

Handout for Researching Female Ancestors

Wednesday, November 13, 2019, Camarillo Public Library Genealogy Class
Lyn Gesch

Some suggested publications on how-to and social history in researching and writing about women:

A Genealogist's Guide to Discovering Your Female Ancestors, Sharon DeBartolo Carmack (Betterway Books, 1998) (social history-oriented) (available in the VCGS Collection at CPL)

The Hidden Half of the Family, Christina Kassabian Schaefer (Genealogical Publishing Co., 1999) (reference book)

"Immigrant Women and Family Planning: Historical Perspectives for Genealogical Research," Sharon DeBartolo Carmack, NGSQ, vol. 84, no. 2, June 1996

Reassembling Female Lives, Special Issue of the National Genealogical Society Quarterly, vol. 88, no. 3, September 2000

No one record will provide the evidence you need.

Follow paths through lives of people she knew.

Pay attention to the details in records. *Who is mentioned and how are they related?*

Analyze the clues you have. *(Think. Develop questions to research. Next steps.)*

Dig into records that are harder to access (*court records, land records, probates, newspapers!*)

Learn the laws. *When could women marry? How old to witness a deed or will? When were widows allowed a military pension? a dower? Could married women run a business on their own? Buy land?*

Tracing Your Female Ancestors, vols. I and II, compiled by Gena Philibert-Ortega (2013 & 2015)

"Widows, Stepkin, and Support Networks: Clues to the Unknown Father of Miranda (Taylor) Morris," William M. Litchman, NGSQ

Writing a Woman's Life, Carolyn G. Heilbrun (Ballantine Books, 1988)

Selected Books in the VCGS Collection at the Camarillo Public Library:

American Women and the U.S. Armed Forces, Charlotte Palmer Seeley

Capital Intentions: Female Proprietors in San Francisco, 1850-1920, Edith Sparks

Conversations with Pioneer Women, Fred Lockley

Imperial Valley Nisei Women, Joan Loveridge-Sanbonmatsu

Linking Our Lives: Chinese American Women of Los Angeles (Asian American Studies, UCLA)

Notable Black American Women, Jessie Carney Smith, ed.

Pioneer Women: Voices from the Kansas Frontier, Joanna Stratton

Pioneers in Petticoats: Yosemite's Early Women 1856-1900, Shirley Sargent

Women and the Law of Property in Early America, Marylynn Salmon