



Gendered Lives

Intersectional Perspectives

SEVENTH EDITION

Gwyn Kirk
Margo Okazawa-Rey

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GENDERED LIVES: INTERSECTIONAL PERSPECTIVES

SEVENTH EDITION

GWYN KIRK AND MARGO OKAZAWA-REY

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women who birthed us, raised us,
taught us, inspired us, held us to high standards, and loved us
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We also honor Eiko Matsuoka, our extraordinary Bay Area mother,
and the late Maha Abu-Dayyeh, visionary feminist and human rights
defender, who dedicated her life to the liberation of Palestine and
Palestinian women.*

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PREFACE

An introductory course is perhaps the most challenging women's and gender studies (WGS) course to conceptualize and teach. Depending on their overall goals for the course, instructors must make difficult choices about what to include and what to leave out. Students come into the course for a variety of reasons and with a range of expectations and prior knowledge, and most will not major in WGS. The course may fulfill a distribution requirement for them, or it may be a way of taking one course during their undergraduate education out of a personal interest in gender. For majors and minors, the course plays a very different role, offering a foundation for their area of study.

This text started out as two separate readers that we used in our classes at Antioch College (Gwyn Kirk) and San Francisco State University (Margo Okazawa-Rey) in the mid-1990s. Since then, we have learned a lot about teaching an introductory course, and the book has grown and developed as understandings of gender—and the wider political climate—have changed.

Women's and gender studies programs continue to build their reputations in terms of academic rigor and scholarly standards. WGS scholarship is on the cutting edge of many disciplines and interdisciplinary fields, especially in the arts, humanities, and social sciences. At the same time, it occupies a marginal position within academia, challenging male-dominated knowledge and pedagogy, with all the pressures that entails. WGS faculty and allies live with these tensions personally and professionally. Outside the academy, government policies and economic changes have made many people's lives more difficult. This includes the loss of factory and office work as jobs continue to be moved overseas or become automated; government failure to introduce and support adequate health care and child care systems; cuts in various social-service programs and funding for education; hostility toward and greater restriction of government support, when available, to immigrants and their families; large numbers of people incarcerated; and vast expenditures on war and preparations for war.

In the past decade, the political climate for WGS on campuses and in the wider society has become more challenging as conservative viewpoints have gained ground through political rhetoric and the narrow range of public discourse. In addition, a slow erosion of academic freedom on campuses has made many teachers' lives more difficult. Increasingly, faculty may face challenges to their teaching methods and course content; their work may be written off as "biased," unscholarly, or politically motivated (Nisenson 2017). Also, academic institutions have become increasingly beholden

to corporate funding and values. Budget cuts, department mergers, and the fact that more than two-thirds of faculty are on part-time or temporary contracts these days all affect the organization and viability of interdisciplinary programs like WGS.

The current Federal administration's destruction of already inadequate "safety nets," contempt for the natural environment, support for overtly racist, sexist, trans- and homophobic attacks, and the daily circulation of distortions, half-truths, and outright lies all challenge us profoundly. This is not new, especially for indigenous people on this continent, for other communities of color, and for those in subjugated nations, but it has become starker, more clear-cut, and increasingly affects many of us with relative access and privilege. What to think? Where to focus? How to respond to one crisis after another? As students, how to support your friends, peers, and families as they experience direct and indirect impacts? As faculty, how to support students trying to find their footing in this maelstrom?

We believe that our job as feminist scholars and teachers is to think big, to help provide spaces where students can think clearly and face current challenges. The strong tradition of organizing for social justice in the United States needs to be much better known, as well as the many efforts underway today. They provide lessons, models, and inspiration. We cannot afford to despair or to nurture despair in others. We must remember the gains made in the past and continue to work for and hold out the possibility of progressive change even as past gains are being attacked and unraveled. A silver lining in this turbulent time is that even as some political spaces are being closed down, new social movements are opening up others.

WHAT WE WANT IN AN INTRODUCTORY WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES BOOK

As teachers, we want to present a broad range of gendered experiences to students in terms of class, race, culture, national origin, dis/ability, age, sexuality, and gender identity and expression. We want teaching materials that do justice to the diversity of US women's lives—whether queer, femme, lesbian, gender nonconforming, or trans, as well as heterosexual and cisgender women. We also want materials that address the location of the United States in a globalizing world. We include some discussion of theory because a basic understanding of theoretical frameworks is a powerful tool, not only for WGS courses but also for other courses students take. We also emphasize activism. There are many women's and LGBTQI activist and advocacy projects across the United States, but students may not know about them. Much of the information that students learn in WGS may be discouraging, but knowing what people are doing to support each other and to promote feminist values and concerns can be empowering, even in the face of sometimes daunting realities. This knowledge reinforces the idea that current inequalities and problems are not fixed but have the potential to be changed.

LINKING INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCES TO NATIONAL AND TRANSNATIONAL TRENDS AND ISSUES

We are both trained in sociology, and we have noted that students coming into our classes are much more familiar with psychological explanations for behaviors and experiences than they are with structural explanations. People in the United States tend

to see inequality and injustice in terms of low self-esteem, poor identity development, learned helplessness, or the work of a few “bad apples” that spoil the barrel. Students invariably enjoy first-person accounts of life experiences, but a series of stories—even wonderfully insightful stories—are not enough to understand the circumstances and forces that shape people’s lives. Accordingly, we provide a broader context for the selected readings in the overview essays that open each chapter.

We recognize that many women in the United States—especially white, cisgendered women in higher socioeconomic groups—have greater opportunities for self-expression, for earning a living, and for engagement in the wider world compared with in the past. However, humankind faces serious challenges in the twenty-first century: challenges regarding work and livelihood, personal and family relationships, violence on many levels, and the mounting pressures on the fragile natural environment. These issues raise major questions about personal and societal values and the distribution of resources. How is our society going to provide for people in the years to come? What are the effects of the increasing polarization between rich and poor in the United States and between richer and poorer nations? These themes of security and sustainability provide the wider framework for this book.

As teachers, we are concerned with students’ knowledge and understanding and, beyond that, with their aspirations, hopes, and values, as well as their fears. One of our goals for this book is to provide a series of lenses that will help students understand their own lives and the lives of others. A second goal is that through this understanding, students will be able to participate, in some way, in the creation of a genuinely secure and sustainable future.

NEW TO THE SEVENTH EDITION

This seventh edition of what was formerly *Women’s Lives: Multicultural Perspectives*, now renamed *Gendered Lives: Intersectional Perspectives*, has undergone a major revision. We rely on the analyses, principles, and style of earlier editions, but with substantial changes to take account of recent scholarship and events. Specific changes include:

- A greater emphasis on gender identity and gender variance to show how trans activists and scholars have challenged, unsettled, and transformed previous understandings of gender.
- An expanded chapter, “Creating Knowledge,” that includes greater discussion of media representations and the role of mass media in the creation of knowledge. In other chapters, we include several articles about media representations to further this discussion.
- Greater emphasis on the insights of dis/ability activists and scholarship, following new developments in this field in recent years.
- Inclusion of materials on Web-based information technologies, especially their impacts on sexualized violence, transnational surrogacy, and feminist organizing.
- Greater emphasis on the transnational and global levels of analysis, including attention to the impact of extractivism in the Global South, barriers to immigration in Europe and the United States, and effects of environmental destruction, war, and militarism worldwide.

- Updated statistics throughout, as well as updated information on activist organizations.
- In our overview essays, reference clusters on particular topics, often spanning years of feminist scholarship. As well as supporting the arguments we make, these also serve as suggestions for further reading.
- A revised and updated, password-protected Instructor's Manual—including alternative Tables of Contents for flexible use of the book—available on our companion website (www.oup.com/us/kirk-okazawa-rey).

A number of considerations, sometimes competing or contradictory, have influenced the decisions we made to ensure this edition meets our goals. Since the beginning, we have been committed to including the work of established scholars and lesser-known writers from a range of backgrounds. As in previous editions, we have looked for writers who integrate several levels of analysis (micro, meso, macro, and global) in their work. Students we have talked with, including those in our own classes, love first-person accounts, and such narratives help to draw them into more theoretical discussions. In our experience, teachers invariably want more theory, more history, and more research-based pieces.

As we searched for materials, we found much more theoretical work by white women in the US than by women of color. We assume this is because there are fewer women of color in the academy, because white scholars and writers have greater access to publishers, and because prevailing ideas about what theory is and what form it should take tend to exclude cross-genre work by women of color. This can give the misleading impression that aside from a few notable exceptions, women of color are not theorists. We have tried not to reproduce this bias in our selection, but we note this issue here to make this aspect of our process visible. We include personal essays and narratives that make theoretical points, what scholar and writer Gloria Anzaldúa (2002) called “autohistoriateoria”—a genre of writing about one’s personal and collective history that may use fictive elements and that also theorizes. In a similar vein, people living in the United States have limited access to writings by and about women and gender nonconforming people from the Global South, whether personal accounts, academic research, journalists’ reports, policy recommendations, or critiques of policies imposed by countries of the North. Relatively few scholars and fiction writers not working in English are published widely. Again, structural limitations of the politics of knowledge affect who has access to book publishers or websites and whose work may be translated for English-language readers.

This new edition represents our best effort to balance these considerations as we sought to provide information, analysis, and inspiration concerning the myriad daily experiences, opportunities, limitations, oppressions and fears, hopes, joys, and satisfactions that make up gendered lives.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many people—especially our students, teachers, colleagues, and friends—made it possible for us to complete the first edition of this book over twenty years ago. We acknowledge everyone at Mayfield Publishing who worked on our original manuscript: Franklin Graham, our editor, whose confidence in our ideas never wavered and whose light hand on the steering wheel and clear sense of direction got us into print; also Julianna Scott Fein, production editor; the production team; and Jamie Fuller, copy-editor extraordinaire. For the second edition, we were fortunate to have the support of colleagues and librarians at Hamilton College as well as the Mayfield production team led by editor Serina Beauparlant and assisted by Margaret Moore, another wonderful copyeditor.

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For this seventh edition, we are deeply indebted to Sherith Pankratz of Oxford University Press for the chance to revise and update this work. We are honored to work with her and acknowledge her encouragement, enthusiasm, skills, and deep commitment to publishing. Many thanks to Grace Li, Wesley Morrison, and Brad Rau for their production and copyediting work and to Lynn Mayo, Hamilton College librarian. Thanks also to those who reviewed the manuscript for this seventh edition: Padmini Banerjee, Delaware State University; Laura Brunell, Gonzaga University; Sara Diaz, Gonzaga University; Molly Ferguson, Ball State University; Meredith Heller, Northern Arizona University; Alison Kibler, Franklin and Marshall College; Rachel Lewis, George Mason University; Stella Oh, Loyola Marymount University; Harleen Singh, Brandeis University; Barbi Smyser-Fauble, Butler University; Katy Strzepak, St. Ambrose University; Deborah Wicking, Aquinas College; Tessa Ong Winkelmann, University of Nevada, Las Vegas; and two anonymous reviewers. We greatly appreciate their insights and suggestions.

As before, this new edition builds on the accumulated work, help, and support of many people. Thank you to Leslie Campos, Jonathan Grove, Deborah Lee, Loan Tran, and Mariko Uechi for writing new pieces for this edition. Thanks also to Judith

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The world continues to gain brilliant young feminist writers, teachers, organizers, and artists—some of whose work is included here. We also acknowledge the groundbreaking contributions made by an older generation of writers and scholars who have passed on: especially Gloria Anzaldúa, Grace Lee Boggs, Lorraine Hansberry, June Jordan, Melanie Kaye/Kantrovitz, Yuri Kochiyama, Audre Lorde, Grace Paley, Adrienne Rich, and Ntozake Shange.

Lastly, we acknowledge our friendship over twenty-five years, which has provided a deep foundation for our work together. We continue to be inspired by national treasures, Sweet Honey in the Rock, and the “sociological imagination”—C. Wright Mills’ touchstone concept—that draws on the need for complex social analysis in order to make change.

To everyone, very many thanks.

— Gwyn Kirk and Margo Okazawa-Rey

We have chosen each other
and the edge of each other's battles
the war is the same
if we lose
someday women's blood will congeal
upon a dead planet
if we win
there is no telling
we seek beyond history
for a new and more possible meeting.

—Audre Lorde

PART

I

Women's and Gender Studies

Knowing and Understanding

Untangling the “F”-word

Feminist Movements and Frameworks

The Focus of Women’s and Gender Studies

Collective Action for a Sustainable Future

The Scope of This Book

Questions for Reflection

Finding Out More on the Web

Taking Action

Readings

Keywords: capitalism, discrimination, feminism, genealogy, gender binary, heteronormativity, ideology, imperialism, intersectionality, liberalism, patriarchy, prejudice, socialism, transgender

Whether or not you consider yourself a feminist as a matter of personal identity, political perspective, or both, in women’s and gender studies courses you will study feminist perspectives because these seek to understand and explain inequalities based on gender. Fundamentally, feminism is about liberation from gender discrimination and other forms of **oppression**. For some people, this means securing equal rights within marriage, education, waged work, politics, law, or the military. For others, it means changing these institutions to create a secure and sustainable future for all. Still others focus on deconstructing or transforming the **gender binary**, the assumption that everyone fits neatly into one of two categories labeled male or female. Sociologist Judith Lorber (1991) argued that “the long-term goal of feminism must be . . . the eradication of gender as an organizing principle of . . . society” (p. 355) (see the box feature “Gender: What’s in a Name?”).

For many people, feminist thinking offers compelling ways to understand their lives, and feminist projects and campaigns have mobilized millions of people in the United States for over a century. Although serious gender inequalities remain, feminist theorizing and activism have achieved significant gains. Women in the United States have won the right to speak out on public issues, to vote, to own property in our own names, to divorce, and to have custody of our children. Women have been

Gender: What’s in a Name?

In recent years, **transgender** individuals and activists have challenged, unsettled, and transformed understandings of gender together with others who identify as gender variant, nonbinary, or gender nonconforming. They have opened up the possibility of gender fluidity as a site of experimentation or a source of personal authenticity. As a result, increasing numbers of people are not interested in identifying with what they see as rigid gender categories.

At an institutional level, gender is more fixed, though this is changing to some extent with the legalization of same-sex marriage, for example, and some states are issuing gender-neutral ID cards. However, most people in the USA live according to a male/female binary, some adamantly so. Others may not pay much attention to this issue unless gender markers are missing or ambiguous.

We note that people are using the language of sex and gender very differently and mean different things by

these terms. In this book, we straddle and bridge various gender paradigms and perspectives. We use *LGBTQI* (lesbian, gay, bi, trans, queer, and intersex) as a shorthand term for the range of people who question or repudiate heteronormativity, which we discuss more fully in Chapters 3 and 4. We use *woman* and *women* to include anyone who identifies as or is identified as female. This may include those who identify as queer, femme, butch, lesbian, gender nonconforming, and trans, as well as heterosexual and **cisgender** women (those whose **gender identity** is the same as they were assigned at birth). Please keep these definitions in mind as you read on and understand that definitions currently in use—both in this book and in the wider society—may change or be discarded in favor of new terminology. Definitions are always being contested and challenged as people’s thinking and practices develop.

able to attend college, become professionals, and learn skilled trades. Developments in birth control and reproductive technologies mean that women are freer to decide if and when to have a child. Also, changing social expectations mean that we can choose whether to marry and how to express our gender and sexuality. Gender-based violence, though still widespread, is now discussed openly. In 2017 and 2018, Hollywood celebrities, Congressional staffers, media workers, farmworkers, students, fashion models, and athletes spoke out about long-standing patterns of sexual harassment as part of the #MeToo and #TimesUp movements, which reverberated around the world (see Reading 59). *Time* magazine named these “silence breakers” as its 2017 Person of the Year. Some of the high-profile men named have faced real consequences: they have been forced to resign, fired, or prosecuted for these crimes.

These feminist movements illustrate shifts in public opinion and what is considered appropriate for women—in all our diversity—and for men or people who are male-identified. However, the term *feminism* carries a lot of baggage. For some, it is positive and empowering. For others, it conjures up negative images of females who do not shave their legs or are considered ugly according to dominant US standards of beauty. Some assume that feminists are white women, or lesbians, or man-haters, or all of the above. Feminist ideas and goals have been consistently distorted, trivialized, and mocked by detractors. In the nineteenth century, suffragists who campaigned for legal rights for women, including the right to vote, were caricatured as “mannish,” “castrators,” and “home-wreckers.” Over a century later, *Time* magazine published no fewer than 119 negative articles on feminism between the early 1970s and the mid-1990s (Jong 1998).

Antifeminist ideas continue to be a staple of right-wing talk shows and social media sites. In a well-known example, Rush Limbaugh maintained that “[f]eminism

was established to allow unattractive women easier access to the mainstream of pop culture” (Media Matters 2015). Feminists are ridiculed and written off as complaining, angry, and humorless. When women speak of gender-based violence—battering, rape, sexual assault, and child sexual abuse—or of racism, living in poverty, or aging without health care, detractors describe them as whining critics who are out to destroy men and the male establishment. In our society, most women are socialized to care for men and to spare their feelings, but acknowledging institutional inequalities between females and men as a group is very different from “man-bashing.” Many women are pushing back by critiquing antifeminist social media and calling out antifeminist perspectives (see, e.g., Cohn 2018; Lawrence and Ringrose 2018).

The claim that we are now living in a postfeminist era is part of the opposition to feminism. It involves a complex maneuver that recognizes the need for feminism in the past but declares that this is now over because it has been successful. Media critic Susan Douglas (2010) argued that even though “women’s achievements, or their desire for achievement, are simply part of the cultural landscape” (p. 9), many contemporary media images of women are

images of imagined power that mask, even erase, how much still remains to be done for girls and women, images that make sexism seem fine, even fun, and insist that feminism is now utterly pointless—even bad for you. (p. 6)

In this chapter, we introduce feminist ideas from different historical periods to highlight the diversity, breadth, and richness of feminist thinking in the United States. We hope this will help you to think about how you define feminism and what it means to you.

FEMINIST MOVEMENTS AND FRAMEWORKS

Many historians and commentators have divided US feminist movements into distinctive periods, described as waves. In this formulation, “**first wave feminism**” denotes efforts to gain legal rights for women, including the right to vote, dating from the 1840s to 1920. “**Second wave feminism**” refers to the feminist theorizing and organizing that flourished in the 1960s and 1970s. The next generation, in the 1990s, described themselves as “**third wave**” feminists. Some rejected what they knew of the feminism associated with their mothers’ generation; others emphasized continuities with earlier feminist work (see, e.g., Dicker and Piepmeier 2003; Findlen 1995; Labaton and Martin 2004).

Defining historical periods is highly selective, focusing attention on certain events or perspectives and downplaying or erasing others. The wave metaphor suggests both continuity and discontinuity with the past as feminists have shaped and reshaped theoretical understandings for their generation, circumstances, and time in history. Also, this approach makes complex movements seem much neater and more static than they really are. Historians Kathleen Laughlin and colleagues (2010) noted: “The waves metaphor entrenches the perception of a ‘singular’ feminism in which gender is the predominate category of analysis” (p. 77). It leaves out large areas of women’s activism, such as nineteenth-century movements of women workers in the New

England textile mills, or Black¹ women's opposition to slavery and lynching, and their struggles for economic improvement. As well as focusing on gender discrimination, women have campaigned for labor rights, civil rights, welfare rights, and immigrant rights, where gender is "tied to racial, class, religious, sexual, and other identities" (Boris 2010, p. 93).

Native American Antecedents

Among many possible pathways into US feminist thought, we chose Paula Gunn Allen's article about the "red roots of white feminism" (Reading 1). She discusses centuries-old practices that gave Native American women policy-making power in the Iroquois Confederation, especially the power to decide matters of peace and war. She lists various Native American principles that overlap with feminist and other progressive ideals: respect for women and their importance in society, respect for elders, an egalitarian distribution of goods and power, diverse ideas about beauty, cooperation among peoples, and respect for the earth. She emphasizes the importance in her community of knowing your ancestry and argues that all "feminists must be aware of our history on this continent"—a history that varies for different social and racial groups.

Legal Equality for Women

In the mid-nineteenth century, white middle-class women involved in the antislavery movement began to articulate parallels between systems of inequality based on race and gender. In 1840, Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton met at the World Anti-Slavery Convention in London. Both were passionately opposed to slavery and were shocked to find that women delegates were not allowed to speak at the convention (Schneir 1994). The irony of working against the system that enslaved people of African descent while experiencing discrimination as women prompted them to work for women's rights. In 1848, they called a Women's Rights Convention at Seneca Falls, New York, where Stanton lived. Stanton drafted the Declaration of Sentiments (Reading 2), modeled after the nation's foundational Declaration of Independence. This document, which was read and adopted at the convention, rallied women and men to the cause of legal equality for US women, and this issue was fiercely debated in newspapers, at public meetings, among churchgoers, in women's organizations, and at dinner tables nationwide.

Following the Civil War, three constitutional amendments—the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments—granted all men the right to vote but still allowed states to deny the vote to women. Suffragists split over whether to support the Fifteenth Amendment that enfranchised Black men. The American Woman Suffrage Association supported it and decided to campaign for women's suffrage state by state. Wyoming was the first territory to allow women the right to vote in 1869. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony did not support it. Rather, they formed the National Woman

¹ When referring to people, we use *Black* rather than *black*. Black is an identity forged in the context of struggles for self-respect. It replaced *Negro* in a particular moment of self-assertion and carries that history with it. Capitalized, it's a proper noun, a name; lowercase, it's just an adjective. *White* does not carry the same connotations, except in the case of White racist organizations. So, because of the history of racism and race relations in the United States, white and black are not equivalent.

Suffrage Association and worked for a constitutional amendment granting votes for women. In 1920, seventy-two years after the Seneca Falls convention, the Nineteenth Amendment to the US Constitution stopped states from denying women the right to vote. This success had taken enormous effort, focus, and dedication. It spanned the lives of generations of leaders and activists and included public education campaigns, lobbying, mass demonstrations, civil disobedience actions, arrests, and hunger strikes (see, e.g., Free 2015; McConnaughy 2013; Weiss 2018).

This dogged campaign for legal equality grew out of **liberalism**, a theory of individual rights and freedom with roots in seventeenth-century European ideas, especially the writings of political philosopher John Locke. Liberalism has been central to US political thinking since the founding of the nation, although political and legal rights were originally limited to white men who owned land and property. Achieving greater equality among people in the United States has been a long, uneven process marked by hard work, gains, and setbacks—and a process that is far from complete. (Some key events are detailed in the box feature “Milestones in US History: Institutionalizing and Challenging Social Inequalities.”)

Milestones in US History: Institutionalizing and Challenging Social Inequalities

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| <p>1565 Spanish settlers established the first European colony in what is now the state of Florida and called it St. Augustine.</p> <p>1584 Walter Raleigh founded Virginia, an English colony, at Roanoke Island.</p> <p>1605 A Spanish settlement was established at what is now Santa Fe, New Mexico.</p> <p>1607 Captain Christopher Newport of the London Company established an English colony at Jamestown, Virginia.</p> <p>1619 A Dutch “man of war” sailed into Jamestown harbor with twenty Africans on board; the captain sold his human cargo to the colonists.</p> <p>1691 The first legal ban on interracial marriages was passed in Virginia. Subsequently, other states prohibited whites from marrying Blacks; marriages between whites and Native Americans, Filipinos, and Asians, were also forbidden.</p> <p>1776 The Second Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence, written mostly by Thomas Jefferson and asserting that “all men are created equal.”</p> <p>1787 In order to ratify the Constitution of the United States, the 13 states negotiated a compromise. Southern states were allowed to count three out of every five enslaved people in determining the number of representatives to Congress, even though they were excluded from the electorate.</p> | <p>In a second compromise, the agreement that created the Senate gave less populous states more power than they would have had otherwise. These agreements enabled Southern senators to use their power to preserve slavery before the Civil War and Jim Crow during and after Reconstruction. Indian people were not counted for the purpose of Congressional representation because the US government designated the tribes as nation-like entities with whom they had to negotiate, as with foreign powers.</p> <p>1820 Missouri entered the Union as the twelfth slave state “balanced” by Maine as the twelfth free state. Slavery was banned in the Louisiana Territory (purchased from France in 1803 for approximately \$15 million).</p> <p>1830 Congress passed, the Indian Removal Act, which moved all Indian tribes from the southeastern United States to land west of the Mississippi River and granted them rights to these new lands “in perpetuity.”</p> <p>1834 The Department of Indian Affairs was established within the War Department to monitor the creation of reservations for Indian tribes. The Department was later transferred to the Department of the Interior as the Bureau of Indian Affairs.</p> <p>1848 The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ended the Mexican-American War (began in 1846). It</p> |
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- established the Rio Grande as the international boundary; ceded Texas to the United States together with Arizona, California, Nevada, and New Mexico; and guaranteed existing residents their land, language, culture, and US citizenship.
- The first Women's Rights Convention was held in Seneca Falls, New York. Delegates issued a Declaration of Sentiments, listing inequities faced by women and urging that women be given the right to vote (see Reading 2).
- 1857 In *Dred Scott v. Sandford*, the Supreme Court argued that as an enslaved man, Dred Scott was not a citizen and therefore had no standing to sue his master for his freedom even though he had been living in free territory for four years. To grant Scott's petition, the Court argued, would deprive his owner of property without compensation, violating the Fifth Amendment. This invalidated states' rights to determine whether slavery should be banned.
- 1863 Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation freeing slaves in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia.
- 1864 US military forces terrorized Indian nations. Navajo people endured the "long walk" to imprisonment at Fort Sumner (New Mexico Territory). US troops massacred Cheyenne warriors (supported by Kiowa, Apache, Comanche, and Arapahoe warriors) at Sand Creek.
- 1865 Following the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, the Civil War was ended after four years. Congress established the Freedmen's Bureau, responsible for relief to former slaves and those made destitute by the war. The Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution officially ended slavery and involuntary servitude.
- 1869 The first transcontinental railroad was completed. Chinese workers, allowed into the country to work on the railroad, experienced increased discrimination and "anti-Oriental" hysteria.
- 1870 Congress ratified the Fifteenth Amendment, which enfranchised Black men but permitted states to deny the vote to all women.
- Julia Ward Howe issued a Mother's Day Proclamation for peace.
- 1877 Ordered off their land in Oregon, the Nez Percé tribe attempted to flee to Canada, a trek of 1,600 miles, to avoid war with US troops. They were forced to surrender 40 miles short of the border and sent to Oklahoma, where many died.
- 1887 Congress passed the Dawes Act, providing for the dissolution of Indian tribes and division of tribal holdings among the members. Over the next fifty years, white settlers took nearly two-thirds of Indian land holdings by deceit and intimidation.
- 1896 In *Plessy v. Ferguson*, the Supreme Court validated a Louisiana law requiring Blacks and whites to ride in separate railroad cars. The law had been challenged as a violation of the Fourteenth Amendment's right of equal protection, but the majority opinion held that "separate but equal" satisfied the constitutional requirement. This decision led to a spate of segregation laws in southern states. From 1870 to 1900, twenty-two Black men served in Congress, but with the introduction of literacy tests, poll taxes, grandfather clauses, and white primaries, none were left by 1901.
- 1898 The United States declared war on Spain and acquired former Spanish colonial territories: the Philippines, Guam, Puerto Rico, and Cuba. Congress also approved US annexation of the Hawaiian Islands.
- 1919 Suffragists were arrested in Washington, DC for blocking sidewalks during a demonstration in support of women's right to vote.
- Fifteen thousand Black people marched silently down New York's Fifth Avenue, protesting lynching and discrimination against Blacks.
- The Jones Act granted full US citizenship to Puerto Ricans and the right to travel freely to the continental United States.
- 1920 The Women's Suffrage Amendment (Nineteenth Amendment) barred states from denying women the right to vote.
- 1924 The Indian Citizenship Act extended citizenship to Native Americans, previously defined as wards of the US government. As late as 1952, some states still denied Indians voting rights.
- 1935 The National Labor Relations Act protected the right of workers to organize into unions. The Social Security Act established entitlements to government assistance in the form of pensions and health benefit programs.
- 1941 Congress declared war on Japan, Italy, and Germany.
- 1942 President Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066, permitting military authorities to evacuate 110,000 people of Japanese ancestry (mostly US

citizens) from West Coast states and incarcerate them in isolated locations.

The Bracero Program permitted Mexican citizens to work in agricultural areas in the United States on a temporary basis and at lower wages than US workers.

- 1945 World War II ended after the United States dropped atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.
- 1954 In *Brown v. Board of Education*, the Supreme Court reversed its *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision and declared that segregated schools were inherently unequal. In 1955, the Court ordered the desegregation of schools "with all deliberate speed."
- 1963 The Equal Pay Act mandated that men and women doing the same work must receive the same pay.
- To gain public support for a comprehensive civil rights law, 250,000 people participated in a March on Washington.
- 1964 Congress passed the most comprehensive Civil Rights Act in the history of the nation. Under Title VII, employment discrimination was prohibited on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.
- 1965 The Voting Rights Act ended the use of literacy tests as a prerequisite for voting.
- 1972 Congress passed the Equal Rights Amendment and sent it to the states for ratification. It had been introduced in every session since 1923.
- 1973 The Rehabilitation Act (Section 504) prohibited discrimination against people with disabilities in programs that receive federal financial assistance.
- 1975 The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act guaranteed children with disabilities a free, appropriate public education.
- 1982 The Equal Rights Amendment failed, being ratified by thirty-five rather than the required minimum of thirty-eight states. Subsequent efforts to revive this campaign have not been successful.
- 1990 The Americans with Disabilities Act prohibited discrimination on the basis of disability by employers, public accommodations, state and local governments, public and private transportation, and in telecommunications.

1994 The Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act legislated mandatory life imprisonment for persons convicted in federal court of a "serious violent felony" and who had two or more prior convictions in federal or state courts, at least one of which was a "serious violent felony" (the "three strikes" law). The other prior offense may be a "serious drug offense." States adopted similar laws.

1996 The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act replaced families' entitlement to government assistance with Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, a time-limited work-based program.

The Defense of Marriage Act forbade the federal government from recognizing same-sex or polygamous marriages under any circumstances and stipulated that no state, city, or county is required to recognize a marriage between persons of the same sex even if the marriage is recognized in another state.

- 2001 The Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act (USA Patriot Act) greatly increased law enforcement agencies' powers of detention, search, and surveillance. It permitted expanded use of secret searches and allowed financial institutions to monitor daily transactions and academic institutions to share information about students.
- 2015 A Supreme Court ruling allowed same-sex marriage in all 50 states.
- 2017 President Trump signed executive orders that restricted entry of refugees to the United States and citizens of various Muslim-majority countries, including Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen.
- 2018 New immigration guidelines separated children from parents or other adults at the US-Mexico border. This included families applying for asylum. Due to immense public pressure, these guidelines were suspended after more than 2,300 children had been separated from their parents (see Reading 44).

Primary source: A. Hernandez (1975, 2002). Also see the box feature "A Timeline of Key U.S. Immigration Law and Policy" in Chapter 3.

Liberal feminism is part of this liberal tradition and explains the oppression of women in terms of unequal access to political, economic, and social institutions (see, e.g., Eisenstein 1981; Friedan 1963; Steinem 1983). Much feminist organizing in the United States—including campaigns for women’s rights to vote, to divorce, to enter universities and professions, to run for political office, and to train for combat—has been and continues to be based on this view. You may hold liberal feminist opinions even though you may not realize it. Despite the disclaimer “I’m not a feminist . . .,” the comment “but I *do* believe in equal pay” is a liberal feminist position. Liberal feminism may be criticized because it accepts existing institutions as they are, only seeking equal access for women within them. However, as the decades-long campaign for women’s legal rights shows, this goal should not be underestimated given the strength of **patriarchy**, or male dominance, as a system of power.

Resisting Interlocking Systems of Oppression

The Combahee River Collective, a group of young Black feminists active in the Boston area in the 1970s, offered a very different view of feminism generated by their experiences of interlocking systems of oppression based on race, class, gender, and sexuality (Reading 3). As Black feminists and lesbians, Collective members found many white feminists too focused on male domination at the expense of oppressions based on race and class. Group members did not advocate equal rights for women within current institutions but argued for the transformation of the political and economic system as essential for women’s liberation. They defined themselves as **socialists** and believed that “work must be organized for the collective benefit of those who do the work and create the products, and not for the profit of the bosses,” as argued by German philosophers Frederick Engels and Karl Marx during the 1840s (shortly before the Seneca Falls convention). Collective members offered a strong critique of **capitalism** and **imperialism** and stood in solidarity with liberation struggles then being waged in colonized nations of Africa and Asia. Such transnational feminist thinking is both relevant and necessary today to understand the impacts of the global economic system, a point we take up in later chapters.

Socialist feminism views the oppression of women in terms of two interconnected and reinforcing systems: patriarchy and capitalism (see, e.g., Federici 2012; Hennessy and Ingraham 1997; Radical Women 2001; S. Smith 2005). The post–World War II rivalry between the West and the Soviet Union led to the discrediting of socialist thinking in the United States, although interest in it is reviving as more people experience the inequalities and insecurities generated by capitalism.

Theoretical perspectives that integrate gender with other systems of inequality have become known by the shorthand term **intersectionality**. For African American women, this has a long history. From the 1830s onward, Black speakers and writers like Frances E. W. Harper, Maria Stewart, and Sojourner Truth explicitly linked oppressions based on race and gender (Guy-Sheftall 1995). More recently, organizer and writer Linda Burnham (2001) noted that

Black women’s experience as women is indivisible from their experiences as African Americans. They are always “both/and,” so analyses that claim to examine gender while neglecting a critical stance towards race and class inevitably do so at the expense of African American women’s experiences. (p. 1)