

Social Sciences 350-03 Ethics: Women in the 20th Century

Professor: Amy Canfield
Spalding Hall 306
Office Hours: Mondays 7:45-8:30, 12:30-1:15, 2:45-3:30
 Tuesdays 11-2
 Wednesdays 7:45-8:30, 2:45-3:30
 or by appointment
aecanfield@lscs.edu
792-2362

Fall 2009
Admin 206
1:30-2:45 pm, MW

Course Description

Women faced a rapidly shifting world in the 20th century. Their individual rights expanded in numerous ways, yet new ideas regarding “womanhood,” “femininity,” and “women’s place” questioned the values different parts of society placed upon women. This course will be an examination of the diverse ethical issues women and society confronted in the 20th century, focusing on similar and conflicting experiences women of different race, class backgrounds, and sexual orientations faced. Students will examine major issues in the 20th century as these issues questioned society’s overarching values and ethics, such as working women and wage discrepancies, suffrage, birth control, education, racism, feminism, political activism (and political apathy), motherhood, and sexuality. Keep in mind that different portions of society define “womanhood” and “femininity” very differently, and we will examine how these different views shaped larger cultural responses. While much of the course focuses on women in the United States, we will also be discussing how these same issues played out on the international stage.

Objectives

- Gain a solid understanding of the ethical issues facing women at different times in the 20th century.
- Increase research and analytical skills in examining key issues in women’s lives (both public and private) in the 20th century.
- Enhance comprehension of women’s changing statuses through different time periods.

Readings

- Women and the American Experience: A Concise History*, 2nd Edition, by Nancy Woloch (course textbook)
- Women of the Klan: Racism and Gender in the 1920s*, by Kathleen M. Blee
- American Women in a World at War: Contemporary Accounts from World War II*, eds. Judy Barrett Litoff and David C. Smith
- The World Split Open: How the Modern Women’s Movement Changed America*, by Ruth Rosen
- Other readings (on reserve at the library or available online)

Course Requirements and Grading

Reading Responses: Because so much of this course is based on class readings and discussions, I want to make sure that every student has done the assigned reading and can participate fully in the class discussions. To achieve this, I will provide a short-essay question the Wednesday before for the following week’s discussion based on the readings from the course textbook (*Women and the American Experience*) and any other reading material assigned (see course schedule). Students are required to write at least a two-paragraph response to the question, which will be due the following Monday. These responses will be graded for their analysis of the question, but they are not formal essays like other papers. This means you can inject more first-person and opinions into your answers. These seven response papers are worth 20 points each, for a total of 140 points. See course schedule for response due dates.

Analytical essays: You are required to write two analytical essays for this class, one on *Women of the Klan* by Kathleen Blee and one on *The World Split Open* by Ruth Rosen. These essays should be between three and five pages. These are formal papers. Your papers should present the author's main thesis or argument and examine her evidence. Make sure you look at the ethical issues the books portray, and how women responded. For Blee's book, consider how the Women's Klan both simultaneously used and rejected ideas of feminism, as well as held up "feminine" ideals in its support of racial terrorism. How did ethical questions play out for the WKKK in this regard? For Rosen's book, consider how the women's movement developed and, subsequently, fractured into different groups. Why did women from a multitude of different backgrounds find feminism attractive? How did differing and changing ideas of women's places in society shift the movement, and cause breaks within the movement as a whole? How did both supporters and detractors of this second-wave feminist movement use different ethical arguments to further their positions? These papers are not book reports or summaries, so make sure you keep focused on critical analysis and answering the questions above. These 3-5 page essays are worth 100 points each. The paper on Blee's *Women of the Klan* is due **October 5** and the paper for Rosen's *The World Split Open* is due **November 16**. Feel free to use the course textbooks and any other relevant outside sources.

Think piece: This essay is based on the contemporary accounts of women found in Litoff and Smith's *American Women in a World at War*. This paper is less formal than the analytical essays as I want it to be more of your response to what women themselves experienced and chose to record during World War II. What roles did women see themselves playing in the war, and how did these roles change views on what women could achieve, what women wanted, and how women were treated/viewed by society? How did ethical arguments of women's places impact these women in their own views? What do you see as the larger issues and lessons from this book and these women's accounts? Because this paper is less formal, first-person narrative is acceptable; however, your paper still needs to conform to typical history standards (see below section on grading guidelines) regarding spelling, proofreading, contractions, citations, etc. This 3-5 page think piece is due **October 26** and is worth 100 points.

Final paper: This 8-10 page paper will take the place of a final examination for the course. It is a culmination of everything the class has read and discussed over the semester, and as such should incorporate class readings, discussions, and any other information. I also expect some outside research for this paper, as well, including perhaps other secondary sources (come talk to me for title and author suggestions) or even primary sources (newspapers, club notes, government documents, etc.). The question I want your final paper to address is this: How has gender both limited and expanded women's opportunities during the 20th century? I want each student to guide her or his own research, and so you must come up with a way to frame the question in a manner that reflects your own interests as well as a manner that considers the differing ideas of ethical issues concerning women in the 20th century. Potential topics include women working outside of the home, birth control and/or abortion, political involvement, racism, feminism, changing views of femininity, etc. (See the course description above for other ideas). Make sure that you consider the whole of the 20th century, no matter what your topic is. For example, if you choose women working in wartime, you cannot focus exclusively on World War II. This paper is due by noon on **December 16** and is worth 200 points. Each student will also give a ten to fifteen minute presentation on his or her topic, and this presentation is worth an additional 25 points. Student presentations are scheduled for **December 7 and 9**.

Participation and attendance: This class will have some lectures to give each student an overview of specific subjects, but it is primarily a discussion-based class. As such, participation and attendance constitute a large portion of your final grade. Please come to class with the reading assignments completed, as they will provide a foundation for that day's discussion. Participation from everyone is required and is worth 60 points. The daily attendance is worth an additional 25 points. If it appears that students are not doing the assigned reading, I reserve the right to give quizzes based on the reading.

Late assignments

Assignments are due **in class** on the day noted on the syllabus. Late work will be accepted, but will lose five points for each day late, including weekends. The first five points starts as soon as class that day is over, so if you hand something in at 3 pm on the day that it is due, you will lose five points. If you hand it in the day after it is due, you lose ten points. Assignments will **not** be accepted via email. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** I also do not accept assignments slid underneath my door. Those found in my office on the floor will be thrown away. You may hand assignments in to the folder attached to my office door.

Disability Statement

Reasonable accommodations are available for students who have a documented disability. Please notify me during the first week of class of any accommodations needed for the course.

Email

Make sure you use my correct email (aecanfield@lsc.edu). DO NOT just rely on the auto-complete feature; type it in fully yourself. Additionally, you must use LCMail (youraddress@lcmail.edu) for all course emailings. This is the address that I will send all email to if I need to get a hold of you. You may set your LCMail account to forward to another email, but you are still responsible for any email I send out. Do not delete any emails to me unless I have responded. I will always respond to let you know that I received your message. If I have not replied within two days, assume that I did not get the email.

Academic Integrity

Academic honesty is expected of all students. Instances of academic dishonesty will result in the failure of the class. Academic dishonesty includes plagiarism (the use of someone else's words or ideas without acknowledgement), cheating on assignments or exams, multiple submissions, and assisting someone else in committing academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty is a serious offense and will be treated as such. Violations of academic honesty will be reported to the appropriate school officials and the student **will fail the course.** No exceptions.

Grading guidelines

Before I grade and evaluate the content of any out-of-class assignment, I will first consider other aspects. All papers must conform to typical academic writing standards for the history discipline. All papers must be cited correctly. You must use footnotes and correct Chicago or Turabian citation. No MLA citation is allowed. Improper citations will lose half a point for each instance. Please come see me if you have questions on this. I do not require bibliographies, just footnotes. For every contraction and use of first person (I, we, me, our, us, etc.), I will subtract half a point. The only two exceptions to the first-person usage are on the reader responses and on the think piece. No page numbers will result in five points off. Use of any font besides Times New Roman, 12 point will lose five points. Papers that are not double-spaced will lose five points. Improper use of the words [there, their, and they're]; [where, we're, and were]; and [its and it's], will also lose half a point. Finally, papers that are not stapled (and paper-clipping doesn't count) will lose 2 points.

Points		Grade scale:	
Reading responses	140 points	A 690-750 points	C 540-584
Analytical essay (Blee)	100 points	A- 675-689	C- 525-539
Analytical essay (Rosen)	100 points	B+ 660-674	D+ 510-514
Think piece	100 points	B 615-659	D 450-509
Final paper	200 points	B- 600--614	F below 449
Student presentation	25 points	C+ 585-599	
Participation	60 points		
<u>Attendance</u>	<u>25 points</u>		
Total:	750 points		

Course Schedule:

Week 1, Aug. 24 and 26: Introduction: Ethics and Values for 20th Century Women

Week 2, August 31 and September 2: Women at Work (turn of the century)

Readings:

-Textbook pgs. 142-172

Assignment:

-Reading response 1, due August 31

Week 3, Sept. 9: Guest Speaker: Sandi Billings (producer and host of Yin Radio on KRFP)

***No class, September 7 (Labor Day)**

Week 4, September 14 and 16: Rise of the New Woman

Readings:

-Textbook pgs. 180-211

-Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *The Yellow Wallpaper* (on reserve at the library)

Assignment:

- Reading response 2, due September 14

Week 5, September 21 and 23: Feminism and Suffrage

Readings:

-Textbook pgs. 219-250

- *Life* editorial on woman suffrage, 1906, available online at

http://womenshistory.about.com/library/misc/bl_life1906.htm

-“The Case for Birth Control,” by Margaret Sanger, available online at

http://womenshistory.about.com/library/etext/bl_sanger_1924.htm

-Students should begin reading Blee's book, *Women of the Klan*

Assignment:

- Reading response 3, due September 21

Week 6, September 28 and 30: Cross-Currents: The 1920s

Readings:

-Textbook pgs. 256-293

Assignment:

- Reading response 4, due Sept. 28

Week 7, October 5 and 7: Discussion of *Women of the Klan*

Readings:

-Katherine Blee's *Women of the Klan*

Assignment:

-Analytical essay on Blee's book, due October 5

Week 8, October 12 and 14: Emergencies: The 1930s and 1940s

Readings:

-Textbook pgs. 300-334

-Students should begin reading Litoff and Smith's *American Women in a World at War*

-“1943 Guide to Hiring Women,” available online at

http://home.tiac.net/~cri_d/cri/2000/women1943.html

Assignment:

-Reading response 5, due October 12

Weeks 9, October 21: Library Day

Misc.:

- This week, students will receive instruction on the library's resources. Meet in Library 104.
- *No class, October 19**

Week 10, October 26 and 28: Discussion of *American Women in a World at War: Contemporary Accounts from World War II*

Readings:

- Litoff and Smith's *American Women in a World at War*

Assignment:

- Think-piece essay on Litoff and Smith's book, due October 26

Week 11, November 2 and 4: High Expectations, 1950-1975

Readings:

- Textbook pgs. 342-377
- “Sex and Caste: A Kind of Memo,” by Casey Hayden and Mary King
<http://www.feministezine.com/feminist/modern/Sex-and-Caste.html>
- Roe v. Wade* (full Supreme Court decision)
<http://caselaw.lp.findlaw.com/scripts/getcase.pl?court=US&vol=410&invol=113>
- Students should begin reading Rosen's *The World Split Open*

Assignment:

- Reading response 6, due November 2

Week 12, November 9 and 11: NO CLASS, RESEARCH DAYS

Week 13, November 16 and 18: Discussion of *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America*

Readings:

- Rosen's *World Split Open*

Assignment:

- Analytical essay on Rosen's book, due Nov. 16
- Topic proposal (final paper) and bibliographic list, due Nov. 18

***No class November 23 and 25—Thanksgiving break**

Week 14, November 30 and December 2: In Search of Equality: Since 1975

Readings:

- Textbook pgs. 386-417

Assignment:

- Reading response 7, due November 30

Weeks 15, December 7 and 9: Research presentations

**Final research papers due by NOON on Dec. 16 to my office.
NO LATE PAPERS ACCEPTED**