

## **Politics 125a: Women in Politics**

Tuesday and Thursday, 5-6:30 pm, Olin-Sang 112

Spring 2005

Dr. Laura Sjoberg

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday, 4-5pm and by appointment

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**Course Description:** This course provides an overview of women and gender in the theory and practice of politics. We begin by examining the historical evolution of women's participation in American politics, from the suffrage movement through the present day. The next section of the course examines where women are in current politics. In this section, we read the stories of the visible women in politics – national and international elected and bureaucratic leaders, as well as the women that are less visible – from the homemakers to the homeless. As we proceed through these stories, we synthesize stories with *theories* of women in politics. We look at questions of the roles that women play in politics and the ways that gender affects and is affected by political participation. The course concludes by addressing questions about how gender affects both *participation in* and *thinking about* politics.

**Course Goals:** Students should 1) understand the historical evolution of women's participation in politics and the obstacles that women face in their efforts to achieve equal political rights; 2) recognize the complexities in the concept of equality; 3) gain awareness of women's roles in contemporary American and international politics; 4) critically evaluate the ways that policies affect and are affected by women and gender; 5) be exposed to current theories concerning women in politics; 6) interrogate the influence of gender on what we see in politics and how we interpret it; 7) develop political research skills as well as written and oral analytical skills.

### **Grading:**

Response questions: 30% - 3% for each of ten one-page responses to questions discussed in the previous class.

Class participation: 5% - each student must either 1) offer his or her informed opinion three times in class when opinions are called for *or* 2) take a major role in a course simulation *or* 3) write an extra response paper for a class that a response is not assigned.

Research Paper: 25% - each student will, before 1 March, choose a woman in politics to study more closely. The students will write a research paper giving a biographical background of the woman who they are studying, then critically evaluating that woman's role in politics using the tools they have acquired in the course. A more detailed assignment will be handed out in the second week of class.

Exams: 30% (Midterm, 10%, Final Exam, 20%)

**Books You Need to Own: (available in bookstore or at websites everywhere)**

- 1) Rossi, Alice. 1988. *The Feminist Papers: from Adams to de Beauvoir*. Boston: Northeastern University Press.
- 2) D'Amico, Francine and Peter Beckman, eds. 1995. *Women in World Politics*. Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey.
- 3) Seltzer, Richard; Jody Newman; and Melissa Voorhees Leighton. 1997. *Sex as a Political Variable: Women as Candidates and Voters in U.S. Elections*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.
- 4) Dolan, Kathleen. 2003. *Voting for Women: How the Public Evaluates Women Candidates*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- 5) Swers, Michelle. 2002. *The Difference Women Make: The Policy Impact of Women in Congress*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- 6) Tong, Rosemarie. *Feminist Thought: A More Comprehensive Introduction*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- 7) **THE READER FOR THIS COURSE – AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE AT THE POLITICS OFFICE.**

**Course Policies:**

- 1) Accommodation of disabilities: Brandeis University has a process in place to officially recognize the need for accommodation. You can find information about that process on the Brandeis website, or you may ask me, and I will direct you to it. No accommodations will be made outside of this system of recognition.
- 2) Late work: There are eleven different times that you will need to turn something in to me this semester. I know that is a lot. Nonetheless, I expect you to do it on time, always. If for some reason you cannot make it to class, you may turn your assignment in either in my mailbox or in my email box *before* class. I am generally an understanding person but *not about late papers*. In 21 years of school, I never turned a paper in more than 20 minutes late. My official policy is not quite so draconian, however: a paper may be turned in the day it is due without penalty, the next day for a letter grade off, and the third day for half credit. This includes your final paper.
- 3) Late persons: Ten minutes late once or twice? C'est la vie. More than once or twice? Grade problem – each tardy after two loses a participation point. More than fifteen minutes late? Tell me ahead of time or stay home that day and apologize profusely.

**I. Introduction – January 13**

- A. Course Overview
- B. Short in-class readings, excerpted from Sojourner Truth's "Ain't I a Woman?," Andrea Dworkin's *Mercy*, and Susan Faludi's *Stiffed*, with small group discussions.
- C. **Response Question 1, Due January 18: Write one page on where you think women are in politics right now.** Rest easy, you will not be graded on any political opinions this assignment shows; rather, I ask this question in order to be able to gauge and teach to your interests.

## II. Histories of Women and Gender in American Politics

### January 18, 20

- A. The United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights (Reader)
- B. Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, ch.1 (Reader)
- C. Alice Rossi, *The Feminist Papers*, selections from Part 2, concerning the Suffrage movement; 282-295, 378-395, 413-470.
- D. Kraditor, Aileen. 1981. *The Ideas of Women in the Suffrage Movement*. New York: W. W. Norton and Company. Introduction (Reader)

### January 25

- A. Jane Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull-House* (Hurt Edition), Introduction, Preface, ch. 2, 7, 15-27, 77-91 (Reader)
- B. Harriet Alonso, *The Women's Peace Union and the Outlawry of War*, 21-42, 142-162 (Reader).
- C. Alice Rossi, *The Feminist Papers*, selections from Part 3, concerning Margaret Sanger and the movement for control of women's bodies; 517-536.

### January 27

- D. *Roe v. Wade*, 410 U.S. 113; brief in-class handout explaining decision from Catherine MacKinnon's *Sex Equality*, 1191-99, 1212-18 (Reader)
- E. Will Lester, "Poll: Americans Want Roe v. Wade Upheld" *The Wichita Eagle*, 11/29/04 (Reader)
- F. N. E. H. Hull, William James Hoffer, and Charles Hoffer, *The Abortion Rights Controversy in America: A Legal Reader*, introduction and the section of Part VII written by Kristina Mentone (Reader).
- G. **Response Question 2, Due February 4: Write one page on what you perceive to be the relationship between courts' decisions and women's lives. Discuss various opinions on this topic expressed by your readings, and then insert your own.**

## III. Women in National and International Politics Today

### Women in International Politics

#### February 1

- A. Introduction – Francine D'Amico, "Women National Leaders" in Francine D'Amico and Peter Beckman, eds., *Women in World Politics*, 15-30.
- B. Condoleezza Rice
  - 1. Visit [www.rice2008.com](http://www.rice2008.com); read BBC News' profile of Rice (Reader)
  - 2. Hilary Charlesworth and Christine Chinkin, "Sex, Gender, and September 11," *The American Journal of International Law*, 96:3, 600-605 (Reader)
  - 3. "The Black Woman Who Is the Chief Foreign Policy Adviser to the Man Who May Be the Next President of the United States," *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, 29, p.12-14 (Reader).
- B. Margaret Thatcher – Kenneth Harris, "Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher: The Influence of her Gender on Her Foreign Policy," in D'Amico and Beckman, 59-70.
- C. Indira Gandhi – Mary Carras, "Indira Gandhi: Gender and Foreign Policy" in D'Amico and Beckman, 45-58

### February 3

- A. Women in War
  - 1. Cynthia Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches, and Bases*, ch.1, 1-18 (Reader).
  - 2. Margaret Randall, "Women in Revolutionary Movements: Cuba and Nicaragua," in D'Amico and Beckman, 183-198.
  - 3. Short excerpt from my writings on women's roles in the current war in Iraq (Reader)
- B. Women in Social Movements – Petra Kelly, "Women and the Global Green Movement," in D'Amico and Beckman, 169-182.
- C. **Response Question 3, Due February 8: Anticipating next week, write one page on a woman President of the United States.** Make sure that you discuss: when or if you think there may be a woman president, any theories you might have as to who that might be, how you think being a woman affects candidates' chances, and what you think the challenges of being a woman running for national political office are.

### Women in National Politics

#### February 8, 10

- A. Rebecca Klatch, *Women of the New Right*, 1-19, 119-153 (Reader).
- B. Richard Seltzer, Jody Newman, and Melissa Voorhees Leighton, *Sex as a Political Variable: Women as Candidates and Voters in U.S. Elections*, ch.1-3, 1-74.

#### February 15, 17

- A. Kathleen Dolan, *Voting for Women: How the Public Evaluates Women Candidates*, ch. 1, 3, 4, 7; 1-26, 57-112, 151-161.
- B. Barbara Burrell, *A Woman's Place is in the House: Campaigning for Congress in the Feminist Era*, ch.6, 101-130 (Reader).
- C. **Response Question 4, Due February 17: How do you think Americans would vote in the hypothetical race that we discussed in class today and why? How would you vote, why?**
- D. **Response Question 5, Due March 1: Write one page on the relationship between sex (like, if you are a man or a woman), sex (as in the carnal act), and elect-ability in American politics, using Bill and Hilary Clinton as a case study to reference.**

### February 19 – Professor's Birthday!

### February 22, 24 – Spring Break!

### March 1

- A. Kim Fridkin Kahn, "Gender Differences in Campaign Messages: The Political Advertisements of Men and Women Candidates for the U.S. Senate," *Political Research Quarterly* 46:3, 481-502 (Reader)
- E. Case Study: Dianne Feinstein
  - 1. Her biography section on her website (Reader)
  - 2. Do a google search for her name. Tell me what comes up. Use at least

one other search engine. Are the results different?

3. Speech on Domestic Violence in America, October 6, 2004 (Reader)

F. Case Study: Hilary Clinton

1. Her biography section on her website (Reader)

2. Do a google search for her name. Tell me what comes up. (Note: this is not an excuse to view inappropriate websites in the name of the course).

3. Speech on the Anniversary of Women's Suffrage, 2004 (Reader)

4. Short excerpts from *My Life* (Bill Clinton), 181-5, 233-5, 800-9.

### March 3

A. MIDTERM

**B. Response Question 6, Due March 8: Where are you from? What women are in local politics there? What percentage of local politicians are they? What do they do? How do they stand out?**

### Women in Politics We Cannot See

#### March 8

A. Go over question 6. Why might local politics be different?

B. bell hooks, "Essentialism and experience" *American Literary History* 3:1, 172-83(Reader)

C. Narratives from Chicago Public Housing, collected as "politics is a donut, women are the holes" (read aloud to you in class)

D. Katharine Moon, *Sex Among Allies*, Prologue and ch.1, 1-47 (Reader).

#### March 10

A. Christine Chin, *In Service and Servitude*, Introduction, 1-30 (Reader)

B. **Response Question 7, Due March 15: Is the personal political?** This is a phrase feminisms are keen on – and with good reason; but so keen on it is almost trite. What does the phrase mean to you? Do you think its accurate?

C. Sara Evans, *Personal Politics*, Conclusion and Appendix, 212-242 (Reader)

#### March 15

A. Susan Boyd, *Challenging the Public/Private Divide*, Introduction, 3-33 (Reader)

B. Fiona Robinson, *Globalizing Care*, ch.5, 81-104

C. **Response Question 8, Due March 17: Do you think that this was a legitimate category on the syllabus? What good have I done you to teach you about women you will never hear of? If you were me, would you include this in the course? Why or why not?**

#### March 17, 22

*Presentations of Progress on Research Papers*

**March 24: Thursday posing as a Monday – go to someone else's class**

## **Women and Policies**

**March 29, 31**

Michele Swers, *The Difference Women Make: The Policy Impact of Women in Congress*.

**April 5**

- A. Margaret Conway, David Ahern, and Gertrude Steuernagel, *Women in Public Policy: A Revolution in Progress*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, ch.2, 17-38. (Reader)
- B. Stanlie M. James, "Shades of Othering: Reflections on Female Circumcision/Genital Mutilation" *Signs*, 23:4, 1031-48. (Reader)
- C. Andrea Dworkin, *Mercy*, 56-73. (Reader)
- D. **Response Question 9, Due April 7: Is there a such thing as a woman's policy issue? If so, who takes care of those when there are so few women in government?**

## **III. Women's Theories of Women in Politics**

**April 7**

Skim *thoroughly*, Rosemarie Tong, *Feminist Thought*

**April 12**

- A. Nancy Harstock, "The Feminist Standpoint," in Linda Nicholson, ed., *The Second Wave*, 216-240. (Reader)
- B. Catherine MacKinnon, *Towards a Feminist Theory of the State*, ch.12, 215-236. (Reader)
- C. R. W. Connell, *Masculinities*, ch.3, 67-86

**April 14**

- A. Chandra Mohanty, "Under Western Eyes" (Reader)

**April 19**

- A. Spike Peterson and Anne Sisson Runyan, *Global Gender Issues*, ch.2, 21-68. (Reader)
- B. Betty Reardon, *Sexism and the War System*, ch.2, 10-36. (Reader)
- C. **Response Question 10, Due April 21: Repeat Response Question 1 incorporating what you have learned from the course.**

**April 21: Review**

**Final Paper Due: May 2, 10AM**

**Final Exam: May 3, 6-9 PM**

**I will have additional office hours to be announced during exam study time and paper preparation time. Feel free to email whenever, as well. While coming to my office hours is not required, it will be much easier for me to grade papers I have heard about before receiving. In this spirit, I'd like you to consult with me about them.**