The Progressive Era: How American History Textbooks' Visuals Represent Women

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Studies of the representation of women in United States history textbooks, both in number and manner in which they appear, have found women are inequitably represented as compared to their male counterparts and are viewed through a patriarchal lens. This study analyzed a contemporary high school United States history textbook’s representation of women in the Progressive Era compared to an earlier edition textbook. Using their visual representation of women, it was found that the textbooks continued the patriarchal view of women and their roles in society. Although the number of representations of women had slightly increased over time, these additions did not promote a more contemporary view of women’s role in history, except in the area of women’s rights. Recommendations for future areas of research are made. Some are: monitoring of textbooks for equability, analyzing of textbooks covering U.S. history prior to 1877 for equability in inclusion of women in history, investigating what teachers are doing to compensate for the inequity, determining whether or not state standards are inclusive of women's history, and analyzing how women's history in college level textbooks represent women in history.

*Key words:* Secondary social studies, U.S. history, gender studies, textbooks, hidden messages, women, visuals, representation, Progressive Era

Introduction

On the night of April 26, 1777, a 16-year-old farm girl named Sybil Ludington made a courageous ride few high school U.S. history textbooks mention. According to the text, Sybil: "rode into the damp hours of darkness through enemy infested woods to summon soldiers to halt a British raid on Connecticut and New York. When she returned home more than four hundred soldiers were ready to march. Sybil rode forty miles, more than twice the distance of Paul Revere" (Sadker & Zittleman, 2009, p. 90-91).

Few high school students have heard of Sybil Ludington or her night ride because she is rarely mentioned in high school U.S. history textbooks. If mentioned, she is defined in her role from a man's point of view, accomplishing something unusual because she was a woman (Sadker & Zittleman, 2009). The account above is indicative of a society in which inequity takes the form of viewing women in relation to men, such as equating women's actions to masculine standards of heroism.

The high school curriculum relies heavily on textbooks (Wakefield, 2006). According to John Wakefield although textbooks are prominent in classroom use overall, social studies classes, of which U.S. history is a major component, rely on textbooks more than any other curriculum area. One survey found 94% of social studies teachers in the secondary level
reported they used textbooks weekly, more than English, mathematics, or science teachers (Wakefield, 2006). Textbooks, especially in social studies, are at the core of the curriculum. U.S. history textbooks have been demonstrated to be predominantly arenas of male accomplishments, with women included as they fit into male-defined terms of importance (Chick, 2006; Clark, Allard, & Mahoney, 2004; Tetreault, 1986; Trecker, 1971). Thus, it can be concluded that women’s roles in social studies textbooks influence a student's perception of women in history, which leads to the issue of how textbooks portray women.

Some studies have shown both boys and girls are negatively affected by gender bias in textbooks and may benefit from positive images of women (Christensen, 2005; Crocco, 1997; Ruthsdotter, 1996; Stake & Gerner, 1987). Jayne Stake and Margaret Gerner’s study compared male and female college students from a variety of curriculum areas who took women's studies to those who did not take those types of courses. They found male and female students who took women’s studies courses developed a higher level of self-esteem than the group who had not taken such courses. Thus, it may follow when students are exposed to textbooks in U.S. history in which women are portrayed as positive role models, levels of self-esteem for all students would increase. Inclusion of women in textbooks, and the way they are portrayed, has a deep impact on the interpretation of history for both boys and girls (Glazer, 2005; Ruthsdotter, 1996). What students see and read in their textbooks is taken as an indicator of what is important. According to Mary Ruthsdotter, “If you’re seen and discussed in class, you’re important. If you’re not, you’re unimportant” (p. 16).

**Representation of Women**

The ways in which women are represented is highlighted by literature indicating women are included in U.S. history textbooks only as they fit the patriarchal view. Gerda Lerner (1979), Mary Kay Tetreault (1986), and Mary Frederickson (2004) came to similar conclusions in their studies. They found women's inclusion lacked depth and women were still portrayed within the patriarchal framework. Women typically were depicted as wives, nurses, and domesticated figures, or in ways representing patriarchal definitions of importance. In history textbooks, representation tends to emphasize military and political winners. These are areas in which women have been less visible in the past. This view tends to omit from textbooks those who, historically speaking, were important in less dramatic in overt ways (Crocco, 1997).

Patriarchal ideology is passed down through tradition and accepted by both men and women (Lerner, 1979). Sandra Bem (1981) and Virginia Valian (2004) referred to acceptance of traditional ideology by both sexes as evidence of gender schemas. Gender schemas, as explained by Bem and Valian, develop during childhood and lead to development of an understanding about what it means to be male or female. Gender schemas influence how both men and women perceive themselves in relation to their own roles and the roles of others. According to Valian, the patriarchal ideology has led to negative perceptions of women’s competency by “overvaluing men and undervaluing women” (p. 209).

An example of passing on patriarchal views was illustrated in a study by Janice Fournier and Samuel Wineburg (1997). Their two-part study asked fifth and eighth grade students to first draw pictures of pilgrims, western settlers, and hippies. The second part asked the same students to read a textbook-like passage and then to draw pictures of the three historical figures. In both parts, boys overwhelmingly drew male figures. The girls, however, differed in their perceptions after reading the textbook passage. In part one, girls depicted approximately equal representations of male and female figures, while in part two, the number of male figures
increased when drawn with females and when drawn alone. This study indicated that textbooks affected how girls view history in relation to the meaning they drew from textbooks. Girls, after reading textbook material, changed their views of historical equability between men and women to views of history more typically male.

Although students may not remember everything they read, they gain a general sense of concepts from textbooks, often referred to as the hidden messages (Fitzgerald, 1979). Hidden messages have continued to perpetuate the myths that women have a dismissed history or their history is not important. Patriarchal ideology, although not so forthright in the early 21st century, clings to those ideas still prevalent in commonly used textbooks (Frederickson, 2004; Schmidt, 2012). As textbooks are habitually used as primary information in the classroom (Wakefield, 2006), this usage continues the false assumption that women did not play important roles in history. The hidden messages in curriculum proliferate the ideology of patriarchy continuing the reproductive cycle of dominant culture in the schools.

Studies by Tetreault (1986) and Roger Clark, Jeffrey Allard, and Timothy Mahoney (2004) indicated that although textbook content in U.S. history included more references to women in content, the references were still less than references of men, and depreciated women’s roles in history. Textbooks have changed and continue to be updated. It is important, however, to continue to make positive strides by including more women’s history. It is also necessary to ensure that the continued representation of women in textbooks does not impede or reflect the patriarchal viewpoint (Frederickson, 2004; Woyshner, 2006).

**Theoretical Framework**

Feminist critical theory is the lens through which this study was conceptualized. Feminist critical theory, as applied to this study, states there is a dominant or subdominant relationship, which is described by Michael Apple (2004) and Paulo Freire (1970). Feminism describes the dominant group as men in a patriarchal society that has dominated the women of that society. Next, feminist critical theory holds that hegemony is countered by women’s awakening to their domination in a patriarchal society and their need to resist the acceptance of the roles allotted to them. Hegemony only works if there is a dominant ideology. Critical feminists argue that patriarchy is the ideology that continues to perpetuate the subdominant role of women in society (McLaren, 2003). Finally, women have to challenge the hidden curriculum that promotes hegemony and the ways in which women are portrayed, as well as the patriarchal viewpoint by which women are judged history-worthy. As described, feminist critical theory provides the lens used to analyze the messages of images in high school U.S. history textbooks.

**Method**

This study was guided by two questions. The first question, "What messages about women are being communicated in contemporary high school U.S. history textbooks? This question was basic to the research in that it looked below the surface of the visual to the innuendos implied by the setting and focus of women in the visual. The second question, “Have these messages changed over time?” allowed the researcher to determine if past research findings of a traditional view of women's roles in U.S. history have led to a less patriarchal view of women's roles. These questions guided the analysis of images depicting women in various roles during the Progressive Era.

Images from two textbooks, *Unites States History: Modern America* (Lapsansky-Werner, Levy, Roberts, & Taylor, 2013) and *America: Pathways to the Present* (Cayton, Perry, Reed, & Winkler, 2003) were analyzed for perceived messages about women. Textbooks were
then compared to determine if messages about women had changed over time. These two particular textbooks were selected because the earlier editions have been found consistently on the Most Widely Used Textbooks list as compiled by the American Textbook Council for almost 20 years (Clark, Allard, & Mahoney, 2004; American Textbook Council, 2008 & 2011). Second, publishers replaced the Pathways series with the new series, United States History: Modern America, copyrighted in 2013. By comparing these two textbooks, it could be determined if the way in which women were represented in visuals and the resulting hidden messages had changed over time.

Data were collected comparing the visuals in the chapter of each textbook concerning the Progressive era. This particular era was chosen because of women’s activism in various movements. The Progressive era chapters in the two textbooks were qualitatively compared by themes, and by two types of criteria in which women were represented in the images. When analyzing the images, three themes became apparent. Those were: women's rights, women’s reform, and women’s’ roles. The themes were used to guide the interpretation of visuals for messages relayed by the images.

Visuals were then analyzed to determine hidden messages encoded in the visuals. The following criteria were used to determine what visuals messages implied about women and their roles. One, when men and women were in a visual together, dominance of the male or female figures was noted. Identifiers were the placement of men and women relative to each other in the image, the gender-focus of the visual, and the roles portrayed by each gender. Two, when women occurred in visuals alone, messages were derived by the represented actions, their relative placement(s), the textual descriptions, and the main emphasis.

When comparing the two textbooks, the number of visuals in each book was counted and was categorized in particular themes. Textbooks were compared for the number of visuals in each category as well as for the total number of visuals of women. The visuals in each textbook then were analyzed for hidden messages and compared with the visuals of the companion textbooks for changes over time in representation of women. Thirteen images were analyzed from the contemporary textbook and 10 images from the earlier edition. The findings are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1

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<td>Traditional</td>
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<td>2. Caregiver/shopping for food</td>
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<td>3. Women sewing</td>
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Feminist critical theory provided the lens for the analysis of data. The theory asserts historically men have dominated women, in a patriarchal society that assigns women to roles deemed proper. The theory also notes that women, as well as men, are many times unaware of the latent existence of patriarchal dominance and need to be awakened to its continued influence on society and then to work for change. This theory allowed the researcher to address the issues of patriarchal viewpoint and representative inequities between men and women. It also allowed for the delineation the hidden messages within the visuals.
The Progressive Era

The review of the chapters on the Progressive Era in the 2003 and 2013 textbooks included a description of the images of women, messages in the images, a comparison of the images in the chapters, and the change in the images over time. Three themes were evident in the analysis. Theme one, traditional, views women within the parameters of a patriarchal society where women are depicted as wives, caregivers, and other nurturing roles. The second theme, women’s rights, focuses on women’s efforts to obtain rights men normally held, such as voting equality. The third theme, reform, illustrates women’s roles in changing society to improve the lot of those who suffered various injustices.

Criteria used to interpret hidden messages within the images were: How were women depicted individually in an image, and How women were represented alongside men? Using the themes and criteria, visuals were analyzed for hidden messages about women and compared for changes over time.

2013 edition. The 2013 textbook contained 13 images of women in the chapter dealing with the Progressive era. Using the themes identified earlier, it was found that three images reflected the traditional theme, six images displayed women’s rights (although the same image was used three times), and four images represented the reform.

The traditional theme depicted women as caregivers such as: working as a nurse, providing food, and serving in traditional family roles. In the image containing the nurse, she was providing care for an elderly patient who was also female. Another image was of a woman

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<th>Women's Rights</th>
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| 4-6. Suffrage movement statue (used 3 times) | 10. Role of progressive movement | The review of the chapters on the Progressive Era in the 2003 and 2013 textbooks included a description of the images of women, messages in the images, a comparison of the images in the chapters, and the change in the images over time. Three themes were evident in the analysis. Theme one, traditional, views women within the parameters of a patriarchal society where women are depicted as wives, caregivers, and other nurturing roles. The second theme, women’s rights, focuses on women’s efforts to obtain rights men normally held, such as voting equality. The third theme, reform, illustrates women’s roles in changing society to improve the lot of those who suffered various injustices. Criteria used to interpret hidden messages within the images were: How were women depicted individually in an image, and How women were represented alongside men? Using the themes and criteria, visuals were analyzed for hidden messages about women and compared for changes over time.

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| 7. 2-page collage of various means of protest used by women for suffrage | 6. Florence Kelley |
| 8. Women voting | 7. Mother Harris "Mother" Jones |
| 9. Suffrage poster | 8. Men and Women in Chart - women dressed exactly as the men |
| | 9. Women working in NAACP Offices |
| | 10. Women of ILGWU |
"delivering Christmas dinner to the poor in New York City" (Lapsansky-Werner, et al., 2013, p. 99). The final traditional theme image was that of a woman sewing. These images reflect the stereotypical roles of women in society.

The women's rights movement was illustrated exclusively with images of women working for the right to vote (three of these images are of the same statuette of a woman suffragist). The Progressive reform chapter of the 2013 edition contained images of women using various methods to draw attention to their cause. Their methods included engaging in civil disobedience, participating in hunger strikes, and carrying protest banners. There was also an image of women voting. In the 2013 edition, women's rights activities implied women were more active, not so much as it dealt with stereotypical roles, but as each woman's right to have the vote as a citizen.

Images of women in reform movements reflected their activities to improve societal injustice. One image was of a woman working in a cigar factory, but the caption referenced the work of Progressive women to improve wages. Women were also in images displaying their involvement in the temperance movement. Ida B. Wells (who is inserted in the sidebar as a "History Maker"), was recognized for her leadership of the anti-lynching campaign. Discrimination against immigrants was recognized with an image representing a Latino family and the problems they faced.

Messages reflected in visual depiction of women. When images from the 2013 edition were examined, the ways in which women were portrayed continued the idea of women in subdominant roles. The image of the woman working in a cigar factory was overshadowed by the size of the coins superimposed on the image, one coin being larger than the women's head. The image portrays the woman working, but the coins sent the message that wages were the important issue. In an image depicting immigrants sewing in their tenement, the man was in the forefront of the picture and the women were behind him. He had his head down as though concentrating on the work, while one woman was smiling, looking at the camera, suggesting that the man was hard-working while the woman was not. In the image of the Mexican immigrants, the man was in the dominant position, standing over the women, putting the women in a subdominant role to the man. None of these images placed women in the dominant role. They were either overshadowed by their wages or in a subdominant position to the male figures. Some images portrayed women in a more positive perspective. In the images of women working for voting rights and reforms, women were center-stage and active in their methods, whether those methods were marching in parades, being jailed, or participating in demonstrations. Women were also dominant and the main focus in the two images depicting them in traditional roles, one of a nurse and the other of a woman providing food for the poor.

In the 2013 textbook, women were shown active participants in change aimed at women's rights. The other images reflected the stereotypical roles of women, usually in a subdominant position to men. Three images were traditional in nature and two of the four reform images demonstrated the traditional theme. The resulting implication was that women in traditional roles were deemed more appropriate for inclusion in textbooks.

2003 edition. The chapter dealing with the Progressive movement in the 2003 textbook included 10 visuals of women. Five of these images concerned women's rights and five dealt with reform. There were no images portraying women in strictly traditional roles, but those roles depicted were blended with some of the other images. In the women's rights theme, two of the images of women working for women's suffrage clearly express the view that it is a mother's role
to gain the right to vote. One image portrayed a woman sitting in a rocking chair clutching the ballot as if it were an infant. The second image was of a woman with two children, a boy and a girl, implying that giving women the right to vote would "give your children equal rights" (Cayton, et al., 2003, p. 406). In another image, a woman stood between two elephants as they held a suffrage sign. A side page insert of Susan B. Anthony (Cayton, et al., 2003, p. 404) described Anthony's work in not only women's rights but also in other reform movements, such as temperance and antislavery. The fifth image was the cover of the program for a woman's suffrage rally in 1913 depicting a woman riding on a horse.

The images depicting the theme of reform focused on women's involvement in Progressive reforms such as protective rights for women working in factories (women labor activists standing arm in arm), the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, (NAACP) and various other reforms as championed by Florence Kelley and Mary Harris "Mother" Jones. Both Kelley and Jones were featured in portrait images with text explaining their involvement in the reform movements. A final image was that of Progressive reforms with both men and women portrayed. Reform and women's rights' themes were predominant in the chapter of the 2003 edition; however, the traditional role of women was seen in the way women were portrayed in images supportive of women’s right to vote, such as that of a mother. The images, as a whole, reflected the tendency to continue to visualize women within the parameters of a patriarchal society. The feminist critical theory lens led to the researcher’s assumption that although women continued to make progress into the work place, education, and other areas of society, there is a lingering perception of women in primarily traditional roles. The themes of women's rights, reform, and traditional were used to categorize the visuals. Women's rights and reform were predominant in the visuals, but the traditional theme was prevalent in the way women were visualized in the other two themes.

**Messages reflected in visual depiction of women.**

Images can give meaning through the ways in which women are depicted in accordance with their surroundings. In the 2003 edition, the suffragist seemed small in the image when compared to the two elephants between whom she was standing. Florence Kelley and Mary Harris "Mother" Jones both had a portrait style image. In the text, however, Kelley was noted for her work to end child labor and improve working conditions for women by gaining government protection for "children . . . and their mothers" (p. 387). This statement gave the impression that Kelley was notable because her work was on behalf of mothers and children, the proper role for a woman. As for Jones, the text accompanying her image stated that personal tragedy (the loss of her family) and the lessons learned from her husband about "difficult working conditions" (p. 387), Jones became a strong advocate for improving labor conditions for both men and women, and a supporter of child labor laws. The text emphasized that it was her family and her personal loss as a mother and wife that led to her work with labor reform. The impression is that the use of portraits as images gives importance to the women, but the reading implies the meaning of importance in accordance with traditional views of women's roles. Other images of women reflect messages that go beyond the visual representation. A chart representation of Progressive political reforms showed several men and one woman who is dressed exactly as are the men. This image leaves the impression that a woman must look like a man if she supports political reforms. In another image depicting a family, two women were seated with the man standing behind them in the dominant position, making the women appear subdominant to the man. One image was of women union activists arm in arm, showing unity
and strength in numbers, and they are the main focus of the picture. This image gives a sense of the power and unity that women possess. Another image was of African American women working in a NAACP office. They are interspersed in the image among the male workers and are doing some of the same jobs representing a more equal status with the men.

The overall conclusion for the 2003 edition is that women in the images are generally seen as subdominant to men when they appear with them, with a few exceptions. Women also are identified with family and their actions are correlated with how they can effect change for women and children. The implied meaning is that women are valuable if they are in a family role relating to either being a wife or mother.

Comparing 2013 and 2003

When the Progressive Era images in the early edition were compared to the same era in the 2013 edition, similarities were found in the ways women were represented and in the messages that were drawn from those representations. Women's images in both editions utilized traditional representations of women such as mothers, wives, and caregivers. When women were pictured with men in images of both editions, the man was the dominant figure with the woman taking on the subdominant role. The meaning drawn from these observations was that women were subdominant to men thus continuing traditional patriarchal views of women. There were some exceptions in the 2013 edition of images in the women's rights and reform movements. Those images portrayed women in strong and united roles. If this was the predominant representation, the images would have represented a more positive meaning for women.

In both the 2003 and 2013 images, traditional roles of women were reflected in the images, whether forthright as the images of women as nurses or shopping, or as reflected in how other themes were visualized. Although images depicting reform and women's rights pass along the idea that women were involved in various societal roles, the images reflected the idea that women were basically caregivers, even when striving to win suffrage. When comparing the images of women in the 2003 textbook to those of the 2013 textbook, a common tendency was found. Women were linked to traditional roles with the exception of the images pertaining to the women's suffrage movement. The difference here was that images of women suffragists in traditional roles (such as the visual in which a woman is sitting in a rocker cuddling a ballot) had been removed from the contemporary edition and replaced with images of women using proactive methods in the struggle to win the right to vote. With that exception noted, the images of the earlier textbook compared to the later textbook reflected the view that women were stereotypically linked with roles, such as mothers and caregivers, whether striving to gain reform in labor laws for women and children or improving family life.

In both textbooks, women in traditional roles were predominant in visuals. As traditional roles often were used to emphasize women's work in the themes of reform and women's rights, a major discrepancy in women's actual roles in history was often critiqued as having a patriarchal viewpoint. Although women represent more than 50% of the population in the United States, the male-dominated version of gender participation and leadership continues to portray women in subdominant roles.

Summary

This study found women were portrayed in mainly traditional roles that emphasized women as wives, mothers, and caregivers. Those representations had not changed over time, with the exception of images of the women's rights movement. Women were particularly active during the Progressive Era in the women's rights movement and reform. For the most part,
women were visualized fulfilling roles that satisfied the patriarchal view. Women were predominantly shown as subdominant to males in the examined visuals. Thus, the message regarding women in history is that women are not as important as men as they fulfill only those stereotypical roles.

Women and their roles in history have made minimal progress toward being depicted equitably in high school U.S. history textbooks. In an era where women were particularly active in political and societal reforms, their roles were portrayed with the patriarchal view. The continued representation of women as filling mainly traditional roles leads to an incomplete version of the role of women in the history of the United States.

The knowledge and values students learn in school should be the building blocks for the continued development of a more equitable society. Both the patriarchal dominance and stereotypical views of women, however naively woven into textbook content, play important roles in how males and females see themselves and others. It is important to raise the educational community’s awareness of this problematic lack of change to an equitable representation of women in United States history. Future research may help to determine if including women in stereotypical roles and viewed with a patriarchal lens continues to be the status quo for United States history textbooks.

**Implications for Future Research**

The findings of this research suggest several issues for further research. A list of possible areas of research follows:

1. As marginal progress has been made in creating a more equitable representation of women in history, future research should continue to monitor for responses by publishers to make textbooks more equitable.

2. High school United States history textbooks that focus on history prior to 1877 should be analyzed. Is this first part of United States history inclusive of women's representation in history and the roles women played in the early development of the United States?

3. How do high school United States history teachers compensate for the lack of women’s history in textbooks? What types of resources do current teachers use to supplement their curriculum to include women's history?

4. As standardized testing is such an important part of the educational process, teachers should promote including more women's history in the state educational standards. Teacher organizations should present a united force for testing that requires an equitable representation of society. Lawmakers and those responsible for developing state standards should be challenged to make sure standards are representative of women in history.

5. As of 2014, the American Textbook Council no longer recommends the use of currently published high school textbooks. They recommend the use of college level textbooks. Are these textbooks more equitable in representing women's roles in history than contemporary high school United States history textbooks?

**Conclusion**

Although the lack of inclusion of women in textbooks and the messages sent about women in those textbooks are continuing problems, textbook publishers have been slow to include the more pertinent roles women played in the development of the United States. History is not a male affair, but this research suggests textbooks continue to promote the view that women played only minor roles in United States history, with men the main players. Over time,
Textbooks have continued to present a male-oriented and patriarchal version of United States history.

Other issues, such as costs of publishing and national and state standards, play a role in the way women are portrayed and the messages about women in contemporary textbooks. It is less costly to make slight changes to a textbook rather than publishing a completely new textbook, which may cost as much as one million dollars in expenses before it has even been published (Forman, 2005). Some minor changes may occur, but the patriarchal view of women tends to be passed from one edition to the next.

National and state standards have been slow to include more specific requirements for including women's history. Kathryn Engebretson (2014) found in her research of the new national social studies standards, that little had been accomplished to encourage a more representative view of women in history. As states align their social studies standards with the core standards, time will tell if any effort has been made to include women's history in those standards.

Students spend a greater part of their waking hours in public education systems. If change is to be effected, then it makes sense to start with the young and educate them for greater civic equity. Textbooks, which are a major resource of the classroom, should be a true reflection of a democratic society in action. If, as Margaret Crocco (2008) suggests, “curriculum represents truth and cultural value for students” (p.180), then what students learn from the school knowledge base represents the correct knowledge. Teachers act as conduits of the dominant culture through practices that they have learned from their own experience either as a student or as teachers in training (McLaren, 2003). Gerda Lerner (1979), Tetraut (1986), and Sandra Schmidt (2012) found in their textbook research that women were and are still portrayed in mainly a traditional patriarchal view. Thus the educational setting in which textbooks are a major part passes that cultural view of women along to the students as the correct view.

With continued scholarship in women's history, the knowledge is available to increase inclusion of the contributions of women in the development of United States history. The Progressive Era was a particularly active time for women in history. The findings of this study indicate that women are still related to roles in reform and women's rights in traditional ways. This leads to the question “When will women be visualized in a more gender-balanced and less male dominated view?” Concerned educators and those who wish to give a more gender-balanced view of history should make that knowledge available on the high school level. Through sustained activism, a more gender-balanced and less stereotypical view of women and their roles in history may be realized through textbook transformation. The Progressive Era and women's active non-traditional roles would be a good place to start.

References


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**Author Bios**

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**Linda B. Bennett** is a social studies education faculty member in the College of Education. She served previously as the Interim Title IX Coordinator at the University of Missouri. She is on the National Council for the Social Studies Board of Directors and served as editor of *SSYL* from 2006-2010.
Women who upheld traditional gender roles argued that politics were improper for women. Some even insisted that voting might cause some women to “grow beards.” The challenge to traditional roles represented by the struggle for political, economic, and social equality was as threatening to some women as it was to most men. To find additional documents on this topic in American Memory, use such key words as women's rights, equality, social reform, and voting rights. top of page.