Instructor: Patrizia Longo
Course: Politics 140--Gender Politics: “Women and Peace”
Enrollment: 25
Academic Year 2006-2007

Description of Course: To better understand diverse women’s gendered understandings of the interrelationships among violence, war and injustice and of peace work as they search for a nonviolent and just world, we will visit and conduct some interviews with Berkeley Women for Peace. The genesis of the anti-war movement, in Berkeley and a few other parts of the United States, started in 1961, when mothers around the country became aware that fallout from above-ground testing of nuclear weapons was depositing radioactive Strontium 90 in their children’s teeth and bones. Madeline Duckles (then the wife of a music professor and mother of five sons) and some of her friends put together an informal coalition of concerned “mothers and others” to work against nuclear testing. They identified the problem as being not only nuclear testing, but militarism in general. So they formed Berkeley Women for Peace to publicize the nuclear threat. In recent years, Berkeley Women for Peace have turned their focus to the Middle East. They leafleted early against both Iraq wars, and continue to organize letter-writing campaigns and demonstrations. Middle East peace is now one of their current study areas. This course will consist in transcribing interviews with the Berkeley group “Women for Peace” thus documenting the oral history of their movement. Also contemporary peace movements will be explored and “younger” groups interviewed. The theme will be “the past, present and future of peace.”