

INTERIM PERFORMANCE REPORT
“Women in World History” [Grant ED-50050-03]
Report covering July 1, 2004 to December 31, 2004

During the first year and a half of this grant, we have made considerable progress. The website for *Women in World History* has been designed and the basic infrastructure completed. As a curriculum and resource center for high school and college world history teachers, this website is designed for maximum accessibility and clear presentation and can be viewed at:

<http://chnm.gmu.edu/wwh>. To maximize publicity and accessibility for this project and another world history website project funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, *World History Sources*, we created a world history portal named *World History Matters*. The portal is available at <http://chnm.gmu.edu/worldhistorymatters/> and links to *Women in World History* as well as to *World History Sources*. Users can also go directly to *Women in World History* or to any section within *Women in World History*.

In the past six months, we have focused on building content for and finalizing the structure of the the five main features of the project: *Website Reviews*, *Understanding Evidence*, *Lessons* (now *Curriculum Modules*—see explanation below), *Analyzing Sources*, and *Teaching Case Studies*. We plan to run the forums in fall 2005 and will finalize the format and design this spring.

Website Reviews (<http://chnm.gmu.edu/wwh/wwhreviews.php>) offers essays on the best online primary source archives for studying women in world history. There are particular challenges to finding quality websites that include primary sources on women as available selections are limited in topical diversity, geographical area, and temporal depth. With this feature of *Women in World History*, we hope to minimize these challenges and provide high school and college world history teachers with resources for locating sources, directing students to useful websites, and discerning quality.

Our two editors, Kirsten McKenzie and Nora Jaffray, write reviews that evaluate the teaching potential of the sites and assess the merits and limitations of their content and presentation. Thus far, McKenzie has written nine reviews and Jaffray has written eleven. See, for example, McKenzie’s review of *The Regency Fashion Page* (<http://chnm.gmu.edu/wwh/d/13/wwh.html>) or Jaffray’s review of *Epistolae: Medieval Women’s Latin Letters* (<http://chnm.gmu.edu/wwh/d/17/wwh.html>). Eight reviews pertaining to women’s history drawn from *World History Sources* are also accessible from the site, bringing the total number of reviews to 26. As we find more worthwhile sites, both Jaffray and McKenzie will continue to review them.

Understanding Evidence will teach students how to analyze evidence specifically related to women and world history, with special emphasis on cultural contact and globalization. Nancy Wingfield, the author of this guide, discusses general approaches to studying gender and providing an overview of various source materials, such as personal accounts or travel narratives. Wingfield is working on final revisions and we plan to begin production of the guide in the spring 2005.

Curriculum Modules has replaced *Lessons* as the most content-rich section of the site. After further discussion with teachers as well as considerable work on a lesson on “Women Writers in Early Japan,” we realized that this model did not adequately serve our intended audience. This section remains devoted to providing and analyzing primary sources in a way that will allow secondary level teachers, introductory college instructors, *and* students to gain knowledge of a particular topic and then apply specific strategies to analyze and interpret primary sources. These modules will cover a range of topics, themes, geographic areas, and time periods. Each will include several elements: a 1000-word introductory essay that presents the topic, provides the context for the primary sources, and highlights key themes; a collection of 10-12 primary sources with annotations; advice for instructors on the use of the sources and discussion questions; an annotated bibliography; a lesson plan appropriate for 9-12 grade students created by a high school teacher; and a document-based question that correspond to the Advanced Placement examinations.

We have also decided to add a searchable database for all the primary sources on the site, which will make the primary source materials accessible in two ways. This dual interface will allow teachers to use entire primary source packets to supplement their courses, to create their own groupings of documents for students, to use individual documents in their classes, and to encourage students to pursue their own comparative and cross-cultural interests.

We conducted an extensive search this fall for qualified scholars to write the modules. To date, 17 scholars have agreed to author modules on topics ranging from “Women in the Spanish Civil War” to “19th Century Representations of Chinese Women by Westerners” to “Women’s Health Issues in Latin America.” We have received drafts for most modules, and have developed a prototype for the design. We anticipate that the writing and editing of all seventeen lessons will occur by summer 2005 with production in fall of 2005. We are now recruiting high school teachers to author the lesson plan component of the modules.

Analyzing Sources offers eight multimedia models of scholars discussing strategies for interpreting primary sources, with the aim of making more apparent the work of experienced historians or “expert learners.” The aim of this section is to ask “expert learners” to share their thinking and analytical process when using primary source material to write or teach history. Users simultaneously view a series of sources and listen to leading scholars interpret the sources and discuss strategies for overall analysis. As with *World History Matters*, we decided to use Flash to program these short movies. Production is labor intensive, but allows the project to guide viewers through a more sophisticated analysis of the various primary documents. We are also creating a non-Flash version for those with slower connections or older computer equipment.

In the past year and a half, we have made excellent progress moving all of the interviews into production. We have interviewed nine scholars, completed audio edits for eight interviews, conducted image research for four interviews, and have moved three of the interviews into production. One interview is complete and now accessible to the public (<http://chnm.gmu.edu/wwh/analyzing/prints/printsq1.html>). We anticipate having all eight modules completed in fall 2005.

In November 2003, Maureen Miller (Associate Professor, European History, UC Berkeley, <http://history.berkeley.edu/faculty/Miller/>), discussed literary sources known as *lais*, a collection of court stories on romance from the European Middle Ages. She highlighted one particular story believed to have been written by Marie, a French court woman during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Miller described the cultural milieu within which the *lais* were created and shared differing scholarly views on their significance and interpretation. Miller has since suggested appropriate images to accompany her interview, and production is in progress.

Three scholars were interviewed in December 2003. Brian Platt (Assistant Professor, Japan and East Asia, GMU), analyzed Japanese prints from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. These popular woodblock prints, known as *ukiyo-e*, represent images of women as seen through the eyes of artists. The creators and consumers of this genre of art were Japanese urban commoners who, through this shared visual imagery, contributed to emerging notions of gender and national identity. (<http://chnm.gmu.edu/wwh/analyzing/prints/printsq1.html>)

Sumaiya Hamdani (Assistant Professor, Islamic history, Middle East, Women's Studies, Global History, GMU), discussed Islamic religious texts known as *Hadiths*. These were reports on the social and political context of Prophet Mohammed's life and the impact of his teachings. The specific *hadiths* Hamdani discusses were created after Mohammed's death by women who were close to him and were recorded in writing several generations later. They represent an example of an acceptable, authorial role for women in Islam. We have located images to accompany Hamdani's interview, and currently are working on production.

In January 2004, we interviewed Ellen Fleischmann (Assistant Professor, Middle East and Western Civilization, University of Dayton) and Yvette Richards (Associate Professor, African American Studies, Women's Studies, GMU). Fleischmann's topic was the life history of a twentieth-century Palestinian woman through which she explored gendered concepts of history, issues of political organization and activity, and the importance of education. She reflected on the challenges and rewards of gathering and using personal accounts as a source for writing historical narrative. The interview with Richards was fascinating, but during the paper edit, we recognized that it did not fit into the format of this feature. We hope to find another use for this rich material.

Joan Bristol (Assistant Professor, Latin America, Social and Cultural History, GMU) spoke about a 17th-century Inquisition document from Mexico. These trial records illuminate prevalent social values, political concerns, and economic relationships of colonial Latin America. Bristol suggested ways in which these sources could also be used to chart the history of resistance and discussed issues of production, audience, and timing for using these sources to reconstruct the past.

We finished the final interviews during spring 2004: Meredith McKittrick, Associate Professor of History at Georgetown; Wendi Manuel-Scott (Assistant Professor, GMU); and T. Mills Kelly (Assistant Professor, GMU). McKittrick discussed court transcripts from the "Women's War" in southeastern Nigeria in 1929 and 1930. She addressed issues of colonial rule, women's lives in a changing culture, and the conflict of cultures displayed in the testimonies. Manuel-Scott used

ship manifest records to discuss West Indian immigrants arriving in New York City in the early twentieth century, addressing issues of gender, class, work, racial identity, and bureaucracy. Kelly analyzed census records from the Austrian empire in the early twentieth century, focusing specifically on national identity and on locating information on women in quantitative data.

Teaching Case Studies will offer nine case studies in which experienced classroom teachers offer a look “behind the scenes” into planning and teaching primary sources in world history. Authors select a primary source they commonly use in teaching world history and discuss how they analyze it and how they hope students will analyze it, reflecting on strengths and weaknesses and describing successful teaching strategies. We located nine qualified high school and college teachers from around the country to author these case studies. They have chosen diverse topics dealing with a range of types of primary sources, such as a cartoon from Restoration Japan, letters written by a Czech politician just before her execution by the Communists in 1950, and the personal narrative/oral history of a South African woman. One essay is currently available (<http://chnm.gmu.edu/wwh/d/7/wwh.html>), three are in production, and four more are being edited. We anticipate completion of this section by fall 2005.

One of the larger changes in the project has been related to personnel. In May 2004, Heran Sereke-Brhan resigned as Post-doctoral Fellow/Project Historian for *Women in World History* to pursue work more closely related to her interest in art and Ethiopian history. We reorganized the structure of the work and have made excellent progress on all areas of content development. To assist with various parts of project responsibilities, we have hired two new members of the project team: Sharon Leon and Kristin Lehner. Leon began as a Research Assistant Professor in August 2004. She recently completed her doctorate at the University of Minnesota, and her work focuses on gender and race in the history of science and religion (see attached CV). She will serve as the Associate Director of the project. Lehner is a recent college graduate from Wesleyan University who studied world history and women’s history and has direct experience working on world history web projects (see attached CV). She will help with research and coordination of all parts of the project.

The number of visitors to the CHNM website (<http://chnm.gmu.edu>) and CHNM project sites has increased significantly over the past few years and we anticipate that this heavy traffic will benefit *Women in World History*. In the past year, the average number of page views for all CHNM projects was 6 million (close to 190 million hits). Traffic for *History Matters*, another NEH funded project (<http://historymatters.gmu.edu>) almost doubled, reaching close to 2 million page views in the past year (average number of hits was more than 35 million). Traffic on *Women in World History* is still in its early phase as we have not started publicity and are still in the early phase of making content public. Despite this, we have had more than 4,000 page views in the past six months and these numbers will increase as we begin making more content available and concentrate on outreach and publicity. Visitors have come from many countries, including Canada, Great Britain, Australia, Japan, and Taiwan.

In the past year and a half, we began sharing *Women in World History* with colleagues. Co-Director T. Mills Kelly made a presentation on *Women in World History* at the conference “World History, the Next Ten Years” at Northeastern University in March 2004. In June 2004, Co-Director T. Mills Kelly presented to the World History Institute, a seminar for high school

AP World History teachers. In October 2004, Kelly presented on our project at the meeting of the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning at Indiana University, Bloomington. Stephanie Hurter, a doctoral student working on the project, presented on *Women in World History* at the World History Association conference in June 2004 in Fairfax, Virginia. In October 2004, she made two presentations on *Women in World History*, one at the Virginia Council of Social Studies Educators meeting in Norfolk, Virginia and one at the Mid-Atlantic World History Association Conference in Lincroft, New Jersey. In February 2005 we will send 6,000 postcards to high school and college teachers around the country, and advertise in other world history-related print publications. We are also working with high school and college teachers of world history and are working to incorporate the feedback we receive to ensure that the website is usable and valuable for teachers at many levels.

In sum, we believe we have made good progress in this first year and a half of the grant. We have created the infrastructure and design for the website and refined the features. We have finished prototypes for all features and have developed significant content. In addition, we have raised the matching funds of \$35,000 from private donors.

We would be delighted to provide more detailed information on our progress. We would particularly welcome a visit from NEH staff to the project at George Mason University at any convenient time.

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