This course is a survey of U.S. women’s history from colonial settlement through 1865. It focuses not only on women’s experiences and activities in the past but also on how constructions of gender have been critical to American political and economic development. As we march through time we will survey not only different ways of thinking about women and gender in the past, but we will also pay attention to how the category of “woman” has been fractured by the differences in status and experience that result from divisions of class, race, region, religion, and ethnicity.