

SECOND WAVE FEMINISM

Tues. & Thurs. 9:30-10:50 a.m.
King 341

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Office Hours: Wednesday, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., Thursday, 11a.m.-12 p.m. or by appointment.

Course Description: Through an examination of primary documents, historical and sociological writings, and works of popular culture, we will explore the emergence and development of “second wave” or “contemporary” feminisms in the United States from the 1960s to the 1980s. We will look at the social, political, and cultural roots of feminist thinking and activism, competing definitions of feminism, different forms/styles of feminist activism, the relation of feminist movements to other women’s movements and other movements for social change, and the ways that race, class, sexual identity shaped the meanings of emancipation, empowerment, and equality for different groups of American women.

Required Texts (available at the Oberlin Bookstore):

Sara Evans, *Personal Politics: The Roots of Women’s Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left* (Vintage)
Rosalyn Baxandall & Linda Gordon, *Dear Sisters: Dispatches from the Women’s Liberation Movement* (Basic Books)
Judith Ezekiel, *Feminism in the Heartland* (Ohio State)
Laura Kaplan, *The Story of Jane, the Legendary Underground Abortion Service* (U of Chicago)
Jane Mansbridge, *Why We Lost the ERA* (U of Chicago)
Kimberly Springer, *Living for the Revolution: Black Feminist Organizations, 1968-1980* (Duke)

Other Required Sources:

A number of additional readings have been placed on ERES. Please print out copies of these readings and bring them to class on the days we’re scheduled to discuss them. If you have trouble finding or reading an ERES text, let me know ASAP so I can correct the problem. Hard copies of the ERES texts have been placed on regular reserve, so use those if you have problems accessing or downloading the ERES versions. In addition to the readings, we will be analyzing and discussing a variety of media, including films, TV programs, advertisements, popular music, etc. Paper and exam questions will require you to incorporate discussions of these audio-visual sources, as well as material covered by the readings, lectures, and discussions.

Course Assignments and Grading:

Attendance and Participation (30% of course grade): Student participation is crucial to the success of this course. Students are expected to: come to class on time, having carefully read the assigned texts; play an active role in class discussions and small group in-class projects; to complete short in-class writing assignments; and to post discussion questions on Blackboard before class on assigned days. Students will be permitted two unexcused absences over the course of the semester. Additional absences will result in the lowering of the student's participation grade unless approved by the instructor in advance or in the case of documented illness or family emergency.

Papers (40% of course grade): Students will write three papers due on 2/26, 4/8, and 4/29. (Details of each assignment will be handed out separately.) Grades for late papers will be marked down one grade step (e.g. A- to B+) per day late, except in cases of documented illness or family emergency or by pre-arrangement with the instructor.

Final Take-Home Exam (30% of course grade): A cumulative take-home exam will be handed out on the last day of class and will be due by 4 p.m. on May 15 (the course's scheduled final exam date).

Academic Integrity: All course work is governed by the Oberlin Honor Code. You will be expected to attach a signed statement of the Honor Pledge to every written assignment. We will discuss how the Honor Code applies to specific assignments in more detail over the course of the semester.

Class Schedule:

Part I: Sowing the Seeds

- Feb. 5 Introduction to Course: Defining Feminism and Second Wave Feminism
Film: *The Pill* (in class)
- Feb. 7 The Roots of Liberal Feminism
Read: Betty Friedan, "The Problem That Has No Name," Cynthia E. Harrison, "A 'New Frontier' for Women: The Public Policy of the Kennedy Administration," (both on ERES) and NOW, "Statement of Purpose" (online at <http://www.now.org/history/purpos66.html>)
- Feb. 12 Origins of Women's Liberation I: SNCC and the Civil Rights Movement
Read: *Personal Politics*, chapters 1-4 and "SNCC Position Paper", "Sex and Caste," and "We Started at Different Ends of the Spectrum" in Appendix.
- Feb. 14 Origins of Women's Liberation II: SDS, the New Left, and the Anti-War Movement
Read: *Personal Politics*, chapters 5-6, *Dear Sisters*, pp. 48-49, p.51
- Feb. 19 An Autonomous Women's Movement?
Read: *Personal Politics*, chapters 7-9 and "Liberation of Women" in Appendix; *Dear Sisters*, pp.28-29; 34-36; 101-103
- Feb. 21 Feminism, Race, and Nationalist Movements
Read: Frances Beale, "Double Jeopardy: To Be Black and Female," and Barbara Omolade, "Sisterhood in Black and White" (ERES); *Dear Sisters*, pp. 29-33, 37-40, 77-79, 93-95, 166-167.

Part II: Many Waves, One Ocean

- Feb. 26 Liberating Dayton
Read: *Feminism in the Heartland*, Intro and Chapters 1-3; *Dear Sisters*, 67-72, 237-239
Hand In: Paper 1, Dear Sisters Primary Documents Analysis
- Feb. 28 Building Feminist Institutions,
Read: *Feminism in the Heartland*, Chapters 4-5; *Dear Sisters*, pp. 79-81
- Mar. 4 Feminist Coalitions
Read: *Feminism in the Heartland*, Chapters 6-7 and Conclusion

Part III: Sexuality and Reproductive Rights as Key Issues

- Mar. 6 Sexual Freedom and Bodily Integrity
Read: Alix Kates Shulman, "Sex and Power: Sexual Bases of Radical Feminism" (ERES); *The Story of Jane*, Intro and chapters 1-4
- Mar. 11 Abortion as a Feminist Issue
Read: *The Story of Jane*, Chapters 5-14

- Mar. 13 Challenges of Feminist Organizing
Read: *The Story of Jane*, Chapters 15-24; *Dear Sisters*, pp. 73-75
- Mar. 18 Feminists Confront the State
Read: *The Story of Jane*, Chapters 25-end;
Jennifer A. Nelson, "Abortions Under Community Control" (ERES)
- Mar. 20 Lesbian Feminism and Lesbian Separatism
Read: *Dear Sisters*, pp. 16-18, 107-111; 167-168; Anne Valk, "Intersection of Theory and Action in a Lesbian Feminist Collective"; Cheryl Clarke, "Lesbianism: An Act of Resistance" (ERES)
- Mar. 25 No Class—Spring Break
- Mar. 27 No Class—Spring Break

PART IV: Rethinking Marriage and Motherhood

- Apr. 1 Feminist Visions of Family Life
Read: Alix Kates Shulman, "A Marriage Disagreement, or Marriage by Other Means"; Alice J. Wolfson, "Clenched Fist, Open Heart"; Lucia Valeska, "If All Else Fails, I'm Still a Mother"; M. Rivka Polatnick, "Diversity in Women's Liberation Ideology: How a Black and White Group of the 1960s Viewed Motherhood" (all on ERES); *Dear Sisters*, 218-236.
- Apr. 3 Who Cares Who Does the Dishes?
Read: *Dear Sisters*, pp. 254-260; Excerpt from *Maid in America* (ERES)
- Apr. 8 Welfare Rights as a Feminist Issue
Read: *Dear Sisters*, pp. 278-281; Premilla Nadasen, "Expanding the Boundaries of the Women's Movement: Black Feminism and the Struggle for Welfare Rights" (ERES)
Paper 2: Analysis of Advertisement/Commercial/Poster

Part V: The Equal Rights Amendment: Too Liberal or Too Radical?

- Apr. 10 Women, Equal Rights, and Equal Protection
Read: *Why We Lost the ERA*, chapters 1-6
- Apr. 15 Equality vs. Difference, or If I Have to Get Drafted (or use the same public restrooms as men), I Don't Want Your Revolution
Read: *Why We Lost the ERA*, chapters 7-10
- Apr. 17 What Went Wrong
Read: *Why We Lost the ERA*, chapters 11-end

Part VI: Race, Class, Sexuality and the Construction of Multiple Feminisms

- Apr. 22 Complex Identities, Divided Loyalties, and the Question of Sisterhood
Bonnie Thornton Dill, "Race, Class, and Gender: Prospects for an All-Inclusive Sisterhood"; Barbara Smith and Beverly Smith, "Across the Kitchen Table: A Sister-to-Sister Dialogue"; Cherrie Moraga, "La Guera"; Lynet Uttal, "Nods That Silence"; (all on ERES);
- Apr. 24 Black Women's Feminism(s)
Living for the Revolution, chapters 1-2 and Appendix C
- Apr. 29 Black Women's Issues and Organizing
Living for the Revolution, chapters 3-4;
Turn In: Feminism in Popular Culture Paper
- May 1 Internal Tensions and Conflicts
Living for the Revolution, chapter 5-end; Audre Lorde, "I Am Your Sister: Black Women Organizing Across Sexualities"
- May 6 Revising the Standard Narrative of the Second Wave
Sherna Berger Gluck, "Whose Feminism, Whose History?"; Rosalyn Baxandall, "Re-Visioning the Women's Liberation Movement's Narrative: Early Second Wave African American Feminists"; Becky Thompson, "Multiracial Feminism: Recasting the Chronology of Second Wave Feminism"; Wini Breines, "What's Love Got to Do with It? White Women, Black Women, and Feminism in the Movement Years" (ERES)
- May 8 History, Memory, and What Remains
Dear Sisters, Introduction; Elayne Rapping, "You've Come a Long Way, Baby? The Road That Leads from June Cleaver to Ally McBeal Looks a Lot Like a U-Turn" (ERES)

Take Home Final Due by 4 p.m. May 15