Women and Abolitionism in the United States, 1700--1870

Women and Abolitionism in the United States. American women came to abolitionism by many paths and the contributions they made to ending ‘the Peculiar Institution’ would prove critical to its eventual overthrow. Moreover, women’s engagement in antislavery could lead them to consider their own place in American society and many historians have located the origins of the women’s rights movement in women’s experiences in the antislavery movement. Despite this and although slavery ended in significant measure because of women’s persevering efforts, the result was not racial or gender solidarity.

Paying particular attention to the historiography on these issues, this course will consider the intellectual origins of calls for human freedom; religious influences on the movements to end slavery and to emancipate women; the particular role of black women in the struggle to end slavery; women’s political activism; the nature of the relationship between antislavery and the nineteenth-century women’s movement; the transatlantic dimension of women’s antislavery activism and the impact of each movement on the other in post-Civil War era.

Objectives: Students taking History 9371A will:

- Identify and recognize the origins of the movement to end slavery in the United States.
- Identify and recognize the role played by women in the movement to end slavery in the United States.
- Identify and understand the intersections between antislavery and women’s rights in the United States.
- Identify and recognize the origins of the women’s rights movement in the United States.
- Identify and recognize the transatlantic intellectual and religious context in which these movements emerged and evolved.
- Engage actively with the historiography on this subject.
- Develop research and writing skills.
- Work collaboratively with classmates to strengthen analytical capacities

Required Texts:
**Assignments & Evaluation:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation*</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>(includes weekly response papers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal and Primary Document Survey</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>(Due 3 October 2013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of Secondary Literature</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>(Due 17 October 2013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Draft</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>(Due 21 November 2013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Version</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>(Due 12 December 2013)</td>
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*Participation:

This course is a seminar which places a premium on informed participation in discussion. This requires that students read and reflect on the assigned material in advance, attend class meetings, and engage in the discussion regarding the readings, issues, and themes of the course. A week before the scheduled meeting, the instructor will suggest some questions that could be pursued during your reading and reflection. These questions are intended to be only suggestive, not comprehensive, or definitive.

Each week, each student will provide a 150-250 word commentary/critical engagement/reaction to the readings. **Students must submit 8 of these.** This commentary **should not be a summary** of our readings **but rather a response** to the issues they raise along with questions that you think should be addressed during our meetings. They should try to make connections across some or all of the week’s readings. In addition, as the seminar unfolds week by week, it is especially productive to see what points can be made, and questions raised, that join readings and discussions for one week with readings and discussions from previous weeks. These response papers will form a significant part of the mark for participation and **are due whether or not the materials for a particular week are extensively discussed in a given class.**

**Weekly Readings**

**12 September 2013: Introduction: Mapping Origins**


**19 September 2013: Women, Enlightenment & Evangelicalism**


26 September 2013: Black Women’s Struggle Against Slavery

Readings:
Willi Coleman, “’Like Hot Lead to Pour on the Americans . . .’: Sarah Parker Remond – From Salem, Mass., to the British Isles,” in Sklar & Stewart, 173-188. 

3 October 2013: Women and the Emergence of Immediatism

Proposal and Primary Document Survey Due

Newman, Transformation of American Abolitionism

10 October 2013: Women and Antislavery Organizing
Newman, Transformation of American Abolitionism
Susan Zaeske, Signatures of Citizenship, 47-125.

17 October 2013: The Emergence of ‘The Woman Question’

Review of Secondary Literature Due

Robertson, Stacey “On the Side of Righteousness'': Women, the Church, and Abolition,” in Clapp and Jeffrey, eds. Women, Dissent and Anti-Slavery. 155-174.
Susan Zaeske, Signatures of Citizenship, 126-144.

24 October 2013: Literary Antislavery

Readings:
Anne Bradford Warner,. "Harriet Jacobs at Home in "Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl."

31 October 2013: Fall Break – No Class
7 November 2013: Racial Dynamics within Female Antislavery
Readings: Debra Gold Hansen, Strained Sisterhood

14 November 2013: Antislavery as a Career

21 November 2013: Was there “a path from antislavery to feminism”? 
First Draft Due
Readings: Ellen Dubois, Feminism and Suffrage, 15-52.
Lori Ginzberg, Unruly Origins
Clare Midgley, “British Abolition and Feminism in Transatlantic Perspective,” in Sklar & Stewart, 121-141.

28 November 2013: Women’s Political Antislavery Activism
Readings: Hewitt, “‘Seeking a Larger Liberty’: Remapping First Wave Feminism,” in Sklar & Stewart, 266-278.
Kellow, “‘For the Sake of Suffering Kansas’: Lydia Maria Child and the Politics of the 1850s,” Journal of Women’s History,” 5/2 (1993): 32-49.

5 December 2013 Things Fall Apart: Emancipation, Equality and Reconstruction
Readings: Ellen Dubois, Feminism and Suffrage , 53-125.
Salerno, Beth A., Sister Societies, 151 -- ?