

# COALITIONAL POLITICS—CASE STUDIES FROM CHICAGO AND BEYOND: ARCHIVING THE PAST FOR THE PRESENT

GNDR\_ST 101-6



In a recent article, historian Finn Enke points out that “1970s feminism [has] entered collective memory as an exclusionary thing, distinct from the experiences, labor, and critiques by feminists of color, trans and queer people of the same era” but challenges us to reconsider “feminism’s deeply questioning, queer, coalitional and anti-imperialist past,” or risk missing “some ways that feminist, lesbian, and queer of color and trans activists grappled hard to develop critical insights and knowledges that move us today.” In

this seminar, we explore several 1970s-era projects in Chicago and beyond that exemplify a coalitional feminist politics and consider the usefulness of this history in an increasingly polarized present. We will read histories of this period and memoirs by movement participants, but our focus will be on engaging in collective archival research and, ultimately curating collections of (10-12) documents that aid us in recuperating these instances of successful coalition building across movements, as well as the intersectional politics that informed these collaborative projects. The seminar will meet in Special Collections and will introduce students to the practice of archival research as well as the remarkable range of archival materials housed in Special Collections, which might form the basis for research projects during your four years at Northwestern. Our final class project will be to collectively curate an exhibition of our findings that will be exhibited in the Main Library during Spring Quarter. Over the course of the quarter, we will also host several class visitors and go on a field trip to the Chicago Women’s Health Center (established in 1975 and still going strong!) to explore current coalitions and projects that build on this legacy.

Amy Partridge

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TTh 2-3:20pm  
Special Collections  
in Deering Library