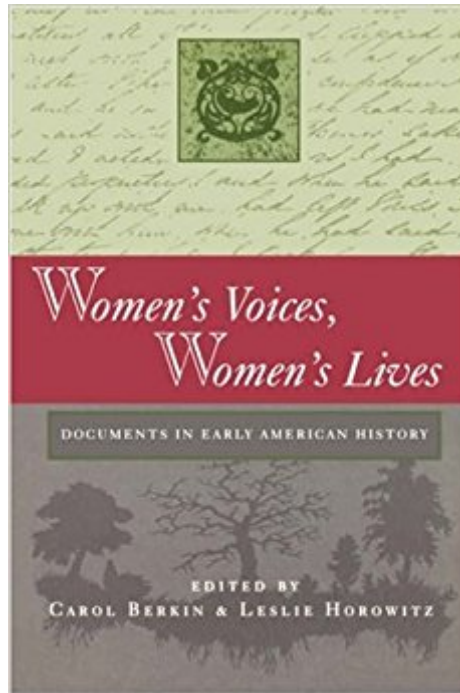


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Women's Voices, Women's Lives: Documents In Early American History



Synopsis

The editors draw on diaries, letters, essays, court documents, sermons, wills, plantation records, newspapers, fiction, and advice manuals to reconstruct women's lives and roles during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In addition to sources that convey women's experiences in their own words, the work includes prescriptive and proscriptive materials, most written by men, to further illuminate women's behavior and attitudes. The book is divided into six thematic chapters: sex and reproduction, marriage and family, women's work, religion, politics and the law, and changing gender ideologies. Introductory essays by the editors place each section within historical, cultural, and social context, and each source is annotated with information about the document's author and insightful interpretation of its typicality or its special circumstances. This enriching collection fills a major gap in the study of early American women, and it is sure to stimulate further discussions about both the common and diverse aspects of their lives.

Book Information

Paperback: 224 pages

Publisher: Northeastern; annotated edition edition (May 7, 1998)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1555533507

ISBN-13: 978-1555533502

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.5 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 7.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 1 customer review

Best Sellers Rank: #673,535 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #75 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Gender Studies > Women in History](#) #1160 in [Books > History > Americas > United States > Colonial Period](#) #2988 in [Books > History > World > Women in History](#)

Customer Reviews

Carol Berkin is Professor of History at Baruch College and the Graduate Center, City University of New York. She is the author of *First Generations: Women in Colonial America*, co-author of *Making America: A History of the United States*, and co-editor of *Women of America: A History and Women, War, and Revolution*. She lives in New York City. Leslie Horowitz is a Ph. D. candidate in American history at Cornell University. She lives in Ithaca, New York.

Synopsis: This book offers a wealth of primary sources on women's experiences in colonial American. Carol Berkin and Leslie Horowitz gather together a broad spectrum of documents that crosscuts race, class, and region, presenting the voices of African American, European, and Native American women, the rich and the poor, and the women in the south, the middle colonies and New England. (from the back of the book) Review: This book appeared in the bibliography of every single book I've read on women in colonial America. I figured, I should read it. I'm glad I did. Organized by subjects, each chapter each chapter begins with a short exposition of the subject and the general overview. It's followed by reprints of a variety of documents, each with a short explanation. This makes it easy to understand what you are reading, as colonial English can be a bit challenging to the modern reader. I enjoyed Berkin and Horowitz opinions, and the way they attempted to included everyone, not just the white elite. They were honest about the lack of documents from Native American and Negro sources, doing their best to include what they had. I recommend this book as a good starting point for study about colonial females.

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