

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN  
Department of History  
Fall Semester 1990-91

HISTORY 902-2  
Thurs. 1:00 - 3:00 P.M.  
Professor Gerda Lerner

Office Hours:  
Wed. 10:00-12:00  
5123 Humanities  
Phone: 263-1852

SYLLABUS

BIOGRAPHY AND AUTOBIOGRAPHY AS HISTORY AND LITERATURE

WEEKS I. LITERATURE AS A SOURCE FOR HISTORY

1 - 2 Each student will read two biographies, one for each week.

Select ONE from this group:

Louise Meriwether, Daddy was a Number Runner  
Anzia Yezierska, Breadgivers  
Maya Angelou, I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings  
Paule Marshall, Brown Girl, Brownstones

Select ONE from this group:

James Farrell, Studs Lonigan, Vol. 1  
Claude Brown, Manchild in the Promised Land  
James Baldwin, Go, Tell it on the Mountain  
Henry Roth, Call it Sleep

II. HISTORY AS A SOURCE FOR LITERATURE - THE GREAT DEPRESSION

3 - 5 All students read entire John Steinbeck, Grapes of Wrath

Each student read any 100 pages of ONE of the following:

Studs Terkel, Hard Times  
Caroline Bird, The Invisible Scar (on reserve) (HC)\*  
Milton Meltzer, Brother Can You Spare a Dime?

\* (HC) denotes Hardcover.

6 - 7 III. THE "PERSONA" AS MORAL LEADER

All students read:

L. Labaree (ed.) The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin

also:

the entry on Benjamin Franklin in the Dictionary of American Biography (Reserve Room)

## 8 IV. THE PERILS OF HISTORIOGRAPHY: JOHN BROWN

Students will select one of the works listed under "John Brown" in the attached bibliographic unit. Please familiarize yourself with the books under this unit prior to class 6, so that you can make an intelligent choice. We will review your choices in class.

9-10-11 V. THE PROBLEMS OF THE BIOGRAPHER

All students read:

9 Gerda Lerner, The Grimké Sisters from South Carolina: Pioneers for Women's Rights and Abolition

10 Read material in Xerox packet.  
Review Lerner, Grimké Sisters, pp. 282-339.  
Read Alice Rossi, The Feminist Papers, pp. 282-322.

11 No reading assignment.

12-14 VI. CONTROVERSIAL INTERPRETATIONS

Assignment schedules will be made in class.

Each student select one person and read at least TWO of the books under that person in the reading list.

See separate bibliography.

BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR UNITS IV AND VIUnit IV: The Perils of Historiography

NOTE: These books are on reserve at The State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

JOHN BROWN

- Louis Ruchames, John Brown, The Making of a Revolutionary (1901)  
 O. G. Villard, John Brown, 1800-1859 (1910)  
 F.B. Sanborn, Life and Letters of John Brown (1969)  
 Richard Boyer, The Legend of John Brown (1969)  
 S.B. Oates, To Purge This Land With Blood: A Biography of John Brown (1972)  
 H. Goldberg, American Radicals, chapter on John Brown.  
 Madison, Critics and Crusaders, chapter on John Brown.  
 H.D. Thoreau, A Plea for Captain John Brown in Thoreau's Works  
 James Redpath, The Public Life of Capt. John Brown, with an Autobiography of His Childhood and Youth (Thayer & Eldridge, 1860)  
 James Redpath, (ed.), Echoes of Harper's Ferry (Arno, 1969)  
 [reprint of 1860 ed.]  
 Jules Abels, Man on Fire: John Brown and the Cause of Liberty  
 (NY, Macmillan, 1971)  
 Benjamin Quarles, Allies for Freedom: Blacks and John Brown  
 (Oxford, 1974)  
 Truman John Nelson, The Old Man: John Brown of Harper's Ferry  
 (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973)  
 Richard Josiah Hinton, John Brown and His Men (Arno, 1968)  
 Wm. Edward Burghardt DuBois, John Brown (Northbrook, IL, Metro Books, 1972), [reprint of 1909 ed.]

Unit V. Controversial Interpretations

NOTE: These books are NOT on reserve. You will find them in the general collections. There should be no problem with availability, since each book will be needed by only one student.

SUSAN B. ANTHONY

- Katherine Anthony, Susan B. Anthony (Doubleday, 1944)  
 Rheta Childe Dorr, Susan B. Anthony: The Woman Who Changed the Nation (Frederick A. Stokes Co., 1920)  
 Ida Husted Harper, The Life and Work of Susan B. Anthony  
 (Hollenbeck Press, 1908)  
 Alma Lutz, Susan B. Anthony: Rebel, Crusader, Humanitarian  
 (Beacon, 1959)  
 Kathleen Barry, Susan B. Anthony

CATHARINE BEECHER

- Catharine Beecher, The True Remedy for the Wrongs of Woman (1851)  
Barbara Cross, The Educated Woman in America (1965) [chapter on  
Catharine Beecher]  
James Marston Fitch, Architecture and the Aesthetics of Plenty,  
Chapter 5  
Kathryn Kish Sklar, Catharine Beecher: A Study in American  
Domesticity (1973)

EUGENE V. DEBS

- Nick Salvatore, Eugene V. Debs, Citizen and Socialist (1981)  
Ray Ginger, The Bending Cross, a Biography of Eugene Victor Debs  
(Rutgers University Press, 1949)  
Eugene Victor Debs, Eugene V. Debs Speaks (ed. Jean Y. Tussey)  
(NY: Pathfinder, 1970)

W.E.B. DUBOIS

- W.E.B. Dubois, The Autobiography of W.E.B. DuBois (1968)  
W.E. Dubois, Dusk of Dawn (1940)  
Julius Lester (ed.), The Seventh Son: The Thought and Writing of  
W.E.B. DuBois (1971)  
Francis L. Broderick, W.E.B. DuBois, Negro Leader in a Time of  
Crisis (1959)  
Eliot Rudwick, William E.B. DuBois, Propagandist of Negro Protest  
(1968)  
Shirley Graham DuBois, His Day is Marching On: A Memoir of  
W.E.B. DuBois (Lippincott, 1971)  
Emma Sterne, His Was the Voice: the Life of W.E.B. DuBois  
(Collier, 1971)  
William M. Tuttle, W.E.B. DuBois, (Prentice-Hall, 1973)  
Jack B. Moore, W.E.B. DuBois. (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1981)

MARGARET FULLER

- Bell Chevigny, The Woman and the Myth: Margaret Fuller's Life  
and Writings (1976)  
J.J. Deiss, The Roman Years of Margaret Fuller (1969)  
Katherine S. Anthony, Margaret Fuller: A Psychological Biography  
(NY: n.p., 1920)  
Margaret Bell, Margaret Fuller, a Biography (NY: A&C Boni, 1930)  
Madeline Stern, Life of Margaret Fuller (E.P. Dutton & Co., 1942)  
Paula Blanchard, Margaret Fuller: from Transcendentalism to  
Revolution (NY: Delacourte Press, 1978)  
Abby Slater, In Search of Margaret Fuller: A Biography (NY:  
Delacourte Press, 1978)

WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON:

- W.P. and F.J. Garrison, William L. Garrison: 1805-1879: The Story of His Life... 4 vols. (1885-89)
- Walter Merrill (ed.), The Letters of William Lloyd Garrison (Belknap Press, 1971)
- Archibald H. Grimké, William L. Garrison the Abolitionist (NY: Funk and Wagnalls, 1891)
- Russell B. Nye, William L. Garrison and the Humanitarian Reformers (Little, Brown, 1955)
- W.M. Merrill, Against Wind and Tide: A Biography of William L. Garrison (Harvard University Press, 1963)
- John L. Thomas, The Liberator, William Lloyd Garrison: A Biography (Little, Brown, 1963)

MARGARET MEAD

- Margaret Mead, Blackberry Winter: My Earlier years (Morrow, 1972)
- Mary Catherine Bateson, With a Daughter's Eye (Pocket Books, 1984)

ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

- Eleanor Roosevelt, My Day (1938)
- Eleanor Roosevelt, This I Remember (1949)
- Eleanor Roosevelt, On My Own: The Years Since the White House (1958)
- Eleanor Roosevelt, You Learn By Living (1960)
- Lorena A. Hickok, Reluctant First Lady (Dodd-Mead, 1962)
- Joseph P. Lash, Eleanor and Franklin, the Story of Their Relationship, based on Eleanor Roosevelt's Private Papers (Norton, 1971)
- Eleanor Roosevelt, Mother and Daughter: the Letters of Eleanor and Anna Roosevelt, (ed. Barnard Askell), (NY: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1982)
- Joan Hoff-Wilson and Marjorie Lightman (eds.) Without Precedent: the Life and Career of Eleanor Roosevelt (Indiana University Press, 1984)

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON

- Theodore Stanton and Harriot Stanton, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, as Revealed in Her Letters, Diary and Reminiscences, 2 vols. (1922)
- Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Eighty Years and More (1898), (Schocken reprint, 1972)
- Alma Lutz, Created Equal, A Biography of Elizabeth Cady Stanton (John Day & Co., 1940)
- Lois W. Banner, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, a Radical for Women's Rights, (Little, Brown, 1980)

Ellen Du Bois, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, Correspondence, Writings, Speeches (1981)

Mary Ann B. Oakley, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, (Feminist Press, 1972)

Elizabeth Griffiths, In Her Own Right, (NY: Oxford University Press, 1984)

#### THADDEUS STEVENS

Alphonse Miller, Thaddeus Stevens (1939)

Richard Current, Old Thaddeus Stevens, A Story of Ambition (1942)

Ralph Korngold, Thaddeus Stevens (1955)

Fawn Brodie, Thaddeus Stevens, Scourge of the South (1959)

#### M. CARRIE THOMAS

Edith Finch, Carrie Thomas of Bryn Mawr

Marjorie Hauspin Dobkin, The Making of a Feminist, Early Journals and Letters of M. Carrie Thomas (Kent State University Press, 1979)

#### FRANCES E. WILLARD

Frances E. Willard, A Woman of the Century, 1470 Biographical Sketches (Moulton, 1893)

Mary Earhart, Francis Willard, From Prayers to Politics (University of Chicago Press, 1944)

#### MALCOLM X

Malcolm X, The Autobiography of Malcolm X (Grove Press, 1965, PB, Ballantine, 1973)

Peter L. Goldman, The Death and Life of Malcolm X (University of Illinois, 1979)

E. Victor Wolfenstein, The Victims of Democracy: Malcolm X and the Black Revolution (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1981)

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HISTORY 902-2

Gerda Lerner

All written assignments are to be typed, double-spaced with 2 inch margins all around. Cover page should state your name, the topic, date, and Assignment 1, 2, etc.

Assignment 1 (Given Week 1, due Week 2)

Select one theme of the four below and write a brief account (no more than four pages):

- a) a turning point in my life
- b) a painful experience in my life
- c) a joyful experience in my life
- d) a significant experience in my life

Assignment 2 (Given Week 2, due Week 4)

Specifications will be given in class.

Week 5 Read assignments 1 and 2 in class.

Assignment 3 (Given Week 5, due Week 6)

Write a 4-6 page book review of any of the books you have read under assignments 1 and 2.

Assignment 4 (Given Week 9, due Week 11)

Read in chronological order.

Read all the material assigned for Week 10. Compare the interpretations by historians with the evidence from primary sources you have available. On the basis on what you have read, write a 4-6 page interpretation of the relationship of the two sisters with each other (and, if you wish, with Theodore Weld) and the impact the relationship had on their development as feminists.

Assignment 5 (Given Week 10, due by schedule beginning Week 12)

Pick a person from the list available. This will automatically put you in an appropriate group. Read the person's biography in DAB or NAW. Read the person's autobiography or letters as available, and at least two other biographies. Then write a 10 page essay - either your interpretation of that person's life or a discussion of the various interpretations you have read.

Meet with the people in your group; exchange essays and discuss, critique and improve the essays. Then offer a ½ hour class presentation on the group of people you have all studied. This can take any form you wish - dramatization, panel discussion, synthesis of issues and interpretations, critique of the books read. The main aim is to achieve some sort of coherence - what do these figures have in common? Is there anything that characterizes the interpretations they have received? (How does the autobiography relate to the biographies?) By what process would you arrive at an interpretation, considering the historiography? Discuss one or more (but not all) of these questions.

BIOGRAPHY AND AUTOBIOGRAPHY AS HISTORY AND LITERATUREBOOKS REQUIRED:

Most of the books required for this course are available in paperback. The publishers are listed in parentheses. Students do not have to buy these books, but they may want to own one or more of them. All books on this list are on reserve at the State Historical Society or Helen C. White Library reserve section.

Books for Section VI will all be in the general collections, not on reserve. There should be no problem of availability, since each book will be needed by only one student.

Required Reading, suggested for purchase:

- L. Labaree, ed., The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964)  
 Gerda Lerner, The Grimké Sisters from South Carolina: Pioneers for Women's Rights and Abolition (NY: Schocken, 1971)  
 Alice Rossi, The Feminist Papers (NY: Bantam, 1973)  
 John Steinbeck, The Grapes of Wrath (1939; reprint, NY: Penguin, 1976)

Additional Reading:

- Maya Angelou, I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings (NY: Bantam, 1971)  
 James Baldwin, Go Tell It on the Mountain (NY: Dell, 1985)  
 Caroline Bird, The Invisible Scar (out of print)  
 Claude Brown, Manchild in the Promised Land (New American Library, 1966)  
 James Farrell, Studs Lonigan (Avon) (out of print)  
 Paule Marshall, Brown Girl, Brownstones (Old Westbury, NY: Feminist Press, 1981)  
 Louise Meriwether, Daddy was a Number Runner (Old Westbury, NY: Feminist Press, 1986)  
 Henry Roth, Call It Sleep (NY: Avon, 1976)  
 Studs Terkel, Hard Times (NY: Pantheon, 1986)  
 Anzia Yezierska, Breadgivers (Persea, 1975)

Please do not buy any books except those under Week 1 until after the first class.

REQUIREMENTS:

Students are expected to do their reading assignments IN ADVANCE of the classes for which the assignment is made. In units where several weeks are allotted for one unit, students may read one book each week in preparation.

There will be several short written papers, but no final exam or paper.