HA 706/940 Women in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art
Spring 2017
Dr. Stone-Ferrier
Tuesdays, 2:30-5:00pm, 103 SMA

This seminar will examine the numerous and diverse pictorial contexts that depict seventeenth-century Dutch women in a wide range of roles, including maiden, lover, wife, mother, widow, prostitute, procuress, shopkeeper, market seller and itinerant vendor. We will also consider the extent to which such pictures do, or do not conform with diverse seventeenth-century Dutch historical, cultural and socioeconomic expectations and circumstances surrounding women’s lives, and why.

Each week, students will critically discuss assigned readings on relevant themes and with diverse methodological assumptions and interpretive conclusions. Readings will consider various issues engaged by current scholarship, such as: to what extent did depictions of women conform, or not, with moralists’ expectations of their roles and behavior, and why? What can be deduced from the fact that seventeenth-century Dutch women—unlike their contemporaries in other European countries—enjoyed very high literacy rates and assumed business roles alongside, or in place of their husbands? What may be misleading about the structural binary “women/home/private domain” versus “men/city/public sphere,” which scholars typically embrace?

HA 706 students will write a state-of-the research paper on a theme relevant to the seminar’s focus. HA 940 students will write a research paper on an individual work of art.