Creative Class Presentations: Women in American History

Worth **150 points** (15%) of your final grade, this assignment is meant to allow you to pursue your own interests and be creative! It has to be about U.S. women’s history. This is a flexible assignment! But you must work in a group of 3-4 students. Time will be set aside for presentations in the latter half of the class; a sign-up sheet for presentations will be handed out in class. The deadline is the day you sign up to give your presentation. *Each person must turn in a group bibliography on Canvas on the day of your presentation.*

**Basic Rules to Remember:**
- Length of presentation: 20~ minutes
- No PowerPoint presentations.
- To receive credit on your presentation, turn in a bibliography with a *minimum of 3 scholarly books and scholarly articles*, combined, your group used. You can also use documentaries as supplemental and not your main three sources. Websites *cannot* be used (unless you have asked the professor first).
- No one person in your group can edit or revise other people’s work without their agreement. This assignment requires that you work together in a cooperative way. To do this effectively, *get an early start and be in touch with each other regularly*. Don't wait for somebody else to lead or take the initiative.

**Presentation Grade (100 of 150 points)**
*The grade you receive in your presentation is based on the following:*
- Your argument and analysis which guides the historical details you present. *Avoid simple, encyclopedic summaries of this history.*
- Each person’s part of the presentation.
- How the presentation comes together as a whole.
- Research that went into your presentation (your bibliography).
- Your presentation style and creativity.

**Structure of the Presentation**
1. When you’ve decided on your broader topic, divide it into sub-topics and assign a sub-topic to each member of the group to research. Figuring out your sub-topics requires some research first. If you’re having a hard time figuring out how to do this, talk to the professor for help!
2. Each person should do research on their sub-topic (i.e. identify your scholarly sources), making sure not only to highlight the details of history but to develop an argument to guide your part of the presentation.
3. Come together to *practice your presentation* before you present in class. Time the presentation to make sure you don't go over 20 minutes.
4. On the day of the presentation, begin your presentation by introducing your topic, members of the group, and providing an argument to guide the presentation.
5. If each person is presenting information individually to the class, each person also needs an argument to guide their presentation.

**Peer review (25 of 150 points):**
You need to do a peer review of others in your group, which you need to upload as a paragraph *(100 words minimum)* by the start of class *on the same day as your presentation*. Other people in your group shouldn't see your peer review. This is where you say how your group worked together, who ended up doing what, if there were any problems that arose, and so on.

**Related Deadline: Proposal (25 of 150 points):**
- Come up with your idea and turn in a one-paragraph long, typed summary by *Monday, February 11* on the Canvas course website. The paragraph should be *at least* one long paragraph *(100 words minimum)*
- This paragraph requires some *thought and preparation*. You need to talk to in your group before turning it in. Each person in your group should turn in the group’s paragraph in the assignment section of Canvas, with the full names of everybody in your group included at the top of your post. *Each person’s paragraph should look identical!*
Ideas for Creative Presentations

These are just some ideas. You can also come up with something else, but it must be creative!

1. A short video presented to the class that either covers a topic not covered in class or that goes into MORE depth than what was covered in class.
2. A performance of a song or poem you’ve written or somebody else wrote about a particular topic in women’s history. A presentation analyzing or accompanying the song/poem should accompany this.
3. Role-Playing re-enactment of an event or debate in history, presented to the entire class.
4. Primary document analysis: you could, for instance, find two or three newspaper articles from the time offering different perspectives on an event. http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/ or the New York Times Historical Database are both good places to look for articles.
5. Story telling: Find an event in history to tell as a story, with clear characters and narrative.
6. A podcast interview with a historical figure (role-playing!)
7. Some interactive activity or game that you lead that involves getting the rest of the class involved.
8. A museum exhibit about a topic in history with a docent tour led by you or a presentation. This might include painting or drawing images about history yourself and/or printing out images accompanied by a paragraph explaining the image, which you would then display around the class and present on.
9. Use your artistic skills to create fake primary documents, art, models, and objects relating to your subject (i.e. newsletters, political posters, dioramas, clothing, tools, food, etc).
10. And on and on! These are just some ideas. You can also come up with something else, but it must be creative!

Ideas for Topics

This is not meant to limit you, but only to give you some ideas!

- Native American women in U.S. history (pick a time period/more specific topic).
- Chicana/Asian American/Black/Native American feminist thought or activism.
- Gender/sexuality and immigration in U.S. history (pick a time period/groups).
- Sojourner Truth’s place in the abolitionist and women’s rights movements of the 19th century.
- Changing definitions of marriage over time, from a time when women had very few rights in marriage, to the breaking down of limits on the rights on wives, to the recent Supreme Court decision on gay marriage.
- Anarchist or Socialist feminism.
- Analysis of women in film, art, or music history in the U.S.
- Working-class feminism versus middle-class feminism, either in one particular time period or over time.
- Emergence of lesbian communities in the post-WWII period (bars and houseparties played key roles).
- Gender and race politics in the “War on Terrorism.”
- Rape and sexual violence over the course of the twentieth century.
- The struggle for welfare as a form of pay for women’s unpaid labor in the home.
- Gender, race, and class and the recent history of mass incarceration (prisons)
- Activism for reproductive rights; activism by women of color against forced sterilization.
- Rightwing women’s activism against feminism in the 1970s and 1980s.
- Asian American feminism in the late 1960s and 1970s.
- Women’s activism against nuclear weapons.
- The history of famous transgender activists.
- Evolution of representations of women in popular culture pre- and post-women’s liberation.
- Feminist art of the 1970s (or another time period)
- Globalization, race, ethnicity, and women’s labor, 1970s to the present (or some other time period).
- Women as elected leaders/women in politics.
- Changing definitions of beauty over time (pick specific topics and time frame & be intersectional).
- Black feminism and the Black Panther Party in the 1960s and 1970s, or just black feminist organizing on its own.
- Gender, race and class and the history of flight attendants/domestic workers/teachers/nurses/waitresses/etc. (A look at why one kind of job became monopolized by women)
- Women’s leadership in the Black Lives Matter Movement/police violence against black women.
- Women’s leadership in various social movement/the labor movement (pick one). For instance, the United Farm Workers, the Civil Rights Movement, Chicana/o movement, immigrant rights activism, etc.
- History of gender and food (this could involve making food for the class to illustrate the history).
- History of women and medicine.
- Gender/Sexuality in disability history

It should describe: what topic you’re choosing to present on and why, what format the presentation will be, who is in your group, the division of labor (who’s doing what?), which sources (books, articles, etc.) you plan to draw on, and so on. Re: division of labor, remember that everybody must do research and reading!