WOMEN’S STUDIES: 
A BRIEF GUIDE TO RESOURCES IN THE WATKINSON LIBRARY

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INTRODUCTION

The Library’s major holdings in 19th-century American materials provide the greatest concentration of resources for Women’s Studies. There are also British holdings in some abundance, while other areas of the world are less well represented.

This guide provides an overview of collections, both print and manuscript, which include materials relating to topics in Women’s Studies. It is not intended to be a bibliography, but is intended rather to assist researchers in locating resources of possible interest. Topics selected for discussion are those most often mentioned by researchers. A listing of selected collections including women’s studies resources is given first, followed by a listing of topics with suggestions for finding appropriate materials in various collections.
SELECTED COLLECTIONS: Ephemera, Manuscripts, Periodicals

Ephemera

This collection of non-book items covers a wide variety of forms and subjects. It ranges from advertisements, concert and theatre programs to autograph albums and valentines. There are over 100 scrapbooks from the period ca. 1820-1900, including 12 volumes of newspaper clippings compiled by Mary Trumbull Prime during the Civil War years. Ephemera materials are not cataloged online. Access to ephemera is by means of a card catalog in the Watkinson Library. This catalog is arranged and indexed by category of material and subject.

Manuscripts

Manuscript holdings date roughly from the beginning of the 17th century to the present. While most are American in origin, some are European, chiefly English. There are over 100 separate collections, most either fully cataloged or processed. Access to manuscript collections is by means of a card catalog in the Library and a union file that identifies the collection in which material can be found. In addition, there is a print guide to manuscripts titled Manuscripts in the Watkinson Library, Watkinson Library Guides, No. 7 (2nd edition, 1997). An online version of this guide can be found on the Watkinson website.

Manuscript collections having to do with women, as authors or subjects, include the following. (For complete descriptions, the manuscripts guide and card catalog should be consulted.)

Diaries
6 diaries and journals by women, 19th and early 20th c., American; 2 diaries of a schoolgirl, early 20th c., American.

Gladys Gage
Letters written to her family in Hartford by a teacher of Japanese-American students in Seattle, Washington, during World War II; also, letters to Gage from her students, interned in 1942.
Hartford Residents
Composite collection of letters from or to Hartford residents, 1807-1947. Includes some women, e.g. Henrietta Gardiner, Harriet Beecher Stowe.

Constance Maxon
Correspondence of an aspiring poet and novelist with notable literary figures, 1956-1964.

Edna St. Vincent Millay
3 letters, galley proofs, clippings and ephemera, of the American poet who lived from 1892-1950.

Religion
Includes incomplete manuscript Bible (1846) translated by Julia E. Smith.

Sibour Family
Papers, 1589-1917; includes an autobiographical manuscript by Mary de Sibour.

Lydia Sigourney
Letters, ephemera, etc., of Hartford’s famous 19th-century poet.

Martha Linsley Spencer
Papers relating to the poetry and other writings of the Hartford poet who lived from 1875 to 1954 and was poetry editor of the Hartford Times.

Thrall Family
Papers of a farming family of Granby, Connecticut, and New Harmony, Indiana, 1765-1859; provides insights into the life of a pioneer family.

U. S Civil War
Includes 14 letters (1863-1864) addressed to a Connecticut woman, Mrs. Cordelia Arnold, from family while her husband was away fighting in the Civil War.

Charles Dudley Warner
Papers covering the life and writings of the Hartford author and editor who lived from 1829 to 1900; includes correspondence with women literary figures and others, e.g., Helen Hunt Jackson, Mary Mapes Dodge, Annie Fields.

Susan Lee Warner (Mrs. Charles Dudley)
Correspondence, journal, and calling book of the Hartford pianist and wife of Charles Dudley Warner, who lived from 1838 to 1921.
World War, 1914-1918
Composite collection including letters from a young corporal in the U. S. Army to his sisters.

Elinor Wylie
Papers relating to the life of the American poet who lived from 1885 to 1928.

Periodicals

The Library has an excellent collection of periodicals, with special strengths in the 19th century. There are very strong holdings for American 19th-century periodicals intended primarily for women. Such periodicals are a valuable source for all kinds of articles dealing with traditional “women’s” topics. Some are primarily literary magazines, with contributions by women writers. Few of these periodicals are indexed in Poole’s Index to Periodical Literature, but they may be in An Annotated Bibliography of American Literary Periodicals, 1741-1850, compiled by Jayne K. Kribbs. The following list gives the titles, holdings, and a brief summary of contents for the leading American and other (mostly British) women’s periodicals in the Library. If indexed by Kribbs, a title is marked with an asterisk (*).

American Kitchen Magazine. (Title varies.) Boston, 1894-1903. v. 1-18.
Wider in scope than its title suggests. All aspects of home economics, health and some general articles. TX 1/.E9

Delineator. New York, 1900-03. v. 55-62.
Butterick’s fashion magazine. Colored illustrations. Also contains stories, articles of general interest, household topics. Quarto/TT500/.D3

Dining Room Magazine. New York, 1876-77. v. 1-2.
Cookery; primarily recipes. 641.5/D58

English journal not exclusively for women, containing a variety of articles, many written by Eliza Cook. AP 4/.E4

Family Circle and Parlor Annual. (Title varies.) New York, 1841-47. v. 1-3, 5-6.
General articles, moral tales, music, colored illustrations of flowers. AP 2/.C521

English magazine for women. Stories, sewing patterns, etc. AP 4/.F17

*Godey’s Lady’s Book.* (Title varies). Philadelphia, 1832-87. v. 5-8, 10-11, 21-24, 34-35, 40-53, 55-61, 68-69, 74-97, 114-115. Generally known for its colored fashion illustrations, but with much more of real substance for women. Under the leadership of editor Sarah Josepha Hale, who included fashion plates only because publisher Godey insisted on them, the magazine touched on many issues (e.g., women’s education, health, reform in the medical profession, etc.) and introduced American women writers (e.g., Harriet Beecher Stowe) at a time when many magazines featured English authors. AP 2/.G56


*Home Monthly.* Buffalo, N.Y., 1859. v. 1-2. Literary; women editors. AP 2/.H702

*Home World.* New Haven, Conn., 1884-88. v. 2, no. 1-v.2., no. 12. Popular magazine for women and families. AP 2/.H75


*Juvenile port-folio.* Philadelphia, 1813-14, 1816. v. 1-2, 4. Literature, etc. AP 2/.J95


Popular literature; colored plates.  AP 2/.L132

Literature.  AP 2/.L138

Literature.  AP 2/.L14  

Edited by Sarah Hale. Fiction, essays, poetry, music, some colored fashion plates.  
Hale’s interest in providing intellectual stimulation for women readers, an interest she continued with Godey’s Lady’s Book, is clearly revealed in this magazine.  AP 2/.L343

Ladies' Pearl.* (Title varies.) Lowell, Mass., 1840-43. v. 1-3.  
Literature, general topics.  AP 2/.L153

Ladies' Repository.* Cincinnati, Ohio, 1841-76. v. 1-24, 26-34, 36.  
Literature.  AP 2/.L198

Ladies' Wreath.* New York, 1846-61. v. 1-4, 6-9, 11-14, 22-23.  
Literature, music, color plates.  AP 2/.L23

Lady's Magazine and Musical Repository.* New York, 1801. v. 2  
Literature, music.  AP 2/.L27

The first American women’s magazine. Edited by a committee of men (anonymous).  
Literature. Includes a selection from Mary Wollstonecraft’s *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, published in the same year.  AP 2/.A2/L2

Literary, etc.; written by the women mill workers of the Lowell mills.  AP 2/.L88

English magazine; besides cookery, etc., contains articles on social issues.  640.5/M18

Mother at Home and Household Magazine. New York, 1869. v.1, no. 1, 7.  
Edited by Mrs. Henry Ward Beecher.  640.5/M91s

Mother’s Assistant and Young Lady’s Friend.* Boston, 1841-52. v. 1-23.  
Primarily education and upbringing of children.  AP 2/.M792
Domestic subjects; education and upbringing of children. AP 2/.M793

Stories; fashion; domestic subjects. AP 2/.M6

Children’s upbringing; education; morals, etc. AP 2/.M614

General interest magazine, but published with women readers in mind. AP 2/.N623

Parlour Companion.* (Continues: Juvenile Port Folio and Literary Miscellany.)
Philadelphia, 1817. v. 1.
Women’s interests; serialized stories. AP 2/.P307

Literature; music; art; colored fashion plates. Quarto/AP 2/.P308

Similar to Godey’s in content and intent but not as distinguished. AP 2/.P48

Literature, etc. AP 2/.R35

English magazine with society news, books, theatre, fashion, articles. Quarto/TT 500/.Q3

English magazine including colored fashion plates, fabric samples, illustrations of household articles and domestic manufactures. AP 4/.R4

Popular articles, stories; interesting advertisements. Quarto/AP 2/.L22

English literary magazine edited by Oscar Wilde. Quarto/AP 4/.W78
OTHER SOURCES:

In addition to the resources—ephemera, manuscripts, and periodicals—listed above, there are other significant print materials pertinent to research in women’s studies. Most of these materials are accessible through the online catalog.

The Barnard Collection of over 7,000 textbooks, from the personal library of 19th-century Hartford educator Henry Barnard, offers a remarkable view into education in America from the late 18th through late 19th-centuries. Women often were the authors of textbooks and involved in all aspects of education. The collection is supported by runs of a number of 19th-century education periodicals of which the most important is the American Journal of Education, covering such subjects as the kindergarten movement, school design and curriculum, teacher training, and education of women.

In the general collection, there are ca. 1,500 volumes of children’s books from the 18th through the 20th centuries, primarily American and English, and a number of 19th-century children’s periodicals. The Library’s collection of alphabet books (ABC books) comprises ca. 400 titles, mainly juvenile, from the early 18th to the late 20th centuries. Illustrations and texts in both categories of juvenile books provide rich resources for the study of many topics concerning gender roles and the family in society.

Women authors are represented in important holdings of English and American literature which begin in the 16th century. The largest concentration is in the 19th and 20th centuries, with a good collection of books by 19th-century American women authors such as Helen Hunt Jackson and Lydia Sigourney as well as minor writers.

A collection of over 1,000 etiquette books, chiefly 19th century but also into the early 20th century, includes “How-to” and advice books concerning behavior, dress, morals, letter writing, courtship and marriage, and the raising of families. Though many etiquette books were written with women in mind, men and children also were targeted as readers, and the Watkinson collection presents an excellent overview of these popular publications.

Issues related to women’s health can be researched in the Watkinson’s substantial collection of books, chiefly 19th-century American, on all aspects of health and hygiene—health and conventional medicine, patent medicine, homeopathy and botanical medicine, hydropathy and other cures, nutrition, exercise, clothing reform, etc. Studies in domestic economy can be supported by books and periodicals, chiefly 19th-century American, about cooking and household management.

The role of women in the arts—music, art, theater—and the depiction of women in the arts can be explored in an important collection of American music, mainly 19th century. In addition to many books (psalm books, tune books, hymn books) which are cataloged
online, there are over 26,000 pieces of **sheet music**. Important in the study of social history and often of interest for its illustrated covers, sheet music is accessible by means of a card catalog located in the Watkinson Library.

The role of women in **religion** and attitudes towards women as reflected in religion can be studied in significant holdings of American and British Protestant books and periodicals, chiefly 19th century but also into the 20th century. Of particular interest for Women’s Studies research are materials relating to the Mormons and the Shakers (including a run of the periodical, the *Shaker Manifesto*, 1878-91).

**A NOTE IN CONCLUSION:**

Researchers should be aware that although the items and collections mentioned in this guide will have direct application to topics in women’s studies, the Watkinson Library may offer many other, less clearly discerned avenues for investigation. In general, the researcher is advised to explore Watkinson holdings by searching the CTW catalog for all subjects of interest, keeping in mind the Watkinson’s special strengths in 19th-century American history and culture. Subject and keyword searches (for example, “Women—employment—United States,” or “Temperance”), with the Watkinson selected as the library to be searched, will produce results quickly. Only manuscripts, ephemera, and certain uncataloged print materials cannot be accessed in this way and indexes in the Watkinson library must be consulted (see above, Ephemera, Manuscripts).