Assignment Sheet 11: WOMEN IN THE FIFTIES AND THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

READING
Woloch: 512-517, 482-486
Ware: 182, 206-229
Handouts: Civil Rights Chart, “Women in the Civil Rights Movement,” “Nannie Washburn”
Anne Moody: 217-384
Graduate students only: Sklar and Dublin: 215-225

NECESSARY BACKGROUND INFORMATION
1. The main economic, political, social, and cultural developments in the United States in the 1950s.
2. The main causes, actions, and results of the Civil Rights Movement in the South.

STUDY QUESTIONS
1. What were the main expectations of American women in the 1950s and in what ways did these conflict with actual women’s lives?
2. What were the main problems faced by different groups of American women in the 1950s?
3. In what ways did Women Strike for Peace and Rachel Carson each try to bring about change and what were the results of their actions?
4. What were the main problems experienced by Anne Moody and other black southern women and families in the 1940s and 1950s? What personal survival strategies did they develop?
5. What actions did some black women take before 1954 to try to overcome the discrimination against them and what were the results of these actions?
6. What different approaches and actions did black people and their supporters take in the 1950s and 1960s to try to gain more rights for African Americans? What problems and results did they experience in each case?
7. How did women (as a whole, in particular groups, and as particular individuals) affect the developments of the civil rights movement?
8. What are the main lessons for readers of Anne Moody’s Coming of Age in Mississippi?

IDENTIFICATIONS
the “feminine mystique”
“mainstreaming” Native Americans
Women Strike for Peace (WSP)
House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC)
Rachel Carson
Rosa Parks
Montgomery Bus Boycott
Daisy Bates
Fannie Lou Hamer
Ella Baker
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)
Mississippi Summer Project
Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP)
Anne Moody
JoAnn Gibson Robinson
Women’s Political council
Septima Clark
Highlander Folk School
citizenship schools
Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)
Nannie Washburn