Why Celebrate Woman's History Month

by Alan Singer

Throughout human history, including most of the history of the United States, women have been treated as second-class citizens. Their continuing second-class status is reflected in many social studies classrooms, where the roles played by women in society and their achievements in the past and present, continue to remain virtually invisible. Although women's names and faces now appear more frequently in social studies textbooks, their inclusion is generally an addition to an already existing curriculum. Female heroes were discovered and fit into previous topics and categories. There is little exploration of the role of women in earlier societies; the ways they lived, the accommodations they were forced to make to patriarchal and oppressive social mores, the familial and community networks and institutions they built, or the struggles women engaged in to achieve legal, political, and economic rights. In an article published by the National Council for Social Studies, Nel Noddings argued that a completely reconceptualized social studies curriculum should focus on women's culture, the realm of the home and family, the idea of women's work, and the role of women as community and international peacemakers.[1]

In his book, The Disuniting of America, Reflections on a Multicultural Society, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. argues that the attention given to difference by multiculturalists and ethnocentrists threatens to reinforce "the fragmentation, resegregation, and tribalization of American life." He is particularly concerned that school curricula that focus on specific ethnic or aggrieved social groups are celebratory rather than academic and critical. For most of my secondary school teaching career, I resisted efforts to have separate units on African Americans, immigrants, or women, because I wanted their histories integrated into more comprehensive social studies curriculum. However, what I have been forced to accept, and what Schlesinger evidently refuses to consider, is that in most secondary school social studies curricula the experiences of racial and ethnic minorities and the roles and contributions of women in our society are rarely considered unless separate units or classes are organized.[2]

A "Woman's History Month" unit can be included in social studies curricula on ever grade level and every subject area. In middle school and high school United States history classes, a unit can focus on the participation of women in the development of the country. It can include the struggles waged to change the condition of, attitudes towards, and opportunities for, women in the past and present. In a global studies class, an area studies unit could focus on women in a particular

country, region, or century, and examine findings from the United Nation's Bejing Conference on the status of women. An Economics unit could examine the changing role of women in the economy as producers and consumers. Units in American Government could focus on the struggle for women's rights, ideas about gender equity, and a comparison of the voting patterns of men and women. Contemporary issues of particular importance in an American Government curriculum include an Equal Rights Amendment, equal pay for equal work, the large number of women and children who live in poverty, reproductive freedom, women in government, and women in the military.

This thematic unit on the history of women in the United States is based on the work of Hofstra Social Studies Educators Jeannette Balantic and Andrea Libresco and was part of the celebration of the 75th Anniversary of the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution. Jeannette and Andrea believe that their ideas on women's history can be taught as a unit in a United States history class or as a United States Women's history elective. But their preference is to distribute individual lessons throughout the regular social studies curriculum. This unit, which can be adapted for either middle school or high school, uses a social history perspective and includes twenty lesson ideas set up chronologically with activities and long-term individual and group projects. The lessons mix attention to the achievements of a diverse group of individual women with an examination of women collectively.[3]

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[1]Nel Noddings, "Social Studies and Feminism," Theory and Research in Social Education, (Summer, 1992, vol. 20 no. 3), pp. 230-241.
[2]Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., The Disuniting of America (New York: Norton, 1991), pp. 73-99.
[3]This curriculum grew out of a New York Council for the Humanities 1994 Summer Institute. Andrea Libresco received support from a National Endowment for the Humanities teacher-scholar fellowship.

1- Are women and men equally important in United States history?

The first lesson in this unit can also be used as a final assessment lesson where students evaluate what they learned. In this lesson students define the theme question for the unit and establish criteria for evaluating the contributions of both men and women in United States history.

As an introductory activity, each student should list 10 people whom they believe made major contributions to the history of the United States (no entertainers please) and write a sentence explaining the contribution of each person. After completing their lists, students meet in small groups to review and consolidate the lists and marshal supporting evidence for their explanations.

After group ideas are written on the board, the class discusses criteria for deciding who made major contributions to United States history, why the choices are usually overwhelmingly male, and whether women and men are equally important in United States history. As a follow-up activity, students discuss the statement by Mao Zedung, the revolutionary leader of 20th century China, who said that "Women hold up half of the sky." What do you think Mao Zedung meant? Do you agree with him? Why?

Many American women are well-known because of diaries where they discussed daily life and their thoughts on major events. During this unit students can keep historical diaries where they discuss what they learned in each lesson and their thoughts on the theme question. As they read the history text, they can also critique the way it describes women (see "Woman's Suffrage - Comparing Textbooks," p. 28). On post-it notes, students can write comments on the coverage of women or notes on what was left out and add these to appropriate pages in their books.

For the last lesson of the unit, students discuss how their lists and ideas about women in United States history were reinforced or changed during the unit. They also discuss whether the history of women in the United States should be taught in a separate unit or if the entire curriculum should be reorganized with an emphasis on different topics and perhaps even a new periodization.

2- What roles did women play among Native American peoples?

This lesson helps students understand that in different societies women have had different roles and rights. It also establishes that these roles and rights are related to how a society produces the food, clothing, and shelter people need to survive. Students read the passages and discuss the questions that follow. As a follow-up activity, middle school students paint a picture or create a diorama of women working in a native American village. They can also research Native American creation stories for presentation in class.

A) Many native American people considered the earth a goddess and compared it to a mother. Read the excerpt from the Tewa people's "Song of the Sky Loom." In your opinion, why was the earth compared with a mother?

"O our Mother the earth, O our father the Sky,
Your children are we, and with tired backs
We bring you the gifts you love."
- "Song of the Sky Loom" (Tewa)[1]

B) Native American Women[2]

In Iroquois villages located in the northeastern part of what is now the United States, women were in charge of farming and distributing all food. Their control over the food supply meant that women influenced tribal council meetings, religious observances and decisions about war.

Among the Shawnee of the midwest, women could be chiefs and joined in war parties. Women's councils among the Cherokee of the southeast nominated new chiefs and could overrule a chief if they felt he was angering the Great Spirit. The Nez Percé in the Rocky Mountains gave women and men equal property rights in divorce cases. Among the Zuni people of the southwest, men were the farmers but women owned the land.

3- What was life like for women in colonial America?

It is difficult to imagine life on the frontier or even before electricity and modern appliances. Have your class compare the steps needed to make a grilled cheese sandwich today and during the 1780's. A class can visit a historical restoration site and discuss ways that life differed from today. In preparation for the trip, students discuss the following excerpt from a young farm woman's diary or the section from a poem about a day in the life of Ruth Belknap, the wife of a New Hampshire minister.

A) A Young Girl's Days' Work (1775)[3]

Fixed gown for Prude. Mend Mother's Riding-hood. Spun short thread. Fixed two gowns for Welsh girls. Carded tow (rope). Spun linen. Worked on Cheese-basket. Hatchel'd flax with Hannah. We did 51 lbs. apiece. Milked the Cows. Spun linen, did 50 knots. Made a Broom of Guinea wheat straw. Spun thread to whiten. Set a Red dye. I carded two pounds of whole wool and felt. Spun harness twine. Scoured the pewter.

B) A Country Parson's Wife (1782)[4]

Up in the morning I must rise
Before I've time to rub my eyes.
With half-pinned gown, unbuckled shoe
I haste to milk, my lowing cow.
But, Oh! It makes my heart ache,
I have no bread till I can bake.
And then, alas! it makes me sputter,
For I must churn or have no butter.
The hogs with swill too I must serve;
For hogs must eat or men will starve.
Besides my spouse can get no clothes
Unless I much offend my nose
For all that try it know its true
There is no smell like coloring blue.
Then round the parish I must ride
And make inquiry far and wide
To find some girl that is a spinner,
The hurry home to get my dinner.

A similar lesson could focus on life during the early national period. As a follow-up to the trip, students learn early American crafts and perform traditional "women's work" using pre-industrial tools. Possibilities include baking, churning butter, making straw brooms for sweeping, candle-making, making corn-husk dolls, and dying cloth. Many activities can be found in the Foxfire books about Appalachian culture.[5]

Early American Crafts: Recipe for dip candles[6]

Materials: Electric hot plate; two-quart pan; 2 coffee cans; pencil; wick; household paraffin.
Directions:

1- Boil water in the pan using the hot plate. Place paraffin in one of the coffee cans. Put the can in the boiling water. The paraffin will melt.
2- Fill the 2nd coffee can with cold water. Tie about six inches of wick to the middle of a pencil. Dip the wick into the melted paraffin and then into the cold water. Keep repeating this process. As the soft wax builds up on the wick, it can be shaped by hand.
3- When the candle reaches the desired size, cut it off of the pencil. Reshape by hand while still warm.

4- How did women view the War for Independence and the founding of a new government?

Some activities have been considered valuable contributions to society when performed by men but given little recognition when performed by women. Alexander Hamilton is recognized as a major Founding Father because he was an important advisor to George Washington during the Revolutionary War, the writing of the Constitution and the early years of the new government. Is his contribution to the Revolutionary cause significantly different from that of Abigail Adams? Her correspondence with Thomas Jefferson and her husband, John Adams kept them aware of events affecting the nation and its people and advised them on the need for new laws and the Constitution?

Students examine the edited excerpts from letters Abigail Adams wrote to John Adams between 1775 and 1777 and discuss the following questions: What events are being described by Abigail Adams? In your opinion, why does she write about these events? How does Abigail Adams want to influence the new government? At the end of the discussion, students write letters to the Continental Congress expressing their views on these developments.

Letters from Abigail Adams to John Adams [7]

May 7, 1775- The distress of the inhabitants of Boston is beyond the power of language to describe. The British made a list of all those they believe were watching the tea and every other person they consider obnoxious. They are their property are to suffer destruction.

June 15, 1775- We expect our seacoast to be ravaged. Perhaps the next letter I write will inform you that I am driven away from our quiet cottage. Courage I know we have in abundance. Conduct I hope we shall not lack. But powder -- where can we get a sufficient supply?

March 31, 1776- I long to hear that you have declared our country independent. In the new laws which will be necessary, I desire you would remember the ladies, and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors. Do not put unlimited power into the hands of the husbands. Remember all men would be tyrants if they could. If particular care and attention is not paid to the ladies, we are determined to rebel, and will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no voice or representation.

May 7, 1776- I cannot say I think you are very generous to the ladies. While you are proclaiming peace and good will to men, emancipating all nations, you insist upon retaining an absolute power over wives. But you must remember that arbitrary power is like most other things which are very hard -- very liable to be broken.

July 31, 1777- There is a great scarcity of sugar and coffee. It was rumored that a wealthy merchant had coffee in his store that he refused to sell. A number of females, some say a hundred, some say more, marched to the warehouse with carts and demanded the keys. When the merchant refused to deliver, one of the females seized him by the neck and tossed him into a cart. Realizing that he was trapped, the merchant gave the women his keys. They opened the warehouse, removed the coffee, loaded their carts, and drove off.

On April 14, 1776, John Adams responded: "As to your extraordinary Code of Laws, I cannot but laugh. We have been told that our Struggle has loosened the bands of Government every where. The Children and Apprentices were disobedient -- that schools and colleges were grown turbulent -- that Indians slighted their Guardians and Negroes grew insolent to their Masters. But your letter was the first Intimation that another Tribe more numerous and powerful than all the rest were grown discontented."[8]

If you were Abigail Adams, how would you have responded to this letter? Why?

5- What role did women play in the industrialization of the United States?

Because of traditional limits on the roles of women and legal restrictions on property rights, women in the United States had little opportunity to acquire an education, enter a profession, or start a business. However, when workers were needed for the new factory system, New England farm women became the primary source of labor.

The patriarchal arrangement of American society followed women into the textile mills. They were forced to live in boarding houses so that their morals could be supervised. Their wages were sent home to their fathers. Higher paying supervisory positions were reserved for men. Companies argued that conditions in the mills and mill towns were idyllic. The official magazine published in Lowell, Massachusetts, "The Lowell Offering, defended mill work. However, some of the other documents present a very different picture of life for these young women.

For this lesson, students are divided into teams. Each team is assigned a different document to analyze. The teams examine their documents and report back to the class about life and work in the New England textile mills and the role of women in the industrialization of the United States. In a final full class discussion, students examine the importance of women workers in industrial development and whether their lives were better in factory towns or on family farms. As a homework assignment, students can imagine they are women factory workers and write letters home to their families describing their lives.

A) Women in an Industrializing America

Women in the Workforce in 1850[9]

Occupations	Number of Women
Domestic service	330,000
Clothing	62,000
Cotton textiles	59,000
Teaching	55,000
Shoes	33,000
Wool	19,000
Hat making	8,000

Weaving Room Wages(1823)[10]

Category	Wages per Week
male overseer	$8
male second hand	$3
girls for looms	$2
girls to draw webbs	$2.25
girls to finish cloth	$2.50
girls as spare hands	$2

B) Life in a Massachusetts Milltown (The Harbinger, 1836)[11]

In Lowell (Mass.) live between seven and eight thousand young women, who are generally daughters of farmers of the different states of New England. The operatives work thirteen hours a day in the summer time, and from daylight to dark in the winter. At half past four in the morning the factory bell rings, and at five the girls must be in the mills. A clerk, placed as a watch, observes those who are a few minutes behind the time, and means are taken to insure punctuality. At seven the girls are allowed thirty minutes for breakfast, and at noon thirty minutes for dinner, except during the first quarter of the year, when the time is extended to forty-five minutes. But within this time they must hurry to their boardinghouses and return to the factory. At seven o'clock in the evening the factory bell sounds the close of the day's work.

Let us examine the nature of the labor itself. The din and clatter of these five hundred looms, under full operation, struck us on first entering as something frightful and infernal. The girls attend upon an average three looms; many attend four, but this requires a very active person, and the most unremitting care. The atmosphere of such a room is charged with cotton filaments and dust, which are very injurious to the lungs.

Although the day was warm, the windows were down. A young woman explained that when the wind blew, the threads did not work well. After we had been in the room for fifteen or twenty minutes, we found ourselves in quite a perspiration.

Thirteen hours per day of close attention and monotonous labor are exacted from the young women in these manufactures. So fatigued are numbers of girls that they go to bed after their evening mean. The young women sleep upon an average six in a room, three beds to a room. There is no privacy. It is almost impossible to read or write alone. So live and toil the young women of our country in the boardinghouses and manufactories which the rich and influential of our land have built for them.

C) An Excerpt from the Time Table of the Lowell Mills (1853)[12]

TIME TABLE OF THE LOWELL MILLS

Arranged to make the working time throughout the year average 11 hours per day.

TO TAKE EFFECT SEPTEMBER 21st, 1853

From March 20th to September 19th, inclusive.

Commence Work, at 6:30 A.M. Leave Off Work at, 6:30 P.M., except on Saturday Evenings.

Breakfast at 6 A.M. Dinner at 12 M. Commence Work, after dinner, 12:45 P.M.

BELLS

From March 20th to September 19th, inclusive.

Morning Bells	Dinner Bells	Evening Bells
First bell, ... 4:30 A.M.	Ring out, ... 12.00 M	Ring out, ... 6:30 P.M.
Second, 5:30 A.M.; Third, 6:20	Ring in, ... 1:35 P.M.	Except on Saturday Evenings

D) Miss Bartlett Explains the Benefits of Mill Life in <u>The Lowell Offering</u>, a magazine published by the Lowell Mills (1833)[13]

By whom is factory labor considered degrading? It is by those who believe all labor degrading -- by those who contemptuously speak of the farmer, the mechanic, the printer, the seamstress, and all who are obliged to toil -- by those who seem to think the condition of labor excludes all the capacities of the mind and the virtues of humanity.

In almost all kinds of employment it is necessary to keep regular established hours. Because we are reminded of those hours by the ringing of a bell, it is no argument against our employment. Our engagements are voluntarily entered into with our employers. . . . There is not a tinge of slavery existing in it.

It is true that too large a portion of our time is confined to labor. But a factory girl's work is neither hard nor complicated. She can go on with perfect regularity in her duties while her mind may be actively employed on any other subject. Our well-worn libraries, evening schools, crowded churches, and sabbath schools prove that factory workers find leisure to use the means of

improvement.

E) Harriet Robinson Recalls Her Life as a "Doffer" in 1834[14]

I worked first in the spinning-room as a "doffer.' The doffers were the youngest girls, whose work was to doff, or take off, the full bobbins (spools of thread), and replace them with the empty ones. I can see myself now, racing down the alley, between the spinning-frames (machines), carrying in front of me a bobbin-box bigger than I was. These mites (small children) had to be very swift in their movements, so as not to keep the spinning-frames stopped long, and they worked only about 15 minutes in every hour. The rest of the time was their own, and when the overseer (foreman) was kind they were allowed to read, knit, or even go outside the mill-yard to play.

The working-hours of all the girls extended from five o'clock in the morning until seven in the evening, with one-half hour for breakfast and for dinner. Even the doffers were forced to be on duty nearly 14 hours a day, and this was the greatest hardship in the lives of these children. For it was not until 1842 that the hours of labor for children under 12 years of age were limited to ten per day.

F) Lowell Women Strike to Protect Their Wages (1834)[15]

Issued by the ladies who were employed in the factories at Lowell. They left their former employment in consequence of the proposed reduction in their wages from 12 to 25 per cent.

Our present object is to have union. We remain in possession of our own unquestionable rights. We circulate this paper, wishing to obtain the names of all who imbibe (breathe in) the spirit of our patriotic ancestors, who preferred privation to bondage.

The oppressing hand of avarice (greed) would enslave us. To gain their object they gravely tell us of the pressure of the times. If they are in want of assistance, the ladies will be compassionate and assist them. But we prefer to have the disposing of our charities in our own hands.

Resolved, That we will not go back into the mills to work unless our wages are continued to us as they have been.

Resolved, That none of us will go back unless they receive us all as one.

G) A Traditional Folk Song - "The Factory Girl's Come All Ye"[16]

1) No more I'll take my shaker and shawl
And hurry to the mill.
No more I'll work so pesky hard
To earn a dollar bill!
Chorus:
Come all ye Lewiston Factory girls, I want you to understand
I'm gonna leave this factory and return to my native land.
Sing dum-dee-wickerty, dum-dee-way, Sing dum-dee-wickerty, dum-dee-way.

2) No more will I take the towel and soap
And go to the sink to wash.
No more will the overseer say,
"You're making a terrible splosh!"
Chorus

3) No more I'll take my bobbins out.
No more I'll put them in.
No more the overseer'll say,
"You're weaving your cloth too thin."
Chorus

4) No more I'll eat cold pudding,
And no more I'll eat hard-bread.
No more I'll eat then half-baked beans.
I vow they're killing me dead.
Chorus

5) I'm going back to Boston town,
I'll live on Tremont Street
And I want all you factory girls
To come to my house and eat.
Chorus

6- What role did women play in expansion west?

A number of women documented the United States expansion west in their diaries and letters. Prudence Higuera, the daughter of a Spanish rancher, wrote about her impressions of the early U.S. settlers in California. Louise Clappe described the California gold rush in letters to her sister. A diary by Lydia Milner Waters reported on her family's experiences as they crossed the Great Plains and Rocky Mountains in 1855. Students can read and discuss excerpts from these sources.[17]

The "Little House on the Prairie" series by Laura Ingalls Wilder gives students insight into life on the frontier as the United States moved westward. Students can read different books from the series, write book reports that focus on the position of women, and present their reports in class as the basis for discussion. Stronger readers will enjoy My Antonia, by Willa Cather (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1918), a novel about the settlement of the prairie states during the 1870's and Women's Diaries of the Westward Journey, by Lillian Schissel(NY: Schocken, 1992).

7- Why did women rewrite the Declaration of Independence?

During the early history of the United States, women contended with the patriarchical ideology prevalent in U.S. society. In 1861, Mary Boykin Chesnut wrote in her diary:

> "How men can go blustering around, making everybody uncomfortable, simply to show that they are masters and we are only women and children at their mercy! My husband's father is kind, and amiable when not crossed, given to hospitality on a grand scale, jovial, genial, friendly, courtly in his politeness. But he is as absolute a tyrant as the Czar of Russia, the Khan of Tartar, or the Sultan of Turkey."[18]

At the 1848 Women's Rights Convention at Seneca Falls, New York, Elizabeth Cady Stanton presented a "Declaration of Sentiments" that paraphrased the Declaration of Independence and declared "all men and women are created equal." The convention was attended by 300 delegates, including 260 women and 40 men. In this lesson, students analyze the Declaration of Sentiments and compare it to the Declaration of Independence.

A) Students read a copy of the introductory paragraphs of the Declaration of Sentiments with the title and date removed.[19] As students read, they circle words or terms that they respond to emotionally (appealing, angry, confused, etc.) and ideas that raise questions in their mind. They should suggest a title for the document and a possible date. Class discussion begins with an evaluation of possible dates and titles. This leads to a discussion of the purpose of the document and similarities between it and the Declaration of Independence.

1) "When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one portion of the family of man to assume among the people of the earth a position different from which they have hitherto (so far) occupied, but one to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes that impel (force) them to such a course."

2) "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal; that they are endowed (given) by their Creator with certain inalienable rights (rights that cannot be taken away): that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights governments are instituted, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of those who suffer from it to refuse allegiance to it, and to insist upon the institution of a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness."

3) "When a long train of abuses and usurpation (taking away of rights), . . . evinces (shows) a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their duty to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance (suffering) of the women under this government, and such is now the necessity which constrains them to demand the equal station to which they are entitled."

B) Working in pairs, students examine the grievances presented in the second part of the document and complete a chart listing specific grievances and explaining whether they are still problems in today's world. Students can also add grievances that they feel were left out on this abbreviated list.

"The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations (taking away of rights) on the part of man toward woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.
- He has never permitted her to exercise her inalienable right to the electoral franchise (vote).
- He has compelled her to submit to laws, in the formation of which she has no voice.
- He has withheld from her rights which are given to . . . . men, both natives and foreigners.
- He has made her, if married, in the eye of the law, civilly dead.
- He has taken from her all right in property, even to the wages she earns.
- He has made her, morally, an irresponsible being, as she can commit many crimes with impunity (without penalty), provided they be done in the presence of her husband.
- In . . . . marriage, she is compelled to promise obedience to her husband, he becoming, to all intents and purposes, her master.
- He has so framed the laws of divorce . . . . the law . . . . giving all power into his hands.
- After the depriving her of all rights as a married woman, if single, and the owner of property, he has taxed her to support a government.
- He has monopolized nearly all profitable employments and from those she is permitted to follow, she receives but a scanty remuneration (payment).
- He closes against her all avenues to wealth and distinction.
- He has denied her the facilities for obtaining a thorough education, all colleges being closed against her.
- He allows her in Church, but in a subordinate (lower) position.
- He has created . . . a different code of morals for men and women.
- He has endeavored . . . to destroy her confidence in her own powers, to lessen her self-respect.

Now, in view of this entire disenfranchisement (denial of the right to vote and other rights) of one-half the people of this country, . . . we insist that they have immediate admission to all the rights and privileges which belong to them as citizens of the United States.

C) At the conclusion of the lesson the class discusses which grievances were most serious and whether the grievances outlined at Seneca Falls have been redressed in the United States in the last century and a half. As follow-up assignments, students compose a new Declaration of Sentiments expressing the views of other groups in American society in the past or present (e.g., students, native Americans, immigrants, gays).

8- How did women help end slavery in the United States?

Women played a major role in the struggle to end slavery in the United States as authors and as activists. Poetry, novels, and songs were used to express the hardship of slavery, protest against injustice, and celebrate resistance. This interdisciplinary lesson draws on literature and music to understand history. It also encourages students to express their ideas in writing.

A) Harriet Beecher Stowe, the author of Uncle Tom's Cabin, was a member of a deeply religious Calvinist family who staunchly opposed slavery. Her fictional account of slavery was initially published as a series of magazine articles. When it was republished as a novel, 300,000 copies were sold in the first year; more copies than any other book except the Bible. Legend has it that when President Abraham Lincoln and Harriet Beecher Stowe were introduced in 1862, Lincoln remarked "So you're the little woman who wrote the book that made this great war."

An edited excerpt from "Uncle Tom's Cabin" [20]

"And now," said Simon Legree, "come here, you Tom. . . . Now, ye jest take this yer gal and flog her; ye've seen enough on't to know how."

"I beg Mas'r's pardon," said Tom; "hopes Mas'r won't set me at that. It's what I an't used to, -- never did, -- and can't do, no way possible."

"Ye'll larn a pretty smart chance of things ye never did know, before I've done with ye!" said Legree, taking up a cowhide, and striking Tom a heavy blow cross the cheek, and following up the infliction by a shower of blows.

"There!" he said, as he stopped to rest; "now, will ye tell me ye can't do it?"

"Yes, Mas'r," said Tom, putting up his hand, to wipe the blood, that trickled down his face. "I'm willin' to work, night and day, and work while there's life and breath in me; but this yer thing I can't feel it right to do'; -- and, Mas'r, I *never* shall do it -- *never*!"

Tom had a remarkably smooth, soft voice, and a habitually respectful manner, that had given Legree an idea that he would be cowardly, and easily subdued. When he spoke these last words, a thrill of amazement went through everyone; the poor woman clasped her hands, and said, "O Lord!" and everyone involuntarily looked at each other and drew in their breath, as if to prepare for the storm that was about to burst.

Legree looked stupefied and confounded; but at last burst forth, --

"What! ye blasted black beast! tell *me* you don't think it *right* to do what I tell ye! What have any of you cussed cattle to do with thinking what's right? I'll put a stop to it! Why, what do ye think ye are? May be ye think ye're a gentleman master, Tom, to be telling your master what's right, and what ain't! So you pretend it's wrong to flog the gal!"

"I think so, Mas'r," said Tom; "the poor crittur's sick and feeble; it would be downright cruel, and it's what I never will do, nor begin to. Mas'r, if you mean to kill me, kill me; but, as to raising my hand agin any one here, I never shall, -- I'll die first!"

. . . . Legree shook with anger; his greenish eyes glared fiercely, and his very whiskers seemed to curl with passion. . . . "An't I yer master? Didn't I pay down twelve hundred dollars, cash, for all there is inside yer old cussed black shell? An't yer mine, now, body and soul?" he said, giving Tom a violent kick with his heavy boot; "tell me!"

In the very depth of physical suffering, bowed by brutal oppression, this question shot a gleam of joy and triumph through Tom's soul. . . ."No! no! no! my soul an't yours, Mas'r! You haven't bought it, -- ye can't buy it! It's been bought and paid for, by one that is able to keep it; no matter, no matter, you can't harm me!"

1- How does this story by Harriet Beecher Stowe portray Tom and Simon Legree?
2- In your opinion, why did this story stir up anti-slavery sentiments?
3- Complete the story in your own words. Why do you choose this ending?

B) Phillis Wheatley (1753?-1784) and Ellen Watkins Harper (1825-1911) were African American woman poets who used their talent to challenge slavery. Wheatley was born in West Africa, captured at the age of five or six, sold as a slave, and arrived in Boston in 1761. She wrote and published the second book of poetry by an American woman. Harper was born a free woman in Baltimore and became one of the best-known anti-slavery poets and lecturers of the ante-bellum era.

Poem on Her Own Slavery [21]

by Phillis Wheatley

"I, young in life, by seeming cruel fate
Was snatch'd from Afric's fancy'd happy seat:
What pangs excruciating must molest,
What sorrows labour in my parent's breast?
Steel'd was the soul and by no misery mov'd
That from a father seized his babe belov'd.
Such, such my case, And can I then but pray
Others may never feel tyrannic sway?"

The Slave Auction [22]

by Ellen Watkins Harper

The sale began -- young girls were there,
Defenceless in their wretchedness,
Whose stifled sobs of deep despair
Revealed their anguish and distress.

And mothers stood with streaming eyes,
And saw their dearest children sold;
Unheeded rose their bitter cries,
While tyrants bartered them for gold.

Ye who have laid your love to rest,
And wept above their lifeless clay,
Know not the anguish of that breast,
Whose loves are rudely torn away.

Ye may not know how desolate
Are bosoms rudely forced to part,
And how a dull and heavy weight
Will press the life-drops from the heart.

1- What images are used in these poems to show the impact of slavery on African people? How do this images make you fell?
2- What poetic image would you use to describe slavery? Why?
3- Write a poem that expresses your ideas about slavery.

C) Harriet Tubman (1820-1888) was the most famous "conductor" on the underground railroad. She was born a slave in Maryland in 1820 and escaped north to freedom in 1850. During the next decade she challenged the slave system by making 19 journeys back to the south to rescue other enslaved African Americans. As her reputation grew, southerners offered a reward of $40,000 to whoever captured or killed her. The song that follows is a modern song that celebrates her achievements.

Harriet Tubman[23]

by Walter Robinson (1977)

1) One night I dreamed I was in slavery,
'bout eighteen fifty was the time.
Sorrow was the only sign;
nothing around to ease my mind.
Out of the night appeared a lady leading a
distant pilgrim band.
"First mate," she yelled, pointing her hand,
"make room aboard for this young woman,"
saying --
Chorus
"Come on up, I got a life-line,
come on up to this train of mine."
"Come on up, I got a life-line,
come on up to this train of mine."
2) She said her name was Harriet Tubman,
and she drove for the underground railroad.
Hundreds of miles we traveled onward,
gathering slaves from town to town,
Seeking every lost and found,
setting those free that once were bound.
Somehow my heart was growing weaker,
I fell by the wayside's sinking sand.
Firmly did this lady stand,
lifted me up and took my hand, saying --
Chorus

1- Why did Harriet Tubman become a legend in the 1850's?
2- In your opinion, why did southerners offer a reward for her capture or murder?
3- Select a woman who you consider a hero. Rewrite a popular song to celebrate her achievements.

D) Angelina Grimké and her sister Sarah were daughters of a wealthy slaveholder from South Carolina. As young women, they moved to Philadelphia where they became Quakers and leading abolitionists. The following passage is from a speech at the National Anti-Slavery Convention in 1838.

> "As a southerner, I feel it is my duty to stand up here tonight and bear testimony against slavery. I have seen it! I have seen it! I know it has hoors that can never be described. I was brought up under its wing. I witnessed for many years its demoralizing influences and its destructiveness to human happiness. I have never seen a happy slave. I have seen him dance in his chains, it is true, but he was not happy."[24]

1- Why does Grimké believe she has a special responsibility to oppose slavery?
2- Do you agree or disagree? Why?

9- How did women help save the union during the Civil War?

Military action in the Persian Gulf in 1991 was the first time that large numbers of American women served as military personnel in a combat zone. But this was not the first time that American women went to war. Thousands of women served, mostly as nurses, in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. In other wars, women secretly passed as men in order to fight for their country and their families. For example, we know the story of Deborah Sampson, who fought and was wounded in the War for Independence. Students read these edited accounts of women who served in the Union Army during the United States Civil War (1861-1865) and use them as a starting point to discuss whether women should be permitted to participate in combat in the United States armed forces today (Ken Burn's PBS documentary on the Civil War is another valuable source).

Women Who Served As Soldiers During the Civil War

Reported in The History of Woman Suffrage, vol. 2[25]

There are many records of women who served in the Civil War in state regiments, in the armies of the Potomac, in cavalry, artillery, and on foot. A women was one of the eighteen soldiers sent as a scout at Lookout Mountain. It was a woman of Brooklyn, N.Y., who joined the army in spite of parental opposition, and during the bloody battle fell pierced in the side, a mortal wound, by a minie ball. Elizabeth Compton served over a year in the 25th Michigan cavalry; was wounded at the engagement of Greenbrier Bridge, Tennessee, her sex being discovered upon her removal to the hospital.

Frances Hook of Illinois, enlisted with her brother in the 65th Home Guards, assuming the name of "Frank Miller." She served three months, and was mustered out without her sex being discovered. She then enlisted in the 90th Illinois, and was taken prisoner in a battle near Chattanooga. Attempting to escape she was shot through one of her limbs. The rebels, in searching her person for papers, discovered her sex. During her captivity, Jeff Davis wrote her a letter, offering her a lieutenant's commission if she would enlist in the rebel army, but she preferred to fight as a private soldier for the stars and stripes, rather than accept a commission from the rebels. After her release from the rebel prison, she again enlisted in the 2nd East Tennessee Cavalry. She was in the thickest of the fight at Murfreesboro, and was severely wounded in the shoulder. Her sex was again disclosed upon the dressing of her wound. When she was mustered out of the service despite her desire to serve the cause she loved so well, "Frank" found the 8th Michigan at Bowling Green, in which she again enlisted. She said she discovered a great many women in the army, and had at different times assisted in burying women soldiers, whose sex was unknown to any but herself.

Mary E. Wise is an orphan, without a blood relative in the world, and was a resident of Jefferson Township, Huntington County, Indiana, where she enlisted in the 34th Indiana Volunteers under the name of William Wise. She served two years and eighteen days as a private, participating in six of the heaviest engagements in the West, was wounded at Chickamauga and Lookout Mountain. Upon discovery of her sex, she was sent to her home in Indiana. Having five months' pay due from the Government, she started for Washington, in the hope of collecting it. Her colonel failed to give her a proper or formal discharge, with the necessary papers. The Department can only pay her upon proper or formal discharge papers.

Susie King Taylor was an African American women who won her freedom during the Civil War. She served as a laundress, teacher, and nurse in a segregated African American regiment.

My Life in Camp (1864) [26]

About 4 o'clock, July 2, the charge was made. The firing could be plainly heard in camp. When the wounded arrived, the first one brought in was Samuel Anderson of our company. He was badly wounded. Then others of our boys, some with their legs off, arm gone, foot off, and wounds of all kinds imaginable. My work now began. I gave my assistance to try to alleviate their suffering. I asked the doctor at the hospital what I could get them to eat. They wanted soup, but that I could not get; but I had a few cans of condensed milk and some turtle eggs, so I thought I would try to

make some custard. The result was a very delicious custard. My services were given at all times for the comfort of these men. I was on hand to assist whenever needed.

10- How were women stereotyped in 19th century society?

HSSE Cynthia Vitere has classes examine the clothing of women from different historical periods to learn how societies envisioned the "ideal" woman. During the 19th century, middle-class women in the United States were taught to see themselves as fragile and ineffective. Advice columns and children's books explained appropriate ways for girls and women to act and dress. Students can examine "The Good Girl's Soliloquy" and "How a Lady Should Dress" for examples of stereotypes about girls and women and compare attitudes about girls and women in the 19th century with attitudes today. They can also try on a corset and long skirt while carrying a baby and a lantern to see how difficult it was to function in a woman's clothing. This is why some feminists refused to comply with the dress code and wore bloomers instead.

Despite stereotypes, housekeeping and "women's work" changed as increasing numbers of people moved from farms to cities. Changes also reflected the growing number of middle-class educated women. The newspaper column by Fanny Fern is a humorous exploration of the division of family labor between men and women. Students can begin by discussing who does the different chores in their families and compare them to the family discussed in the article. This article is especially funny when read aloud.

A) Behavior: The Good Girl's Soliloquy[27]

I must not slap, not pinch, nor bite,
Nor do a single thing in spite;
Nor whistle, shout, or jump like boys,
To vex (bother) the family with noise;
I must not my own praises seek,
Nor interrupt when others speak --
And raise my voice with earnest tone,
As if I must be heard alone.
And if I would be truly neat,
I never must my breakfast eat
Till I have comb'd and brush'd my hair,
And washed my face and hands with care.

B) Clothing: How A Lady Should Dress (1848)[28]

- A lady's underclothes are not intended to be seen, but we always imagine them to be faultlessly clean. A man who would marry a woman who wore a dirty stocking, or one with a hole in it, would be very likely to beat her in a month, and run away from her before a year was over.
- Shoes should always be worn a little longer than the foot. Their length makes the foot look narrow which is a great beauty.
- Be as moderate as you can about bustles (girdles). Do not lace too tightly. A waist too small for the natural proportion of the figure is the worst possible deformity.
- The most elegant dresses are black and white. Common modesty will prevent indecent exposure of the shoulders and bosom.
- Jewels and feathers are most appropriate to women whose charms are fading or in their full maturity.
- The most plainly dressed woman is sure to be the most lady-like.
- Persons are the best dressed when you can not remember how they were dressed.

C) Fanny Fern's "Housework with Mrs. Adolphus Smith"(1854)[29]

Well, I think I'll finish that story for the editor of the "Dutchman." Let me see; where did I leave off? The setting sun was just gliding with his last ray --
-- "Ma, I want some bread and molasses" -- (*yes, dear,*)
-- gilding with his last ray the church spire --
-- "Wife, where's my Sunday pants?" -- (*Under the bed, dear,*)
-- the church spire of Inverness, when a --
-- "There's nothing under the bed, dear, but your lace cap" -- (*Perhaps they are in the coal hod in the closet,*) --
-- when a horseman was seen approaching--
-- "Ma'am, the pertators (potatoes) is out; not one for dinner"-- (*Take some turnips,*) --
-- approaching, covered with dust, and --
-- "Wife! the baby has swallowed a button" -- (*Reverse him, dear -- take him by the heels,*) --
-- and waving in his hand a banner, on which was written --
-- "Ma! I've torn my pantaloons" --
-- liberty or death! The inhabitants rushed en masse --
-- "Wife! Will you leave off scribbling? -- (*Don't be disagreeable, Smith, I'm just getting inspired,*) --
-- to the public square, where DeBeguis, who had been secretly --
-- "Butcher wants to see you, ma'am" --
-- secretly informed of the traitors' --
-- "Forgot which you said, ma'am, sausages, or mutton chop" --
-- movements, gave orders to fire; not less than 20 -- (*My gracious! Smith you haven't been reversing that child all this time; he's as black as your coat; and that boy of yours has torn up the first sheet of my manuscript. There! It's no use for a married woman to cultivate her intellect. Smith, hand me those twins.*)

As a follow-up to discussing these pieces, students can follow a female family member who works both inside and outside the house. They should take notes as she performs different functions and interview her about her job and family responsibilities. After the interview, students can compare the reality of a working woman's life with their earlier expectations. Based on these findings, students can discuss and design a "family responsibility prenuptial agreement." For another activity, half of the class can write letters to Fanny Fern about the role of women today and the other can respond to these letters as if they were Ms. Fern.

11- Why did women emerge as leaders of reform campaigns?

During the 19th century and early 20th century women were at the forefront of many American reform movements. Women reform leaders included: woman's rights advocates Sojourner Truth, Lucy Stone, and Lucretia Mott; labor organizers Mary Harris "Mother" Jones and Elizabeth Gurley Flynn; populist orator Mary Lease; anti-lynching campaigner Ida B. Wells-Barnett; muckraking journalist Ida M. Tarbell; temperance leaders Frances E. Willard and Carrie Nation; Jane Addams, a founder of the settlement house movement Clara Barton, who established the American Red Cross; Fanny Fern, a journalist; Charlotte Perkins Gilman, a radical feminist; Florence Kelley, an advocate of protective wage and labor laws for women and an end to child labor; and Emma Goldman, an anarchist.

As an introduction to reform movements, students can list some of the problems facing the United States today and discuss different tactics for promoting social change. Assign teams to research each of the female reform leaders listed above and then write and present a three to five minute "persuasive speech" explaining their view of American society, the changes they advocated, and the tactics they were willing to use to achieve their goals. After students speak, the class discusses the ideas presented and whether stiudents would be willing to join the campaign. As a follow-up activity, students can write "letters to the editor" of newspapers expressing their views on different reform campaigns.

Mary Harris "Mother" Jones
leads a protest by the wives of
striking coal miners in Colorodo.

12- What did women experience as immigrants and workers?

From the 1880's through the 1920's, millions of women immigrated to the United States, where they became workers, wives, mothers, and eventually, citizens. These women and their families frequently suffered great hardships as they struggled to preserve families and build communities in a new country. Many women went to work in factories, especially in the garment industries, and became active labor union organizers. Students can read stories about women immigrants and workers and write about their lives.

An interesting activity that helps students see multiple perspectives on the same issue or event is the "dialogue poem." Divide the class into groups of four with each group subdivided into pairs. A group is assigned an actual or hypothetical event where there are competing interests. Each pair lists the problems faced by one of the sides (e.g., the problems faced by women factory workers and the problems faced by factory owners trying to make a profit in a highly competitive industry). The lists are rewritten as oral statements and organized into "dialogue poems." Dialogue ideas include:

* Labor union organizer Mary Harris "Mother" Jones and industrialist John D. Rockefeller of the Standard Oil Company discuss a 1914 strike that Mother Jones led against Rockefeller's coal company in Colorodo.
* An Eastern European immigrant, a wife and mother, struggling to feed and house her family during the 1919 steel strike in Pittsburgh, argues with a store owner, who is being pressured by the steel company to cut off her credit.
* A Sicilian woman arriving at Ellis Island with her children talks with the husband she has not seen in three years.
* A young Asian woman who arrives in Hawaii as a picture bride is introduced to her future husband, a man she is meeting for the first time.
* A young Jewish woman in the garment center in New York City trys to convince a religious fellow worker to join the union.
* An American-born Japanese girl says good-bye to a European American classmate before being sent to an internment camp during World War II.
* A black woman sharecropper from Alabama speaks with the white owner of the farm before she boards a train to Chicago.

The Triangle Shirtwaist Company
An excerpt from a student dialogue poem

"I work for the Triangle Shirtwaist Company."
"I work for the Triangle Shirtwaist factory."
"I am in charge of two hundred girls."
"I work along side two hundred other women workers."
"All my girls care about is their next break."
"Mr. Manager, can't I even go to the bathroom?"
"If I turn my back, they will slack off."
"Why must we be locked in?"

13- Why did working women demand "Bread and Roses"?

In 1912, in the great woolen center of Lawrence, Massachusetts, 20,000 workers walked out of the mills in spontaneous protest against a cut in their weekly pay. Workers had been averaging $8.76 for a 56-hour work week when a state law made 54 hours the maximum for women and for minors under 18. The companies reduced all hours to 54 but refused to raise wage rates to make up for the average pay loss of 31 cents per week suffered by each worker. Under the aggressive leaderships of the Industrial Workers of the World the strike became front-page news throughout the country. After ten weeks the strikers won important concessions from the woolen companies for 250,000 textile workers throughout New England.

During one of the many parades conducted by the strikers some young girls carried a banner with the slogan: "We want bread and roses too." This inspired James Oppenheim to write his poem, "Bread and Roses," which was set to music by Caroline Kohlseat. Resources include the TNT video "A Century of Women" and Lawrence 1912: The Bread and Roses Strike by Wiliam Cahn (NY: Pilgrim Press, 1980).

Students read and discuss "Bread and Roses." As a follow-up activity, they can design and paint a wall mural celebrating the struggle of women during the Lawrence strike.

Bread and Roses[30]

As we come marching, marching in the beauty of the day,
A million darkened kitchens, a thousand mill lofts gray,
Are touched with all the radiance that a sudden sun discloses,
For the people hear us singing: "Bread and roses! Bread and roses!"

As we come marching, marching, we battle too for men,
For they are women's children, and we mother them again.
Our lives shall not be sweated from birth until life closes;
Hearts starve as well as bodies; give us bread, but give us roses!

As we come marching, marching, unnumbered women dead
Go crying through our singing their ancient cry for bread.
Small art and love and beauty their drudging spirits knew.
Yes, it is bread we fight for--but we fight for roses, too!

As we come marching, marching, we bring the greater days.
The rising of the women means the rising of the race.
No more the drudge and idler--ten that toil where one reposes,
But a sharing of life's glories: Bread and roses! Bread and roses!

14- How did women win the right to vote?

In most textbook accounts of history, the struggles by people for change are glossed over. Decades of hard work and sacrifice are summarized in a few sentences. Disagreements about tactics are ignored. Difficult battles are discussed as if the results were a foregone conclusion. It took 133 years of struggle from the Constitutional Convention of 1787 until the ratification of the 19th amendment to the United States Constitution for American women to secure the right to vote. The campaign for women's suffrage produced outstanding women leaders, including Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott, who organized the first women's rights convention in the United States at Seneca Fall, NY; Susan B. Anthony, a founding member of the National Woman Suffrage Association in 1869; and Carrie Chapman Catt and Alice Paul, who led ultimately successful campaigns for the right to vote during World War I. This lesson is designed to give students an opportunity to dramatize history and explore the ideas and tactics of women who helped to expand American democracy. As a preliminary activities, students can view sections from the Smithsonian video, One Woman, One Vote or listen to songs from the Folkways cassettee, Songs of the Suffragettes.

HSSE Lois Ayre has her middle school students create half-hour news broadcasts of different historical topics. Student teams research an event, write a script that includes props, scenery and costumes, and prepare a full length video or act out a live broadcast in class. Every production includes an anchor person, news reporters, and historical actors with different views of the event. Students can also include advertisements for a product from the historical era (an excellent model is a video prepared by the New York State Bicentennial Commission, An Empire of Reason). After presentations to class, historical actors answer questions from the audience about the impact these people had on United States history. For this unit, subjects and settings for the newsbroadcast can include:

Elizabeth Cady Stanton presiding at Seneca Falls Convention.
Susan B. Anthony engages in civil disobedience to demand the vote.
Abigail Scott Duniaway secures the vote for women in Oregon.
Carrie Chapman Catt campaigns for ratification of the 19th amendment.
Alice Paul protests at the White House and refuses to eat in prison.
Ida B. Wells-Barnett refuses to participate in a racially segregated suffrage march.

15- How did women reformers shape the 20th century?

Since the earlier days of the United States, women have played prominent roles in American reform movements that were not directly related to conditions faced by women. At the start of this lesson, the class should discuss ideas about why suffragettes and feminists have frequently been involved in other reform issues as well. As a follow-up to the discussion, student teams select and research the lives of 20th century women reformers. Choices include Ella Baker, Mary McCloud Bethune, Myra Bradwell, Rachel Carson, Marian Wright Edelman, Betty Friedan, Fannie Lou Hammer, Maggie Kuhn, Frances Perkins, Jeannette Rankin, Eleanor Roosevelt, Margaret Sanger, Gloria Steinem, Mary Church Terrell, and Lillian Wald. After the research is completed, individual students organize the information into biopoems using the following format.

_____

First name: _____
Title or role: _____
Descriptive Words: _____
Lover of . . . _____
Who believed . . . _____
Who wanted . . . _____
Who used . . . _____
Who gave . . . _____
Who said . . . _____
Last name: _____

_____

Students share their poems to teach the class about different reformers and reform movements. The biopoem that follows is by Janine Velotti, a former student of Andrea Libresco.

MARGARET
Speaker on sexual reform
Leader of Birth Control Movement
Lover of medicine and women's rights
Who believed in a woman's rights to control her own body
Who wanted legalized contraceptives, sexual information for women and
to decrease the number of unwanted pregnancies
Who used writings, investigations, and medical training
Who said, "[Women's] weary misshapen bodies . . . . were destined to be thrown on the scrap heap before they were thirty-five."
SANGER

16- Why did African American women sing the blues?

This lesson examines African American life from 1900-1945 with a focus on conditions faced by women. This period includes the "Great Migration" north, World War I, the "Roaring 20s," the Great Depression, and World War II. It is an interdisciplinary lesson drawing heavily on art, music, and literature.

For this lesson, students examine work by women writers Zora Neale Hurston, Jesse Redmond Fauset, Nella Larsen, Anne Spencer, Georgia Douglas Johnson, Gwendolyn Brooks, and Margaret Walker; Laura Wheeler Waring, a painter and illustrator; Meta Warrick Fuller, a sculptor; and musical performers Marian Anderson, Ann Brown, Sippie Wallace, Camilla Williams, Gertrude "Ma" Rainey and Bessie Smith. They can also examine work by men that illustrates conditions faced by women, including poetry by Langston Hughes' ("Mother to Son") and Fenton Johnson ("The Scarlet Woman" and "The Lonely Mother") and the mural art by Jacob Lawrence, who chronicled the "Great Migration."

17- Why did women lead opposition to war?

How different are women and men and are their differences inherited or learned? Do men tend to behave more aggressively than women because of their hormones or because of their training? Do women's traditional nurturing roles as mothers, sisters, daughters, wives, nurses and teachers create a distinct feminist perspective that values cooperation over competition and peaceful solutions over war? Throughout United States history, women have played leading roles in anti-war movements, even when this meant they risked being labeled as traitors. Examples include:[31]

* The Woman's Christian Temperance Union took strong anti-military stands, especially against the Spanish-American War in 1898.
* In 1915, Jane Addams, a founder of the settlement house movement, was elected national president of the Women's Peace Party, an organization established by pacifists to oppose U.S. entry into World War I. She continued her anti-war activities throughout her life and was honored with a Nobel Peace Prize in 1931.
* Crystal Eastman, a lawyer, author of New York State's first workman's compensation law, publisher of the magazine Four Lights, and President of the New York chapter of the Women's Peace Party, was jailed because of her efforts to keep the U.S. out of World War I.
* In 1918, Emily Greene Balch, a professor of political science and economics at Wellesley College, was fired because of her opposition to the United States entering the war. She won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1946.
* Florence Kelley was a lawyer, author, socialist and an advocate for protective labor laws for women and an end to child labor. In 1919, Kelley joined Addams, Balch and other women in founding the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.
* During the years between World War I and II, the Women's Peace Union worked for a constitutional amendment to outlaw United States participation in war.
* Jeannette Rankin was the first woman elected to the United States House of Representatives. A life-long pacifist, she voted against U.S. entry into both World War I and World War II. In the 1960's, while over eighty years old, she was an active opponent of U.S. military involvement in Vietnam.
* Catholic pacifist Dorothy Day organized civil disobedience in opposition to civil defense testing and counseled young men not to comply with the military draft.
* Dagmar Wilson was a founder of Women Strike for Peace, an organization opposed to nuclear weapons and U.S. military involvement in Vietnam.
* Coretta Scott King succeeded her assassinated husband as a leading figure in the struggle for civil rights for African Americans in the United States and as an outspoken critic of U.S. military involvement in Vietnam.
* Dr. Helen Caldicott, an anti-nuclear weapons activist, campaigned across the United States for nuclear disarmament as part of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) and its U.S. affiliate, Physicians for Social Responsibility. IPPNW was awarded a Nobel Peace prize in 1985.
* In the 1980's, Samantha Smith, a teenager from Maine, wrote a letter to the leader of the Soviet Union. Her letter and her meetings with world leaders helped ease military tension between nuclear powers. Samantha died in a plane crash while still in her teens.

Students should research and write about the life of a women in United States history who was an activist for peace. In their reports students should explain her reasons for opposing war. The entire class can then discuss their ideas about why women have been so prominent as peace activists.
As a final activity, students will design a quilt square that presents the ideas, struggles, and achievements of the woman they researched. The squares will be assembled into a giant "peace quilt."

Peace Quilt

Materials needed for a "peace quilt":
felt or paper (a large piece or pieces for the background, the number of square feet equals the number of students in the class)
12" x 12" pieces of felt or construction paper for the individual quilt pieces
Assorted colors of felt or construction paper
Markers
glue sticks and glue guns
scissors
curtain rod for hanging

18- What role did U.S. women play in World War II?

This lesson is based on a curriculum guide, "Long Island Woman Go to War, The Changing Roles of U.S. Women, 1940-1946," prepared by HSSE Diane Tully, Pamela Booth, Jennifer Evans and Melissa Sorgen.

Many changes took place in the United States during the Roaring 20's and the Great Depression, but women's traditional occupational roles remained relatively unaffected. When women were employed outside the home, their choices were limited. Married women were expected to be homemakers, wives and mothers and leave the outside jobs to men. However, after the attack by Japan on Pearl Harbor in December, 1941, hundreds of thousands of men went off to war and left behind jobs in factories, on farms, in offices, and in mines. Maintaining production was essential to victory and women were essential to production.[32]

Women's adaptation to the new roles created during World War II produced mixed feelings for women, men, and society in general, and forced many people to reevaluate their perceptions of a woman's capabilities. Women proved they could build planes, tanks, and ships. And although thankful for the end of the war, many women were reluctant to give up their new jobs. Many of these developments are documented in the video, The Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter. A class can explore the the changes that took place in the public perception of women during World War II by locating articles about women and advertisements from local newspapers and national magazines published during that period.

19- How have women's lives changed since World War II?

Holly Near's song, "Working Women," can be used to open discussion of the ways that attitudes towards women, opportunities for women, and the lives of women, have changed since World War II.

Working Women by Holly Near[33]

I'm a working woman and they call me "9 to 5"
What that means is I work full time, trying to survive
First I take care of boss's business
And then I go home and take care of mine
Oh, I'm a working woman and they call me "9 to 5."

File a lot, smile a lot, yes sir, have a good day!
On my feet, on my seat, deadline! Do not delay!
I got phone-itis, in spite of us, they put in an extra line
I've got to file faster! Type faster!
White-out is clogging my mind!
And without me the boss would be totally at a loss
I'd like some respect to be reflected in the check.

Please, don't call me honey
Don't grab me as you go by
Dodging your passes just makes me angry
It's hard enough to just keep your boring business alive!

As a follow-up, students can interview their mothers, grandmothers, and other female relatives, about the changes they have seen during the course of their lives. Topics include work, education, family roles, women's health issues and access to political power. These women can also be invited to come to class and discuss their experiences.

Other activities include examining newspaper articles discussing Supreme Court decisions on abortion rights, affirmitive action, and equal access to educational programs, federal legislation on family leave, welfare, and education (including title IX), and the struggle over the Equal Rights Amendment. New York Times articles on these topics are available on microfiche in the Great Events series.

20- How have women shaped the modern U.S.? (Middle School)

Based on their work during the unit, each student nominates a woman, famous or not, as "Woman of the Year." To nominate a candidate, students fill out nomination forms which include the biography and achievements of the woman and the impact she has had on the student or on other people.

For the second step in the process, a student submits a persuasive piece on the nominee. This can be a poem, essay, collage, mobile, book jacket, monologue, interview, or photo essay, etc. At an awards ceremony, all nominees and nominators are honored. Projects are displayed and living honorees are invited to attend and address the class.

20- How have women shaped the modern U.S.? (High School)

Working in teams, students examine the chronology of events and social developments between 1890 and 1974. Each group selects ten that its members believe are most significant for shaping the United States in the 20th century. The class discusses the selections with a particular focus on events and developments that are related to women. As a culminating activity, students write essays explaining their individual selections and whether men and women are equally important in United States history.

1890 Women are 17% of the U.S. labor force

1899 First motor-driven vacuum cleaner

1900 Life expectancy for women -- 48 years

1903 Wright brothers open air age

1907 First radio broadcast

1916 Birth control clinic opens in Brooklyn, NY

1917 US enters World War I; Invention of electric portable vacuum cleaner

1919 Sale of alcohol prohibited

1920 19th amendment approved; women get vote; women are 20% of U.S. labor force

1920s Major changes in women's fashion; mass production of automobiles; electrification of U.S.; majority of U.S. population in cities

1921/24 Quotas restrict immigration

1925 Electric refrigerators and frozen foods

1927 First sound movie; Lindbergh first solo Atlantic flight

1929 Stock Market crash; Great Depression

1930 Electric dishwasher invented; Unemployment reaches 4.5 million

1932 FDR elected President, starts New Deal; Earhart first woman solo Atlantic flight

1936-37 Strike wave - CIO founded

1938 Nylon fabric invented

1940 Birth control information legalized in most states; Lend-lease support for Britain; FDR elected for third term

1941-45 WW II; 6 million women enter labor force; Penicillin used in medicine

1944 Forerunner of digital computer invented

1945 Atomic bombs dropped on Japan

1946 Fully automatic dishwasher invented

1947 GI bill spurs development of suburbs

1950 US enters Korean War

1950s Baby boom; prepared foods; Cold War

1951 Rapid growth of television; Rosenbergs sentenced to death as atomic spys

1953 Women are 30% of US labor force

1954 Supreme Court declares separate schools are unequal

1955 Montgomery bus boycott; Rock and roll era begins; Salk polio vaccine; AFL and CIO merge

1957 Sputnik lauches space age

1959 Alaska and Hawaii become states

1960 Kennedy elected President; Birth control pills available; Civil rights sit-ins

1961 First human space flights

1964 Civil Rights Act bans sex-based job discrimination; Expanding US role in Vietnam

1968 Martin Luther King, Jr. assasination leads to urban riots; Nixon elected President

1971 Life expectancy for women -- 74 years

1972 Congress passes Equal Rights Amendment

1973 Supreme Court legalizes abortion; Peace accord in Vietnam; Watergate investigation; Energy crisis begins

1974 Women are 45% of US labor force; President Nixon resigns; Ford grants pardon

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Woman's Suffrage - Comparing Textbooks

by Alan Singer

A) Middle School United States History Textbooks

Ernest R. May, A Proud Nation (Evanston, IL: McDougal, Littell & Company, 1984).

This middle school United States history book mentions campaigns for woman's suffrage six times. An insert containing the Constitution, the Amendments, and text comments, informs students that "the right to vote was finally extended to women in 1920 (p. 266)." The unit on the "An Era of Improvement" discusses movements for reform, including the women's rights movement. It includes a photograph of Susan B. Anthony and a caption that recounts her arrest and conviction for voting in the 1872 Presidential election (pp. 370-371). This unit also includes a full page focus on "Lucy Stone's 'Solitary Battle'" for women's rights (p 374). Campaigns for women's rights are reintroduced in the section on post-Civil War corruption and reform. This section contains a map showing when women gained the right to vote in different states, two pictures representing the suffragette campaign of the World War I era (pp. 525-529) and a full page focus on Abigail Scott Duniway's leadership in the battle for woman's suffrage in Oregon (p. 536). The right of women to vote also receives brief mention in the section on reforms during Woodrow Wilson's Administration, but the book leaves out that Wilson opposed women's suffrage and only agreed to it as an emergency wartime measure (p. 553).

Beverly J. Armento, Gary B. Nash, Christopher L. Salter and Karen K. Wixson, A More Perfect Union (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1991).

In this edition of A More Perfect Union, campaigns for women's suffrage are mentioned four times. The section on pre-Civil War reform movements states that in 1848, "no woman had the right to vote (p. 267)." This is followed by a two page fictional account of Susan B. Anthony's arrest and conviction for voting in the 1872 Presidential election (276-277). Woman's suffrage is not mentioned again until a section on "Women's Rights" in the unit on the Progressive Era (pp. 516-518). This section includes a photograph of a woman's suffrage march in New York City in 1912 and summarizes woman's suffrage activities from Seneca Falls in 1848 through the ratification of the 19th Amendment. Much of this information is restated in a later thematic section on the expansion of voting rights from 1790 through 1970 (pp. 595-596). This section includes another photograph of a woman's suffrage march.

Earlier in the book, students are shown a picture of the Susan B. Anthony dollar without being told who Anthony was or why her face is on a coin (p. 101) and there is a picture of men and women voting in New Jersey in the early 1800's (p. 147). The caption reads that, "Through an oversight, the voting laws of New Jersey allowed women to vote until 1808." However, there is no mention that women were not allowed to vote in other states or that after 1808, women were not allowed to vote in New Jersey until the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution in 1920.

B) 11th grade United States History Textbooks

Winthrop D. Jordan, Miriam Greenblatt and John S. Bowes, The Americans, The History of a People and a Nation (Evanston, IL: McDougal, Littell & Company, 1985).

In this edition, Jordan, The Americans, mentions campaigns for woman's suffrage in three places. The section on Amendments to the Constitution includes a drawing of women attempting to vote for Susan B. Anthony for President of the United States. The caption reads: "Forty years after the first introduction of a bill in Congress, women secured voting rights. Susan B. Anthony was arrested for voting in 1872 (p. 191)."

The chapter, "Populism, 1876-1910," contains a two and a half page sub-chapter, "Women Continue Their Struggle for Suffrage." It includes a picture of Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton and a discussion of feminist objections when women were

excluded from the 15th amendment. It also mentions the formation of the National American Woman Suffrage Association in 1890, local initiatives and legal efforts to secure the right to vote, attempts to pass a constitutional amendment, and anti-suffrage opposition (pp. 478-480).

The final discussion of woman's suffrage occurs in three paragraphs on social change in the 1920's. They mention suffragist protests in front of the White House during World War I, Woodrow Wilson's decision to support voting rights for women, and a quote by Carrie Chapman Catt describing the long campaign by women to secure the right to vote. This section include a picture of women picketing the White House. The caption reads: "The 1920s saw many changes, and one of the first and most important was the 19th Amendment (p. 566)."

Carol Berkin et al., American Voices: A History of the United States (Glenview, IL: ScottForesman, 1995).

This book was rejected by the American Textbook Council. Its guide to textbooks describes it as, "Full of revisionist folly, and strident on themes of ethnicity, gender, and class."[34]

The one volume edition of American Voices discusses campaigns for woman's suffrage six times. The section on Jacksonian reform movements briefly mentions campaigns for women's rights (pp. 173-174). They are given more attention in a section on Gilded Age political controversies, which includes a picture of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, discussion of the founding of the National Woman Suffrage Association and the American Woman Suffrage Association, and successful efforts to win the right to vote in western territories and states (pp. 299-300). Brief mention of woman's suffrage is made again in sections on the Progressive Era (pp. 349-350) and World War I (p. 433). What distinguishes this textbook's coverage of woman's suffrage from other textbooks are the inclusion of a primary source excerpt from Elizabeth Cady Stanton's autobiography (p. 326-327) where she discusses higher education for women and a sub-chapter that summarizes the final campaign for and achievement of the right to vote. This section includes pictures of women celebrating victory and voting and a U.S. map that outlines "women's voting rights before 1920 (pp. 480-481)."

C) An Advanced Placement United States History Textbook

Thomas A. Bailey and David M. Kennedy, The American Pageant, A History of the Republic, 7th edition (Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath and Company, 1983).

Bailey and Kennedy, The American Pageant, 7th edition, briefly mentions woman's suffrage in four places. The chapter "The Ferment of Reform and Culture, 1790-1860," contains a 2 page subsection "Women in Revolt." It includes a picture of Susan B. Anthony and a caption that identifies her as "a foremost fighter in the women's rights movement, as well as in that for temperance and abolition." The caption mentions her arrest in 1872 for voting. The section concludes, "The crusade for woman's rights was eclipsed by that against slavery in the decade before the Civil War. . . . Yet women were being gradually admitted to colleges, and some states, . . . were even permitting wives to own property after marriage (pp. 317-318)."

Two hundred pages later, four paragraphs discuss "Women's Rights and Wrongs." This section emphasizes gains made by women after the Civil War, including securing the right to vote in some local elections and in western territories. It concludes that "American females had long enjoyed a degree of freedom unknown in Europe" and that their "gradual emancipation" brought problems, an increasing divorce rate, as well as benefits (pp. 515-516).

In the section on the Progressive movement, Bailey and Kennedy mention the revival of woman's suffrage and include an extended quote from a statement by President Theodore Roosevelt. Roosevelt offered luke-warm support for the right of women to vote. He wrote,

"Personally I believed in woman's suffrage, but I am not an enthusiastic advocate of it, because I do not regard it as a very important matter (p. 603)." In the chapter "The War to End War, 1917-1918," a paragraph (accompanied by a picture of women picketing the White House), announces the passage of the 19th amendment, crediting Woodrow Wilson's decision that woman's suffrage was "a vitally necessary war measure (p. 685)."

Become Textbook Detectives:

- Have students in your classes become a textbook detectives. Compare the way that different United States history textbooks discuss the struggle for Woman's Suffrage or another issue related to women in United States history. Is coverage adequate? Why or why not?

- Language influences the way that we think about ourselves and others. Examine a social studies textbook for possible sexist language. Should this book be changed? How?

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[1]Barbara M. Wertheimer, We Were There, The Story of Working Women in America (NY: Pantheon, 1977), p. 3.

[2]Based on a quote from Judith K. Brown, "Economic Organization and the Position of Women Among the Iroquois," Enthnohistory, vol 17, no. 3-4, Summer-Fall 1970, p. 164. Cited in Wertheimer, We Were There, p. 4.

[3]Sydney G. Fisher, Men, Women and Manners in Colonial Days (1897), cited in Wertheimer, We Were There, p. 20.

[4]The poem has been attributed to both Ruth Belknap and Jeremy Belknap. It appears in the Belknap papers, Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, 60th series, vol. IV (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1895), p. 228.

[5]Eliot Wigginton, ed., The Foxfire Book (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1972). Nine volumes were published between 1972 and 1986.

[6]Lowell Thompson and Norman Marchart, Authentic Craft Activities to Enrich the Social Studies (Lanham, MD: University Press of America), p. 155-158.

[7]Wertheimer, We Were There, p. 44.

[8]Rossi, Alice, ed. The Feminist Papers from Adams to de Beauvoir, (NY: Bantam, 1973).

[9]Wertheimer, We Were There, p. 61.

[10]Frederic Kidder et al., ed., The History of Ipswich (Boston, 1845), pp. 224-231, cited in Grade 7 United States and New York State History: A Multicultural Perspective, Vol. III (New York City Public Schools, 1990), p. 122.

[11]The Harbinger, November 14, 1836, cited in Thomas Bailey and David Kennedy, The American Spirit, 5th ed., vol 1. (Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath, 1984), pp.278-280.

[12]An original handbill is displayed at the "Working People Exhibit" in the Lowell National Historical Park, courtesy of the Baker collection, Harvard University. For more information about the historical park and its exhibits, write Lowell National Historical Park, 67 Kirk Street, Lowell MA 01852 or call 508/970-5000.

[13]Adapted from a version of The Lowell Offering, 1833, appearing in Voices of Freedom: Sources in American History (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall Allyn & Bacon, 1987), p. 83-84.

[14]Harriet H. Robinson, Loom and Spindle, or Life Among the Early Mill Girls (1898), cited in Carol Berkin and Leonard Wood, National Treasures, 2nd ed. (Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1987), p. 62-63.

[15]Werthheimer, We Were There, p. 68-69.

[16] Hilda E. Wenner and Elizabeth Freilicher, Here's to the Women (NY: The Feminist Press at CUNY, 1987), pp. 95-96.

[17]Voices of Freedom, pp. 97-98 and 100-101. National Treasures, pp. 76-77.

[18]Cited in Eugene D. Genovese, Roll Jordan, Roll (NY: Pantheon Books, 1974), p. 74.
[19]Elizabeth C. Stanton, Ausan B. Anthony, and Matilda J. Gage, eds., The History of Woman Suffrage, vol. 1 (Rochester, NY: Charles Mann, 1889), reprinted in Leslie B. Tanner, Voices from Women's Liberation (NY: New American Library, 1970), pp. 43-47.
[20]Harriet Beecher Stowe, Uncle Tom's Cabin or, Life Among the Lowly, ed., Ann Douglas (NY: Penguin, 1981), pp. 507-508.
[21]Werthheimer, We Were There, p. 37.
[22]Werthheimer, We Were There, pp. 33-34.
[23]Wenner and Freilicher, Here's to the Women, pp. 227-228. It is performed by Pete Seeger, Jane Sapp and Si Kahn on their recording "Carry It On" (Flying Fish Records, 1986).
[24]Ravitch, Diane, ed. The American Reader (NY: HarperCollins, 1990), p. 106-107.
[25]Cited in Tanner, Voices from Women's Liberation , pp. 83-85.
[26]Beth Millstein and Jeanne Bodi, We, the American Women: A Documentary History (Chicago: Science Research Associates, 1977), p. 129, cited in Grade 7 United States and New York State History, Vol. III, p. 438.
[27]Arnold Arnold, Pictures and Stories From Forgotten Children's Books (NY: Dover Books, 1969), pp. 20-27, cited in Grade 7 United States and New York State History, Vol. III, p. 210.
[28]The Art of Good Behavior (New York, 1848), cited in Grade 7 United States and New York State History, Vol. III , p. 202.
[29]Parton, Sara Payson Willis, Fern Leaves from Fanny's Portfolio (Auburn: Miller, Orton & Mulligan, 1854).
[30]Edith Fowke and Joe Glazer, Songs of Work and Protest (New York: Dover, 1973), pp. 70-71. It is also on the cassette "Carry It On!"
[31]Judith Freeman Clark, Almanac of American Women in the 20th Century (New York: Prentice Hall, 1987); Harriet Hyman Alonso, "Peace and Women's Issues in U.S. History," OAH Magazine of History, Vol. 8, No. 3, Spring, 1994, p. 20.
[32]Susan Mathis, "Propaganda to Mobilize Women for World War II," Social Education (February, 1994), pp. 94-96.
[33] Holly Near, "Working Women", Hereford Music, 1979. Recorded on Singing for Our Lives (Oakland, CA: Redwood Records, 1982).
[34]American Textbook Council, History Textbooks, A Standard and Guide: 1994-95 Edition (New York: Center for Education Studies/American Texbook Council, 1994), p. 56.