Seeking Women’s History

Project Description

The Legacy Center is embarking on a planning project to develop an online interactive interpretive programming plan. Working with experts from women’s and medical history, the digital humanities, education, media literacy, and youth marketing, the project will investigate avenues to connect a young audience to Legacy Center historic collections on women in medicine. This plan aligns with the Center’s mission: connect a young audience to its historic collections on women and medicine to inspire learning and thinking about the history of women and science in Philadelphia, and to connect the present to the past.

This project is being generously supported by a Pew Heritage Philadelphia Planning grant. Having built a digital collection of historic materials on women in medicine, the Center is poised to expand its audience to increase access for young users and is specifically targeting a 6th through 12th grade audience. Web technology is ideal to connect with this demographic. Online experiential, interpretive learning activities will leverage the audience’s modality of choice and provide resources to a broad and diverse community of other online learners. Seeking Women’s History will incorporate digital models so young people can become “youth public historians,” interacting directly with primary sources to create their own interpretive content facilitated by inquiry based prompts, and informed by their experiences.

Project Goals

- Explore ways to actively engage young adults in women’s stories, particularly in medicine
- Conduct 6-8 focus groups (i.e. students, teachers, educators, parents, technology and gaming experts)
- Identify tools/approaches to connect young people to the collection raising interest in gender, medicine, women’s health, and Philadelphia history
- Design/implement formative and summative evaluation
- Finalize the implementation and marketing plan
- Complete Interpretive History Engagement Module that documents the planning process

Preliminary research focus

- **Methods**: Can all young adults (grades 6-12) be reached with same interpretive tools and methods? Should focus be on one - middle school or high school? Kinds/amounts of interpretative narrative/materials needed?

- **Academic Level**: Impact on interpretive materials? Is it better to have a few generalized tools to reach all levels or specific tools for different levels/abilities?

- **Interdisciplinarity**: Which disciplines are archives most useful to? Should tools/activities be segmented by discipline given our collection strength (history) or be developed to adapt across curricula?
Planning Project Advisory Team

Amy Jane Cohen History teacher, J. R. Masterman School, Philadelphia

Aroutis N. Foster, PhD Professor, Learning Technologies, Drexel University Goodwin School of Education

Amanda French, PhD Digital Humanities specialist, THATCamp Coordinator, George Mason University Center for History and New Media; former Assistant Research Scholar, Archives and Public History graduate program, NYU.

Elissa Goldberg, MLS Librarian, A.M.Y. (Alternative Middle Years) at James Martin Middle School, Philadelphia

Janet Golden, PhD Professor of History, Rutgers University; specialist in medical history, women's history, children's history and American social history; historical consultant for documentary films.

Leila Graham, 8th Grade Student, J. R. Masterman School, Philadelphia

Renee Hobbs, PhD Professor, School of Communications and Theater and College of Education, and Founder, Media Education Lab, Department of Broadcasting, Telecommunications and Mass Media, Temple University; Co-designer, My Pop Studio, web game engaging young women in the production of personal creative works while strengthening critical thinking skills about new media.

Dale McCreedy, PhD Director, Gender and Family Learning Programs, Franklin Institute; developer of national programs that demonstrate how science museums can help girls and adults become confident, capable science learners and facilitators.

Manna S. Middlebrooks 10th Grade Student, Science Leadership Academy High School, Philadelphia

Scott P. Roberts, PhD National Civics Outreach Director, The Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania, former director of Annenberg Media

Adrianne Washington, MA Director, VP Operations Buzz Marketing, specializing in teens and tweens marketing; corporate focus group facilitator; adjunct professor of sociology with focus on research methods/at risk teens.

Ethan Watrall, PhD Professor, Anthropology; Associate Director, MATRIX; Assistant Director, Cultural Heritage Informatics Initiative, University of Michigan