

Women in an Expanding Republic

Economics, Race, and Gender

Announcements

- Group visual exhibit and presentations
 - The exhibits will be displayed at the Ohio Union Exposures Gallery, Rm. 236
 - The presentations will take place during the last week of class.
- Form groups of 4-5 students
- **Select a primary source related to American women's history.**
 - Some choices include a newspaper article, speech, flyer, image, song, or even a material object. Be creative!
- **When you analyze the source, consider what it suggests about how female roles in the realms of family, work, politics, and/or culture have changed (or not changed) over time. During your presentation you should also discuss:**
 - what the source is
 - who created it
 - the reason for which it was created
 - the context in which it was created
- Next Tuesday, Feb. 1, Library Orientation on finding primary sources
- Next Thursday, Feb. 3, Discuss *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*

Oral History/ Performance Art Project

- Next Tuesday, Feb. 1
 - Capturing the Subject Workshop, Univ. Hall 56
 - Prof. Nina Ha
 - Alternate session, Friday, Jan. 28, 1:30-3, Multicultural Center, Rm. 436
- By Jan. 31 (and preferably this week)
 - Schedule a group meeting with me to discuss the Human Subjects Review Exemption application

Facets of Expansion

- Expanding Democracy for white men
 - By early 1850s, every state extended suffrage for all white males, 21 years or older
- Industrialization in the North
 - Promise of class mobility
 - Universal education
 - Entrepreneurial Republicanism
- Cotton Economy in the South
 - Expansion of slavery
 - Less urban or industrial development
 - Less investment in social welfare and infrastructure
- Westward migration
 - Native American removal



Implications for women

- Industrializing North
 - Separate spheres for middle class
 - Factory work for laboring women
 - Religious and social activism
 - Women's professions
- Slave South
 - Planter Patriarchy
 - Slave family formation and separation
 - Yeomen complicity
- West
 - Missionary opportunities for white women
 - Pressures of colonization for Native American women

Separate Spheres

- Class and region-bound ideal
 - Men = work and politics
 - women = home and religion
- Housewifery
 - Unpaid and invisible work
 - Craft and "science"
 - Catherine Beecher, *Treatise on Domestic Economy* (1841)
 - Godey's Lady's Book, est. 1837
- Changing Ideas about Family
 - Patriarchy to companionate marriage and maternal guidance

Expanding the Domestic Sphere

- Education and Women's Professions
- Literacy rose among white women in New England from 50-nearly 100% from Revolution to 1840.
- Teaching
 - 38% of all whites (5-20) attended school by 1840
 - women hired at 1/2 to 1/3 the salary
- Medicine
- Married women's property acts (1830s-)

Religious and Social Activism

- 2nd Great Awakening – 1798-1830s
 - Charles Finney: Predestination vs. Perfectionism
 - 3 Female for every 2 male converts
- "Saving Women" and Protecting Families
 - Prostitution
 - American Female Moral Reform Society
 - 555 local chapters in 1840
 - Temperance
 - Self control and class identity
 - Home protection
 - Abolitionism
 - Suffrage
- Women in Civil Society
 - Gender consciousness
 - Public role
- Crossing Class and Racial Boundaries – Sisterhood? Maternalism?

Laboring Daughters



- Factories
 - Native-born, rural daughters
 - 11-13 hrs/day; 6 days/week
 - "family" wage vs. secondary worker
- Boarding house culture
 - Family obligations to peer group culture
 - Paternalism/maternalism
- Labor Activism
 - Lowell Strikes 1834, 1836
 - Factory Girls' Association (1836) – 2500 members
 - 10-hour day petition (MA - 1844)
 - Lowell Female Labor Reform Assoc. – Sarah Bagley
- Free labor vs. factory slaves

Laboring Urban Women

- Producers to Consumers
 - Rural vs. urban settings
 - Home as work place
- Selling Domestic Services
 - Boarders
 - Domestic Servants
 - 5 a.m.-10 p.m.
 - 6-7 days/week
 - Boarding and leisure
 - Prostitution
- Outwork
 - No overhead costs for manufacturers
 - Isolation of workers



Fancy shoes made in Lynn, Mass.

- Plantation dominated economy
 - 1/4 whites slaveholders
 - Majority owned fewer than 5
- 52% of slaves on plantations (1860)
 - produced 75% or more of South's export crops
 - cotton 60% of nation's export (1840)
- 10% of nation's industrial workers in the South (1860)
 - Illiteracy rate for whites 20%

Agricultural South



1860

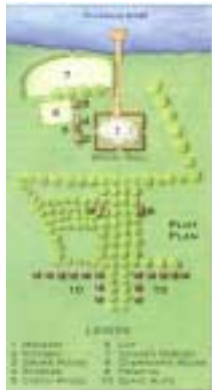
Expanding Slavery



- Slave population
 - 700,000 in 1790
 - 2 million in 1830
 - 4 million by 1860
 - 1/3 Southerners black
 - 1/76 Northerners black
- End of slave trade (1808)
 - Native-born slaves
- Westward forced migration
 - at least 300,000 slaves

Impact on Slave Women

- Incentives for pregnancy and “marriages”
 - “I consider a woman who brings a child every two years as more profitable than the best man of the farm....There is nothing I desire so much as that all the young people in the estate should intermarry with one another and stay at home.” Thomas Jefferson
 - Yet possibility of forced separations
 - Children begin working at 5-6; field work by 11-12
- Sexual Coercion and Violence
 - “God forgive us, but ours is a monstrous system, a wrong and iniquity. Like the patriarchs of old, our men live all in one house with their wives and their concubines; and the mulattos one sees in every family partly resemble the white children. Any lady is ready to tell you who is the father of all the mulatto children in everybody’s household but her own. Those, she seems to think drop from the clouds.” Diary of Mary Boykin Chestnut, South Carolina



White women in the South

- Lady on a Pedestal
 - Importance of sexual honor for white women
 - Dependent on male protection
- Plantation Mistresses
 - Household managers and supervisors of slave labor
- Lack of social reform tradition regarding gender or race
- Lack of female professional opportunities
- Southern Patriarchy tied to Slave Economy

Women in the Expanding Republic

- Regional differences
- Class differences
- Racial differences