

WMNST 341B Women in American History

Spring 2021

Women's Studies

San Diego State University

Instructor Contact Information

Name: Dr. Jess Whatcott

Email: jwhatcott@sdsu.edu (I respond within 24 hours, but during business hours only)

Voicemail: 619-594-2861 (you may leave a message, but email receives a quicker response)

Virtual Office: During office hours, you can email me or meet me in the “Chat” function of Canvas, send your number if you would like a phone call or tell me if you prefer video chat.

Office Hours: Thursdays 12:30-1:30 pm (during scheduled class time for optional Q&A)

General Course Information

Live Session Day/Time: Tuesdays 12:30-1:45 pm

Format: This is a virtual class, with a “hybrid” format of partial “live” and partial “work at your own pace” instruction.

- We will meet together for a “live session” through Zoom video conferencing (with an option to call in on your phone) on Tuesdays from 12:30-1:45 pm each week. At this “live session” there will be opportunity for question and answer, group discussion, and small group activities to take place in “Breakout Rooms.”
- Before our live session, you should review a lecture slideshow, and read/listen to/watch the assigned material each week. These can be completed at any time **before** the live session.
- On Thursdays during scheduled class time, you can join me online for an **optional Q&A** session and further discussion.

GE Category: Partially satisfies American Institutions requirement.

What is this class about?

How does thinking about gender, race, class, and nation transform our understanding of the history of the United States of America (U.S.)? The version of U.S. history we are probably used to hearing has focused on a few wealthy, white men, such as the framers of the Constitution or the Generals in the Civil War. Early women's studies scholars sought to add women to U.S. history by highlighting the stories of notable women such as suffragist Susan B. Anthony, or the abolitionist Grimké sisters. Increasingly, however, feminist thinkers and activists have questioned what counts as important in U.S. history. Rather than emphasize only a few notable “heroes,” feminist historians also tell the stories of everyday people caught up in historical events. Instead of recreating the standard timeline of important events (usually the big wars), feminist historians ask us to examine how every day structures of domination have been built, maintained, and challenged throughout U.S. history.

Meanwhile, feminists of color have critiqued some forms of women's studies for only telling the stories of elite and middle-class white women. Through a framework of analysis called intersectional feminism, historians have shown how the experiences of women are different based on their geographic locations in the U.S. (northeast versus southwest, mainland versus island), race (white, Black, indigenous, Chicana/latinx, Asian, Pacific Islander), class (elite, middle-class, working-class, poor), and religion/spirituality (Christian versus indigenous worldviews). Rather than assume a shared, universal experience of all women, this class will compare how different experiences give different women unique perspectives of U.S. history. As intersectional feminist historians we will also attend to the lives of gender diverse people who do not fit into the Western categories of "man" or "woman."

The spring semester part of this course focuses on U.S. history from the late nineteenth century through the present. First, we will examine the emergence of new forms of U.S. imperialism in the late nineteenth century through the perspective of Asian and Pacific Islander feminists. Second, we will discuss the construction of the U.S./Mexico border over the course of the twentieth century through the perspective of Chicana/Latinx feminists. Finally, we will assess how U.S. imperialism abroad, combined with the construction of borders, has created a series of refugee 'crises' throughout the 20th century. Throughout our course, we will explore how resistance by women -- and other gendered people -- has fundamentally shaped U.S. history by challenging oppressive systems of power at the family, community, and national levels.

What will you learn?

By the end of this this course you will be able to identify some of the trends and patterns in U.S. history that feminist historians have argued are significant, and you will have familiarity with some specific events that feminist historians have used to support their arguments. Perhaps more importantly, you will have a set of tools to evaluate narratives about U.S. history:

- **History as interpretive:** Identify the sources of historical evidence, and recognize the differences between primary sources and historical interpretations. Identify the differences between dominant interpretations of U.S. history, and versions of history told from the perspective of feminists of color.
- **Intersectional feminist analysis:** Compare gendered experiences in U.S. history as they intersect with race, class, and geographic location. Evaluate the significance of centering the perspectives of those who are multiply marginalized by gender, race, class, and other forms of social difference.
- **Structural analysis:** Identify the structures of power, privilege, and oppression that have historically distributed rights and resources unequally across gender and race. Describe how economic conditions affect social and political phenomena in U.S. history.
- **Transnational analysis:** Understand that the borders of the U.S. were created and changed over time, and are still contested. Understand the U.S. as a transnational space (for example, because of immigration and outmigration, and because of the existence of indigenous sovereign nations). Explain how the actions of people based in the U.S. affect people beyond the official borders.

- Students will demonstrate an understanding of American history, the United States Constitution, and California state and local government. Upon successful completion of this course AND WMNST 341B, students will fulfill their **American Institutions GE requirement**. There are other possible combinations for fulfilling this requirement, see your major advisor.

What will you read?

Required Books: The following books have been chosen because they explore U.S. history through the perspectives of women of color. Because of their unique perspectives, the events and trends these authors highlight will be quite different from some more conventional histories of the U.S.

1. *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawai'i*, by Haunani-Kay Trask, revised edition 1999, ISBN: 0-8248-2059-2
2. *The Best We Could Do*, by Thi Bui, 2018, ISBN: 978-1-4197-1878-6
3. *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, by Gloria Anzaldua, third or fourth edition

Other Required Readings

There are **3 other required articles** listed in the syllabus will be available on the course Canvas page as pdf documents.

What does the professor expect of you?

1. **Read the assigned material and watch the slideshow prior to live class.** Each part of this class builds on the others. In order to fully understand the slideshows, you should do the assigned reading first. In order to fully participate in live class, you should have looked at the slideshow. The exams in class will ask you to demonstrate your understanding of the broad themes of the course, and to give some concrete examples from the readings, although in general you will not be asked to memorize dates, places, or names. For you to complete these exams successfully, you must complete the assigned readings.
2. **Check your university e-mail regularly.** Any changes to reading assignments, instructions for completing assignments, and any other announcements will be sent via e-mail.
3. **Regularly attend and participate in class.** This is not the type of class that you can pass by reading the material on your own. Class instruction will be spent comprehending the arguments made in assigned material, analyzing and evaluating the material, and synthesizing and integrating ideas across assigned readings. To pass the course exams, you must regularly attend and participate in class instruction. *If you have an emergency or serious extenuating circumstance that requires you to miss several class periods, please contact me as soon as possible to discuss your situation. I am much more understanding if you come and speak with me.*
4. **Participate respectfully during class time.** We join the virtual classroom from a variety of situations and from different life experiences. Because most of class instruction will be

completed on your own time, I ask that you make every attempt to join our Tuesday live session each week, and that you minimize as many distractions as can during the live session. You will not be required to have your video camera on for the entire live session, but during breakout sessions it will build a sense of community if you can turn your camera on. During these discussions, you will be asked to abide by some community agreements that we will create together during the first live session.

- 5. Complete all assignments to the best of your ability and on time.** You should expect to put in two hours of homework per classroom hour each week to keep up with assigned readings and complete assignments. You are responsible for keeping track of when assignments are due. Late policy: I accept assignments and exams *up to one week late (and no longer) for partial credit*. If you have an extreme, unavoidable, and documentable reason preventing you from turning in your assignment on time, please come speak with me. No work will be accepted beyond Thursday, May 13.

How will you know you are learning?

Participation: 20 points

You will receive 1 point for each live class session activity you participate in. Group activities will include applications of assigned readings and group reading quizzes. You will also receive 1 point for weekly assignments that ask you to respond to the assigned readings, podcasts, and films (a total of 11 possible). There are 25 points possible, yet you only need to complete 20 points. This means you can miss a combination of 5 classes and/or weekly assignments without any penalty. If you do earn more than 20 points, the additional points you earn will be considered extra credit.

Exams: 30 points each, 60 points total

In order to demonstrate your ability to apply the frameworks and theories of the class (see “What will you learn?” above), you will complete two take-home exams. The prompts for the exam will be distributed two weeks before they are due. Each exam will consist of one essay question, and one creative assignment where you will apply the frameworks of analysis from the course.

Digital Humanities Project: 20 points

Digital technologies are changing the ways that historians do their research and present their information. We will practice presenting information in a digital format by collectively creating a class web site. You will create your own web page on the class Google site. You have two options for the content of your site:

Digitize your essay and creative work: You can choose to expand on and transform ONE of your exams – either your midterm or final -- into a digital format, to be included on the class web site.

Mini-Primary Document Research Project: You must get approval to do this option by the end of week 5 of the class. If you do not get approval, then you are automatically assumed to be doing the first option. For this option, you will engage in the work of an historian. You will spend 3-4 hours examining primary documents that have been digitized, and you will write a short essay in which you detail your interpretation of the primary documents. What do these documents tell us about the past, in your interpretation? Your essay will then be presented on your web page. If you are approved to do this option, to

mitigate the additional labor, you will not be required to complete the creative portions of the take-home exams – you will only write the essay portions of these exams.

Overall grades will be based on the following points earned:

A = (93-100); A- = (90-92)
B+ = (87-89); B = (83-86); B- = (80-82)
C+ = (77-79); C = (73-76); C- = (70-72)
D+ = (67-69); D = (60-66)
F= (\leq 59)

Note: At any point in the course, you can estimate your grade by adding up the points you have earned and compare that to the remaining points available.

Other important things to know

Students are responsible for being familiar with the university wide policies found at: https://arweb.sdsu.edu/es/catalog/GC1617/143_UniPolicies.pdf.

Content warning

A course on the history of the United States, especially one centering women of color, necessarily requires us to encounter texts discussing violence. Please reach out for support from me or the following resources if you are experiencing distress due to this content.

- Campus-based Counseling and Psychological Services, M-F 8 am – 4 pm: 619-594-5220
- San Diego Access & Crisis Phone Line available 24/7: 1-888- 724-7240
- San Diego Access & Crisis Chat Line available M-F 4-10 pm:
<https://svcrplv.uhc.com/sdchat/>

Disability and Access Information – Student Accommodations

I invite all students to communicate their other access needs with me. If you have a campus accommodation letter, it would be helpful to get a copy as soon as possible.

If you think that you could benefit from an accommodation, even if you do not yet have a learning disability or psychiatric diagnosis, or if you are experiencing a new or temporary disability caused by injury, please contact the Student Ability Success Center and they will walk you through the process. Visit: http://go.sdsu.edu/student_affairs/sds/services-overview.aspx. SASC is located in Calpulli Center, Suite 3101. Voice: (619) 594-6473.

Student Privacy and Intellectual Property

I assure the privacy of student grades and feedback on individual assignments. I will retain your work for one year after the completion of the course. I agree to only circulate your work with your express permission.

Academic honesty

I encourage students to study together and to talk about their ideas for the exams together. However, any work that you turn in **must be in your own words**. In order to be give credit to the ideas of others, any phrase, sentence or paragraph that is an exact copy of what somebody else wrote (or said) should be attributed to the author (or speaker) by name and include a page number. In

addition, any idea from an author or theorist that you use in your work, even if it is not a direct quote, should also be attributed to that author by name. To present someone else’s words as your own is considered plagiarism, whether you intended to steal their work or not. Students who are found to be plagiarizing, whether intentionally or not, will be subject to penalty. This can include: receiving a zero on the assignment or exam, receiving a failing grade in the course overall, or being referred to student conduct.

Sexualized Violence and Reporting Requirements

All employees are required to report incidences of sexual assault and sexual harassment to the campus Dean of Students office. That means that professors and other employees who become aware of sexual assault or harassment must contact the Title IX office. HOWEVER, it would be YOUR choice to pursue any action beyond the initial report. You do not have to talk to the university at any point, even if a report is made about you. Anyone who would prefer to talk to someone confidentially about sexual assault or harassment can contact:

- Counseling & Psychological Services (see above)
- Campus-based Sexual Violence Advocate & Educator, [Calpulli Center](#), 2nd Floor, [\(619\) 594-0210](#)
- Center for Community Solutions (CCS), 24-Hour Hotline: [\(888\) 385-4657](#) (Bilingual)

Course Schedule

Subject to change with fair notice – announced in class and posted on Canvas.

Week/ Date of live session	To do before Live Session	Live Session	Deadlines & Assignments (all weekly participation points due Thursday by 11:59 pm unless written otherwise)
1 Jan. 21		<p><i>Welcome, Introductions and Overview</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SDSU land recognition • Assign breakout rooms • Class overview 	<p>Purchase/rent/borrow assigned books</p> <p>Sign in to Canvas page, upload photo, and make sure your email is correct = 1 point</p>
2 Jan. 26	<p>Watch: <i>Then There Were None</i> (26 mins) (link on Canvas)</p> <p>Read: “From a Native Daughter” by Haunani-Kay Trask (p. 113) (chapter in book)</p>	<p><i>Hidden U.S. histories</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion agreements • In class activity: Collaborative U.S. history timeline and map = 1 point • Discussion of <i>Then There Were None</i> 	<p>Response to <i>Then There Were None</i> and “From a Native Daughter” = 1 point</p>

Week/ Date of live session	To do before Live Session	Live Session	Deadlines & Assignments (all weekly participation points due Thursday by 11:59 pm unless written otherwise)
3 Feb. 2	<p>Review slideshow lecture</p> <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Typology on Racism and Imperialism” by Haunani-Kay Trask (p. 251-252) • “Movimientos de Rebeldía y las Culturas que Traicionan” by Gloria Anzaldúa (chapter 2 of <i>Borderlands</i>) • “The West Versus the Rest” by Stuart Hall (pdf on Canvas) • OPTIONAL: “Women, Gender, Migration, and Modern US Imperialism” by Lorena Oropeza (on Canvas) 	<p><i>Defining key terms</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-class participation = 1 point 	<p>Response to Anzaldúa and Hall = 1 point</p>
4 Feb. 9	<p>Watch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the Digital Humanities? Video lecture by Dr. Pam Lach (30 mins) 	<p><i>How history is made</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet Amanda Lanthorne, SDSU University Archivist • In-class activity: Analyzing primary documents = 1 point 	<p>Response to “Digital Humanities” video = 1 point</p>
5 Feb. 16	<p>Review slideshow lecture</p> <p>Read:</p> <p>Chapters of <i>From a Native Daughter</i> by Haunani-Kay Trask</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Introduction” (p. 1) • “The New World Order” (p. 58) 	<p><i>History of Hawai’i and colonization</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of midterm exam instructions • Overview of digital humanities project options 	<p>Response to <i>From a Native Daughter</i> chapters = 1 point</p> <p>OPTIONAL: deadline to propose to do the mini-primary documents research option for</p>

Week/ Date of live session	To do before Live Session	Live Session	Deadlines & Assignments (all weekly participation points due Thursday by 11:59 pm unless written otherwise)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “‘Lovely Hula Hands’: Corporate Tourism” (p. 136) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-class participation = 1 point 	digital humanities project – submit brief paragraph proposal
6 Feb. 23	<p>Review slideshow lecture</p> <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Native Hawaiian Decolonization and the Politics of Gender” by J. Kēhaulani Kauanui (pdf on Canvas) <p>Watch:</p> <p><i>Kumu Hina</i> (75 mins)</p>	<p><i>Gender, Heteropatriarchy, and U.S. Imperialism</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-class activity: Analyzing representations of API women = 1 point • Discussion of <i>Kumu Hina</i> 	Response to “Native Hawaiian Decolonization” and <i>Kumu Hina</i> = 1 point
7 March 2	<p>Take-home midterm exam DUE on Canvas by class time</p> <p>No assigned reading</p>	No Live Session today	Take-home midterm exam DUE on Canvas by 12:30 pm
8 March 9	<p>Review slideshow lecture</p> <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The Homeland, Aztlán” by Gloria Anzaldúa (chapter 1 of <i>Borderlands</i>) • “Foreigners in their Native Land” and “El Norte: Up From Mexico” by Ronald Takaki (pdf on Canvas) <p>Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Emma Tenayuca and the 1938 San Antonio Pecan Shellers Strike” (12 mins) 	<p><i>Constructing the border, Constructing the Other</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-class participation = 1 point 	Response to “The Homeland Aztlán” and “El Norte” and “Emma Tenayuca” = 1 point

Week/ Date of live session	To do before Live Session	Live Session	Deadlines & Assignments (all weekly participation points due Thursday by 11:59 pm unless written otherwise)
9 March 16	<p>Review slideshow lecture</p> <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “In the Service of White Supremacy: Immigration and Reproductive Violence” by Lina-Maria Murillo (link on Canvas) <p>Watch:</p> <p>“No Más Bebés: ICE Hysterectomy Scandal Recalls 1970s LA, When a Hospital Sterilized Chicana Patients” (11 mins)</p>	<p><i>Chicanas, Eugenics, and Reproductive Control</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-class participation = 1 point 	<p>Response to “In The Service of White Supremacy” and “No Más Bebés” = 1 point</p>
10 March 23	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “La Conciencia de la Mestiza” by Gloria Anzaldúa (chapter 7 of <i>Borderlands</i>) 	<p><i>Environmental Justice and Deconstructing Borders</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guest Speaker: Leslie Quintanilla, Professor at San Francisco State University and co-founder of Center for Interdisciplinary Environmental Justice • In-class participation = 1 point 	<p>Response to “La Conciencia” and guest speaker = 1 point</p>
March 30		<p>Day of Rest – SDSU wide – no Live Session</p>	
11 April 6	<p>Review slideshow lecture</p> <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapters 4-7 of <i>The Best We Could Do</i> by Thi Bui, p. 91-262 (note: this is a graphic memoir) 	<p><i>The U.S. War in Vietnam</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of final exam instructions • In-class participation = 1 point 	<p>Response to <i>The Best We Could Do</i> = 1 point</p> <p>Mini-archival research project students: Submit one page of notes from your research journal (see triple entry note-taking sample on</p>

Week/ Date of live session	To do before Live Session	Live Session	Deadlines & Assignments (all weekly participation points due Thursday by 11:59 pm unless written otherwise)
	<p>so don't be intimidated by the page numbers)</p> <p>Watch: "Vietnam Protest Movement" (24 mins)</p>		Canvas) – research should be completed this week
12 April 13	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapters 1-3 and 9-10 of <i>The Best We Could Do</i> by Thi Bui, p. 1-90 and p. 262-329 Rebecca Gordon "How the U.S. Created the Central American Immigration Crisis" <p>Watch: LGBTQ migrants doc</p>	<p><i>Women and LGBTQ Migrants</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-class participation = 1 point 	Response to Gordon and LGBTQ migrants doc = 1 point
13 April 20	<p>Take-home final exam DUE on Canvas by 12:30 pm</p> <p>No assigned reading</p>	<p><i>Tutorial on using Google Sites for Digital Humanities Projects</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet Dr. Pam Lach, Director of the Digital Humanities Center In-class participation = 1 point 	<p>Take-home final exam DUE on Canvas by class time</p> <p>Mini-archival research project students: attach a rough draft of your essay to your final exam for feedback</p>
14 April 27	<p>Review slideshow lecture</p> <p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Patricia Valoy "Transnational Feminism: Why Feminist Activism Needs to Think Globally" Rachel O'Donnell "Transnational Feminist Activism in Latin America and Beyond" 	<p><i>Transnational Feminist Organizing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guest speaker: Detention Resistance In-class participation = 1 point 	Response to short articles and guest speakers = 1 point

Week/ Date of live session	To do before Live Session	Live Session	Deadlines & Assignments (all weekly participation points due Thursday by 11:59 pm unless written otherwise)
15 May 4	No assigned reading	<p><i>Digital Showcase of Digital Humanities Projects</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback on your classmates' projects = 1 point 	Draft of your final project must be uploaded to your web page by 12:30 pm
Finals Week	Final edits to Digital Humanities Project due Tuesday, May 11, 12:30 pm	No live session this week	