

Suzanna Danuta Walters

Post-Race? Post-Gender? The Politics of Identity in Contemporary United States

ABSTRACT

The 2008 presidential campaign abounded in references to race and gender, as well as mutual accusations of sexism and racism. On the other hand, it has been suggested that America now enters a post-race, post-gender, as well as post-homophobic era, with women and minorities enjoying unprecedented levels of social inclusion. Our aim is to discuss the politics of race, gender and sexuality in the elections and, more generally, in contemporary U.S. How have the meanings of gendered and racial identities shifted in recent years? Does Barack Obama's "race" signal a new era? What are the rules and limits of public discourse on these matters?

BIO

Suzanna Danuta Walters is Professor and Chair of the Department of Gender Studies at Indiana University. Her work examines questions of gender, sexuality, family, and the place of (post)feminism in popular culture. She is the author of *All the Rage: The Story of Gay Visibility in America* (University of Chicago Press, 2001) as well as two earlier books: *Material Girls: making sense of feminist cultural theory* and *Lives Together/Worlds Apart: mothers and daughters in popular culture*. In *All the Rage* she looks at the rise of gay visibility in American culture and politics during the last 15 years, raising questions about the politics of this development. The book was the subject of much debate in the media and a finalist for, among others, the Lambda Literary Award.