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Introduction
This resource guide features primary source content from ProQuest’s Gerritsen Collection of Aletta H. Jacobs, British Periodicals, and Women’s Magazine Archive. Focusing on women’s health and medicine, education, and employment in the long nineteenth century in England and America, this guide is structured to help students, scholars, and instructors create connections between the topics. For instance: most of these texts are written for a female readership: is that readership constructed differently between the genres? Between the readers of domestic health manuals versus essays on women becoming medical professionals? Each topic is accompanied by a brief description and questions to help generate discussions and ideas.

We begin with this introduction and a source on British laws affecting women to give scholars a background on the legal landscape of women’s lives. The second topic is on health and medicine and features texts on women’s and children’s health and domestic home medicine manuals. The third topic contains texts on women’s education and conduct and is designed to demonstrate the continuity between the two genres. The fourth topic is on women’s employment and features census materials, essays on women’s employment, and employment guides.

The Laws Respecting Women outlines laws that affect women, especially as it relates to titles, marriage, property, and children.


Guiding Questions:
• How are laws, conduct, and morality tied together in this text?
• What is the effect of the anecdotal examples that are given?
Health and Medicine

In the long nineteenth century, attending to the family’s health and medical needs was often considered part of a mother’s household duties. Compendiums of domestic medicine were a common household resource that mothers relied on for medical advice, and they often included a mix of what we would now think of as modern medicine and traditional folk remedies. The documents listed below include medical compendiums and periodical articles on health and medicine, management of family medicines, physical fitness, and women’s education and professionalization in medicine.

Guiding Questions:

• How do the authors of the compendiums conceive of “health”? Is it solely what happens within the body?
• Why do you think domestic health manuals had such a long history of popularity? How do health manuals help us historicize both the body and healthcare?
• “Quack Medicines” is part of a series of magazine articles. This one is dedicated to warning mothers against giving their infants and children harmful medicines, including opium and Godfrey’s Cordial. How does the author construct health as a moral issue? How does social class come up in the article? How are ethnicity and religion used?
• How do the articles below frame women’s role in healthcare?

Readings — Medical Handbooks


• Morrill, Charles: The Physiology of Woman and Her Diseases from Infancy to Old Age: including all those of her critical periods, pregnancy and childbirth: their causes, symptoms, and appropriate treatment, with hygienic rules for their prevention, and for the preservation of female health: also, the management of pregnant and parturient women ...: to which is added a treatise on womanhood and manhood, love, marriage, and hereditary descent ... in three books—complete in one volume. Boston: J. Campbell, 1870. http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?url_ver=Z39.88-2004&res_dat=xri:gerritsen&rft_dat=xri:gerritsen:bookrec:Gerritsen-G1992.1

Readings — Newspaper and Journal Articles


Education

Hannah More, Catherine Macaulay, Maria Edgeworth, and Mary Wollstonecraft participated in conversations regarding the education of girls and women, and their books are in clear conversation with each other. Macaulay and Wollstonecraft argue that perceived differences between men and women are only due to the differences in the education that they receive, and that women should therefore receive the same education as men. More, on the other hand, argues that there are innate differences between men and women, and that each gender has different strengths and weaknesses.

In the periodical articles listed below, authors also participate in the debate around female education. In the years closer to the twentieth century, readers will notice that the debate begins to shift from primary school to college—although many of the concerns of the debate persist as this emphasis shifts.

**Guiding Questions:**

- More writes: “The prevailing manners of an age depend more than we are aware, or are willing to allow, on the conduct of women; this is one of the principle hinges on which the great machine of human society turns.” What does she mean by this?
- Why does Wollstonecraft criticize the education that women receive in England? What type of education does Wollstonecraft think women should receive? Why?
- What arguments did authors make against education for women?
- How do authors see education and conduct as connected?
Books:


Periodical Articles:


Employment

In the resources listed below, scholars will find articles and books on different professions available and considered suitable for women in the long nineteenth century. Books and articles often provided resources for women on how to find jobs, how to structure their careers, and what obstacles they might face. Many of these manuals were sold very cheaply because the audience for such books were primarily working-class women. The government documents listed below include census records that provide additional information about employment, and legislation that limited women’s ability to work in bars and taverns.

Guiding Questions:

• How does On the Obstacles to the Employment of Women help us understand women’s attitudes toward work in the nineteenth century? What challenges did women face when seeking employment?

• Alfred Henry Huth deploys a myriad of arguments on why women shouldn’t seek employment. What are Huth’s arguments in this text? Does he deploy any arguments that you have seen before, in contemporary conversations?

• Are there any occupations listed in the government census that surprised you? Are there types of employment that this census seemed to miss? What kind of new research questions does the census generate? How might this information be used in a larger project?

• The Parliament bill calls for mandatory reduction in hours for women who work in bars. Why might a bill like this one be proposed to Parliament? What role does paternalism play here?

• How do texts like A Dictionary of Employments Open to Women help us understand women’s professional opportunities at the turn of the century? How might women have used a text like this to help navigate employment?

Readings — Periodicals and Books


These documents demonstrate the connections between health, education, and employment for women in the long nineteenth-century in Britain and America. In particular, increasing women’s access to education meant that they had more professional opportunities. However, scholars will also notice the tensions between these topics: although family health was often considered a mother’s responsibility, this did not immediately translate into accepting women into medical professions.

ProQuest’s Gerritsen Collection of Aletta H. Jacobs, British Periodicals, and Women’s Magazine Archives provides primary source materials to research the nuances around which gender was understood and discussed on these topics and more. The documents listed in this guide are just a starting point to begin to explore research paper ideas or course syllabi.

Databases Covered in This Guide

- Gerritsen Collection of Aletta H. Jacobs
- British Periodicals
- Women’s Magazine Archive

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