INTRODUCTION TO FEMINIST STUDIES

This course introduces students to the interdisciplinary field of feminist scholarship, which seeks to understand the creation, perpetuation, and critiques of gender inequalities. After tracing the historical emergence of feminist politics, the course surveys contemporary issues with a focus on work and family; health and sexuality; politics and creativity. Each topic draws on historical analysis and pays close attention to the intersections of race, gender, ethnicity, and sexuality. Along with the focus on the U. S., the course incorporates international perspectives.

No prior course work is required, but a sincere commitment to understanding gender, sexuality, and feminism and a willingness to complete all course assignments are essential. Beyond questioning the legitimacy of gender inequality, the course takes no single political perspective. A major goal is training students in analytical skills to help think critically about gender in the past, the present, and the future. Prompt attendance is required at all classes. Weekly sections covering required readings begin the second week; small group meetings begin the third week (see instructions below and on CourseWork). This course encourages active engagement in lectures as well as section, so come prepared with ideas! Graded option only.

REQUIRED BOOKS available at the Stanford Bookstore and Green Library Reserves:
Buchi Emecheta, The Joys Of Motherhood (1979)
Barbara Ehrenreich, Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting by in America (2001)
FS101 COURSE READER (RDR) from Copy Source
Remaining required readings will be available on CourseWork (Materials/Documents)
Recommended reading (to supplement lectures):

SUM OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS
1. Attend all lectures, sections, and small groups and arrive on time.
2. Participate in all meetings of your discussion section, complete all required reading, and submit all required assignments on time.
3. Submit two ungraded and one graded reading responses. UNGRADED responses (2 pp.) for the first two sections (on THE JOYS OF MOTHERHOOD and on primary historical documents) allow instructors to provide feedback on your analytic and writing skills without the pressure of grades; the GRADED response for the last section (2-4 pp.) covers the final reading assignments and influences section grade.
4. Submit two graded take-home papers (5-7 pages each, due 10/20 and 11/17)
5. Participate in at least seven small group meetings and keep a brief journal after each meeting; contribute to the group project (presented during the last week of classes); and submit a 4-5 page summary/evaluation of your small group and its project (ungraded, due 12/3)

Please turn off cell phones during class and disable wireless connections for laptops, which should be used for note taking only.
DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION

Students with disabilities should register with the Disability Resource Center (563 Salvatierra Walk, Stanford 94305; 723-1066 or 723-1067/TTY), inform me during the first week of class (confidentiality assured), and let me know whether you will need any accommodations.

GRADING AND PAPER GUIDELINES (See CourseWork for further paper guidelines)

Final grades are based on:
33% Section and small group (prompt attendance, participation, responses, small group paper)
33% First paper
33% Second paper

Final grades take into account improvement in writing and thinking over the quarter.

We are interested in how well you comprehend the issues raised in readings, lectures, and films and in your abilities to express your views clearly and persuasively. Papers will be evaluated on clarity of argument, use of evidence, and stylistic presentation. All written work must be printed, double-spaced, 12-point font, with one inch margins; all written work must be submitted on the due date, by the time deadline. In fairness to all students and TAs, late papers will be downgraded one grade and will not be accepted after one day. Extensions and incompletes will not be granted EXCEPT in the case of medical or family emergencies (in these cases, please contact T.A. or instructor as soon as possible). All written work is conducted according to the honor code. Your work is your own and should not be shared with any other students. You may discuss outlines and drafts of your papers with any of the teaching staff, and we urge you to meet with your TA as you draft your papers.

GUIDELINES FOR PRIMARY DOCUMENT ANALYSES

Whenever you read primary documents (and in reading responses) keep these tips in mind:
Identify and provide historical context for the author(s)—who, when, where?
What is the purpose of the document or intent of the author? Who is the intended audience?
How does the author/document make its points? (What kinds of arguments/rhetoric? How effective?)
What does the text reveal about the author, feminist history, the period in which it was written?
What questions does it raise for you?
How does the document contribute to your understanding of gender, feminism, intersecting hierarchies?

OFFICE HOURS

All staff office hours will be posted on CourseWork. Try to meet with your TA at least once during the quarter. Feel free to drop in during Professor Freedman’s office hours on Mondays, 3:15-5:15 (except on 10/6, until 4:10 only); you do not need a question or agenda; just introduce yourself. We appreciate feedback during the course.
DATES, TOPICS, ASSIGNMENTS
All readings are required (bold) unless listed as “Recommended.” Numbers refer to EFR.

9/22: INTRODUCTION
What is feminism; feminist studies; gender; sex? Why do they matter? Overview of course content, requirements, and format. Introductions of staff and students.
49. Lorde, “The Masters’ Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House” (1979)

9/24: THEORIES OF GENDER ASYMMETRY
What difference does gender make and how does it intersect with other social hierarchies, such as race? What do “origins stories” reveal about the meaning of gender and inequality?
2. de la Barre, “On the Equality of the Two Sexes” (1673)
38. de Beauvoir, from The Second Sex, (1949)

9/29: PATRIARCHAL LEGACIES ACROSS CULTURES
How gender systems operated in the past, across cultures; what historical conditions foster patriarchy or women’s authority/resistance; how capitalism and colonialism affect gender and sexuality. Examples from Europe, China, and Africa.
37. Funmilayo Ransom-Kuti, “We Had Equality till Britain Came” (Nigeria, 1947)
Buchi Emecheta, The Joys Of Motherhood (complete for section)

10/1: CHINA: A CASE STUDY
Critiques of gender hierarchy and the effects of communist interventions in the twentieth century, seen through a rural Chinese village.
23. Qiu Jin, from Stones of the Jingwei Bird (China, 1905)
35. Ding Ling, “Thoughts on March 8” (China, 1942)
Film: “Small Happiness” (1984) in class
Recommended:
Freedman, No Turning Back, Chap. 2 (hereafter NTB)

First sections meet this week; submit a two-page reading response considering, for example: How does Emecheta’s novel illustrate themes of patriarchy, resistance, and/or colonialism? How do you interpret the title “The Joys of Motherhood”? How do you respond to the story? How do the African and Chinese accounts of patriarchy compare?

First small groups meet next week; before meeting be sure to read all of the instructions and tips on CourseWork (Materials/Small Groups), along with the following required documents (not for discussion but as historical background on group dynamics).
Pam Allen, “Free Space (1973) RDR
Lynet Uttal, “Nods That Silence” (1990) RDR
10/6: THE HISTORICAL ORIGINS OF FEMINISMS, I
How liberal, socialist, and maternalist movements shaped feminist political ideas from the seventeenth century through the early twentieth century; woman suffrage; early feminist theorists.
3. Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, “Response to Sor Philotea” (Mexico, 1691)
5. Wollstonecraft, from A Vindication Of The Rights Of Woman (England, 1792)
7. Sarah Grimke, from Letters on the Equality of the Sexes (U.S., 1837)
9. Elizabeth Cady Stanton "Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions" (U.S. 1848)
10. Sojourner Truth, Two Speeches (U.S. 1851, 1867)
15. Kishida Toshiko, "Daughters in Boxes" (Japan, 1883)
17. Francesca Diniz, "Equality of Rights" (Brazil, 1890)
8. Flora Tristan, "The Emancipation of Working Class Women" (France, 1843)
27. Luisa Capetillo, from Mi Opinion (U.S. 1911)
33. Virginia Woolf, from Three Guineas (England, 1938)
Recommended:
NTB: Chap. 3

10/8: THE HISTORICAL ORIGINS OF FEMINISMS, II
“Second wave” feminist politics in the late twentieth century, with a focus on intersections of gender, race, and sexuality; how racial justice movements redefine feminist politics.
18. Anna Julia Cooper, from A Voice From The South (U.S., 1892)
56. Gloria Anzaldúa, "La Consciencia de la Mestiza" (U.S., 1987)
Recommended:
NTB: Chap. 4
For section, submit a two-page reading response based on at least three historical documents from 10/6 and 10/8 required readings. Compare how they illuminate analyses of gender and/or feminist politics. Keep in mind the contexts in which the authors wrote (when, who, where, why), drawing on lectures. See document analysis guidelines above.

10/13: THE POLITICS OF LOCATION
Rethinking feminism through nationality and international relations; international women’s movements; questions of cultural relativism, with a focus on the veil.
55. Adrienne Rich, "Notes Toward a Politics of Location" (U.S., 1984)
21. Qasim Amin, from The Liberation of Women (Egypt, 1899)
32. Shareefeh Hamid Ali, "East and West in Co-operation" (India, 1935)
36. Huda Sha'arawi, Speeches at Arab Feminist Conference (Egypt, 1944)
51. Domitila Barrios de la Chungara, "The Women’s Problem" (Bolivia, 1980)
Film: “They Call Me Muslim” in class
Recommended:
First graded paper (5-7 pp.), due in class 10/20, comparing feminist perspectives; choice of topics and guidelines will be posted in advance on CourseWork and distributed in class.

10/15: ALLIANCES ACROSS GENDER, RACE, SEXUALITIES
How feminists navigate the intersections of gender, racial, ethnic, and sexual identities; cooperative vs. competitive social movements. Focus on historical and contemporary roles of male feminists and critiques of hegemonic masculinity by heterosexual and gay men.

Bernice Johnson Reagon, "Coalition Politics" (1981) RDR
Peggy McIntosh, “White Privilege, Male Privilege” (1988) RDR
Recommended:

10/20: A BRIEF HISTORY OF WOMEN’S WORK  (Papers due before class begins today)
Female labor within and outside families; the impact of industrialization on family life and women’s labor.

Begin reading Ehrenreich, Nickel and Dimed
Recommended:
NTB: Chap. 6

10/22: WAGE LABOR AND GLOBAL ECONOMIES
Contemporary wage gaps, international labor markets, and labor organizing.
42. Pat Mainardi, "The Politics of Housework" (U.S., 1970)
Ehrenreich, Nickel and Dimed (complete for section)
Film: “Global Assembly Line”
Recommended:
NTB: Chap. 7

10/27: SOCIAL POLICIES: WORK AND FAMILY
How societies respond to the dilemmas of women’s productive and reproductive lives, including: poverty and welfare, child care, the “mommy wars,” and male parenting.
40. Betty Friedan, from The Feminine Mystique (U.S., 1963)
44. Mariarosa Dalla Costa, "A General Strike" (Italy, 1974)
Ann Crittendon, The Price of Motherhood (2001) pp. 82-84, 103-109; 258-274, RDR
Recommended:
NTB: Chap. 8
EFT: 34. Alva Myrdal (Sweden, 1941); 41. Pauli Murray (U.S., 1970)
10/29: BODY POLITICS

How do representations of and laws concerning the female body contribute to gender, class, and race hierarchies? How do women and men internalize cultural images of health, beauty, and able-bodiedness? What influences our readings of practices such as genital cutting?


Roberta Galler, "The Myth of the Perfect Body" (1984) RDR
Carol Munter, "Fat and the Fantasy of Perfection" (1984) RDR
Nancy Mairs, "Body in Trouble" (1996) RDR
Rogaia Mustafa Abusharaf, "Virtuous Cuts: Female Genital Circumcision in an African Ontology" (2001) CourseWork link

Films: “Mirror, Mirror” (1990) and “Killing Us Softly III” (2000) in class

Recommended:
NTB: Chap. 9
EFR: 20. Charlotte Perkins Gilman (U.S., 1892)

11/3: REPRODUCTION AND SEXUALITIES, I

The separation of reproduction and sexuality in modern history; the emergence of sexual identities; contemporary controversies (abortion, lesbian and gay rights, prostitution).

31. Margaret Sanger, from Woman and the New Race (U.S., 1920)
53. Anonymous, "How It All Began: I Have Had an Abortion" (Germany, 1981)


Julia O'Connell Davidson, "Men, Middlemen, and Migrants: The Demand Side of 'Sex Trafficking'" (2006) CourseWork link

Recommended:
NTB: Chaps. 10-11
EFR: 54. Monique Wittig (France, 1981)

11/5: REPRODUCTION AND SEXUALITIES, II

Continuation of 11/3 lecture

Film: “Girls Like Us” (1997) in class

11/10: GENDER AND VIOLENCE

Feminist analyses/responses to sexual violence, including rape, harassment, and child sexual abuse.

46. Susan Brownmiller, Against Our Will: Men, Women, and Rape (U.S., 1975)

Katie Koestner, “The Perfect Rape Victim” (2000) RDR

Film: “Rape Is . . . ” (2002) in class
Recommended:
NTB: Chapter 12

11/12: PORNOGRAPHY, OBJECTIFICATION, AND FEMINIST SEX WARS

Feminist controversies over pornography and censorship.

The second graded paper, linking economic and body issues, is due in class 11/17; general topics will be posted on CourseWork and distributed in class.

11/17: POLITICS, WAR, AND PEACE (Papers due before class begins today)
Overview of political strategies and focus on how war affects women as warriors and as pacifists.
29. Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Resolutions (1919)
Niamh Moore, “Imagining Feminist Futures: The Third Wave, Postfeminism, and Eco/feminism” (2007) RDR

Recommended:
NTB: Chapter 14

11/19: LANGUAGE, CREATIVITY, AND SPIRITUALITY
Feminist analyses of language; writing, art, and religion as both critiques and sources of empowerment.
22. Rokeya Hossain, "Sultana's Dream" (India, 1905)
26. Three Poems: Sara Estela Ramirez, "Rise Up" (U.S., 1910); Akiko Yosano, "The Day the Mountains Move" (Japan, 1911); James Oppenheim, "Bread and Roses" (U.S., 1911)
Judith Plaskow, “Applesource” (1976) RDR
Alice Walker, "In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens" (1983) RDR

Recommended:
NTB: Chapter 13

For section: the final (graded) reading response (two to four pages) should assess the political and cultural strategies for change in the required readings for this week. Are the categories of feminisms we have studied this quarter helpful in characterizing these approaches? What continuities and changes do you detect in feminist political and cultural critiques over the twentieth century?
THANKSGIVING BREAK - NO CLASSES 11/24, 11/26

12/1: SMALL GROUP PRESENTATIONS
Each group will have five to ten minutes to present their projects to the class; be sure to remain within the limit! Be prepared for today, although some groups may present 12/3.

12/3: SMALL GROUP PRESENTATIONS, COURSE SUMMARY, COURSE FEEDBACK
Small group papers are due at the beginning of class today.

Final sections meet this week to review course and think about the future.

---------------------------------------------

SMALL GROUPS: Initial Instructions
See CourseWork for further instructions and tips from former students

Groups of five or six students each will meet weekly at least seven times during the quarter, without instructors. Students facilitate their own discussion by taking turns speaking and listening. Each session should last approximately 1.5 hours (minimum 1, maximum 2 hours). Small groups do not discuss readings per se--sections will cover these--but issues raised by readings, lectures, or films can be addressed.

Small groups are intended to provide a space to encourage peer discussion of issues raised by FS101 and are based on the belief that exploring both common and differing personal responses can broaden your base of knowledge and facilitate learning. Detailed instructions for the meetings appear on CourseWork, including suggested topics (recalling gender socialization in your family; how race and sexuality influence your views of gender or feminism; past work experiences). Groups may initiate their own topics and instructors will sometimes highlight questions in class for possible small group discussion. The instructions emphasize the importance for successful small groups of attentive listening, confidentiality, and mutual respect.

Students sign up for groups by time slots via CourseWork once sections have met. In the past some groups have met right after lecture, or in the evenings or on weekends. KEEPING A FIXED MEETING TIME IS CRITICAL TO THE SUCCESS OF SMALL GROUPS. Once you have been assigned to a time slot, do not ask other group members to rearrange the schedule. If all members of a group wish to change to a new time, please let instructors know and then keep that slot stable throughout the quarter. If there are initial scheduling problems in a group, consult the instructors; changes must be made BEFORE OCTOBER 9. Please notify the instructors about problems; we will try to accommodate any shifts before the next meeting. Please do not ask to change groups in order to be in a group with a friend or dorm/house mate. Student feedback has suggested that it is better not to know other group members well already.

Groups usually choose to meet in a dorm room or reserved lounge area, an unused classroom, or off campus. Past experience suggests that it is not a good idea to meet in a public
place like a restaurant or well-traveled lounge. The most successful groups in the past included members who were committed to being ON TIME for each meeting. It is extremely disrespectful to other students to come late to small group meetings. Prompt attendance is required, and fulfilling group requirements contributes to your section grade.

The first meeting should take place by OCTOBER 8 and the last scheduled meeting by DECEMBER 1. To receive credit for this course you must participate in all seven small group meetings. Each week a different group member takes responsibility for submitting a meeting report that consists of 1) collecting a sheet that gives your group number/time, the date of the meeting, and signatures (name and time of arrival) from participating group member. The Honor Code requires honest sign-ins (you cannot sign for another student or alter the arrival time!), and 2) a sentence or two, or a short list, giving main topics covered at the meeting and any problems or questions encountered by your group. Submit the meeting report/sign-in sheet to Professor Freedman each Monday before lecture. After small group meetings, each student should write a brief journal entry (a few paragraphs) about the discussion and any remaining questions it raised. These entries will make the required small group paper much easier to prepare!

Please inform the teaching staff immediately if any group is having a problem with attendance or scheduling. If a medical or family emergency interferes with your attending a small group, contact another group member and report your necessary absence to your T.A. or Professor Freedman. Groups should spend some time during the fourth meeting assessing their procedures and suggesting any changes.

Guidelines for the final small group evaluation papers (4-5 pages, due 12/3) will be posted on CourseWork. The paper consists largely of responses to each group meeting, so keeping a journal will make it easy to produce this paper. The paper will also assess the group’s “action project,” a voluntary or creative endeavor that will probably be the focus of the last group meeting and should require a small time commitment outside of the meeting time. Group members should discuss ideas for these projects after the fourth group meeting, setting realistic goals. Each group will have a five to ten minute slot during the last week of classes to report on or present their projects; all groups must be prepared by December 1.

Action projects can be as simple as going together as a group to a feminist event (theatre, other performance, speaker, etc.)—whether on campus, in San Francisco, or elsewhere—and then evaluating the event in terms of course themes. Some past projects include: writing a group letter to the editor of a campus or local publication; volunteering together for an evening or afternoon at a women’s or feminist organization; performing an original skit; producing a short image montage (web or otherwise) on a course topic; taking a dorm poll or creating an advertisement/informational flyer about issues discussed in class. Use your imagination, and be sure that all group members can and do participate. The in-class presentations cannot exceed the time limit but the evaluation papers can include any additional materials. These presentations are not graded; the time you put into them is purely for your enrichment and the education of other students. They must, however, be completed before December 1.