

HIST 315: Gender and Empire in U.S. History

Emily Lampert
Spring 2023
T/Th, 10am-11:15am
HUMA 117

Contact Information

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Office Hours: Mondays, 2-3pm and by appointment

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

Description: This course explores the connections between gender and empire throughout US history. Beginning with early colonial contact in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, we will explore US empire through the twenty-first century. Importantly, this class is not designed to be a chronological push through hundreds of years of history, but instead is organized thematically, working to identify important gendered themes in the long history of US colonialism and using particular historical examples to best illustrate and discuss these broader issues. In this sense, this class should not be thought of as exhaustive but rather exploratory. Doing so allows us to draw comparisons and think critically about the ways in which ideas about femininity, masculinity, sexuality, intimacy, and the gendered body were simultaneously tools and products of US colonialism.

Students will be able to:

- Understand and describe various ways in which the gendered bodies and identities of colonized and colonizing people were affected by U.S. imperialism.
- Draw comparisons and parallels with a gendered lens between different moments of US empire.
- Identify the dual ways in which ideas about gender, sexuality, and gendered bodies were both the tools and products of US colonialism, and in doing so understand why these ideas were often weaponized by American colonizers and to what purpose.

Required Texts and Materials

Please acquire copies of the following:

Laura Briggs, *Reproducing Empire: Race, Sex, Science, and U.S. Imperialism in Puerto Rico*

Catherine Ceniza Choy, *Empire of Care: Nursing and Migration in Filipino American History*

Katrina Jagodinsky, *Legal Codes and Talking Trees: Indigenous Women's Sovereignty in the Sonoran and Puget Sound Borderlands, 1854–1946*

Jennifer Thigpen, *Island Queens and Mission Wives: How Gender and Empire Remade Hawai'i's Pacific World*

All other readings will be provided via Canvas.

Exams, Papers, and Assignments

Weekly Writing

Throughout the semester you will be required to submit 7 weekly writings, which will be due by 5pm on Friday of that week. In 1-2 paragraphs you will answer one of the following prompts:

- Relate one of our readings from this week to something we've read for a previous week (related reading must not be from the same book).
- Offer a critique of one of the week's readings. Please keep in mind that critique is not just criticism—don't simply say you didn't like the reading. Instead, *evaluate* an aspect of the reading. Perhaps you believe the author should have used other sources, or maybe you disagree with their conclusions, or had a different interpretation, etc.
- Discuss something you found particularly interesting, and *why*.

Each of these prompts can only be used a maximum of 3 times.

Discussion Questions

Each student will be required to bring in a discussion question twice in the semester, and a maximum of two students can bring in questions each class. Once we reach a point at which each student has met the required 2, students can volunteer to bring in additional questions for extra credit. Importantly, much of our meetings will be discussion-based and being not only present but engaged in class discussion is crucial!

Primary Source Analysis Paper and Short Presentation

For this project you will locate a primary source related to one of our class readings and, in 2-3 pages, discuss both the historical context (*who/what/where/when*) and your analysis (*why*—why is this source valuable? What does it tell historians, and how does it contribute to our understanding of gender and U.S. imperialism?). We will discuss how to locate primary sources in class. For the paper, you must cite a minimum of two secondary sources, one of which must be from outside the class readings. For class that day, please prepare a 5–7-minute presentation for your classmates mirroring your paper (i.e. give us the context as well as your interpretation). Also, I encourage you to choose a primary source that can be used in your final paper.

Annotated Bibliography

Your annotated bibliography is part of the lead-up to your final project. You will find 5 secondary sources outside class readings that speak to your research topic. Of these 5 sources, at least 2 must be book-length works (i.e., not articles or chapters from edited volumes). For each source, write 150-200 words describing the argument and how the work fits into your research project.

Final Paper

For your final paper, you will write a 10–12-page research paper on a question or problem of your choosing. Two previous assignments, the primary source analysis paper and the annotated bibliography, are designed to help you build up to the longer paper. There will be mandatory individual meetings on February 21 in order to discuss both the primary source you will use in the contextualization paper as well as ideas you may have for your larger research paper. In addition to this, I am more than happy to discuss potential research topics and ideas with you throughout the semester!

Grade Policies

Grade Breakdown:

Final Paper: 30%

Annotated Bibliography: 25%

Primary Source Essay: 25%

Other Assignments (weekly writings, discussion questions, etc.): 20%

Grading Scale:

A	= 93% and above	A-	= 90-92%
B+	= 88-89%	B	= 83-87%
B-	= 80-82%	C+	= 78-79%
C	= 73-77%	C-	= 70-72%
D+	= 68-69%	D	= 63-67%
D-	= 60-62%	F	= 0-59%

Absence Policies

Attendance is required in this class. However, students may have up to 2 absences for any reason. Any further unexcused absences will reflect on your final grade; for every unexcused absence after your allowed 2 your final grade will be dropped by a half-letter grade (i.e., if you have a B+ and miss a 3rd class your grade will drop to a B, then a B-, and so forth).

Rice Honor Code

In this course, all students will be held to the standards of the Rice Honor Code, a code that you pledged to honor when you matriculated at this institution. If you are unfamiliar with the details of this code and how it is administered, you should consult the Honor System Handbook at <http://honor.rice.edu/honor-system-handbook/>. This handbook outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of your academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process.

Disability Resource Center

With or without documentation, we can discuss how to improve your access to course material and explore different methodologies for learning. If there are ways in which the overall structure of the course and general classroom interactions could be adapted to better facilitate your full participation, do not hesitate to raise your ideas with me: comments and suggestions about the format of readings, lectures, and class discussions are always welcome. Additionally, consult with the Disability Resource Center if you are in need of specific accommodations.

Syllabus Change Policy

This syllabus is only a guide for the course and is subject to change with advanced notice.

Course Schedule

What is Empire, and Why Gender?

Tuesday, January 10, 2023

Introductions

Thursday, January 12, 2023

Read: Osterhammel, *Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*, pp. 1-22

Tuesday, January 17, 2023

Read: Brown, "Gender and English Identity on the Eve of Colonial Settlement"

Expansion and the Frontier

Thursday, January 19, 2023

Read: Greenberg, chapter 1

Tuesday, January 24, 2023

Read: Greenberg, chapters 2 and 3

Thursday, January 26, 2023

Read: Barman, "Indigenous Women and Feminism on the Cusp of Contact"

Tuesday, January 31, 2023

Read: Jagodinsky, chapters 2 and 3

Thursday, February 2, 2023

Read: Jagodinsky, chapters 4 and 5

Tuesday, February 7, 2023

Read: Jagodinsky, chapters 6 and 7

Thursday, February 9, 2023 - NO CLASS

Empire at Home

Tuesday, February 14, 2023

Read: Kaplan, "Manifest Domesticity"

Thursday, February 16, 2023

Read: Hall, "A Soldier's Body: GI Joe, Hasbro's Great American Hero, and the Symptoms of Empire"

Tuesday, February 21, 2023

Individual meetings about primary sources and research topics

Missionaries, Nurses, and Other Travelling Women

Thursday, February 23, 2023

Read: Thigpen, chapter 1

Tuesday, February 28, 2023

Read: Thigpen, chapters 2 and 3

Thursday, March 2, 2023

Read: Thigpen, chapter 4

Tuesday, March 7, 2023

Read: Thigpen, chapter 5

Thursday, March 9, 2023

Due: Primary Source contextualization and analysis essay

In class: short presentation of your source

Tuesday, March 14-16, 2023 – Spring Break, NO CLASS

Tuesday, March 21, 2023

Read: Choy, chapters 1 and 2

Thursday, March 23, 2023

Work day, required individual meetings to discuss secondary sources for annotated bibliography

Tuesday, March 28, 2023

Read: Choy, chapter 3 and 4

Thursday, March 30, 2023

Work day, schedule appointment if needed

Due Friday: Email annotated bibliography to me by 5pm

Reproduction and the Reproducing Body

Tuesday, April 4, 2023

Read: Briggs, chapters 1 and 2

Thursday, April 6, 2023

Read: Briggs, chapter 3

Tuesday, April 11, 2023

Read: Briggs, chapters 4 and 5

Thursday, April 13, 2023

Read: Briggs, chapter 6

Tuesday, April 18, 2023

Read: Cerretti, “A Close and Mutually Beneficial Relationship: The United States, Marshall Islands, and Militarization of Reproduction”

Dr. Cerretti will be joining us during class for a Q+A via Zoom, so come prepared with thoughts and questions!

Thursday, April 20, 2023

No reading—final class discussion, thoughts, and wrap-up.

Final Paper due by 5pm on the last day of finals week.