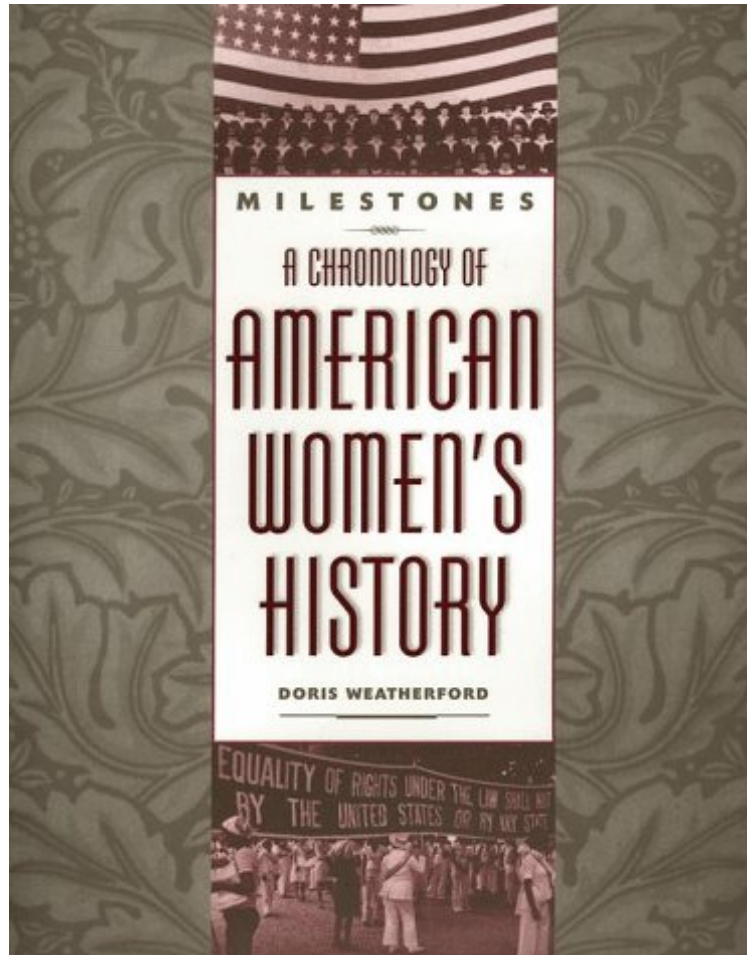


(Free) Milestones: A Chronology of American Women's History

## Milestones: A Chronology of American Women's History

*Doris L. Weatherford*

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**Doris L. Weatherford : Milestones: A Chronology of American Women's History** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Milestones: A Chronology of American Women's History:

Milestones reveals the advances, defeats, events, and contributions made by women that helped shape the development of this country. Beginning in 1492 with the role Columbus's mother-in-law played in the discovery of America, these concise chronological entries interconnect to explain important, yet often overlooked, aspects of women's history.

From Library JournalThe author of several works related to women's history, including American Women and World War II (LJ 9/1/90), Weatherford again focuses on the achievements of women in American history. Beginning in 1492

and ending in 1995, her book provides brief, informative entries on events and people from all walks of life, including government, industry, the arts, education, and medicine. The entries are organized chronologically within ten chapters and an 11th covering "the multiplicity of women in modern America." The activities of such famous women as Martha Washington and Dorothea Dix are chronicled here, but one can also find women like Capt. Mary T. Klinker, the "last American woman to die in the Vietnam War." Though it appears anomalous, the book contains at least one small error regarding a group of "Christian Indians" killed in 1782 in east Central Ohio (not northern Ohio in 1852). Libraries that own James Trager's *The Women's Chronology* (LJ 8/94) may still want to purchase this work, as it contains information not found there. A complement to reference collections in public libraries aiming for a thorough coverage of women's history. (Illustrations and index not seen.) Elaine M. Kuhn, Allen Cty. P.L., Fort Wayne, Ind. Copyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc. From *Booklist* Chronologies on women's history in the next decades and beyond should take note of the absolute publishing boom in the 1990s of chronologies and timelines on women. *Facts On File* brings out this latest, by Doris Weatherford, which follows on the heels of two from Gale Research: *Chronology of Women Worldwide* [RBB F 1 97] and *Women's Firsts* [RBB Mr 15 97], as well as *Chronology of Women's History* by Kirsten Olsen [RBB S 15 94] and *The Women's Chronology* [RBB O 15 94]. An example of a more focused chronology is *Women Writers in the United States: A Timeline of Literary, Cultural, and Social History* [RBB S 1 96]. This newest title aims to place women in the context of American history, highlighting not only both famous events and individuals but also those whose existence is often neglected in historical documentation. The book is divided into chapters with names such as "Women in the Age of Exploration," but the coverage is basically a straightforward year-by-year chronology of short entries on women's lives and accomplishments and the events that affected them. The time period covered begins with 1492 (and Columbus borrowing maps from his mother-in-law for his historic voyage) and continues to 1995, a year that included Shannon Faulkner's admission to the Citadel. A selected bibliography of books and articles is appended, as well as a list of the archives consulted. There is a single index covering subject and name. Some broad subject areas, such as abortion and divorce, are indexed. It would be helpful to be able to look up women or events under even broader terms, such as art or medicine. The coverage of American women is indeed greater here than in the more general women's chronologies reviewed earlier in RBB. In the year 1857, for example there are 10 entries, generally three times more on American women than in any of the other chronologies whose scope is wider in time and geography. Entries in *Milestones* for 1857 include a reference to the book published by Delia Bacon on the authorship of Shakespeare's plays, information about little-known abolitionist journalist Jane Grey Swissholm, and a paragraph on the first southern woman to earn a medical degree. It is curious to compare what is selected for inclusion in all of these works. There is never complete overlap, and each may include different bits of information. What must be kept in mind is the imprecision of some of the information, especially regarding dates. For example, Elizabeth Blackwell, the first trained female physician, founded the New York Infirmary for Women and Children in the nineteenth century. With an all-female staff, it was to serve the indigent, especially immigrants in that city. *Milestones* gives the opening of the infirmary as March 1855. Two of the other women's chronologies give opening dates of May 1855. The entries in *Women's Firsts* adds to the confusion, citing the opening of the infirmary as circa 1855 in its year-by-year index but as 1858 in the body of the work categorized by topic. These are minor discrepancies, but since many of these new reference works are compiled by gathering items from other reference sources without extensive fact-checking, it is easy to see how errors or inconsistencies can be replicated. (The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and most sources, by the way, cite the opening of the infirmary as 1857.) So, should anyone buy yet another chronology of women's history? Certainly this latest addition does provide more information on American women than the others, and it includes many glimpses of less than famous women and events, with engaging glimpses of women in their times. With such a wealth of information for women's studies or American social history, this book can be used in most types of libraries. Its breadth may be especially appreciated in academic and large public libraries. Year-by-year coverage links women's history to American events, from two early female pirates who battled the English to a female correspondent behind enemy lines during the Mexican American War. This is packed with well researched entries which provide spice and little-known color to the field of women's history, and which shall enrich both students and adult browsers. -- Midwest Book