Class #8

1. Library Resources for Oral Presentations (Mark Szarko, Librarian)

2. Discussion: *The Yellow Wallpaper* (1892) - Charlotte Perkins Gilman – See Question Sheet

3. Meaning of this text in the contemporary period; relationship to other accounts of gender and madness (e.g. Susanna Kaysen- *Girl, Interrupted*, Sylvia Plath – *The Bell Jar*). Is *The Yellow Wallpaper* a “feminist” text?

4. *The Yellow Wallpaper* as “Bridging Text” between First and Second Waves of American Women’s Rights Activism

5. The Legacy of the “First Wave” of American Women’s Rights Activism (1848-1920) for Women’s and Gender Studies
   
   a. Critiquing the “Lenses of Gender”—(Sandra Bem)
   1. Biological Essentialism-The notion of gendered roles/hierarchy and male domination as rooted intrinsically in biology
   2. Androcentrism (male-centeredness)- defines males and male experience as the norm and females and female experience as a deviation from that norm.
   3 Gender polarization- assumes male and females are opposite in nature;
   This lens may be superimposed on many aspects of dress, behavior, work and sexuality.
   b. Articulating a critique of the gender system as one of performance and power; Describing a model of a system in which the parts (social/cultural, legal/economic) work together to maintain a gendered hierarchy
   c. Identifying contradictions within the political, economic and familial system to promote change
   d. Establishing a model of social change that involved diverse methods, participants and goals: prefigurative and pragmatic approaches
   e. Questions of the meaning of equality: sameness or difference?
   f. Creating connections and affirming differences among various subgroups of women; questions of theorizing race/gender/ethnicity

6. The Years Between the Waves of Women’s Rights Activism: 1920-40- “Unobtrusive Mobilization” or “Lull Between the Waves”? Role of Mass Media in Defining Social Movements