

Florida Commission on the Status of Women

Ninth Annual Report

Year 2000



A Study of Women's History Education in Florida's Public Schools



STATE OF FLORIDA
COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Executive Committee

Susan Guber
Chair
Rose Marie A. Cossick
Vice Chair
Allison Doliner Hockman
Secretary
Dee Williams
Treasurer
Peggy Morgan
Member at Large
J. Kayty Pappas
Member at Large
Marsha Griffin Rydberg
Historian
Peggy Morgan
Parliamentarian
Kate L. Gooderham
Immediate Past Chair

Commission Members

Claudia Kirk Barto
Blanca C. Bichara
Cathy M. Boyer
Patricia L. Clements, Ph.D.
Helen Gordon Davis
Lena Juarez
Bob M. Levy
Anita Mitchell
Caroline Routson
Joyce A. Szilvasy
Norma S. White

Past Chairs

Susan Gilbert
Kate L. Gooderham
Marsha Griffin Rydberg
Navita Cummings James
Elsie B. Crowell
Susan Glickman

Staff

Linda P. Nelson
Executive Director
Michele S. Manning
Administrative Assistant III
Jessica Labbé
Staff Assistant
Pat Gleason
General Counsel

Florida Commission on the
Status of Women
Office of the Attorney General
The Capitol, PL-01
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1050
(850) 414-3300
Fax (850) 921-4131
<http://legal.firn.edu/units/fcsww/>

January 1, 2001

Dear Florida Citizen:

Welcome to the Florida Commission on the Status of Women's Ninth Annual Report "*A Study of Women's History Education in Florida's Public Schools.*" Pursuant to Section 14.24, Florida Statutes, the Commission is mandated annually to study the changing and developing roles of women in American society, including the identification and recognition of contributions made by women to the community, state and nation. Compounding the Commission's purpose is Section 233.061, Florida Statutes, which mandates Florida schools to teach "efficiently and faithfully...the study of women's contributions to the United States." In keeping with these requirements, we have conducted the state's first study of women's history education in our public schools. Also featured in this publication is information pertinent to the FCSW itself, including our year 2000 accomplishments.

We believe that the research and recommendations provided herein shed light on the condition of women's history education in Florida's public schools. We think you will agree that this issue necessitates closer examination on a local and state level—by parents, students, educators and policy-makers. It is time to recognize women's history as an integral part of traditional history and to ensure that our children are aware of women's contributions.

We hope that this report helps its readers understand why the inclusion of women's history is essential to education. We also hope that this study will inspire some mode of change—either through legislation, further analysis of this issue, public awareness or teacher training—that will bring women's history into all of Florida's classrooms.

Sincerely,

Susan Guber
FCSW Chair

Rose Marie Cossick
Annual Report Committee Chair

“America’s future walks through the doors of our schools each day.”

Mary Jean Letendre, Director of Compensatory Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education

“The role of the teacher remains the highest calling of a free people. To the teacher, America entrusts her most precious resource, her children; and asks that they be prepared, in all her glorious diversity, to face the rigors of individual participation in democratic society.”

Shirley Hufstедler, Secretary of Education under the Carter administration

“Let [woman] receive encouragement for the proper cultivation of all her powers so that she may enter profitably into the active business of life.”

Lucretia Mott, American abolitionist and suffragist

“It is as impossible to withhold education from the receptive mind, as it is impossible to force it upon the unreasoning.”

Agnes Repplier, U.S. essayist and scholar

“Each time a girl opens a book and reads a womanless history, she learns that she is worth less.”

Myra and David Sadker, pioneering researchers of gender bias in American schools

Foreword

By Oare' Dozier-Henry Ed.D.

Professor of Adult Education, Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University

Had she lived to see this day, my mother would be proud. She would be contented that her only child—a woman—would be poised to introduce and comment on the Florida Commission on the Status of Women's (FCSW) report examining women's history education in Florida public schools. She would have seen how much I was able to utilize what I learned from her about women, patience and change during the year that I served as Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University's Director for the Center for Equity and Cultural Diversity.

Like most women, my mother and I stood on the shoulders of the proud women who paved the road before us. I became acquainted with these women outside of academic settings. No formal curriculum existed to introduce me to the examination of women's roles. I learned of them at the kitchen table, in Sunday school, beauty parlors and other places where the women in my community gathered.

I was affected profoundly by many phenomenal women. I, therefore, come to this task as a woman of African descent, a college professor, a wife and mother of two, urged forward by the affirming presence of women here and in the hereafter. While this certainly has buttressed my development, all women are not so blessed. The positive affirmation of womanhood must be embraced by society and its institutions. The pivotal institution that has direct bearing on how individuals perceive themselves and others is the school.

This document is a study of the current status of the inclusion of women's history in Florida's public school classrooms. The developer of this study captures in real terms and real words the experiences of front line teachers working to redress past inequities. The document utilizes previous studies, surveys and interviews with Florida teachers to capture a "state of the art" on women's history education.

Now, perhaps more than ever, we must be vigilant about the gains made to bring women's issues to the forefront. The efforts of the FCSW must expand, not contract. The positive impact of the Commission can be seen in the curriculum activities and community interaction it has generated. Dialogue has been one of its most important by-products. By our voices, it must be empowered to continue its critical work. I urge each reader to do more than absorb the facts of this document. Contact the FCSW, and become part of the centripetal force that is making a difference in the way women are understood in this state.

Recommendation Summary

Integrating Women's History into Florida Classrooms

- Fund the mandate contained in Section 233.061, Florida Statutes, which requires the teaching of women's contributions to the United States
- Establish clear standards at the district level for the inclusion of women's history in the classroom
- Develop unique approaches to teaching women's history

Improving Social Studies Texts

- Provide clearer guidelines to the instructional materials selection committee for distinguishing between superficial and pertinent references to women in textbooks
- Eliminate social studies texts which depict women in superficial or stereotypical roles while procuring texts which include proportionate and pertinent references to women

Training Teachers

- Require gender equity education to be a component of pre-service teacher training
- Train teachers to recognize and reject sexist instructional materials
- Facilitate the use of supplemental materials by training teachers to access and employ these materials, thereby compensating for existing inequities within classroom texts

Building Self-Confidence in Students

- Refute stereotypical views of gender, and empower students to feel comfortable assuming any professional or creative role
- Counter the notion that women have been passive observers of history by expanding students' knowledge of women's accomplishments and encouraging students to develop respect for the role that women have played in history

Acknowledgments

Danielle Dorothea Tinsley, a third-year Psychology and Criminal Justice major at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, spent several months researching and writing this publication. We appreciate her tireless efforts, particularly because she worked on a volunteer basis.

This document was by no means a singular effort, however. Danielle based this publication on a survey of Florida social studies teachers developed by FCSW Staff Assistant, Jessica Labbé, who also developed the curriculum guide included at the end of this document. Jessica and Danielle worked closely through the successive rewrites of this report.

In addition, the following people provided invaluable assistance in the creation of this document: Dr. Oaré Dozier-Henry, Dr. Elizabeth Watts, Barbara Brown, Judith H. Williams, Laura Wakefield, Connie Louise Miller and Sarah Cohan.

Special thanks to FCSW Administrative Assistant III, Michele S. Manning, and FCSW Executive Director, Linda P. Nelson, who reviewed and edited this manuscript, and to all those who participated via survey and other forms of suggestion.

Thanks also to the FCSW Annual Report Committee: Susan Guber, Commission Chair; Rose Marie Cossick, Annual Report Committee Chair; Blanca Bichara; Kate Goodherham; Allison Doliner Hockman; Peggy Morgan; J. Kayty Pappas; Marsha Griffin Rydberg and Dee Williams.

Finally, the Commission would like to acknowledge the social studies teachers in Florida who have integrated women's history into their classroom curriculum. Their dedication to teaching women's history ensures a more equitable future for our children. We thank these teachers for providing an invaluable service to our state.

Table of Contents

The Florida Commission on the Status of Women 7

Overview of the Florida Commission on the Status of Women 7

History of the Florida Commission on the Status of Women 9

Members of the Florida Commission on the Status of Women 11

Members of the Florida Women’s Hall of Fame 13

Florida Commission on the Status of Women Year 2000 Accomplishments 15

Strategic Plan of the Florida Commission on the Status of Women 19

Introduction to Women’s History Education in Schools 20

Are women given equal coverage in social studies texts? 21

How should prospective teachers be trained? 22

Does the image of women presented in social studies classes affect the self-confidence of boys and girls? 22

What advances in the promotion of women’s history education have been made? 23

Compilation and Analysis of Surveys 24

Are Florida’s social studies teachers integrating women’s history into their classrooms, and if so, how? 24

What actions are Florida school districts taking to promote women’s history? 26

Individual Experiences in Teaching Women’s History 28

What do Florida teachers experience when they integrate women’s history into their classroom curriculum? 28

Lessons Learned 32

What lessons can we learn from the information provided in this report? 32

Bibliography 33

Appendices 34

Appendix A: Survey utilized to determine how and if Florida teachers are integrating women’s history into their classroom 34

Appendix B: Survey utilized to determine what Florida teachers experience when they integrate women’s history into their classroom curriculum 37

Supplemental Women’s History Educational Materials 40

Florida Commission on the Status of Women Survey Response Form 50

The Florida Commission on the Status of Women

Overview of the Florida Commission on the Status of Women

The Florida Commission on the Status of Women, through coordinating, researching, communicating, and encouraging legislation, is dedicated to empowering women from all walks of life in achieving their fullest potential, to eliminating barriers to that achievement, and to recognizing women's accomplishments.

Who We Are...

The Florida Commission on the Status of Women (FCSW) is established in the office of the Attorney General, State of Florida, and consists of 22 members. The Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the President of the Senate, and the Attorney General appoint three members, and the Comptroller, the Secretary of State, the Insurance Commissioner, the Commissioner of Agriculture, and the Commissioner of Education each appoint two members. Each member serves for a term of four years. No member may serve more than eight consecutive years.

What We Are About...

As required by Section 14.24, Florida Statutes, the Commission's mandate is to study and make recommendations to the Governor, Cabinet and Legislature on issues affecting women. These recommendations are presented in the form of an annual report, which is distributed during the first quarter of each year. Topics may include, but are not limited to:

- socioeconomic factors influencing the status of women;
- the development of individual potential;
- the encouragement of women to utilize their capabilities and assume leadership roles;
- the coordination of efforts of numerous organizations interested in the welfare of women;
- the identification and recognition of contributions made by women to the community, state and nation; and
- the implementation of recommendations to improve working conditions, financial security, and legal status of both sexes.

Publications

- 1992 Annual Report "Women in the Workplace"
- 1993 Annual Report "Women's Health Care"
- 1994 Annual Report "Justice and Human Rights; How They Apply to Women"
- 1995 Annual Report "Welfare Reform in Florida"
- 1996 Annual Report Benchmark Study
- 1996 Publication "Women and Health, A Status Report"
- 1997 Annual Report "Women and Economic Development"

- 1998 Annual Report “A Definitive Study on Young Women Ages 12-18 in Florida”
- 1999 Annual Report “Reflections and Projections: Women in Florida”
- 1999 Calendar
- 2000 and 2001 Women’s History Calendar
- Women’s Hall of Fame Brochure
- Employment Survey Brochure
- Sexual Harassment Brochure

Events and Projects

- Women’s Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony
- Women in the Workplace Survey and Press Conference
- Essay Contest: Women’s Suffrage Movement
- Public Hearings: Farm Workers, Welfare Reform, Public Housing, Young Women in the ‘90s, Women and Finances, Obstacles for Women Coming off Welfare, Women in Prison
- Press Conference Kickoff for the 75th Anniversary of Suffrage
- Women’s History Month Programs
- National Association of Commissions for Women Outstanding Achievement Award
- Workshops with Local Commissions on the Status of Women
- Minority Commissions Conference
- Civil Rights Conference
- Non-governmental Organizations Forum at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China

Commission Priorities

- Domestic Violence
- Employment and Education
- Family
- Gender Equity
- Health Care

FCSW Project Committees

- Annual Report
- Employment
- Legislative Advocacy
- Research
- Resources
- Women’s Hall of Fame/Women’s History

The Florida Commission on the Status of Women meets quarterly in different locations throughout the state.

History of the Florida Commission on the Status of Women

by Jessica Labbé

The 1961 creation of the Presidential Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) by President John F. Kennedy was in response to the urging of the appointed head of the Women's Bureau in the U.S. Department of Labor, Esther Peterson. Kennedy's action was groundbreaking in that it was the first time women's issues were critically and thoroughly addressed by the federal government. He appointed acclaimed human rights activist Eleanor Roosevelt as chair of the PCSW, with Peterson acting as vice chair.

Roosevelt established seven committees to examine issues such as the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), employment policies, and the provision of social services for women. The committees suggested contemporary solutions to the problems faced by women. After a number of legislative victories, the PCSW formed an institutional structure to continue its efforts. This entity, the President's Interdepartmental Committee on the Status of Women, paired with the Citizen's Advisory Council on the Status of Women and determined that each state should have a commission on the status of women to carry on the PCSW's work at a state level.

Florida Governor Farris Bryant created the Governor's Commission on the Status of Women (COSW) in 1964. The COSW was designed to study laws and regulations pertaining to women in Florida and make recommendations to the legislature based on their findings. In January 1966, the Commission presented its first report to the governor.

In December 1967, Governor Claude Kirk was elected. He announced the appointment of 14 new members to the COSW, bringing the total number of commissioners to 24. It took two years for the COSW chair, Helen Krauss Leslie, to successfully coordinate a meeting. The greatest obstacle facing the COSW was funding, as members had to pay their own travel expenses, mailing and mimeography costs. In October of 1968, Governor Kirk appointed eight new members to the Commission, including a new chair, Mary R. Grizzle, a Republican legislator from Pinellas County. Recognizing that the COSW's main impediment was lack of funding, Grizzle lobbied for inclusion of the Commission's fiscal needs within the Legislature's budget. She also redirected the COSW and introduced issues such as women's property rights, civil service on a local level, the Economic Opportunity Act, labor laws affecting women and migrants, nursery resources, social services, the governor's employment placement project, and equal pay legislation. Grizzle's Commission worked closely with the Florida Federation of Professional Business and Professional Women's Clubs to pass equal pay legislation and secured co-sponsors for the bill.

The year following his election as governor in 1971, Reubin Askew reestablished the Governor's Commission on the Status of Women by Executive Order. In 1974, Askew appointed an executive director to help coordinate the Commission's activities and to assist in its daily operations. The executive director and a part-time secretary ran the Commission on a budget of \$27,000. The Commission published regular newsletters reporting on legislative and women's issues, produced brochures and manuals to assist women, created a talent bank and established local commissions throughout the state. In their 1974 annual report, the Commission made numerous recommendations to the Governor with the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment presiding at the top of their list. The annual report also highlighted the areas focused on by the Commission that year: women and employment, education, law and business.

In 1975, the Commission's budget was cut \$7,000 for 1975-76, reducing it to \$20,000. This amount had to cover the salary of the executive director, the Commission's annual meeting and eight

brochure printings. Though lack of funding was a major problem for the 1976 COSW, the passion for equality remained in its members. Countless letters reside in the state archives documenting the COSW's support from women all over the state. It is apparent that the Commission attempted to remain active, maintaining deep involvement in legislative matters, the ERA, welfare reform, employment, and problems faced by displaced homemakers and female offenders. According to records, however, the Commission was forced to discontinue projects due to budget constraints. Documentation as to the Commission's fate between the years 1977 and 1978 has not been found.

On July 31, 1979, Governor Bob Graham reactivated the Governor's Commission on the Status of Women (still referred to as the COSW) by means of Executive Order 79-60. The Commission maintained adequate funding throughout his tenure. It was extremely active in 1981: printing newsletters, hosting a public program on women and violence, and bringing together numerous local commissions on the status of women for an "exchange session" to share ideas and discuss problems facing women.

The first Florida Women's Hall of Fame ceremony and reception was held by the Commission at the Governor's Mansion in Tallahassee in May of 1982. Records again suggest that funding problems left the commissioners searching for a source of income for the inductee plaques. The Hall of Fame was still going strong in 1984, when eight women were inducted; 13 more women were inducted in 1986.

Throughout these years, the COSW continued its commitment to the battle for the ERA, working closely with Governor Graham to answer the public's questions and concerns. It did the same with Title IX, employment and economic issues, animal rights and domestic violence.

As the Commission existed only by gubernatorial appointment, it found itself at the mercy of changing political climates. When Governor Bob Martinez came into office in 1987, no members were appointed. Florida Women's Hall of Fame member's plaques, which had hung in the Governor's Office during the Graham administration, were located in a broom closet in the 1990s.

Governor Lawton Chiles lobbied the Florida Legislature to statutorily create the Florida Commission on the Status of Women only months after he took office. The date was May 14, 1991. The leading sponsor in the House of Representatives for CS/CS/HB 109 was Representative Elaine Gordon, while Senator Carrie Meek sponsored the companion bill, SB 1324. The Commission's legislative authority now exists in Section 14.24, Florida Statutes.

Since 1991, the Florida Commission on the Status of Women has been fully supported by the Governor, the Cabinet and the Florida Legislature. The FCSW is administratively located in the Office of the Attorney General, and is composed of 22 members who represent the diversity of the state's population. The Governor, Attorney General, President of the Senate and Speaker of the House of Representatives each appoint three members to four-year terms. The Secretary of State, Comptroller, Insurance Commissioner, Commissioner of Agriculture and the Commissioner of Education each appoint two members for four-year terms. No member may serve more than eight consecutive years. As required by Section 14.24, the Commission's mandate is to study and to make recommendations to the Governor, Cabinet, and Legislature on issues affecting women. The duties and interests of the FCSW include, but are not limited to, identifying and studying the socio-economic factors influencing the status of women; aiding in the development of individual potential; encouraging women to utilize their capabilities and to assume leadership roles; coordinating the efforts of numerous organizations interested in the welfare of women; identifying and recognizing the contributions made by women to the community, state and nation; and implementing recommendations to improve working conditions, financial security and legal status of both sexes.

Members of the Florida Commission on the Status of Women

Claudia Kirk Barto of West Palm Beach

Blanca Bichara of Miami

Cathy M. Boyer of Orlando

Patricia Clements, Ph.D. of Tallahassee

Rose Marie Cossick of Hollywood

Helen Gordon Davis of Tampa

Kathryn L. Gooderham of Ft. Myers

Susan Guber of Miami

Allison Doliner Hockman, J.D. of Coral Gables

Lena Juarez of Tallahassee

Bob Levy of Miami/Tallahassee

Anita Mitchell-Bridgeman of West Palm Beach

Peggy Morgan of Merritt Island

Kayty Pappas of Gulf Breeze

Caroline Routson of Maitland

Marsha Griffin Rydberg, J.D. of Tampa

Joyce A. Szilvasy of DeFuniak Springs

Norma White of Jacksonville

Debbie Warren of Orlando

Dee Williams of Sun City Center

FORMER COMMISSIONERS

Karen C. Amlong, J.D.
The Honorable Rosemary Barkett
Roxcy O’Neal Bolton
Conchy Bretos
Yvonne Burkholz-Megar
Barbara Carey del Castillo, J.D.
Toni Crawford, R.N.
Jennifer Knapp Crock
Elsie Crowell
Karen Cunningham, Ph.D.
Marilyn J. Dewey
Barbara Effman
Peggy Gagnon
Susan Gilbert
Susan Glickman
Debbie Green
Donna Hansen
The Honorable Edward Healey
The Honorable Sally Heyman
Mohinder “Mona” Jain, Ph.D.
Navita Cummings James, Ph.D.
Martha “Marty” Pinkston, Ed.D.
Mona Reis
Judith Byrne Riley
D. Anne Terrell, Esq.
Lisa A. Tropepe, P.E.
Laura Ward
Doris Weatherford
Judy K. Wilson, Ph.D.
Susan Wilson
Karen Woodall

STAFF

Linda P. Nelson, Executive Director
Michele S. Manning, Administrative Assistant III & Jessica Labbé, Staff Assistant

Members of the Florida Women's Hall of Fame

The Florida Women's Hall of Fame began in 1982 under the aegis of the Governor's Commission on the Status of Women. A total of 27 women were selected as members of the Hall in 1982, 1984 and 1986. In 1992, legislation was passed that created a permanent Florida Women's Hall of Fame. Since 1993, three women have been inducted into the Hall annually pursuant to Section 265.001, Florida Statutes. Nominations to the Hall may be made between April 15 and July 15.

To obtain a nomination form or review member biographies, you may visit our web site at <http://legal.firn.edu/units/fcsw> or contact our office at 850-414-3300. The Commission appreciates the public input that assists us in honoring meritorious women and in educating citizens on the significant and varied accomplishments of women in Florida's history.

Annie Ackerman, 1914-1989, inducted 1986
Rosemary Barkett, 1939—, inducted 1986
Alicia Baro, 1918—, inducted 1997
Nikki Beare, 1928—, inducted 1994
Mary McLeod Bethune, 1875-1955, inducted 1982
Roxcy O'Neal Bolton, 1926—, inducted 1984
Marjorie Harris Carr, 1915-1997, inducted 1996
Betty Castor, 1941—, inducted 1996
MG Marianne Mathewson-Chapman, Ph.D., 1948—, inducted 2000
Gwendolyn Sawyer Cherry, 1923-1979, inducted 1986
Jacqueline Cochran, 1910?-1980, inducted 1992
Helene S. Coleman, 1925—, inducted 1982
Carita Doggett Corse, 1891-1978, inducted 1997
Evelyn Stocking Crosslin, 1919-1991, inducted 1995
Helen Gordon Davis, 1926—, inducted 1998
Mattie Belle Davis, 1910—, inducted 1998
Dorothy Dodd, 1902-1994, inducted 1986
Marjory Stoneman Douglas, 1890-1998, inducted 1986
Chris Evert, 1957 —, inducted 2000
Betty Skelton Frankman, 1926—, inducted 1993
Barbara Landstreet Frye, 1922-1982, inducted 1984

Wilhelmina Celeste Goehring Harvey, 1912—, inducted 1982
Paula Fickes Hawkins, 1927—, inducted 2000
Lena B. Smithers Hughes, 1910-1987, inducted 1984
Zora Neale Hurston, 1901-1960, inducted 1894
Elizabeth McCollough Johnson, 1909-1973, inducted 1986
Christine Fulwylie-Bankston, 1916-1998, inducted 1998
Althea Gibson, 1927—, inducted 1999
Elaine Gordon, 1931-2000, inducted 1982
Elsie Jones Hare, 1903-1985, inducted 1986
Betty Mae Jumper, 1923—, inducted 1994
Frances Bartlett Kinne, inducted 1986
Carrie P. Meek, 1926—, inducted 1992
Gladys Nichols Milton, 1924-1999, inducted 1994
Paula Mae Milton, 1939-1980, inducted 1982
Sybil Collins Mobley, 1925—, inducted 1984
JoAnn Hardin Morgan, 1940—, inducted 1995
Helen Lennehan Muir, 1911—, inducted 1984
Sister Jeanne O’Laughlin, OP, Ph.D. 1929—, inducted 1999
Ruth Bryan Owen, 1885-1954, inducted 1992
Barbara Jo Palmer, 1948—, inducted 1982
Arva Moore Parks, 1939—, inducted 1986
Paulina Pedroso, 1845-1925, inducted 1993
Dessie Smith Prescott, 1906—, inducted 1999
Sarah “Aunt Frances” Brooks Pryor, 1877-1972, inducted 1995
M. Athalie Range, 1916—, inducted 1997
Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, 1896-1953, inducted 1986
Janet Reno, 1938—, inducted 1993
Florence Barbara Seibert, 1898-1991, inducted 1986
Marilyn K. Smith, 1936-1985, inducted 1986
Gladys Pumariega Soler, 1930-1993, inducted 1984
Ivy Julia Cromartie Stranahan, 1881-1971, inducted 1996
Julia DeForest Sturtevant Tuttle, 1848-1898, inducted 1984
Eartha Mary Magdalene White, 1876-1974, inducted 1986

Florida Commission on the Status of Women Year 2000 Accomplishments

~ COMMITTEE PROJECTS ~

The Annual Report, Bylaws, Employment, Executive, Finance and Budget, Legislative Advocacy, Nominating, Research, Resources, Women's Hall of Fame and Women's History Committees of the Florida Commission on the Status of Women (FCSW) held meetings to plan and execute their functions throughout the year. The following list details each committee's projects and accomplishments.

Annual Report Committee

- Completed and distributed the FCSW's 1999 Annual Report *Reflections and Projections: Women in Florida, January 2000*.

Bylaws Committee

- Enacted a Commission-wide review/revision of Commission Bylaws and Policies and Procedures, *Summer/Fall 2000*.

Employment Committee

- Completed its seventh annual "Best Florida Employers for Working Women" survey, administered to more than 5,000 large and small companies and governmental entities state-wide, *Summer 2000*.
- Hosted the seventh annual "Best Florida Employers for Working Women" awards ceremony, press conference and luncheon at The Colony Hotel in Palm Beach, *September 2000*.

Legislative Advocacy Committee

- Assisted in the passage of SB 0352/HB 0111 which created a Women and Heart Disease Task Force designated to produce an in-depth study of heart disease, the number one killer of women, *Spring 2000*.
- Advocated legislation regarding domestic violence, and mandatory osteoporosis screening, *Spring 2000*.

Research Committee

- Established a partnership with the Miami-based Girls Advocacy Project. The Committee and staff, in-person and via mailed questionnaire, surveyed the status of juvenile detention center facilities state-wide and collected information relating to girls in the justice system from various Florida juvenile judges, *Summer/Fall 2000*.
- Facilitated a site visit to the Florida Institute for Girls (FIG) in West Palm Beach, which included a tour of the facility and a discussion session with FIG staff and female juvenile offenders, *September 2000*.

Resources Committee

- Initiated the creation of a state-wide women's organization directory, *Fall-Winter 2000*.
- Encouraged the appointment of women to various boards, *January-December 2000*.
- Secured private funding for the Best Florida Employers for Working Women luncheon and the Florida Women's Hall of Fame reception, *September and November 2000*.

Women's Hall of Fame/Women's History Committee

- Administered the nomination process for the Florida Women's Hall of Fame, accepted and analyzed nominations and recommended the names of 10 nominees to the Governor (for his selection of up to three) for induction into the Florida Women's Hall of Fame, *Spring-Fall 2000*.
- Coordinated the Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony in the Capitol Rotunda, featuring Governor Jeb Bush and Attorney General Bob Butterworth, and inducting tennis champion Chris Evert, Senator Paula Hawkins and Major General Marianne Mathewson Chapman, Ph.D. Coordinated the Hall of Fame Reception in the Senate Chambers of the Old Capitol, *November 2000*.
- Created and distributed the state's first Women's History Calendar, highlighting Florida Women's Hall of Fame members and detailing various events in women's history, *January-December 2000*.

~ COMMISSION ACTIVITIES ~

- Created a Women's History Month exhibit honoring American women inventors and raising awareness of the Florida Women's Hall of Fame at the Odyssey Science Center (currently the Mary Brogan Science Center) in Tallahassee, *March 2000*.
- Participated in Tallahassee Community College's Women's History Month Celebration, *March 2000*.
- Coordinated and conducted a full Commission quarterly meeting in Tallahassee, including reports from the Executive, Legislative Reporting, Family, Health Care, Employment and Education, Finance and Budget, Resources and Women's Hall of Fame/Women's History Committees; and featuring speakers Orean Jamerson, Workforce Development Coordinator for WAGES, Region V; Karen Woodall, member of state WAGES board; Richard Nimer, Director of Programs for the Department of Corrections; and Rini Bartlett, Administrator of the Female Offenders Program for the Department of Corrections; and the presentation of the 1999 "Women-Friendly" Government Employers Recognition Resolution from members of Florida's Cabinet, *March 2000*.
- "Forget Me Not: Florida Women's Hall of Fame Keeps the Past Alive" article published in the National Women's History Project newsletter, *Women's History Network News*, *April 2000*.
- Encouraged Tallahassee-based state agencies, state-wide university women's studies centers and local commissions on the status of women to participate in Take Our Daughters to Work® Day, *April 2000*.

- Coordinated and conducted a full Commission quarterly meeting at St. John's River Community College in St. Augustine, including reports from the Executive, Annual Report, Legislative Advocacy, Bylaws, Research, Employment, Finance and Budget, Resources, and Women's Hall of Fame/Women's History Committees; developed a strategic plan for the Commission comprised of a vision statement, guiding principles, goals, objectives and specific projects with Dr. David L. Goetsch, Provost of Okaloosa-Walton Community College, *June 2000*.
- Coordinated and conducted a full Commission quarterly meeting in Palm Beach, including reports from the Executive, Annual Report, Research, Legislative Advocacy, Resources, Bylaws, Nominating, Employment, Finance and Budget, and Women's Hall of Fame/Women's History Committees; and featuring speakers Barry E. Krischer, State Attorney of the 15th Judicial District; Mary Larrea, Director of the Girls Advocacy Project; Eileen Nexer Brown, Co-Chair of the Girls Advocacy Project (GAP) Community Advisory Board; GAP graduate Destiny Coleman and Dr. Jay Trabin, Immediate Past-President of the Florida Obstetrics and Gynecology Society, *September 2000*.
- Coordinated and conducted a full Commission quarterly meeting in Tallahassee, including reports from the Executive, Annual Report, Bylaws, Research, Employment, Finance and Budget, Legislative Advocacy, Nominating, Resources, Women's Hall of Fame/Women's History Committees; approval of the Commission's Year 2000 Equal Pay Day Resolution; and featuring speakers Sandy Pelham, Program Specialist for the Instructional Materials Office of the Department of Education; Lois Milne, Division Director for Self Care and Community Volunteer Initiatives in the Department of Elder Affairs; and Linda Radigan, Assistant Secretary of the Department of Children and Families, *November 2000*.
- Administered the FCSW web site (<http://legal.firn.edu/units/fcsw>) including a state-wide calendar, member photographs and biographies, news releases, meeting minutes, and Florida Women's Hall of Fame photographs and biographies, *January-December, 2000*.

~ 2000 CONFERENCES/SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS ~

- Florida Women's Consortium 2000 Legislative/Lobby Days, Tallahassee, FL, *March 2000*.
- "Behind Closed Doors III" Breaking the Silence In Rural Communities In The New Millennium, Chipola Junior College, Marianna, FL, *March 2000*.
- WomanWise Legislative Screening Day, Tallahassee, FL, *April 2000*.
- Southern Women in Public Service, Washington D.C., *June 2000*.
- 32nd Annual National Association of Commissions on the Status of Women Convention, San Francisco, CA, *July 2000*.

- “Pathways To Peaceful Communities” Governor’s Annual Summit on Domestic Violence, Sandestin, FL, *October 2000*.
- 10th Annual Florida Civil Rights Conference, Orlando, FL, *November 2000*.
- Hillsborough County Chapter of the American Business Women’s Association, *December 2000*.

~ **RESOLUTIONS and PROCLAMATIONS** ~

- Women’s History Month, *February 2000*. (Issued by Governor Jeb Bush)
- 1999 “Women-Friendly” Government Employers Recognition, *March 2000*. (Issued by Attorney General Bob Butterworth)
- Supporting Individual Commission Votes for NACW Officers, *March 2000*. (Issued by the FCSW)
- Supporting Term Limits for NACW Officers, *March 2000*. (Issued by the FCSW)
- Take Your Daughters to Work Day, *April 2000*. (Issued by Governor Jeb Bush)
- A Resolution of the Florida Commission on the Status of Women Relating to Florida’s First 150 Women Lawyers, *June 2000*. (Issued by the FCSW)
- A Resolution of the Florida Commission on the Status of Women Condemning the Superficial and Inappropriate Media Coverage of Prestigious Women Officials, Including But Not Limited to, Comments About Florida’s Secretary of State Katherine Harris, During the Current Electoral Cycle and Encouraging the Media to Reconsider Its Coverage of Women Officials to Focus on Their Substantive Accomplishments and Philosophical Positions, rather than on the Physical and Superficial Characteristics of These Prominent Leaders, *November 2000*. (Issued by the FCSW)
- Equal Pay Day, *November 2000*. (Issued by the FCSW)

Strategic Plan of the Florida Commission on the Status of Women

Vision Statement

Florida will be a state in which women are able to achieve their full potential uninhibited by gender-related barriers, and be appropriately compensated and recognized.

Guiding Principles

The Florida Commission on the Status of Women supports:

- **Equity** in wages, healthcare, career opportunities, education, political leadership, career advancement and criminal justice.
- **Acceptance** of women in the workplace, political arena, and within educational institutions.
- **Zero Tolerance** for domestic violence, sexual harassment, inappropriate treatment of incarcerated women, and financial neglect of children.
- **Social Infrastructure** including high quality childcare, job flexibility, high quality eldercare, and high quality accessible healthcare, that allows women to achieve their full potential.
- **Acknowledgment** of home and career callings as equally valid life choices.
- **Criminal Justice** policies that promote the dignified treatment of women in Florida's criminal justice system including the fostering of relationships between incarcerated women and their families/children; elimination of male guards for female prisoners, and the provision of adequate medical care for incarcerated women.
- **Recognition** of women's historic contributions.
- **Leadership** opportunities for women from all walks of life and of all ages.
- **Mentoring** to assist women in reaching their full potential.
- **Family Friendly** policies that promote, preserve and protect the sanctity, importance and fundamental role of the family in society.

Introduction to Women's History Education in Schools

Mention educational inequality and for most people, race comes to mind. Black children walking down a dusty road to a dilapidated school while a bright yellow bus with white children passes them by; or an urban ghetto school with iron bars protecting already broken windows, a building ravaged by poverty and time. While the record of racial injustice is at the forefront of our national conscience, history books still do not tell the story of profound sexism at school. Few people today realize that today's girls continue a three-hundred-year struggle for full participation in America's educational system.

David and Myra Sadker
Failing at Fairness
1994

The purpose of this publication is to promote the inclusion of women's history within social studies classes at the K-12 levels in Florida schools. A study such as this must be multi-faceted; therefore, this publication endeavors to answer the following questions:

- Are women given equal coverage in social studies texts?
- How should prospective teachers be trained?
- Does the image of women presented in social studies classes affect the self-confidence of boys and girls?
- What advances in the promotion of women's history education have been made?
- Are Florida's social studies teachers integrating women's history into their classrooms, and, if so, how?
- What actions are Florida school districts taking to promote women's history?
- What do Florida teachers experience when they integrate women's history into their classroom curriculum?

Are women given equal coverage in social studies texts?

At one time, elementary and high school texts offered few and limited images of women. In 1975, a study of elementary school readers found that for each female biography, there were six male biographies. In addition, when women were mentioned, they were portrayed as nurses, housewives, or in some other stereotypical role (Sadker & Sadker, 1995).

At first glance, today's texts appear to be gender-balanced. Women are mentioned more frequently than before, and the featured pictures include women. Unfortunately, these changes do not mean that women are now discussed equally. Women are often cited for accomplishments that would go unmentioned were they male (Noddings, 1992). Lists of women who were the "first" in so-called male domains downplay women's role in history. These lists do nothing to confront stereotypes of the female role (Bickmore, 1997), but serve to reinforce the prejudice that women are followers, simply replicating what men have already perfected. Changing the terminology also does not eliminate bias (Noddings, 1992). Using terms like "he or she" or "policeperson" is of little use if all the persons later referred to are male.

In some instances, women simply appear in more pictures although their presence is not pertinent to the subject discussed. Textbook writers add frivolous mentions and photographs of women so that they can bolster the appearance of women in the text and claim to be equitable. Any reference to a woman is tallied by publishers, regardless of relevance (Tetreault, 1986). Addison Wesley's 1991 text, *World History: Traditions and New Directions*, devotes only two percent of its 819 pages to women. However, the book appears to be equitable because of 15 half-page boxes entitled "spotlight on people" seven of the 15 boxes refer to women. The Sadkers, a husband and wife team who did revolutionary research in gender equity in education, note that these very visible inserts might easily fool a textbook selection committee (1995).

Some history textbooks do not even give an appearance of equity. For example, just seven pages of a 1992 631-page D.C. Heath book mentions women either as famous persons or as a group. Another text, Prentice Hall's 1992 *A History of the United States*, allocates only three percent of its pages to addressing women and their accomplishments (Sadker & Sadker, 1995). While textbooks have improved cosmetically, their content does not reflect women's history realistically.

In Florida, the state instructional materials committee, the committee which selects and recommends textbooks for Florida schools, is mandated to choose instructional materials which, among other things, "accurately portray the ethnic, socioeconomic, cultural, and racial diversity of our society, including men and women in professional, vocational, and executive roles" by Section 233.09, Florida Statutes. If the instructional materials committee is convinced that women are equally represented within a text, they may be more likely to recommend that book. The danger in this is that while a text may seem to be equitable on a surface evaluation, it may not be so between the lines—culminating in the committee suggesting a sexist textbook for use in Florida's public classrooms. To avoid this result, the state textbook selection committee should be provided with clearer guidelines regarding the selection of equitable textbooks.

How should prospective teachers be trained?

Textbooks which have sexist characteristics may be used to stimulate classroom discussions regarding gender issues in history (Marshall & Reinhartz, 1997). However, in order to lead such a discussion, teachers must first be trained in this subject matter. Studies have shown that gender equity education is rarely a component of prospective teachers' education (Lundeberg, 1997). This lapse can result in teachers who do not realize that the materials in their classroom are biased (Campbell & Sanders, 1997). As a result, they may inadvertently reinforce that bias.

Teachers should be exposed to sexist materials as part of their training so that they will recognize these materials and the underlying messages conveyed. In addition, future teachers should be shown how to access textbooks, videotapes and curricula that promote equity (Dunne & Rose, 1989).

No matter what texts or teaching materials educators are provided, the final determination of the lesson's content lies in their hands. Teachers who are trained in gender equity are more likely to reject biased teaching materials and offer their students alternatives (Harvey, 1986).

Does the image of women presented in social studies classes affect the self-confidence of boys and girls?

When girls are exposed to female role models, they develop a sense of capability. On the other hand, when girls are taught a history that excludes females, they learn that they are less valued and less capable (Sadker & Sadker, 1995). A 1990 study demonstrates this reality. When Sadker & Sadker asked 1,100 children to write an essay on what it would be like to be a member of the opposite sex, 95 percent of boys saw no advantage to being a girl. In contrast, 42 percent of girls saw advantages to being a boy (Sadker & Sadker, 1995). Another study found that boys are more likely than girls to cite social studies as their favorite course. Girls are more likely than boys to state that social studies is their least favorite course (Sadker & Sadker, 1986).

In light of the bias in social studies, these results are not surprising. When girls perceive that women have been only passive observers of history and contributed little, why should they value being female or enjoy the class? The girls who yield to these subtle messages about a woman's role also yield their self-confidence (Sadker, 1999).

Boys are also victims when women's accomplishments are erased from history. Boys learn that women are weak and incompetent (Sadker & Sadker, 1995). Boys who would like to take up pursuits that are considered feminine are teased because such work is "for girls." Males are forced into rigid stereotyped roles early on because certain roles are seen as "women's work" and therefore degrading (Sadker, 1999). The young boy who dreams of being a nurse may abandon this aspiration because history has taught him that this job is for a woman.

What advances in the promotion of women's history education have been made?

Social Studies classes give students an opportunity to develop confidence and prepare for citizenship. It is important to offer varying perspectives because doing so allows young girls and boys to prepare to take their place in society (Bickmore, 1997). Fortunately, positive changes have been made in recent years. The following is a list of steps that have been taken to promote fairness in the classroom.

- The National Coalition on Sex Equity in Education and the Association of Teacher Educators has formed commissions on gender issues in education (www.ncsee.org and www.siu.edu/departments/coe/ate);
- The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education has created a study group on gender equity, a standing committee on women's issues and a program for leadership development for aspiring female leaders (www.aacte.org);
- The Women's Educational Equity Act Resource Center publishes a guide of gender fair materials for grades K-12 (www.edc.org/WomensEquity);
- The National Women's History Project distributes equitable materials for all grade levels (www.nwhp.org);
- The Teacher Education Equity Project worked with 61 educators from 41 colleges and universities to develop curricula that addressed gender issues (Campbell & Sanders, 1997) (www.wri-edu.org/equity/teep.html).
- Florida schools are mandated to teach "efficiently and faithfully...the study of women's contributions to the United States" pursuant to Section 233.061, Florida Statutes.
- The Internet has made equitable materials and information easier to access.

Increasing equity in social studies increases educational effectiveness. It is important that boys and girls receive a fair and unbiased view of history. "Equity and effectiveness need not be competing goals; they are complimentary" (Sadker & Sadker, 1986, p. 514).

Compilation and Analysis of Surveys

Are Florida's social studies teachers integrating women's history into their classrooms, and if so, how?

In the spring of 2000, the FCSW drafted and distributed a survey to 2,717 K-12 public schools in the state of Florida. This survey was mailed to each school principal, who was responsible for the further direction of the survey. The purpose of the survey was to determine how, and if, students were being educated on the contributions women have made to this country and what could be enacted to facilitate the expansion of this knowledge in Florida's classrooms.

The survey consisted of three questions with multiple responses. Teachers were instructed to mark all answers that applied to them or their schools. Excerpted below are the survey questions and the corresponding percentages of those who marked each reply. The original survey, which is located in the appendix of this publication, included the choice of "other" for each question. This response has been omitted because it is not quantitative and therefore could not be used in the computation of the percentages. In addition, those who marked 'd' as a response to question one were instructed not to respond to the second question.

1. How are the contributions women have made to Florida, the United States of America or the rest of the world been included in your curriculum?
 - 9% a. We have implemented a Women's Studies/History program at our school as part of our overall curriculum.
 - 28% b. I utilize Women's History Month to introduce women in history to my classroom.
 - 82% c. I introduce women's accomplishments throughout history as they arise chronologically, interspersing their stories equally with those of their male counterparts.
 - 10% d. Neither myself nor my school substantially recognizes the contributions of women to history.

2. If you have implemented the instruction of women's history in your classroom, how have you done so?
 - 48% a. I have done personal research on my own time and devised my own method of teaching the information.
 - 35% b. I have enlisted the help of teaching manuals and activity packets created by women's interest or other organizations.
 - 11% c. I have followed the lead of other teachers in my school or area and have used their knowledge in my own endeavors.
 - 18% d. I received formal/informal education on the instruction of women's history to students in my age bracket and have implemented these ideas in my classroom.
 - 26% e. I have tried to piece together what I thought interesting, but do not feel I am adequately prepared to teach the material I wish to share with my students.

3. What materials would help you in extending women's history to your classroom?
- 77%** a. A calendar detailing the dates of women's history events throughout the year.
 - 54%** b. A concise, yet detailed resource, such as a publication directed specifically at teaching the history of women in Florida.
 - 72%** c. Videos on great moments in women's history, such as the Suffrage Movement and the contributions of great women to the arts, sports, business and all such areas.
 - 69%** d. Books related to the subject available in the library for student research and interest.
 - 46%** e. Lectures and presentations from local groups and organizations working with women's issues and history.
 - 66%** f. A list of Internet resources for support and information.
 - 31%** g. A directory of people who can help me obtain materials and put me on winning path for introducing this to my classroom.

The return rate of this survey was five percent. Generally, when a response rate is this low, respondents tend to represent those most interested in the subject matter. Hence, this sample may represent only those educators already interested in teaching women's history. As a result, the numbers may be skewed and paint an overly optimistic picture of what is occurring in Florida classrooms.

A possible explanation for the low response is that the schools did not assign much value to the survey's subject matter, and as a result did not distribute or complete the survey. If this is the case, the fact that only five percent of Florida schools answered this brief survey could represent a sad commentary on the importance currently being placed on women's history in our classrooms.

On the other hand, those individuals who took the time to complete the survey provided a great deal of insight into environments that are open and accommodating to the inclusion of women's history. It is clear that these teachers are interested in receiving materials related to the teaching of women's history. Ninety-seven percent of the teachers who responded to question three of the survey indicated that there was at least one educational material that would aid them in extending women's history to their classrooms. Another 18 percent of the teachers stated that they had received some education on the instruction of women's history and implemented these ideas in their classrooms. Nearly half of the teachers indicated that they have conducted research on their own time and devised their own methods of teaching the information. Based on this information, the state should facilitate the accessibility of women's history training and quality teaching materials for all Florida educators.

What actions are Florida school districts taking to promote women's history?

The Florida Commission on the Status of Women conducted a telephone survey of Florida's school districts in the late summer and early fall of 2000. The Commission was able to contact appropriate personnel at 60 of the state's 67 school districts. The purpose of this research was to determine what effort, if any, was being made at the district level to incorporate women's history into the schools' curriculums. Each district representative was asked if a distinct women's history curriculum had been developed, whether women's history was included in the general curriculum and finally, if a resource or curriculum guide would be of interest to their district. On the next page are three graphs depicting the results of the survey.

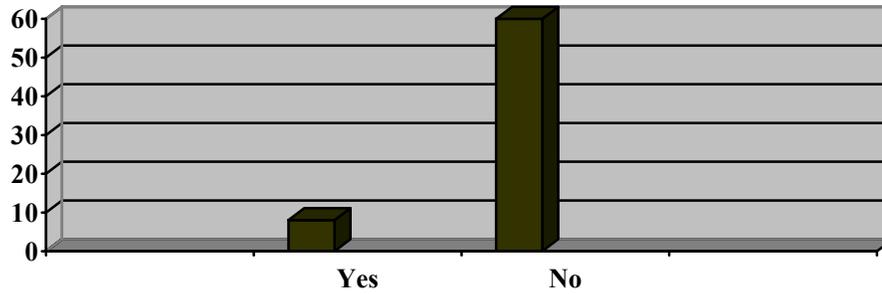
The first graph illustrates the reply to the question, "Have you developed a distinct women's history curriculum?" At first glance, the results seem dismal, with only eight of the 60 school districts responding affirmatively. However, those eight districts—Broward, Columbia, Escambia, Gulf, Madison, Miami-Dade, Palm Beach and Pinellas Counties—are doing extraordinary things. For example, the Miami-Dade district has developed *FACES: A Women's History Curriculum Resource Guide*. This 350-page text includes lesson plans formulated for each grade level. The Broward County school district is in the process of formulating a comprehensive guide of women's contributions to the United States, including local role models. This school district also offers training for teachers concerning women's contributions to United States history. These are just two examples of school districts that have gone above and beyond the minimum required by law.

The second graph represents the reaction to the question, "Is women's history included in your general curriculum?" This question elicited a more favorable response. Twenty-five of the school districts indicated that they had, in some way, incorporated women's history into their curriculum. Unfortunately, some of these schools seemed to have made very limited efforts. Curriculum specialists, coordinators and directors often seemed unsure as to what extent women were included within the curriculum. One response was, "If [women's history] is mandated to be included, then I'm sure it is included."

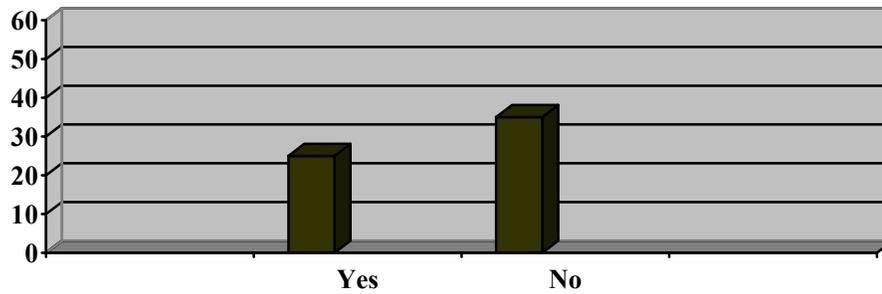
The third graph portrays the response to the question, "Would you be interested in a resource or curriculum guide relating to women's history?" Forty-four of the school districts responded that they would not be interested in such a guide. This response may indicate that personnel in these districts do not view the teaching of women's history as a priority, which may contribute to the absence of women's history education in some of Florida's classrooms.

It is obvious from this survey that women's history is, at best, at the periphery of Florida's educational priorities. Despite legislative mandate, our state has not provided the leadership, commitment or funding to adequately implement women's history into the K-12 curriculum. Without the necessary funding for quality instructional materials and teacher training, women's history will never assume its rightful place in Florida's classrooms. Moreover, the State Board of Education, the Department of Education and the Legislature must all renew their commitment to rewriting women back into our state and nation's history.

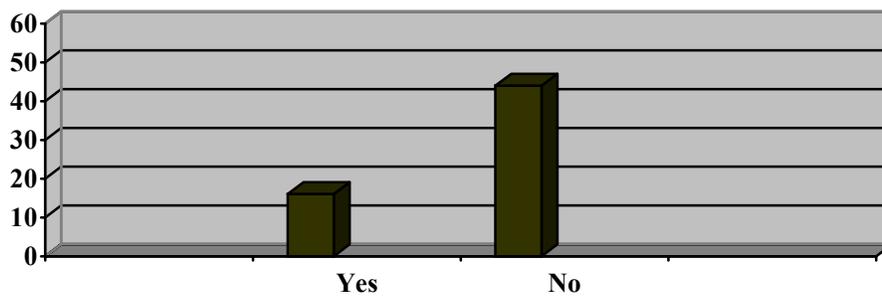
■ Question 1: Has your district developed a distinct women's history curriculum?



■ Question 2: Is women's history included in your general curriculum?



■ Question 3: Would you be interested in a resource or curriculum guide relating to women's history?



Individual Experiences in Teaching Women's History

What do Florida teachers experience when they integrate women's history into their classroom curriculum?

Surveys, statistics and studies offer indication of the status of women's history education in our schools. However, theory and data cannot fully convey the classroom reality. On the following pages, five teachers from across the state discuss their experiences integrating women's history into their classroom curriculum. These teachers vary in educational background, years of experience and grade level of students. The greatest variation, however, lies in their methodology. Three conclusions are apparent from reading these accounts.

First, there is no single approach to teaching women's history. Several of the teachers integrate women's history into their regular classroom curriculum; other teachers use separate units. Despite this difference in methodology, all of the instructors indicate largely positive responses from their students.

Also apparent is that the instructors have worked well with and received support from their school administration. All five teachers indicated that their environment is accommodating of their decision to include women's history in their classroom. One of the teachers was thanked by her principal for "keeping the torch lit."

Last, but perhaps most important, is the realization that women's history can be brought into the classroom. These teachers are from different eras, have very different perspectives, and choose different instructional methods. Yet, each one has found a unique way to make women's history a part of their students' classroom experience.

The educators are placed in descending order by years of teaching experience. The following Florida teachers are portrayed:

- Barbara Brown of James S. Rickards High School in Tallahassee
- Judith H. Williams of Port St. Joe Middle School in Port St. Joe
- Laura Wakefield of Neptune Middle School in Kissimmee
- Connie Louise Miller of Stanley Switlik Elementary in Marathon Key
- Sarah Cohan of Pensacola High School in Pensacola

Each depiction is based on a 20-question free answer survey. While remarks have been edited for style, care has been exercised to maintain as much of the substance of the responses as possible.

Barbara Brown
James S. Rickards High School
Leon County, Tallahassee, Florida
34 years teaching experience
Teaches 11th and 12th grade, Psychology and Sociology
M.A./Ed.S. in Counselor Education and a B.S. in Mathematics

I did not encounter women's history in grade school. However, as a graduate student, I took a course entitled "Women's History Studies" at the University of Florida. I am a product of the early sixties and late fifties, a time when women were progressively pushing for equality.

As a result of my experiences, I make sure that students are aware of how women's contributions have benefited society. I point out the fact that these women often either received no credit for their accomplishments or that their husbands were given the credit. When exposed to women's history, the boys become more accepting of women's views and the girls are more assured of themselves and their goals. My psychology classes are predominantly comprised of males who want to better understand women's issues.

For those interested in bringing women's studies into the classroom, I suggest introducing women who were leaders in the field that they teach, and incorporating those women's discoveries and struggles with recognition of their successes. I believe that each subject area should recognize all the leaders in that field. This will demonstrate to students that no one gender dominates all advances.

Judith H. Williams
Port St. Joe Middle School
Gulf County, Port St. Joe, Florida
26 years teaching experience
Teaches 8th grade, U.S. History
B.S. degree in History with a minor in Social Studies Education

I have two daughters who have never had a shortage of self-confidence, awareness and goals. I feel that this is a result of their upbringing. I have taken an active role in educating my students about women's history because I want to help girls who may not have the same environmental, social or academic experiences as my daughters.

In my classes, I have woven the role of women into the day-to-day history of our nation. This has been an effort to show women's unique roles and how these roles change and develop as our history changes. Special attention is paid to Women's History Month with bulletin boards and visible displays.

Unfortunately, men act as if I am promoting the "Women's Lib" movement. Even young males want to know why they don't have "Boy Power." In general, I don't like to make such a big deal of "just for girls" stuff! It alienates the group and causes negative reactions. We need to continue special programs and events for all of our students who need developmental help. I really prefer to teach about human beings—period—so that people aren't resentful.

This summer, I established two separate camps, one for boys and the other for girls. I found that most of the students involved came away with a feeling of empowerment, improved self-esteem, and clearer goal orientation. The girls learned to stand up for themselves, and developed loftier dreams of what their futures may hold.

My work environment is very supportive of my efforts. Our school has a female principal who is encouraging of anything her faculty does that benefits our students. For those who need more information to teach this subject, I suggest they delve into the Internet, as there is much information available. Fortunately, our textbooks today are much better than in the past. Also, there is no limit to what one can discover if one takes the time to do the research.

Laura Wakefield
Neptune Middle School
Osceola County, Kissimmee, Florida
12 years teaching experience
Teaches 8th grade, American History and Social Studies
B.S. in Government and Social Studies, currently pursuing an M.A. in History

I learned nothing in grade school about women's history except stories about people like Pocahontas and Sacajawea. There was also no training in my college courses specific to teaching women's history.

I take an active role in teaching women's history as a part of America's history because it is relevant to the education of all students. Students should know the history of women. My school is supportive of any valid educational experiences teachers choose to pursue. In my classroom, students participate in National History Day in which they conduct in-depth research on topics relevant to a national thesis (example: this year's theme is "Frontiers in History"). I suggest women's history topics to my students and many of them pursue research in these areas.

While there are more women's history resources available for teachers these days, they are "extras" or "add-ons"—not part of the "free" material we receive. I have purchased a set of women's history materials with my own funds for my classroom. Students—both male and female—are inspired by the examples of women who achieved their goals despite obstacles. There are many women whose lives and accomplishments can serve as role models for all students. To teachers who would like to bring women's history into their classroom, but are unsure how to proceed, I say dive in! You will learn as you teach. If I waited until I was an expert, I would never teach anything new.

Connie Louise Miller
Stanley Switlik Elementary
Monroe County, Marathon, Florida
6 years teaching experience
Teaches 5th grade, Reading, Spelling, Science, Health, Social Studies, Writing and English
B.A. in Psychology and Elementary Education

I teach about women because women's history is human history. I have always tried to incorporate women's history in all of my subjects. I don't just focus on a particular month set aside for any group. I make a conscious effort to include women every day in my curriculum.

As an undergraduate, I attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Madison Area Technical College. Both schools had great women's studies programs. I now live and teach in Marathon Key and our library is very small. As a result, it hasn't been easy to do research on

this topic. However, after a lot of digging, I have found a wealth of information that I could share with my students. I am learning as well because some of this information is new to me.

My school has been very supportive of my endeavors. Students tell me that they enjoy learning about women's history, and our media specialist now makes a special effort to order books on women for me. In addition, other teachers and many in my administration have complimented me. My principal has said, and I will never forget this, "Thanks for keeping the torch lit."

Sarah Cohan

Pensacola High School

Escambia County, Pensacola, Florida

5 years teaching experience

Teaches 9th grade, Inquiry Skills

B.A. Anthropology/Sociology, M.S.- Social Science Evaluation

I have always questioned why women's contributions in history are often ignored. Girls need to see themselves in history so that they can visualize their future roles. I learned very little concerning women's history in elementary school. Fortunately, I had my mother's guidance and an influential teacher who allowed me to explore women's history.

In most units I teach, I try to incorporate the role of women. For example, I was planning to conduct a unit on civil disobedience focusing on Thoreau, Ghandi and Martin Luther King. I then realized that women have been practicing civil disobedience and should be included. I revised the unit to include Emmeline Pankhurst and Mother Jones.

Students enjoy the opportunity to explore women's history and show interest in this subject. Last year, the feminist club that I sponsor arranged for an assembly for four hundred students at the school. They hosted a panel of speakers from the community and the administrators supported the event.

Sometimes as teachers, we must rethink history and make bold decisions. The consistent challenge that I face is finding textbooks and additional material that focuses on women's issues. My students have even begun to question the absence of women in their textbooks. I am desperate for information regarding women of significance in world and U.S. history. In order to effectively teach women's history one has got to have materials, and for that matter, training.

Lessons Learned

What lessons can we learn from the information provided in this report?

Women's history education is important because it teaches both boys and girls to appreciate and respect the roles of women in modern society. Learning about women's accomplishments builds girls' self esteem by demonstrating that women have played an active role in the development of our nation. This counters the stereotype that women have only been passive observers of history, while opening up possibilities in creative and professional endeavors. Expanding boys' knowledge of women's accomplishments refutes stereotypical notions of gender, allowing them to feel confident in assuming professional and creative roles traditionally assigned only to women.

There are a number of needs that we, as a state, can and must fulfill in order to bring women's history into every classroom. Florida teachers should receive proper training. State instructional materials committees should ensure that only equitable texts enter Florida classrooms. School curricula should integrate women's history. If there is a singular lesson to be learned from this publication, it is that all of us—policy-makers, school administrators, teachers, parents and the general public—must continue to work to give our children a fair and equitable view of history.

Bibliography

- American Association of University Women. (1998). *Gender Gaps: Where schools still fail our children*. Washington DC: Author.
- Bickmore, K. (1997). Making space for equity: Attention to conflict in social studies. *Canadian Social Studies*, 13, 76-9.
- Campbell, P.B. & Sanders, J. (1997). Uninformed but interested: Findings of a national survey in pre-service teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 48(1), 69-75.
- Dunne, F. & Rose, T. (1989). Gender equity for a new generation: Teacher educators can make a difference. *Contemporary Education*, 61(1), 29-31.
- Harvey, G. (1986). Finding reality among the myths: Why what you thought about sex equity in education isn't so. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 67(7), 509-512.
- Lundeberg, M. A. (1997). You guys are overreacting: Teaching prospective teachers about subtle gender bias. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 48(1), 55-61.
- Marshall, C. S. & Reinhartz, J. (1997). Gender issues in the classroom. *The Clearing House*, 70, 333-7.
- Noddings, N. (1992). Social Studies and Feminism. *Theory and Research in Social Education*, 20(3), 230-41.
- Sadker, D.M. (1999). Gender equity: Still knocking at the classroom door. *Educational Leadership*, 56(7), 22-26.
- Sadker, M., & Sadker, D. (1995). *Failing at Fairness: How America's Schools Cheat Girls*. New York: Simon and Schuster's Sons.
- Sadker, M. & Sadker, D. (1986). Sexism in the classroom: From grade school to graduate school. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 67(7), 512-515.
- Tetreault, M. K. (1986). Integrating women's history: The case of the United States history high school textbooks. *The History Teacher*, 19(2), 211-262.
- Warner, C. (1992). *The Last Word: A Treasury of Women's Quotes*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Appendices

Appendix A: Survey utilized to determine how and if Florida teachers are integrating women’s history into their classroom.

Florida Commission on the Status of Women

Office of the Attorney General
PL-01, The Capitol, Tallahassee, FL 32399-1050
Phone: (850) 414-3300, Fax: (850) 921-4131
<http://legal.firn.edu/units/fcsw>

February 11, 2000

Dear Social Studies and/or History Teacher:

The Florida Commission on the Status of Women is “dedicated to empowering women from all walks of life in achieving their fullest potential, to eliminating barriers to that achievement, and to recognizing women’s accomplishments.” This founding principle is the purpose of this brief survey—to ascertain the presence of women’s accomplishments and history within your curriculums.

We want to know *how* young women and men are being educated on the contributions women have made to this country and *what* can be enacted to facilitate the expansion of this knowledge in Florida’s classrooms. With your assistance in this survey, we will become better equipped to create women’s history curriculum guides and study tools to extend this information to your classes, making it more readily available to both teachers and their students.

Your Contact Information (Optional)

Name: _____
School: _____
Address: _____
Telephone: _____
Fax: _____
E-mail: _____

Part One
How are you helping?

1. How are the contributions women have made to Florida, the United States of America or the rest of the world been included in your curriculum? *(Please check the following answers that apply to your classroom. If you check "d" for the following question, please skip to part 2 of the survey.)*

- a. We have implemented a Women's Studies/History program at our school as part of our overall curriculum.
- b. I utilize Women's History Month to introduce women in history to my classroom.
- c. I introduce women's accomplishments throughout history as they arise chronologically, interspersing their stories equally with those of their male counterparts.
- d. Neither myself nor my school substantially recognizes the contributions of women to history.
- e. Other *(please explain)*

2. If you have implemented the instruction of women's history in your classroom, how have you done so? *(Please check all that apply.)*

- a. I have done personal research on my own time and devised my own method of teaching the information.
- b. I have enlisted the help of teaching manuals and activity packets created by women's interest or other organizations.
- c. I have followed the lead of other teachers in my school or area and have used their knowledge in my own endeavors.
- d. I received formal/informal education on the instruction of women's history to students in my age bracket and have implemented these ideas in my classroom.
- e. I have tried to piece together what I thought interesting, but do not feel I am adequately prepared to teach the material I wish to share with my students.
- f. Other. *(Please explain.)*

Part Two
What can be done to help you?

1. What materials would help you in extending women's history to your classroom? *(Please check all that apply.)*

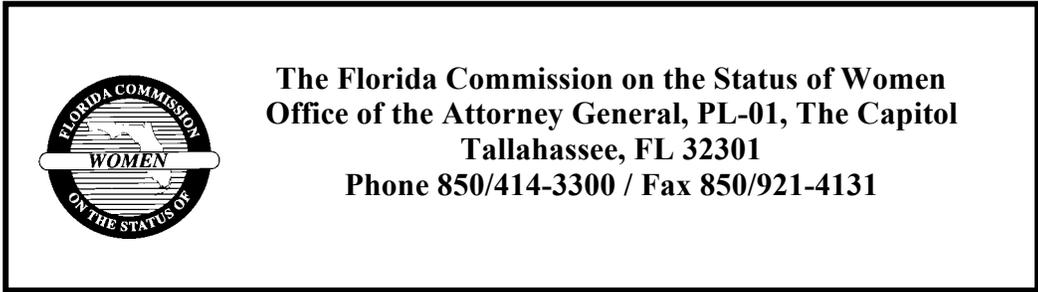
- a. A calendar detailing the dates of women's history events throughout the year.

- b. A concise, yet detailed resource, such as a publication directed specifically at teaching the history of women in Florida.
- c. Videos on great moments in women's history, such as the Suffrage Movement and the contributions of great women to the arts, sports, business and all such areas.
- d. Books related to the subject available in the library for student research and interest.
- e. Lectures and presentations from local groups and organizations working with women's issues and history.
- f. A list of internet resources for support and information.
- g. A directory of people who can help me obtain materials and put me on winning path for introducing this to my classroom.
- h. Other (*Please explain.*)

Please include any other comments here.

**Please return the above survey
U.S. Mail or via fax by March 1, 2000.
Thank you so much for taking the time to complete this survey.
Your participation is highly appreciated.**

Appendix B: Survey utilized to determine what Florida teachers experience when they integrate women's history into their classroom curriculum.



Dear Educator:

Please complete the following survey. We may choose to directly quote you in our upcoming report on the status of women's history education in Florida's schools, so please answer the questions in a manner suitable for publishing. Please return via fax at 850-921-4131 by no later than October 6, 2000. Your cooperation is *greatly* appreciated!

Part One: Biographical Information

Name: _____

School: _____

Public/Private _____

Sex: _____

Age (optional): _____

Years of teaching: _____

Grade level taught (currently) _____

Name(s) of Class(es) you teach: _____

Part Two: Your Educational Background

Type of degrees earned:

Have you received any training specific to teach women's history?

What did you learn in grade school about women's history?

Part Three: Your Experiences

(Please feel free to attach additional sheets where necessary)

What have you done in your classroom to promote women's history?

Please describe any challenges you have encountered in your efforts to teach women's history and how you overcame them.

Please describe any positive feedback you have received regarding your women's history instruction.

What positive results have you witnessed in your students?

Why did you choose to take an active role in teaching women's history?

Has your working environment supported your efforts to incorporate women's history into your classroom curricula?

What would you suggest to teachers who would like to teach women's history in their classroom but are unsure how to proceed?

Please include any other comments here.

**Please sign and date here to authenticate* _____

Supplemental Women's History Educational Materials

∞ Women's Studies Book List ∞

The following is by no means an exhaustive search of women's studies literature available to our global society. It is merely a beginning, a suggestion, a source of inspiration

YOUNGER AUDIENCES:

(Preschool)

The Adventures of Isabel. Ogden Nash

Amazing Grace. Mary Hoffman

Anna Banana and Me. Lenore Blevgvad

Christina Katerina and the Box. Patricia Lee Gauch

Here's Pippa! Betty Boegehold

I Like Me! Nancy Carlson

Kate's Castle. Julie Lawson

Madeline. Ludwig Bemelmans

Mary Mary. Sarah Hayes

My Mama Had A Dancing Heart. Libba Moore Gray

My Working Mom. Peter Glassman

The Paper Bag Princess. Robert N. Munsch

Sing, Sophie! Dayle Ann Dodds

A Very Noisy Girl. Elizabeth Winthrop

When I Was Little: A Four-Year-Old's Memoir of Her Youth. Jamie Lee Curtis

(Early Readers: Five through Seven)

Aani and the Tree Huggers. Jeannine Atkins

Amelia Earhart: Courage in the Sky. Mona Kerby

Bloomers! Rhoda Blumberg

Caterina, the Clever Farm Girl. Julienne Peterson

Clara Barton: Angel of the Battlefield. Rae Bains

The Emperor and the Kite. Jan Yolen
The Gadget War. Betsey Duffey
A Gift for Tia Rosa. Kren T. Taha
Girls to the Rescue. Bruce Lansky
Mae Jemison: Space Scientist. Gail Sakurai
Mary McLeod Bethune. Patricia and Fred McKissack
Molly's Pilgrim. Barbara Cohen
The Princess and the Admiral. Charlotte Pomerantz
Rumpelstilskin's Daughter. Diane Stanely
The Samurai's Daughter: A Japanese Legend. Robert D. San Souci
Sarah, Plain and Tall. Patricia McLachlan
The Warrior Maiden: A Hopi Legend. Ellen Schecter

(Independent Readers: Eight through Eleven)

Allana, The First Adventure. Tamora Pierce
American Daughters: 400 Years of American Freedom. Judith Head
Amazing Women in American History: A Book of Answers for Kids. Sue Heineniann
Anna Is Still Here. Ida Vos
Anne of Green Gables. L. M. Montgomery
Black Star, Bright Dawn. Scott O'Dell
Black Women for Beginners. Sandra Sharp
The Book of Goddesses. Kris Waldherr
Daphne's Book. Mary Downing Hahn
The First Woman Doctor. Rachel Baker
The Girl-Son. Anne E. Neuberger
Island of the Blue Dolphins. Scott O'Dell
Little Women. Louisa May Alcott
Pippi Longstocking. Astrid Lindgren
Scholastic Encyclopedia of Women in the U.S. Shiela Keenan
A Wrinkle in Time. Madeline L'Engle

(Young Adults: Twelve and Up)

Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl. Anne Frank

Beauty: A Retelling of the Story of Beauty and the Beast. Robin McKinley

Buffalo Brenda. Jill Pinkwater

Cornerstones of Freedom: Women's Voting Rights. Miles Harvey

Fifth Chinese Daughter. Jade Snow Wong

Girls: A History of Growing Up Female in America. Penny Colman

Herstory: Women Who Changed the World. Ruth Ashby

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings. Maya Angelou

Mama's Girl. Veronica Chambers

National Velvet. Enid Bagnold

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry. Mildred D. Taylor

The Story of My Life. Helen Keller

A Tree Grows in Brooklyn. Betty Smith

MATURE AUDIENCES:

1001 Things Everyone Should Know About Women's History. Constance Jones

Amazing Women of the Civil War. Webb Garrison

Amelia Earhart's Daughters: The Wild and Glorious Story of American Women Aviators from

World War II to the Dawn of the Space Age. Leslie Haynsworth, David M. Toomey

America's Working Women: A Documentary History 1600 to the Present. Rosalyn Fraad

Baxandall

American Indian Women: Telling Their Lives. Gretchen M. Bataille

The American Women's Almanac: An Inspiring and Irreverent Women's History. Louise

Bernikow

American Women and World War Two. Doris Weatherford

American Women in the Progressive Era, 1900-1920. Dorothy Schneider

American Women's History A-Z: People, Organizations and Events. Doris Weatherford

American Women in World War I: They Also Served. Lettie Gavin

Ar'N't I A Woman?: Female Slaves in the Plantation South. Deborah Gray White

Bitter Fruit: African-American Women in World War II. Maureen Honey

Black Women Abolitionists: A Study in Activism, 1828-1860. Shirley J. Yee
A History of the American Suffragist Movement. Doris Weatherford
Milestones: A Chronology of American Women's History. Doris Weatherford
*What Every American Should Know About Women's History: 200 Events That Shaped Our
Destiny.* Christine Lunardini
Women of the World: Women Travelers and Explorers. Rebecca Steffoff
Women's Almanac. Doris Weatherford

❧ Women's History ❧ Internet Resource Guide

This list is a sampling of the resources available for the study of women's history on the Internet. It is basically an introduction, and most of the sites listed are general, even in specific areas. We suggest that you, whether you be a parent, teacher, student, or a women's history enthusiast, take a few moments to peruse these sites. You will find that they are elegant, informative and, most of all, inspiring.

Resource list compiled from National Women's History Project web site, for more listings, please visit www.nwhp.org/links.html.

GENERAL TOPICS

150th Anniversary of the Women's Rights Movement

<http://www.legacy98.org>

This is a great resource and starting point for the women's history beginner. It offers chronological, biographical and resource information.

Great Women Quotations Resources

<http://bemorecreative.com/cqwomen.shtml>

This site is fun for young and mature. Click on any date of the year and be rewarded with numerous quotes from famous women born on that day.

Distinguished Women of Past and Present

<http://www.DistinguishedWomen.com>

This is a women's history researcher's dream! You can search for famous women by name or subject and easily collect information.

Encyclopedia Britannica Women's History Site

<http://women.eb.com>

You get what you would expect from this exemplary publication. This multimedia site features over 1,200 articles and 1,000 biographies about great women. You can also find a four-part timeline, topical essays, video and audio pieces.

Youngster's Encyclopedia of Women's History

<http://www.teleport.com/~megaines/woindex.html>

This clever cooperative site is chock-full of biography tidbits written by young people for young people. Introduce children to this site and encourage them to add their thoughts to it. A great way to encourage women's history interest among youth.

Great Speeches of Great Women

<http://gos.sbc.edu>

This site offers tons of speeches by great women. This is a solid resource for a speech class activity or research. The amount of information provided is quite impressive.

National Women's Hall of Fame

<http://www.greatwomen.org>

This site offers background information on the 125 women who have been inducted into the Hall. Visit this site to see who is a part of our country's prestigious National Women's Hall of Fame.

Notable Women Ancestors

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~nwa/>

This site certainly should not be overlooked. It is a seemingly endless database of women ranging from celebrities to grandmothers. You can even add your own heroines and relatives into the mix.

Social Studies School Service-Women's History Page

<http://socialstudies.com/mar/women.html>

This is an essential resource for educators. It offers Internet exercises, classroom discussion questions, web links, essays about women in history and more. There are also many useful items that can be ordered for your classroom.

Women and Social Movements in the United States, 1830-1930

<http://womhist.binghamton.edu/index.html>

This source is the most detailed one yet—and that fact sets it apart from the rest. This site is for the slightly more advanced researcher, a good resource for upper-level high school or college-level papers.

Women of Achievement and Herstory

<http://undelete.org>

This page offers dated events of women's history. You can find information from birthdays to historical precedents. All topics are discussed in a precise and informative manner.

Women's History Magazine Volume 2

<http://www.thehistorynet.com/WomensHistory>

This wonderful site explains the history and status of women in many different areas. It is packed with information and very easy to use. Great middle-school to college-level research resource.

Women's Stories

<http://writetools.com/women/archive.html>

This is an excellent archive of hundreds of women's biographies. Be sure not to pass over this one!

SPECIFIC TOPICS

National Museum of Women's History

http://www.nmwh.org/exhibits/exhibit_frames.html

This site is easily one of our favorites. It contains a great deal of information on the Suffrage Movement, and is a virtual museum of original Suffrage merchandise you can surf through. From "Votes for Women" buttons to artistic interpretations of suffragist banners, this sight is sure to delight.

National American Woman Suffrage Association

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/nawawshome.html>

The title is self-explanatory and a great resource on this topic.

Votes for Women

<http://www.huntington.org/vfw/main.html>

This is possibly the most comprehensive site about the women's suffrage campaign in the U.S. With many biographies, photos, speeches, essays, documents and links, this is a top-notch database.

Documents from the Women's Liberation Movement

<http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/wlm/>

The site is designed for the advanced student with a particular focus on women's history. It offers information referring to the early Women's Liberation Movement including: transcribed texts and scanned images of original articles, pamphlets, flyers, and booklets published from 1969 to 1974.

Women in Congress

<http://clerkweb.house.gov/womenbio/alpha/alpha.htm>

This unique site features biographies of women who have served in the U.S. Congress. It is indexed alphabetically, chronologically, or by state to make searching less complicated.

African-American Women

<http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/collections/african-american-women.html>

This page offers insight into the African-American woman slave's experience at the personal level. It includes scanned images of manuscript pages and full text of the writings of several African-American women.

International Women's Air and Space Museum

<http://www.iwasm.org/>

Though this site is in its growing stages, it has great potential. It offers interesting facts, and, most importantly, web links to further information on women in aviation.

4000 Years of Women in Science (and Mathematics)

<http://crux.astr.ua.edu//4000ws/4000ws.html>

This is a wonderful site where you can find biographies, photos and reference lists for further information.

History of Women in Astronomy

<http://astron.berkeley.edu/~gmarcy/women/history.html>

This is a good resource, featuring not only photos and biographies of accomplished women astronomers, but links to sites discussing current issues affecting women of this field.

Women of NASA

<http://quest.arc.nasa.gov/women/index.html>

This top-notch and recently updated site provides information on the women who have made NASA what it is today. Check out profiles of the numerous women previously and currently involved with NASA; also engage in a chat or gather some teaching tips. This site even presents all the above information in Spanish and encourages bilingual chats! A must-see for all those interested in learning more about women within the space program.

Historical Women Composers

<http://music.scu.edu/www/iawm/historical/historical.html>

This site is truly outstanding, with over 70 features on women composers from the present to ancient times. Be sure to utilize their extensive resource list. Those researching women musicians would do well to start here.

National Museum of Women in the Arts

<http://www.nmwa.org>

This museum's detailed permanent collection of women artists stretches from the Renaissance to the postmodern era, with over 16,000 artist files—all about women. Take a virtual tour of the museum, search past and present exhibition catalogues, teacher newsletters and packets, and much more. If you want information on women artists, this is a noteworthy choice.

96 Years of Women in the Olympics

<http://www.feminist.org/archive/olympics/intro.html>

This is a solid and invaluable resource, complete with profiles of athletes and coaches, an overview of women in sports and great links.

American Women in Uniform

<http://userpages.aug.com/captbarb/>

This site has lots of good data regarding women's contributions to the war effort. Look for detailed information on every war in the history of the United States and prepare to be impressed by the large role women played in each one of them! This is a remarkable site, good for research and general interest.

Women and the Military

<http://www.gendergap.com/military.htm>

This site details women's involvement in war dating back to prehistory, featuring an array of international biographies and spellbinding lore of brave women warriors.

Florida State Archives

<http://dhis.dos.state.fl.us/barm/fsa/women'sguide.htm>

If you are interested in Florida history, this is the best place to start. This site contains interesting pictures of women from Florida's heritage and links supplying excellent information.

❧ Women's History Activity List ❧

The following is a list of activities appropriate for a range of age levels in a number of disciplines designed to celebrate women of history and encourage interest in women's studies in the school and community.

This list was inspired by the National Women's History Project publication *Celebrating Women's History: A Women's History Month Resource Book*, edited by Mary Ellen Snodgrass.

1. **Organize an art fair/competition** for the class/school/community on the subject "A Woman I Wish I Had Known" based on famous women in history. This way these women will be studied in a different light and celebrated all over again. *Appropriate for all age levels.*
2. **Use women in local history** to create an "around-the-room" cyclorama, hanging pictures and other materials on your classroom walls. Make it multimedia, colorful, large. Invite local women to speak to the class. *Appropriate for all age levels.*
3. **Organize young girls in a dance** to a Disney music medley. Use songs from films with powerful women like *Mulan* and *Pocahontas*. Have the girls create dance moves by how the music and story of the strong characters inspires them. This is both entertaining and creatively empowering. *Appropriate for younger classrooms.*
4. **Create an appreciation garden** in your classroom, school play-yard or in a community location. This can be done by planting flora symbolic of famous women in history or creating a garden with materials that represent them. Have children cut out and create paper flowers and other symbols of these famous women. Reserve a special place in the

- classroom for this project so the children may watch it grow. Have a party to celebrate the completion of it at the end of the year. *Appropriate for all age levels.*
5. **Create a series of skits** that reenact the women’s fight for the right to vote. Illustrate how they marched in the streets and rallied in front of the White House. Deliver a speech given by Susan B. Anthony. Show how they starved themselves in jail and were force-fed. Show the physical torment that many received for standing up for their rights. This would work well as a women’s history month presentation. It could be video-recorded and replayed at the school for years to come. *Appropriate for upper-level classrooms and community projects.*
 6. **Present a program** detailing women’s fashions throughout history in various cultures. Create examples of the dress styles (via slides or drawings) and discuss why they would be popular, what purpose they serve(d) and how they can hurt a woman’s body. Footbinding, breast augmentation, and corsets are a few obvious examples. *Appropriate for advanced classrooms: high school through college.*
 7. **Play a matching game** with famous women in history. Place names on one side and drawings, pictures or real-life symbols of these women’s accomplishments on the other. One example would be place astronaut Sally Ride’s name on one side with an astronaut’s suit or a spaceship on the other side. *Difficulty of the activity can be altered for the appropriate age group.*
 8. **Create a woman’s humor magazine.** Use humor to illustrate stereotyping of women, fashion magazine fads, and advertisements blatantly aimed at the female consumer. Feature columns written by women in the class on different aspects of being a woman. Write faux articles on famous women comedians. Discuss how these comedians broke the role of women in comedy. Feature women like Carol Burnett (who had her own show, and mostly male side-kicks), or sitcoms like *Designing Women* or the *Golden Girls* (all-female comedies that enjoyed extended running time). *Appropriate for upper-level classrooms.*
 9. **Hold a discussion** with women considered strong in the family, school or community with younger women. Discuss what constitutes “strength” and the characteristics of strong women. Highlight accomplishments within the home, school or community supporting women’s rights, health, etc. Encourage young women to speak up and ask questions. This is a great opportunity to develop mentors. *Appropriate for all age levels.*
 10. **Create a newspaper** with articles about women’s history. Interview local teachers and professors. Write columns about the struggles of women or from a famous woman’s point of view. *Great upper-level project for women’s history month.*
 11. **Compose an epitaph or memorial** to a famous woman. Describe what this woman did for the good of all humanity, the suffering she endured and how she affected the author of the epitaph personally. Close with an explanation of how this woman should be remembered. *Appropriate for middle to high school level classes. May be altered for more mature classrooms.*

12. **Publish a monthly list** of works by or about women for your school or local library. Have them available at the beginning of the month and feature a discussion session at the end of every month. *Appropriate for all age levels.*
13. **Create a brochure** about a famous woman from history or literature. This could range from a Pagemaker printout on Gloria Steinem to a construction paper folder about Tara Lipinski. *Appropriate for all age levels.*
14. **Compile a list** of the most important works of literature by female authors. Discuss why their works are so important and why it is important to create such a list. *Appropriate for upper-level literature/writing classes.*
15. **Re-enact speeches** made by historical or fictional women. Use text from letters, books, plays, poetry, short stories, songs, etc. Feature discussion about the symbolism of these words and their speaker. *Appropriate for all age levels.*
16. **Mimic the lives** of female inventors, scientists or anyone by keeping a journal in their voice. This works great with biographical applications and encourages students to perceive these women as real people, rather than words and pictures on a white page. *Appropriate for middle to college-level students.*
17. **Host an all-ages women's history writing contest.** Hold categories for non-fiction, fiction and poetry. Have all entrants read work aloud (this may call for length constraints) at a public event. Share this knowledge with the school(s) and community. This is an excellent Women's History Month activity. *Appropriate for all age levels.*