Global Feminisms Preliminary Exam
November 2012

Answer Question 1 in Part A; then choose one question from
Part B, and one question from Part C.

Be sure each essay has a clear line of argument,
addresses as many dimensions of the question as possible,
and offers relevant, persuasive evidence from specific
secondary sources wherever appropriate.

Good luck!

PART A (Mandatory)

1. What are the working definitions of the term “global feminism” in
the historiography, and what are the historical contexts in which it
came to prominence? If, in other words, you were asked to define it
and explain its history, how would you do so? Who are its main
practitioners; what are their concerns; and how have the stakes of
the subject changed in the decades since Robin Morgan’s Sisterhood
is Global (1984)?

PART B (Choose one)

2. Given its broad geographical reach and its interdisciplinary nature,
why does global feminism need its history? What can historical
research and methods bring to the subject that other practitioners
can’t? What are the narratives and chronologies that you would
privilege and why? Be sure to deal with questions of race, class and
sexuality in your response.

3. Your first teaching position is at a large public institution, with 16
week semesters, where there is a great deal of enthusiasm for the
global approach to feminist history. You are asked to teach History
105, “Women and Nationalism.” How would you approach this task? What themes and authors would you emphasize? What kinds of assignments would you give to the students to help them grasp the diversities in women’s history? Please note that a detailed syllabus (weekly readings, page numbers, etc.) is not required.

PART C (Choose one)

4. Feminists of color like Chandra Mohanty have argued that the global in global feminism was really a Trojan horse, acting as a carrier for imperial attitudes and practices — first world v. third world, white v. black, privileged v. working class -- in the modern women’s movement. What are the grounds for this claim, and does it have validity? Be sure to cite both social movements and historical scholarship in your response.

5. As progressive feminist historians, we are committed to never losing sight of the critical dynamics and interconnectedness of race, class and gender. Race, however, can be a surprisingly slippery category to foreground in one’s own research. In your opinion, which two authors on your list have conceptualized and tackled this task most successfully? Which authors have not been as successful? Why?

6. “Emancipation and the formal end of slavery in the 19th century Atlantic World had the same impacts on formerly enslaved men and women.” Discuss.