

## **Integrating Women's History in Social Studies: Lessons Learned from a College/School Partnership**

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### ***Abstract***

*This article describes a collaborative effort between a teacher educator, an inservice teacher, and a preservice teacher to develop a program for integrating women's history in an eighth-grade early American History course. Using the results of a survey given to social studies teachers within the local district, they designed a program intended to address primary barriers to the integration of women's history in the curriculum. Teacher-identified barriers included a lack of quality resources and a lack of time as well as a need to conform to district curriculum and state standards and a lack of content knowledge in women's history among teachers. In addition to a description of the project, the article provides a discussion of lessons learned through the process.*

### **Introduction**

With the advent of Women's Studies programs at colleges and universities in the 1970s as well as the acceptance of women's history as a credible line of inquiry among historians, increasing attention has been given to the question of how we approach women's history in the K-12 social studies curriculum. The growing literature base surrounding this question can be viewed in three broad categories. Several works have examined the absence of women in textbooks and other curriculum materials and have provided ample evidence that, despite

improvements over the past three decades, a lack of coverage continues to be a problem at the elementary and secondary level (Chick, 2006; Clark, Allard, & Mahoney, 2004; Sadker & Sadker, 1994; Tetreault, 1986). Other historians and educators have focused their efforts on developing frameworks for studying women's history and providing visions of how educators might approach the field in a broad sense (Lerner, 1981; McIntosh, 1983; Noddings, 2001; Woyshner, 2002). Finally, several works have provided practitioners with general strategies for incorporating women's history and with lesson ideas for teaching certain topics (Crocco, 1997; Cruz & Groendal-Cobb, 1998; Karnes, 2000; Woyshner, 2006).

One area that has not been directly addressed in the literature is the question of how teachers might intentionally integrate women's history across a year-long course within their curriculum and what happens when they attempt to do so. This is an important question as we strive to bring theory to practice. Theorists have argued convincingly that the study of women's lives in K-12 curriculum should be central to the historical narrative rather than "added on" when time allows. At the same time, according to Noddings (2001), teachers should not undermine students' understanding of women's important work by exaggerating their contributions to a given event simply because they are women. In Noddings's view, it would be far more meaningful for teachers to focus on the countless areas of human experience in which women have played profound, yet often marginalized, roles. For practitioners who often have limited resources and time, it can be challenging to find an approach that avoids the pitfalls described by women's history theorists and that coherently changes the scope of a course rather than an individual lesson or unit. By telling the story of one group's attempt to meet this challenge, this article intends to bring to the forefront issues surrounding women's history at the practitioner level and to provide for readers some lessons learned.

In 2004, shortly after joining the faculty at a liberal arts college in Pennsylvania, I formed a partnership with Lisa, an eighth-grade social studies teacher at one of the two local middle schools. Together, we decided that we would look at ways that she might begin to integrate more women's history into her eighth-grade early American History course and to brainstorm ideas for incorporating women's history more broadly in her school and district. Knowing that it would take time to develop any type of comprehensive project, but not wanting to delay getting started, we decided to take some initial, small steps. In March of both 2005 and 2006, we arranged for my college's chapter of Kappa Delta Pi (KDP), an education honor society, to hold a Women's History essay contest for Lisa's students and for other interested eighth graders within the district.

In order to encourage students to think more broadly about women's historic roles, we asked them to consider writing about women who were known for their work in politics, science, the arts, athletics, social activism, or community leadership. They could also choose to write about women in the past, contemporary women, or women in their own families or local communities (See Appendix A). Lisa required her students to write the essay, and she graded them and then gave unmarked copies to a committee of KDP students who selected winners in each category. Because we opened the contest to all 8th graders in the district, we also received a few essays from students who had other teachers, making our total number of essays approximately 100.<sup>1</sup> We held receptions for the winners and their families, and we highlighted the project in the district's newsletter. By all accounts, our contests were successful. They introduced students to women left out of their traditional curriculum; they broadened their understanding of the types of people who are important in history, and they supported the district's research and writing goals.

Despite these important successes, the fundamental social studies curriculum for the eighth-grade American History course and the day-to-day lessons that Lisa and her colleagues taught remained largely unchanged. Because we sponsored the contests during Women's History Month and because many of the students chose to write about "notable" women (e.g. Eleanor Roosevelt), one could argue that our efforts simply reinforced the notion that women are only to be studied at special times of the year rather than as central participants in all human experiences included in the curriculum. While Lisa and I both believed that the essay contests were valuable for her students and remained committed to continuing them in the future, we recognized that ultimately her students' understanding of women's historic roles would be served best through an analysis and reconsideration of her curriculum. The project being described in this article emerged from our desire to move in this new and more complex direction.

### The Plan

In our initial, informal meetings, Lisa and I agreed that this new direction would prove most fruitful, but we kept returning to the question of *how* to integrate women's history more broadly within her curriculum. We wanted to come up with an approach that was at once substantive and doable. Because we hoped that our project might also serve as a model for change in the broader social studies curriculum within the district, we needed to address teachers' real concerns. At the same time, we could only guess at the amount of resistance or support for women's history there would be among Lisa's colleagues. Would they too be interested in our question? Who should participate in this project? With these questions in mind, we began to formulate a plan.

We agreed to spend the 2005-2006 school year reviewing literature in women's history, gathering information about current practice within the district, determining the scope of the project, deciding who else might be involved in our efforts, and establishing specific project goals. We would then spend the summer of 2006 analyzing Lisa's current curriculum and developing strategies for integration. We also saw this as a time to strengthen our own knowledge bases in women's history. The project would be implemented during the 2006-2007 school year.

During this planning phase, Lisa and I had many discussions about the obstacles that had limited our own inclusion of women's history in our social studies teaching. We also shared anecdotal data from discussions with other teachers. In order to gain more specific information regarding the views of Lisa's social studies colleagues within the district, we planned to develop and administer a survey instrument (See Appendix B). This would help us to assess current practices and self-reported needs of social studies teachers in the district. The results of the survey, which will be discussed in the next section, provided us with a framework for our project.

In addition to establishing a timeframe and planning for the survey, we needed to determine who would participate in this project. There are four eighth-grade social studies teachers in Lisa's school district with two in each of the two middle schools. We decided to focus our initial efforts in Lisa's school. If successful, we hoped to gain district support for implementing a similar program at the other middle school. In the end, four individuals played a direct role in the project: two in-service teachers, one pre-service teacher, and one teacher educator.

Lisa, having expressed a strong interest in the project since our initial work together on the essay contests, agreed to participate fully in the process. A 20-year veteran teacher, she had no specific training in women's history prior to this project. She considered her knowledge base in this area to be typical of most social studies teachers, and, although eager to participate in our work, she had some reservations about changing her curriculum. Lisa is a teacher leader at her school, having served for several years as the middle school social studies department chair.

The other eighth-grade social studies teacher, who had worked with Lisa for many years, planned to retire at the end of the 2005-2006 school year. We hoped that the new teacher hired to fill her position would be willing to participate. This is, in fact, what happened when the district hired Mike in May 2006. Mike, a history major in college, had completed his certification in social studies as a post-baccalaureate student in the year after he graduated. Thus, he began the 2006-2007 school year as a first-year teacher, willing to participate, but concerned about managing all of the responsibilities of a new teacher.

In addition to Lisa and Mike, we included Meghan, a college senior who served as a research assistant on the project during the summer of 2006 and who came back for a ninth semester to student teach with Lisa during the fall of 2006. As a political science major, she had limited background in women's history and had never taken a course in the field, but she had been involved with the KDP essay contests and was motivated to learn more women's history. She was also eager to gain experience in curriculum development at a community school and to implement the project during her student teaching semester.

As the fourth member of the team, I had taught social studies for 11 years in a public high school before completing a doctoral program in social studies education. As an undergraduate history major in the 1980s, I had an interest in women's history, but there were no courses in women's history offered at my college and scant attention had been given to women's roles in the courses that I took. When I taught high school, I tried to supplement the existing curriculum, but had become frustrated by my own lack of knowledge of women's history, and, like most teachers, I had limited time to learn on my own. Later, as a doctoral student, I came across the work of Mary Ritter Beard, the most consistent advocate of women's history in the first half of the 20th century, and I was struck by the continued relevance of her critique of the way that history has been written and the way that it has been taught at all levels. As a teacher educator with a concentration in social studies, I came to this project with the goal of exploring avenues that might lead to teaching a richer and more inclusive history curriculum in our schools.

Finally, Lisa, Meghan, and I established a set of specific, measurable goals for the program. Mike joined us after these goals had been developed, but he had an opportunity to review and discuss them with us during the summer of 2006. In addition, we identified sources of evidence that could be used to measure the extent to which we met each of our goals (See Appendix C). We planned to work in a spirit of collaboration, and each of our goals represents consensus thinking. As will be discussed later, however, there was some degree of tension from the beginning in terms of how ambitious to be with the project.

### **The Program**

The women's history survey, which was completed by 21 secondary teachers (11 male and 10 female), provided us with useful information for our planning process. Teachers identified four primary concerns about integrating women's history in their curriculum. These included (a) a lack of quality resources, (b) a lack of time, (c) a need to conform to district

curriculum and state standards, and (d) a lack of content knowledge in women's history. Most teachers said that their college coursework did not provide training in women's history. Of the six who reported that they did receive undergraduate training, four had graduated within the past five years. Despite the lack of formal training, 63.1% of teachers reported having a knowledge base in women's history. A lack of knowledge, however, was the fourth most frequently listed concern regarding the integration of women's history. In the survey, 85% of teachers agreed that women's history should be integrated in the social studies curriculum, and 90% of the teachers reported that they would *use* effective resources in women's history if the resources were provided to them.

Two points of possible contradiction emerged from the survey results. First, the highest percentage of teachers, by a small margin, had agreed with the statement that their current resources (i.e. textbooks, worksheets, films, etc.) include women's history; whereas in the open-ended questions, they had listed "lack of good resources" as the number one reason that teachers limit the inclusion of women's history in their courses. This may suggest that teachers recognize the inclusion of some women in their textbooks, perhaps an increase from the past, but that they do not consider the text an adequate resource. Second, 65% of teachers reported that they currently integrate women's history in at least one of their courses, but only 20% reported that their students have an age-appropriate knowledge base in women's history. This may suggest that women's history, when integrated, is taught sporadically or superficially or that students are simply not remembering what has been taught.

Given the results of the survey, we wanted to address the four primary, teacher-identified concerns regarding women's history. Our first goal was to construct a women's history curriculum guide that would provide teachers with *easily accessible quality resources*. Using the current eighth-grade social studies curriculum as a starting point, we organized our guide into two main parts. The first several pages provide an overview of the field of women's history, questions for teachers to think about when integrating women's history, an explanation of how content within the guide can be linked to Pennsylvania academic standards for social studies, and a list of general resources (books, articles, and websites) on women's history. Our goal here was to provide general background information and context for those with limited exposure to the field of women's history.

We organized the second part of the curriculum guide into seven main subheadings—one for each unit of study within the existing eighth-grade curriculum. These headings include (a) Explorations, (b) Colonial Beginnings, (c) Revolutionary Era, (d) A New Government, (e) Expansion, (f) A Nation Divided, and the (g) Civil War. Each of these subsections is between 7 and 16 pages long and contains an overview of women's history during that specific period, biographical sketches of women from the period, annotated resources for the unit, three lesson ideas, and a primary source and accompanying lesson plan. We hoped to provide a substantial amount of information for teachers who may not go beyond the guide as well as to provide additional resources for those interested in learning more. We carefully reviewed and annotated all of the resources listed for each section so that teachers could be confident in the value of each one.

The second teacher-identified concern that we hoped to address was the *lack of time*. Part of this concern referred to a lack of preparation time, and, thus, we tried to make our curriculum guide as user-friendly and efficient as possible. Teachers also noted that there were simply not enough hours in the day to cover everything important to the social studies curriculum. Several teachers commented on the growing amount of content that they are expected to cover and

expressed some resistance to more being added. We devised several strategies to confront this issue. First, we planned to start the course with a specific lesson on multiple perspectives in historical inquiry and to use this as a theme throughout the year. Then, when talking about any issue, the boycott of British goods by Colonists for instance, students could be asked to think about it from various women's perspectives as well as from other groups. In this example, students will have a deeper understanding of the implications of a boycott if they recognize that the only way Colonists could substitute local goods was through the efforts of women who took on the job, among many others, of producing homespun cloth. We hoped to weave this kind of analysis into day-to-day lessons as seamlessly as possible, thus not adding substantially to the overall time needed for each unit.

As a second strategy for dealing with the time issue, we included lessons and assignments in which examining the roles of women or the work of individual women could be one of several options or examples. When studying westward expansion, for instance, students could be asked to write letters or diary entries from the perspective of a mother or a father in a family traveling on the Oregon Trail or from the perspective of a specific man or woman such as Narcissa Whitman, one of the first two white women to cross the continent by land on the Oregon Trail. By providing teachers with a framework focusing on multiple perspectives, with information about more than 70 individual women and with descriptions of women's roles in each unit of study, we hoped to encourage the inclusion of women's history on a day-to-day basis without making teachers feel like they had no time for it.

To address the third concern expressed by teachers, the need to *focus on the planned curriculum and on the PA state standards*, we first organized the curriculum guide to match the existing units in the district's eighth-grade early American History curriculum. We also looked at what was currently covered in the course and referenced the text used by the teachers so that we could develop lesson ideas that meshed well with the curriculum. For example, the curriculum already included considerable attention to slavery and the abolition movement, so we provided resources that supported these topics and gave primary sources that included Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers Project. This way, teachers could have small groups of students analyze and compare the narratives, many of which were dictated by slave women, without deviating from the planned curriculum.

Because the district curriculum is based on Pennsylvania state standards, we could, to a large degree, comply with state standards by linking our curriculum guide to the district curriculum. In order to address more explicitly the concern about meeting the standards, however, we used two approaches. First, we included a section on Pennsylvania state history standards in the first part of our curriculum guide. We listed the standards followed by examples of topics addressed in our guide that supported the standards. In addition, we intentionally suggested lesson ideas that would support Pennsylvania standards for writing and reading. Most school districts in the state are expecting teachers in all academic areas, including social studies, to work on the reading and writing standards as students prepare for state exams. We knew that it would be essential for any materials we developed to comply with the standards if we wanted teachers to use them.

Finally, we sought to tackle the question of *teacher content knowledge*. Because neither Lisa nor Meghan nor Mike had a strong background in women's history, we thought that it would be useful to implement a small-scale study group focusing on women's history. During the summer of 2006, as we were working on the curriculum guide, we met regularly to discuss the project and to discuss shared readings within the field. We planned to assess the extent to

which reading and discussing background materials would strengthen their conceptual understanding of women's history as well as their specific content knowledge as they taught the eighth-grade American History course the following year. After reading Gail Collins's *America's Women: 400 Years of Dolls, Drudges, Helpmates, and Heroines*, which provides an excellent and highly readable survey of American women's history, we read a series of articles—some theoretically based and others more practitioner oriented. Essentially, we wanted to see whether a small and modified version of a faculty study group would be an effective way to augment teachers' knowledge bases. Each of us used journals to record our responses to the readings and to our discussions.

By the end of the summer of 2006, we had completed the Curriculum Guide, had met several times to discuss shared readings, and had decided on some basic approaches for the 2006-2007 school year. Lisa, Meghan, and Mike agreed to track which formal lessons and assignments they used from the Guide as well as any material they used from the biographies or unit overviews. They also planned to note any of the additional resources that they used throughout the year. In addition, we gave the Curriculum Guide to the two eighth-grade American History teachers at the neighboring middle school and encouraged them to use it and to give us feedback. That was our only contact with them until the end of the school year.

Our goal was to measure the project on three levels. Having contributed significantly to the Curriculum Guide, having read the Collins text and several articles, and having been involved in the conception and implementation of the project from start to finish, Lisa and Meghan would clearly be the most invested in its success. If they did not use the materials and resources, there would be little chance that they would be used by others. Mike, on the other hand, played no direct role in the development of the materials. He was hired as a first-year teacher after we had begun the project, but he agreed to read several of the articles and to read and use the Curriculum Guide. He also met with us over the summer to discuss the results of the survey and the genesis for the project. The two teachers at the neighboring middle school had participated in the survey, but otherwise knew nothing of the project and had no particular investment in it. One was scheduled to retire at the end of the year.

Throughout the year Lisa, Meghan, Mike, and I met regularly and communicated through email. We also completed project evaluations at the end of the first semester and again at the end of the school year. The mid-year evaluation consisted of five open-ended questions that asked the teachers to address the overall strengths and weaknesses of the project, to assess the value of the curriculum guide, to review their women's history content knowledge, and to evaluate the extent to which we had avoided an "add-on" approach to women's history. The final evaluation consisted of five open-ended questions, the first of which asked the teachers to reflect on the extent to which we had achieved each of our goals. They also discussed how well our approach addressed the concerns raised by teachers in the survey as well as future directions for this work. Several lessons emerged from our project.

## **Lessons Learned**

### ***Lesson 1: There Are Different Levels of Success***

At the outset, we decided to measure our success in the first year of this project by the extent to which teachers used the materials we provided and by the extent to which we met our self-defined goals. While we were obviously interested in what students learned from the

lessons, we knew that measuring student learning would be impossible if teachers did not use the resources in the first place. We also decided not to mandate that Lisa, Meghan, and Mike use a certain number of resources or lessons or discuss particular women or gender issues. We were more interested in seeing whether teachers, with varying degrees of ownership of the materials, would use them of their own volition.

It quickly became clear, however, that our more open-ended approach made determining the ultimate success of the project more difficult. On one level, Lisa, Meghan, Mike, and I agreed that the project was a success. They reported that the curriculum guide was, in fact, user friendly and that they referred to it for background information, resources, and lesson ideas throughout the year. Each of them said that the project “greatly increased” their understanding of women’s historical roles and that they included much more women’s history than they would have otherwise. Lisa could quantifiably show in her lesson plans that she taught more women’s history this year than in previous years, but she still only used a small percentage of the lesson ideas and resources provided. At the end of the year, Lisa and Mike, both of whom spent the whole year teaching the curriculum, reported that they would have liked to use more of the resources provided in the guide and cited “not having enough time” as the primary reason that they did not.

### ***Lesson 2: Teacher Buy-In Is Essential***

We quickly learned that simply providing materials to teachers, no matter how easy they are to use, is not enough. Even though 90% of the teachers we surveyed responded that they would use resources if they were provided, we found that the extent to which the resources were used was directly related to the teachers’ proximity to the project, with those most involved using them the most. The two teachers at the neighboring middle school both gave the Curriculum Guide high marks for its content, accessibility and flexibility. However, both said that they used the guide primarily for background information. Given the many competing demands on their time as well as the breadth of the social studies curriculum in most schools, teachers must pick and choose which initiatives and/or curricular changes to embrace. Our experience suggests that professional development, which is built into the school district’s professional development plan and promotes ownership over the integration process, is crucial to more widespread success. Because Lisa, Meghan, and Mike found our small faculty study group to be helpful, we believe that a similar format could be used on a wider scale and that teachers could be compensated for time spent working on women’s history curriculum guides for their own courses.

### ***Lesson 3: Traditional Historical Structures Are Deeply Entrenched***

Although our survey revealed that teachers considered *lack of time* and *lack of resources* to be roughly equal obstacles to the integration of women’s history, we learned that time may be the greater challenge. My hope, going into the project, was that Lisa and Meghan, both of whom were receptive to new ideas, would come away from our discussions on the shared readings in women’s history with a willingness to challenge the basic organizational structure of the early American History course in order to maximize the coverage of women in the time allowed. Although we intentionally matched our curriculum guide to the existing curriculum and maintained its chronological structure, I hoped that many of the topics, individuals, and primary sources which we included in the guide would be central to the units and used as starting points

for inquiry. This did not happen in a fundamental way with any of the teachers who were involved in the project. Even Lisa, who was most invested in the project and had done the most reading in women's history, struggled with how to balance the traditional curriculum and the goals of the project. In her mid-year evaluation, she wrote:

My greatest concern has been how to use the curriculum guide in a way that would be valuable to both my class and the project. I want the number one priority to be my classroom, yet I feel that I should also be "testing" the guide to help the project. Are the two goals one and the same? There is so much I need to do in the classroom, and I have many of the same concerns other teachers mentioned in the survey. Can it all be done in a valuable way? What would I be "giving up" to maximize the curriculum guide? I'm still working on that.

Lisa, Meghan, and Mike all reported their making a conscious effort to weave women's perspectives into lessons, as we hoped teachers would do, but they still followed a curriculum that was largely male-centered in its focus and orientation.

During our discussion of the readings, there was a general consensus among my colleagues that most social studies teachers would not be receptive to materials that asked them to abandon a chronological approach or that moved too far from the traditional narrative found in most textbooks. For instance, when we read Nel Noddings's provocative 2001 article entitled "The Care Tradition: Beyond 'Add Women and Stir'" in which she describes a unit on homemaking as a valuable topic of study, my colleagues were intrigued but unconvinced. In response to the reading, Lisa wrote in her journal: "I think she has really neat ideas, but I don't see how we could apply them here. It's not practical. What is going to be left out if we do a unit like homemaking? It doesn't really fit our curriculum." From Lisa's perspective, teachers are reluctant to make the kind of content compromises that a substantive restructuring of the curriculum might require. Although this is only one person's point of view, my interactions with teachers, when I was teaching high school myself and as a teacher educator, suggest that it is not an isolated one. Programs that intentionally help teachers to negotiate those content compromises, to a larger extent than we did in our first year, will be most successful.

#### ***Lesson 4: There Is an Inevitable Tension between Theory and Practice***

From the start, I urged our group to avoid the traditional "add and stir" approach that has been soundly rejected by historians of women. The results of our survey and my discussions with Lisa, however, suggested that teachers would be most receptive to materials closely aligned to their existing curriculum, which is chronological and fairly traditional. We faced a dilemma: If we were too conservative in our approach, we would be unlikely to see meaningful integration and certainly not transformation. If we were too radical, we risked turning off teachers from the start. We hoped to strike a balance, but throughout the year, we grappled with this tension.

While Lisa and Meghan used at least one women's history lesson idea for each unit and incorporated more women's perspectives into lessons taught in previous years, none of us believed that the curriculum was transformed in a substantial way. While I, with my beliefs grounded in theory, was disappointed by this, Lisa had never believed that curricular transformation was needed for the project to be considered a success. Based on her experience, she did not believe that a radical departure from tradition would work. Rather, she felt quite

positive about the amount of women's history she was able to incorporate and believed that her students were exposed to far more than they had been in the past. She argued that if we had built the Curriculum Guide around thematic, multidisciplinary units that used gender as a point of inquiry, she and other teachers would have been less able to use it. However, I wondered if we could have done a better job in our efforts to bridge theory and practice.

### ***Lesson 5: Curriculum Change Is an Ongoing Process***

One of the most important lessons we learned from this project is that curriculum change takes time, and in the real world of public schools in which teachers face many demands on their time and in which the history curriculum is continually expanded, a gradual approach is probably best. We focused our efforts largely on two teachers and one student teacher in one middle school. On their end-of-year evaluations, all three stated that we had met our goals, that the project had been a significant success, and that they see it as a first step in an ongoing process. We learned that when it comes to curriculum initiatives, teachers need time to process suggested changes and to work through where new material fits into their broader goals and previous ways of teaching. This was true even for Meghan and Lisa who had themselves developed many of the new lessons. Writing a good lesson during the summer can be done in a relatively short amount of time. Determining where and how to make best use of that lesson during a busy school year takes more time.

### **Conclusion**

My intention in writing this article is not to offer a definitive answer on how best to integrate women's history across a middle school American History course but rather to describe and discuss one attempt to do so. An important part of the women's history conversation must center on *how* we go about moving beyond individual lessons and how we make theoretical frameworks accessible to practicing teachers. While our attempt to do this achieved mixed results, we were encouraged enough by our progress to build upon our foundation in the coming years. In addition to using a revised version of this model in the other middle school within our district, we also plan, in the future, to assess student reaction to our women's history lessons. Perhaps most importantly, we hope to use our initial experience to begin a dialogue with other social studies teachers in the district about ways in which they might develop similar strategies in their own courses. Based on our experience, the most successful approaches to integrating women's history across courses will likely be those that define success in a series of stages, that promote teacher ownership and school-supported staff development, and that successfully navigate the tension between theory and practice.

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## Women's History Essay Contest

The XXX chapter of Kappa Delta Pi, an International Honor Society in Education, is sponsoring an essay contest for 8<sup>th</sup> graders in the XXX Area School District. The purpose of the contest is to help students celebrate Women's History Month and to learn more about the vital roles that women have played and continue to play in American History.

### **Topic Choices – Students may choose to research and write about one of the following types of women:**

- Choice A: A woman who has played an important role in American history through politics, science, the arts, athletics, social activism, or community leadership.
- Choice B: A woman who is currently playing an important role in American history through politics, science, the arts, athletics, social activism, or community leadership.
- Choice C: A woman in your community or family who plays an important role in shaping your life and the lives of those around her.

### **Requirements: The following requirements apply to all of the choices:**

- Essays must be handed in to your social studies teacher no later than March 15.
- The essay cover sheet must be stapled the front of each essay
- Essays must be 400 to 600 words in length
- Essays must be typed using a standard 12 or 14 pt. font
- Essays must include (1) background information on the person, (2) why the person is important and what impact she has had on the country or her community, and (3) why you chose the person
- Essays will be judged on content, organization, style, and originality. **NOTE:** For options A & B a bibliography should be included.

### **Prizes: The following prizes will be given in each of the three categories:**

- First Prize: \$50.00 cash                      Second Prize: \$25.00 cash

**\*\* Kappa Delta Pi will sponsor a reception for all of the winners, their teachers, and their parents after school on April 4<sup>th</sup>.**

## Appendix B

**Survey Results**

This survey was given to secondary social studies teachers during a regular department meeting held in April 2006. Twenty-one teachers completed at least some portion of the survey.

**What is your sex?**

- Male 11
- Female 10

**How long have you been teaching?**

- Less than 5 years 4
- 5 to 10 years 4
- 11 to 20 years 8
- More than 20 years 5

**What factors do you consider most significant in causing many teachers to limit the inclusion of women's history in their courses?**

**\*Note: This was an open-ended question. No choices were provided. Responses were summarized.**

- Lack of good textbooks and resources – 9
- Time – 8
- Curriculum Constraints / Standards – 5
- Lack of Knowledge – 3
- Desire not to change – 1
- Finals/Mid-terms – 1
- Contrived lessons just to include examples of women – 1
- How history has been written / male-centered – 1
- Student attitudes – Women didn't do anything important – 1
- Lack of interest – 1
- The course – 1
- Hasn't been much women's history until recently / can't be forced – 1

	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
I have a knowledge base in women's history.	0 (0%)	4 (21.1%)	3 (15.7%)	<b>10</b> <b>(52.6%)</b>	2 (10.5%)
My undergraduate and/or graduate coursework provided training in women's history.	<b>7</b> <b>(35%)</b>	6 (30%)	1 (5%)	6 (30%)	0
The traditional resources used in my courses (i.e., textbooks, worksheets, films, etc.) include women's history.	3 (15.7%)	5 (26.3%)	4 (21.1%)	<b>6</b> <b>(31.6%)</b>	1 (5.3%)
Women's history should be integrated in the social studies curriculum.	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (15%)	8 (40%)	<b>9</b> <b>(45%)</b>
I currently integrate women's history in one or more courses that I teach.	2 (10%)	4 (20%)	1 (5%)	<b>10</b> <b>(50%)</b>	3 (15%)
If provided with effective resources on women's history, I would use them.	0 (0%)	1 (5%)	1 (5%)	<b>10</b> <b>(50%)</b>	8 (40%)
My students have an age-appropriate knowledge base in women's history	4 (20%)	<b>10</b> <b>(50%)</b>	2 (10%)	3 (15%)	1 (5%)

## Women's History Project

### Project Goals

1. To work in a spirit of collaboration with all team members contributing their expertise and experience to the project.

*Sources of Evidence: Journal entries, email correspondence, final products*

2. To construct a women's history curriculum guide that:
  - Incorporates current resources and information for each unit
  - Is useful, flexible, and closely aligned to current district curriculum and PA standards

*Sources of Evidence: Final draft of curriculum guide, number of times the guide is used by teachers, number of lesson and assessment ideas incorporated, notes from discussions and debriefings regarding effectiveness of materials, lesson observations, mid-year and final project evaluations*

3. To strengthen our own understanding of women's history by setting aside time at regular meetings to discuss shared readings (model for a small faculty study group).

*Sources of Evidence: List of readings, meeting minutes, journal entries*

4. To develop an introductory lesson (and assignment) that encourages the students to think about the nature of history (What constitutes history? How and why is it recorded? Whose stories are important?) and to use that lesson as a reference point throughout the year.

*Sources of Evidence: Lesson plan, student work, observation*

5. To incorporate at least one lesson idea and at least one assignment for each unit (Lisa & Meghan, Mike).

*Sources of Evidence: Lesson plans, observations, mid-year and final evaluations*

6. To track, in a tangible way, the change in women's history integration from the 2005-06 school year to the 2006-07 year.

*Sources of Evidence: # of individual women included in lesson plans, # of resources / primary sources to which students are exposed, and # of assignments integrating women's history*

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<sup>i</sup> In 2007, we doubled our number of essays when Mike, the other eighth-grade American History teacher at Lisa's school, also required his students to write a women's history essay.