History 94
Gender and Sexuality in Japanese History

This course focuses on the historical construction of gender and sexuality in Japan from prehistoric times to the 20th century. Emphasis will be placed on connections between gender, class, and ethnic identity. The reading schedule, involving primary materials in translation, such as Buddhist scripture, mytho-history, courtly fiction, diaries, plays, Confucian tracts and a variety of secondary works, is fairly heavy. You will not be quizzed on the readings, but be expected to come to class having put some thought into them and the issues they raise. Each class will begin with an informal lecture but the bulk of the period will be devoted to discussion of the readings.

Grades will be based upon regular attendance, class participation, individual reports, and two short (10-page) interpretive essays.

Books for purchase:

Ariyoshi Sawako, The Doctor’s Wife (Tuttle, 1978)

Tentative Syllabus
(More readings may be substituted or added)

1/21 Introduction

1/28 Prehistoric Religion: Men and Women in the Japanese Myths

[no individual report]

2/4 **The Impact of Buddhism**

Aston, trans., *Nihongi*, pp. 90-120

Alan Spoonberg, “Attitudes Towards Women and the Feminine in Early Buddhism,” in *Buddhism, Sexuality and Gender* (State University of New York Press, 1992), pp. 3-36

[excerpts], Tsunoda Ryûsaku et al., eds., *Sources of Japanese Tradition* (Columbia University Press), vol. 1, pp. 3-11


2/11 **Women, Power and the Throne in the Nara and Heian Periods**


2/25 **Heian**


Willig, *The Changelings* (all), pp. 13-239


3/4 **Gender, Sexuality and Monasticism; Monastic Homosexuality**


Leupp, *Male Colors*, pp. 11-57

3/11 Sex Roles in Medieval Society


3/18 Individual Presentations and Discussion

3/25 The Tokugawa Transformation, I: The Samurai


4/1 The Tokugawa Transformation, II: Commoners’ Marriages and the Commodification of Sexuality

Leupp, Male Colors, pp. 58-204


4/8 The Meiji Transformation; Early Women’s Movement
Sharon Sievers, *Flowers in Salt* (Stanford University Press, 1983), pp. 1-113
Leupp, pp. 198-204


4/15 **Fascism, War, U.S. Occupation and Beyond**


4/22 **Gender and Sexuality in Contemporary Japan**


4/29 **Presentations and Discussion**