

From 'Great Women' to an inclusive curriculum:

how should women's history be included at Key Stage 3?

Susanna Boyd 'discovered' women's history while studying for her own history degree, and laments women's continued absence from the school history curriculum. She issues a call-to-arms to make the curriculum more inclusive both by re-evaluating the criteria for curricular selection and by challenging established disciplinary conventions. She also weighs up the merits of differing options for turning this into reality. Boyd offers an example of how her vision can be put into practice, analysing a pilot scheme of work she taught to Year 7 students which took a more inclusive approach to the Norman Conquest, and evaluating her students' response.

It was the start of the new millennium, and, as a bright-eyed young history undergraduate, I was both surprised and delighted to 'discover' that there was such a thing as women's history. This is strange, given that there had been a blossoming of women's history in academic circles at least as far back as the 1920s, and certainly a growth in the 1960s and 1970s, nearly forty years before I began my study. My school-based history education, however, had barely mentioned them. When women were present, they were seen only in glimpses of 'Great Women', such as Henrietta Maria and Catherine the Great, or in brief, discrete topics, such as 'Nazi policies towards women'. I consoled myself that I was merely an exception, coming from a rather traditionally-minded grammar school. The inclusion of women's history must certainly have been going on in other institutions and, anyway, surely it was only a matter of time? After a few years in the wilderness, I embarked on a PGCE in 2009, and was shocked that, in textbooks, schemes of work and examination specifications, it seemed very little progress had been made: women were still not there. Their absence persisted in the new National Curriculum, GCSE and A-level examinations. Over the course of nine years, four (very different) schools, five GCSE and two A-level specifications, I have become convinced that the only way for women's history (and other marginalised histories) to gain a real and lasting place in the curriculum, is for us, as teachers, to take up their cause – and I challenge you to join me.

Why do women matter?

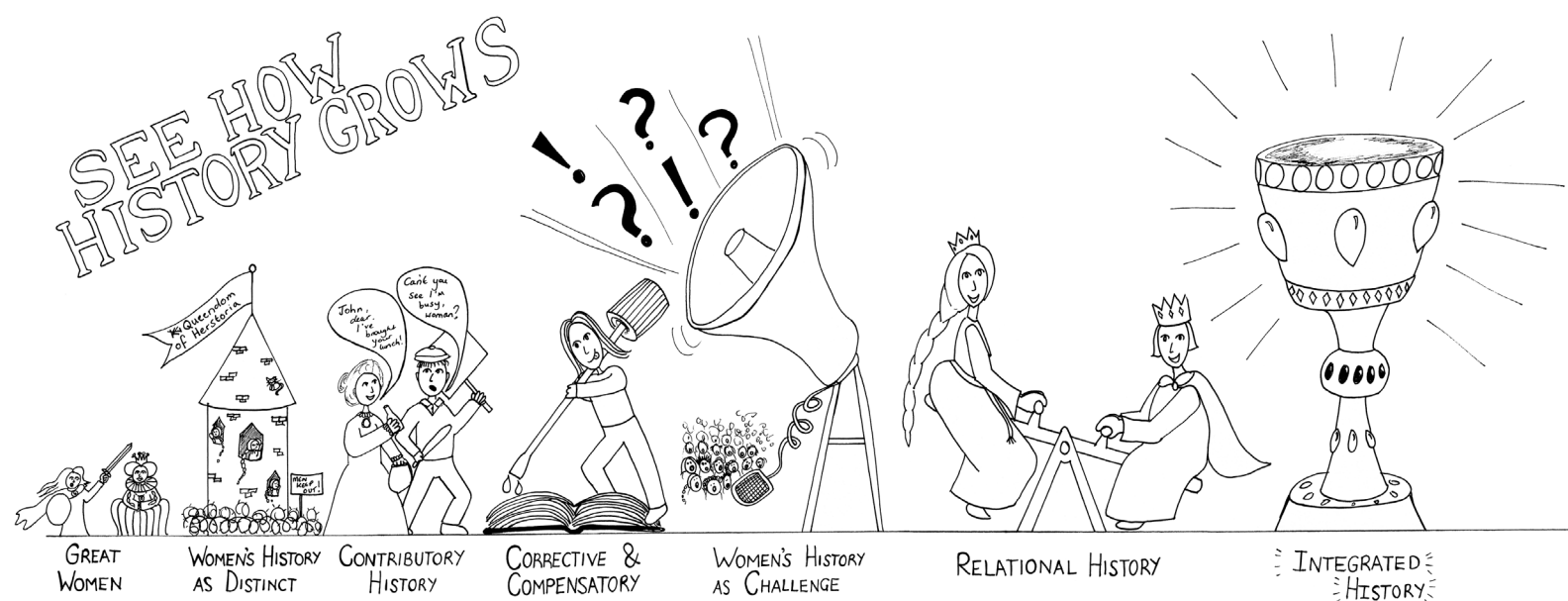
The place of women in the curriculum should need no justification: including the stories and experiences of over half of the human race is simply good history. As Hammond and Ford and Kennett have demonstrated, students require several 'layers' of substantive knowledge to form meaningful historical understanding and explanation.¹ Without this knowledge, students are liable to make sweeping and anachronistic judgements about the past – particularly about the experience of women: one such is that the First and Second World Wars finally 'allowed [women] to go out to work' (as a Year 12 student once put it), ignoring centuries of women's paid and unpaid work both inside and outside the home. As teachers, we may unwittingly reinforce uncritical thinking through the use of period labels such as Renaissance or Enlightenment, with their implications of progress for all, even though these labels have often been constructed without reference to the experiences of women.² In selecting the events and topics we teach, we make judgements as to what constitutes a significant event or person: often those who create political or public change; by these criteria, only queens or suffragettes may seem worthy of attention.³ The continued exclusion of women from the curriculum results in an inaccurate, even dangerous, understanding of human history; one which has frightening implications for our students when they enter the 'real world'. After all, if women seem to have achieved little in the past, where is the inspiration to achieve in the future? If no one can name any famous female scientists or mathematicians, how easy is it for young girls to see themselves in such roles? And finally, and perhaps most worryingly, given recent revelations of women afraid to speak out about systematic abuse, if we continue to ignore women's history, how are we to avoid reinforcing ideas that women's views simply do not matter and are not worth listening to?

As history educators, we should certainly be concerned about the integrity of our subject; but as teachers, we have a further duty to safeguard the well-being of those in our care, which includes paying close attention to the messages we give as part of the 'hidden curriculum'.⁴ History has particular power to help form collective and personal identity.⁵ This is well

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Figure 1: Stages on the road to inclusive history



understood outside academic circles: websites such as *A Mighty Girl.com*, and books such as *Goodnight Stories for Rebel Girls*, aim to inspire young girls with powerful female role models from the past.⁶ Gender schema theory describes how young men and women form their own gender identities through ‘trying out’ roles in play, but also through identification with (or rejection of) role models and societal expectations.⁷ If we are to enable our students to form healthy views of themselves and others, becoming responsible citizens who are able to challenge negative stereotypes and discrimination, as well as critical and informed students of history, then it is imperative that women’s history is included in a systematic and meaningful way.

Hasn’t that been done already?

Not in my experience, and I suspect that this is the case more widely. The absence of women is particularly apparent in the examination specifications I currently teach. For example, in the specification and authorised textbooks for the AQA A-level breadth study *The USA: The Making of a Superpower 1865 to 1975*, women only really appear in three topics: in the 1920s with the rise of ‘flappers’, in the 1950s with the ‘ideal housewife’ and in the 1960s–1970s with the rise of the women’s movement.⁸ There is no mention of the campaign for the vote or the women’s trade union movement, and Eleanor Roosevelt is merely an aside. The Edexcel iGCSE is somewhat better, particularly as women’s experience under Mao’s leadership is identified as a topic of note; but textbook coverage of women’s experiences before and after the Maoist period is thin, preventing meaningful comparison and analysis.⁹

Textbooks have long been criticised, notably by Adams in 1983 and Osler in 1994, as well as in my own, more limited, survey of Key Stage 3 textbooks in my department in 2010, for marginalising women’s history from the main narrative (for example, with chapters entitled ‘So what’s herstory?’) and for an unequal balance of male and female images even when these images were drawn by a modern artist (ask yourself, dear reader, how many women you can spot

on a typical diagram of the feudal system) and for showing them exclusively in stereotypical gender roles (childcare, sewing and so on).¹⁰ Teachers can, of course, choose to teach ‘off topic’ or devise their own materials, but while textbooks and examination specifications continue largely to exclude women’s history, there is still work to be done. Time constraints and the culture of performance targets limits teachers’ freedom to go ‘off topic’ with examination classes. A significant number of teachers surveyed by the Historical Association also use formal examinations as a ‘yardstick’ to measure what to teach at Key Stage 3.¹¹ Without the support of textbooks and other published resources, teachers may simply lack the specialist knowledge required to resource alternative lessons, resulting in a curriculum from which women’s history is still largely excluded.

What should an inclusive curriculum look like?

Given the constraints of the formal examination specifications currently on offer, I suggest that we start at Key Stage 3: the area of the curriculum over which teachers themselves have most influence. Ideally, we would start at Key Stages 1 and 2, but, as many of these teachers are not specialists, it would be a significant challenge. By teaching a rigorous, engaging and inclusive curriculum we might eventually shape the perceptions of students, parents and fellow professionals in such a way that examination boards, too, would take note in designing their specifications. How, then, should we begin?

First, we should begin by defining women’s history as the experiences of human beings who identify, or are identified by others, as female. It is distinct from gender history, as envisaged by Scott, in that it is not primarily concerned with representations of gender, gender-based organisation, or the relations between genders although this could certainly form part of meaningful discussion during study; rather, it is concerned with lived experiences.¹² An inclusive curriculum would not only include these lived experiences of women, but, because these are different from traditionally male experiences, and the male perspectives of history (and

arguably of the assumptions of the discipline itself), this will gradually transform the narrative of history as well as historical concepts themselves.¹³ The ultimate aim of inclusive history (and thus of an inclusive curriculum) is that it reflects the full range of human experience of the past. This is certainly an ambitious aim, and one which is difficult to envisage. It is a tall order for history teachers: if academic historians, and those who set examinations and write textbooks, have not yet realised it, how will we do so in the classroom, on Friday afternoon, with Year 9? Nevertheless, we are already engaged in the process of meaning-making, shaping students' conceptions of the past and the narratives that they take away with them. It is therefore imperative that we play a role in shaping the curriculum for the better.

Figure 1 lays out the steps that are needed (some of which will already be familiar) in order to reach the ultimate goal of a fully inclusive history, within and without the classroom. To create this, I have drawn on the theories and taxonomies of numerous authors.¹⁴ Although I have presented it in a linear fashion, it is not intended as a strict hierarchy. Different approaches may suit differing circumstances. Within the strictures of an examination specification, it may only be possible for teachers to include *Contributory* or *Corrective* history, until sufficient momentum is built to challenge this: doing something is better than doing nothing. At Key Stage 3, however, where there is greater freedom, it would be possible to work towards a more *Relational* model. This is the starting point we should aim for when designing our own curriculum, as earlier stages have a number of potential drawbacks.

Stage 1, *Great Women*, is where the discipline of history, and classroom history teaching, was before the 1960s. Women, usually queens and warriors, appeared where they met conventional criteria for significance such as having political or military impact. This can extend into what Chapman terms *Compensatory* history, where examples of women are deliberately sought to counterbalance the number of men studied.¹⁵ Problems arise, however, if we merely think that the inclusion of any women will do the job. This approach can be tempting because the inclusion of these 'Great Women' justifies established criteria for significance and does little to disrupt the overall narrative. Moreover, resources are reasonably plentiful. However, given the exclusion of women from political and military spheres, there are inevitably fewer of them to study in these contexts, and none at all in certain topics; the majority of female experience is thus excluded. As teachers we have a role to play in shaping the discipline of history, and our students may go on to be the academics, film and documentary producers, or policy-makers of the future. Our curricular decisions, even if made for the most practical of reasons, could have significant impact. A specific danger of taking a haphazard approach to inclusion (providing examples where they are easily found through *Great Women*) is that the absence of women from the historical narrative might be interpreted as further proof of their insignificance, continuing to marginalise women's experiences, rather than using them to challenge the narrative, or to challenge conventional criteria for historical significance. This is a potential pitfall of Pearson's suggestion to use examples of local heroines to enrich the curriculum, although this is certainly an excellent step on the path to progress.¹⁶ Stage 3, *Contributory* history, is also insufficient to alter the narrative,

since, although it goes further by including the experiences of groups of women, and gives recognition to the part women have played in significant events, these events are still selected according to the same conventional criteria, and again there may not always be suitable examples. Further, Scott's searing critique of attempts by historians to bring women into working class history suggests that this approach may actually be futile, because certain events and identities have been formed in deliberate opposition to women, and they cannot, therefore, simply be 'slotted in'.¹⁷

Given the difficulty of including women's history within conventional narratives, it is tempting to study women's history as a distinct subject. This is what has happened in many universities, and so also in many classrooms since the 1960s. This is certainly well-intentioned: it has allowed the study of women's history on its own terms, and the creation of its own frame of reference (some even went as far as to throw out traditional concepts of chronology).¹⁸ Again, however, this approach has proved insufficient, as Bitel states:

*Despite such recoveries [of women's history through research]...men's memory and men's history remain the norm in which female actors participate, while women's history exists on a discrete timeline...pupils still learn traditional history first, only to revise its chronologies, contents and focuses when they study women's past.*¹⁹

Many students may not even revise their understanding of history, as researchers have found students 'switching off' from topics which they feel are not the 'real stuff' of history.²⁰ This further marginalises women's history, and can also lead to criticism, particularly for female teachers perceived to be 'pushing' women's history for their own personal agenda, while traditional history is seen as neutral and therefore more reliable.²¹

I have more time for Stages 4 (*Corrective* and *Compensatory*) and 5 (*Women's History as Challenge*), which both demand a re-evaluation of traditional narratives and resources. Stage 4 recognises that the stories and images we decide to use in teaching materials can have significant impact. Images are particularly potent in forming students' concepts of the past, particularly for those who struggle with literacy; we can ensure that men and women are both equally represented, and shown in diverse roles where this is consistent with the historical record – clearly we do not want to diminish the considerable barriers that women faced to taking up traditionally male roles. This approach naturally leads into, and prepares students for, Stage 5, by making them open to more varied narratives of the past and therefore more able to challenge traditional narratives when they encounter them. I often use this in my teaching, asking students 'who is missing?' from diagrams, accounts or documentaries. This engenders discussion about why certain groups were excluded, deliberately or accidentally, by the authors, and prompts students to examine their own assumptions. There is, however, the ever-present danger that, as a female teacher, I could be seen artificially to be 'pushing the women issue', making it important that this approach is considered, planned for, and is employed equally by male and female teachers within the department.

Figure 2: A plan to make teaching the Norman Conquest more inclusive

Issue / Emphasis	Traditional teaching	Inclusive teaching
William's claim to the throne	Emphasises his individual claim through male lineage of his father, contrasting with other male contenders (Hardrada, Edgar Aetheling and Godwinson) and the promise made by Edward the Confessor through Godwinson.	Greater emphasis on the role Matilda of Flanders' in legitimising his links to Wessex through relation to Emma of Wessex, and her higher status and legitimacy. Matilda's role in ruling Normandy to enable William to go to England and providing the more 'acceptable face' of conquest afterwards. Other contenders dealt with very briefly.
Battle of Hastings	Emphasis on William's fighting prowess and strategy and battle as central point in the narrative, cementing William's claim over Godwinson. Women ignored apart from vague reference to mistress, mother and Bayeux Tapestry.	Importance of the battle de-emphasised, as only one of many factors which legitimised William's claim. Greater importance given to consolidation of power afterwards and the effects on the people who survived.
Landholding, feudal system and Domesday Book	Emphasis on male Norman knights replacing male Anglo-Saxon/ English lords. Feudal system largely concentrates on King, barons, knights and then peasants. Images used emphasise men, women rarely included, and where they are, they are normally depicted as powerless peasants or trophy wives.	Includes experiences of Anglo-Saxon noblewomen who married Norman knights, legitimising their claim to land, and the reasons most agreed to this rather than choosing alternative lives in nunneries. Female landownership such as the continuation of Gytha's holdings discussed alongside male holdings.
Changes in culture	Imposition of Norman French on the nobility.	Includes the role of women in ensuring that English was still the 'mother tongue' of many. The resistance of the ordinary people to Norman French and other rebellious acts.
Power	Seen as central and within the public sphere, legitimised by warfare, castle-building and putting down insurrections such as the Harrying of the North.	Seen as multi-faceted and negotiable – Norman knights needed Anglo-Saxon wives' legitimacy; ordinary people rebelled in more covert ways e.g. hidden symbols in stonemasonry and continuity of English as 'mother tongue'.
Castles	Seen as imposition on the helpless Anglo-Saxons who had to build them. Emphasis on warfare techniques – little role for women.	Castle warfare de-emphasised to make way for the lives of people who worked in castles.
The Church	Emphasis on the changes under Lanfranc and the centrality of monasteries as places of learning.	Emphasis on the importance of the role of the Church in society, including the role of religious women and the ability of women to get power and protection through nunneries. Balance of examples from monasteries and nunneries.

Figure 3: Pilot scheme of work

Lesson focus	Activities/resources
Was William the best person to rule England?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a list of the qualities needed to make a good ruler in England 1066. • Students compare a brief biography of William to identify key qualities and then compare to Matilda of Flanders. • Discussion: who made a better ruler and why? Why didn't events necessarily result in this?
Why didn't more people rebel against William and Matilda?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss reasons why the majority of the population did not like William and Matilda and were likely to rebel. • Students take on roles of different characters (Saxon lady, abbess, serving-woman at a castle, Bishop of Peterborough, male innkeeper, stonemason). Prompt questions ask why character disliked William and Matilda, why they chose not to openly rebel, and how they did rebel. • Discuss: why didn't people openly rebel? What ways did they find to resist? • Contrast to Hereward the Wake – what factors meant he was the exception?
Was the Norman Conquest really that big a change?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Card sort illustrating change/continuity in different areas of life (laws, Church, language etc.). • Which areas saw most change/continuity and why? • Referring back to characters of previous lesson, students describe which factors created most/least change (e.g. gender, social status, occupation etc.). • How far was the conquest of 1066 a change? Is it still a significant event?

Having used a number of these approaches for years, and becoming frustrated with my slow progress in transforming the ideas both of my students and, in some cases, my colleagues, I set out to design a scheme of work beginning at Stage 6. This envisages a curriculum in which women are included not as exceptions, nor as distinct, nor as merely contributing, nor as a challenge to the traditional narrative, but as integral to the story from the very beginning. Inspired by the challenge laid down by Lerner, I asked myself how my teaching would change if I started from the premise that women's experiences were equally important to the study of a topic as men's.²² How would this affect my enquiry questions? The resources I used? The emphasis I placed on particular events, turning points, changes and continuities? And how would the students respond?

Putting a vision into practice

I chose the Norman Conquest of 1066. The topic presented opportunities for a critical redesign of the scheme of work to be more inclusive, and, as the first topic we teach in Year 7, it has great potential for forming students' conceptions of the discipline of history. This is a significant event by most standards, because it arguably marks a major change in the ruling dynasty, as well as in political, social and cultural systems. As usually taught, however, this is a story in which women rarely appear; when they do, it is usually Harold's mistress Edith identifying his mutilated body, perhaps his mother Gytha begging William to be allowed to bury her son, the unnamed embroiderers of the Bayeux Tapestry, and peasants. The male bias of the Norman Conquest is certainly a historical reality to an extent: women were usually second-class citizens in relation to men of the same class and they were not participants in battle; however, they were essential to the legitimisation of Norman rule through intermarriage with Norman knights, some were landowners in their own right and exercised feudal power over both men and women in their fiefdom, and they were also affected by the conquest,

if not necessarily in the same way as men. How would my teaching of the Norman Conquest change if I deliberately set out to include women's experiences on equal terms? Figure 2 shows how my thinking evolved.

In developing my pilot lessons I was particularly influenced by a number of texts. From Harrison, Bitel, Hilton and Borman I learned that royal and aristocratic women were essential in enabling their male consorts to rule – indeed, Matilda of Flanders not only ruled Normandy while William subdued England, but ruled it more peacefully than he had, and was praised by English chroniclers for being a more civilised presence in her visits.²³ Much of the story of the Norman Conquest is about power, and in its traditional form power is seen as public, imposed from above, and legitimised through laws, outward ceremonies and violence. Foucault's concept of power as exercised in multiple ways, and constantly negotiated and reinforced, and Anagol's emphasis on resistance (albeit in a different context, that of India before independence) expressed through ordinary everyday actions, not just in formal rebellions (such as that supposedly led by Hereward the Wake), were instrumental in developing a lesson that looked at how different people resisted Norman rule, opening an exploration of different forms of power.²⁴

Finally, in assuming that women's experiences were of equal significance to men's, I realised that a scheme of work which emphasised the Battle of Hastings itself would no longer be appropriate. Rather than get students to focus on 'Why did William win the Battle of Hastings?', my emphasis shifted to 'How successfully did William get control of England?', 'How could ordinary people get power in Norman England?' and 'How far did 1066 really change England?' These new questions invited students to look at the varieties of power, the experiences of diverse people, and to also question the significance of 1066 in terms of change and continuity for different people. My last question was inspired by Bennett's

Figure 4: Example character card

Ælfgifu – Saxon Lady



I was born into a noble Anglo-Saxon family. My father was Harold Godwinson's brother, Leofwine. We, the women of Godwinson's family, led a petition to King William to allow them to be buried, but he refused – saying that the crows would bury them as traitors deserved. This is despite Harold's mother, Gytha, offering him Harold's weight in gold.

Not to be defeated, however, Gytha secretly paid for the bodies to be collected and taken to Waltham Abbey where the monks daily say prayers for their souls.

I had only just finished mourning when I received a messenger from Geoffrey de la Guerche, one of William's knights. I had no desire to marry him, but as the daughter of a man who had fought against William, what choice did I have? I was not in the privileged position of Gytha or Godwinson's widow Ealdgyth to whom the King and Queen granted they could keep their lands.

We are now expecting our first child: with God's help it will be a girl. I know Geoffrey hopes for a boy he can mould in his own image, but a girl would be more closely mine. She can stay with me, I can teach her my mother's language, English, so she will grow up speaking not only French but the language of her ancestors. She could embroider pictures of our saints and hear stories of our heroes like Beowulf. She may even be able to enter a nunnery rather than marry another Norman boy – my father's lands could provide enough for a dowry and Queen Matilda seems keen to ensure there are many such nunneries built across the land.

I must keep these thoughts to myself. If my husband knew, his anger would be terrible, and I know that many other Saxon ladies have not been as lucky as I to marry into wealth. I will stay quiet for the sake of my child and other future children.

suggestion that women's experience has been largely of continuity rather than of change; while I do not agree that women's experience was homogeneous, my question invited students to challenge the assumption that 1066 is a monumentally significant moment because it fundamentally changed England.²⁵

Piloting in the classroom

Due to time constraints I was only able to resource and pilot three lessons with a small group of seven volunteers. This had to be done outside normal lesson time, and therefore did not replicate 'normal' classroom conditions. It was, however, taught after students had already studied the topic as usually taught in my department, and therefore resulted in student reflections directly comparing the two approaches. This also meant that my lessons did not build towards an overall enquiry question, but took the form of three mini enquiries, one in each lesson. Figure 3 shows an outline of the lessons as taught.

In resourcing these lessons I relied on a mixture of my existing knowledge, biographies of Matilda of Flanders, general medieval women's histories, and GCSE textbooks.²⁶ Lesson 2 was the most challenging, as it required considerable contextual knowledge, combined with imagination, to create and 'flesh out' characters. Three characters (Ælfgifu

the Saxon Lady, Ælfgiva the Abbess of Barking, and Leofric the Bishop of Peterborough) were based on real historical figures, while the other three (Hilda the serving woman, Ealdwine the innkeeper, and Ælfred the stonemason) were amalgamations of my own research and imagination. Figure 4 shows an example card. In order to show the varying ways of resisting or colluding with the conquerors, as I designed these characters I sought to represent multiple perspectives, social classes and roles. This fed into Lesson 3, when students were asked to identify factors (class, age, gender, occupation) which influenced how much change different people experienced. Working with a small group of engaged and willing volunteers towards the end of their Year 7 experience, my resources catered to high levels of literacy and demanded complex critical thinking; they could easily be adapted for other groups.

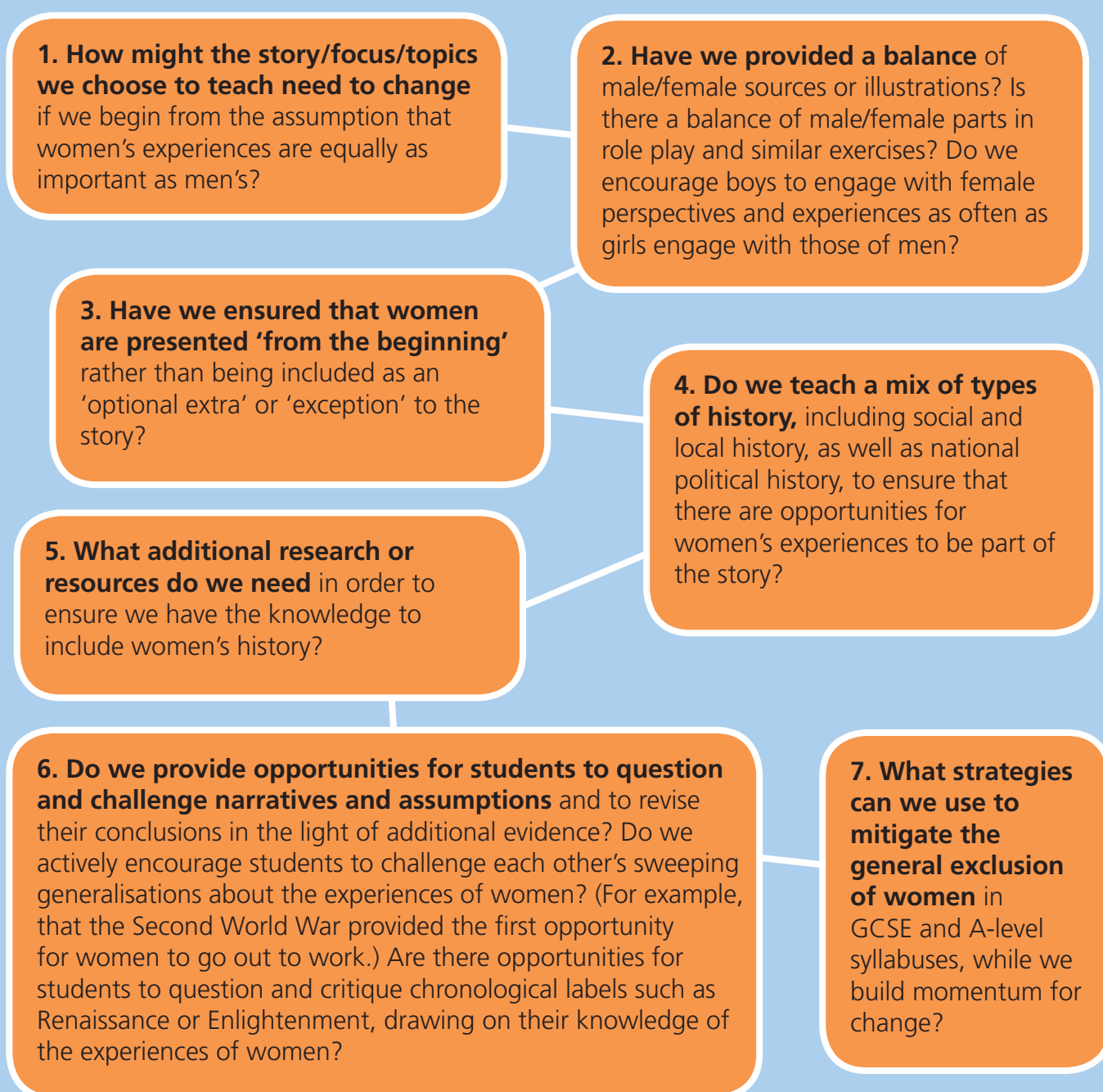
Reflections

Following the three pilot lessons, I consulted the students in pairs or individually, using a semi-structured interview format. These interviews gave the following encouraging results:

1. The resources and approach made women's history seem 'normal'.

This approach avoided the pitfalls of Stages 2-5 (see Figure 1), whereby women's history is seen as an irrelevance, an

Figure 5: Questions for departmental reflection and discussion



afterthought or the teacher artificially 'pushing' women. Students felt that lessons fitted into what they already considered to be 'real' history. Only one student noticed that the resources had been designed consciously to include women's history, and even when I revealed this intention only a further two commented they could 'see it now'. This suggests that this approach fits well within the discipline of history as currently taught and as conceived by my students.

2. Students were aware that under normal circumstances they did not get to study much women's history.

When asked what they had studied in the course of the academic year, only three students could recall specific instances. Two were aware that Matilda of Flanders had been mentioned at some point but could not recall any details, and the other referred to Eleanor of Aquitaine when discussing

the Crusades. Another recognised that 'men definitely outnumbered women'.

3. Students recognise the value of redressing the balance.

Two students, upon hearing that this study had been to include women, actually felt that too many men had been included. Three male students indicated they found women's history interesting for its own sake, with one student claiming it was 'better than normal history [in which he] does not normally get to learn about wives and how they did their own things'. One female student was particularly excited by the inclusion of women's history: she stated it was 'good to have some women to show how powerful we are and how we can be powerful' and felt that it was important that women's history was included, as '[we] need to make our century different – people can learn about us'. There was also

a clear sense among three male students of the importance of fairness in our society, one of whom said ‘society has changed and it’s important to know [about women’s history]...women deserve to be learnt about – everyone’s equal.’

Conclusions and challenges

At the start of this article I laid down a challenge to you, the reader, to join me in making this vision of an inclusive curriculum a reality. My experience of researching and delivering my first steps towards realising this has encouraged me to see a more inclusive curriculum as an achievable goal, albeit one which will take considerable dedication, thought and time to realise. Most excitingly, my students felt that the benefit of learning about women’s experiences in the past and were acutely aware that traditional narratives failed to give fair consideration of this. This suggests that not only will we find the experience rewarding, but our students will too. Departments wondering where to start could begin by re-examining their schemes of work, asking the questions set out in Figure 5.

I am not for a moment claiming that these are the only questions to ask, nor that my first tentative steps are the final word on how to include women’s history within the curriculum. I am, however, encouraged by other articles in this journal, and by the discussions I have day-to-day with colleagues and pupils, to think that, as a professional community, we have the resources, skills and the will behind us to take these first steps together, and the potential to revolutionise history teaching, perhaps even the discipline of history itself. Eleanor Roosevelt once said ‘It takes as much energy to wish as it does to plan’ – I for one have given up wishing, and started planning for change. Who’s with me?

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- Chapman, A., op. cit, p. 117.
- Pearson, J., op. cit.
- Scott, J. W., op. cit.
- See for example, Anderson, B. S. and Zinsner, J. P. (1990) *A History of their Own: women in Europe from prehistory to the present*, Vol. 1, London: Penguin Books.
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- Bennett, J. M. (2006) *History Matters: Patriarchy and the Challenge of Feminism*, Manchester: Manchester University Press. However, a number of authors have refuted this view of the past and Bennett’s historical basis for this in the medieval period. See for example, Hill, B. (1993) ‘Women’s history: a study in change, continuity or standing still?’ in *Women’s History Review*, 2, no. 1, pp. 5–22.
- For Matilda of Flanders, see in particular Hilton (2008) *Queens Consort: England’s medieval queens*, London: Phoenix; Borman, T. (2011) *Matilda: queen of the conqueror*, London: Jonathan Cape; for histories of medieval women, Leyser, H. (1995) *Medieval Women: a social history of women in England 450–1500*, Phoenix: London. Leyser critically examines the view that 1066 represented a monumental change for all levels of society and for women specifically. Fell, C. (1984) *Women in Anglo-Saxon England and the Impact of 1066*, London: British Museum Publications, also sees 1066 as a disaster for women in terms of curtailing their freedoms, which inspired my exploration of the character of the Abbess in Lesson 2. For textbooks, Byrom, J. and Riley, M. (2016) *The Norman Conquest: 1065–1087*, London: Hodder Education; Clarke, H. (2016) *Norman England 1066–c. 1100*, London: Hodder Education; Dawson, I., Arnott, E., and Merritt, L. (2016) *Anglo-Saxon and Norman England c. 1060–1080*, London: Hodder Education.