Introduction to Gender and Women’s Studies

Gender and women’s studies begins with Hanisch’s premise that the personal is political as a means of thinking about personal issues as broader political and structural issues, resulting in various levels of privilege and oppression. We investigate first-wave feminism, second-wave concerns and critiques, and third-wave ideologies and queer theories. We examine the constructed nature of gender and identity via historical, theoretical, and cross-cultural texts to develop conscious approaches to thinking about the intersections of race, sexuality, and class. In addition, the course seeks to sharpen our critical awareness of how gender operates in cultural contexts and in our own lives in order to participate in social change. We read a diverse group of historical and contemporary feminist and queer writers, activists, and theorists.

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