There are six titles of books (I have 1 or 2 copies of each) for you to choose from. You will select a book and check out a copy from me. Following reading the book a 3 to 5 page review will be completed using the following format. These reports will be due May 1, 2007.


“Lucy Sprague Mitchell was by any measure a woman of achievement: a writer, teacher, administrator and social reformer; an amateur architect, poet, illustrator and geographer. Her primary claim to the attention of readers today is her distinction as a builder of experimental institutions and as a leader in the education of children. But for me, the deepest interest in this life story goes beyond Lucy Mitchell’s record as a key figure in progressive education; it lies in a woman’s creative struggle to resolve the conflict between demanding, innovative professional work and full engagement as a wife and mother.”


“In the following pages, I’ll be telling the stories of dozens of women who have been trapped—at the breaking point—by forces stemming directly from our culture’s paradoxical definition of female roles. On the surface, these women’s problems seem infinitely varied, but the paradox of being female in American society underlies all of them.”


Almost half of all professional women are childless at age forty. The more a woman succeeds in her career, the less likely it is that she will have a partner or a baby. For men the opposite is true: the more successful a man is professionally, the more likely it is that he will be married with children.

Hewlett brings to the book her substantial expertise as a policy analyst and her own difficult experiences of pregnancy and motherhood.


Modern women’s history is a complex and dramatic tale. The changes in women’s lives over the last century have had a profound effect on the world. This book celebrates seven larger-than-life women who influenced not only their professions—politics, journalism, anthropology, acting, sports, dance and music—but the way women saw themselves and their options in life.

A leading authority in the field here provides the first synthetic and comprehensive history of women in American education in over fifty years. “This marvelous and monumental book will be an enduring classic—a major contribution to our understanding of historical changes in the lives of American women during the past two hundred years. It is a very human book, filled with humor as well as statistics and it will be enjoyed by a general as well as an academic audience.” —K. K. Sklar


In volume one of this landmark study, focusing on developments up to 1940, Rossiter describes the activities and personalities of the numerous women scientists—astronomers, chemists, biologists, and psychologists—who overcame extraordinary obstacles to contribute to the growth of American Science. This remarkable history recounts women’s efforts to establish themselves as members of the scientific community and examines the forces that inhibited their active and visible participation in the sciences.


In volume two Rossiter continues to interpret the history of American women scientists covering the crucial period of World War II and beyond. The acute manpower shortages brought on by the war seemed to hold out new hope for women professionals, especially in the sciences. But the public posture of welcoming women into the scientific professions masked a deep-seated opposition to change.

Alternative books will be considered, but must be approved by the instructor no later than Feb. 1, 2003. If student wishes to read an alternative book, a copy must be provided for the instructor’s review. That copy will be returned to the student.
THE BOOK REVIEW:

Although a book review, like a book report, spends some time discussing the content of the book, its main purpose is not informational, but analytic and persuasive. The writer, in analyzing the content, format, argument and context within which the book was written, argues that the book is worth reading or not.

PREPARING TO WRITE THE BOOK REVIEW:

Before you write the book review, but after you have read the book, you should make notes on the following areas:

1. **The Author:**
   - Background & Qualifications
   - Writing Style
   - Use of sources (See Bibliography & Table of Charts & Figures)
   - His/her purpose in writing the book

2. **The Book Format:**
   - Table of Contents
   - Section & Chapter Titles
   - Index
   - Introduction (often tells the format, purpose & intended audience)

3. **The Content:**
   - Introduction/ Conclusion
   - Preface
   - Chapter summaries
   - Tables, Graphs, Figures etc.

STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK REVIEW:

1. **Introduction:**
   - A general description of the book: title, author, subject and format. Here you can include details about who the author is and where he/she stands in this field of inquiry. You can also link the title to the subject to show how the title explains the subject matter.
   - A brief summary of the purpose of the book and its general argument or theme. Include a statement about who the book is intended for.
   - Your thesis about the book: is it a suitable/ appropriate piece of writing about the problem for the audience it has identified?

2. **Summary of Content:**
This can be done in the same way that it is done for the simple book report. (Do not spend too much time or paper on this section, as the analysis of content is more important than a simple summary.)

3. **Analysis of Text:**
   - What is the writer's style: simple/technical; persuasive/logical?
   - How well does the organizational method (comparison/contrast; cause/effect; analogy; persuasion through example) develop the argument or theme of the book? (Give examples to support your analysis.)
   - What evidence does the book present to support the argument? (Give examples: maps, charts, essays by experts, quotes, newspaper clippings.)
   - How convincing is this evidence? (Select pieces of evidence that are weak, or strong, and explain why they are such.)
   - How complete is the argument?
   - Are there facts & evidence that the author has neglected to consider? (Here you may use a comparable book on the same topic to illustrate what has been omitted.)

4. **Evaluation of the Text:**
   - Give a brief summary of all the weakness and strengths you have found in the book. Does it do what it set out to do?
   - Evaluate the book's overall usefulness to the audience it is intended for.
     (Is it suitable for other audiences as well?)
   - Note why you liked/disliked the book.

**QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF:**

- Does my introduction clearly set out who the author is, what the book is about and what I think about the value of the book?
- Have I clearly presented all the facts about the book: title, author, publication details, and content summary?
- Is my review well organized with an easily identifiable structure?
- Have I represented the book's organizational structure and argument fairly and accurately?
- Have I presented evidence from the book to back up statements I have made about the author, his/her purpose and about the structure, research and argument of the book?
- Have I presented a balanced argument about the value of the book for its audience.
  (Harsh judgments are difficult to prove and show academic intolerance.)

**SOURCES FOR THESE NOTES:**