How To Celebrate National Women's History Month.

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Intended for teachers, this guide is designed as an aid to mark Women's History Month with special thought and activity, and to offer suggestions for further information and resources. Noting that "history doesn't only happen to men," the document stresses that "history is made at home, in the community, in the factories, offices, and fields of America." Every subject and every level of education can use the addition of the lost heritage of women as evidenced by books, letters, diaries, speeches, oral histories, poems, handicrafts, paintings, musical compositions, and other productions of women. The guide suggests what state federations of teachers can do, what American Federation of Teachers (AFT) locals can do, and what the community and school districts can do to commemorate the month of March as National Women's History Month. The document offers several lists of information sources and includes separate information sheets on the suffrage movement, how AFT celebrates Women's History Month, and suggested class activities celebrating the month. (BT)
HOW TO CELEBRATE

NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

by Marjorie H. Stern
"... the personalities, interests, ideas and activities of women must receive an attention commensurate with their energy in history. Women have done far more than exist and bear and rear children. They have played a great role in directing human events as thought and action. Women have been a force in making all the history that has been made."

MARY BEARD
Women as Force in History, p. vi.
Where are the images and voices of women in American history? How can girls, as well as boys, grow up with a healthy respect for the contributions of countless American women, when women of all races are lost to the pages of history textbooks?

A national movement is reclaiming the richness of this heritage and the inspiration of women's achievements. Women's History Week originated in 1978 in Santa Rosa, California, when a group of teachers wanted to see that their schools and community had a special time to recognize the accomplishments of both well-known and not-so-well-known women of all races, ages, cultures, ethnic backgrounds, religions, and ways of life. They chose the week in which March 8, International Women's Day, falls.

Activities centered around a multicultural study of women's history to remind their classes and community that contributions of women are significant, and they had played an active role in making history happen. The idea caught on all over the United States, and many city and state legislatures, mayors and governors began proclaiming the Week. The President and Congress annually passed resolutions urging communities and school districts to put women back into the nation's consciousness. School boards, organizations such as NOW and AAUW, museums, libraries, equity specialists in state departments of education, businesses, labor unions, and community members all contributed to make America aware of women's history.

The popularity of these celebrations led to the expansion of a week into a whole month to allow time for special programs and exhibits which write women back into history. Since March, 1987, National Women's History Month resolutions have enjoyed overwhelming, bi-partisan support in both houses of Congress.

March 8, International Women's Day, was first celebrated in New York City in 1908 by labor groups to recognize the work of women in the labor movement. They called for an end to child labor and sweatshops, and for the right of women to vote, and the day soon grew into a tradition linking women around the world. We as unionists have pride in carrying out this tradition with suitable activities in our communities, classrooms, and schools as a continuing reminder of the significance of women as shapers of history.

Women's History Month deserves to be celebrated in every classroom, not only during that month, but in every lesson throughout the school year. Every subject and every level of education can use the addition of the lost heritage of women as evidenced by books, letters, diaries, speeches, oral histories, poems, handicrafts, paintings, musical compositions, and other productions of women. Study of these contributions strengthens and expands the perceptions of expectations of male students about the real lives of work of women, and contributes to the pride and self-esteem of women students.
In 1980 the Executive Council of the American Federation of Teachers passed a resolution urging members and others to celebrate the Week, and later supported without opposition expansion into a month. Community organizations, governmental units, libraries and churches are already sponsoring proclamations, lectures, meetings, parades, awards, press conferences, radio and TV interviews, displays, and other activities. We, as AFT union members, have a large role to play in seeing that the visible and silent majority in history is seen and heard, and in giving recognition where it is due.

Here is our opportunity to show that history doesn't only happen to men, and only in the legislative chamber or battlefield. History is made at home, in the community, in the factories, offices, and fields of America.

This pamphlet is designed as an aid to you and your local to mark this month with special thought and activity, and to offer you suggestions for further information and resources in March and throughout the year. Whether or not your local is the bargaining agent, participation will indicate your continuing and dedicated concern for human rights.

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"Women as a group have been denied knowledge of their legitimate past and have been profoundly affected individually by having to see the world through male eyes. Seeing women cast only in subordinate and inferior positions throughout history and seldom, if ever, learning about female heroines or women of achievement, American girls are conditioned to limit their own life goals and self-esteem. Black women have been doubly victimized by scholarly neglect and racist assumptions. Belonging as they do to two groups which have traditionally been treated as inferiors by American society - Blacks and women - they have been doubly invisible."

— GERDA LERNER, Black Women in White America, p. xvii.

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WHAT STATE FEDERATIONS CAN DO

- Pass a resolution at the state convention or Executive Council supporting National Women’s History Month.

- Alert locals to contact local school boards and superintendents to pass resolutions supporting the Month, and marking it on school district calendars.

- Run articles in the state federation newspaper on a woman or women prominent in your state’s history.
Cooperate with your state department of education on developing and distributing curricular materials for the observance.

Issue a statement of support in a press release.

Prepare and lobby for legislation to amend state education codes to include history of women in social studies at all levels as nondiscriminatory education.

Introduce a resolution at state labor federation conventions to observe National Women's History Month, and to honor women in labor history.

Cooperate with regional or state labor history associations to see that papers on women workers are presented at all meetings and conventions.

Distribute the national or a state pamphlet on celebrating women's history month to individuals, locals, and interested community members.

Cooperate with your state historical society in honoring women.

Join with the state status of women commission in announcements and activities.

Ask the state legislature and the governor to proclaim National Women's History Month.

Appoint a state federation committee to make recommendations on activities, or use the current women's rights committee for this purpose.

Publicize events in which the federation has taken part in the state paper.

Feature workshops and events honoring women leaders at the state convention.

"Much to my surprise, I found that in books, only Hispanic men struggle with conflicts, whether internal or external. Although I could understand these male voices, try as I might, I could not identify with them. What about me? What about women? What were our problems? What were our lives?

"There was little or nothing written about la mujer in the ethnic novels I read. When she did appear, it was as a mythological, faceless, submissive, supporting, no-real-life-to-her woman. She was just there. I did not think of myself as a 'just there' sort of person." YVONNE TIXIER Y VIGIL, Las Mujeres, p. xxi.
WHAT LOCALS CAN DO

- Pass a resolution supporting National Women's History Month in the executive committee, membership meeting or delegate assembly.

- Appoint a committee to recommend events and activities in which the local would participate or initiate, or use the current women's rights committee for this function.

- Urge the major and city government to pass resolutions in support of and proclaiming the Month.

- Cooperate with local or regional status of women commission programs.

- Contact the local history society to combine or support programs.

- Prepare and present a statement for the local board of education to adopt and put on the school calendar.

- Secure the cooperation of the superintendent of schools and other central office and on-site administrators to prepare curricular materials, hold workshops, and distribute notices to all teachers and educational workers.

- Contact women's studies and women's centers in local community colleges, state colleges, or other colleges and universities to cooperate in programs or share materials.

- Invite a speaker or have an interested teacher speak before March at the local's membership meeting on the necessity and value of celebrating National Women's History Month, or have a speaker on the program during the observance to tell about an outstanding woman leader from the local's history.

- Put information about the Month in the local's leaflets and newsletters sent to members and all teachers and paraprofessionals, in time for them to prepare for the Month.

- Prepare curricular and in-service material on women in American history and labor history for classroom use.

- Sponsor community activities with other organizations and institutions, such as the local history society, public library, or National Organization for Women or Coalition of Labor Union Women chapters.
Present a resolution at the central labor council asking for support of the Month, particularly for women in labor history, and ask for a program or talk at a council meeting, or for a woman or women from a local to be honored.

Offer speakers to labor or women's studies courses at local colleges.

Sponsor an award or certificate for a school, student or teacher which has an outstanding program for the Month.

Write your member of Congress to support the Congressional resolution designating the Month.

Sponsor an essay or art contest to depict a famous or "lost" woman in history for students in the district.

"Even though Chinese working men were excluded from most facets of American society and their lives were left unrecorded, their labors bespoke their existence - completed railroads, reclaimed lands, and a myriad of new industries. The evidence of women's lives seems less tangible. Perhaps the record of their struggles to immigrate and overcome discriminatory barriers is their greatest legacy. Tracing that record therefore becomes a means of recovering our history. Our grandmothers are our historical links." — CONNIE YOUNG YU, "The World of Our Grandmothers." in Making Waves, p. 35.

WHAT TEACHERS AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL WORKERS CAN DO

Remind your union that AFT has endorsed National Women's History Month.

Plan ahead either to incorporate women's history in your weekly lesson plans or structure your unit or curriculum around skills which use women's history as content.

After discussing the goals of National Women's History Month, assign or have students assign themselves activities appropriate for your level or subject. All the usual study and learning techniques involved in any lesson can be utilized; for instance:
- Research reports on famous women made from material in school or home libraries.
- Interviews and reports made of current women in the family or the community, whether they are leaders or ordinary women.
- Artistic representations of real or story heroines.
- Oral or written stories about real or fictional women.
- Reading aloud to students about famous women.
- Guest speakers from the community on their own or famous lives, including women who may be working in non-traditional fields.
- Discussions on literature by or about women achievers.
- Newspaper or magazine articles about career objective and the new horizons for both men and women today.
- Play records or tapes on women who contributed to state or national goals, or who broke ground in some unusual field, or contributed to getting women the vote.
- Play music or listen to a video connected with labor, civil rights, or women's rights campaigns.
  - Decorate a bulletin board, with student help if appropriate, on a person or an idea, such as women's suffrage, health care, career choices.

  - Hang posters in the classroom showing women achievers.

  - Involve the librarian in making a library display, setting out a special women's collection of books, or preparing a women's bibliography.

  - Schedule a film depicting women's lives during a particular period of history or on an issue connected with feminism or sex equity.

  - Give pre- and post-tests after a discussion or film on attitudes toward sex fairness.

  - Post career posters in counselors' offices showing men and women in non-traditional jobs.

  - Provide other teachers with materials for observance of the Month, and talk about it in the faculty lounge and at faculty meetings.

  - Show a short film at lunchtime on women in history or women's issues.

  - Enlist your site principal, librarian, counselors, curriculum assistants, and paraprofessionals in planning school events during the month, and be sure they are announced in advance on your school calendar and in the bulletin.

  - Plan an assembly portraying famous women, presenting a skit or play, displaying women's or girls' sports, or featuring a guest speaker on women's history or issue.
Hang a display of famous women’s art in the main hall.

Honor a woman in the community who is doing something unusual, who played a role in contributing something in the past, or who is an elected official.

Invite a woman, either elected or working for a governmental agency, to speak about her triumphs and obstacles.

Of Black women in America “...Less is known of our women than of any other class of Americans. No organization of far-reaching influence for their special advancement, no conventions of women to take note of their progress, and no special literature reciting the incidents, the events, and all the things interesting and instructive concerning them are to be found among the agencies directing their career. There has been no special interest in their peculiar condition as native-born American women. Their power to affect the social life of America, either for good or for ill, has excited not even a speculative interest.” — From an address by FANNIE BARRIER WILLIAMS, in Black Women: Achievements Against the Odds, Calendar 1981-83.

WHAT YOUR COMMUNITY AND SCHOOL DISTRICT CAN DO

• Proclaim the Month.

• Prepare and distribute curricular materials.

• Provide facilities - school assembly halls, community centers, library auditoriums, church halls - for celebrating activities.

• Provide materials or make donations to purchase women’s history supplies - posters, programs, bulletin board space - for the celebration.

• Cooperate with community, governmental organizations, church groups which are recognizing women during the Month.

• Create a positive atmosphere of active participation.

• Provide speakers to community or school celebrants.
- Sponsor in-service workshops on women in history and women in labor history.

- Encourage the local media to announce programs, interview women, or highlight groups making contributions to women’s lives.

- Sponsor a community-wide luncheon or banquet to honor contributions of women.

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SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND MATERIALS

The following sources of information and classroom materials are augmented by a basic reference book list. All entries offer materials which are multicultural and multi-ethnic.

Major Providers

National Women’s History Project
7738 Bell Road
Windsor, CA 95492-8518 1-707-838-6000 FAX 1-707-838-0478

The Project offers the most concentrated and comprehensive source of materials for schools, community, and worksite celebrations of women’s history in the United States. Its catalog contains posters, display materials, videos, plays, speeches, coloring books, card games, fiction, readers, books of photographs, the Congressional Resolution, postcards, notecards, reference lists, and celebration supplies. All of these materials are geared to every level of education from primary to adult, and to every subject taught in schools. Suggestions for beginning to plan for National Women’s History Month, for History Day, and for continuing to focus on women’s history the year-round are included. Family history materials to document significant events for school or personal projects are featured. Orders can be taken by mail, phone or FAX. The catalog alone is an education.

The Feminist Press at the City University of New York
311 East 94th Street
New York, NY 10128 212-360-5790

A publisher for over 20 years of curricular guides, library resources, “found” feminist literature by and about women from the United States as well as many other countries, the Press is another source of books and classroom-useable guides on women’s history. Geared to high school, college and adult levels, these materials are excellent for women’s studies and self-enrichment. Included are books of multi-ethnic literature, working-class novels and biography, and books on interpersonal themes. The Press also publishes Women’s Studies Quarterly, the first U.S. journal devoted to teaching about women.
Devoted mainly to classroom materials which are gender fair, and funded by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education, the Center’s catalog contains the following aids for women’s history teaching:

**Women in American History** (secondary, post-secondary)
- Women in the Colonial Era and the Early American Republic, 1607-1820
- Women in the Ages of Expansion and Reform, 1820-1860
- Women During and After the Civil War, 1860-1890
- Women in the Progressive Era, 1890-1920
by Beverly Sanders, American Federation of Teachers

**In Search of Our Past** (upper elementary to high school)
- Units in Women’s History, by Susan Groves, Berkeley Unified School District

**A Road Well Traveled:** Three Generations of Cuban American Women
An anthology of personal accounts of Cuban women of different generations in the United States. Suitable for social studies, women’s studies, Latino studies, or programs within community agencies, by Terry Doran, Janet Satterfield and Chris Staden, Latin American Educational Center, Fort Wayne, Indiana

*The Center’s catalog also announces the publication of a WEEA Digest, and contains several pages of sex equity products distributed by other sources, with titles and addresses.*
BOOK PUBLISHERS

These are some of the commercial publishers having women's studies lists:

**Ayer Company Publishers, Inc.**, 50 Northwestern Dr., #10, P. O. Box 958, Salem, NH 03079
(Woman as Hero; biographies and autobiographies)

**Beacon Press**, 25 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108-2800
(Includes Black Women Writers, Asian Voices lists)

**Basil Blackwell, Inc.**, Three Cambridge Center, Cambridge, MA 02142

**Garland Publishing Inc.**, 136 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016
(Ask for Women's Studies catalog; includes dissertations)

**Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc.**, 88 Post Road West, P.O. Box 5007, Westport, CT 06881-9990
(Women's Studies, Labor Studies, and Women in Education)

**Haworth Press**, 10 Alice Street, Binghamton, NY 13904-1580
(Advanced feminist studies list; seven different women's journals)

**JACP**, 234 Main St., P. O. Box 587, San Mateo, CA 94401
(Asian studies books at all levels, journals, Asian dolls, bi-lingual aids)

**New American Library**, 1633 Broadway, New York, NY 10019
(Paperbacks in women's literature, biography, autobiography, Black and British women's studies)

**Penguin USA, Academic Marketing**, 40 West 23rd St., New York, NY 10010
(Women's history, psychology, literature, health, humor, sex roles)

**Pergamon Press, Inc., Sales Development Dept.**, Maxwell House, Fairview Park, Elmsford, NY 10523
(Athene Series, national and international, publishes Women's Studies International Forum)

**Random House**, 201 E. 50th St., New York, NY 10022

**Routledge, Chapman and Hall, Inc.**, 29 West 35th St., New York, NY 10001-2291
(Extensive special women's studies catalog with complete list of feminist bookstores in U.S.)

**Sage Publications**, 2455 Teller Road, Newbury Park, CA 91320
(Gender Studies books in social sciences)

**Scholarly Resources, Inc.**, 104 Greenhill Ave., Wilmington, DE 19805
(Excellent list and guides to Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony papers)
Unwin Hyman, Inc., 8 Winchester Place, Winchester, MA 01890  
(Gender studies list; Pandora Press)

Upper Midwest Women's History Center, Central Community Center,  
6300 Walker St., St. Louis Park, MN 55416  
(Curricular packets in U.S. and global women's history)

UNIVERSITY PRESSES.

University of California Press, 2120 Berkeley Way, Berkeley, CA 94720  
(Gender and women's studies catalog)

University of Illinois Press, 54 E. Gregory Dr., Champaign, IL 61820  
(Women's Studies catalog)

Indiana University Press, 10th & Morton Sts., Bloomington, IN 47405  
(Women's studies list; publishes Differences: a journal of feminist cultural studies)

The University of Massachusetts Press, Box 429, Amherst, MA 01004  
(Women's studies, Black and Asian studies catalogs)

The University of Michigan Press, 839 Greene St., P. O. Box 1104, Ann Arbor, MI 48106  
(Women and Culture series)

Northeastern University Press,  
P. O. Box 136, Boston, MA 02117

Rutgers University Press, 109 Church St., New Brunswick, NJ 08901  
(Women's list)


University of Texas Press, P. O. Box 7819, Austin, TX 78713-7819  
(Women's Studies catalog; others in general list)

BOOK DEALERS

Daedalus Books, P. O. Box 9132, Hyattsville, MD 20781-0932  
(Offers remainders in trade and university press books, including many women’s studies books)

Just Us Books, Inc., 301 Main St., Suite 22-24, Orange, NJ 07050  
(African-American Heritage children's books)

Maral Enterprises, P. O. Box 361, New York, NY 10028  
(Guide to Black Children's Books; extensive list)

Barbara Walzer Books, P. O. Box 2536, Providence, RI 02906  
(Specializes in rare, unusual and out-of-print books and ephemera, including post cards and posters, relating to women's history; catalogs)
SUPPLIERS OF OTHER USEFUL CLASSROOM MATERIALS

AFL-CIO Education Department, 815 16th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006 (Catalog of films and videotapes for labor and labor union women's history)

Aristoplay, Ltd., P. O. Box 7529, Ann Arbor, MI 48107 Educational games for children, including Great Women series and Black History card games)

Bellerophon Books, 36 Anacapa St., Santa Barbara, CA 93101 (Art coloring books, paper dolls, and biographies, including many women's titles)

California Kids History Catalog, P. O. Box 1521, Sonoma, CA 95476 (Books for children and grown-ups, audio and videotapes, calendars on California history, including women)

Happy Lane Publishers, 18502 Happy Lane, Sonoma, CA 95476 (Women's Studies Grids, a specialized chart study tool for grades 6-12)

Ishtar Films, 6253 Hollywood Blvd., Suite 1107, Hollywood, CA 90028 (Feminist films and videos)

Ladyslipper, Inc., P. O. Box 3124-R, Durham, NC 27715 (recordings by women; posters, books, postcards)

National Asian American Telecommunications Association, 346 Ninth St., 2nd Floor, San Francisco, CA 94103 (Cross Current Media, Asian-American video and audio cassettes)

New Day Films, 121 West 27th St., New York, NY 10001 (Social issue films and videos; many women's titles)

Organization for Equal Education of the Sexes, P. O. Box 438, Main St., Blue Hill, ME 04614 (comprehensive offerings of posters and teaching packets on women's history)

Phoenix Films, 468 Park Ave., So., New York, NY 10016 (films by and about women)

Terra Nova Films, Inc., 9848 S. Winchester Ave., Chicago, IL 60643 (films about women, old and young)

Women in the World Curriculum Resources, 1030 Spruce St., Berkeley, CA 94707 (Two world history units for middle grades and secondary; reproducible pages)

FEMINIST JOURNALS

These monthlies or quarterlies may have articles on women's history:
**Feminisms**, Center for Women's Studies, Ohio State University, 207 Dulles Hall, 230 W. 17th Ave., Columbus, OH 43210

**Feminist Collections**, University of Wisconsin System, Women's Studies Librarian, 112A Memorial Library, 728 State St., Madison, WI 53706

**Feminist Studies**, Women's Studies Program, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742

**Frontiers**, Frontiers Editorial Collective, c/o Women's Studies Program, University of Colorado, Box 246, Boulder, CO 80309

**Signs**, University of Chicago Press, Journals Division, 5720 South Woodlawn Ave., Chicago, IL 60637-4603

**Women's Studies Quarterly**, Feminist Press at CUNY, 311 E. 94th St., New York, NY 10128-5603

**INEXPENSIVE CHILDREN'S BIOGRAPHIES OF WOMEN**


*The Story of the Women's Movement*. Chicago, Children's Press, 1989 ($3.95)


Sabin, Francene. *Young Eleanor Roosevelt*. Mahwah, NJ, Troll Associates, 1990 ($2.50)


**ORGANIZATIONAL PUBLICATIONS**

American Historical Association, 400 A St., S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003 (Publications list includes Gerda Lerner's *Teaching Women's History* and several relating to women in the profession)

The Bethune Museum-Archives, 1318 Vermont Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005 (National Archives for Black Women's History and Mary McLeod Bethune Museum; research, publications, exhibits, educational programs)

Organization of American Historians, 112 N. Bryan St., Bloomington, IN 47408 (Publishes *Magazine of History* and *Restoring Women to History*; teaching
packet for integrating women's history into courses on Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Middle East

National Women's Hall of Fame, 76 Fall St., Seneca Falls, NY 13148
(Catalog offers books, posters, exhibits about women honored in the Hall of Fame)

National Museum of Women in the Arts, 1250 New York Ave., N.W.,
Washington, DC. 20005
(Art museum and library; women's art gifts)

National Women's History Project,
7738 Bell Road, Windsor, CA 95492
(Publishes The Women's History Network News, a quarterly newsletter; a directory of persons interested in exchanging women's history information; provides discounts on purchases, clearinghouse referrals and technical assistance)

Women's Rights National Historical Park,
P. O. Box 70, Seneca Falls, NY 13148
(Publishes educational materials on founding of this Park under the U.S. Dept. of the Interior)

OTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION ABOUT WOMEN'S HISTORY

State departments of education have educational Equity or Sex Desegregation offices. See list in the AFT publication, Resources for Changing Sexist Practices in the Classroom.

Public or college libraries can assist you with guides to women's studies, biographical indexes and dictionaries, abstract indexes, periodical indexes, government publication, and suggested subject headings.

Local, county or state commissions on the status of women may distribute pamphlets, posters or newsletters. Historical societies may have special exhibits or collections.

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Hine, Darlene Clark, Black Women in American History. 15 volumes.


*James, Edward T. and Janet Wilson, Notable American Women 1607-1950. 3 volumes.

Kugler, Israel, From Ladies to Women: The Organizational Struggle for Woman’s Rights in the Reconstruction Era.


______, Teaching Women’s History. (Pamphlet, available from American Historical Association listed under Organizational Publishers.)


*Sicherman, Barbara and Carol Hurd Green, Notable American Women: The Modern Period.

*Smith, Jessie Carney, Notable Black American Women.


*Available from the National Women’s History Project, listed under Major Providers. Their catalog also lists many other reference books and biographies of women.

AFT PUBLICATIONS *

Changing Sexist Practices in the Classroom, #600

Sexual Harassment: Unprofessional... Unacceptable... Unlawful! #604

AFT Women’s Rights Resolutions, #773

Bargaining for Family Issues, #803

Women’s History Month Resource Packet, Single copy free

*These publications may be ordered from the American Federation of Teachers, Human Rights Dept., 555 New Jersey Avenue, N.W., Wash., D.C. 20001.
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"When an effort is made to answer (the question of change in history) by a serious study of historical documents, women is discovered as a force so constant and general that forty volumes, if any number, would hardly suffice to give the record which sustains this generalization about women - the record found in excavated artifacts of a preliterate age, in folklore, in myths, in religious literature, in printed and unprinted manuscripts, in some general histories, in particular studies of women conducted by careful modern scholarship in universal history. Indeed it is hard to miss woman as force if one keeps one's eyes open and seeks, in the scientific spirit, the truth about woman as revealed in a documentation as diverse as it is ponderous, if one is not afraid to know her, if one really wants to know her."

MARY BEARD
Women as Force in History, p. 274
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