

Masculinity and Femininity in China, 1500-Present (3420)

Gina Anne Tam

This class will critically examine changing notions of masculinity and femininity in China from the Ming dynasty to the present. This class does not assume that gender history is synonymous with the female experience—rather, that patriarchal structures, laws, and gender norms have historically affected the roles, subjectivities, and lived experience of men as well as women. With this in mind, our class will attempt to grapple with the following questions: How have culture and history shaped the categories of “woman” and “man”? What are the lines we draw between these categories, have the relationships among them changed over time? How have class, status, and divisions of labor influenced the shaping of normative gender roles and sexualities, as well as actual patterns of behavior? How has gender performance interacted with the body? Who has the power to define masculine and feminine traits?

This class proceeds chronologically. In units 1 and 2, we will examine how elite and common notions of masculinity and femininity were constructed, respectively. These units will focus on how gender roles were ingrained and challenged through law, literature, and through elite example, as well as how these roles changed with increasing commercialization, dynastic change, and shifting scientific practices. In unit 3, we examine how the “modern” both upended and maintained gender roles of earlier periods, exploring urbanization and global networks galvanized changes in those who had the power to define normalcy and deviancy. In unit 4, we probe the role of gender in a revolutionary context, from the inner workings of party politics to the dynamics of the Chinese countryside. Finally, we will end by considering how globalization, notions of race, and China’s opening up reforms have affected how people imagine men and women in a new China.

This class is an upper-level colloquium. Throughout the course, you should focus on two goals: (1) critically analyzing class themes in order to consider how they texture our lived experience today; (2) exploring how historians construct historical knowledge and argumentation. This class is reading-intensive (expect to read approximately 100 pages a week), and requires a substantial time commitment to both complete the coursework and grapple with the complex issues at hand.

Learning Objectives: Core Capacities: Global Awareness (GA)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS. In order to fulfil the Global Awareness (GA) requirement, this course will:

1. Provide substantial instruction concerning the cultures, perspectives, and values of the peoples of China; and
2. Involve the study of diverse groups in China, including non-Han Chinese people, Chinese overseas, and others

LEARNING OUTCOMES. Upon successful completion of this Global Awareness (GA) course, students will have demonstrated the ability to:

1. Analyze major historical events and processes that have given early modern and modern Chinese society its unique cultural character and affected their relations with other regions and peoples of the world;
2. Identify and articulate the perspectives and values of diverse peoples, groups, institutions, and cultures of China, in particular as the related to gender;
3. Gather and evaluate information from scholarly sources concerning the perspectives and values of the peoples of early modern and modern China

Primary Texts

Leta Hong, *Betraying Big Brother* (2018)

Gail Hershatter, *Women and China’s Revolutions* (2018)

We will also watch several films:

Raise the Red Lantern, 1991

Daybreak, 1933

Girl from Hunan, 1986

Wolf Warrior II, 2016

Grading

Attendance, Participation, and Weekly Notes (25%): Punctual attendance at all colloquium meetings; completion of all reading assignments and movie viewings in advance of class; and consistent participation in discussion.

You will also be expected to take notes on the week's readings. We will do this through a "Quote Notes" handout distributed in class. For each reading, you will pull quotes from the texts that you wish to bring up in discussion and bring those notes to class. This handout will be distributed in the first week, and will be due on T-learn the 8 PM before class. Note: You *do not* need to create a "Quote Notes" sheet for the weeks for which you write a response paper

Three response papers (45%): Three times throughout the semester, you will write response papers for the weeks of your choice. On week two, you will choose three weeks on which to write, 1 from the first third of class, 1 from the second third, and 1 from the final third (you will sign up in advance for the weeks you wish to cover). In these 1500-1800-word essays you will synthesize the central themes and arguments of the readings and explore the implications of the key areas of contention or debate on these readings. As the class proceeds, you are strongly encouraged to draw comparisons with readings from previous weeks. (note: responses papers need not address every reading, but *must* include more than one).

Final Project (30%):

For your final project, your assignment is to create your own primary source based upon the ones we have looked at in class. When thinking about this assignment, you should bear the following questions in mind:

- What time period does this source come from?
- Who is producing this source? Who is the intended audience?
- Under what circumstances was this source produced?
- What is the medium of this source? How does this affect its meaning for either the producer or intended audience?

Some possible examples:

- Memoir of an elite wife from the Ming dynasty
- A magisterial handbook outlining proper Confucian behavior for husbands and fathers from the seventeenth century
- Court case trying a woman for an illicit affair in eighteenth century
- A medical text on male sexual health from the early Republican period
- A religious treatise from a band of brothers fomenting a millenarian revolution in the nineteenth century
- A tutorial for male body-building from Maoist China

Let your imagination be your guide!

Accompanying your source should be a 1500-2000-word analysis of the source. The first section should outline the source's creator, audience, and purpose. The second part of the paper should be your own thoughts and analysis—what does this source tell us about gender in modern China? You must also include a bibliography of secondary and primary sources you consulted. You must consult at least 6 secondary sources and 2 primary sources.

Your grade will be based primarily upon the historical plausibility of your source (i.e. it fits in line with the types of sources that would be produced at this time, the content makes sense given the time period and parameters you chose); as well as your ability to creatively synthesize both the themes we've explored in this class as well as the types of sources we've examined.

Students should email me or talk to me about a topic/idea for this project before week 9.

Policies:

Attendance: You are expected to attend every class unless you must miss it for illness or another emergency. Absences or consistent lateness will negatively affect your grade. *Missing or being late for three classes will result in a zero for your attendance grade, barring extenuating circumstances. Missing or being late for four or more class will result in an automatic fail for the course.*

Paper submission instructions: Papers are due by the time class starts on T-learn. I will only grant extensions in exceptional circumstances, and you must ask me 24 hours beforehand. If extenuating circumstances require extensions, please come and chat with me.

Formal academic writing is expected for all written work. Sources must be cited in any approved citation style (MLA, APA, or CMS all acceptable).

Technology inside and outside the classroom: Cell phones must be switched off and remain off for the duration of each class. Laptops are permitted for class activities only. Taking notes and accessing readings are appropriate uses; social media, email, entertainment, or googling topics you find interesting are not. Inappropriate use of technology will result in being asked to leave class.

If you have any questions, you may email me at gtam@trinity.edu. Give me 24 hours to respond.

Honor code:

All students are covered by a policy that prohibits dishonesty in academic work. Under the Honor Code, a faculty member will (or a student may) report an alleged violation to the Academic Honor Council. It is the task of the Council to investigate, adjudicate, and assign a punishment within certain guidelines if a violation has been verified. **Students who are under the Honor Code are required to pledge all written work that is submitted for a grade: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received any unauthorized assistance on this work" and their signature. The pledge may be abbreviated 'pledged' with a signature.**

Accessibility:

If you have a documented disability and will need accommodations in this class, please speak with me privately early in the semester. All discussions will remain confidential. In order to receive accommodations, you must be registered with Disability Services for Students. If you are not already registered with DSS, please contact their office at 999-7411 or dss@trinity.edu.

I am aware that you have responsibilities and goals outside of this class. While I do expect you to work hard and make my class a priority, I understand that sometimes the unexpected happens that make it difficult for you to express yourself to your fullest potential. If something happens, my door and email are always open. I want to help you succeed in any way I can.

I am often available outside of my office hours. If you would like to meet with me, don't hesitate to send me an email to talk about history or this class.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

January 16: Theorizing Gender

Gail Hershatter and Wang Zheng, "Chinese History: A Useful Category of Gender Analysis." (2008)

Song Geng, *The Fragile Scholar: Power and Masculinity in Chinese Culture* (2004) [Introduction]

UNIT 1: ELITE MEN, ELITE WOMEN

January 23: Women of the Inner Chambers

Secondary sources: Susan Mann, *Talented Women of the Zhang Family* (2007) [Prologue, Chapter 2]

Primary sources:

Song Ruozhao, "Analects for Women" (Eighth Century AD)

Gu Ruopu, "Letters to my son" (1670)

Selected poems by Wang Duanshu (1701)

January 30: The scholar-elite

Secondary Sources:

Kam Louie, *Theorising Chinese Masculinity: Society and Gender in China* (2002) [Introduction]

Primary sources:

The Scholars (1750) [Selections]

"Drinking Wine and Reading 'Encountering Sorrow': A reflection in disguise by Wu Zhao" (1850)

February 6: The Gendered Body

Dorothy Ko, "The Body as Attire: The Shifting Meanings of Footbinding in Seventeenth-Century China," *Journal of Women's History*, 8:4 (1997)

Andrea Dworkin, "Gynocide: Chinese Footbinding" in *Woman Hating* (1974) [95-116]

Primary sources:

"A Eunuch Cooks Boys to make a Tonic of Male Essence" *The Book of Swindles* (1617)

"Shunzhi's Head-Shaving Decree" (1644)

UNIT 2: COMMON MEN, COMMON WOMEN

February 13: The Heroes of Early-Modern Fiction

Secondary Sources

Bret Hinsch, "Ming Dynasty: Marginal Heroes" in *Masculinities in Chinese History* (2013) [111-130]

Primary sources:

Luo Guanzhong, *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* (Fourteenth Century) [Chapters 50-53]

Janling Xiaoxiao Sheng, *The Plum in the Golden Vase* (1610) [Chapters 24-25]

February 20: Gender and Labor

Hill Gates, "Footloose in Fujian: Economic Correlates of Footbinding," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* (2001) [130-148]

Nicholas Schillinger, "Forging the Male Body: Drills in the New Army," *The Body and Military Masculinity in Late Qing and Early Republican China* (2016)

Primary sources:

"Poems on Tea-picking" (Eighteenth Century)

Note: Paper one due by today

February 27: Sodomy, Sex, and Gender-Crossing

Matthew H. Sommer, *Sex, Law, and Society in Late Imperial China* (2000) [Chapters 1 and 4]

Primary sources:

Robert Hegel, *True Crimes in Eighteenth Century China*, cases 14-16.

“The Basic Illicit Sex Statutes of the Ming and Qing Codes” and “Qing Sodomy Legislation,” (1658)

March 6: Bare Sticks and Bands of Brothers

Secondary sources:

Avron Boretz, *Gods, Ghosts and Gangsters: Ritual Violence, Martial Arts and Masculinity on the Margins of Chinese Society* (Chapter 2)

Primary sources:

Shi Nai’an *Outlaws of the Marsh* (Sixteenth Century) [Chapters 9-12]

Robert Hegel, *True Crimes in Eighteenth Century China*, Case 17

SPRING BREAK

UNIT 3: MODERN MEN, MODERN WOMEN

March 20: Early Feminists and Modern Girls

Secondary sources:

Madeleine Y. Dong, “Who’s Afraid of the Chinese Modern Girl?” in *The Modern Girl Around the World: Consumption, Modernity, and Globalization* (2008)

Primary Sources

Ding Ling, “Miss Sophia’s Diary” (1927)

Lu Xun, “What Happens After Nora Leaves Home” (1924)

“Qiu Jin’s Address to Two Million Fellow Countrywomen” (1904)

March 27: Gendered Crime

Secondary Sources

Gail Hershatter, “Modernizing Sex, Sexing Modernity: Prostitution in Early Twentieth-Century Shanghai” in *Chinese Femininities/Chinese Masculinities: A Reader* (2005) [199-225]

Gail Hershatter, *Women and China’s Revolutions* [Chapter 5]

Primary sources:

“A child prostitute’s life” *Modern Sketch* (1937)

Daybreak, (Film) (1933)

Note: Paper 2 due by today

April 3: Sex and Modernity

Leon Rocha, “Xing: The Discourse of Sex and Human Nature in Modern China,” *Gender and History*, 22:3 (2010)

Primary Sources

Zhang Jingsheng, Howard Levy, trans., 1967: *Sex Histories: China’s First Modern Treatise on Sex Education* [8-11, 12-16, 17-18, 45-50, 51-67, 88-92, 108-110]

UNIT 4: REVOLUTIONARY MEN, REVOLUTIONARY WOMEN

April 10: Feminism and the Revolution

Secondary Sources

Christina Gilmartin, *Engendering the Chinese Revolution: Radical Women, Communist Politics, and Mass Movements in the 1920s* (1995) [Introduction, Chapter 1]

Gail Hershatter, *Women and China's Revolutions* [Chapter 3]

Primary Sources

Mao Zedong, "Miss Chao's Suicide" (1919)

Ding Ling, "Thoughts on March 8 (Women's Day) 1942" (1942)

Film: *Raise the Red Lantern* (1991)

April 17: "We are All Socialist Builders": Gender and the State

Gail Hershatter, *Women and China's Revolutions* (2018) [Chapters 8 and 9]

Leta Hong, *Betraying Big Brother* (2018) [Chapter 1]

Primary Sources:

Xueping Zhong et al. *Some of Us: Chinese Women Growing Up in the Mao Era* (2001) [Chapter 2]

Film: *Girl from Hunan*, 1986

Note: Paper 3 due by today

UNIT 5: MEN TODAY, WOMEN TOMORROW

April 24: Gendered Ethnicities

Kara Abramson, "Gender, Uyghur Identity, and the Story of Nuzugum" *Journal of Asian Studies* (2012)

Louisa Schein, "Gender and Internal Orientalism in China," *Modern China* (1997)

Primary Sources:

"The Loving Spring Sunshine of Mother Earth," 2015 China Central Television Lunar New Year Gala (2015) [available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dNMqQXqGhMk>]

Jiang Jie, "Tainted by Terror," *The Global Times* (2013)

May 1: New Policies, New Roles

Xiao Suowei "The 'Second-Wife' Phenomenon and the Relational Construction of Class-Coded Masculinities in Contemporary China" *Men and Masculinities* (2011) [607-627]

Leta Hong, *Betraying Big Brother* (2018) [Chapters 2-3]

Primary Sources:

Wolf Warrior II (2016) (film)

Final Projects Due May 5