

Setting the historical record straight: **The Role of Women in U.S. History**

History is essential to study for an understanding of ourselves and the world around us, according to the University of the People at Pasadena. **Naida Tushnet** wouldn't disagree, but she says there is gap and a "bias in all of history." She is determined to remedy the situation for students who attend her class on ***The Role of Women in U.S. History***.

"Women's lives are not as public . . . I'm looking to change that," she said." Women, she added, are often behind many of the changes in our society. But when it comes to the public record - which is history - women are frequently overlooked."

For instance, Dr. Tushnet will set the record straight by explaining women's role in the labor movement, along with the textile workers' strike at the Lowell Mill at Massachusetts in 1836. Women are prominent in today's social justice activism.

In general, she said, women have always been deeply involved in local concerns.

In the 1960s and 1970s much information on women's history was documented by the second wave of feminists. But she said the information still is not generally known. The lives of women - and particularly their work lives - are often hidden from view historically, she added.

Her goal is to showcase women's work in the community and its impact on society, as well as the tensions that frequently occur around women's rights and the rights of minorities.

In today's political climate women tend to be taken for granted by the Democrats and

sidelined by the Republicans, she said. This is obvious from the lack of political focus on day care or educational opportunities for girls and women. While overlooked by history, today's society still doesn't bode well for women. "It's not a good time for women . . . My granddaughter has fewer rights than I did," she added.

"We still have glaring issues of inequality and injustice when it comes to women's everyday lives," according to Dr. Abigail Brooks, director of the Women's and Gender Studies Program at Providence College, Providence, RI.

Dr. Tushnet, who taught classes at Pennsylvania and Missouri schools, comes to the OLLI program with experience and education. She considers herself a feminist, and loves history. She earned a master's degree in history and a doctorate in education policy analysis. She came to SoCal for a job and about 13 years ago retired here. It was then she began volunteer teaching at OLLI. One of the best things about volunteer teaching is that you get to teach new courses, she said. In fact, one of her previous classes dealt with the legal issues affecting women in history.

