

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
History Department
Fall Semester, 1990-91

History 901-6
Tuesday 3-5 p.m.
7111 Helen C. White

Gerda Lerner
Office Hours:
1-3 Wednesday
5123 Humanities
263-1852

HISTORY OF FEMINIST THEORIES

I. Enlightenment Theories: Natural Rights

Required Reading: Lerner, Patriarchy, Appendix, "Definitions"
Rossi, Feminist Papers (hereafter FP) pp. 1-86
(Intro; Adams Correspondence; J.S. Murray; M.
Wollstonecraft
Linda Kerber, Women of the Republic, ch. 1, pp. 7-32
B. Taylor, Eve and the New Jerusalem, ch. 1
Thomas Paine, Rights of Man, pp. 40-50; 130-38
Rousseau, Emile, Book VIII ("Education of Girls")
Xerox Reader 1 (hereafter XR) Ellen Moers,
"Vindicating Mary Wollstonecraft"

Suggested Reading: Read Vindications in its entirety.
Margaret George, "From Goodwife to Mistress..." in
Science and Society, vol. 37 (Summer 1973), 152-77.
(On reserve)

II. Utopian Socialism, Romantic Individualism, Free Love

Required: FP, 86-118 (Frances Wright); 144-182 (Margaret
Fuller)
Chevigny, Woman and Myth, 1-11; 18-30; 65-83; 94-
115; all of Part IV; 281-303; 313-316; 366-402;
440-442; 483-497.
Taylor, Eve..., ch. 2
XR 2 (Emma Goldman, Woman's Emancipation; Traffic in
Women; Marriage and Love)

Suggested: Chevigny, entire.
Ann Douglas, The Feminization of American Culture,
ch. 8

III. The Woman's Rights Movement and its Theory - 1

Required: FP, 282-306 (A. Grimké, Pastoral Letter)
 Sarah Grimké, Letters on the Equality of the Sexes,
 chs. 1, 3, 4.
 XR 3 (S. Grimké, Letters to Catharine Beecher,
 Letters 12 and 13
 DuBois, Stanton-Anthony, 27-36;, 131-138; 146-151;
 246-254.

Suggested: DuBois, Introductions to all the chapters.

IV. The Woman's Rights Movement and its Theory - 2

Required: XR 4, Woman's Rights Documents (Seneca Falls
 Resolutions; Ohio Convention; Rose, Hunt; Minor
 vs. Hapersett; Anthony; NOW Resolutions; Houston
 Resolutions)
 H.T. Mill, "The Enfranchisement of Women" in J.S.
 Mill, Essays on Sex Equality (A. Rossi, ed.). The
 same essay is reprinted in Roberta Salper, Female
 Liberation, 33-52.
FP, 183-268 (John S. Mill)
 Jaggar, Feminist Politics..., pp. 173-top of 186.
 G. Lerner, Majority, ch. 4, "Woman's Rights and
 American Feminism"

Suggested: Wm. Chafe, Women and Equality, (Oxford UP, 1977) 3-
 11; 43-114

V. The Traditional Marxist Approach to the "Woman Question"

Required: F. Engels, Origin of the Family..., Introduction to
 the 1891 edition; ch. 1, 2, 6, 9
FP, 473-477, 496-505 (Introduction; Bebel)
 Carroll, Liberating Women's History, 4-25
 K. Sacks, "Engels Revisited..." in Reiter, Toward an
 Anthropology of Women, 211-234
 Blanche Cook, Crystal Eastman, 41-63

Suggested: Alexandra Kollontai, Autobiography of a Sexually
 Emancipated Woman (1972)
 K. Honeycutt, "Clara Zetkin," Feminist Studies, III,
 (Spring\Summer 1976)

VI. Marxist Feminist Theory

- Required: Juliet Mitchell, Woman's Estate, ch. 3, 4, 5, 7, 10
 Zillah Eisenstein, Capitalist Patriarchy..., 41-45;
 355-361; 373-387
 Heidi Hartmann, "Capitalist Patriarchy and Job
 Segregation" in SIGNS, I, #3, Part 2, (Spring 1976)
 137-169
 Jaggar, Feminist Politics, 307-332
 Joan Kelly-Gadol, "The Social Relations of the Sexes"
SIGNS, I, #4 (Summer 1976), 809-825
- Suggested: Eli Karetsky, Capitalism, The Family and Personal
 Life
 Ann Foreman, Femininity as Alienation: Women and the
 Family in Marxism and Psychoanalysis (London:
 Pluto Press, 1977)

VII. Woman as "Other"

- Required: Simone de Beauvoir, The Second Sex (Bantam, 1970),
 chs. 1, 2, 3, 11, 13, 15, 16, 17, 21, 25.

VIII. Housework as the Cause of Women's Oppression

- Required: Charlotte P. Gilman, Women and Economics
 (Introduction; chs. 1-3; 9-14.
 XR 5 (Mary Inman, Pat Mainardi, M. Dalla Costa;
 J. Boydston)
 Heidi I. Hartmann, "The Family as the Locus of
 Gender, Class and Political Struggle: The Example
 of Housework," SIGNS, VI, #3, (Spring 1981), 366-
 394.
- Suggested: Nona Glazer-Malbin, "Housework," SIGNS, I, #4,
 (Summer 1976), 905-922.
 Lerner, The Female Experience, 108-135.

IX. Radical Feminist Theory

- Required: XR 6 (Radical Feminists; K. Millet; "Redstockings")
 Kate Millet, Sexual Politics, ch. 2
 Shulamith Firestone, The Dialectic of Sex, ch. 1, 4,
 and ch. 10.
 Gayle Rubin, "The Traffic in Women," in Rayna Reiter
 (ed.) Toward an Anthropology of Women, pp. 157-210
 Juliet Mitchell, Woman's Estate, ch. 5, 7.(continued)

- IX., continued A.K. Shulman, "Sex and Power: Sexual Bases of Radical Feminism" in C. Stimpson and E. Person (eds.), Women: Sex and Sexuality, 21-35
- Suggested: Stimpson/Person, entire or selections of your choice.

X. Sexuality and Reproduction as Causes of Women's Oppression

- Required: XR 7 (S. Grimké, "Marriage"; Sigmund Freud)
L. Gordon, Woman's Body, Woman's Right, chs. 1-3, 5, 12, 14.
Nancy Chodorow, The Reproduction of Mothering, ch. 2, 4, 9, 10, 12.
Adrienne Rich, Of Woman Born, ch. 3, 6, 7, 10, Afterword
Lerner, Creation of Patriarchy, ch. 1, 2, 4, 5, 6.
- Suggested: Chodorow, (entire)
Rich (entire)

XI. Woman as Force - 1

- Required: Ann Lane, Mary Ritter Beard: A Sourcebook, 31-71; 89-94; 108-128; 172-191.
Carroll, Liberating Women's History, articles by B. Carroll, Gordon-Buhle-Dye; and Johannsson
Lerner, Majority, ch. 1-10
XR 8, Kelly, "Doubled Vision"
Virginia Woolf, Three Guineas
Alice Walker, In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens
- Suggested: Rosaldo and Lamphere, Woman, Culture and Society
Rayna Rapp, Toward an Anthropology of Women

[These volumes of anthropological essays are rich in methodological suggestions and in evidence of women's civilization-building work.]

XII. Woman as Force - 2 Lesbian Theory

- Required: Catharine Stimpson, Where the Meanings Are, ch. 4 ("The Androgyne and the Homosexual")
A. Rich, "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence," in SIGNS, V, #4, (Summer 1980), 631-660.
Ferguson, Zita and Adelson, "Reply to Rich," in SIGNS, VII, #1, (Fall 1981), 158-199. (continued)

XII., continued. Selections in Lerner, Female Experience, pp. 448-453.
 (Radical Lesbians; A. Koedt)
 Blanche Cook, "Women Alone Stir My Imagination,"
SIGNS, IV, #4, 718-739
 XR 9 (Charlotte Bunch, "Not for Lesbians Only")
 Martha Vicinus, "Sexuality and Power..." Feminist
 Studies, VIII, #1, (Spring 1982), pp. 133-157.

Suggested: Browse in the Lesbian Issue of SIGNS, IX, #4, and use
 it as a source for further reading. See especially
 J. Kennard, 647-662.
 Bettina Aptheker, Tapestries of Life, ch. 3.

XIII. Universality and Differences

C. Stimpson, Meanings, ch. 2.
 XR 10 (Combahee River Collective; M. Wallace; A.
 Walker)
 Lerner, Majority, chs. 5-7.
 Chafe, pp. 45-78
National Women's Studies Association Journal, vol 1,
 #1 (1988), articles by Gwin and Christian, pp. 21-
 36.
 Audre Lorde, Sister Outsider
 June Jordan, On Call: Political Essays, ch. 6.

Suggested: Lerner, Black Women in White America, selections of
 your choice.
 Diane K. Lewis, "A Response to Inequality" in SIGNS,
 III, #2, (Winter 1977), 339-361.

XIV The Search for Woman's Culture

Required: C. Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and
 Ritual..." SIGNS, I, #1, (Fall 1975)
 L. Kerber, "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's
 Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History," Journal
 of American History, Vol. 75, #1 (June 1988), 9-39.
 "Politics and Culture in Women's History: A
 Symposium," Feminist Studies, VI, #1, (Spring
 1980), 26-64.
 E. Freedman, "Separation as Strategy..." Feminist
 Studies, V, #3, (Fall 1979), 512-29.
 E. Minnich, Transforming Knowledge, pp. 23-26, 49-85,
 177-191.
 XR 11 (E. Minnich) (continued)

XIV., continued

Suggested:

Sherry Ortner, "Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?" in Rosaldo-Lamphere, 67-88.
M.Z. Rosaldo, "The Use and Abuse of Anthropology...", SIGNS. V, #3, (Spring 1980), 389-417.

XV. Synthesis

No reading assignment.

History of Feminist Theories

ASSIGNMENTS

In this course we will study in historical sequence the various theories of feminism with special emphasis on those of importance to the historian. There are many ways one might organize such a topic; I have sought to show related approaches to several analytical questions as they developed over time. Some of these questions we will use over and over again in order to understand the various conceptual frameworks we will be discussing: How does the author describe the situation of women? How does the author explain the subordination (or oppression) of women? Are women seen as victims or as agents? What method or what conceptual framework does the author use? What are the remedies proposed for the emancipation of women? How does this theory affect, differ with or revise existing theory?

One of the difficulties students experience in dealing with this seminar is that it requires them to distinguish descriptive observations from theoretical insights. Many feminist theoreticians have themselves had difficulty doing this. The theoretical concepts they have used to deal with the situation of women have been androcentric and have marginalized women or omitted them. To arrive at a more adequate basis for theorizing, feminist thinkers have often resorted to giving an empirical description of women's situation. This is a precondition for theoretical thinking, but it is not in itself theory. We will work on such distinctions and try to distinguish reality and thought, practical application and systems of explanation.

In this class you will each work in two groups, which will be formed during the first class. You will be teamed up with one student to prepare a class presentation, with another to be your "partner". You can use your partner to prepare and discuss class preparation; to discuss and help improve your written assignment. It must be understood that written assignments handed in to me are the work of the author and that the partner's role is to be a critic, who reads your first draft, offers suggestions and discusses the draft with you. After that you must work alone. In this, you are on an honor system, and I trust you will not abuse it.

Assignments should be double-spaced with good margins, so I can write my comments on them. Please hand in two copies of each assignment; I will correct one and return it to you, and keep the other. Number the assignments on the top of the first page; number each page, and have your name next to the number. This keeps me from mixing up papers if they drop, as they sometimes do. Please keep your assignments to the requested length; extra length is definitely NOT appreciated. They are due on time; unexcused lateness will be reflected in the grade. Excused lateness is another matter. The idea is: responsibility; learning how to plan your work; communication.

ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment 1 (A-1) Given week 1, due week 2.

Describe the major concepts of traditional patriarchal theories about women. Keep this in summary form; focus on a limited number of major points. (Write 3-4 pages.)

A-2 Given week 2, due week 4.

Select an author from those we discussed during Week 1. Discuss how she or he answers the analytical question posed above. (4 pages)

A-3 Given week 4, due week 6.

Select an author from those discussed in Units II and III and compare that author with the one you dealt with in A-1. (4 pages)

A-4 Given week 6, due by individual schedule.

This is the assignment you do with the other partner. It consists of you jointly selecting a unit from Units VII - XIV. You will read the suggested readings under that unit and give a 30-minute presentation to the class on what you have read. You will also give us several discussion questions for the entire unit, which you will give to me in advance. Submit your written preparation for the presentation to me. Be innovative in your mode of presentation - it can take any form you like.

A-5 Given week 6, due week 8.

Do a synthesis sheet on the readings for Unit VIII. You will have had a full explanation as to what that is in due time beforehand.

A-6 Given week 8, due week 13.

Do a synthesis sheet on all the units up to and including Unit XII. Use the analytical questions we have used before, but add at least two new ones.

History 901-6
History of Feminist Theories

Gerda Lerner

Most of the books required for this course are available in paperback. The publishers are listed in parentheses. Students do not have to buy these books, but they may want to own one or more of them. All books are on reserve at the State Historical Society or Helen C. White reserve section.

Books suggested for purchase:

Xerox Reader at Kinko's, 608 University Avenue
Simone de Beauvoir, The Second Sex (NY: Bantam, 1970).
Bell Chevigny, The Woman and the Myth: Margaret Fuller's Life and Writings (Old Westbury NY: Feminist Press, 1976)
Nancy Chodorow, The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender (Berkeley: U of California P, 1978)
Linda Gordon, Woman's Body, Woman's Right (NY: Viking, 1976)
Ann Lane, Mary Ritter Beard: A Sourcebook (NY: Schocken Books, 1977)
Gerda Lerner, The Majority Finds Its Past (NY: Oxford, 1979)
Gerda Lerner, The Creation of Patriarchy (NY: Oxford, 1986)
Adrienne Rich, Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution (NY: Norton, 1976)
Alice Rossi, The Feminist Papers: From Adams to Beauvoir (NY: Bantam, 1973)
Virginia Woolf, Three Guineas (NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1963)

Please do not buy any books except those under week 1 until after the first class.

Additional required reading:

Portions of the following books--

Berenice A. Carroll, Liberating Women's History (U of Illinois P, 1976)
Blanche Cook, ed., Crystal Eastman on Women and Revolution (NY: Oxford, 1978)
Ellen C. DuBois, ed., Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony: Correspondence, Writings, Speeches (NY: Schocken, 1981)
Zillah Eisenstein, Capitalist Patriarchy and the Case for Socialist Feminism (NY: Monthly Review Press, 1979)
Friedrich Engels, Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State (1891 edition)
Shulamith Firestone, The Dialectic of Sex (NY: Morrow, 1970)
Charlotte P. Gilman, Women and Economics (reprint, NY: Harper and Row, 1965)
Sarah Grimke, Letters on the Equality of the Sexes (1838; reprint, NY: Source Book Press, 1970)

- Angelina Grimke, Letter to Catharine Beecher (1838, NY: Arno Reprint, 1969)
- Alison M. Jaggar, Feminist Politics and Human Nature (Totowa NJ: Rowman and Allanheld, 1983)
- June Jordan, On Call: Political Essays (Boston: South End Press, 1985)
- Linda Kerber, Women of the Republic (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1980)
- Audre Lorde, Sister Outsider (Trumansburg NY: The Crossing Press, 1984)
- H.T. Mill, "The Enfranchisement of Women," in J.S. Mill, Essays on Sex Equality, ed. Alice Rossi (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1970). The essay is reprinted in Roberta Salper, ed., Female Liberation: History and Current Politics (NY: Knopf, 1972), 33-52.
- Kate Millet, Sexual Politics (Garden City NY: Doubleday, 1970)
- Elizabeth Minnich, Transforming Knowledge (Philadelphia: Temple UP, 1990)
- Juliet Mitchell, Woman's Estate (NY: Pantheon, 1971)
- Rayna R. Reiter, Toward an Anthropology of Women (NY: Monthly Review Press, 1975)
- Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Emile, Book VIII
- Catharine Stimpson, Where the Meanings Are (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1980)
- C. Stimpson and E. Person, eds., Women: Sex and Sexuality (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1980)
- Barbara Taylor, Eve and the New Jerusalem (NY: Pantheon, 1983)
- Alice Walker, In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens (NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1983)

Articles in the following journals--

- Signs 1/1 (Fall 1975)
- Signs 1/3, Part 2 (Spring 1976)
- Signs 1/4 (Summer 1976)
- Signs 4/4
- Signs 5/4 (Summer 1980)
- Signs, 6/3 (Spring 1981)
- Signs 7/1 (Fall 1981)
- Feminist Studies 5/3 (Fall 1979)
- Feminist Studies 6/1 (Spring 1980)
- Feminist Studies 8/1 (Spring 1982)
- National Women's Studies Association Journal 1/1 (1988)
- Journal of American History, 75/1 (June 1988)

History 901-6
History of Feminist Theories

Suggested Reading:

Books--

- Bettina Aptheker, Tapestries of Life: Women's Work, Women's Consciousness, and the Meaning of Daily Experience (Amherst: U of Massachusetts P, 1989)
- William Chafe, Women and Equality (NY: Oxford, 1977).
- Ann Douglas, The Feminization of American Culture (NY: Avon, 1977)
- Ann Foreman, Feminity as Alienation: Women and the Family in Marxism and Psychoanalysis (London: Pluto Press, 1977)
- Alexandra Kollontai, Autobiography of a Sexually Emancipated Woman, ed. Iring Fetscher (London: Orbach and Chambers, 1972)
- Gerda Lerner, The Female Experience (NY: Macmillan, 1977)
- Gerda Lerner, Black Women in White America (NY: Random, 1973)
- Rosaldo and Lamphere, Woman, Culture and Society (Stanford, Stanford UP, 1974)
- Mary Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of the Rights of Woman.
- Eli Zaretsky, Capitalism, the Family, and Personal Life (NY: Harper and Row, 1976)

Articles in the following journals--

- Science and Society 37 (Summer 1973)
- Feminist Studies 3 (Spring/Summer 1976)
- Signs 1/4 (Summer 1976)
- Signs 3/2 (Winter 1977)
- Signs 5/3 (Spring 1980)
- Signs 9/4