Appendix 1: Teaching Strategies Lesson: Margaret Rutledge

**Introduction.**

These lessons are readily incorporated into Social Studies 11 during discussions of the

* role of the airplane and bush pilots in the development of Canada’s isolated resources;
* BCATP and women’s significant, but defined role not as pilots, but as “ground-based” support for male-oriented aerial combat;
* role of women and social expectations of women in the post-war “cult of domesticity” from the late 1940s through mid-1960s;
* Sexual division of labour, or “gendered work” and efforts to break the gender barrier.

The lessons are easily incorporated in Planning 10 discussions of diversity of occupations open to men and women. The inherent gender conflict and social expectations of women’s work makes this a fertile lesson for Point of View writing in English and Humanities classrooms.

The lessons were designed to provide Teachers and Students with considerable options. Teachers may choose one or more of the following assignment options while taking care not to overlap learning outcomes (for example, giving two assignments that both lead to the same summary of historical reasons limiting women’s opportunities as pilots in Canadian aviation)

Teaching Suggestions

Note that all assignment options should involve

* Viewing the Knowledge Network vignette, *Margaret Rutledge*;
* Reading a brief online biography of this female Canadian pilot found at: <http://www.canadianflight.org/content/margaret-fane-rutledge>
* Reading the article, *A Brief History of Women in Canadian Aviation*.

Teachers should lead their classrooms through a debriefing of the video and a reading of the article, *A Brief History of Women in Canadian Aviation*. Students should have an opportunity to read the online biography of Margaret Rutledge – either through a printout, their own computers, or via classroom laptop and projector.

Before engaging in one or more of the six Activities suggested below, teachers should review and emphasize the following points:

* Rutledge had an early passion for flying, geared her education to becoming a pilot, and continued to subsidize her dream through related work either by bookkeeping at the flying club, or through aircraft fabric maintenance;
* Gendered expectations of women’s work persisted from the late 1920s, through the Depression, and into the 1960s: women might enter the professions of teaching, nursing, or clerical work – at least until they were married at which point began their “real jobs” as mothers and attentive housewives;
* In becoming a private, then commercial pilot, and in setting up the “Flying Seven” Club with six other women, Rutledge provides a good example of “human agency”, or personal resistance to mainstream’s society’s expectations, in her case, expectations of gendered roles including work roles.
* Women were not merely passive victims, but pushed the boundaries and exerted influence where they could. Hoping to participate beyond the war time traditional “home front” roles (factory work), and unable to join in the British Commonwealth Air Training Program as pilots, or instructors, a few women went to Great Britain to fly for the Air Transport Auxiliary. In Canada, Margaret and her club of female pilots formed the “Flying Seven Auxiliary” in advance of the creation of the Women’s Division of the RCAF. Their work dropping “bomphlets” over Vancouver in 1940 in order to fundraise “to buy our boys more planes,” illustrates *both* continuity and an expansion of the idea of “women’s work” on the Home Front.

Lesson Extensions

This lesson might lead to classroom discussions of students’ own career aspirations and the factors including income, as well as personal and family expectations imposing upon their own career choices. The lesson also naturally leads to some discussion of other occupations traditionally regarded as proper men’s work. In the mid-1970s, some women found work not in the offices but on the production lines of Lignum’s sawmill in Williams Lake, as well as in the mines of Northern Ontario – in the latter case in the above-ground mill but not in the actual underground mine. Teachers might explore why more women are not engaged in delivery or long distance truck driving. When asked in Planning 10 classrooms why there are so few female commercial pilots in Canada, students commonly cite reasons such as “I want to have a family,” or “I wouldn’t want to spend so much time away from family and friends.” Generally, students do not always consider critically that might women aspire to become flight attendants but not pilots – despite the fact that once trained, both occupations have similar layover time commitments on inter-city and international flights. This is a discussion worth pursuing.