

### **Questions for Week 3: Feminism, Pro-Natalism and the Politics of the Family**

#### **Offen**

What is the distinction that Offen makes between “individual” and “familial” feminism? Why, according to Offen did the latter have more success than the former in late nineteenth and early twentieth century France?

What kinds of reforms did French “familial” feminists advocate that “individual” feminists might have objected to?

Concern about low birth-rate in France was shared by people of a wide variety of political orientations. How were pro-natalist arguments used to argue in favor of granting women equal legal status? How were they used to argue against doing so?

How did feminists, according to Offen, use the tradition of “republican motherhood” to “subvert the sexual system from within” ?

#### **Pendersen**

Why does Pendersen argue that “republican motherhood” become a liability in 1920? Do you think that the passage of the law of 1920 debunks Offen’s argument about the astute political behavior of “familial” French feminists?

Why was abortion so deplored by French politicians of a wide variety of political orientations in 1920? How do their arguments compare to those of contemporary anti-abortion activists in the United States?

What is the significance of the fact that condoms were the only form of birth control not outlawed in 1920? Why do you think that the legislators made this choice?

#### **Roussel**

How would you characterize Nelly Roussel’s feminism in terms of the “individual”/ “familial” distinction? What are the key arguments that she uses to plead in favor of giving women equal legal rights?