

First Summer Term, June-July, 1999
HIST 4956-210 and 5956-210
WMST/APST 4956-201 and 5956-201

Instructor: Dr. Marie Tedesco
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History of Women in Southern Appalachia: Myth and Reality

Brief Course Description. The course aims to investigate the history of women in the Southern Mountain region from the 17th century to the present. The course will begin with an analysis of the historiography of gender in the region, and will be followed by a linear overview of the roles of women in the history of Southern Appalachia. Cherokee, African-American, white, and Melungeon women all will be the subjects of historical investigation. The linear overview will be followed by a topical investigation of women's history. Included among the topics will be women as laborers, both slave and free, industrial and agricultural; the varieties of mountain religion, and the "place" of women in the churches; women's status as reflected in literature of the region; the "fabric" of women's lives, as revealed in textile arts (including quilting); and music as reflective of gender roles in the Southern Mountains; and women as activists. Throughout the course emphasis will be placed on the contrast between the myth of the Appalachian woman, especially as presented in early 20th century works on the region and in the present-day media, and the reality of Appalachian women's lives.

Format. The course will utilize a lecture/discussion format, with individuals other than the instructor making special presentations in specified topical areas (e.g. Appalachian woman in fiction; textile arts and what they reveal about Appalachian women's lives). Videos also will be used throughout the term.

Assigned Reading. The following books are required:

Bush, Florence Cope, *Dorie: Woman of the Mountains* (University of Tennessee Press, 1992)

Clark, Septima Poinsette and Cynthia Stokes Brown. *Ready From Within: A First Person Narrative* (Red Sea Press, 1990)

McCrum, Sharyn. *The Ballad of Frankie Silver* (Penguin, 1999)

Page, Myra. *Daughter of the Hills: A Woman's Part in the Coal Miners' Struggle* (Feminist Press, 1986)

Young, Perry Deane, *The Untold Story of Frankie Silver* (Down Home Press, 1998)

In addition, students are required to read one article which is on reserve at the circulation desk of the library.

Wilson, Darlene and Patricia D. Beaver, "Transgressions in Race and Place: The Ubiquitous Native Grandmother in America's Cultural Memory," in Barbara Ellen Smith, editor, *Neither Separate Nor Equal. Women, Race and Class in the South* (1999), pp. 34-56.

Proposed Schedule of Topics

Week 1 **June 8:** Images of Appalachian women (slide presentation)
Images of Appalachian women in literature (presentation by Dr. Jean Haskell Speer)

June 9: Gender in the study of Appalachia
The development of patriarchy in Western civilization
Cherokee women in Southern Appalachia, 17th century through removal (1838)

Note: class will not be held on June 10. Please use this time to do reading for the following week.

Week 2 **June 15:** Cherokee women (con't)
White migrations into the Southern Appalachian region, and the role of women on the frontier
Discussion: Wilson and Beaver, "The Ubiquitous Native Grandmother"

June 16: Slavery in Upper East Tennessee (presentation by Michael Jackson on slaves at the Netherland Inn, Kingsport, Tenn.)
Video: "The Journey of August King"
Discussion on video

June 17: Slavery in Southern Appalachia
Video: "Ballad of Frankie Silver"
Discussion: McCrumb, *The Ballad of Frankie Silver*; and Young, *The Untold Story of Frankie Silver*

Week 3: **June 22 Test 1** (90 mins. Maximum)
"Rediscovery" of Appalachia and the development of the image of Appalachian women in literature, 1870-1920

June 23: Women, work and family: on the farm and in the coal and lumber camps of Southern Appalachia, 1880-1930

Discussion: *Dorie, Woman of the Mountains*
Women in the textile mills of Southern Appalachia

June 24: Graduate student presentations
Video: “Dreadful Memories: The Life of Sarah Ogan Gunning”

Week 4: **Website papers due by 4:30, Friday, July 2, 1999**

June 29: Women in industrial work, 1930-present
Discussion: Page, *Daughter of the Hills*

June 30: Women in the coal miners:
Video: “Coal Mining Women”
Women as labor activists: Brookside coal strike, 1974; and Pikeville, KY
hospital Strike, 1974; and the organization and work of the Coal Employment
Project

July 1: Women as activists on the grassroots level: civil rights,
Environment, and education
Video: “Evelyn Williams”

Week 5: **July 6:** Women as activists (con’t)
Discussion: Clark and Brown, *Ready From Within*

July 7: “Stand by your man?” Women in country music and the image of
women in country music about women, from the Carter Family to
Gillian Welch.
Video: “The Real Patsy Cline”
Video: “Jean Ritchie: Mountain Born”

July 8: Textile arts and women’s lives: exhibit tour and presentation by
Kathleen Wilson

Take-home final: due to instructor by 4:30, July 12.

Tests and Outside Assignments

Tests will be of the essay type. There will be one in-class test during the third week of the course, and one take-home final exam. Undergraduates will have to do a five-page paper based on analysis of a website dedicated to Appalachian women. A bibliography of ten sources on the website’s topic will accompany the paper. Graduates will have the option

of doing a five-page paper on a website, or on a research topic of their choosing. Graduates are required to make an in-class presentation based on their research paper.

Determination of Grade

Tests and assignments will be weighted as follows for undergraduates:

Test 1: 30%
Outside paper: 20%
Test 2: 50%

Tests and assignments will be weighted as follows for graduates:

Test 1: 25%
Outside paper: 20%
Presentation of paper: 10%
Test 2: 45%

Grade scale

94 and above: A
93-90: A-
89-87: B+
86-84: B
83-80: B-
79-77: C+
76-74: C
73-70: C-
69-67: D+
66-60: D-
59 and below: F