

3-1-2017

## Featured Bookshelf: 2017 Women's History Month

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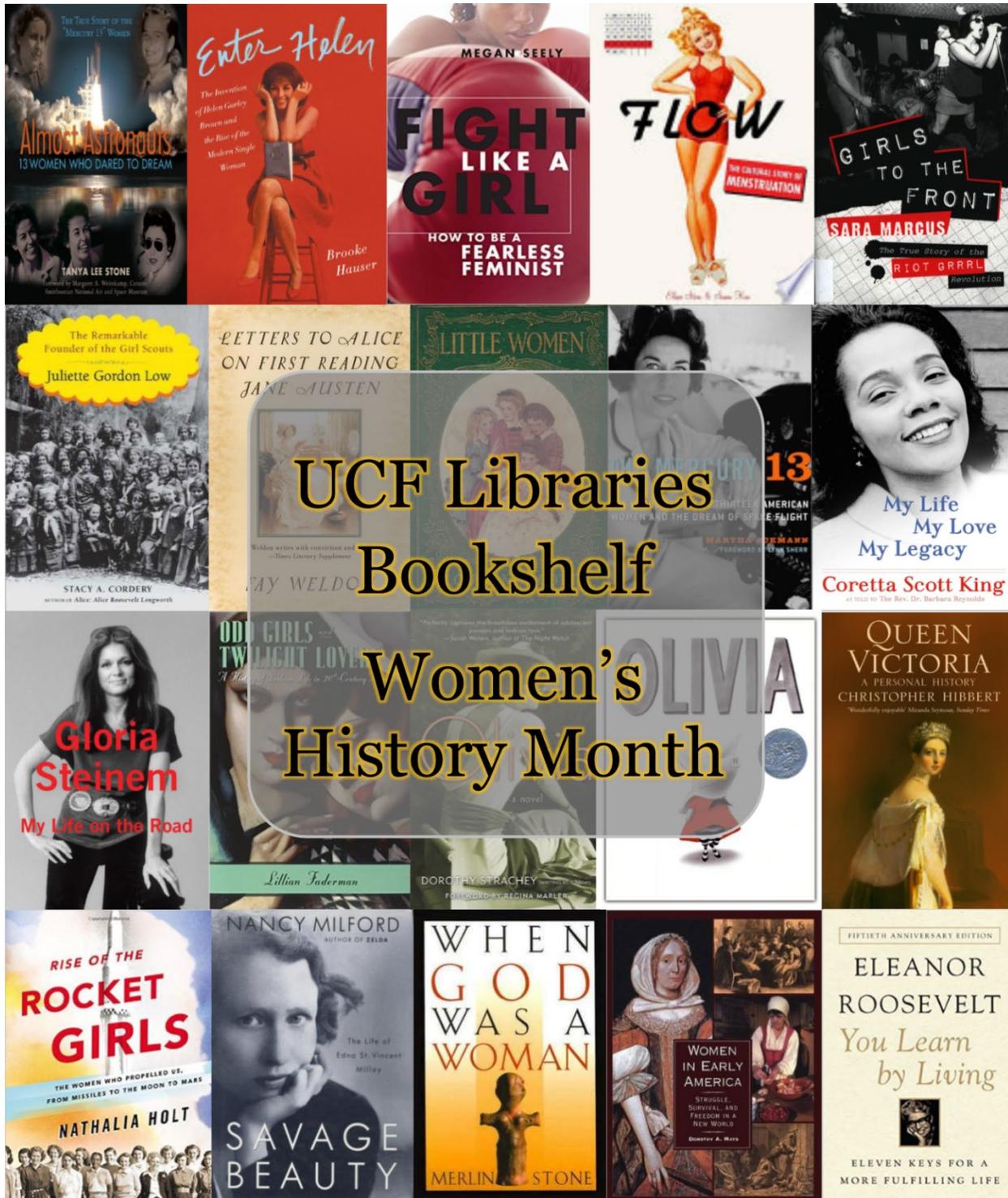
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### STARS Citation

Haught, Megan M., "Featured Bookshelf: 2017 Women's History Month" (2017). *Featured Bookshelf*. 10.  
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Women's History Month began as a week-long celebration by in Sonoma, California in 1978 which was centered around International Women's Day on March 8. A year later during a women's history conference at Sarah Lawrence College, participants learned how successful the week was and decided to initiate similar in their own areas. President Carter issued the first proclamation for a national Women's History Week in 1980. In 1987, Congress (after being petitioned by the National Women's History

Project) passed Pub. L. 100-9 designating March as Women's History Month. U.S. Presidents have issued proclamations on Women's History Month since 1988.

Here at the UCF Libraries, we have created a list of suggested, and favorite, books about women's history in both fact and fiction.

**Almost Astronauts: 13 Women Who Dared to Dream by Tanya Lee Stone**

<http://ucf.catalog.fcla.edu/permalink.jsp?29CF020311762>

What does it take to be an astronaut? Excellence at flying, courage, intelligence, resistance to stress, top physical shape, any checklist would include these. But when America created NASA in 1958, there was another unspoken rule: you had to be a man. Here is the tale of thirteen women who proved that they were not only as tough as the toughest man but also brave enough to challenge the government. They were blocked by prejudice, jealousy, and the scrawled note of one of the most powerful men in Washington. But even though the Mercury 13 women did not make it into space, they did not lose, for their example empowered young women to take their place in the sky, piloting jets and commanding space capsules.

*Suggested by Jamie LaMoreaux, Acquisitions & Collections*

**Enter Helen: the invention of Helen Gurley Brown and the rise of the modern single woman by Brooke Hauser**

<http://ucf.catalog.fcla.edu/permalink.jsp?29CF034218065>

Chronicles the rise of a cultural icon who redefined what it means to be an American woman. In 1965, Helen Gurley Brown, author of the groundbreaking bestseller *Sex and the Single Girl*, took over an ailing *Cosmopolitan* and soon revamped it into one of the most bankable--and revolutionary--brands on the planet. At a time when women's magazines taught housewives how to make the perfect casserole, Helen spoke directly to the single girl next door, cheekily advising her on how to pursue men, money, power, pleasure, and, most of all, personal happiness. Bringing New York City vibrantly to life during the sexual revolution and the women's movement, and featuring a rich cast of characters, including Hugh Hefner and Gloria Steinem, *Enter Helen* is the riveting story of a polarizing pioneer who bucked convention to define her own destiny, baiting a generation that both revered and rejected her.

*Suggested by Richard Harrison, Subject Librarian*

**Fight like a Girl: How to be a Fearless Feminist by Megan Seely**

<http://ucf.catalog.fcla.edu/permalink.jsp?29CF022143918>

*Fight Like A Girl* offers a fearless vision for the future of feminism. By boldly detailing what is at stake for women and girls today, Megan Seely outlines the necessary steps to achieve true political, social and economic equity for all. Reclaiming feminism for a new generation, *Fight Like A Girl* speaks to young women who embrace feminism in substance but not necessarily in name.

*Suggested by Mary Rubin, Special Collections & University Archives*

**Flow: The Cultural Story of Menstruation by Elissa Stein**

<http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/317929082>

Flow spans its fascinating, occasionally wacky and sometimes downright scary story: from mikvahs (ritual cleansing baths) to menopause, hysteria to hysterectomies - not to mention the Pill, cramps, the history of underwear, and the movie about puberty they showed you in 5th grade.

*Suggested by Megan Haught, Teaching & Engagement/Research & Information Services*

**Girls to the Front: The True Story of the Riot Grrrl Revolution by Sara Marcus**

<http://ucf.catalog.fcla.edu/permalink.jsp?29CF025564999>

Girls to the Front is the epic, definitive history of Riot Grrrl—the radical feminist uprising that exploded into the public eye in the 1990s and included incendiary punk bands Bikini Kill, Bratmobile, Heavens to Betsy, and Huggy Bear. A dynamic chronicle not just a movement but an era, this is the story of a group of pissed—off girls with no patience for sexism and no intention of keeping quiet.

*Suggested by Carrie Moran, User Engagement Librarian*

**Juliette Gordon Low : the remarkable founder of the Girl Scouts by Stacy A. Cordery**

<http://ucf.catalog.fcla.edu/permalink.jsp?29CF027431013>

In celebration of the Girl Scouts' centennial, this biography is a salute to its maverick founder. Born at the start of the Civil War, Juliette Gordon Low grew up in Georgia, where she struggled to reconcile being a good Southern belle with her desire to run barefoot through the fields. Deafened by an accident, "Daisy" married a dashing British aristocrat and moved to England. But she was ultimately betrayed by her husband and dissatisfied by the aimlessness of privileged life. Her search for a greater purpose ended when she met Robert Baden-Powell, war hero, adventurer, and founder of the Boy Scouts. Captivated with his program, Daisy aimed to instill the same useful skills and moral values in young girls, with an emphasis on fun. She imported the Boy Scouts' sister organization, the Girl Guides, to Savannah in 1912. Rechristened the Girl Scouts, it grew rapidly because of her unquenchable determination and energetic, charismatic leadership. In this biography, the author paints a dynamic portrait of an intriguing woman and a true pioneer whose work touched the lives of millions of girls and women around the world.

*Suggested by Richard Harrison, Subject Librarian*

**Letters to Alice on First Reading Jane Austen by Fay Weldon**

<http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/42881045>

Alternating between passages from Jane Austen's novels and accounts of her own career, Weldon reveals the connections between art and life, and charts Alice's trajectory from unpublished writer to celebrated author, her success ultimately outstripping that of her famous "aunt." Letters to Alice puts Austen's works into a contemporary perspective as it explores the craft of writing fiction, the pitfalls of publishing too early, the conventions that stifle the creative impulse, and more. In paying tribute to Austen, Weldon opens an illuminating window onto reading, writing, and why literature matters.

*Suggested by Jamie LaMoreaux, Acquisitions & Collections*

### **Little Women by Louisa May Alcott**

<http://ucf.catalog.fcla.edu/permalink.jsp?29CF026613360>

Lovely Meg, talented Jo, frail Beth, spoiled Amy: these are hard lessons of poverty and of growing up in New England during the Civil War. Through their dreams, plays, pranks, letters, illnesses, and courtships, women of all ages have become a part of this remarkable family and have felt the deep sadness when Meg leaves the circle of sisters to be married at the end of Part I. Part II, chronicles Meg's joys and mishaps as a young wife and mother, Jo's struggle to become a writer, Beth's tragedy, and Amy's artistic pursuits and unexpected romance. Based on Louise May Alcott's childhood, this lively portrait of nineteenth-century family life possesses a lasting vitality that has endeared it to generations of readers.  
*Suggested by Cindy Dancel, Research & Information Services*

### **Mercury 13: the true story of thirteen women and the dream of space flight by Martha Ackmann**

<http://ucf.catalog.fcla.edu/permalink.jsp?29CF021335804>

In 1961, just as NASA launched its first man into space, a group of women underwent secret testing in the hopes of becoming America's first female astronauts. They passed the same battery of tests at the legendary Lovelace Foundation as did the Mercury 7 astronauts, but they were summarily dismissed by the boys' club at NASA and on Capitol Hill. The USSR sent its first woman into space in 1963; the United States did not follow suit for another twenty years. In addition to talking extensively to these women, Ackmann interviewed Chuck Yeager, John Glenn, Scott Carpenter, and others at NASA and in the White House with firsthand knowledge of the program, and includes here never-before-seen photographs of the Mercury 13 passing their Lovelace tests. Despite the crushing disappointment of watching their dreams being derailed, the Mercury 13 went on to extraordinary achievement in their lives: Jerrie Cobb dedicated her life to flying solo missions to the Amazon rain forest; Wally Funk went on to become one of the first female FAA investigators; Janey Hart had the political savvy to steer the women through congressional hearings and later helped found the National Organization for Women.

*Suggested by Jamie LaMoreaux, Acquisitions & Collections*

### **My Life, My Love, My Legacy by Coretta Scott King**

<http://ucf.catalog.fcla.edu/permalink.jsp?29CF034929648>

The life story of Coretta Scott King--wife of Martin Luther King Jr., founder of the King Center for Nonviolent Social Change, and singular twentieth-century American civil rights activist--as told fully for the first time, toward the end of her life, to one of her closest friends. Coretta's is a love story, a family saga, and the memoir of an independent-minded black woman in twentieth-century America, a brave leader who stood committed, proud, forgiving, nonviolent, and hopeful in the face of terrorism and violent hatred every single day of her life.

*Suggest by Missy Murphey, Subject Librarian*

### **My Life on the Road by Gloria Steinem**

<http://ucf.catalog.fcla.edu/permalink.jsp?29CF033909054>

Gloria Steinem had an itinerant childhood. Every fall, her father would pack the family into the car and they would drive across the country, in search of their next adventure. The seeds were planted: Steinem

would spend much of her life on the road, as a journalist, organizer, activist, and speaker. In vivid stories that span an entire career, Steinem writes about her time on the campaign trail, from Bobby Kennedy to Hillary Clinton; her early exposure to social activism in India, and the decades spent organizing ground-up movements in America; the taxi drivers who were "vectors of modern myths" and the airline stewardesses who embraced the feminist revolution; and the infinite, surprising contrasts, the "surrealism in everyday life" that Steinem encountered as she traveled back and forth across the country.

*Suggested by Carrie Moran, User Engagement Librarian*

### **Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers by Lillian Faderman**

<http://ucf.catalog.fcla.edu/permalink.jsp?29CF022516106>

As Lillian Faderman writes, there are "no constants with regard to lesbianism," except that lesbians prefer women. In this groundbreaking book, she reclaims the history of lesbian life in twentieth-century America, tracing the evolution of lesbian identity and subcultures from early networks to more recent diverse lifestyles. She draws from journals, unpublished manuscripts, songs, media accounts, novels, medical literature, pop culture artifacts, and oral histories by lesbians of all ages and backgrounds, uncovering a narrative of uncommon depth and originality.

*Suggested by Missy Murphey, Subject Librarian*

### **Olivia by Dorothy Strachey**

<http://ucf.catalog.fcla.edu/permalink.jsp?29CF025993985>

Captures the awakening passions of an adolescent girl sent away for a year to a small finishing school outside Paris, where she develops an infatuation for her headmistress. Although not strictly autobiographical, Olivia draws on the author's experiences at finishing schools run by the charismatic Mlle. Marie Souvestre, whose influence lived on through former students like Natalie Barney and Eleanor Roosevelt. Olivia was dedicated to the memory of Strachey's friend Virginia Woolf and published to acclaim in 1949. In 1999, Olivia was included on the Publishing Triangle's widely publicized list of the 100 Best Gay and Lesbian Novels of the 20th Century.

*Suggested by Megan Haught, Teaching & Engagement/Research & Information Services*

### **Olivia by Ian Falconer**

<http://ucf.catalog.fcla.edu/permalink.jsp?29CF020740203>

A new and unexpected heroine emerges with the irresistible Olivia. Olivia is a spunky little pig with an abundance of energy and enthusiasm. Her daily activities of singing the loudest of songs, creating art on walls, and building skyscrapers do not tire her in the least. Rather, when it is time for bed, she asks for a plethora of books to be read! Olivia's mom, on the other hand, is drained. Parents and kids alike will marvel at Olivia's abounding energy and her mom's abounding patience and love.

*Suggested by Susan MacDuffee, Acquisitions & Collections*

**Queen Victoria: A Personal History by Christopher Hibbert**

<http://ucf.catalog.fcla.edu/permalink.jsp?29CF020898548>

The unearthing of lively, telling anecdotes is the special province of Christopher Hibbert, who delights in forcing readers, in the most entertaining way, to reassess all their notions about some of the world's most intriguing historical figures. His biography of Victoria is no exception. We learn in these pages that not only was she the formidable, demanding, capricious Queen of popular imagination, but she was also often shy and vulnerable, prone to giggling fits and crying jags. Often puritanical and censorious when confronted with her mother's moral lapses, she herself could be passionately sensual, emotional, and deeply sentimental. Her 64-year reign saw thrones fall, empires crumble, new continents explored, and England's rise to global and industrial dominance. Hibbert's account of Victoria's life and times is just as sweeping as he reveals to us the real Victoria in all her complexity: failed mother and imperious monarch, irrepressible woman and icon of a repressive age.

*Suggested by Peggy Nuhn, Regional Librarian*

**Rise of the Rocket Girls: The Women Who Propelled Us, from Missiles to the Moon to Mars by Nathalia Holt**

<http://ucf.catalog.fcla.edu/permalink.jsp?29CF034152941>

In the 1940s and 50s, when the newly minted Jet Propulsion Laboratory needed quick-thinking mathematicians to calculate velocities and plot trajectories, they didn't turn to male graduates. Rather, they recruited an elite group of young women who, with only pencil, paper, and mathematical prowess, transformed rocket design, helped bring about the first American satellites, and made the exploration of the solar system possible.

*Suggested by Megan Haught, Teaching & Engagement/Research & Information Services*

**Savage Beauty: The Life of Edna St. Vincent Millay by Nancy Mitford**

<http://ucf.catalog.fcla.edu/permalink.jsp?29CF020025524>

If F. Scott Fitzgerald was the hero of the Jazz Age, Edna St. Vincent Millay, as audacious in her love affairs as she was in her art, was its heroine. She embodied, in her reckless fancy, the spirit of the New Woman, and gave America its voice. Nancy Milford was given exclusive access to Millay's papers, and what she found was an unimaginable treasure. Hundreds of letters flew back and forth between the three sisters and their mother - and Millay kept the most intimate diary, one whose ruthless honesty brings to mind the journals of Sylvia Plath.

*Suggested by Larry Cooperman, Research & Information Services*

**When God Was a Woman by Merlin Stone**

<http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/3397068>

Documents the ancient worship of the great creator Mother Goddess under a diversity of names and details the rewriting of myths, the recasting of rituals and religious doctrines, and the transformation of the Goddess into a wanton, depraved figure by invading patriarchal tribes.

*Suggested by Megan Haught, Teaching & Engagement/Research & Information Services*

**Women in early America: Struggle, survival and freedom in a New World by Dorothy Mays**

<http://ucf.catalog.fcla.edu/permalink.jsp?29CF020247134>

"Women in Early America: Struggle, Survival, and Freedom in a New World "provides insight into an era in American history when women had immense responsibilities and unusual freedoms. The coverage begins with the 1607 settlement at Jamestown and ends with the War of 1812. In addition to the role of Anglo-American women, the experiences of African, French, Dutch, and Native American women are discussed. The issues discussed include how women coped with rural isolation, why they were prone to superstitions, who was likely to give birth out of wedlock, and how they raised large families while coping with immense household responsibilities.

*Suggested by Peggy Nuhn, Regional Librarian*

**You Learn by Living: Eleven Keys for a More Fulfilling Life by Eleanor Roosevelt**

<http://ucf.catalog.fcla.edu/permalink.jsp?29CF021390810>

Eleanor Roosevelt, one of the world's best loved and most admired public figures, offers a wise and intimate guide on how to overcome fears, embrace challenges as opportunities, and cultivate civic pride: You Learn by Living. A crucial precursor to better-living guides like Mark Nepo's The Book of Awakening or Robert Persig's Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance, as well as political memoirs such as John F. Kennedy's Profiles in Courage, the First Lady's illuminating manual of personal exploration resonates with the timeless power to change lives.

*Suggested by Carrie Moran, User Engagement Librarian*