

Curriculum Unit Introduction

Title of Unit: Different Women, Different Experiences

Vital theme of the Unit: Comparing the different experiences of two women who lived in the pre and post revolutionary time.

Author: Peggy Smyth
Sweetwater Elementary School
Sweetwater, Tennessee
smythm@k12tn.net

Grade Level: Fourth Grade

Lesson in Unit: Two

Curriculum standards addressed: 1.01, 4.04,4.5spi6 and 5.09

Technology Used: computer

Unit Introduction and Overview of Instructional Plan: The students will become familiar with the American Colonies and the Cherokee Tribe from the perspective of two women who lived during the pre-revolution period, during the revolution and after the revolution.

Students will study, investigate and/or interpret

- location of Massachusetts and Chota
- cultures of Massachusetts and Cherokee Tribe
- events that led to the colonies separating from Britain
- cause and effect of the choices made by Sampson and Ward
- cause and effect of the taxes imposed upon the colonies and the resulting Declaration of Independence.
- interpreting primary documents of the time studied

Investigation will take place using the Internet, encyclopedias, atlases, maps, primary documents and teacher lecture based on the information in prepared essay.

Different Women, Different Experiences

The years from 1760 to 1820 were filled with great change and deep convictions from the people who lived through this period in American history. Everything from the government, the church affiliation and the family structure was undergoing a dramatic shift from English influence to the creation of a new American culture. The American Revolution, for Deborah Sampson, was the vehicle used to gain her freedom. For Nancy Ward in Tennessee, freedom and power were already hers. Unlike Cherokee women who lived in a matriarchal society, colonial women had to transcend traditional boundaries of gender in a patriarchal society in order to participate in political events outside the domestic realm.

In 1760, colonial America consisted of thirteen colonies that were naturally underdeveloped but also filled with citizens who were accustomed to a society where the government was headed by a British king. Under the monarch were people in varying degrees of importance and dependent on one another in different ways to survive. As the years went on the people began to resent the taxes imposed on them by their king in England.

The colonial aristocracy in society began to speak and write about the injustice of being taxed without any representation in government. Discontent with the monarchy started to spread as quotes such as “taxation without representation is tyranny,” began to permeate throughout the colonies. It became apparent that more people were speaking and writing against the British government from all stations in life. As more Parliament impressed additional taxes on the colonies, groups of ordinary citizens began to organize and rebel against the British tax agents.

(Wood, Gordon. *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*. New York: RandomHouse 1991.6)

Cartoons were drawn and printed in newspapers proclaiming the injustice of the taxes and

large numbers of people began to voice their discontent. One such group of common men was the Sons Of Liberty who instigated a practice of tarring and feathering tax collectors. Any British government representative in Boston was subject to the anger of this group whether it be tarring and feathering or perhaps destroying their property such as their homes or offices. People from all stations in society began to take part. Men as well as women joined in by organizing boycotts of British goods, writing songs and drawing additional cartoons indicating how the colonists were organizing against the British. (Chester, Revolutionary Tea, Liberty Song, Paying the Excise Tax Man, The destruction of tea at Boston Harbor 1773, Tea Party,)

The British sent troops to Boston in an attempt to quiet the rising spirit of discontent among the colonists. As distrust of the monarchy grew, so did reactions from the citizens. In 1770 the British shot into an angry crowd of Bostonians. Paul Revere, a member of the Sons of Liberty, made the incident famous by engraving a portrait of the scene depicting blood flowing in the streets of Boston. (Boston Massacre Engraving)

By 1773 the citizens of Boston reacted to the Tea Act by tossing the tea on three British ships into the water of Boston Harbor. This resulted in the British closing the port in Boston until the tea was paid for. Word of these “Intolerable Acts” spread throughout the colonies with the help of the Committees of Correspondence. Colonial communities sent aid to the citizens of Boston in the form of food and other items of necessity again creating a group of colonials working together to fight British injustice.

The Continental Congress signed the Declaration of Independence in 1776, which sent a strong message not only to Parliament and King George III of England, but also to the citizens of the American Colonies. This, bold and courageous statement of reasons for leaving and plans for a new nation was a radical idea because this was a colony populated with British subject

rebellling against the British Empire. (Declaration of Independence, Recruiting Poster, Common Sense)

Deborah Sampson was born into an impoverished family in Massachusetts on December 17, 1760 according to Herman Mann who interviewed her for his biography of Sampson. She was a decedent of William Bradford on her mother's side and Henry Samson on her father's side, both having arrived in the colony aboard the Mayflower. Sampson grew up hearing stories of survival in the Plymouth Colony. Religion played a significant role in her family life; each of the Sampson children was named after a Biblical character.

Five years later, Sampson's grandmother died and her father chose to abandon the family. With money scarce, her mother sent the children to live outside the family home, which was a common practice during this time. Sampson was sent to live with a Mrs. Fuller who was related to her mother. Three years later upon the death of Fuller, Sampson was put in the home of the widow of Reverend Peter Thacker in Middleborough, Massachusetts. She lived with Thacker's wife until she died in 1770.

Sampson's next home was with Jeremiah and Savannah Thomas also in Middleborough. During her years from age ten to eighteen, Sampson was an indentured servant in the Thomas home. (Mann, Herman *The Female Review, Life of Deborah Sampson*. Boston. J.K. Wiggins & Wm. Parsons Lunt, 1797.) This was her first experience living in a patriarchal home. The family farmed their fifty acres and it was here that Sampson learned the skills of both men and women. She helped with the dairy, plowing fields, caring for livestock, spinning, weaving, childcare, and kitchen chores. Sampson was an equal to the boys in physical strength; however, she was never treated as an equal in the family. (Young, Alfred F. *Masquerade*. New York. Random House. 2004.)

Education was very important to Sampson. At an early age she learned her ABC's and she would use the books of the Thomas children. Unfortunately for Sampson, Mr. Thomas did not approve of her thirst for knowledge and was openly hostile on the subject. "You are always hammering upon some book – I wish you wouldn't spend so much time in scrabbling over paper." In spite of this, Sampson continued reading anything she could find, from *The New England Primer*, as well as "chapbooks" that contained adventure stories of heroes and warriors and newspapers. Current events in newspapers were also filled with adventure and excitement of the day. News of the Revolutionary War battles consumed the majority of the stories in newspapers. Tales of great deeds and heroism were shared with the readers. (Mann, Herman. *The Female Review, Life of Deborah Sampson*. Boston. J. K. Wiggins & Wm. Parsons Lunt, 1797, 63) The young American government's aim was to muster pride and interest in national events.

In 1778, Sampson turned eighteen and was free to leave but she chose to stay with the Thomas family instead. For the next two years she taught school and spun wool in the community. Sampson had become during the years between 1778 and 1781 what was referred to as a "masterless woman." Most women at her age would have been seeking a husband but that didn't appear to be in the cards for her. Sampson was skilled in labor but very poor. She was, "tall muscular and very erect and considered one of the very best specimens of womanhood among the hardy and vigorous population of Middleboro of that day." Sampson was thought to be taller than most women, five feet seven inches, but the same height of most men. "People often thought as they looked on her stalwart form Deborah Sampson should have been a man and they often said so." (Mann, Herman. *The Female Review, Life of Deborah Sampson*. Boston. J.K. Wiggins & Wm. Parsons Lunt, 1797, 13).

The gender norm of the day was not Deborah Sampson. She was able to do the work of

both men and women, read anything she could get her hands on, could weave and had taught school. In reading, Deborah grew to a point that she was aware of the outside world and was more interested in adventure than becoming a wife and a mother. The possibilities of a person becoming anything they chose perhaps had been realized by Deborah through words of the day that spoke of liberty and freedom. These two words had not been realized in Deborah's life to this point and as she began to understand herself better and her abilities she took control of her own life.

Her first choice to rebel against the norm was leaving the Congregational Church for the Baptist Church. She became a member of the Third Baptist Church in Middleborough in 1780. The Baptist Church was "regarded as outsiders and eccentrics," who had no ties with family, wealth, and no power in the political realm. (Young, Alfred F. *Masquerade*. New York. Random House. 2004,69) (Mann, Herman. *The Female Review, Life of Deborah Sampson*. Boston. J.K. Wiggins & Wm. Parsons Lunt. 1866, XXVII)

The first time Deborah Sampson went outside her gender role was when she enlisted in the Continental Army in Middleborough as Timothy Thayer. It is thought that this took place in the spring of 1782. When she was found out she was in trouble with not only the authorities but also the Baptist Church. Although she escaped legal prosecution, the Baptist Church suspended her membership.

The second time Deborah enlisted in the army was on May 20, 1782 as Robert Shurtliff. (Primary Document) This enlistment was after the battle of Yorktown but soldiers were still needed and sought after. Men were either drafted or went into the army because of the bounty they were paid. No physical examination took place, the height requirements were met and she was dressed in men's clothes appropriate for the mission.

The possibilities of a woman joining the Continental Army in 1782 were impossible unless they chose to masquerade as a man. Deborah Sampson was educated, adventurous, strong, and had a burning desire to live her life on her own terms. (Young, Alfred F.

Masquerade. New

York. Random House.2004)

The culture of the Cherokee living in Tennessee was quite different from the northeastern part of Colonial America. The men and women of the Cherokee tribe were divided into clans and the women were the only constant members. It was a matriarchal society. When a man married he moved to the clan of his new bride. He remained a member of his mother's clan but his wife and children were members of his wife's clan. The clan of the mother took on the responsibility of raising the children and teaching the ways to survive. Traditions in the Cherokee way of life and lessons on how to live were taught to the children through oral histories and stories.

The Cherokee were divided in seven clans. Each clan had its own government and was headed by a chief that had been chosen according to the merits of the person in battle or within the clan. When the chief brought up issues they were discussed in the council. Women were permitted to speak in the council meetings where their opinions were taken seriously. Their government was a form of a democracy where all shared in the decision making process.

When crimes arose within the clan the matter was usually settled within the clan. If it was impossible to settle, the people involved waited until the Green Corn Ceremony took place and all crimes were forgiven, with the exception of murder. If a murder took place, one clan member killed a member of a different clan, the matter was settled by revenge. The clan who had lost a member took it upon themselves to kill the murderer.

Everyone in the tribe contributed to the well being of the clan and their perspective families. Balance in life was the main goal in their culture. The men hunted and the women planted. The Cherokee gave significance to things in nature. The most important was the moon that represented man and the sun that represented woman. Men had certain things they were responsible for and women had other things they were responsible for. These roles were separate but necessary. However, the men and women worked together and helped the other when needed.

When one tribe was in disagreement with another, some women went into battle with their husbands. Nancy Ward was one such wife who chose to go into battle with her husband Kingfisher. Kingfisher was killed during the battle with the Creek Indians. Nancy, who was by his side, took up her husband's battle and continued to fight.

The Cherokee were so impressed with Nancy's contribution to the battle that she was given the honor of becoming "War Woman of the Cherokee." This honor was not bestowed on many women and it commanded a great deal of respect for their bravery in battle and in their wisdom in peacetime. With this great honor the "War Woman" was allowed to participate in dances and tell of their experiences in battle. She was now not only a woman but also a warrior. She had a major role in the "Green Corn Ceremony" and had the power to decide the fate of captives. (Perdue, Theda. *Cherokee Woman*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press. 1998.)

To understand Ward's courage and strength in battle with the Creek Indians, it is necessary to become familiar with her background and family connections. Ward was born in 1737 or 1738 in Chota, which was the Capital Town of the Cherokee. She was a member of a highly celebrated family. Her uncle, Old Hop, was the chief and highly respected by the whites. Her mother was Tame Doe. Tame Doe's brother Attakullakulla was a chief and known for his

great desire for peace. Not much is known of her father except that he was thought to have been the son of a Delaware Chief.

Children in the clans were educated by the members of their mother's clan. Therefore, Attakullakulla was one of the great influences on Nancy's life. Attakullakulla was a chief who had traveled to London, spoken to the white leaders and desired peace with them.

Nancy's first husband was named King Fisher. They had two children, a girl named Catherine and a son named Little Fellow. It was upon the death of her husband, around 1755, she became known as a "War Woman." (Alderman, Pat. *Nancy Ward, Cherokee Chieftains*. Johnson City, Tennessee: The Over Mountain Press. 1978.)

In 1776 as Mrs. William Bean was hurriedly riding to the safety of the Watauga Fort, she was captured by Indians. Bean, along with Samuel Moore, was taken to the Indian camp near the Nolichucky River. Upon being taken to the Cherokee towns located in the Overhill country, Samuel Moore was tortured to death but Mrs. Bean was taken to yet another town. In Togue, Mrs. Bean was tied to a stake that had been lit on fire when she was rescued by Nancy Ward. Nancy Ward, being a "War Woman," chose to let her live. "It revolts my soul that the Cherokee warriors stoop so low as to torture a squaw." (Alderman, Pat. *The Over Mountain Men*. Johnson City, Tennessee: The Overmountain Press. 1970, 34)

Nancy Ward spoke to the United States treaty commissioners in northeastern Tennessee in 1781. She brought attention to the commissioners that in their society women are not considered important but in truth, women are their mothers and they are the sons. The gender relations during the late eighteenth century can best be understood by comparing the different experiences of two different women. Both Deborah Sampson and Nancy Ward lived their lives based on their convictions. Sampson came from a patriarchal society and Ward from a

matriarchal society. These culture differences made it necessary for

Deborah to hide her gender from authorities on one hand and Ward to enjoy her station in life with great power without fear of crossing the gender line. Sampson remained in the background until she sought a pension from the government for her service in the Revolutionary War. (Mann, Herman. *The Female Review, Life of Deborah Sampson*. Boston: J.K. Wiggins & Wm. Parsons Lunt. 1866. XV) She then began to speak in public about her experiences. Herman Mann wrote *The Female Review* in an attempt to create a civic religion in Deborah by making her a hero. Ward on the other hand continued to be the War Woman of the Cherokee speaking in public, voicing her strong views on peace between the white man and the Cherokee. Ward, the Beloved Woman became a hero in her own right in her attempts to create peace.

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Bibliography

Submitted by: Peggy Smyth
Sweetwater Elementary School
Sweetwater, Tennessee

Alderman, Pat. *Nancy Ward, Cherokee Chieftains*. Johnson City: The Overmountain Press. 1978.

Alderman, Pat. *The Overmountain Men*. Johnson City. The Overmountain Press. 1970

Pardue, Theda. *Cherokee Woman*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press. 1998

Mann, Herman. *The Female Review, Life of Deborah Sampson*. Boston: J.K. Wiggins & Wm. Parsons Lunt, 1797.

Wood, Gordon. *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*. New York: Random House. 1991

Young, Alfred F. *Masquerade*. New York: Randon House, 2004.

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Primary Document List

Submitted By: Peggy Smyth
Sweetwater Elementary School
Sweetwater, Tennessee

www.mcgath.com

Chester
Revolutionary Tea
Liberty Song

www.bostonmassacre.net

Boston Massacre

www.historypage.com

The destruction of tea at Boston Harbor, 1773

www.boston-tea-party.org

Tea Party

www.kathimitchell.com

Tar and Feathering
Declaration of Independence
Recruiting Poster

www.indiana.edu

Common Sense

<http://edtech.tennessee.edu>

Chester

Different Women, Different Experiences
Submitted by Peggy Smyth
Sweetwater Elementary School
Sweetwater, Tennessee

Unit: Revolution and New Nation

Lesson Title: Parts of the Declaration Of Independence

Grade Level: Fourth Grade

Lesson Time: Approximately three class periods.

Curriculum Standards: 4.5spi6

Technology used and how: Students will locate the www.loc.com on internet. They will read the Declaration of Independence.

Materials: Student worksheet, internet/computer, and Social Studies Text Book.

Activity description (s) and overview of instructional strategies:

The class will divide into four groups. The Declaration is divided into four parts. Using the website given, they identify their part of the Declaration and share the information they learned to the group and on the worksheet.

When the worksheet is complete they will look at the timeline given on the website and make the connections between the events before 1776 and the grievances listed in the Declaration.

Assessment: The student will be able to write an essay explaining why the colonist want to break away from England.

Timeline Investigation

Grievance

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

Cause

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

Different Experiences, Different Women

Submitted by Peggy Smyth
Sweetwater Elementary School
Sweetwater, Tennessee

Unit: Revolution and a New Nation

Lesson Title: Organizing Your Knowledge

Grade Level: 4th Grade

Essential Question related to Vital Theme: How are they different and how are they alike?

Lesson Time: Approximately two class periods.

Cirriculum Standards: 1.01, 4.04,5.09

Technology used and how: Deborah Sampson and Nancy Ward will be researched on internet. Work sheet provided to report facts on both women then will compare and contrast.

Materials: Worksheet and computers

Activity description (s) and overview of instructional strategies:

Two students will work together. One person will investigate Deborah Sampson and the other will investigate Nancy Ward. Students will collect facts on the person they are investigating and add information to their worksheet. After investigation is complete they will review the information and they will compare and contrast the subjects.

The second day the class will share the information they learned on Deborah Sampson and Nancy Ward. As a group the class will place information on a Venn Diagram.

Assessment: Will write an essay on the different experiences of Deborah Sampson and Nancy Ward.

