

VISUALIZING WOMEN'S WORK

WOMEN OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

Celebrating the often ignored historical contributions of women throughout American History.

OBJECTIVE

To research information on the historical contributions of women to specific events in American history to eventually be used in an art installation.

BACKGROUND INFO

- Because I am researching within various fields in the arts and humanities, the methodologies I am using are mainly qualitative.
- Much of my research involves visual analysis of public monuments.
- In terms of gathering historical information on the contributions of individual or groups of women, I use a combination of primary and secondary sources which are available through the university libraries and databases.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this research project is to visually analyze public sculptures and monuments commemorating historical figures, and draw attention to the fact that the majority of these works only honor the contributions of men. In order to counteract this tendency, I research the contributions of women towards specific events in American history. By the end of the term, I will have created a database of historical monuments across the United States in order to catalog and interpret certain trends. The research involved in this project will culminate in an art installation, which involves work in the 3D imaging lab.

METHODS

The research for my project has been primarily qualitative, with some quantitative components. I am using a combination of primary and secondary sources to gather information about the contributions of women to specific events in American history. I am using visual analysis, the primary method of art history scholarship, to interpret national monuments and the values and individuals they prioritize above others in terms of importance. In creating a database of national monuments, I am using quantitative methodology to break down the numbers of statues by gender.

RESOURCES

De Pauw, Linda Grant, and Michael McCurdy. *Founding Mothers: Women In America In the Revolutionary Era*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1975.

Raphael, Ray. *A People's History of the American Revolution: How Common People Shaped the Fight for Independence*. New York: New Press, 2001.

Evans, Elizabeth. *Weathering the Storm: Women of the American Revolution*. 1st pbk. ed. New York: Paragon House, 1989.

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

Women contributed much more to the American revolution than most people realize. Women played diverse roles in the war effort, including nurses, camp-followers, seamstresses, soldiers, spies, and wives and mothers who had to defend themselves as well as provide for their families while their husbands were fighting.

Individual women who fought in the American revolution or contributed to the war effort are represented disproportionately less in national statues and monuments compared to their male counterparts. When women are represented in statues, they usually are unspecified figures who represent values or ideas, or embody traditionally feminine roles as wives and mothers.

FUTURE STEPS

The research I am doing is being used to create an art installation in the 3D imaging lab in the Penny Stamps School of the Arts. Individual women who contributed to the American Revolution will be represented as virtual holograms which will be visible to viewers once they put on special goggles.

In this way, our research pays tribute to the "well behaved women" who have gone unrecognized in American history and monuments of national remembrance.



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Mentor: Dr. Melanie Manos
By: Ryan Lakin