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## **UCLA Historical Journal**

### **Title**

Introduction: Women, Gender & History

### **Permalink**

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/4mf9m00h>

### **Journal**

UCLA Historical Journal, 14(0)

### **Author**

Woodsum, Jo Ann

### **Publication Date**

1994

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# Introduction: Women, Gender & History

JO ANN WOODSUM

**T**WO YEARS AGO, the *UCLA Historical Journal* published the first in a series of special issues. That issue focused on indigenous language texts in the Spanish Americas and grew out of the expertise in that field of UCLA graduate students. The authors examined indigenous language texts in order to uncover native perspectives on the Spanish Conquest as well as to elucidate the structure of indigenous gender roles and sexualit(ies).<sup>1</sup> This special issue of the *Journal* is devoted to historical studies of women and gender. The history department at UCLA has a distinguished faculty who specialize in women's and gender history. These faculty in turn are training a generation of graduate students, many of whom are contributors to this volume. Volume 15 of the *Journal* will contain a section dedicated to the topic of postmodernism and history.



The field of women's history is now firmly established in the academy and rests on a solid foundation of over two decades of scholarship. As a result of the Women's movement of the 1970s, feminist historians began to question traditional historical narratives which rarely mentioned women or their achievements.<sup>2</sup> One of the first tasks of these historians was to recover women's contributions to history by publishing women's diaries and letters and reprinting works by women who were well-known in their day but had not entered the canon of history.<sup>3</sup> Women's historians also questioned standard historical periodization,<sup>4</sup> and redefined history to include activities traditionally associated with women's domestic roles.<sup>5</sup> These histories of women's lives within the private sphere dem-

onstrated on the one hand that women's work was integral to family and local economies and on the other that women manipulated rhetoric about their role in the private sphere (e.g., as mothers) to influence the public sphere (i.e., the world outside the home such as politics and commerce usually associated with men in Western cultures).<sup>6</sup> Historians of women then began to interrogate the relationship between the private and public spheres and questioned the validity of the separation of these spheres in various historical contexts.<sup>7</sup> Historians of women also began to examine the varied experiences of women in such public arenas as education,<sup>8</sup> religion,<sup>9</sup> politics,<sup>10</sup> war,<sup>11</sup> medicine,<sup>12</sup> labor,<sup>13</sup> crime,<sup>14</sup> and landscape.<sup>15</sup> By placing women at the center of the historical frame, these historians have significantly revised accepted interpretations about the past. In addition, historians of women created new topics of historical study by examining relationships between women of similar class backgrounds<sup>16</sup> as well as across racial<sup>17</sup>, ethnic<sup>18</sup> and national boundaries.<sup>19</sup>

During the 1980s, women's historians began to grapple with gender as a social construction—even questioning whether women's history *per se* should exist at all or whether the time had come to shift away from the paradigm of isolating women and their achievements to a paradigm which examined the dynamic ways in which women's and men's social roles as well as definitions of masculinity and femininity vary across cultures and through time.<sup>20</sup> Many historians now point to Joan Scott's 1986 essay "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis" as their starting point for defining gender:

gender is a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes, and gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power.<sup>21</sup>

Studies which take gender as their primary theoretical lens have encouraged historians to question the state's role in structuring gender roles<sup>22</sup>, the gendered nature of nationalist movements,<sup>23</sup> imperialism<sup>24</sup> and colonialism<sup>25</sup>, the differences in the religious experiences of men and women<sup>26</sup>, the ways in which the language of science has been used to construct women's and men's "essential" and "opposite" biological natures<sup>27</sup>, the relationship between popular representations of women's bodies and their social, political and economic status<sup>28</sup>, and the role of gender in the production of knowledge<sup>29</sup> including feminist theory.<sup>30</sup> Thus an examination of gender, many historians now argue, changes the way we perceive an entire historical period. As one group of historians wrote in their introduction to a recent anthology on gender and Chinese history:

adding women to the social and historical picture, and highlighting gender as a cat-

egory of analysis, changes the whole. China viewed through the lens of gender is not just more inclusive; it is different. By proposing to “engender China,” we make the claim that research on women and gender does not rest in a corner of sociological endeavors, but revises the most basic categories through which we strive to apprehend Chinese social relations, institutions, and cultural productions.<sup>31</sup>



Women’s history and gender history are frequently viewed as antagonistic.<sup>32</sup> Borrowing heavily from poststructuralist theories of language, gender theorists have argued that women as a category is always created and that this creation is always intimately linked with systems of power.<sup>33</sup> Jane Flax explains that poststructuralist theory makes “us skeptical about the ideas concerning truth, knowledge, power, history, self, and language that are often taken for granted within and serve as legitimations for contemporary Western culture.”<sup>34</sup> However, some women’s historians interpret gender theory as a rejection of material experience as a factor in women’s identity formation.<sup>35</sup> For example, many historians of women of color argue that the history and theory of women of color must be based on the life experiences of their subjects. Patricia Hill Collins argues that her experiences as a black woman are critical to feminist theory formation because Black women “are the only group that has experienced race, gender, and class oppression as Black women experience them.”<sup>36</sup> These scholars believe that it is crucial to their projects to validate women’s experiences of the world because those experiences have so often been ignored in historical practice. Historians of women of color and Euro-American women have also pointed out that just at the moment in which they are gaining ground in the academy and producing their own histories, the very notion of “woman” as a category has been called into question.<sup>37</sup>

I believe that the articles in this volume indicate that women’s history and gender history are eminently compatible. These articles each share a focus on women’s experience illuminated by sophisticated use of gender analysis. They point to a future historiography in which the two fields may successfully merge without losing an emphasis on women.<sup>38</sup> An emphasis on women in gender studies will be necessary until we have parity in research on men’s and women’s historical experience. However, as Françoise Thébaud commented in an introductory essay for a history of twentieth century Western women, “this history of women therefore has a subtext: that men, too, are gendered individuals.”<sup>39</sup>

In a recent essay, Linda Nicholson advocated thinking about:

the meaning of *woman* as illustrating a map of intersecting similarities and differences. Within such a map, the body does not disappear but rather becomes a historically specific variable whose meaning and import are recognized as potentially different in different historical contexts. Such a suggestion, in assuming that meaning is found rather than presupposed, also suggests that the search itself is not a research/political project that an individual scholar will be able to accomplish alone in her study. Rather, it implies an understanding of such a project as necessarily a collective effort undertaken by many in dialogue.<sup>40</sup>

We, the editorial board of the *Journal*, are proud to offer this volume as part of this on-going project and dialogue.



Allison Sneider's essay, "The Impact of Empire on the North American Woman Suffrage Movement: Suffrage Racism in an Imperial Context," tests the limits of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan Anthony's beliefs in women's equality and right to vote by examining their views on the annexation of Hawaii and the Philippines. Sneider argues that Stanton and Anthony were caught between their racist assumptions about colonized peoples and their goal of women's suffrage. Sneider concludes that their appeal to Congress to grant suffrage to Hawaiian and Philippine women was ultimately motivated by their desire to gain women's suffrage in the newly-acquired territories in order to bolster their argument for women's suffrage in the States.

Susan Englander's article, "The Science of Protection: Gender-based Legal Arguments for the Ten-Hour Work Day," and my article, "From Civilized to Savage: Changing Euro-American Perceptions of Pueblo Gender Roles and Sexuality, 1850-1920," each examine the ways in which law was deployed to promote certain ideas about men and women's biological nature. Englander traces the juridical deployment of science to construct women's and men's bodies to gain legal protections in the workplace. I demonstrate the way in which expert and anthropological definitions of native gender and sexuality were utilized by judges to rationalize classifying Pueblo peoples as uncivilized and therefore subject to intense Euro-American intervention to re-order Pueblo gender roles.

Carol Cini's article, "From British Women's WWI Suffrage Battle to the League of Nations Covenant: Conflicting Uses of Gender in the Politics of Millicent Garrett Fawcett," explores the tension in Fawcett's definition of women as innately anti-war, pro-peace and her desire to cast women as patriotic, pro-

war (and thus deserving of the vote) during World War I.

Kate Cannon's article, "The Separate Spheres of the State: Mobilization Rhetoric and Public Policy Objectives During World War II," reviews U.S. policies aimed at mobilizing women into the wartime workforce. Throughout the war effort, Cannon argues, policymakers held conflicting ideals about women workers. For example, rhetoric which suggested the effectiveness of women in the workplace ("equal pay for equal work") angered conservatives who feared women would be unwilling to return to their homes after the war.

Jennifer Kalish's article, "Spouse-devouring Black Widows and Their Neutered Mates: Postwar Suburbanization—A Battle Over Domestic Space," provides insight into the standard historiography of the suburbs and their impact on gender roles. In her analysis of anti-suburban literature of the 1950s, she argues that the suburbs were constructed as a female space where men lost their masculinity. Kalish concludes that such diverse sources as sociological treatises, popular fiction, and a well-known mental health survey of suburbia all shared a profound discomfort with the suburban home because it was a female-dominated space.

In her study of Tupperware and Tupperware hostesses, "Parties Are the Answer': Gender, Modernity and Material Culture," Alison Clarke argues that U.S. suburban women were able to use Tupperware parties as a way of empowering themselves. Clarke grapples with one of the classic paradigms of modern economic theory which defined the private sphere as non-economic and the public sphere as economic. Clarke contributes to feminist critiques of modern economic theory by arguing that women—through Tupperware parties and sales—created a "domestic" economy centered in the home.

Lisa Materson's article "Sisterhood, Ideology, and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom: Formulating Policy on the Arab-Israeli Conflict During the 1960s and 1970s" examines efforts on the part of women to work together on an international scale. Materson notes that despite women's belief in promoting world peace, nationalism and cultural difference divided women.

Lisa Hopkins' essay, "Elizabeth I Amongst the Women," and Sangeeta Gupta's essay, "The Ambiguity of the Historical Position of Hindu Women in India: Sita, Draupadi and the Laws of Manu," each examine a particular country's mythic constructs in order to re-read women's agency. Hopkins notes that Queen Elizabeth I—introduced to all British children through their first reader—is a significant role model for girls and for her in particular. Despite her status as role model, Elizabeth I has typically been painted by historians as a misogynist. Hopkins re-reads the legendary tales about Elizabeth I's rivalry with women to

demonstrate Elizabeth's powers as a strategist during a time when her throne was constantly endangered and provides numerous examples of Elizabeth's affection for women. Gupta argues that the Hindu epics, *Ramayana* and *Mahabharatha*, have traditionally been interpreted as defining a subordinate role for Indian women. She re-examines the life of Sita (a prominent female figure in the epics) and provides a feminist reinterpretation for Sita's actions in the hopes of empowering Indian women.

In her article, "Exceptions to the Rule: German Women in Music in the Eighteenth Century," Christine Colin takes issue with the standard historiography of Western European music and argues that this canon has overlooked a large group of extremely talented women composers and musicians. She suggests some of the reasons why it was difficult for women to succeed in music, in particular she notes the class constructions of gender which prescribed music as a hobby for women and an art form for men. Colin begins and ends her article with a call for additional research on women musicians and composers in order to provide a more complete picture of music history.

Elizabeth Townsend's article, "'This is the world I create': A Review Essay on Current First World War Scholarship," analyzes the historiography of British women and World War I. In addition to the enormous project of recovering primary texts documenting women's experiences during the War, Townsend notes the recent increase in historical studies demonstrating the ways in which women actively participated in the war effort.

Amy Thomas explores recent works in the field of Chinese women's and gender history in her essay "Women and Gender in Late Imperial and Republican China: Problems and Promise of Recent Western Historiography." Thomas concludes that the balanced use of gender theory to analyze Chinese women's experiences holds the most promise for the field.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS: I wish to express my heartfelt appreciation to Michelle Meyers who read numerous drafts of this Introduction. In addition to her endless patience, her critical insights were crucial in clarifying my thoughts and beliefs about history, women and gender. I also wish to thank Annelise Orleck who provided thoughtful criticism as I was finalizing this Introduction for publication. Finally, I am deeply indebted to each of the contributors to this special issue. Their essays made me re-think many of my assumptions about the current state of historical studies of women and gender.

#### NOTES

1. See, e.g., Matthew Restall & Pete Sigal, "May They Not Be Fornicators Equal to These Priests': Postconquest Yucatec Maya Sexual Attitudes" *UCLA Historical Journal* 12 (1992): 91-121; Kimberly Gauderman, "Father Fiction: The Construction of Gender in England, Spain and the Andes" *UCLA Historical Journal* 12 (1992): 122-151.

2. For a review of the early days of U.S. feminist historians and their relationship to activism as well as their efforts to challenge/revise male-dominated historical practice, see Judith Zinsser, *History & Feminism: A Glass Half Full* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1993). As Zinsser points out, many scholars now point to the 1969 publication of Gerda Lerner's essay, "New Approaches to the Study of Women in American History" as an inaugural moment in the history of (second wave) women's history. Zinsser, *History & Feminism*, 27. Gerda Lerner, "New Approaches to the Study of Women in American History," *The Journal of Social History* 3 (Fall 1969): 53-62. Cf. Lise Vogel, "Telling Tales: Historians of Our Own Lives" *Journal of Women's History* 2 (Winter 1991): 89-101.
3. In the field of U.S. Women's history, see for example, Gerda Lerner, *The Female Experience: An American Documentary* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Educational Publishing, 1977); Dorothy Sterling, ed., *We Are Your Sisters: Black Women in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1984). Mary Wollstonecraft and Charlotte Perkins Gilman, two important Western feminist forerunners, were among the first feminist forerunners to be "discovered". Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, ed. Carol Poston. 1792 (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1975) & Charlotte Perkins Gilman, *Women and Economics: The Economic Factor Between Men and Women as A Factor in Social Evolution*, ed., Carl Degler. 1898 (New York: Harper & Row, 1966).
4. Joan Kelly-Godal, "Did Women Have a Renaissance?" in Renate Bridenthal & Claudia Koonz, eds., *Becoming Visible: Women in European History* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1977): 137-164.
5. Laurel Thatcher Ulrich's *Good Wives* and more recently *A Midwife's Tale* exemplify this tradition. Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *Good Wives: Image and Reality in the Lives of Women in Northern New England, 1650-1750* (New York: Vintage Books, 1980) & *A Midwife's Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard Based on Her Diary, 1785-1812* (New York: Vintage Books, 1990).
6. On women's contribution to family and local economies, see, e.g., Ulrich, *A Midwife's Tale*. On women's manipulation of their roles as mothers to influence the public sphere, see, e.g., Linda Kerber, *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980).
7. For an overview of the "separate spheres" paradigm in the U.S. field, see, e.g., Linda Kerber, "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Women's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History" *Journal of American History* 75 (June 1988): 9-39.
8. See, e.g., Devon Mihesuah, *Cultivating the Rosebuds: the Education of Women at the Cherokee Female Seminary, 1851-1909* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993).
9. See, e.g., Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880-1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993).
10. See, e.g., Ellen DuBois, *Feminism and Suffrage: The Emergence of an Independent Women's Movement in America, 1848-1869* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978); Jo Fisher, *Out of the Shadows: Women, Resistance and Politics in South America* (London: Latin American Bureau, 1993); Cora Ann Presley, *Kikuyu Women, The Mau Mau Rebellion, and Social Change in Kenya* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992).
11. See, e.g., Valerie Matsumoto, "Nisei Women and Resettlement During World War II" in Asian Women United of California, ed., *Making Waves: An Anthology of Writings By and About Asian American Women* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989): 115-126.
12. See, e.g., Regina Morantz-Sanchez, *Sympathy and Science: Women Physicians in American Medicine* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985); Elaine Showalter, *The Female Malady: Women, Madness and English Culture, 1830-1980* (London: Virago, 1985).
13. See, e.g., Vicki Ruiz, *Cannery Women, Cannery Lives: Mexican Women, Unionization, and the California Food Processing Industry, 1930-1950* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1987); Evelyn Glenn, *Issei, Nisei, War Bride: Three Generations of Japanese American Women in*



- Domestic Service* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986).
14. See, e.g., Lucia Zedner, *Women, Crime and Custody in Victorian England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Estelle Freedman, *Their Sisters' Keepers: Women's Prison Reform in America, 1830-1930* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1981); Edward Berenson, *The Trial of Madam Caillaux* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).
  15. See, e.g., Annette Kolodny, *The Land Before Her: Fantasy and Experience of the American Frontiers, 1630-1860* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984).
  16. Carol Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual" originally published in 1975 in *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture & Society* and republished in her collected essays, *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985): 53-76. One group of historians of women has begun to produce excellent histories of lesbian communities. Notable recent works include: Elizabeth Kennedy & Madeline Davis, *Boots of Leather, Slippers of Gold: The History of a Lesbian Community* (New York: Routledge, 1993); Lillian Faderman, *Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers: A History of Lesbian Life in Twentieth Century America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991).
  17. See, e.g., Elizabeth Fox-Genevieve, *Within the Plantation Household: Black and White Women of the Old South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988); Glenda Riley, *Women and Indians on the Frontier, 1825-1915* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984).
  18. See, e.g., Peggy Pascoe, *Relations of Rescue: The Search for Female Moral Authority in the American West, 1874-1939* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).
  19. See, e.g., Jane Hunter, *The Gospel of Gentility: American Women Missionaries in Turn-of-the-Century China* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984).
  20. This development is most apparent in the recent plethora of journals with the word gender in the title. For example, *Gender & History* founded in 1989 stated in its inaugural issue: "The integration of the experiences, languages, and perspectives of women into our understandings of the past, therefore, requires a fundamental transformation of received categories and models of thinking, as well as new conceptualization of the very definition of historical study and of the nature of those who have the power to define it." Editorial Collective, "Editorial: Why Gender and History?" *Gender & History* 1 (Spring 1989): 1-6, 4.
  21. Joan Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History* (NY: Columbia University Press, 1988), 42. See also, Denise Riley, "Am I That Name?": *Feminism and the Category of "Women" in History* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988).
  22. See, e.g., Linzi Manicom, "Ruling Relations: Rethinking State and Gender in South African History" *Journal of African History* 33 (1992): 441-465; Laura Engelstein, *The Keys to Happiness: Sex and the Search for Modernity in Fin-de-Siècle Russia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992); Kathryn Bernhardt, "Women and the Law: Divorce in the Republican Period" in Kathryn Bernhardt & Philip Huang, eds., *Civil Law in Qing and Republican China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994): 187-214; Nikki Keddie & Beth Baron, eds., *Women in Middle Eastern History: Shifting Boundaries in Sex & Gender* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991).
  23. See, e.g., Barbara Bair, "True Women, Real Men: Gender Ideology, and Social Roles in the Garvey Movement" in Dorothy Helly & Susan Reverby, eds., *Gendered Domains: Rethinking Public and Private in Women's History* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992): 154-166; Gisela Bock, "Nazi Gender Policies and Women's History" in Françoise Thébaud, ed., *A History of Women in the West: Toward a Cultural Identity in the Twentieth Century* vol. V (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1994): 149-176. See, also, the recent special issues of *Gender & History* and *Feminist Review* on the topic of gender and nationalism and national identities. The articles in *Gender & History* arose in response to Benedict Anderson's influential *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (1983) in which Anderson failed to examine the ways in which nations and nationalism are gendered. Catherine Hall, Jane Lewis, Keith McClelland & Jane Rendall, "Introduction" *Gender &*

- History* 5 (Summer 1993): 159-164; *Feminist Review* 44 (Summer 1993).
24. See, e.g., Amy Kaplan, "Romancing the Empire: The Embodiment of American Masculinity in the Popular Historical Novel of the 1890s" *American Literary History* 2 (Winter 1990): 659-690.
  25. Ann Stoler, "Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Gender, Race and Power in Colonial Asia" in Micaela di Leonardo, ed., *Gender at the Crossroads of Knowledge: Feminist Anthropology in the Postmodern Era* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991): 51-101; Ann Curthoys, "Identity Crisis: Colonialism, Nation and Gender in Australian History" *Gender & History* 5 (Summer 1993): 165-176; Jenny Sharpe, "The Unspeakable Limits of Rape: Colonial Violence and Counter-Insurgency" in Patrick Williams & Laura Chrisman, eds., *Colonial Discourse and Postcolonial Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994): 221-243.
  26. See, e.g., Carol Devons, *Countering Colonization: Native American Women and Great Lakes Missions, 1630-1900* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992); Karen Anderson, *Chain Her By One Foot: The Subjugation of Native Women in Seventeenth-Century New France* (New York: Routledge, 1991).
  27. See, e.g., Sally Shuttleworth, "Female Circulation: Medical Discourse and Popular Advertising in the Mid-Victorian Era" in Mary Jacobus, Evelyn Fox Keller & Sally Shuttleworth, eds., *Body/Politics: Women and the Discourse of Science* (New York & London: Routledge, 1990): 47-68.
  28. See, e.g., Miriam Silverberg, "The Modern Girl as Militant" in Gail Lee Bernstein, ed., *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600-1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991): 239-266; Rose Marie San Juan, "The Queen's Body and Its Slipping Mask: Contesting Portraits of Queen Christina of Sweden" in Shirley Neuman & Glennis Stephenson, eds., *Reimagining Women: Representations of Women in Culture* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993): 19-44; K. Sue Jewell, *From Mammy to Miss America and Beyond: Cultural Images and the Shaping of U.S. Social Policy* (New York: Routledge, 1993).
  29. Donna Haraway, *Primate Visions: Gender, Race, and Nature in the World of Modern Science* (New York: Routledge, 1989).
  30. Uzoma Esonwanne, "Feminist Theory and the Discourse of Colonialism" in Shirley Neuman & Glennis Stephenson, eds., *Reimagining Women: Representations of Women in Culture* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993): 233-255; Ruth Frankenberg & Lata Mani, "Crosscurrents, Crosstalk: Race, 'Postcoloniality' and the Politics of Location" *Cultural Studies* 7 (May 1993): 292-310.
  31. Christina K. Gilmartin, Gail Hershatter, Lisa Rofel & Tyrene White, eds., *Engendering China: Women, Culture, and the State* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994), 2.
  32. For an excellent summary of the contours of this debate, see Sonya O. Rose, "Gender History/Women's History: Is Feminist Scholarship Losing Its Critical Edge" *Journal of Women's History* 5 (Spring 1993): 89-101.
  33. It is beyond the scope of this essay to discuss the relationship between poststructuralism and feminist theory, for an excellent introduction see Chris Weedon, *Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory* (Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell Inc., 1987) and Linda Nicholson, ed., *Feminism/Postmodernism* (New York: Routledge, 1990).
  34. Jane Flax, *Thinking Fragments: Psychoanalysis, Feminism & Postmodernism in the Contemporary West* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 29.
  35. See, for example, Louise Newman, "Critical Theory and the History of Women: What's at Stake in Deconstructing Women's History" *Journal of Women's History* 2 (Winter 1991): 58-68, 58-59.
  36. Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1990), 33. See also, bell hooks, *Black Looks: Race and Representation* (Boston: South End Press, 1992).

37. See, e.g. Barbara Christian, "The Race for Theory" *Cultural Critique* 6 (Spring 1987): 51-63; Nancy Hartsock, "Foucault on Power: A Theory for Women," in Nicholson, *Feminism/Postmodernism*, 163-64. These historians note the alarming way in which poststructuralist theories of gender are divorced of any political content. For example, Joan Hoff has sounded a cautionary note about gender studies, "by erasing "woman" as an independent category of analysis and replacing it with gender, poststructuralism also defers the growth of feminism within academic circles." Joan Hoff, "Gender as a Postmodern Category of Paralysis" *Women's Studies International Forum* 17 (July-August 1994): 443-447, 446.
38. Louise Newman has also suggested that women's and gender history may converge. Newman, "Critical Theory and the History of Women".
39. Françoise Thébaud, "Explorations of Gender" in Françoise Thébaud, ed., *A History of Women in the West: Toward a Cultural Identity in the Twentieth Century* vol. V (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1994): 1-13, 5. Jane Flax warns that "to the extent that feminist discourse defines its problematic as 'woman', it, too, ironically privileges the man as unproblematic or exempted from determination by gender relations." Jane Flax, "Postmodernism and Gender Relations in Feminist Theory" in Nicholson, *Feminism/Postmodernism*, 45.
40. Linda Nicholson, "Interpreting Gender," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 20 (1994): 79-105, 101-102.

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- can Bureau, 1993.
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- . *Thinking Fragments: Psychoanalysis, Feminism & Postmodernism in the Contemporary West*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990.
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