University of Wisconsin
Department of History
Fall, 1985-86

History 901 Reading Seminar
Thursday 1:20-3:20 P.M.
7117 Helen C. White

Gerda Lerner
5123 Humanities
Office Hours:
10-12 and by
appointment

SOCIAL HISTORY OF U.S. WOMEN: 1650-1870

In this seminar we will study the historical experience of American women in the 18th and 19th century, using a topical approach. Wherever possible we will be using primary sources, that is documents in which women speak for themselves about their lives and ideas. These will be combined with secondary sources and essays offering a variety of interpretations. Students will become familiar not only with content, but with the use of historical methodology.

REQUIREMENTS: Attendance at all classes; reading preparation prior to the class for which the assignment is given; participation in class discussions; one oral presentation; three written assignments.

READING: Students are expected to do all assigned readings, to take notes on them and are encouraged to add to their reading from the Additional Suggested Reading List according to their own interests. A typewritten report on the reading done from the Additional Suggested Reading List should be handed to the instructor. It should be no more than a 4 x 6 card, single spaced, briefly stating the book's thesis and a critical comment on it.

The Additional Suggested Reading List is intended to augment the reading for the course and to serve as a source for future study. Students in Women's History should make use of it for prelim preparation.

Students should use Notable American Women, 4 vols., as a general reference work. Each student should select three 19th century women and become our class expert on them.

Unless otherwise noted (HC), all assigned books are paperbacks. Books may be purchased at A Room of One's Own and Brown's Book Store. Some titles are also available at University Book Store.

ASSIGNMENTS:

(1) From your reading notes prepare three questions for discussion for each assigned unit. Put these questions in my box by Wednesday, 4:00 P.M. each week. You may, if you wish, also offer critical comments.
(2) Prepare an oral report (no more than 10 minutes) on the life of the women whose autobiography you have read. Interpret her life, using any of the criteria developed in this course. The main point of this exercise is to develop your ability to select. You should strive for conciseness and lucidity. We will set up a schedule for these oral reports to be presented to the class after Week 3.

3. Do a 4-6 page paper, comparing one aspect of the female life cycle of yourself or your mother (20th century women) with an 18th century woman. Use one of the women in the readings as a source or use NAW or any of the biographies and autobiographies in my bibliography. What aspect of the experience is typical for that period? What unusual? Who defined the female role? How did women act or decide? What constraints determined their decisions? Assignment due Week 7.

4. Using the readings from Units VII and VIII, discuss two or more interpretations of a topic from these units and offer your own synthesis and critique. You may use both assigned and supplementary readings. 6 page paper. Due Week 10.

5. From sources listed in the assignments up to Unit XI and/or from additional sources, select a problem for comparison, holding either class or race stable. For example, compare the work and/or activities of black and white middle class women in a given period. Or compare the work and family decisions or middle and working class white women. Bring in a 6-8 page paper, footnoted and with evidence that you have read a number of sources. Due Week 13.

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AR = Assigned Reading
ASR = Additional
Suggested Readings

WEEK I. HOW TO THINK ABOUT WOMEN IN HISTORY

Assigned Reading:


Additional Suggested Readings:

Ann D. Gordon, Mari Jo Buhl, Nancy Schrom Dye, "The Problem of
Women's History," pp. 75092 in Berenice A. Carroll, ed., Liberating
Women's History (1976).
Sheila Ryan Johansson, "Herstory as History: A New Field or
Another Fad?", pp. 400-430 in Berenice Carroll, ed., Liberating
Women's History
Janet James, Introduction, Notable American Women.

WEEK 2
NATIVE AMERICANS, WHITE SERVANTS

AR:
Richard Morris, Government and Labor in Early America, pp. 310-
389.
89-90, "Letter from and indentured servant".
107-135. (Cott, "18th century family...")
XEROX readings on Native Americans

ASR:
Ulrich, Good Wives, ch. 2, 3.
Francis Jennings, The Invasion of America (Norton, 1975), ch. 3 and 7.

WEEK 3
THE RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

AR:
Cott, Bonds of Womanhood, ch. 4.
Cott, Root, pp. 34-36 (Ann Hutchinson); 65-73 (Mercy
Short); 83-88 (Sarah Osborn).
Janet James, Women in American Religion, pp. 27-110 (articles by
Dunn, Moran, Ulrich, Ryan).

ASR:
James, pp. 111-126 (Welter)
Mary Ryan, Cradle of the Middle Class, ch. 2.

WEEK 4
WOMEN AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

AR:
Kerber, ch. 2, 3, 4, 6.
Norton, ch. 5, 6, 7.

ASR:
Kerber, chs. 1, 5.
Joan Hoff Wilson, "The Illusion of Change: Women and the
American Revolution" in Friedman and Shade, Our American Sisters, 3d
ed., ch. 5.

WEEK 5

THE FEMALE LIFE CYCLE

AR:
Lerner, The Female Experience, ch. 1, 2, pp. 3-107; ch. 4, pp. 151-178.
Cott, Root, pp. 113-116, (S. Jennings)
Lebsock, Free Women, ch. 2.

ASR:
Harriet C. Brown, Grandmother Brown's Hundred Years, 1827-1927 (1930)
Elizabeth Buffum Chace and Lucy Buffum Lowell, Two Quaker Sisters (1937).
Eve Merriam, Ten Lives: Growing Up Female in America, esp. chapters on Stanton, Mitchell, Cooper, Shaw.

Consult biography and autobiography section in Gerda Lerner's bibliography for additional readings.

WEEK 6

WOMEN'S WORK

AR:
Lerner, Female Experience, ch. 3.
Alice Kessler Harris, Women Have Always Worked (1981), pp. 20-51.
Cott/Pleck, ch. 21 (Vanek), ch. 11 (Glasco).

ASR:
Radical America VII, nos. 4 and 5 (July-October 1973).
Barbara Ehrenreich and Deirdre English, For Her Own Good, ch. 5.

WEEK 7

DEFINITION AND CONTROL OF SEXUALITY

AR:
Ryan, Cradle of the Middle Class, ch. 5 and Conclusion (p. 230-242).
Cott/Pleck, ch. 6 (Cott), ch. 8 (Smith-Rosenberg), ch. 9 (Smith), ch. 13 (Gutman).

ASR:
Ronald Walters, Primers for Prudery: Sexual Advice to Victorian America (1974).


WEEK 8 HEALTH REFORM, BIRTH CONTROL, SEXUAL REVOLUTION

AR:
- Nancy Cott, Root, pp. 263-308.
- Lerner, Female Experience, pp. 87-103 (S. Grimke and M. Sanger).
- Linda Gordon, Woman's Body, Woman's Right, ch. 1 and 3, pp. 3-94; 249-418).

ASR:
- Barbara Ehrenreich and Deirdre English, For Her Own Good, ch. 2, 3, and 4.

WEEK 9 THE RIGHT TO LEARN AND THE RIGHT TO TEACH

AR:
- Ann Firor Scott, "What Then Is This American, This New Woman?", Journal of American History, LXV, #3 ( ), pp. 679-703.
- Eleanor Flexner, Century of Struggle, ch. 2, (pp. 23-40), ch. 8, (pp.113-130).

ASR:
- Mary Lyon, The Life and Labors of Mary Lyon (1885)
- NAW essays on Zilpah Grant, Anne J. Cooper, F.I. Coppin, M. Carey

WEEK 10 WOMEN'S WORK II: IN THE WORK FORCE

AR:
- Cott/Pleck, pp. 182-196 (Lerner)
- Cott, Root, pp. 148-156 (Ten hour workday)
- Friedman/Shade, pp. 243-263 (D. Walkowitz).

ASR:
WEEK 11
SLAVERY AND ABOLITION
ASR:
Genovese, Roll, Jordan, Roll
Lerner, Female Experience, pp. 329-347, 471-492.
Cott/Pleck, ch. 12 (Genovese)
Leon Litvack, North of Slavery, ch. 7.

Lerner, Black Women in White America (BWWA), pp. 19-53.
Lerner, Female Experience, pp. 329-347, 471-492.
Cott/Pleck, ch. 12 (Genovese)

WEEK 12
WOMEN ORGANIZE FOR COMMUNITY AND WELFARE
AR:
Ryan, ch. 10, pp. 105-144.
Lebsack, ch. 7.
Mary Beard, "Women's Work in Municipalities" (XEROX)
Lerner, Female Experience, pp. 178-199.
Ann F. Scott, The Southern Lady, ch. 6, pp. 135-163.
Nancy Cott, The Bonds of Womanhood, ch. 4, pp. 126-159.
Flexner, ch. 13.

ASR:
Jane Addams, Twenty Years at Hull House.
Frances Willard, Glimpses of Fifty Years (1889).

WEEK 13
WOMEN ORGANIZE FOR EMANCIPATION
AR:
Ann F. and Andrew Scott, One Half the People: The Fight for Woman Suffrage (1975), pp. 3-12, 55-59, 24-50.
Flexner, Century of Struggle, ch. 6, (pp. 71-104); ch. 12, (pp. 164-178) and ch. 16, (pp. 216-228).
DuBois, ed., E.C.Stanton, S.B. Anthony: Correspondence, Writings, Speeches, Parts I and II.
ADDITIONAL SUGGESTED READINGS for those wishing to study the suffrage campaign to 1920:

- Scott, One Half the People, pp. 112-13, 129-141.
- Flexner, ch. 22 and 24.
- Alan P. Grimes, Puritan Ethic and Woman's Suffrage, ch. 1.

WEEK 15
THE SEARCH FOR THE NEW WOMAN

AR:
- Lerner, BWWA, pp. 563-583.
- Scott, Southern Lady, pp. 105-133.
- Mary Beard selections (XEROX)
- NAW entries on Alice Hamilton, Emily and Elizabeth Blackwell, Mary Putnam Jacobi, Belva Lockwood, Crystal Eastman, Charlotte Perkins Gilman.

ASR:
Read any one of the autobiographies or biographies.

AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

- Otelia Crowell, Lucretia Mott (1958)
- Eleanor Hays, Morningstar, A Biography of Lucy Stone (1961)
- Gerda Lerner, The Grimke Sisters from South Carolina: Rebels Against Slavery (1967)
- Elizabeth C. Stanton, Eighty Years or More (Reprint, 1971)
- Kathryn Kish Sklar, Catharine Beecher (1978)
- Rheta Childe Dorr, Susan B. Anthony
- Emma Goldman, Living My Life
- Mabel Dodge Luhan, Intimate Memoirs
- Agnes Smedley, Daughter of Earth
- Mary Field Parton, ed., Autobiography of Mother Jones
- Jane Addams, Twenty Years at Hull House
- Margaret Sanger, An Autobiography
- Rose Cohen, Out of the Shadow

Blanche Cook, ed., *Crystal Eastman*

Gerda Lerner, *Grimke Biography*

Ruth Landes, *The Ojibwa Woman*


Bell Chivigny, *The Woman and the Myth: Margaret Fuller's Life and Writings* (1976)


Frances Willard, *Glimpses of Fifty Years* (1889)

Harriet C. Brown, *Grandmother Brown's Hundred Years, 1827-1927* (1930)


Olive Gilbert, *Narrative of Sojourner Truth, A Northern Slave* (1850)
The document is a list of assigned readings for a course on the social history of U.S. women, 1650-1890. The list includes titles and authors of various works, such as:

- Alice Kessler-Harris, *Women Have Always Worked* (1981)
- Eve Merriam, *Ten Lives: Growing Up Female in America*

* Purchase suggested.