obvious extent than other feminist scholarship. Of course queer scholarship, too, may take a postcolonial sort of approach, as in the Boone article on orientalism as gendered and heteronormative. ‘Intersectionality’ refers to the ways in which gender, sexuality, race, class, world location (so-called ‘First’ vs ‘Third’ world) and other factors cut across or condition each other in ascribed or claimed subject positions, so that the racialization of a subject depends upon gender, gendering depends upon class/race’, and so on.

Although, in theory, postcolonial feminism is concerned with the effects of the intersecting of the full range of discriminatory categories (eg., ‘black’, ‘woman’, ‘Third World’, ‘working class’ etc), it has tended to foreground race/racism and ‘worldism’/imperialism more than others. Some feminist scholars have felt that in recent years class analysis in particular has largely been ignored, which we might expect in liberal feminism but not in postcolonial feminism (since it owes much to traditional leftist feminism).

The best way to get a feel for postcolonial feminist theory and approaches would be to read some essays from the reader: Feminist Postcolonial Theory (edited by Reina Lewis and Sara Mills).

Kit Reading

Questions for Discussion:

I. Gayatri Spivak, a feminist on the ‘poststructuralist’ or ‘deconstructionist’ side of postcolonial scholarship, is known particularly for her seminal essay, ‘Can the Subaltern Speak?’. In this she basically questioned our ability to ‘recover’ the voice of the colonized subaltern, especially the female one, using the ‘figure’ or metaphor of the sati (widow immolation) victim? Explain her argument (or feminist critiques of it such as Loomba’s)?

II. Postcolonial feminist scholarship such as Ien Ang’s has often applied critiques of Western humanism—for e.g., its penchant for treating the white, privileged, Western male as normative in its visions of humanity—to ‘white, middle-class, western feminism’, which is said to universalize ‘Woman’ (and treat the white, privileged woman normative) in similar terms. She goes further to criticize feminism for its liberal-humanist ‘politics of inclusion’. How would we avoid such failings in our studies of ‘women’?
III. As herself a good example of a feminist postcolonial scholar, what does a reading of works by Reina Lewis (editor of the Feminist Postcolonial Reader)—e.g., both the essay below and introduction to her book, Gendering Orientalism—suggest about the themes, theories and/or methods that commonly characterize this style of scholarship? The other editor, Sara Mills, is another possibility (book below).

IV. Sara Suleri (essay listed in identity week, p. 274) observes that whilst ‘postcolonialism’ once referred to ‘the discursive practices produced by the historical fact of prior colonization’, now in contemporary feminist discourse it has become ‘an almost obsolete signifier for the historicity of race’. She goes further to mention an ‘almost obsessive attention …recently paid to the racial body’. Whilst it is not her point, of late one of these categories of identity/subjectivity, class, is invariably ignored even in postcolonial feminist scholarship. How can we explain this comparative lack of interest today in class positionalities and analyses? (see Weedon’s chap. on class, or Bowen Raddeker, Chapter on difference, part VI)

Readings on postcolonial feminism and/or intersectionality:

Note that some authors here, such as bell hooks or Indigenous Australians, are not known specifically as postcolonial feminists (but ‘black feminists’ etc) but the style of critique/analysis is similar in some respects; internationally known postcolonial scholars are in bold.


Ang, Ilen, ‘I’m a feminist but... “Other” Women and Postnational Feminism’, in Barbara Caine and Rosemary Pringle (eds), New Australian Feminisms, NSW: Allen and Unwin, 1995, pp. 57–73 (also in Feminist Postcolonial Theory)


Bizzini, Silvia Carporale, ‘Sara Suleri’s Meatless Days and Maxine Hong Kingston’s The Woman Warrior: writing, history and the self after Foucault’, Cultural Review, vol. 7, no. 1 (Spring 1996), pp. 55-65 (re how the postcolonial woman writer approaches questioning the universal subject, a category from which she is doubly excluded.)

Bowen Raddeker, Sceptical History, Chap. 3: ‘Negotiating Difference’, especially part V on postcolonial feminism


*Feminist History Reader, Part IV: ‘Centres of difference: decolonising subjects, rethinking boundaries’, features 10 essays including Brown, Loomba and Mohanty below*

Gunew, Sneja (works by)


Huggins, Jackie and Kay Saunders, ‘Defying the Ethnographic Ventriloquists: Race, Gender and the Legacies of Colonialism’, *Lilith*, vol. 8, 1993, pp. 60–70 (Huggins is a well-known Indigenous critic of white feminism)


(Reader in Feminist Knowledge: part one contains essays by Jackie Huggins, Diane Bell, and bell hooks re black/indigenous and white women, on feminism)

Riley, Denise, ‘Am I that Name’ *Feminism and the Category of Women in History*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988 (x1)


**Spivak**, Gayatri, *In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural politics*, New York: Methuen, 1987 (and other collected essays such as *Outside in the Teaching Machine*; her essay ‘Can the Subaltern Speak?’ is particularly famous)

—— ‘Other things are never equal: a speech,’ *Rethinking Marxism*, vol 12, issue 4 (2000), pp. 37–

Examples of postcolonial history:
(those on gender and nation/empire/colonialism/orientalism are generally ‘postcolonial’)


Andaya, Barbara Watson (ed.), *Other Pasts: Women, Gender and History in Early Modern Southeast Asia*, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, 2000 (some essays)


—— also *Gendering Orientalism*... (x2 copies)

Manderson, L. and M. Jolly (eds) *Sites of Desire/Economies of Pleasure: Sexualities Across cultures in Asia and the Pacific*, Chicago UP, Chicago, 1997 (x1, e.g., essays on exoticism)

Mayer, Tamar (ed.), *Gender Ironies of Nationalism: Sexing the Nation*, London and New York: Routledge, 2000 (x1, Maracek article good).


Rajan, Rajeswari Sunder, *Real and Imagined Women: Gender, Culture, and Postcolonialism*, 1993 (x2)


Riley, Denise, ‘Does sex have a history?’, in FHR, pp. 149–59 (good on the various grounds on which the category of ‘woman’ is now being contested in feminist scholarship)


Yuval-Davis, Nira and Floya Antlias (eds), Woman—Nation—State, New York, St Martin’s Press, 1989

Wk 10 (13 May)  Race, Gender, the ‘Representation Debate’ (& Feminist Ethics and Oral History)

This week follows on from last week partly due to the special emphasis on race and gender, but also on ‘intersections’.  The so-called ‘representation debate’ has revolved around concerns connected with the issue of ‘who may speak for whom?‘: i.e., the legitimacy of the white, western, and often middle-class feminist (and/or queer) scholar who seeks to ‘speak for’ the ‘Other’ (Indigenous, black, Third World, poor working-class etc) woman.  Nowhere do we see this issue discussed and debated quite so often, perhaps, as in feminist Oral History (example in the Kit), or any studies involving the use of oral testimonies by women who are either not literate or, for a range of possible reasons, not inclined to record their own stories.

In Australia some years ago there was a very heated debate on the issue of ‘who can [legitimately] speak for whom’.  Here white feminist Diane Bell together with an Aboriginal woman, Topsy Nelson, spoke out about intra-racial rape in Indigenous communities, and were challenged for feeling they had the right to do so by Indigenous critics such as Jackie Huggins.  The debate is still current, however, as is illustrated by two articles on it in Australian Feminist Studies in 2012 (listed below).

Kit Reading

Questions for Consideration:

I.  Bearing in mind critiques of (white) feminist ethnographies of Australian Indigenous women by Aileen Moreton-Robinson, Jackie Huggins etc, how would you write an oral history of Indigenous women?  What sorts of ethical issues would you have to consider?  For e.g., when working with the oral testimonies of Indigenous women (or other racialized groups), can white feminists avoid ‘appropriating’ and/or ‘misrepresenting’ their experience(s)?  How?  (Of course the rape debate that has continued since 1990-91 between Diane Bell, Jackie Huggins, Topsy Nelson, and other is relevant to this question.)

II.  What are the ethical issues involved with oral histories/studies where ‘rendering women visible’ or ‘casting them as agents’ involves documenting their oppression (Gluck, p. 205), yet the one doing the documenting of the oppression of Indigenous or ‘Third World’ women is a comparatively privileged western feminist scholar?
III. One of the central issues Hassim and Walker address is the issue of accountability of feminist academics to their subjects. In what ways should academics be accountable, and how should they not?

IV. Both Hassim and Walker (South Africa) and Moreton-Robinson (Australia) indicate that the issue of 'who can [legitimately] speak for whom' is more complex than black versus white. How so?

V. Older sources on problems associated with historical memory and oral history tended to focus upon issues of accuracy of recall (i.e., facticity/truth'). This empiricist concern with reconstructing past 'realities' is not today a central issue for many feminist historians. Why? And are there particular problems associated with trying to mesh postmodernist scepticism about realism/truth in history with oral history?

Readings:
Some of the essays in Feminist History Reader, Part IV: 'Centres of difference: decolonising subjects, rethinking boundaries' should also be pertinent to this issue; ones by Brown, Loomba and Mohanty were included under the postcolonial week
Bell, Diane, ‘Speaking about rape is everyone’s business’, Women’s Studies International Forum, vol. 12, no 4 (1989)—this sparked a huge debate
——Women’s Studies International Forum, vol. 15, no. 5 (1991): Editorial, Letters from Topsy Nelson and Jackie Huggins; also Bell's reply above (online access to this journal)
Burgos-Debray, Elisabeth (trans., ed.) I, Rigoberta Menchü: An Indian Woman in Guatemala, London: Verso, 1984 (famous oral history; a comparable one was I Domitila, A Woman of the Bolivian Tin Mines, bit it doesn't appear to be in the library)
Darian-Smith, Kate and Paula Hamilton (eds), Memory and History in Twentieth Century Australia, Melbourne, 1994
Jeffrey, Jaclyn and Glenace Edwall (eds), Memory and History, University Press of America, 1994
Gluck, Sherna Berger and Daphne Patai, Women’s Words: The Feminist Practice of Oral History, New York and London: Routledge, 1991 (x2, take your pick, e.g.:...
There are many works of history that could be termed ‘experimental’ or just unusually imaginative in style or method—for e.g., even in the school of ethnographic history/new cultural history that predated ‘postmodernism’. Greg Dening is the most famous Australian historian of this school, and reading a bit of any of his works would be helpful even if they are not feminist or queer. His style involves an especially sceptical, self-reflexive and dialogic approach to history (in which he, the author, could hardly be accused of being absent from the text), so it is unsurprising to see a recent essay of his included amongst the examples of experimental history in the Reader by Alun Munslow and Robert A. Rosenstone (eds): *Experiments in Rethinking History*, Routledge, 2004. Munslow is a history theorist of the deconstructionist/postmodern school, and editor of the journal *Rethinking History* (with Keith Jenkins).

Historians have experimented with the writing of history in various ways. The authors included in *ERH* are not perhaps as radical in their practice as Simon Schama, whose 1991 book, *Dead Certainties (Unwarranted Speculations)* apparently caused a furore in the United States. He did not just blur but rather ‘obliterate’ (according to Lawrence Stone, *PHR*, p. 257) ‘the difference between archival fact and pure fiction’: for it seems that he ‘introduced entirely fictional characters and
scenes into what might appear to be a conventional work of history…, identifying them as “pure inventions” only in an “Afterword.’ (Gertrude Himmelfarb, p. 165) This debate featured the common charge against postmodernists that they deny facticity altogether, and that postmodernist principles enable one (‘irresponsibly’) to tell whatever story one feels like about the past. This, however, has often been denied by those who seek to practise a postmodernist or just unusually sceptical/critical and self-reflexive form of history.

The second part of this week’s topic concerns a debate over whether postmodernism—invoking what Baudrillard called an incredulity toward ‘metanarratives’; or empiricist discourses/knowledges such as History—spells the ‘end’ or ‘death’ of History, as conservatives such as Geoffrey Elton have warned. The last part of The Nature of History Reader (2004), entitled ‘Endisms’, engaged with this debate, featuring essays by Joan Scott, Elizabeth Deeds Ermath, the postcolonial theorist/historian Dipesh Chakrabarty, and others. Instead of Zinsser’s exercise in writing ‘experimental history’, some may like to read Rita Felski’s thought-provoking essay on a perceived ‘relationship…between the idea of the end of history and sex through the now ubiquitous notion of transsexuality—i.e.,…the idea that we are, today, all transsexuals’ in the ‘sense of transvestism, of playing with the commutability of the signs of sex’ (NHR, p. 270-71).

Kit Reading


OR


Questions

I. In her essay on the marquise Du Châtelet, Judith Zinsser demonstrates a postmodern-style scepticism about telling ‘the Truth’ about the past, or getting ‘the’ story straight, but does she have no sense of ‘responsibility’ toward her subject? Does she (or Bisha) believe that telling any story she feels like about her subject is possible or ethical?

II. In what ways do such historians ‘rethink’ life-writing, biography or, more broadly, the writing of history?

III. Amongst those who advocate a rethinking of historical practice in line with postmodernist principles, self-reflexivity is a common demand. Why? How far do these historians go in their practice of it? How far would you?

IV. If you were to take ‘on board’ suggestions from Munslow and Rosenstone (or Ermarth, listed below), how might it affect your own written practice of (FGQ) history?

V. Is History (like sex/gender) really ‘dead’ or moribund?
Readings:

Becker, Marjorie, ‘When I was a child, I danced as a child, but now that I am old, I think about salvation: Concepción González and a past that would not say put’, in ERH, Part I: ‘Self-Reflexive’, pp. 17–29 (library: 1 copy)


Dening, Greg, Performances, Melbourne University Press, 1996 (especially, ‘Inventing Others’)


Himmelfarb, Gertrude, ‘Telling it as you like it: postmodern history and the flight from fact’ (first published in 1992), in Keith Jenkins (ed.), The Postmodern History Reader, London and New York: Routledge, 1997, pp. 158–74 (Himmelfarb has long been a critic of postmodernist and feminist history, pretty much in the style of Elton or Windshuttle)


Munslow and Rosenstone, Editors’ Introductions, in ERH, pp. 1–15


Week 12 (27 May) (Remaining) Research Presentations etc

Since the research essay (thesis intro.) is due next Monday, there is no set topic or reading for this week. We will have started on the individual research presentations well before this week, but will finish off the remaining ones. Each group will also be expected to provide an averaged peer assessment mark for each member of that group; it may be an idea to organize/finalize it before this week.

Time permitting, I’d also appreciate your feedback on the course: content, topics, structure, assessment etc.