

History 344/Gender 380, Fall 2013
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Research Paper

This assignment is at once simple and complex. You will need to

- select a women's U.S. history issue or topic from an era with which you are familiar;
- locate and interpret primary source materials on this topic;
- analyze and critique secondary sources on the topic;
- craft an interesting argument;
- write a thoughtful, well-argued, and carefully researched paper.

You are required to use primary sources for this paper—that is, you should be finding texts, photos, and/or artifacts from the era under consideration. (If you wish, I will set up a session with the library liaison for the History department to review how to find these sources.)

You must choose a topic for which there are easily accessible primary sources **in a language in which you are fluent**. For most of us, that's English. If you're reading sources in another language, you need to be able to translate them yourself. Do not rely on primary sources that have been translated from a foreign language by someone other than yourself. In the Albertsons Library Special Collections and in the Idaho State Archives, there are plenty of English-language documents. We also have access to some digitized primary sources through Albertsons Library and through various state and government entities, including the National Archives and the Library of Congress.

You should also refer to secondary sources to discover how scholars have interpreted these primary sources (or ones similar to them) and analyzed these issues. We will talk in class about how to balance the use of primary and secondary sources. The ratio of primary to secondary sources will vary by paper topic, but you should be looking at several primary sources as you develop your argument and your paper.

As always, I will be available to assist you during my office hours and by appointment. Please let me help you write a strong paper. Let me say that again: *I am here to help!*

Length: At least 12 double-spaced pages, but no more than 20.

Details: One-inch margins, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman or Cambria. Do not add additional spaces after each paragraph.

Citation style: Use the *Chicago Manual of Style*. There's a copy in the library, or you can refer to the "Quick Guide" online at http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html; click on the "Notes and Bibliography" tab in the middle of that page, not the "Author-Date" tab.

Deadlines

Paper topic and preliminary annotated bibliography: **October 9** at the beginning of class.

Your paper topic should take the form of a research question. Your research question should be

- an actual question to which you don't already know the answer;
- one to which the answer would be a non-obvious argument;
- answerable through reference to, and analysis of, primary source documents.

An annotated bibliography is a list of works you have consulted, or plan to consult, for your paper, with a short paragraph explaining the significance of each source. For more information on annotated bibliographies, see the Purdue Online Writing Lab's overview at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/614/01/>.

I will provide feedback on your topic within a week. You are welcome to submit your research question before the deadline, and I'll try my best to provide feedback earlier.

Outline, thesis, and annotated bibliography: **October 23** (draft, to workshop) and **October 28** (final version, for grading) at the beginning of class. Your preliminary outline should begin with a thesis statement (which, of course, is subject to change).

Polished draft: **November 13** at the beginning of class. This should be a complete draft of your paper, and the writing should be as clean and clear as you can make it; ideally this will be your fifth or sixth draft (or 17th!) rather than your second. (Tip: Consult *The Elements of Style* by Strunk and White.)

Final paper: **December 11** at the beginning of class. (We will workshop drafts on December 4 and 9.) You are, of course, welcome to turn in your paper early, but **I will not be accepting late papers** because the deadline is at the end of the semester.