

American Women/American Womanhood:

1870s to the Present

(HIUS157)

[Prof. Rebecca Jo Plant](#)

Teaching assistant: Alicia Ratterree

Winter 2009

MWF 10-10:50 a.m., Center 109

Sections 3-3:50 pm., Center 203

Course description

This course examines the history of women in the United States from roughly 1870 to the present. We will explore the status and experiences of American women from a range of perspectives — social, cultural, political, economic and legal. A central concern will be the relationship between gender ideologies and divisions based on class and race within America society. Major areas of inquiry will include: strategies that women have employed to attain political influence and power; changing conceptions of women's rights and duties as citizens; women's roles as producers and consumers in an industrial and post-industrial economy; and attitudes and policies regulating female sexuality, reproduction and motherhood.

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Course Requirements:

You will have two options as to how you will be assessed in the course. One involves attending weekly sections, while the other does not. If you do not want to attend section meetings, the course requirements are as follows: a 5-page paper (30%); the midterm (30%); and the final examination (40%). If you choose to take advantage of the option of attending section meetings, the course requirements are: a 5-page paper (30%); the final examination (40%); and three one-page responses which will be assigned in section (10% each). In other words, instead of taking the midterm, you will attend sections and write three short reaction pieces to an assigned reading. If you select this second

option, you **MUST** attend eight of the weekly sections.

The midterm will consist of brief identifications (1-2 sentences) and a series of short answers (a short paragraph). The final will have identifications, short answers, and two essay questions.

Policy regarding late papers: We will accept late papers without penalty only if an extension is requested by email at least seven days in advance of the due date. Otherwise, a letter grade will be deducted for each day beyond the due date.

Grading scale:

97-100 A+
94-96 A
90-93 A-
87-89 B+
84-86 B
80-83 B-
77-79 C+
74-76 C
70-73 C-
Etc.

Academic integrity:

I take the issue of academic integrity very seriously, and I will report suspected cases of cheating or plagiarism. Indeed, as a UCSD professor, if I suspect evidence of cheating or plagiarism in my class, I am required by the Office of the Academic Integrity Coordinator to file a report. (See the "Instructors' Responsibility" and "Students' Responsibility" sections of the [University's Academic Integrity Statement](#).) Please do not make me take this step.

The problem of plagiarism has become more pervasive since the rise of the internet. Obviously, purchasing a paper or taking a paper (or any part of paper) off of a website violates the principles of academic integrity. But the problem of plagiarism is not limited to these flagrant examples. Any time you take a sentence, or even a phrase, from another person's work without using quotation marks and providing proper attribution, you are plagiarizing. When you write a paper, the best way to avoid plagiarism is to do all the necessary reading, including on-line reading, in advance. Once you begin to write, you should not go on-line again until the paper is done.

If you have any questions as to what is or is not plagiarism, please review the attached [MLA statement](#). If you still have questions, please contact the TA.

Required Reading

[Jacqueline Jones Royster, ed., *Southern Horrors and Other Writings: The Anti-Lynching Campaign of Ida B. Wells, 1892-1900*, Boston: Bedford Books, 1997](#)

[Leisa Meyer, *Creating GI Jane: Sexuality and Power in the Women's Auxiliary Corps during World*](#)

[War II, New York: Columbia Press, 1996](#)

[Nancy McLean, ed., *The American Women's Movement, 1945-2000: A Brief History with Documents*, Boston: Bedford Books, 2009](#)

[Kristin Luker, *Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985](#)

Weekly Schedule

Week 1: Gender Ideology in the Gilded Age

January 5 [Introductions](#)

January 7 [Overview: 1870s and 1880s](#)

- [Carroll Smith-Rosenberg and Charles E. Rosenberg, "The Female Animal: Medical and Biological Views of Woman and Her Role in Nineteenth-Century America," *Journal of American History* 60 \(1973\): 332-65](#)

January 9 [Late Victorian Conceptions of Womahood: The Debate over Higher Education](#)

- [Edward H. Clarke, *Sex in Education; or, A Fair Chance for the Girls*, Boston: James R. Osgood and Co., 1873, 11-30, 65-77](#)
- [Julia Ward Howe, ed., *Sex and Education: A Reply to Dr. Edward Clarke's "Sex in Education,"* Boston: Robert Bros., 1874, 13-31](#)

Week 2: Immigration and Progressive Era Reform Movements

January 12 The Settlement House Movement and Maternalist Reform Movements

- Jane Addams, ["The Subjective Need for Social Settlements"](#) from *Twenty Years at the Hull House with Autobiographical Notes*, New York: MacMillan Co., 1912 (c. 1910)

January 14 The Black Women's Club Movement

- Royster, ed. [*Southern Horrors and Other Writings*](#), 14-19, 27-41, 50-72, 75-82, 117-30, 138-48

January 16 Working Women and Labor Activism

- [Nancy Dye, "Creating a Feminist Alliance: Sisterhood and Class Conflict in the New York Women's Trade Union League, 1901-1914," *Feminist Studies* 2 \(1975\): 24-38](#)
- View segment of *New York: A Documentary* (in class)

Week 3: Women and Politics: The Labor and Suffrage Movements

January 19 Martin Luther King Day – NO CLASS

January 21 Suffrage Movement

- [Ellen Carol Dubois, "Working Women, Class Relations, and Suffrage Militance: Harriot Stanton Blatch and the New York Woman Suffrage Movement, 1894-1909," *Journal of American History* 74 \(1987\): 34-58](#)

January 23 Women's Politics in the 1920s

- [Eleanor Roosevelt, "Women Must Learn to Play the Game as the Men Do," *Red Book Magazine* 50 \(April 1928\): 78-79, 141-42](#)
- Kim Nielson, "How Did Women Antifeminists Shape and Limit the Social Reform Movements of the 1920s?" Document Project, Women and Social Movements in the United States, 1600-2000 (Available through UC-elinks)

Paper due in class or in my mailbox by 4 p.m., 6th floor HSS

Week 4: Reproduction and Motherhood

January 26 Birth Control and Abortion

- [Leslie J. Reagan, "'About to Meet Her Maker,'" *Journal of American History* 78 \(1991\): 1240-64](#)
- [Margaret Sanger, *Woman and the New Race*, New York: Brentano's, 1920, chaps. 1, 6 and 10](#)

January 28 Scientific Motherhood

- [Judith Walzer Leavitt, "Birthing and Anesthesia: The Debate over Twilight Sleep," *Signs* 6:1 \(Autumn 1980\): 147-64](#)

January 30 Midterm examination

Week 5: Prosperity and Depression: Gender Roles in the 1920s and 1930s

February 2 Consumer Culture

- [Elizabeth Ewen, "City Lights: Immigrant Women and the Rise of the Movies," *Signs* 5:3 \(Spring 1980\): S45-S66](#)
- In class: view segment of [*Our Dancing Daughters*](#)

February 4 Work and Family Life during the Depression

- [Annelise Orleck, "We Are that Mythical Thing Called the Public': Militant Housewives during the Great Depression," *Feminist Studies* 19 \(Spring 1993\): 147-72](#)

February 6 Women's Networks in the 1930s: A New Deal for Women?

- [Alice Kessler-Harris, "In the Nation's Image: the Gendered Limits of Social Citizenship in the Depression Era," *Journal of American History* 86:3 \(1999\): 1251-79](#)
- In class: view segment of [Eleanor Roosevelt](#)

Week 6: World War II: A Watershed?

February 9 Mobilizing Womanpower

- View [The Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter](#) (in class)

February 11 The War and Gender Ideology

- Meyer, *Creating GI Jane*, 11-70, 100-21

February 13 Demobilization and Postwar Reconstruction: At Home and Abroad

- [Mire Koikari, "Exporting Democracy? American Women, 'Feminist Reforms,' and Politics of Imperialism in the U.S. Occupation of Japan, 1945-1952," *Frontiers* 23:1\(2002\): 23-45](#)
- McLean, *The American Women's Movement, 1945-2000*, pp. 47-50 (doc. #1)

Week 7: The Cold War and the Civil Rights Movement

February 16 President's Day – NO CLASS

February 18 Sexual and Racial Politics in Cold War America

- [Judy Tzu-Chun Wu, "'Loveliest Daughter of Our Ancient Cathay!': Representations of Ethnic and Gender Identity in the Miss Chinatown U.S.A. Beauty Pageant," *Journal of Social History* 31:1 \(1997\): 5-31](#)
- [Barbara Ehrenrich, "Playboy Joins the Battle of the Sexes," chap. 4 from *The Hearts of Men: American Dreams and the Flight from Commitment* \(Garden City, NJ: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1983\), 42-67](#)

February 20 Radicalism and Repression

- View segment of [Salt of the Earth](#) (in class)

Week 8: The Rebirth of Feminism in the 1960s and 1970s

February 23 The Civil Rights Movement and the Rebirth of Feminism

- McLean, *The American Women's Movement, 1945-2000*, pp. 6-33, 59-62 (doc. 5), 66-76 (docs. 7-9)
- [Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*, New York, 1963, chap. 1](#)

February 25 Women's Liberation

- MacLean, *The American Women's Movement, 1945-2000*, pp. 76-78 (doc. 10), 87-106 (docs. 14-21), 134-39 (doc. 30), 142-46 (doc. 32)

February 27 Conferences and Controversy: Mexico City (1975) and Houston (1977)

- "How Did the National Women's Conference in Houston in 1977 Shape an Agenda for the Future," Document Project, Women and Social Movements in the United States, 1600-2000 (Available through UC-elinks)

Week 9: Progress and Reaction: The 1970s and 1980s

March 2 The Rise and of the New Right and the Defeat of the ERA

- [Donald T. Critchlow and Cynthia L. Stachecki, "The Equal Rights Amendment Reconsidered: Politics, Policy, and Social Mobilization in a Democracy," *Journal of Policy History* 20:1 \(2008\): 157-76](#)
- MacLean, *The American Women's Movement, 1945-2000*, pp. 33-6, 113-17 (doc. #24), 140-2 (doc. # 31), 146-49 (doc. #33)

March 4 Women and the Workplace

- [Dorothy Sue Cobble, "A Spontaneous Loss of Enthusiasm': Workplace Feminism and the Transformation of Women's Service Jobs in the 1970s," *International Labor and Working Class History* 56 \(1999\): 23-44](#)
- MacLean, *The American Women's Movement, 1945-2000*, pp. 131-33 (doc. #29)
- View movie trailer for "Nine to Five" (1980) on [YouTube](#)

March 6 The Sears Case and the Politics of Women's History

- [Ruth Milkman, "Women's History and the Sears Case," *Feminist Studies* 12:2 \(Summer 1986\): 375-400](#)

Week 10: Contemporary Issues, Unresolved Conflicts

March 9 Abortion Wars: Women Divided

- Luker, *Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood*, pp. 1-10, 126-215
- MacLean, *The American Women's Movement, 1945-2000*, pp. 79-81 (doc. #11)
- Visit [Access Denied: U.S. Restriction of International Family Planning](#). Read "Executive Summary" and "The Global Gag Rule TimeLine" (under "Background on the Policy").

March 11 The Politics of Welfare Reform

- MacLean, *The American Women's Movement, 1945-2000*, 106-110 (doc. # 22)

March 13 Work and Family: A "Maternal Wall"?

March 20 8:00-11:00 FINAL