



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1997 Volume III: American Maid: Growing Up Female in Life and Literature

Women: Stride Toward Freedom

Curriculum Unit 97.03.02
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Introduction

This unit is developed for seventh and eighth grade classes.

The unit's focus will be on the rise of women's movements beginning in the late seventeen and eighteen hundreds. The thinkers of the age of reason questioned the established political and religious authority and stressed the importance of reason, equality, liberty, and women in the workplace as well as the political arena.

Included in the unit are lesson plans, activities for students, a suggested bibliography and reading list, for the students and teachers alike. The different women's organizations such as Women's Bureau, Women's ORT, Women's Equal Rights Amendment, and the amendment that gave women the right to vote, also Women's Relief Corps, and various others will be considered.

The more contemporary women's movements have had an impact on several levels of society in the United States. Women's groups have changed many people's views about male and female roles. The changes have affected their roles in the workplace and the family, and the way women live their lives. Through their vote, women's groups have influenced election results and government. They have also been instrumental in influencing legislation.

The most notable single change in women's lives was their growing participation in the paid labor force. In the United States, the percentage of employed women surveyed over a fifty year period rose from 28 percent to 57 percent. This contemporary women's movement contributed to an increasing acceptance of careers for all women, including mothers with young children. Such changes were incorporated with a growing expectation that women would combine employment with their roles as wives and mothers.

The road for equality for women has been an arduous one. They have had to fight their way through legislatures and congressional obstacles, face ridicule and indifference. Without the resources of money and political power women found their way blocked, and only through determination and perseverance did they make impressive achievements.

The struggle for equal rights is not only a part of the past, but has continued throughout the entire fabric of American history. There is still a long road ahead and many obstacles to overcome. Women must band

together and continue.

For more than a century women have tried to achieve full citizenship, the right to take part in the political and social life of their time and to stand on equal human dignity with men in their relationship. Many will not claim that these goals have been fully achieved. The women's movement has come far enough for them to look back and see where they started, and how they reached their present status.

The alterations in the status of women arose from the efforts of a small but very active group of feminists. These feminist groups were the recipients of the forces that transformed the country in a comparatively short space of time from a small, undeveloped country into one with wealth, industrialization, and international responsibilities. Women played various roles in the transformation, not as inventors, generals, business leaders, presidents, but as homemakers, producers, reformers, and eventually as citizens. Women were deprived of a vital step toward achieving human dignity, and the recognition that they too were endowed with the faculty of reason, the power of judgement, and the capacity for social responsibility.

Over the past 150 years, women in the United States and around the world have organized political movements in order to obtain the same social, economic, and political rights that men have traditionally enjoyed. These feminist movements have sought to change the laws to prevent discrimination against women and to provide them with equal opportunities in all aspects of life, including education, employment, and representation in the government.

Women's struggle for equal rights is not just a part of the past. It is a cord that runs through the entire fabric of our history. From early settlements throughout our nation's development, its political changes, its wars, its industrial growth, and labor movements women have fought for their rights, and the rights of others. Women had to fight, fight, fight.

When the Plymouth Colony of 1620 established itself it was one of families, who brought with them the traditions of their English backgrounds.

In the colonial society, women had no standing in the eyes of the law. They did not have the right to own or inherit property. They could not vote or hold any office in government. Married women, under English common law, could not sign contracts, have their own money, or sue for divorce. Women had no political or legal rights and were without political representation. Women often could not speak out, their husbands spoke for them.

In addition to bearing and caring for the children, some women worked long hours in the field, raising food for their families. They tended the cattle. They spun the wool that they later used to make clothing and bedding. They made the soap, the candles and many of the medicines.

Some women shared with their husbands in such occupations as retailing, printmaking, shipbuilding, innkeeping, ferry boat operations, and prison management. They acted as nurses for their communities, and even some as teachers. Women were rarely found in such esteemed professions as law and medicine, although no formal education was required for either profession until the end of the eighteenth century. Women who were able to work outside the home were the exceptions, not the rule.

Indian and black women fared even worse than their white sisters in the early days of American History. The Indian woman was considered inferior, and an enemy, and the black woman was a slave. About one-third of the slaves forcibly brought to America were women and they had no rights at all. They did field labor on the plantations, performed household duties, raised children, and were often married to slaves. Marriage did not

prevent slave women from being separated from their husbands and children.

During the colonial revolution men and women worked together to bring about a new nation. Women generally did not venture onto the battlefields but there were exceptions to be found among nurses, cooks, and aides. Women in these positions received half of the pay that men did. In some instances women took over the duties or combat replacing wounded soldiers.

During the seventeen and eighteen hundreds women were employed in various fields, such as Marguerite Hastner of New York, a silversmith, and Ann Franklin, a newspaper editor in Rhode Island, Mary Salmon of Boston ran a blacksmith shop, Mary Wilson of Norfolk, Virginia was a shoe maker, Mary Katherine Goddard was a printer in Baltimore and she was authorized by the Continental Congress to print the first copy of the Declaration of Independence with the names of the signers attached, and Anna Zenger, wife of John Peter Zenger continued to publish her husband's newspaper while he was in jail for publishing an article opposing the New York Colonial government in 1735.

Women such as Abigail Adams, Martha Curtis Washington, and Mercy Otis Warren gave valuable counsel to their husbands. "The Daughters of Liberty" banded together to protest taxes on teas and imported fabrics. They also protested about the English laws under which they were forced to live. Many women acted as spies for the revolutionaries aiding in victories against the British soldiers. Women's mobility began when they took over men's roles.

The home in Colonial America was the place where the family labored to feed, house and clothe themselves. A new established government brought industrialization, growth of cities, with factories, mercantile establishments and a group of working class people. Men began to compete in the marketplace so they could earn money to purchase the products and merchandise that were previously produced at their homes by their wives. The roles of the wives then changed. They were to maintain their homes, set an example of virtue and religious piety and raise their children to be morally upright and industrious and become productive members of their society.

Many young, poor and unmarried women from the farms or newly immigrated from Europe went to work in textile mills in New England. The south was largely agricultural but in the industrialized south, women whether poor farmer's wives or mistresses of plantations with the slaves were also expected to be virtuous, religious and devoted to the care of their families.

The Civil War brought new responsibilities for women, for some, opportunities as well. While the men fought, women became heads of households, farms, business managers, and income earners. There was a shortage of nurses; women in both the south and north rendered their services. At first there was prejudice against women but they were needed and they rallied to the cause with thousands volunteering to assist on the battlefields and in care of the wounded, including working in the operating rooms.

Although women were discriminated against they continued to struggle, work, and take on difficult roles. As women took on more and more responsibilities and discovered that they could function they began to look at their roles and status and they wanted change.

In ancient societies the lives of most women centered around their households. For example, in the Greek city of Athens, women raised children and managed the spinning, weaving and cooking in the household. Wealthy women supervised slaves in these tasks, but they also did some of the work themselves. Respectable Athenian women seldom left their homes. Only men could purchase goods, or engage in soldering, lawmaking,

and public speaking. The societies of ancient Egypt and of the Greek city of Sparta provided a rare contrast. Both Egyptian and Spartan women could own property and engage in business.

In ancient Rome, women's primary role was to manage household affairs. Women could not hold public office. Men dominated as head of the household. But the Romans developed a system of government based on the authority and leadership of a noble class that included not only statesmen and military leaders, but also the married women of leading Roman families. The Roman matron Cornelia, achieved fame and respect for her managerial skill, patriotism, and good works. In time, such upper-class women, gained greater control over their property and over marriage decisions. However, even these women could not vote or hold public office.

During the middle ages, women's lives continued much as before, like the Roman matrons, medieval noblewomen managed large households and supervised servants, oversaw gardens, attended to clothing and the household furnishings. Many other women worked as cooks, servants, or worked in the pastures and fields of large estates.

Two new roles for women did appear in the Middle Ages, the nun and the woman active in trade, either as an artist or as a merchant. Convents flourished during the early Middle Ages. They offered primarily upper-class women an alternative to marriage and provided education, spiritual development, and control over extensive land. Women found increasing opportunities for independence as artisans and merchants.

From the Renaissance to the eighteenth century, fundamental changes in religious and political outlook took root, as leading thinkers began to emphasize the rights of the individual. The Renaissance was a period of great cultural and intellectual activity that spread throughout Europe. The most significant intellectual movement was humanism, which stressed the importance of human beings and their nature and place in the universe. Some humanists questioned certain traditional ideas about women, and favored better education and a more responsible family role for women.

The Reformation, the religious movement that gave rise to Protestantism, also encouraged reassessment of women's roles. Protestant leaders permitted ministers to marry and began to picture marriage as a mutual relationship of spiritually equal partners. Husbands had less control over the lives of their wives. Protestants also began to view marriage and divorce as matters of individual choice rather than as a fulfillment of obligations to such authorities as parents and the church.

The Age of Reason was another period of great intellectual activity and change. In Europe, in the eighteenth century, during this era, educated women participated in intellectual and political debates. In Paris for instance, gatherings called salons promoted conversation and discussion among learned men and women. The salons widened these fortunate women's view of society and their possible roles in it.

Women's roles as workers also expanded during this Age of Reason. In western Europe and the American colonies, women worked as innkeepers, landowners, midwives, printers, servants, teachers and textile workers. But rural occupations continued to employ the largest group of female and male workers. Rural women toiled as laborers on large farms and in their own small gardens and cottages. Both urban and rural women engaged in knitting, sewing, and other home industries that made crucial contributions to household income.

The forces of change that made several developments during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries set the stage for the rise of women's movements. Those thinkers of that Age of Reason questioned established political and religious authority and stressed the importance of reason, equality and liberty. This new

intellectual atmosphere helped to justify women's rights to full citizenship. On the eve of the French Revolution, the Marquis de Condorcet spoke in favor of women's right to vote. The British author Mary Wollstonecraft argued for women's rights and equality with men.

The spread of industrialization during the eighteenth century also had an effect on the woman's place in society. The Industrial Revolution moved not only women's work, but also men's and children's as well, out of the home and into the factories. Factory jobs offered middle-class women the opportunity to earn wages. But, if a woman was married, her husband legally controlled her earnings.

Industrialization had a different effect on the middle-class women in small towns and cities. With this new separation of work and home life, these women lost a sense of useful involvement in productive work. They became regarded as "ladies" whose place was in the home, while their husbands provided the family income. Many of these women turned to such pursuits as needlework and craftwork, and to religious and charitable activities as well.

There is no end in the list of things that women began to do.

They took part in strikes. In 1877, men, women and children took part in the railroad strike in Pittsburgh. The strike began because the railroad announced that worker's wages were to be cut by ten percent. These workers already were not earning enough to meet their financial obligations. National guard soldiers were sent in to quell the strike but it continued and spread rapidly. The most important part of the disturbance was the active role taken by women. They developed methods, techniques, and strategies to deal with scabs, a name for workers that the companies brought in to do the work. Because of this railroad cars and their contents were burned, including property along the railroad tracks. The guard troops were no match for the people. The people met them with sticks, stones and bullets alike.

Women played an important part in the workers' wars. In the coalfields of the east, miners' wives developed a special technique in order to deal with "scabs", workers who were called in by the mining companies to dig coal, when the miners went on strike. The scabs would take mule-carts down the mine with them to bring the coal up in. But crowds of women, armed with mops, metal dishpans and washtubs, would run down the hillside toward them, screaming, shouting, and banging their dishpans, thereby setting the mules to flight afraid of the noise and racket they made.

The law usually took the side of the employers, but both employers and law enforcement officers came to dread the pots and pans raids and their leaders. Early one morning, at one dawn raid at Arnot in Pennsylvania, an Irish woman in her nightgown hurriedly bundled up and was pushed into action by her husband who was on strike. When the local sheriff told her not to frighten the mules, she decided not to let him get away with it. She took up the old tin pan and she hit him in the head with it, and she yelled, "To hell with you and the mules!". He fell over and dropped into a creek. Then the mules began to rebel against the scabbers. They bucked and kicked the scab drivers and started off for the barn.

This woman was Mary Harris Jones, the Irish widow who had watched the roundhouse burn in Pittsburgh in eighteen seventy-seven. Known everywhere as "Mother Jones", she spent her life traveling through the mining areas urging workers to join a union and to strike for better pay and treatment. It was Mother Jones who sent the miner's wives at Arnot careering downhill after the scabs, and led the miners themselves to victory.

The union Mother Jones worked for was the United Mine Workers of America. A young trade union, it was soon to become one of the most powerful protectors of worker's rights in the whole United States.

More and more workers were realizing that they would have to fight hard to win concessions from their bosses and that union organization was essential.

The metal workers of the western states now had their own union too, so did the railway workers, the tailors, printers, carpenters, dockers and many others. Most employers, and many of the other people in authority, hated and feared the unions that forced them to pay workers more. They did all they could to harass unions that forced them to pay workers more.

Mother Jones was a pioneer. But soon, women all over the states were following her into trade unions. Taking the militancy of the coalfield wives a stage further, they set up their own trade union league. Some male unionists doubted how well women could fight in the workers' war, they received a hard lesson, very similar to the one taught to the Arnot sheriff.

Women were on the move and fighting for equality. But it wasn't always a forward move. Let's backtrack for a moment to eighteen forty, when abolitionists in London, England decided to hold a world conference on the importance on antislavery. People came from all over the world to attend this meeting, among them two American abolitionists, Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. They had made the long transatlantic trip in order to speak out against the evils of slavery, rampant here in America. Mott and Stanton were forced to take seats in the balcony and were told to sit quietly. These women were fighting for the rights of slaves, citizens who had less than they did, and this is the treatment they received. Of course this was an era when almost everyone believed that women should not play any active role in society. Mott and Stanton had the courage to disagree. They returned home determined to make changes.

One of the most important incidents in the history of women took place in the summer of 1848, in upstate New York. It was the Seneca Falls Convention, the official beginning of the women's movement in the United States. At that time, women had few rights. They were routinely denied admission to colleges and to the trades and professions. Most found work in four areas: teaching, sewing, factory jobs, or domestic service. Their wages, if married, belonged to their husbands. Indeed, a wife herself was then considered as her husbands' personal property.

On July 19, 1848, the organizers of that convention; Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, Martha Coffin Wright, Jane Hunt, and Mary Ann Mclintock, stood before 300 people and presented a Declaration of Rights and Sentiments. That document, modeled after the Declaration of Independence, declared that all men and women are created equal. It demanded equal access to all means of employment and the ministry, and it insisted that women had "the duty.. to secure the themselves their sacred right to franchise," or suffrage(the right to vote).

Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Lucy Stone quickly became the movement's undisputed leaders. They and their followers tirelessly petitioned the nation's state legislatures for women's suffrage and for the reform of property and child custody laws. Many of them worked simultaneously as abolitionists to end slavery. Many male abolitionists also supported their female colleagues' new demands.

As far as women were concerned, there was plenty for Mott and Stanton to change. Since the beginning of American history, women had only limited rights. Although they were citizens, they were second-class citizens compared to men. As previously stated, they could not vote, most university positions were closed to them. If they were married, they could not own property, control whatever money they might earn, even though they earned it, they could not bring cases to court, they were unable to sue for divorce, and even when that changed, they rarely received the right to keep their children. In their daily lives, women were expected to

spend their time on home, children and church.

After Mott and Stanton returned from London in 1840, they began organizing the women's rights movement. Their primary goal was to gain women equal rights with men. Among the early women's rights leaders were famous abolitionists, such as Frederick Douglass and William Lloyd Garrison. As the Abolition Movement raised questions about the status and rights of individuals, women began to look at their own position and to speak out.

In 1848 Mott, Stanton, and others held a women's rights convention at Seneca Falls, New York. Stanton lived in Seneca Falls with her husband and their seven children. Women and some men traveled many miles by horse and wagon to meet at this small town. Sojourner Truth, a well-known abolitionist, took part in the fight. There the delegates approved a "Declaration of Sentiments" based on the American Declaration of Independence. They resolved that women should no longer be "satisfied with their present position." The Seneca Falls meeting was important for two reasons. First, it was the first women's rights convention. Second, the declaration summed up women's many complaints in one program for action.

The Seneca Falls Declaration, like the Declaration of Independence, first attacked the treatment of women that made the document necessary. Whereas the colonists blamed the British, the women at Seneca Falls blamed men. Then, also like the Declaration of Independence, the Seneca Falls Declaration listed specific complaints. The feminists listed many "injuries" that man had done to women in trying to establish "an absolute tyranny" over them. Here are some of them:

He has never permitted her to exercise her inalienable right to the elective franchise.

He has taken from her all right in property, even to the wages she earns.

He has monopolized the profitable employments.

He has denied her the facilities for obtaining a thorough education.

He has tried in every way he could to destroy her confidence in her own powers, to lessen her self-respect, and to make her willing to lead a dependent and abject life.

Although the women's rights movement made few gains at first, many individual women were able to achieve success. Even before the Seneca Falls meeting, educator Mary Lyon had established Mount Holyoke, the first women's college in the United States. Several women writers gained wide audiences. They included Louisa May Alcott, who wrote *Little Women*, and Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Against all odds, a few women were able to succeed in fields usually closed to them. For instance, many people were against Elizabeth Blackwell's effort to become the first American woman physician. Maria Mitchell, an astronomer, was the first woman, and the only one for one hundred years, to be elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

More important than such individual successes were changes that affected thousands of women. One change was education. Beginning in the eighteen sixties, several new state universities accepted both women and men. These were called coeducational schools. In 1870, only about twenty percent of college students were

women.

Before women's movements emerged, women began to form many kinds of groups based upon common interests. After the French Revolution, various women's political clubs took shape in both France and Great Britain. In the United States, women formed temperance societies.

In the United States and Britain, two major types of women's movements gradually developed; (1) social or domestic women's movements, and (2) equal rights feminist groups. Women's social movements carried out religious charitable, and social activities. Equal rights feminists primarily worked to remove educational and political barriers to women and to change women's roles.

Before our American Civil War, many American woman's movements were of the benevolent social type. These included societies to promote temperance, to aid poor women and orphans, and to send missionaries to the Indians. Women also formed similar religious and charitable associations in Britain before eighteen sixty and in other Western countries during the late eighteen hundreds.

Few groups were centered on gaining equal rights for women. But such groups had a clear goal to improve women's situation through such reforms as better education for girls, support for women's property rights, and voting rights for women.

Women's educational opportunities gradually expanded throughout the eighteen hundreds. In 1821, American teacher Emma Willard founded the Troy Female Seminary in Troy, New York. Willard's school was one of the first institutions to offer girls a high school education. In 1833, Oberlin Collegiate Institute opened as the first coeducational college in the United States.

Women's efforts to secure legal rights, particularly property rights, also brought reform. In America, many states enacted property laws during the 1840's and 1850's. Such laws allowed married women to make contracts, to own property, to control their own earnings, and to have joint custody of their children.

In 1848, a New York law gave married women the right to retain control of their own real estate and personal property. The new laws, especially aided widowed, deserted, and mistreated wives. Similar legislation passed in Britain and other Western countries during the middle and late 1800's. Also in 1848, Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton convention in Seneca Falls, prompted other women's conventions. National ones met almost every year from 1850 until the onset of the Civil War in 1861. The delegates discussions regarding the rights of women would lead to the afore-mentioned laws and reforms.

The issue of suffrage also became increasingly important to women during the 1800's. In the United States, the cause of women suffrage was championed by two key organizations; the National Woman Suffrage Association, and the American Woman Suffrage Association. Stanton and women's rights leader Susan B. Anthony led the NWSA, founded in 1869. The more radical organization of the two, the NWSA demanded equal education, equal employment opportunities, and voting rights for women immediately. Women's rights leader Lucy Stone, her husband, Henry Blackwell, and other reformers formed the AWSA, also in 1869. The more moderate AWSA supported gradual advances, such as suffrage for women.

In 1890, the two organizations joined to form the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA). Suffragists held conventions, waged state-by-state campaigns, and distributed literature to win support for their cause. New methods of campaigning used by British women suffragists-especially parades and outdoor speeches spurred the drive for suffrage. Support from both social and equal rights women's movements

proved necessary to the final suffrage victory. Women's social movements, temperance organizations, missionary societies, and progressive reformers realized that they needed the vote to reach their goals.

Suffrage movements also arose in other Western countries during the 1800's. In 1893, New Zealand became the first nation to grant women full voting rights. Australia gave women the right to vote in federal election in 1902. Swedish women with property could vote in city elections in 1862. Sweden granted women full suffrage in 1921. In Britain, the suffrage movement began in the 1860's, though women did not win full voting rights until 1928.

While mankind has been slow to grant women full recognition, her influence on the course of human progress has been great. The thread of women's influence stands out in the unraveling of all recorded history. Women have exerted greater and more influence on the course of history than any of the so called "great women" of the ages. Women were vital factors in all the great movements of mankind.

The pilgrim women who endured the hardships of the first winter in New England provided death-defying proof of the courage and endurance of women. The American West could not have been settled without the skill and bravery of the pioneer women who labored and improvised to make homes in the wilderness, and even took up arms to fight beside their men when hostile adversaries attacked.

Beginning with the Industrial Revolution in the 1760's, women began taking their place in industrial life. Constantly increasing numbers of women have entered into activities that were once exclusively the domain of men. Today, there are no fields of enterprise which women have not entered, and where the best of them have not made outstanding success. It is true that many of them have found serious conflicts between a career and the fundamental desires for love and marriage. Women have also found that their participation in trades and professions has been marked by unfairness in wage rates or salaries, and in the same vein opportunities to advance themselves. But many of these difficulties have been overcome by women in the democracies, and there is confidence among women that their remaining goals are attainable.

From the first offering, women's entrance into the arts and sciences was marked by outstanding contributions to the knowledge and culture of humanity. These contributions were made in such fields as science, medicine, government, nursing, welfare, education, literature, journalism, sculpture, architecture, engineering, drama, international relations, labor organization, and aviation. Women have become governors of states, been elected to Congress, as well as having been appointed to diplomatic posts.

In social advancement, women have been particularly active. The number of outstanding women social workers is large, and constantly increasing. One of the greatest social workers was Jane Addams, founder of Hull-House, the famous international settlement house in Chicago. Miss Addams inspired other leaders in social welfare, such as Florence Kelley, who became the first factory inspector in Illinois, and Julia Lathrop, the first chief of the Children's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor. In the field of welfare, Florence Nightingale, pioneer nurse, and Clara Barton, founder and first president of the American Red Cross, are deserving of special recognition.

Leaders in the movement to improve woman's lot included Sarah Margaret Fuller, one of the most learned women of the 1800's; Lucretia Coffin Mott, a minister in the Society of Friends and promoter of many social and domestic reforms; Elizabeth Cady Stanton, one of the earliest women lawyers and founder of the suffragist movement.

In the field of education, many women rose above the ranks of their sister teachers. Anna Garlin Spencer,

instructor in leading American universities during the early 1900's, first brought to public attention the need for women's participation in broad cultural activities. The Russell Sage Foundation for the improvement of social and living conditions was founded by a woman, Margaret Olivia Slocum. Mary Van Kleeck, a director of the foundation, conducted valuable studies on industry and the problems of employees. Edith Abbott and Sophonisba Breckenridge founded the first school of social service administration at the University of Chicago.

In the sciences, women have met their greatest test of their ability to demonstrate equality with men. During the 1890's Dr. M. Carey Thomas, later president of Bryn Mawr College, asked to attend a class at Johns Hopkins University school of medicine in Baltimore. No woman had ever before been permitted to attend the lectures, and Dr. Thomas was granted her request only on condition that she sit behind a screen. Today the "screen" has disappeared, and women have not only witnessed and studied new discoveries of science, but many of them have also made discoveries of their own.

When Madam Marie Curie and her husband announced the discovery of radium in 1898, the woman scientist won immediate fame. She was awarded the Nobel prize in 1903 and again in 1911 for her studies in chemistry and physics. Annie J. Cannon, winner of the Draper Medal for her work in Astrophysics at the National Academy of Sciences, won recognition as one of the world's leading astronomers. She and her feminine associates at Harvard University discovered nearly five thousand new stars in a period of forty years. Florence Rena Sabin became one of the world's outstanding scientists in the study of blood and blood diseases. The work of Lise Meitner in atomic physics played an important part in the development of the atomic bomb. Other women who rank high in the annals of science include Katherine Burr Blodgett and Alice Hamilton.

Women have regularly been given research fellowships or scholarships such as are offered men in almost every field of science. Often women have had to work hard in order to pay for the scientific study they wanted. But today there are few research laboratories which do not employ large numbers of women workers.

In the arts, women have shown the greatest variety of natural gifts. Because of the feeling for personal and concrete matters, women have accomplished the most in literature. Such novelists as Jane Austen, Charlotte and Emily Bronte, Pearl Buck, Edith Wharton, and Virginia Woolf rank with the great male authors. Women make up more than half of the successful writers of fiction in contemporary literature. Agatha Christie and Mary Roberts Rinehart won fame for their mystery and detective stories. Such authors as Sara Orne Jewett and Katherine Ann Porter wrote outstanding short stories.

Women have ranked especially high in writing books for children and young people. Louisa May Alcott, Frances Hodgson Burnett, Selma Lagerlof, Beatrix Potter wrote books that many generations of children have cherished.

They have been many good women poets, from Sappho in ancient times to Edna St Vincent Millay, Marianne Moore and Edith Sitwell. Women seem to have been less successful playwrights, although many popular plays have come from women authors. However, there have been many famous and successful actresses, such as Sarah Siddons, Eleanor Duse, Sara Bernhardt Ethel Barrymore and Helen Hayes. In music, there have been outstanding instrumentalists, and a few composers, but the women singers rank among the leading artists in the field. Marian Anderson, Maria Callas and Lotte Lehman are among the opera singers who have achieved greatness. Great dancers and choreography include Agnes De Mille, Martha Graham and Ruth St. Dennis. There have also been many talented women artists, such as painters Mary Cassatt and Georgia O'Keefe, and sculptor Malvine Hoffman.

Last but not least, many women have also made outstanding records in the field of sports. Althea Gibson,

Alice Marble, and Helen Willis won many prizes for tennis. In golf, “Patty” Berg and Mildred “Babe Didricksen set many course records. Florence Chadwick and Gertrude Ederle excelled in swimming, and Tenley Albright and Barbara Ann Scott were outstanding as figure-skaters.

Objectives

1. To make students aware of the women’s struggle for equality and justice.
2. To increase students written and oral communication and to develop reading comprehension and interpretive evaluation skills.
3. To build pride and self-esteem within themselves especially the females.
4. An important objective is to develop a goal for yourself.
 - a. Set a goal that you would like to accomplish.
 - b. Select and describe your first step.
 - c. Devise the major steps based upon your ability and skills.
 - d. Discover where to obtain helpful and or necessary information.
 - e. Select places and individuals who could possibly assist in your achievement.

Lesson Plans & Activities For Students

Research Questions

How did women’s opportunities increase in the eighteen hundreds?

How and why did women finally win the right to vote?

If you were a woman in 1848 which injustice meted out to women would bother you the most?

In todays working world do women earn more money, less money, or money equal to that of men in some professions? Please elaborate as to why or why not.

Please complete the following sentence in an explanatory manner,

During the seventeen and eighteen hundreds men earned more money than women because . . .

In what year was the book by the famous abolitionist, Harriet Beecher Stowe, published?

How many years after African Americans were granted the right to vote, did these women earn their same right?

Which preceding event may have influenced Susan B. Anthony to vote although it was against the law? And, what kind of statement was she trying to make?

Critical Thinking & Comprehension

Read the facts about women's suffrage below, and then give us your thoughts on these possible conclusions.

1. At the beginning of the women's movement, women were expected to devote most of their time to home, family and church. Men did most of the work and held most of the jobs because society's view was that a woman's place was in the home. 2. Two years after the end of World War 1, women earned the right to vote. During World War 1, women filled many jobs previously held only by men, showing that they were capable of equal responsibility.

Essay Questions

In what ways did American education improve in the eighteenth century?

What progress did women make in the participation of the professional fields? Such as medicine, the arts and sciences., etc.

Make a list of the conditions and laws that made women second-class citizens in the 1840's.

Then indicate how and when inequality was corrected.

What two types of women's groups emerged in America during the 1960's?

What is the double burden that most women carry?

How did the Civil Rights Act of 1963 and 1964 affect women?

Class Discussion

After students have completed essay questions and research work have a class discussion on comparing and contrasting women's roles and status based upon past history and today, and include their opinions of the

future as they see themselves.

Possible Films for Viewing:

One Woman, One Vote

Rosie The Riveter

from PBS The American Experience

Book Report

Have the students select a book from the suggested reading list, or perhaps in their research one that they would like to read, and write a report on their reading as well as their opinion on the subject matter.

Suggested Reading List and Bibliography for Teachers

Carroll, Susan J., *Women as Candidates in American Politics* : Indiana University Press, Bloomington 1950.

This book suggests the presence of increasing numbers of women in office may lead to greater representation of women's interests in the policy making process.

Christnensen, Kathleen, *Women and Home-Based Work* : Henry Holt and Company, New York 1988.

This book tells the story of home- based work for all types of women.

Depauw, Linda, *Remember The Ladies* , Viking Press. New York, 1976.

This book tells the story of women's situation at the time of the American Revolution.

Flexner, Eleanor, *Century of Struggle* : Beeknot, Massachusetts, 1976.

This work is based on the struggle for equality that women have had for over a century.

Mason, Mary Ann, *The Equality Trap* : Simon & Schuster, New York, 1988.

This book draws in both social and legal history and it explains the move away from women's rights to equal rights.

Matthaei, Julie A., *An Economic History of Women in America* : Schockin Books, New York, 1982.

This volume examines women's role in labor within the broad sweep of American economic history from colonial times.

Oneill, William, *Everyone Was Brave* , Quadrangle Books, Chicago 1969.

The bravery of the women in this work was extraordinary. They stood for what they believed in.

Evans, Sara M., *Born For Liberty* , Collier The Three Press, New York, 1989.

This book brings to center stage the richness and diversity of women's lives.

Suggested Reading List and Bibliography for Students

Curriculum Unit 97.03.02

Boynick, David K., *Women who led the Way, Eight Pioneers for Equal Rights* : Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York, 1959.

This work discusses the women who began to lead the way for women's rights, equality and justice.

Fisher Canfield, Dorothy, *A Fair world for All*: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc. 1952

This work is about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and legal rights for all.

Fisher Marianne P., *Women in the Third World* : Franklin Watts, New York.

The roles of women are discussed with regards to the family, education, marriage, motherhood, agriculture, industry, business, the professions, and politics.

Green, Rayna, *Women in American Indian Society* : Chelsea House Publishers, Philadelphia, 1992.'

In this book problems develop when people of different cultures come together. For the American Indians, the consequences of their interaction with different people were both productive and tragic. I recommend this book highly.

McKissack, Frederick & Patricia, *Sojourner Truth Ain't I A Woman* , Scholastic, Inc., New York, 1992.

Meticulously researched, this book is a chronicle of not just one, but many courageous individuals battles against justice.

Peterson, Helen Stone, *Susan B. Anthony Pioneer in Women's Rights* : Garrad Publishing Company, Champaign, Illinois, 1972.

Specific abilities, character and accomplishments are emphasized in this work.

Rooke, Patrick, *Women's Rights* : Wayland Publishers, London, 1972.

This book contains information about the struggle for women's rights.

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