What does the word “feminism” mean to you right now? What might this word mean in political struggles to come? GSS 230 will help you forge answers to these questions by investigating the emergence of feminism as a coalitional and contested practice from roughly 1800 to the late twentieth century. Mostly focused on America, GSS 230 will interrogate the meaning of “feminism” across four thematic and archival units: (1) nineteenth-century American suffrage movements, abolitionist activism, and racism; (2) Civil Rights activism, separatist radicalism, and foundational statements of intersectional feminism; (3) the underground Chicago abortion collective Jane; and (4) the critical field mapped by Gayle Rubin’s 1975 essay, “The Traffic in Women: Notes on the ‘Political Economy’ of Sex,” as well as its critical afterlives. Today, the roots of these complex political and conceptual engagements are often reduced to a monolithic middle-class white feminism. This class aims to illuminate the tangled, contested, and coalitional strands of argument and concrete action that brought American feminism to the end of the twentieth century.