

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY

Livingston Campus

Lucy Stone Hall

Room 267

SYLLABUS: Working Women in American Society

Instructor: Francine Moccio

Course Number: 37:575:309:04, Index 70283 Day/Time: Monday/Thursday, 10:20 a.m. – 11:40 a.m.

Location: Livingston Campus, Lucy Stone Hall, Rm. B267

Number of Credits: 3

Learning Objectives:

This is a core social science area course. Its goals are for a student to:

- . Understand different theories about human culture, social identity, economic entities, political systems, and other forms of social organization.
- . Apply concepts of human and social behavior to particular questions or situations.
- . Explain and be able to assess the relationship among assumptions, method, evidence, arguments, and theory in social and historical analysis.

It is also a core 21st Century Challenge course. Its goals are for a student to:

. Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person's experiences and perspectives on the world..

Students will learn about the outcomes working women have achieved in American society regarding workplace equality and how these outcomes and experiences may or may not apply to women in a global context.

Course Description

This is an undergraduate course in the experience and history of working women in America. In accordance with the set goals and objectives of the course listing, much of the course will look at women and waged work. Nonetheless, the course is broader in its approach than just presenting a chronology of the experiences of "working women" in the US work force. For example, America's working women – from post World War II until the present day – will be examined and discussed from across a broad spectrum of cultural backgrounds and occupations. In addition, the course will present and analyze the comprehensive experiences of working women in the US through a multi-dimensional lens that is reflective of the lived experiences of women "on the ground" in their communities and families; as well as ways in which women – as agents of social change – act upon their institutional environment to advance their work-related interests.

In Ancient Greece, the "city" was synonymous with "politics" and in light of this, Aristophanes, a Greek philosopher stated: "When women enter the city, they change it forever." This course will present how and why women up from post-war America until the present day play this dynamic and transformative role - not only globally - but specifically, in American society. The paradigmatic framework for this course will be achieved by using the following approach: interrogate how the role of various aspects of women's lives, for example: community, family, income either impede or advance their opportunities in the labor market; consider how, in turn, women's individual and group efforts to improve their economic and social circumstances and security influence broader societal changes in the American

workplace. For example, working women have been generally successful in challenging status quo employment practices and very innovative in creating best practices such as work and life balance, parental leave, the elimination of sex-typing jobs in blue-collar jobs and professional occupations. Working women have expanded educational opportunities and addressed issues such as gender wage disparity, among other labor and business practices. In addition, American public policy has evolved in a progressive direction, in large part, due to the efforts of American working women striving for gender equality. Women's transformative role in society has resulted in workplace -related efforts to increase parity between men and women; and expand greater equality in general, not only specific to labor policies and employment relations but in the larger context of societal change.

The course will present the story of America's working women by using an interdisciplinary approach drawn from across the theories and methods of such core social science academic disciplines as: anthropology, sociology, economics, political science, psychology and public policy. Special emphasis will be placed on how these academic disciplines and their affiliated methods can help re-imagine the lived

reality of working women as it relates to the American workplace. We will also examine ways in which the formation and transformation of concepts and practices regarding male dominance in the American workplace and "patriarchal-like" relations are influenced by the interrelationship of work, family life and leisure. Students will have the opportunity to examine women's waged work and unpaid

work in the US as a microcosm, reflective of the broader societal hierarchies of sex, race, ethnicity, and income in American society. Special emphasis will be placed on how these factors define normative behaviors and gendered workplace roles within conventional views of "women's work."

Part of the goal of interdisciplinary social science is to provide students and researchers with the toolkit necessary to explore the overt and covert factors that

shape a working woman's quality of life. In light of this, students will be introduced to a variety of research methods across social science disciplines that have been useful in providing applications for pure research and public policy reforms. As a result, and at the end of the course, students are expected to present – orally and through writing – a comprehensive knowledge of the significant issues that influence working women's status and be able to identify and analyze the barriers and opportunities that may impede or advance their progress toward gender equality in contemporary American society.

Course Requirements and Evaluation:

Class Attendance/ Participation (10%): Since all course assignments will draw heavily from lectures and class discussions, on-time and regular attendance, and thorough study of assigned readings, are expected and necessary for a passing grade. Classes will typically include a period of both lecture and discussion. The lecture component of the course is intended to provide further historical context or an explanation of topics stemming from the readings. Mostly, however, our class meetings will be discussion-centered---meaning all students are expected to come to class prepared to participate and articulate their perspectives on the readings and topics being considered. Participation will be evaluated on the quality of students' contributions to class discussions. In general, students who pose thoughtful

questions and comments for consideration, or who listen actively and follow-up on others' remarks, will do well in this regard. In-class discussion will be worth half of your class participation grade: 10%

Leading the Seminar (10%): Students will be assigned in groups of three or four to help facilitate discussion, and focus our attention on a particular topic; as well as report on their final research projects. I will assign groups of students to come to class prepared to lead the seminar regarding the specific readings and topics with prepared summaries and questions and/or statements that may emerge from

their readings. Each member of the group and the degree to which students respond will be part of class participation grade and since this is intended to encourage class contribution, they cannot be made up. In-class group assignments and presentations will be worth half of your class participation grade: 10%.

Mid-Term Take Home Exam (30%): The take home mid-term (approximately 6-7 pages) will consist of an essay response to a particular topic/question that will be distributed and discussed in class one week before the mid-term is due.

Final Research Report (40%) and Final Research Report Group Presentations (10%-individually graded): The final research report will cover topics we have reviewed throughout the entire course. Students will also be asked to present their papers in class.

Course pedagogy: course pedagogy will emphasize active learning, including the following: student lead seminars and oral presentations, consistent class participation, a number of small-scale written assignments and a final research paper.

Course Schedule:

Jan. 19: **Course introduction.** Review of syllabus, readings, course goals and requirements.

Jan. 23 – 26: Introduction and a Conceptual Framework

Readings: “Introduction” and “A Conceptual Framework” – that is, Part I – in Amott and Matthaei and Hagemann and Michel, “Introduction” and Chapter 1, “Civil Society and Gender.”

Jan. 30 – Feb. 2: Women, Men, Work and the Problem with a Name

Readings: Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*; Introduction and Chapter 1, “The Problem with No Name” Excerpt on Sakai; *Revolutionary Road*, Excerpt posted on Sakai. Chafe, Chapters 2 & 5 (selected page numbers will be provided).

Film (TBA)

Feb. 6 – 9: *Where Have All the Women Gone? Post World War II Histories of Women’s Work*.

Readings: Chafe, selections from Chapters 5 & 6; Hagemann and Michel, selected pages from Chapters 1 & 2, “Gender and Civil Society;” Part II of Amott and Matthaei, designated page selections on race, class, gender and work, posted on Sakai.

Feb. 13: *US Women in the Low-Wage Workforce*

Readings: Beth Shulman, *The Betrayal of Work: How Low-Wage Jobs Fail 30 Million Americans* (all)

Feb. 16: Midterm Exam, no new readings.

Feb. 20–23: *She Works Hard for the Money*

Readings: Liza Featherstone, *Selling Women Short: The Landmark Battle for Workers’ Rights at Wal-Mart* (New York: Basic Books, 2004) Introduction, Chapters 1 and 2 posted on Sakai); Part III in Amott and Matthaei, selected pages posted on Sakai.

Feb. 27– 29: *Gender, Work, and Welfare*

Readings: Mary Daly and Katherine Rake, *Gender and the Welfare State* (Oxford and Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing Press, 2003); “Introduction” and “Part I: Studying the Welfare State and Gender, the Insights of Existing Work,” Excerpts posted on Sakai; Eileen Reese, *The Backlash against Welfare Mothers:*

Past and Present (University of California Press, 2005), “Chapters 1 & 4” posted on Sakai.

March 1: Work and Masculinity in America

Readings: Pierre W. Orelus, *the Agony of Masculinity* (Peter Lang, 2010); “Introduction” and “The Intersection between Gender, Sex, Race and Social Class,” posted on Sakai.

March 5 – 8: Work in America: Patterns of Race, Ethnicity and Nationality

Readings: Vicki Ruiz, *From Out of the Shadows, The Lives of Mexican Women in Twentieth Century America* (Oxford University Press, 2008), Introduction & Chapters 1 & 2 and 3 will be posted on Sakai; Milkman, L.A. *Story*, Introduction & selected chapters will be posted on Sakai.

-----**March 10 – 18: SPRING BREAK, NO CLASSES**-----

March 19-22: Domestic Work

Readings: Mary Romero, *The Maid’s Daughter: Living Inside and Outside the United States* (New York: New York University Press, 2011, “Introduction” and Chapters 1 & 2 posted on Sakai.

March 26-29: Challenging Male Privilege and Power: Women in Nontraditional jobs.

Readings: Molly Martin, Excerpt from *Hard-Hatted Women*; and Jane LaTour, Excerpts from *Sisters in the Brotherhood* (New York: Macmillan Publishers, 2006) Introduction and Chapter 1 posted on Sakai; Deidre T. Royster, *Race and the Invisible Hand* (University of California Press, 2003),

April 2 – 5: Men doing “Women’s Work.”

Readings: Christine Williams, *Gender Differences at Work* (University of California

Press, Excerpts from Williams in reader; presentation and discussion of final research

reports – possible topics and methodologies.

April 9-12: The Commercialization of Intimate Life

Readings: Susan Markens, *Surrogate Motherhood and the Politics of Reproduction*, 2007; “Introduction: Unfamiliar Families?” and Chapter 6, “A Brave New World: Reproductive Politics from the Past to the Present;” posted on Sakai. Anita Lita Garey and Karen V. Hansen (eds), *At the Heart of Work and Family Life*, engaging the ideas of Arlie Russell Hochschild, with an introduction by Anita Lita Garey and Karen V. Hansen (Rutgers University Press, 2011); Parts IV and V posted on Sakai.

April 16-19: Beyond Gender: the workplace, human sexuality and economic differences

Readings: Scott Herring Introduction to Ralph Werther’s *the Autobiography of an Androgyne* (Rutgers University Press, 2008); “Introduction” by Scott Herring posted on Sakai. Heidi Hartmann, “The Job Loss Tsunami of the Great Recession: Recedes for Men But for Women” (Institute for Women’s Policy Research Report, July 2011) posted on Sakai.

April 23 – 26: Preliminary findings and in-class group presentations.

No new readings.

April 30: **LAST CLASS** - REGULAR CLASSES END – finish up in-class group presentations

READING DAYS BEGIN: May 1 & May 2

Exam period: FINAL RESEARCH REPORT DUE ON MAY 6, 2012 posted on Sakai by midnight.

UNIVERSITY COMMENCEMENT, May 13, 2012

Summary of Required Course Readings: (Shulman in its entirety, other books excerpts will be posted on Sakai) – students will be responsible for selected page numbers in the listings below except for Shulman in which the entire book is required reading: Beth Shulman. *The Betrayal of Work: How Low-Wage Jobs Fail 30 Million Americans* (New York: The New Press, 2003) (All)

Karen Hagemann (ed.), and Sonya Michel (ed). *Civil Society and Gender Justice: Historical and Comparative Perspectives* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2011), Excerpts will be posted on Sakai, Introduction, Chapters 3, 14 & 15.

Theresa Amott and Julie Matthaei, *Race, Class, Gender and Women's Work: A Conceptual Framework*, Boston: South End Press, 1991), Excerpts will be posted on Sakai: Chapter 1 & 2. William Chafe, *The Unfinished Journey: America Since World War II* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), Excerpts will be posted on Sakai: Chapter 5, "The Paradox of Change" American Society in the Postwar Years; Chapter 12, "1968," Chapter 15, "The Reagan Years," Chapter 16, "The 1990s and Beyond" (page numbers will be provided; students will not be responsible for entire chapters).

Dorothy Sue Cobble, *The Sex of Class* (Cornell University Press, 2007), Excerpts will be posted on Sakai.

Ruth Milkman, *L.A. Story: Immigrant Workers and the Future of the U.S. Labor Movement* (New York: The Russell-Sage Foundation, 2006), Excerpts will be posted on Sakai.

Molly Martin, *Hard-Hatted Women: Life on the Job*, 1987, excerpts will be posted on Sakai.

Jane LaTour, *Sisters in the Brotherhood* (Macmillan, 2007), Excerpts will be posted on Sakai.

Nancy MacLean, *Freedom Is Not Enough: the Opening of the American Workplace* (Cambridge University Press, 2008), Excerpts will be provided on Sakai.

Lillian Breslow Rubin, *Worlds of Pain, Life in the Working-Class Family* (New York: Basic Books Inc., 1969) Excerpts will be posted on Sakai: Chapters 9, 10 & 11.

Richard Yates, *Revolutionary Road* (Little Brown, 1961) Excerpts will be posted on Sakai.

Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* with an Introduction by Anna Quinlan (London: W.W. Norton Press, 1997) Excerpts will be posted on Sakai.

Mary Romero, *The Maid's Daughter: Living Inside and Outside the United States* (New York: New York University Press, 2011), selected pages posted on Sakai.

Susan Markens, *Surrogate Motherhood and the Politics of Reproduction*, 2007; page selections posted on Sakai.

Anita Lita Garey and Karen V. Hansen (eds), *At the Heart of Work and Family Life – engaging the ideas of*

Arlie Russell Hochschild (University of California Press, 2007), selected excerpts post on Sakai.

Liza Featherstone, *Selling Women Short: The Landmark Battle for Workers' Rights at Wal-Mart* (New York: Basic Books, 2004), selected chapters will be posted on Sakai.

Pierre W. Orelus, *The Agony of Masculinity* (Peter Lang, 2010), selected chapters will be posted on Sakai.

Mary Daly and Katherine Rake, *Gender and the Welfare State* (Oxford and Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing Press, 2003), selected chapters will be posted on Sakai.

Institute for Women's Policy Research, *Reports on Working Women in the Great Recession*, Washington, DC, 2011.

Recommended But Not Required:

Christopher Lasch, *A Haven in a Heartless World: the Family Besieged* (New York: Basic Books Inc., 1977), especially: Chapters 4 and 7, Excerpts will posted on Sakai.

Michel Foucault, *Disciplining Women and the Power of Feminist Discourse* (Praxis International, 1985) Excerpts will be posted on Sakai.

Arlie Russell Hochschild, *The Managed Heart, the Commercialization of Human Feeling* (University of California, 2003), Excerpts posted on Sakai and *The Time Bind* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 1997), Excerpts posted on Sakai.

Media – a selection of two television shorts, and one or two films will be viewed during the semester.

Possibilities are listed below:

Silkwood

Mad Men – selected series, provided in-class.

Rosie the Riveter – film provided in-class

The Stepford Wives – film provided in class

Thelma & Louise

Bend It Like Beckham

Norma Rae

The Graduate