

Takeaway 1

List of unfamiliar words, sites, people, and concepts:

- Seraglio (Wollstonecraft, Mary) - the women's apartments or harem in muslim households
- Coverture - erased the separate legal existence of a woman upon marriage.
- *Feme sole* - single woman
- The credit networks discussed in the reading about women in business left me a little confused, although I think I worked through it in the end.
- Enfranchisement - giving a group or individual access to important legal rights
- Clandestine Marriage - Marriage through common law rather than the church... considered illegal

What I learned:

In Wollstonecraft's reading, I learned about the stigma around education and women in the late 1700s. I read it this limiting stigma to act as a self feeding cycle in which the presumption that women's minds are not fit for education resulted in women not being educated and thus less able to develop their thoughts as their much more heavily educated male peers, thus fulfilling and perpetuating the idea that women were not 'smart' enough to spend an education on. I also appreciated her notation of diction in its role of reducing women to weak, docile creatures.

Before reading *Women in Business and Women's Rights*, I had no idea what coverture was. The idea that the woman's identity completely ceased to exist after being married is an insane concept to me, yet the ways through which women could manipulate the laws and trade as *feme sole* was yet another concept I had no prior knowledge of. I did struggle to understand all of

the logistics of credit networks and the ways in which women could participate. I did make the assumption that it may so convoluted a system that women would have had to have been incredibly dedicated, prepared for conflict, and had considerable access to education in order to succeed in the business. However, as I continued reading I reached another conclusion that the vast networks of credit trading, if well developed, could provide a sort of financial safety net to women identifying as legal *feme soles* despite being married.

In the work about women's rights, the excerpt from *Family Fortunes* was unfortunately a surprising revelation to me. To paraphrase the excerpt; they claimed that the experience of women in history was filtered through the eyes of men, as they were the social commentators and that because of this there are large gaps in documentary evidence about what women were doing due to women's lives being considered trivial and unchanging. This is something that I was disappointed to have not considered before, but it opened my eyes even more to the bias of history and spurred excitement for what we will cover throughout the course of this class.