

WST 212 : Women and Social Movements

This course examines the participation and leadership of women in a wide variety of social movements in the United States and in the colonial societies that preceded it, from the earliest European colonial encounters to the present. An important focus of the course is the creation by women of the “official” women’s and feminist movements. However, the course also focuses on the roles of women in other movements—those of the poor, of the working class, of African Americans and other ethnic groups peoples, and of the middle and upper classes. Women in movements promoting both progressive and conservative causes are studied. This course may be taken with an optional cultural lab (HST 212L) for one additional credit. This lab extends the focus of this course beyond the history of women and U.S. social movements strictly understood, into the realm of popular cultural understandings of that history. In this lab, students will study the ways that this history has been represented and “taught” in the popular media and in public discourse, and the ways that these representations themselves have impacted broader historical processes. Particular attention will be paid to depictions of this history in movies, television, print media, museums, musical productions, and various other types of performance. This lab will also attend to the ways that these depictions have shaped popular understandings. (Cross-listed with HST 212)

Credits 3