



EXPLORING A COMMON PAST



*Researching and Interpreting
Women's History for
Historic Sites*

2003
2nd Edition
(with 2005 updates)

On cover: *Jodie Bassett Morris with horse carrying dead deer circa 1950. Photograph courtesy of Uintah County Library Regional History Center, Utah.*

Born in the early 1870s, Josie Bassett moved with her family from Little Rock, Arkansas to Brown's Park, Colorado. Here on the family ranch, she learned the skills that would serve her well later in life – riding, roping and shooting. Perhaps most notorious for marrying five times, four ended in divorce and one left her a widow, Josie was also said to be a friend of Butch Cassidy. In 1914, Josie homesteaded a piece of land along Cub Creek in Utah, now within the boundaries of Dinosaur National Monument. Josie, along with her son Crawford McKnight, built the site into a working ranch complete with a cabin, root cellar, outhouse, chicken coop, tack shed, animal shed, and corrals. For the next fifty years, she lived off of the land farming and raising cattle. During Prohibition she supplemented her income by bootlegging. After her son and his family moved to nearby Jensen, Josie continued to live on the ranch with no plumbing, telephone or electricity until 1963, when at the age of 89 she fell and broke her hip. Forced to leave the ranch, she died in the spring of 1964 and is buried at the family cemetery at Brown's Park. Today, visitors to Dinosaur National Monument can visit the remnants of Josie's homestead.

Acknowledgments

This booklet is the result of a cooperative agreement between the National Park Service and the Organization of American Historians. The project was coordinated by Anne M. Derousie, Historian, Women's Rights National Historical Park and Ph.D. candidate in the History Department at the State University of New York at Binghamton and, Susan Ferentinos, Public History Coordinator for the Organization of American Historians. Susan holds a Masters degree in History and Library Science and is currently completing her doctoral dissertation.

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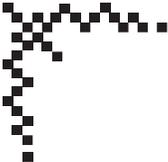
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Resource Guide Series

Over the past four decades there have been major transformations in the study of American history. The concern for a more accurate and comprehensive view of women's experiences is an aspect of scholarship which has dramatically changed the ways we look at the past. Social history research, from the 1960s and 1970s, has made it clear that long-dominant patterns of historical inquiry were inadequate, as historians expanded the boundaries of their work to pose new questions and take advantage of forms of evidence previously overlooked or hard to analyze. Among their concerns were understanding culture and society as the work of "ordinary" people, not just political and economic elites. This evolution in historical thinking resulted in broader conceptualizations of American history and revitalized frameworks for examining the past that questioned old categories, acknowledged varieties of significance and evidence, and embraced the multiplicity and complexity of the human experience.

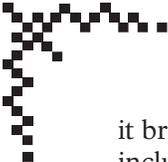
This booklet is the first in a series designed to assist historic site managers, historians and interpreters in the ongoing process of reviewing and evaluating interpretive programs and media and adjusting them in light of recent scholarship.

Partnerships in Interpreting Women's History

Do you know what real cowboy's thought of Teddy Roosevelt? Or how women came to dominate the teaching profession? Or where Ulysses S. Grant's money came from? The answers to these questions and many others are enriched by a better understanding of the history of women and gender. Leading authorities in the Women's History, Cultural Landscape and Built Environment fields have come together to author this Resource Guide. The goal is to aid interpreters, cultural resource managers, and others in the National Park Service to better understand how women have participated in and shaped American History.

There have been many changes in the field of women's history since this guide was first published in 1996. This revision reflects some of those changes. Historians are looking at how historical definitions of gender affected men as well as women. They are also examining how women found their way into the public life of the nation despite being excluded from the system of political parties and electoral politics. Both of these trends provide information that National Park Service interpreters can use to help their visitors better understand the complexities of life in the past. The essay on Women's History Scholarship has been updated and reorganized. Dr. Evans notes that along with those laboring in other fields of social history, historians of women have expanded the definition of history to include the everyday lives of people along the broad spectrum of class, race, gender, ethnicity and other experiences that influenced them. The resources that Park Service sites possess - landscapes, buildings and objects - are valuable tools to help our audiences better understand the experiences of people in the past.

This essay also discusses the emergence of gender history, which is useful to interpretive programs at NPS sites because



it broadens our understanding of the influence of gender to include the lives of men. This makes it possible to discuss the meaning of masculinity and femininity in a given time and place at all National Park Service sites, even when there were no women present. The author gives several examples of sites that have achieved this.

Finally, the author added a section on women's public life and voluntary organizations, another area in women's history scholarship that has been the focus of increased study in the past decade. She describes how women in the nineteenth century used the ideology of "separate spheres" to stake out a place for themselves within the public arena. The author points out that "Women's complex struggles for civic inclusion force us to think in new ways about citizenship, democracy, and freedom."

Because the NPS utilizes "things" including buildings, battlefields and preserved natural environments knowing how to look for and interpret the presence and influence of women at these sites is a valuable interpretive tool. For that reason this revision places more emphasis on women and cultural landscape and the built environment than the original publication.

The Institute for Cultural Landscape Studies at Harvard University defines cultural landscape as "any landscape that people have created, used, modified or protected" and can include streetscapes, gardens, parks, forests and farms. Authors Jill Cowley and Shaun Eyring also define cultural landscape, how women have influenced that landscape and how to interpret their presence.

Similarly, Leslie N. Sharp explores methods for locating women in the built environment. She poses a series of questions helpful to interpreters, and cultural resource managers who determine the significance of buildings and how to interpret them to the public.



Finally, this edition includes an updated, annotated and greatly expanded bibliography compiled by Sheri Browne. This bibliography includes a sampling of recent works in the fields of history, cultural landscape and built environment that covers a wide variety of topics. As extensive as this bibliography is, it is by no means all-inclusive. The proliferation of studies in the past decade make good, thorough scholarship available on almost any conceivable area of interest to Park Service employees.

Women's History Scholarship

The scholarship on the history of American women has been one of the richest and most prolific fields of inquiry in recent decades. Its findings offer the National Park Service an opportunity to develop a sweeping—and far more accurate—interpretive approach that will dramatically enrich and enliven the interpretation of historic sites as well as provide new ways to identify future sites. The key themes of this scholarship bring into focus the dynamic relationships between public and private actions, between the formal realms of government, business, or military, which American culture traditionally defined as male domains, and the infrastructures of daily life. With its emphasis on daily life and the issues of class and race, women's history joined other emerging fields of social history in pioneering an enlarged definition of history itself. For public historians, this transformation has opened the possibility of interpreting an American past that includes every American, regardless of gender, race, class, religion, region, or ethnic or immigrant status. The resources found at historic sites—the cultural landscapes, historic structures, archeological sites, museum objects—can make women's past especially vivid. Cradles and cribs found at Herbert Hoover NHS and John F. Kennedy NHS attest to their *mothers'* lives. A woman's sewing machine found on a nineteenth-century ship at San Francisco Maritime NHP hints of a different history than so often proclaimed. Civil War battles were fought on people's fields with families huddling against the shelling or having their dining room tables appropriated for surgery. Historic sites can present women's history to the public in ways texts seldom can. The history of women, in and of itself, brings all of these issues into play as women are half the population in virtually every socially and culturally defined group. Women's complex struggles for civic inclusion force us to think in new ways about citizenship, democracy, and freedom. They also highlight the emergence of voluntary associations at the intersections of public and private life that have been critical to the expansion of democracy and the definition of active citizenship.

To clarify these implications, this section of the resource guide points to seven of the key themes in women's history scholarship with examples that illustrate their application to NPS sites. This is just the barest introduction, however, as the examples for each theme could be multiplied many times over.

Principal Themes in Women's History: an Applied Approach

The following themes, highlighted in recent scholarship in women's history, have moved rapidly into the mainstream of historical interpretation. They reveal the dynamics of gender as a fundamental historical force, shaping the lives of women and men alike and opening much of the traditional historical narrative to reinterpretation. There is no field of historical inquiry that has not been reshaped by the questions these themes provoke, and no historical site that would not provide an enriched and more accurate interpretation by taking them into account.

1. *Family and kinship*: Cultural definitions of womanhood and of appropriate female roles have historically in the United States centered on familial relationships—wife, mother, and daughter. As a result, the changing definition and structure of the family, both nuclear and extended, have been central concerns for historians of women. Questions of interest include household structure for example, household size and composition fertility rates, and marriage age, but these issues take on meaning in the context of an analysis of the relationship of families to society, such as looking at the family as a center of production or of consumption. Whereas past histories focused on notable individuals and their families, historians now emphasize these individuals' relationships to other social groups in the household.

Scholars of the colonial family were among the first to pose such questions. Their work challenged static definitions of family, pointing out its variable meanings over time and noting the important analytic distinction between family and household. Historians of women like Laurel Thatcher Ulrich,

professor of history at Harvard University then looked at the ways in which motherhood in New England colonial families was extensive rather than intensive and woven into the social and economic life of local communities in ways that cast new light on the whole. The family, of course, always exists in dynamic relationship to the rest of society. Motherhood raises questions about fatherhood, childhood socialization, education, and how society reproduces itself from generation to generation. Historian Jeanne Boydston, for example, focused on the early nineteenth-century household as a center of production and consumption previously ignored by economic historians. Historians expanded these themes into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in studies of immigrant families, middle-class urban families, and the slave family. The latter, for example, is critical to understanding the creation of African-American culture, which developed in spite of the constraints and cruelty of slavery.

Ideals of the nineteenth-century middle class family can be studied at the Lincoln Home National Historic Site in Springfield, Illinois, where the household ornaments reflect the fashions of the day plus a concern for maintaining contemporary standards of good taste while on a limited budget. The Boott Mill at Lowell National Historical Park illustrates a nontraditional living situation in which young girls lived in a boarding house run by the mill. Herbert Hoover National Historic Site, with its Quaker Meeting house, birthplace "cottage," and one room school may reveal more about nineteenth century Iowa farm families than about the man who left the area at age six. The Kingsley Plantation, part of Timucuan Ecological and Historical Preserve, interprets the lives of those who lived in the "big house" as well as those enslaved peoples who lived in the quarters. Cane River Creole NHP and Melrose at Natchez NHP do the same. Sites related to American Indian cultures enlarge the notion of family to a broader set of gendered social connections in which kinship is imbedded in the very fabric of the community itself.

2. *Life Cycle*: Women's history, in conjunction with recent scholarship on the history of the family, has also highlighted the importance of life cycle. Such a focus unearths a plethora of themes that illuminate otherwise static interpretations: childhood, adolescence, courtship and marriage, childbirth, motherhood, old age, death, or the bodily experiences of puberty and adolescence, menopause, and "women's" diseases. Interpretive themes might include the tasks and games of childhood, the communal experience of childbirth (or the more isolated one on the frontier or later in hospitals), courtship patterns, schooling, and childhood labor.

Many sites offer opportunities to develop life cycle themes. The nineteenth-century farmhouses in Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area, for example, provided the setting for nearly every major event, ritual, and celebration of their residents' lives. At the Todd House, part of Independence National Historical Park, Dolley Todd adapted to life as a young wife and mother, then as a widow who began the ritual of courting again. A number of sites exhibit wedding presents, yet the interpretation often focuses on a description of the item and not the rituals of the wedding celebration. Pipe Spring National Monument, which commemorates the Mormon settlement of the southwest territories, was also a favorite Mormon honeymoon spot. Most historic houses offer an array of possibilities for interpreting diverse customs regarding birthing, childcare, adolescence, and courtship, as well as aging and death.

3. *Gender Ideology*: Many of the path-breaking studies in women's history have explored societal definitions of "true womanhood" or being a "good wife." Such ideas are manifested in the wordings found on gravestones, in sermons, in nineteenth- and twentieth-century popular magazines, in fiction, poems, and letters, and in the designs of fashionable clothing. More recently scholars have explored the relationship between societal ideals of femininity and

masculinity and the ways that gender has shaped national, regional, and racial identities. The images and metaphors of gender, for example, infuse public discourse on all manner of issues, revealing important new dimensions of popular conceptions of power as well as ideals such as liberty. In the late nineteenth century, for example, "Liberty" was frequently depicted as a female. Yet the idea of the "citizen" was highly masculine (citizen soldier/citizen worker), and leaders like President Theodore Roosevelt advocated a strenuous ideal of manliness. Political rhetoric has always been filled with gendered metaphors. Thus, even at historic places where few women were present, there are many untapped opportunities for exploring societal expectations and changing definitions of masculinity and femininity in American history. In such male-oriented settings such as courthouses, legislatures, saloons, and battlefields gendered language and behavior can be interpreted, adding depth as well as historical accuracy.

Ideals tend to be articulated by those with the greatest access to authoritative means of publication—sermons, advice books, magazines—and in positions of considerable social and economic power. On the one hand, such ideals often coexist with ever different lived realities even in dominant groups like the urban middle classes, but at the same time they have a powerful impact on those explicitly excluded from the ideal (racial and ethnic minorities, working class, etc.). For example, the ideal of "separate spheres" for men and women in the nineteenth century shaped architecture, furnishings, fashions, and reform activities among middle class women. Society did not simply impose separate spheres on women; educated women of the middle class helped create the idea of this distinct space. At the same time, they seized the notion of women as uniquely pious and moral to justify organized forays into a wide array of reform activities from temperance, to peace, to abolition. The Settlement House is an example of the "woman's sphere" transformed into a public space, an implicit challenge to the very idea of separating public (male) from private (female).

The ideal of separate spheres also justified additional denigration of and discrimination against women who, because of racial, religious, class, or ethnic status, did not conform to its tenets. Black women, slave or free, and women factory workers who were paid extremely low wages were considered sexually suspect; and most poor women were judged by middle class standards to be inadequate mothers. Historians also examine the ways in which working-class women shaped the public and private spaces where they lived, worked, and played. Finally separate spheres ideology functioned as a distorting lens through which Euro-Americans perceived American Indians, and it shaped their efforts to compel Indian conformity to western norms from colonial era missionary teachings to late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century boarding schools.

In the twentieth century, images in popular magazines, television, and film are reflected in national parks. For example, at Eisenhower National Historic Site in Pennsylvania, Mamie Eisenhower's bedroom was ornately decorated in pink, gold, and khaki—in direct contrast with Dwight Eisenhower's bedroom with its severe furniture and red Oriental rug. San Antonio Missions National Historical Park reflects Roman Catholic ideas about women, while Natchez National Historical Park in Mississippi interprets southern womanhood, both slave and free. The emerging new scholarship on conceptions of masculinity (a notable example being Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization*) can also allow park interpreters in many traditional sites, for example military sites and western sites having to do with cowboys or miners, to point out the dynamics of gender and to avoid representing the “masculine” as an unmarked norm. At Theodore Roosevelt National Park in Medora North Dakota—where the future president (and historian!) fled after his wife & mother died nearly simultaneously—Theodore Roosevelt lived out his ideas of masculinity as a “cowboy.” The *real* cowboys thought him strange because he had books and a toothbrush in his very small cabin there.

4. *Dynamics of difference*: The differences in women's experiences—rooted in race, class, ethnicity, region, religion, and so forth—are primary themes in the scholarship on women's history for any given period. On the one hand, such factors sharply shaped women's experiences, making it impossible to present any single narrative as “women's history.” At the same time, women's historians have shown that with each of these categories—and the histories they evoke such as slavery, immigration, and religious conversion—women's experiences differed, often sharply, from those of men in the same group. Because women constitute a subset of virtually every other social group, their history is as complex as the histories of the American people.

In telling the story of any group we can ask the simple questions: where were the women? What did they do? What ideas or ideals about women affected their lives? In telling the stories of women at any particular place or time we can ask how those stories were different from each other and whether we have noted and interpreted the lives of ALL the women who were there at the time.

Differences in African American women's experiences are evident when one compares Boston's African American National Historic Site, where women were active in the abolitionist movement, with Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site in Virginia, which reflects the life of a business-oriented progressive woman. Walker engaged in numerous enterprises to further both her race and sex, including a newspaper, insurance company, bank and department store. She transformed The Independent Order of St. Luke, an African American fraternal organization and insurance society, into a 50,000 member organization—during the Jim Crow period. In the grand houses within the National Park Service, the upstairs/downstairs themes reveal the divergent lives of the women of different classes who lived and worked there. The dynamics of difference are also reflected in the experiences of Native American women at Hubbell Trading Post National

Historic Site in Arizona, where Navajo and Anglo women interacted, and Pecos National Historical Park in New Mexico, where Pueblo Indians encountered (male only) Spanish missionaries.

5. *Work*: To understand women's daily lives, historians set aside narrow definitions of work as paid labor, generally outside the home, and looked closely at the full range of women's productive activities both inside and outside the home. This expanded definition of work has led to major reevaluations of the divisions of labor—between women and men, adults and children, master or mistress and servants or slaves—of changing definitions and technologies of housework, of informal economies based on barter and trade, and of the gendered expectations imbedded in the emergence of industrialism and urbanization.

Since very few women have been “ladies of leisure,” almost all the historic parks offer opportunities for interpreting women's work experiences. Whether it is an industrial setting such as women's work in the textile mills of Lowell, or hotels at Yosemite National Park where women had major responsibilities, or a fort where women ran the kitchen and laundries, or homes in which wives, immigrant servant girls, or slave women performed the daily household tasks, the national parks have diverse opportunities for interpreting women's work experiences.

Many sites have unrealized potential for examining women's work and related themes such as the technology of housework and the changing role of the family. The conditions varied considerably, as did the technology available—from open fires to gigantic stoves, from springhouses to Bess Truman's “modern” red and green kitchen at the Harry S. Truman National Historic Site. The National Park system also has various general stores—at Appomattox Courthouse National Historical Park, at Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site, and at Salem Maritime National Historic Site, among others—where women bought supplies.

New dimensions of the past come into focus when the productive life of a household is examined. For example, at Martin Van Buren National Historic site, where Van Buren spent his retirement years, the interpretive program discusses the Irish immigrant women whose work made life in the formal parlor possible. The staff does not interpret Van Buren in isolation from other social groups but rather stresses the theme of interdependence among those who shared that household space. Clara Barton National Historic Site interprets her story of a self-educated, self-appointed nurse and the story of nursing being developed as a profession. A proudly displayed photograph here shows an elderly Barton sitting proudly in front of a class of nurses. The Red Cross offices there with typewriters hint at the technological changes that occurred during her lifetime. Other sites also illustrate changing technologies which affected women's lives: Edison National Historic Site has both early phonographs and a wooden-handled electric curling iron. Golden Spike NHS in Utah celebrates completion of the transcontinental railroad which provided an alternative to wagon trains, allowed produce and meat to travel great distances improving diets, and changed immigration patterns.

6. *Education*: Until the late twentieth century, society considered formal education less important for women than for men, and in many instances women were formally denied access to educational institutions. Yet women have always been providers of education. In the colonial era, when literacy and vocational training were familial responsibilities, women taught their children and other young people in their households. Young girls learned basic household skills—food preparation, needlework, spinning, gardening, etc.—by taking on these tasks at an early age. In the revolutionary era, the debate about “woman's place” in the new republic and the need for an educated citizenry led to a new emphasis on formal education for women in the middle and upper classes. To be “Republican mothers” capable of raising virtuous citizens, women claimed the importance of education for themselves.

Through the nineteenth century, women's struggle for education took on many dramatic dimensions, ranging from the secret, and often illegal, education of some slave women to the growth of female academies and colleges and the gradual feminization of the teaching profession. The rise of public education created an enormous demand for teachers that was increasingly filled by drawing on the skills of women, thus enlarging their "sphere" and opening opportunities for travel and independence outside of marriage. For most groups of women, education has had a very powerful and subversive impact by raising expectations, offering new skills and broader horizons.

Opportunities to interpret women's contributions in the field of education are present at many parks. Homestead National Monument of America includes Freeman School, a one-room school, which both illustrates the expansion of education and the feminization of the teaching profession. The Oaks, the home of Booker T. and Margaret Murray Washington, at Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site in Alabama, focuses on coeducational intellectual and vocational training reflecting women's leadership role. The influence of individual teachers can be seen at Jimmy Carter National Historic site, which includes Plains High School where Miss Julia L. Coleman taught Carter. Her influence on the future president was so significant that Carter referred to her in his inaugural address. Two schools especially significant in the civil rights movement, the Topeka School featured in *Brown v. Board of Education* in Kansas and the Little Rock High School in Arkansas are also NPS sites.

7. Public Life and Voluntary Associations: American political institutions were initially founded on the assumption that women—like children, slaves, and the insane—were not "fitted" for participation in public life. Women's close association with domesticity, however, has meant only that they followed different paths into public life, not that women were absent from the public domain. Indeed, by exploring the interactions of public and private spheres, the study of women's

history demands a more capacious definition of politics and illumines in new ways what we thought we knew.

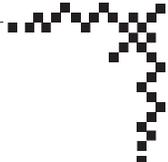
Beginning in the revolutionary era, women pioneered the formation of voluntary associations, laying the basis for that layer of "civil society" that is critical to the maintenance of an active democratic citizenry. Nineteenth-century American politics proceeded along two different, and highly gendered, lines: 1. electoral politics, not only exclusively male but also infused with images and rhetoric about manhood as the source of political allegiances that crossed class lines; and 2. the politics of "influence," primarily female and located in voluntary associations that became the seed bed for the social justice dimensions of progressive reform. The crucial role of religion is notable here, as women often first acquired public skills in religious settings such as missionary societies and they put those skills to political use in the name of moral imperatives that had religious roots.

The movements for women's rights are part of the larger drama of American democracy in which numerous groups have broadened the definition of citizen and redefined the terrain of politics. Women's participation in politics, however, has also taken many other forms. Through voluntary associations women have reshaped civic life, creating benevolent associations, missionary societies, reform and social service institutions—hospitals, orphanages, settlement houses—venting professions such as social work, and feminizing others such as teaching. The community infrastructures that resulted broadened the arenas of civic action and civic education considerably and over time they expanded accepted views of societal responsibility and the role of government.

Some of the examples of national parks that interpret the theme of women's public contributions are Women's Rights National Historical Park, site of the 1848 Women's Rights Convention, and Mary McLeod Bethune Council House National Historic Site in Washington, D.C., which was the home of the National Council of Negro Women. Still many other sites offer



opportunities to discuss women's public roles. For example, Clara Barton identified and marked 12,000 union graves at what is now Andersonville National Historic Site in Georgia, provided relief after the Johnstown Flood (now a NHS) and established the American Red Cross. At Ellis Island, the Daughters of the American Revolution provided supplies for immigrants detained on the island, and the National Council of Jewish Women found homes for unaccompanied women and girls. Women who lived in many of the houses located in national parks worked at settlement houses, participated in temperance organizations, were members of suffrage organizations or the League of Women Voters, and provided leadership to reform and philanthropic organizations. Women participated in social reform, especially abolition, at the Boston African American Meetinghouse. They were active in religion as missionaries with Narcissa Whitman at Whitman Mission NHS and Eliza Spaulding at Nez Perce and as leaders at the Quaker meetinghouse at Herbert Hoover NHS in Iowa with its roll-down doors for men's *and* women's meetings.



Women's History and Cultural Landscapes

Cultural landscapes are geographic areas that have meaning for people. They reflect human adaptation and use of natural resources, which can be expressed in settlement patterns, land use, circulation systems, vegetation patterns, and building styles. Small gardens, ranches and plantations, agricultural river valleys, forested areas where plants are gathered for ceremonial purposes, urban neighborhoods, and national parks are all examples of cultural landscapes. The NPS identifies four cultural landscape types: designed, vernacular, ethnographic, and historic sites.¹ While built environments are often contained within cultural landscapes, not all cultural landscapes include structural elements. Viewsheds, topography, and natural systems, may, for example, be most significant within battlefields or natural areas with ethnographic associations. Cultural landscapes provide opportunities to relate women's stories to the physical realities of the places where they lived and worked. Landscapes are especially powerful in bringing to life women's experiences outside the home.

When using landscapes to interpret women's history, we focus on how women made changes to the landscape, how they used and adapted to landscapes, and how they valued landscapes.² We need to make sure that women's stories are included and accurately represented. What women were involved in this landscape, when, and how? Do stereotypes and incorrect information need to be corrected? How can landscape features like vegetation and settlement patterns show us that women used and valued the landscape? Women's history needs to be told in context. Cultural landscapes are interacting systems of natural and cultural resources. Similarly, women's histories have evolved within complex systems of overlapping cultures and systems of gender roles and associations. Recent literature on women's history has increasingly addressed women in community and women of varying cultural backgrounds, and has situated women's lives in the context of historical

expectations of women's and men's roles and behaviors.³ Much of this literature discusses women's adaptations to, and influences on, natural environments.

Landscapes are made up of networks of social and material relationships. In addition to physical features, cultural landscapes are made up of less tangible elements including how people move through the landscape, changes through time, sets of social relationships, and the meanings that different features hold for different people. For example, to tell the story of women's experiences within an eighteenth-century Spanish Mission community, we need to learn about relationship networks. In addition to understanding spatial relationships between water sources, the mission church, housing areas, circulation routes, irrigated fields, and outlying grazing lands, we also need to understand what specific places like gardens meant to Indian and Spanish women and men, what restrictions might have been placed on women or men in their access to different parts of the mission, and how intermarriages between Mexican women and Anglo men influenced land ownership patterns.⁴ Landscape interpretive programs can help visitors connect the story of social relationships with specific physical places. For example, visitors at Tumacacori NHP can stop at the *monjero*, the outdoor sleeping area historically set aside for unmarried Native American women, to connect this space with cultural and gender relationships within the mission, or they can stop at the remains of orchards and irrigation systems which illustrate women's and men's work roles.

Interpreting women's history within cultural landscapes can relate to a broad range of types of experiences and levels of involvement in landscape change. For many years, women have designed gardens, planned communities, and managed farms and ranches. Women's volunteer groups have been active in landscape preservation efforts, and women and girls have played major roles within their communities in how settlements are spatially organized and modified. Women have created meaningful artistic expressions of their perceptions

of and relationships with landscapes, expressions that have influenced land management policies and landscape appreciation. Sometimes, certain women's stories are overlooked while others are told, for example, when a garden associated with a white plantation owner's wife is interpreted but areas where enslaved African American women worked are not. "Women's history in . . . landscapes needs to map female presence, location, contribution, and sense-of-place in ways both obvious and subtle."⁵ The examples that follow include landscapes obviously associated with women's history and landscapes not usually associated with women.

Designed landscapes where contributions of women designers or civic leaders are preserved and interpreted come easily to mind. At Dumbarton Oaks and Dumbarton Oaks Park, Beatrix Farrand's contributions to the field of landscape design are discussed during interpretive tours. Within the overall interpretive theme of landscape design, tours address how Farrand worked with owner Mildred Bliss on design decisions and how the resulting qualities of the gardens reflect Farrand's design style.⁶ The Palisades Interstate Park in New Jersey interprets the critical role of the New Jersey Federation of Women's Clubs in protecting the Hudson River palisades from destruction. Women also played leading roles in creating designed landscapes in less conventional but very meaningful ways. In the 1930s, for example, African American women in Virginia, through President Roosevelt's New Deal programs, led the design, planting, and care of urban parks in Petersburg and Richmond.⁷

Likewise, vernacular landscapes can be identified with women's history. The historic Lockhart Ranch landscape at Bighorn Canyon NRA is used to interpret the life of Caroline Lockhart, owner and manager of the Ranch. Three on-site waysides focus solely on Lockhart, helping visitors connect the story or her life to the landscape within which she lived and worked. During on-site tours, and in the site brochure and park film, the Ranch is used to interpret Caroline Lockhart as a significant individual rather than only including a mention

of her within the broader story of primarily male western ranching culture.⁸

Less obvious in terms of interpreting women's history might be urban neighborhoods, Alaskan Red Light Districts, large natural landscapes, or mining areas.⁹ In 1950s Philadelphia, African American and ethnic communities united under the able leadership of Alice Lipscomb to prevent the construction of an eight lane expressway that threatened to displace thousands of residents and destroy many closely knit neighborhoods. At the same time, many African American neighborhood women took leading roles in a city-wide garden block initiative aimed at beautifying their communities and dispelling the perceived notion of urban blight that often threatened the stability of neighborhoods.¹⁰

By the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, preserving scenic and natural American landscapes became a familiar issue on agendas of women-led civic organizations such as the Garden Club of America, the Colorado Cliff Dwellings Association, and the General Federation of Women's Clubs. These and other groups played leading roles in protecting such significant natural and cultural systems as the Everglades, the Atlantic coast barrier islands, Mesa Verde National Park, and the California Yosemite Valley.¹¹

Landscapes associated with women artists and writers are especially suited to experiential interpretation. The Willa Cather Country Tour brochure, produced by the Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial and Educational Foundation, guides visitors to specific sites within the landscape around Red Cloud, Nebraska, where Cather lived and which she described in her novels.¹² This driving tour interprets historical and imaginative landscapes. Visitors can combine direct experience of places within the landscape — the prairie, the river, cemeteries, and other landscape features — with reading the tour brochure in order to connect specific places to Cather's emotional responses to the Nebraska landscape and how she expressed these responses in her novels. In comparison, the Georgia

O'Keeffe Museum's "Walks in the American West" program doesn't necessarily use landscapes directly associated with O'Keeffe, but provides opportunities for increasing understanding of O'Keeffe's relationship with the southwestern landscape through participation in types of experiences associated with O'Keeffe, such as taking long contemplative walks.¹³

Understanding women's experiences can be further enriched by interpreting how underlying cultural ideas on gender influence women's lives and meanings of place. At Knife River Indian Villages NHS in South Dakota, a small garden plot and the adjacent reconstructed earthlodge illustrate the story of women's status and role within the community. The interpretive program can address how, in the matrilineal Mandan-Hidatsa culture, women owned and built the lodges, and were in charge of the gardens.¹⁴ Moving to the southwest, architect Rina Swentzell, a member of Santa Clara Pueblo, portrays the Pueblo cosmos as encompassing various feminine and masculine elements: "Although they are acknowledged, as are all living beings, to contain male and/or female qualities, the overall whole or cosmos is ultimately perceived as feminine, moving with the principles of spirituality, wholeness, interrelatedness, harmony, and balance".¹⁵ Within the cosmos, mountains are masculine, valleys are feminine, and the female plaza spaces are contained and held by the male structures.¹⁶ Feminine and masculine principles exist in balanced and complementary harmony. Within historic sites that interpret Puebloan culture, interpretive programs could include how this gendered sense of place may influence women's experiences within different places in the Pueblo world.

In addition to the significant highway beautification efforts of Lady Bird Johnson, women's groups around the country from the early twentieth century waged campaigns to beautify their cities by promoting clean, tree-lined streets free of trash and unsightly billboards. Believing that a "bad physical environment meant a bad moral environment",¹⁷ this effort was expanded to the countryside to control roadside billboards in the name of preserving scenic beauty. Women's groups like the National Roadside Council and Hawaii's Outdoor Circle were formed to

specifically address the threat to America's natural landscape beauty in the face of an expanded national road system.¹⁸

Many opportunities exist for interpreting women's experiences of living in, and their efforts to preserve, cultural landscapes. One of the challenges is to find and interpret women's stories where least expected. Asking the right kinds of questions is key. Were women involved in this landscape, and if so, how? How did cultural notions associated with gender influence their experiences? How do physical landscape features help tell their stories?



¹ Robert R. Page, Cathy A. Gilbert and Susan A. Dolan, *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Techniques* (Washington D.C.: National Park Service, 1998).

² Heather Huyck, personal communication, 2003.

³ Virginia Scharff, personal communication, 2002.

⁴ Ideas for this paragraph come from the Second National Women in Historic Preservation Conference Field Trip Report, prepared by Vivien Rose in 1997 for the staff of Tumacacori National Historical Park, Arizona.

⁵ Heather Huyck, personal communication, 2003; and "Beyond John Wayne: Using Historic Sites to Interpret Western Women's History," in Lillian Schlissel, Vicky L. Ruiz & Janice Monk, eds., *Western Women: Their Land, Their Lives* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988), 311.

⁶ Christine Blazina and Maureen Joseph, pers. comm. February 2003. Docent led tours are offered at Dumbarton Oaks, a 12-acre property located in Washington D.C., owned by the Trustees of Harvard University, and interpretive tours are offered at the neighboring 27-acre Dumbarton Oaks Park, which is a National Park Service unit.

⁷ See Nancy Kober, *With Paintbrush and Shovel* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2001).

⁸ Bighorn Canyon NRA, resources and interpretation staff, personal communication, 2003.

⁹ The "restricted districts" in Seward and Skagway, Alaska, for instance, were fenced off from adjoining neighborhoods. See A.J. Bateman, *Regulated Vice: A Historic of Seward's Red Light District, 1914-1954*, NPS Alaska Support Office, 34; and March 27, 1915 letter from the Mayor of Skagway to the Mayor of Pasco, Washington, City of Skagway Historical Files, Box 4, Misc. document. Baby Doe of the Matchless Mine in Colorado made history within the Leadville mining landscape. See E. Blair, *Leadville, Colorado's Magic City* (Boulder: Pruett Publishing Co., 1980) and D. Karsner, *Silver Dollar: The Story of the Tabors* (New York: Bonanza Books, 1982).

¹⁰ Shaun Eyring, "Special Places Saved: The Role of Women in Preserving the American Landscape," in G. Dubrow and J. Goodman, eds. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press), 54-56.

¹¹ See Chapter Two in Polly Welts Kaufman, *National Parks and the Woman's Voice: A History* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996).

¹² Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial and Educational Foundation, Country Tour brochure (Red Cloud, Nebraska: n.p., n.d.).

¹³ The Georgia O'Keeffe Museum in Santa Fe, New Mexico, offers an educational program entitled "Walks in the American West."

¹⁴ Cindy Haakenson, Knife River Indian Villages NHS, personal communication, 2002.

¹⁵ Rina Swentzell, 1998.

¹⁶ Rina Swentzell, "Remembering Tewa Pueblo Houses and Spaces," *Native Peoples*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 1990 : 6-12.

¹⁷ Leslie L. Gould, *Lady Bird Johnson and the Environment*. (Kansas City: University Press of Kansas), 3.

¹⁸ Shaun Eyring, "Special Places Saved: The Role of Women in Preserving the American Landscape," in G. Dubrow and J. Goodman, eds. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press), 50-52.

Women's History and the Built Environment

Investigating women's history and issues of gender within the built environment provides an exciting opportunity not just to explore how all people in the past experienced life, but also to expand and even change our interpretations of historic places.¹ Linda Gordon writes, "The central claim of the new women's history is that a focus on women not only adds to but alters earlier pictures of the past, exposing what was inaccurate and misleading in those depictions."² Since the 1960s, there has been a proliferation of women's history scholarship recording the lives of different types of women, their varied experiences, and their changing roles within society. The challenge is to draw on this diverse body of scholarship for a stronger and truer understanding of the built environment. Keeping in mind that gender norms for both women and men are fluid and change depending on the social and political climate, cultural, and religious context, race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status of the actors, this essay suggests some ways cultural resource managers can enhance their interpretations of historic places by using gender as a category of analysis.

The National Park Service's *Where Women Made History* travel itinerary at <http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/travel/pwwmh/> is an excellent resource to the variety of places for which a women's history association can be made. Although focused on Massachusetts and New York, this website includes photographs and brief descriptions of seventy-four historic places, as well as lists of other women's history resources around the country. Public historian Darlene Roth used the National Park Service's own list for function and uses of a resource found in the *National Register Bulletin 16A: How to Complete the National Register Registration Form* as the base for describing women's generic property types. She discovered a multitude of properties, including houses, community landmark buildings, workplaces, recreational facilities, and

landscapes, with diverse historical associations related to the history of Georgia women.³

While the prescriptive literature of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries promoted separate spheres, the economic reality was that most women have always worked in and outside of the home to support themselves and their families.⁴ Following the Civil War (1861-1865) and coinciding with the rapid American industrialization, economic opportunities for women expanded outside of the traditional realm of paid household labor. Generally excluding African-American women in the South who continued working as maids, laundresses, and fieldworkers, this change marked an important departure for working women away from traditional domestic employment. Industries such as commercial laundry, food processing, candy making, and textile factories employed large numbers of women workers in segregated areas. Fulton Bag and Cotton Mill in Atlanta segregated its women seamstresses by creating a mezzanine level with only six-foot ceilings, figuring that women sitting at machines did not need much headroom. Even more disturbing is the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory building in New York where 146 people, mostly women and children, lost their lives trying to get out of the locked building during the horrific fire of 1911. Today visitors can go to the building, read about the tragedy, and look up at the ninth floor from where women jumped in a desperate attempt to avoid the fire and smoke.

Even as women entered the paid workforce in large numbers during the early twentieth-century, public resistance to women working outside the home remained, making women's entrance into the workforce a compelling story. Angel Kwolek - Folland's work on the gendered nature of the early twentieth century professional office provides an excellent example of how women's business history scholarship can be used to better understand the lives of working women and the spaces they inhabited. Large corporations both catered to and discriminated against women commonly building separate facilities such as ladies' lounges, lunchrooms, and libraries to

help make the workplace a more appropriate environment for this new female labor pool. Knowing that such women-centered places existed outside the home aids in painting a more accurate picture of workers' daily lives.⁵

In 1945 and with the assistance of federal Public Works Administration funds, Cook County, Georgia, constructed its first courthouse. The fact that it did not contain women's restrooms was not an oversight but rather it reflected the gendered belief that women did not belong in the legal sphere. While this may seem outrageous, women's right to serve on juries was not established nationwide until 1975 and striking women from jury pools because of their sex was not prohibited till the 1990s.⁶ Whereas women were excluded from some arenas, they were increasingly welcome in other public roles, such as that of consumer. Looking beyond department stores and suburban shopping center, this changing role can be seen in the construction of a Ladies' Rest Room building in 1924 in Lewisburg, Tennessee, and the opening of one in Covington, Georgia, in 1915 as a part of the Covington Woman's Club-sponsored library. These women-centered lounges provided clean and safe places for rural women who came into town to shop. It must be noted that these new spaces were for white women only; African-American women in the South were excluded from these "public" facilities. Where black women did have their own spaces, such as in the Illinois Central Depot (1920) in Newbern, Tennessee, their bathroom was less than half the size of the white restrooms and attached to the considerably smaller "colored waiting room."⁷

Another area where interpretive programs can be expanded in terms of women's history is in documenting women's roles in the preservation of historic and natural resources as volunteers and employees. The histories of the founding and administration of national, state, and local parks, historic places, and museums are filled with women. The classic example is that of Ann Pamela Cunningham forming the Mount Vernon Ladies Association but hundreds, if not thousands, of examples exist throughout the country.⁸



Whether it is Virginia Donaghe McClung's labors to preserve Mesa Verde in Colorado, Georgia Ellard's path breaking career as the first African-American National Park Service superintendent at Rock Creek Park in the District of Columbia, or Beth Davis's tireless promotion of and commitment to the Blue and Gray Civil War Museum in Fitzgerald, Georgia, these successful efforts demonstrate the perseverance, hard work, and dedication of women to improving their communities.⁹ This activism in preserving and interpreting historic places and artifacts can be placed in a larger historical context of the changing roles of women.

Feminist scholars have demonstrated how architecture has reinforced traditional beliefs about the appropriate roles for men and women in society, therefore, creating gendered environments.¹⁰ Others have looked at how women have functioned in man-made environments.¹¹ Whereas the professions of builder and architect have historically been gendered male, women have always influenced the built environment as both professionals and lay people. Architect and interior designer Mary Jane Colter created a distinct style of park architecture as she blended the cultures of the native peoples of the Southwest with the desert landscapes.¹² Lelia Ross Wilburn (1885-1967) of Georgia designed houses throughout the South, as well as authored architectural pattern books for single-family dwellings. Her designs featured the prevailing styles popular during her fifty-year long career, multiple closets, and front and rear porches. As founder of the Gainesville High and Industrial School for the Colored, Georgia black educator Buelah Rucker recycled an agricultural building for use as her house and school. Further evidence of her industriousness is the chimney Rucker built by herself out of stones and clay from her land. Following the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941, Japanese-American women struggled to create home-like environments for their families out of scrap lumber and cardboard in dismal conditions in internment camps.¹³



One key to improving the documentation of historic properties in terms of women's history is to ask better questions. In the identification of historic resources the ability to make a connection with women's history is enhanced if the survey manuals, forms, and training procedures facilitate consideration of social, economic, and cultural contexts. Such contexts are not just central to women's history but to credible, balanced approaches to research, preservation, and education at historic sites. In Georgia, "women's history" was added as an area of interest to its Georgia Historic Resources Survey form. Not only does this bring "women's history" to the attention of surveyors, but it also sets up standardized terms to facilitate research on women-related properties.

The emphasis on architectural design in residential architecture overlooks viewing a house as a site of household labor, social activities, and domestic relations. The male and female owners, occupants, workers, and visitors' lives and experiences should be documented equally. To only write the history of the husband, employer, or owner's lives, overlooks fundamental aspects of the structures of society as well as the many ways in which women contributed to the households, workplaces, and communities in which they lived, worked, played, and died. An example of this male-centered history can be found in the 1970s National Register of Historic Places nomination for the Swan House in Atlanta. The original nomination focused on Samuel Inman and architect Phillip Schutze to the exclusion of Emily MacDougald Inman, who lived in the house forty years after her husband's death and was intimately involved in the design and decoration of the house and grounds. The amended nomination now includes the life and experiences of Ms. Inman, as well as a detailing of how Ms. Inman, her family, and household workers functioned within society and her home.

Within historic houses each room should be documented and interpreted. Do not assume the kitchen and laundry area will be the best place for the administrative offices. These areas provide an excellent opportunity to interpret a house as a

functioning whole. Labor, race, and gender relations among owners, workers, and guests can be highlighted during tours. The kitchen and the laundry areas also can be viewed as places where women adopted the latest household technologies. It is in these areas that women can be interpreted in varied roles as mothers, wives, consumers, and wage earners.

The landscaped areas, household gardens, and landscapes of work at the periphery of houses should be documented as spaces for household work. In studying the lives of Irish workers in Delaware, Margaret M. Mulrooney describes the porch and yard as extensions of the house where women cooked, did their laundry, and socialized. The importance of the yard to the rural African-American community is well documented through oral histories and photographs in Richard Westmacott's study of landscapes in the rural South. He writes, "The vegetable garden, livestock pens, and all the associated equipment were therefore not just symbols of self-sufficiency but of commitment to the well-being of the whole community."¹⁴

Society preserves those resources that best reflect what it values. Ignoring women's history in preservation devalues the many roles women have played in society and distorts our understanding of history and therefore what we preserve and value and how and why we do it. An example of this distortion is seen in how historic places are commonly named. In Georgia, a property owner submitted the William D. Terrell Plantation for review to obtain National Register of Historic Places status. The text of the application read, "In 1855 William D. Terrell who owned two slaves but no land married the wealthy Mary Saddler. By the end of 1855, the tax digest listed Terrell's assets as 20 slaves and 700 acres."¹⁵ This direct quote from an application demonstrates how the applicant overlooked Ms. Saddler's role in Mr. Terrell's increased fortunes. The National Register staff re-named the property as the Saddler- Terrell Plantation to more accurately reflect the history of the property, as it was her money and her land that increased Mr. Terrell's holdings. The naming of historic

properties to reflect the men and women associated with properties is a first step toward refining our understanding of the built environment. Although seemingly superficial, this naming is important because it recognizes that yes, women were there and yes, they were important. President John Adams and his wife Abigail Smith Adams' house in Massachusetts is referred to as the Adams National Historic Site. By broadening the title, the National Park Service conveys the message that the Adams family was significant and not just Presidents John and John Quincy Adams. The interpretation of Abigail and three other generations of Adams women's lives underscores this idea further.

Historic places related to women's history are fragile resources. It is crucial to document these resources and their significance by relating them to broader historical patterns and events and within the context of the ever-changing gendered roles of women and of men. This can be done through utilizing recent women's history scholarship to improve the way we record and interpret these resources. Visitors are interested in the way people experienced life. As the professionals who make the past public, we need to make sure that women are included as fundamental to the stories we tell and the places where women lived, worked, played, and died are better understood and preserved.



¹⁴Angel Kwolek - Folland defines gender as "a system of interrelated ideas about men's and women's social roles, self-definition, and cultural experience that is grounded in the historical process. It is closest to class as a socially constructed category of human experience, but it is also like race in that it is based in biological fact but expressed in cultural terms;" Angel Kwolek - Folland, "Gender as a Category of Analysis in Vernacular Architecture Studies," *Gender, Class, and Shelter: Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture, V* edited by Elizabeth Collins Cromley and Carter L. Hudgins (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press): 3.

² Linda Gordon, "U.S. Women's History," *The New American History*, Revised and Expanded Edition, edited for the American Historical Association by Eric Foner (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1997): 260.

³ Darlene Roth et al, *Georgia: A Woman's Place, A Historical Context* (April 2001), unpublished report, on file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.

⁴ For further discussion on "separate spheres," see Sara M. Evans discussion in this booklet on gender ideology.

⁵ Angel Kwolek - Folland, *Engendering Business: Men and Women in the Corporate Office, 1870-1930* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994); Andrea Tone, *The Business of Benevolence: Industrial Paternalism in Progressive America* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997); Oliver Zunz, *Making America Corporate, 1870-1920* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1990, paperback 1992).

⁶ Linda K. Kerber, *No Constitutional Right to Be Ladies: Women and the Obligations of Citizenship* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1998): 136.

⁷ Carroll Van West, "The Ladies Rest Room: Gender and Space in the Rural South, 1910-1990," unpublished paper presented to the *Telling Her Story: Expanding the Past of Georgia's Women through Historic Places*, Atlanta, Georgia, 1996; Covington Woman's Club miscellaneous files, Covington, Georgia; Leslie N. Sharp and Carroll Van West, "Illinois Central Depot," National Register of Historic Places nomination, 1992, on file at the National Park Service, Washington, DC.

⁸ William J. Murtagh, *Keeping Time: The History and Theory of Preservation in America* (New York: Preservation Press, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1997, revised edition): 28.

⁹ Polly Welts Kaufman, *National Parks and the Woman's Voice: A History* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996): 28-30, 155; Informal interview with Darlene Roth, principal, Roth & Associates, consultant for the Blue and Gray Museum (Fall 2002).

¹⁰ Leslie Kanes Weisman, *Discrimination by Design: A Feminist Critique of the Man-Made Environment* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1992); Angel Kwolek - Folland, *Engendering Business: Men and Women in the Corporate Office, 1870-1930* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994): 94-130; Daphne Spain, *Gendered Spaces* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1992).

¹¹ Diana Agrest, et al, editors, *The Sex of Architecture* (New York: Harry N. Adams, Inc., 1996); Annmarie Adams and Peta Tancred, *Designing Women: Gender and the Architectural Profession* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2000).

¹² Kaugman, 25.

¹³ Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston and James D. Houston, *Farewell to Manzanar* (New York: Bantam Books, 1995, originally published 1974).

¹⁴ Richard Westmacott, *African-American Gardens and Yards in the Rural South* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1992).

¹⁵ Saddler- Terrell Plantation, Putnam County, Georgia, *Historic Property Information Form*, on file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.

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Blanton, DeAnne and Lauren M. Cook. They Fought Like Demons: Women Soldiers in the American Civil War. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2002. The authors document the lives of 240 women who fought on both sides of the Civil War.

Boylan, Anne M. The Origins of Women's Activism: New York and Boston, 1797-1840. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002. A comprehensive study of women's volunteer organizations and their organizers in the Early Republic.

Brodie, Janet Farrell. Contraception and Abortion in Nineteenth-Century America. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994. Ingeniously using diaries, advertisements, catalogs and other advice literature of the time, Brodie weaves an engaging history of birth control methods, their proponents and opponents, and the reasons that contraception was criminalized near the end of the century.

Buhle, Mary Jo. Women and American Socialism, 1870-1920. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983. A wonderful resource for understanding women's involvement in American Socialism and its working class, German American roots. Buhle examines the interplay between working-class women's roles as wives, mothers, and daughters, their support for the labor movement, and labor's stance on woman suffrage.

_____. and Paul Buhle, eds., The Concise History of Woman Suffrage: Selections from the Classic Work of Stanton, Anthony, Gage, and Harper. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1978. Still one of the best one-volume collections of the speeches and writings created by four central figures in the woman suffrage movement.

Clinton, Catherine and Nina Silber, eds. Divided Houses: Gender and the Civil War. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992. A collection of essays evaluating the impact of the war on notions of manhood and womanhood for black and whites. Homefronts, both southern and northern, form a major theme for the articles.

Cott, Nancy F. The Bonds of Womanhood: "Woman's Sphere" in New England, 1780-1835. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977. An early and pathbreaking work in women's history that analyzes the development of the "cult of domesticity," which shaped middle- and upper-class women's cultural and social experience during the early nineteenth century.

_____. The Grounding of Modern Feminism. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987. An important work that illuminates the difference between the woman's rights movement of the nineteenth century and the feminist movement of the twentieth. Charts the course of the radical Woman's Party in the early twentieth century.

Deutsch, Sarah. No Separate Refuge: Culture, Class, and Gender on an Anglo-Hispanic Frontier in the American Southwest, 1880-1940. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987. Focusing on Colorado and New Mexico, this study evaluates cultural interactions between Chicanos and Anglos over sixty years. Deutsch argues that Chicanos maintained and transformed their ethnic and cultural identities in the face of economic, political and demographic conquest.

Diner, Hasia and Beryl Lieff Benderly. Her Works Praise Her: A History of Jewish Women in America from Colonial Times to the Present. New York: Basic Books, 2002. A social history that puts to rest many stereotypical ideas concerning Jewish women. Diner and Benderly present rich and varied portraits of women who shaped their communities across North America.

Dorsey, Bruce. Reforming Men and Women: Gender in the Antebellum City. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002. Centered on religious activism in antebellum America, this work examines "contested manhood and womanhood" using songs, stories, plays and sermons.

Drachman, Virginia D. Enterprising Women: 250 Years of American Business. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press in association with the Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute of Advanced Study, Harvard University, 2002. An overview of women entrepreneurs from the colonial period to the present.

Dublin, Thomas. Transforming Women's Work: New England Lives in the Industrial Revolution. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994. Examines the experience of women workers – teachers, millworkers, shoeworkers, servants, and garment workers – in New Hampshire and Massachusetts between 1830 and 1900.

_____. Women at Work: The Transformation of Work and Community in Lowell, Massachusetts, 1826-1860. New York: Columbia University Press, 1979. A landmark community study of working-class women in Lowell.

Evans, Sara M. Tidal Wave: How Women Changed America at Century's End. New York: Free Press, 2003. Evans examines the origins of the modern women's movement in the 1960s, analyzes the troubled years of the 1970s and '80s, and chronicles the movement's re-emergence in the 1990s. The strengths and weaknesses of "the personal is political" ideology is fully explored in the context of race, class and sexuality.

Faust, Drew Gilpin. Mothers of Invention: Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996. A study of the lives of 500 elite Confederate women during the war using "diaries, letters, essays, memoirs, fiction, and poetry." Analyzes these women as both privileged and subordinate in Southern politics and culture.

Fischer, Gayle V. Pantaloons and Power: A Nineteenth-Century Dress Reform in the United States. Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2001. Clothing is symbolic of acceptable social norms and people's struggles against those norms, and Fischer's engaging work examines the ways in which dress reformers challenged traditional concepts related to health while questioning middle-class social, religious, and political values.

Fox-Genovese, Elizabeth. Within the Plantation Household: Black and White Women of the Old South. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988. Focusing on slaveholding women and female slaves from 1820-1861, this study describes relations of power, gender roles, and the dynamics of privilege and oppression. Based on diaries, letters, reminiscences, slave narratives, and plantation records.

Gabaccia, Donna. From the Other Side: Women, Gender, and Immigrant Life in the U.S., 1820-1990. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994. A sweeping analysis of the socioeconomic roots of migration, the realities of work and family life in the U.S., and the ways in which immigrant women shaped and were shaped by notions of womanhood in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Giddings, Paula. When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America. New York: Bantam Books, 1984. A classic and important history of Black women that evaluates the intersection of racism and sexism. Richly incorporates oral histories and biographies to describe Black women's efforts to overcome dual oppression.

Gilmore, Glenda E. Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996. A detailed study of racial politics in North Carolina after the imposition of legal segregation. Gilmore argues that in the face of black male disfranchisement, black women played an important role as liaisons and "diplomats" to the white community in order to obtain benefits and services for their families and communities.

Gustafson, Melanie S. Women and the Republican Party, 1854-1924. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001. An invaluable study that links women's activism in the antislavery and suffrage movements to formal party politics. Examines the birth and growth of women's political participation to argue that women's disfranchisement did not prevent them from engaging in partisan political activity.

Harper, Judith E. Susan B. Anthony: A Biographical Companion. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, Inc., 1998. This resource is an indispensable A to Z guide to people, events, organizations, ideas and documents related to Anthony and the woman suffrage movement. A comprehensive bibliography is included.

Hawes, Joseph M. and Elizabeth I. Nybakken, eds. Family and Society in American History. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001. A valuable compilation of articles on family history, this anthology analyzes the importance of property laws, economic constraints, pregnancy and family limitation, household structure, and divorce on women and their families.

Hoffschwelle, Mary S. Rebuilding the Rural Southern Community: Reformers, Schools, and Homes in Tennessee, 1900-1930. Examines rural education as a progressive ideal that resulted in reforms for white and black schools in the early twentieth century.

Hunter, Tera. To 'Joy My Freedom: Southern Black Women's Lives and Labors After the Civil War. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997. Focusing on Atlanta, Georgia, this work analyzes the experiences of working-class black women – primarily domestic servants – from the end of the Civil War through the Great Migration.

James, Ronald M. and C. Elizabeth Raymond. Comstock Women: The Making of a Mining Community. Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1998. Through the lens of race, class and ethnicity, this study is a collection of essays detailing the nature of women's lives in Virginia City, Nevada during the Gold Rush. Demography, archaeology and social history commingle to produce a comprehensive evaluation of women's experience.

Jeffrey, Julie Roy. Frontier Women: "Civilizing" the West? 1840 - 1880. 1979; Rev. ed., New York: Hill and Wang, 1998. An excellent introduction to the frontier and settlement period in the American West. This revised edition includes analyses of the frontier experience of Hispanic, Indian, and Black women in addition to that of white, middle-class pioneers.

_____. The Great Silent Army of Abolitionism: Ordinary Women in the Antislavery Movement. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998. Asserting that “women formed the backbone of the movement,” Jeffrey's study illuminates and evaluates the roles of rank-and-file women, both black and white, whose voices seldom have been heard in the scholarship of the antislavery movement.

Jellison, Katherine. Entitled to Power: Farm Women and Technology, 1913-1963. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993. Examines the farm household's division of labor and documents how changes in modern technology enabled women to challenge traditional “separate spheres” ideals and embrace productive roles on farms such as operators of farm machinery. The study focuses on women in the Midwest.

Jensen, Joan. Loosening the Bonds: Mid-Atlantic Farm Women, 1750-1850. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986. A pathbreaking study of rural women in Pennsylvania and Delaware, Jensen's work asserts that women were part of three spheres – the household, domestic production, and public life. These spheres created a complex social and economic fabric that changed over time as the agricultural economy of the region evolved.

Jones, Jacqueline. Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow: Black Women, Work and the Family from Slavery to the Present. New York: Basic Books, 1985. An early, important and beautifully written study that examines the nature of black women's work in the context of family life during and after slavery.

Kaufman, Polly Welts. National Parks and the Woman's Voice: A History. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996. A unique history of the Park Service from the perspective of women park founders, rangers, and wives of Park Service rangers. Argues that the contributions of women, both as preservationists within the system and conservationists from without, have changed the culture and mission of the Park Service for the better.

Kelly, Catherine E. In the New England Fashion: Reshaping Women's Lives in the Nineteenth Century. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999. An intriguing social and intellectual history of rural middle-class women in Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont from 1790 to 1865. Examines the creation of the provincial middle class and the continuities and tensions in men's and women's relationships.

Kerber, Linda. Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980. Kerber's intellectual history of the Revolutionary period asserts that women created the ideology of "Republican Motherhood" to actively participate as citizens through their roles as wives and mothers.

Kessler- Harris, Alice. In Pursuit of Equity: Women, Men and the Quest for Economic Citizenship. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001. Arguing that wage work provides economic and legal benefits in modern America, Kessler- Harris analyzes protective labor legislation, "right to work" laws, and the history of calls for a "family wage." She asserts that women's economic citizenship has been circumscribed by social policies based on gender.

Kline, Ronald R. Consumers in the Country: Technology and Social Change in Rural America. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000. While not specifically focusing on women, Kline's study examines modern technologies and their impact on rural family life from the end of the nineteenth century through WWII. The discussion focuses on rural electrification, modern agricultural tools and conveniences such as the telephone and washing machines.

Kwolek - Folland, Angel. Incorporating Women: A History of Women and Business in the United States. New York: Basingstroke Palgrave MacMillan, 2003. Focuses on social and legal changes confronted by women as they engaged in business activities from the seventeenth century to the present.

Martinez, Katherine and Kenneth L. Ames. The Material Culture of Gender, the Gender of Material Culture. Winterthur, Delaware: University Press of New England, 1997.

Norton, Mary Beth. Liberty's Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women, 1750 -1800. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1980. This classic study has become a companion-piece to Linda Kerber's Women of the Republic. Norton describes the everyday lives of women before, during, and after the Revolution to conclude that women's contributions to the war effort enhanced their status in the domestic realm.

Osterud, Nancy Grey. Bonds of Community: The Lives of Farm Women in Nineteenth-Century New York. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991. An analysis of a small farming community in New York during the late nineteenth century. Examines the gendered division of labor on family farms and richly defines women's daily activities.

Parsons, Elaine Frantz. Manhood Lost: Fallen Drunkards and Redeeming Women in the Nineteenth-Century United States. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003. A study of the post-Civil War temperance debate.

Paton - Walsh, Margaret. Our War Too: American Women Against the Axis. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002. Tells the story of women who supported the entry of the United States into World War II and describes how they used volunteer organizations to engage in the political debate.

Pierson, Michael D. Free Hearts and Free Homes: Gender and American Antislavery Politics. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2003. This study examines gender and politics in the antebellum north and asserts that different visions of family and gender roles were emerging between the political parties in the decades before the Civil War.

Rossi, Alice S., ed. The Feminist Papers from Adams to deBeauvoir. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1988. Excerpts from the speeches and writings of important advocates of women's rights provide the material for this invaluable collection of intellectual history. Rossi provides introductory essays to key eras and thinkers.

Schlissel, Lillian and Catherine Lavender, eds. The Western Women's Reader: The Remarkable Writings of Women Who Shaped the American West, Spanning 300 Years. New York: HarperCollins, 2000. The history of women in the American West is enlivened through this combination of fiction and non-fiction writings. See Heather Huyck, "Beyond John Wayne: Using Historic Sites to Interpret Women's History."

Scott, Joan W. Gender and the Politics of History. New York: Columbia University Press, 1988. Scott provides a very useful process for researching and understanding women's history within the context of gender dynamics. Detailed case studies are included using European working-class history as a conceptual framework for addressing gender. Scott argues that looking at gender relationships in addition to women's history is needed to understand the context of women's lives and actions.

Sharpless, Rebecca. Fertile Ground, Narrow Choices: Women on Texas Cotton Farms, 1900-1940. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999. Highlighting the lives of rural southern women on the Blackland Prairie, this study examines food production, housekeeping, community ties, and family relationships of farm women through memoirs, oral histories and storytelling.

Shoemaker, Nancy, ed. Negotiators of Change: Historical Perspectives on Native American Women. New York: Routledge, 1995. A collection of essays covering four centuries, which address the effects of European colonization on native women. The scholars discuss changes in the gendered division of labor, women's status in native societies, and the diverse responses that women had to cultural change. The introduction summarizes central themes in Indian women's history.

Solomon, Barbara Miller. In the Company of Educated Women: A History of Women and Higher Education. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985. An excellent resource for understanding the beginnings of college education for women and the occupations available to them in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Solomon integrates into her analysis biographies of teachers, college faculty, and students who shaped women's education.

Strasser, Susan. Never Done: A History of American Housework. New York: Pantheon Books, 1982. An enlightening and highly readable account of the tools and methods used by women to cook, clean, sew, manage households and sell their wares in the marketplace during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Thompson, Eleanor. The American Home: Material Culture, Domestic Space and Family Life. Winterthur, Delaware: University Press of New England, 1998.

Ulrich, Laurel Thatcher. Good Wives: Image and Reality in the Lives of Women in Northern New England, 1650-1750. New York: Oxford University Press, 1980. An early and important work on the colonial period, this engaging text analyzes the roles women played as wives, mothers, and daughters and describes how idealized versions of women did not often fit the reality.

Warren, Karen J., ed. Ecofeminism: Women, Culture, Nature. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996. A combination of practical and theoretical essays on ecofeminism, a movement that is part of second wave feminism and which has its roots in the relationships between women and nature throughout history and from varied cultural perspectives. Ecofeminism, which associates environmental degradation and discrimination against women, calls for new and healthier relationships between people and nature.

Wolfe, Margaret R. Daughters of Canaan: A Saga of Southern Women. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1995. A multicultural and economically diverse history of southern women that puts real voices in place of stereotype and myth. Covers the period from the seventeenth century to the 1960s.

Yuh, Ji-Yeon. Beyond the Shadow of Camptown: Korean Military Brides in America. New York: New York University Press, 2002. A study of some of the 100,000 Korean women that have married American soldiers since 1950.

Yung, Judy. Unbound Feet: A Social History of Chinese Women in San Francisco. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995. A thorough analysis of Chinese American women during the first half of the twentieth century. Yung asserts that ethnicity, class and gender must be examined together to fully understand the rich history of Chinese Americans. Based on multigenerational oral histories of Chinese American women and their immigrant foremothers.

Zaeske, Susan. Signatures of Citizenship: Petitioning, Antislavery & Women's Political Identity. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003. The author asserts that women of the 1830s drew on their rudimentary right to petition personal grievances to Congress to flood the national legislature with antislavery petitions, simultaneously expanding their political rights and forcing Congress to address the issue of slavery.

Zanjani, Sally. A Mine of Her Own: Women Prospectors in the American West, 1850-1950. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997. A delightful social history that demonstrates how our image of the West can be transformed when we put women in the foreground.

Biographies

Biography is a wonderful way to explore the history of women. The following are some noteworthy examples.

Barry, Kathleen. Susan B. Anthony: A Biography of a Singular Feminist. New York: New York University Press, 1988.

Clark, Ella E. and Margot Edmonds. Sacagawea of the Lewis & Clark Expedition. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979.

Cook, Blanche Wiesen. Eleanor Roosevelt. New York: Penguin Books, 1992. 2 volumes.

Elshtain, Jean Bethke. Jane Addams and the Dream of American Democracy. New York: Basic Books, 2002.

Griffith, Elisabeth. In Her Own Right: The Life of Elizabeth Cady Stanton. New York: Oxford University Press, 1984.

Jeffrey, Julie Roy. Converting the West: A Biography of Narcissa Whitman. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991.

Lerner, Gerda. The Grimke Sisters from South Carolina; Rebels Against Slavery. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967.

Miller, Darlis A. Mary Hallock Foote: Author-Illustrator of the American West. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2002.

Oates, Stephen B. A Woman of Valor: Clara Barton and the Civil War. New York: Free Press, 1994.

Schechter, Patricia A. Ida B. Wells-Barnett and American Reform, 1880-1930. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001.



Scott, Anne Firor. Making the Invisible Woman Visible. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984.

Sklar, Kathryn Kish. Catharine Beecher; A Study in American Domesticity. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974.

_____. Florence Kelley and the Nation's Work. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995.

Ulrich, Laurel. A Midwife's Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard Based on Her Diary, 1785-1812. New York: Knopf, 1990.

Zanjani, Sally. Sarah Winnemucca. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001.

