

Wage Earning Women of the Industrial Age:
Representation in Northeastern American Historical Museums

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This thesis provides an assessment of the representation of wage-earning women of the American Industrial Age (1800-1915) at twelve museum exhibitions and presents data that illuminates the contemporary portrayal of women's history. The interpretation and presentation of women's history, has been overlooked or simplified in many historical museums. Consequently, the complexities of women's stories have not been entirely told. Historical museums are increasingly working towards the inclusivity of women's history within their institutions, but lack adequate examples of female representation.

For this assessment, data was collected from eleven exhibits at nine museums in the greater northeastern region of the United States. Data collection for this assessment occurred at museums in the following locales: Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Washington D.C., Virginia, Maryland, and Ohio. For each of the exhibits within this assessment, an exhibit site survey was completed to document representations of wage earning women of the Industrial Age. The findings show a lack of representation of women within historical museum exhibits. There is a continued need for projects of this nature that will address the underrepresentation of women's histories in American museums. By drawing attention to this issue, museums may be better equipped to increase inclusivity in future exhibitions.

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Chapter One – Introduction

This thesis provides an assessment of the representation of wage-earning women of the American Industrial Age (1800-1915) at eleven museum exhibitions and presents data that illuminates the contemporary portrayal of women's history. The interpretation and presentation of women's history has been overlooked or simplified within many historical museums. Consequently, the complexities of women's stories have not been entirely told. Historical museums are increasingly working towards the inclusivity of women's history within their institutions, but lack adequate examples of female representation.

For this assessment, data was collected from eleven exhibits at nine museums in the greater northeastern region of the United States. The goal of this research is to address and assess how and in what way current exhibits within American historical museums include representations of wage-earning women of the Industrial Age. Data collection for this assessment occurred at museums in the following locales: Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Washington D.C., Virginia, Maryland, and Ohio. For each of the exhibits within this assessment, an exhibit site survey was completed to document representations of wage earning women of the Industrial Age. There is a continued need for projects of this nature that will address the underrepresentation of women's histories in American museums. By drawing attention to this issue, museums may be better equipped to increase inclusivity in future exhibitions.

Chapter Two – Literature Review

The literature review is grouped into two areas: 1) expectations of inclusivity and representation of women and women's history, in museum exhibits and 2) interpretation of wage-earning women during the American Industrial Age.

Expectations of Inclusivity and Representation of Women and Women's History in Museum Exhibits

In the late 1980s, Barbara Melosh, in "Speaking of Women: Museums' Representations of Women's History," addressed the historian's struggle to find "a language to convey women's complex and contradictory relationship to the rest of social life"¹ and explains that "women stand both inside and outside their own culture; they are both subject and other in history."² Melosh states that history "must be reimagined to take into account of female experience"³ and argues for a more complete representation of women's historical experiences in American museums:

a fully realized history of women must convey women's simultaneous participation in and alienation from a dominant culture that defines them as other. It must consider difference and inequality among women, for class, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, marital status, and age are also inseparable parts of women's experiences and consciousness. It must capture a sense of female agency even as it depicts the limitations that bound women's ability to act.⁴

Melosh argues that the presentation of women's history in museums "illuminates the museum's role in the larger process of unraveling and rebuilding a cultural center, a process of incorporation and accommodation that constantly renews and fortifies dominant ideology."⁵

Melosh continues by noting that presenting women's history in museums will help to "close the gap between scholarly and popular conceptions of the past, to convey a more complex sense of

¹ Barbara Melosh, "Speaking of Women: Museums' Representations of Women's History," in *History Museums in the United States: A Critical Assessment*, by Warren Leon and Roy Rosenzweig, (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 186.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., 186-187.

⁵ Ibid., 183.

history as a flexible and time-bound medium, explicitly interpretive and partial in its constructions of the past.”⁶ She further argues that if museums can “engage the concerns of women’s history”⁷ through such modes as exhibits, they “may be able to lead, not just follow, in the reshaping of a critical social history.”⁸

Feminist Scholarship

In her essay, “Three Stages of Development,” Lois W. Banner discusses the recent developments of feminist scholarship in various fields and explains how “feminist scholarship has moved through a three-stage process.”⁹ She identifies the first stage as having occurred during the 1970s and focusing on “documenting both discrimination and liberation” as well as “revealing the gender oppression that relegated most women to a subordinate status.”¹⁰ Banner describes the second stage as “identifying and investigating separate female traditions and cultures”¹¹ and “recording and analyzing women’s separate experience of reality.”¹² She states that, “feminist historians especially explored and in many ways celebrated a distinct women’s history.”¹³ She argues that this “thrust toward separatism and the feminist dynamic toward social change also added a new emphasis on exploring the experience and the cultural productivity of ethnic, racial, and class groups.”¹⁴

Banner describes the third stage as essentially a stage of integration that is presently and continuously occurring through the lens of feminist scholarship. Banner explains that feminist

⁶ Ibid., 209.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Lois W. Banner, “Three Stages of Development,” in *Gender Perspectives: Essays on Women in Museums*, by Jane R Glazer and Artemis A Zenetou, (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1994), 40.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid., 41.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid., 42.

scholarship, which is “rooted in the public feminist movement,” is “more than simply revisionist in intent.”¹⁵ She argues that the goal of feminist scholarship seeks to create a “paradigm shift – a revisioning and recreation of the theoretical and methodological bases of all the disciplines away from their androcentric center to a gynocentric or a holistic position.” Banner goes on to state that “if feminist scholarship were to produce a full paradigm shift that would overturn male-oriented scholarship, then the center of discourse in each field had to be addressed and entirely new systems of understanding and methodology had to be instituted.”¹⁶ She discusses the recent influence of these ideas on feminist historians and explains that the delay stems “not from any less commitment to change from feminist historians but from the fact that history is not a theory-driven discipline.”¹⁷ She explains that in history, these new ideas have developed as a “full analysis of the social organization of gender relations”¹⁸ and that these “relations impinge on broadly conceived historical change.”¹⁹

There are museum professionals that share Banner’s view of moving away from a male defined historical perspective. Marc Pachter, the interim director of the Smithsonian National Museum of American History, responds to these ideas by addressing the representation of women and asks, “if feminist scholarship is having an impact in museums, has there also been significant, substantive, and balanced gender representation in collections, exhibitions, and publications?”²⁰ Pachter acknowledges that while there may be representation of women within the field, for example as museum workers, an institution may lack “the articulation and

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid., 43.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Marc Pachter, In *Gender Perspectives: Essays on Women in Museums*, ed. Jane R. Glaser and Artemis A Zenetou (Washington and London: Smithsonian Press, 1994), 56.

representation of a feminist perspective that informs exhibitions and other presentations ... that, presumably, even men are capable of providing.”²¹ This issue has been addressed directly at the National Museum of American History through the organization of “a gender equity group” whose mission is to “critique all existing exhibitions from a feminist perspective.”²²

Incorporating Feminist Scholarship and the History of Women into Historical Museum Exhibits

In her article, “New Angles of Vision,” Edith P. Mayo discusses the importance of examining how new feminist scholarship “has been incorporated into exhibitions, not only because they are the most visible manifestation of its impact, but also because it would be exceedingly difficult to assess changes in museums without an extensive survey of exhibitions.”²³ Mayo addresses the fact that while “at present we may have greater numbers of exhibitions by and about women,” this is “quite different from exhibitions that incorporate the new scholarship on women.”²⁴ In Mayo’s article, “Putting Women in Their Place: Methods and Sources for Including Women’s History in Museums and Historic Sites,” she states,

exhibits that incorporate only male experiences and points of view skew the historical reality of over half our population. Filtered through the prism of gender, history becomes inclusive, correcting past distortions and incorporating both halves of human experience. Done well, women’s history can profoundly reshape our perceptions of the past and foster an irrevocably altered perspective on the present and the future.²⁵

Mayo specifically notes that “historians and curators must incorporate and present the historical realities of women in order to create a balanced historical perspective and to legitimize women’s

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Edith P. Mayo, “New Angles of Vision” in *Gender Perspectives: Essays on Women in Museums*, ed. Jane R. Glaser and Artemis A. Zenetou, (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution, 1994), 57.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Edith P. Mayo, “Putting Women in Their Place: Methods and Sources for Including Women’s History in Museums and Historic Sites” in *Restoring Women’s History through Historic Preservation*, by Gail Lee Dubrow and Jennifer B. Goodman, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 111.

experiences as valid.”²⁶ Furthermore, she states that women’s history is more than “simply factoring women into existing, traditional models developed for and by men.”²⁷ Mayo acknowledges the attempts to include women’s history within museum exhibits and states that “although women may curate exhibitions and both men and women may do their best to insert women into exhibitions at appropriate junctures, in many exhibitions the fundamental conceptualization of the topic, the ‘construct’ of the history, the ‘viewpoint’ of the subject matter, remains male defined.”²⁸

Mayo notes that in order to have women’s history truly realized in museums, women themselves must not only understand the construction of history, but also the factors that work against the incorporation of feminist scholarship into historical museum exhibitions.²⁹ As Mayo explains, “women are not often perceived as a legitimate constituency by museum administrators, by funders, and often by women themselves.”³⁰ She believes that women’s exhibits are considered legitimate if “they present traditional “women’s” topics such as costume, quilting, or decorative arts, or if women are depicted as leading “attendant” lives – that is, attached to some other cultural or historical group such as African Americans, Native Americans, or presidents.”³¹ Mayo argues that because both “women themselves and funding agencies fail to perceive the connection between women’s visibility in history and empowerment, It is extremely difficult to fund meaningful women’s history exhibitions.”³² Mayo proposes that women must understand these connections and only then will we see exhibitions

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Mayo, "New Angles of Vision," 61.

²⁸ Mayo, "Putting Women in Their Place," 118.

²⁹ Mayo, "New Angles of Vision," 59.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid., 60.

³² Ibid., 60-61.

not only containing women, but those that are increasingly meaningful and “grounded in women’s history.”³³

Past Projects of Incorporation of Women’s History into Historical Museum Exhibits

There have been past projects that address the incorporation of women into historical museum exhibits. Mayo notes that the 1986 Smithsonian conference, *Women’s Changing Roles in Museums*, did not directly address women’s inclusion in exhibits, but addressed the larger issue of “women’s career paths, promotion and leadership potential; and women as colleagues and supervisors in the workplace.”³⁴ Also noted is the 1990 Smithsonian conference, *Gender Perspectives: The Impact of Women on Museums*, which focused on a “critical examination of the impact of feminist scholarship on research, collections, exhibitions, and publications.”³⁵

Mayo also highlights a project that began in 1992 entitled *Raising Our Sites* which “fostered collaboration between historians and museum professionals to design comprehensive plans for the inclusion of women’s history at fourteen sites in Pennsylvania.”³⁶ These project sites then created “special exhibits centered on women’s experiences, developed interpretive strategies, and integrated women’s history into existing exhibits, with the hope that the initiative will impact collection policies as well as future interpretation.”³⁷

Kim Moon, who was the project director for this program from 1993-1996, and served as the assistant director of the Pennsylvania Humanities Council, writes that the ultimate goal of

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Mayo, "Putting Women in Their Place," 111-112.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid., 112.

³⁷ Ibid.

this program was to “move beyond token programming and predictable exhibits to make the story that is being conveyed to the public fully inclusionary of both men’s and women’s experiences.”³⁸ Moon discusses the relevance and importance of this particular project and explains that it “provides a vehicle for historic sites to examine and enhance the stories that they tell and in the process find ways to challenge their visitors to reflect on history as it really was.”³⁹ These projects are important and vital to the future of women in museums. As Mayo notes, “despite growing interest in women’s past by the public and the history community, comparatively little published material exists on the actual practice of how to include women in exhibitions and how to conceptualize exhibits that incorporate a feminist framework from the outset.”⁴⁰

Interpreting Women’s History through Museums

In her article, “Trying to Be an Honest Woman: Making Women’s Histories,” Elizabeth Carnegie argues that the “realities of male power in society is so dominant that museum professionals, regardless of gender, contribute to that notion with every judgment and with every decision on how and what to display.”⁴¹ She continues by stating that, “collecting, displaying and communicating women’s history means creating new histories (and therefore symbols) from existing collections and working with people to collect and interpret new objects.”⁴² Carnegie acknowledges that “cultural, class and race differences can and do create divisions”⁴³ and that

³⁸ Moon, Kim, ““Raising Our Sites”: A Pilot Project for Integrating Women’s History into Museums” in *Restoring Women’s History through Historic Preservation*, by Gail Lee Dubrow and Jennifer B. Goodman (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 260.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 262.

⁴⁰ Mayo, “Putting Women in Their Place,” 112.

⁴¹ Carnegie, Elizabeth, “Trying to Be an Honest Woman: Making Women’s Histories” in *Making Histories in Museums*, by Gaynor Kavanagh, (London: Leicester University Press, 1996) 54.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 55.

“making women’s history means accepting that there is more than one history and hence no single truth.”⁴⁴ She explains that in the “case of interpreting women’s history, every museum has objects which were used, made, bought by or depict women which can be interpreted in ways which allow honest and fair appraisals of women’s roles in society”⁴⁵ and that “museums need to create a policy to promote women’s history which can be applied to all museum activities.”⁴⁶

Interpretation of Wage-Earning Women During the American Industrial Age

The Industrial Age in America began in the late 18th century, and as Thomas Dublin explains in *Transforming Women’s Work: New England Lives in the Industrial Revolution*, New England was the first region in the United States “to undergo significant industrialization...in the years after 1790.”⁴⁷ The early factories and mills that were centered mainly in New England provided such services as “fulling woolen cloth, grinding grain, sawing lumber and carding cotton flax.”⁴⁸ In 1790, Samuel Slater opened a spinning mill in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, “the first to incorporate spinning machinery under a factory roof.”⁴⁹ In the late 18th century and early 19th century, wage earning women in New England often worked in their own homes performing piecework, and to a lesser extent, worked outside the home in a factory or mill. At this time women were employed by businesses such as shoemaking, cigar making and textile work. As Rosalyn Baxandall explains in *America’s Working Women: A Documentary History*, during this

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 64.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Thomas Dublin, *Transforming Women’s Work: New England Lives in the Industrial Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 14.

⁴⁸ Alice Kessler-Harris, *Out to Work: A History of Wage-Earning Women in the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 22.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

time, “nearly the whole of the Connecticut tobacco crop was made by the farmers’ wives and daughters into cigars.”⁵⁰

The rise of the factories in the early 19th century brought an increasing need for workers. For many types of industry women were desirable workers as the common belief or assumption was that they would not receive the same salary as their male counterparts, which benefited the mill and factory owners economically. Kessler-Harris writes, “the sex of mill hands was less important than having a regular work force... Incipient manufacturers quickly discovered the advantages of employing children and women, preferably those who had no direct ties to the land and whose labor could be purchased at minimal cost.”⁵¹

Kessler-Harris continues by explaining that widows “potentially the most dependent labor population, proved particularly desirable, especially if they had children of working age.”⁵² She continues, “A Baltimore cotton mill announced in 1808 that ‘work will be given out to women at their homes, and widows will have preference in all cases where work is given out.’ Widowhood often carried with it poverty, landlessness, and the need to survive economically without male support.”⁵³ Additionally, many young or married women early on in the 1800s left their jobs after a couple of years or so to go back to their domestic environment and eliminating the potential for their wage to be increased.

As time went on, an increasing number of women began to leave their homes in order to earn a wage. Jobs increased specifically for women in the textile industry as this had traditionally

⁵⁰ Rosalyn Baxandall and Linda Gordon, *America's Working Women: A Documentary History 1600 to the Present* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1995), 87.

⁵¹ Kessler-Harris, 23.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

been women's work in the domestic sphere.⁵⁴ This process of textile production in a factory setting quickly became more streamlined. Kessler-Harris explains that by 1814, "the whole process from raw material to finished fabric took place under one roof. This final consolidation was the achievement of the mills that opened at Waltham, Massachusetts."⁵⁵ This particular mill is now the site of the Charles River Museum of Industry & Innovation. By 1812, the number of textile factories in the northeastern United States had risen steadily with Rhode Island having 33 textile factories in production, and Massachusetts twenty.⁵⁶ At this time, Massachusetts employed women in many occupations, including textile production, shoemaking and straw hat making. In the late 1820s, many small factories throughout this state produced a combined total of "more than half a million dollars' worth of hats."⁵⁷

During the 1830s, the number of women in the textile industry rose considerably. Baxandall and Gordon explain in 1831, "18,539 men and 38,927 women worked in the cotton industry"⁵⁸ which was the largest sector of the overall textile industry. At this time, women were enmeshed in wage earning industries as women "constituted half of the total and sometimes as many as 90 percent of those employed in shoe factories, textile mills, and millinery shops."⁵⁹ In 1850, women accounted for "24 percent of the total jobs in manufacturing."⁶⁰

In the mid-1800s, a demographic shift occurred within the female paid labor force. Kessler-Harris explains that wage earning women were increasingly "poorer women – free black

⁵⁴ Baxandall and Gordon, 66.

⁵⁵ Kessler-Harris, 25.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 29.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 28.

⁵⁸ Baxandall and Gordon, 63.

⁵⁹ Kessler-Harris, 29.

⁶⁰ Baxandall and Gordon, 63.

and immigrants, widows, and those who migrated to cities in search of jobs.”⁶¹ Beginning in the 1840s, an “increasing stream of immigrants contributed to the supply of labor” and this expanded labor pool gave way to lowered wages.⁶² This increase of immigration brought 4,200,000 people, mostly to larger cities, to the United States between 1840 and 1860.⁶³ Many of these immigrants were from western European countries such as Ireland, and were young and single women in need of work.⁶⁴ By 1860, approximately 500,000 free African Americans lived in the United States.⁶⁵ Half of this population lived in northern urban cities such as “Boston, Philadelphia, New York, and Cincinnati.”⁶⁶ As African American women dealt with exclusion because of their gender and race, they “found themselves confined to the most onerous jobs. They tended to work as washer-women and cooks, and sometimes as seamstresses and dressmakers.”⁶⁷

By the 1860s “approximately 14 percent of women sixteen and over worked for wages, and about 20 percent of the manufacturing employees were women, of whom 25 percent were under sixteen years old.”⁶⁸ By the late 19th century, the increasing migration of African Americans to the northern states and the heavy influx of immigrants from eastern and southern Europe to the United States had effectively altered the racial and ethnic composition of the working class.⁶⁹ Baxandall explains that

the poverty of many new immigrants combined with the rapidly increasing demand for labor drew more women into the wage labor force. As the United States became more ethnically and racially diverse, women’s jobs became more ethnically and racially segregated. Although white collar jobs for women grew,

⁶¹ Kessler-Harris, 47.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Baxandall and Gordon, 40.

⁶⁶ Kessler-Harris, 47.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Baxandall and Gordon, 40.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 127.

they went almost exclusively to white, English-speaking high school graduates. Immigrant women, by contrast, were likely to work in factories.⁷⁰

In 1870, which is the first year of available aggregate census data, 52.9 percent of all wage earning women in the United States worked in domestic service.⁷¹ Between 1870 and 1900, there continued to be an increase in the number of wage earning women in the United States, and during this thirty year period, the number of “gainfully employed women increased from 1.8 to 4.8 million.”⁷² The time period between 1870 and 1900 also saw a large shift in type of occupation for women. By 1900, the proportions of wage earning women “employed in agriculture and domestic service declined markedly, while garment workers, teachers, and sales and clerical workers all showed gains relative to other female occupations.”⁷³ This trend continued into the twentieth century with women’s employment in “manufacturing, sales, and clerical occupations expanding still further at the expense of agriculture and domestic service.”⁷⁴

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Dublin, 23.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 24.

Chapter Three - Methodology

The method utilized to gather data for this study was an exhibit survey with data collected from the content of eleven exhibits within nine museums in the northeastern United States based on the following set of criteria. The following questions were addressed:

1. Are there photographs, engravings, paintings, or any other two dimensional images that depict a wage earning woman?
2. Are there artifacts on display that represent wage earning women?
3. Is there text associated with images or objects that explains the representation?
4. Is there text that stands alone that describes wage earning women of the Industrial Age?
5. What specific occupation, if any, is noted with the representation?
6. What specific ethnicity, if any, is noted with the representation?
7. What date, if any, is noted with the representation?
8. For each of the questions above, is the depiction definitive or non-definitive?⁷⁵

For each of the exhibits within this study, the same set of methodology was employed and each was meticulously surveyed for representations of wage earning women of the American Industrial Age. The museums included in this study are:

1. Rhode Island Historical Society, Woonsocket, Rhode Island
2. Connecticut Historical Museum, Hartford, Connecticut
3. Charles River Museum of Industry & Innovation, Waltham, Massachusetts
4. Heinz History Center, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
5. State Museum of Pennsylvania, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania
6. Baltimore Museum of Industry, Baltimore, Maryland
7. Ohio Historical Society & Museum, Columbus, Ohio
8. National Museum of American History (Smithsonian), Washington, D.C.
9. Virginia Historical Museum, Richmond, Virginia

Of these museums, the Charles River Museum of Industry & Innovation, and the Baltimore Museum of Industry each had two exhibits that fit the criteria of this study, and

⁷⁵ For the purposes of this study, “definitive” is defined as any representation of a wage-earning woman that is included in an exhibit (matching the criteria listed above) about industrial history or the history of a specific industry. This representation must also be paired with exhibit text (general or label) that explains this association to industrial history. Additionally, the context of the representation must leave little doubt as to the occupation within the representation, whether general or specific. Non-definitive is defined as any representation of a wage earning woman that points to the previously stated definition of definitive, yet is not confirmed.

therefore were included in the data collection. Museums were chosen for this assessment based on the following criteria:

1. Located in area with rich historical roots to the Industrial Age.
2. Non-specialized historical museum, preferably presenting a broad historical narrative.
3. Exhibit containing content directly related to the industrial history of the area or region.

Using this set of questions and criteria as guidelines, it is hoped that a broad range of representations of wage earning women of the Industrial Age, whether definitive or non-definitive, might be collected and recorded for each exhibit within each museum. Additionally, the specific occupation and ethnicity will be recorded whenever noted within the exhibit content, providing a greater understanding of the representation of women within these exhibits. The named ethnicity category comes directly from the exhibit text. Finally, the categories of data for each type of representation, whether definitive or non-definitive, will be recorded and totaled.

Chapter Four – Presentation of Data

Rhode Island

Rhode Island Historical Society – Museum of Work and Culture



Figure 4.1: Rhode Island Historical Society - Museum of Work and Culture, Woonsocket, Rhode Island⁷⁶

The Rhode Island Historical Society (RIHS) was founded in 1822 and is “dedicated to collecting, preserving, and sharing Rhode Island’s history.”⁷⁷ The RIHS maintains two museums, one of which is the Museum of Work and Culture, located in Woonsocket, Rhode Island. The museum “shares the stories of men, women, and children who came to Rhode Island in the late 19th and 20th centuries.”⁷⁸ The exhibit included in this study, *La Survivance*, explores the lives of the early French Canadians that immigrated and inhabited the area in and around Woonsocket. This exhibit specifically highlights the lives of working individuals during the American Industrial Age, and focuses on the textile industry. This exhibit is located just inside the entrance to the museum and comprises a large portion of the main floor. Noted below is the data which was collected from the exhibit *La Survivance*.

⁷⁶ “Museum of Work & Culture,” *City of Woonsocket*, <http://www.ci.woonsocket.ri.us/museum.htm> (accessed April 4, 2012).

⁷⁷ “Museums,” *Rhode Island Historical Society*, <http://www.rihs.org/museums.html> (accessed March 27, 2012).

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*



Figure 4.2 : Mannequin with artifact, weaving machine (author’s photograph)

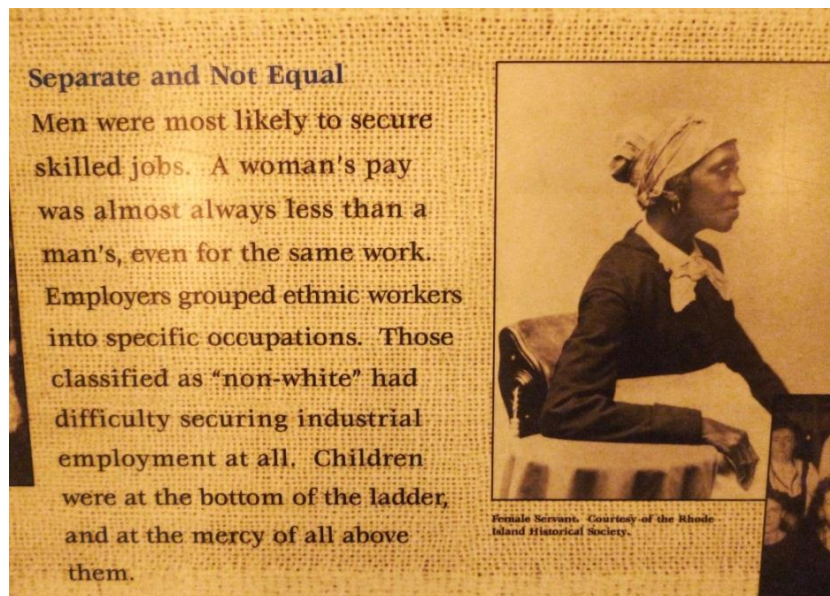


Figure 4.3: Noted Ethnicity, “non-white” (author’s photograph)

Findings below show that within this exhibit, there are a total of fourteen representations of wage earning women. Ninety-three percent of the representations are definitive in nature, leaving 7% as non-definitive. Of the total representations, 86% are definitive images with

associated text and 7% are noted as definitive text only. Approximately 50% of the total representations are photographs, 7% are videos, 7% are drawings, and 14% are lithographs. Additionally, 14% of the total representations include artifacts. These artifacts are a reproduction of a mill memo from 1865, and a weaving machine. The occupations represented are focused mainly in the textile industry. Fifteen percent of the total representations are ethnically identifiable, and of these, 50% are listed as "French" and 50% are listed as "Non-White".

Table 4.1: Data collected from exhibit *La Survivance*

Occupation	Definitive Image	Definitive Text Only	Non-Definitive	Type of Representation	Noted Ethnicity	Notes	Total
Domestic Service, General	(1) photo			1 Photograph	(1) Non-White	(1) classified as servant, See Figure 4.3	1
Industrial & Factory Work, General	(1) video	(2) text	(3) silhouette drawing	1 Video, 1 Drawing		(1) video concerns local industry (3) fabric window dressing with screenprint of woman	3
Retail Work, General	(1) photo 1913			1 Photograph			1
Textile Industry, General	(1) photo 1900 (2) photo			2 Photographs			2
Textile Industry, Silk Warping	(1) photo 1910 (2) photo 1912			2 Photographs		(1) weaving company (2) weaving company	2
Textile Industry, Spinning	(1) lithograph, mid 1800s (2) lithograph, mid 1800s (3) mill memo 1865			2 Lithographs, 1 Artifact	(3) French	(1) Slater Mill, cotton mule spinning (2) same image as #1 used in separate area of exhibit (3) reproduction of mill memo	3
Textile Industry, Weaving	(1) photo 1906 (2) artifact			1 Photograph, 1 Artifact		(2) weaving machine and mannequin, See Figure 4.2	2
Total	12	1	1				14

Connecticut

Connecticut Historical Society



Figure 4.4: Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, Connecticut⁷⁹

The Connecticut Historical Society (CHS), located in Hartford, Connecticut, was founded in 1825 and its mission is to “inspire and foster a life-long interest in history through exhibitions, programs, and Connecticut-related collections, because improving knowledge of the past enhances understanding of the present and the ability to meet the challenges of the future.”⁸⁰ The exhibit included in this study, *Making Connecticut*, is the “story of all the people of Connecticut from the 1500s through today” and includes themes that focus on the history of industry in Connecticut.⁸¹ The exhibit, which opened in 2011, contains over 500 artifacts, and encompasses 4,000 square feet of space.⁸²

⁷⁹ “Connecticut Historical Society Museum and Library,” *Wikipedia*, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Connecticut_Historical_Society_Museum_and_Library,_2009-09-02.jpg (accessed April 7, 2012).

⁸⁰ “About,” *Connecticut Historical Society*, <http://www.chs.org/page.php?id=492> (accessed March 31, 2012).

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² “Making Connecticut: An Interactive Trip through Connecticut’s History,” *Dani Frank*, <http://connecticut.cbslocal.com/guide/making-connecticut-an-interactive-trip-through-connecticut-history/> (accessed May 12, 2012).



Figure 4.5: Manufactured tinware with painted images (author's photograph)

The findings below show that within the exhibit *Making Connecticut*, there are thirteen total representations of wage earning women. One hundred percent of the representations are definitive in nature. Of the total representations, 77% are definitive images associated with text and 23% are noted as definitive text only. Approximately 31% of the total representations are photographs, and 8% are engravings. Additionally, 38% of the total representations include artifacts. These artifacts include furniture, kitchenware, thread, brushes, and a sewing machine. The occupations portrayed vary from the textile and sewing industries to restaurant work. There were instances of noted ethnicity in the exhibit itself; however, there were none that fit within the time period of this study. Therefore, there are no instances of representations that are ethnically identifiable.

Table 4.2: Data collected from exhibit *Making Connecticut*

Occupation	Definitive Image	Definitive Text Only	Non-Definitive	Type of Representation	Noted Ethnicity	Notes	Total
Brush Manufacturing	(1) artifact 1880s	(2) text 1865-1918		1 Artifact		(1) brushes	2
Furniture Manufacturing, Image Painting	(1) artifact 1820s	(2) text		1 Artifact		(1) wood furniture, women applied images from metal stencils	2
Industrial & Factory Work, General		(1) text 1790-1840					1
Restaurant Work, General	(1) engraving 1872			1 Engraving			1
Switchboard Operator	(1) photo 1880s			1 Photograph			1
Textile Industry, Commercial Sewing	(1) artifact 1851-1905			1 Artifact		(1) sewing machine	1
Textile Industry, General	(1) photo 1820-1865 (2) photo 1870s (3) photo 1870s			3 Photographs		(3) no label text	3
Textile Industry, Thread Production	(1) artifact 1865 - 1918			1 Artifact		(1) thread	1
Tinware Manufacturing, Image Painting	(1) artifact			1 Artifact		(1) tin kitchenware, Also mentions male African American workers. See Figure 4.5.	1
Total	10	3	0				13

Massachusetts

Charles River Museum of Industry & Innovation

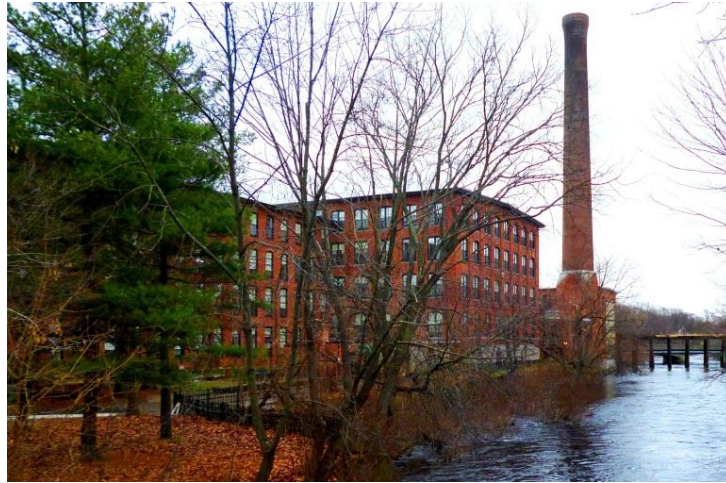


Figure 4.6: Charles River Museum of Industry & Innovation, Waltham, Massachusetts (author’s photograph)

The Charles River Museum of Industry & Innovation (CRMII) is located in Waltham, Massachusetts. The museum is housed in an 1814 textile mill that is “recognized as the world’s first integrated factory.”⁸³ The mission of the museum is to “encourage and inspire future innovation in America.”⁸⁴

There are two exhibits from the CRMII that are included within this study, entitled *Textile History* and *Watches & Clocks*. *Textile History* is much smaller in size and includes fewer artifacts than the *Watches & Clocks* exhibit, but was included because of the significance of the textile industry in relation to wage-earning women during the Industrial Age. *Textile History* explores the “significance of textile manufacturing in the context of our country’s industrial development, social systems, and innovations.”⁸⁵

⁸³ “Exhibits,” *Charles River Museum of Industry & Innovation*, <http://www.crimi.org/exhibits/> (accessed March 31, 2012).

⁸⁴ “About the Museum,” *Charles River Museum of Industry & Innovation*, <http://www.crimi.org/about-the-museum/> (accessed March 31, 2012).

⁸⁵ “Exhibits,” *Charles River Museum of Industry & Innovation*, (accessed March 31, 2012).



Figure 4.7: Definitive image of woman weaving from the exhibit *Textile History* (author's photograph)

The findings below show that within the *Textile History* exhibit, there are a total of five representations of wage earning women. All five representations are of women in the textile industry and there is one noted time frame of 1890. One hundred percent of the representations within this exhibit are definitive in nature, and include images with associated text. Twenty-five percent of the representations are photographs, and 75% are paintings. The paintings were not physically located within the assigned exhibit space; they are located in the windows of the museum's exterior. They do however, fit within the criteria of this study, and were therefore included. There are no associated artifacts within this exhibit. Additionally, there are no instances of noted ethnicity.

Table 4.3: Data collected from exhibit *Textile History*

Occupation	Definitive Image	Definitive Text Only	Non-Definitive	Type of Representation	Noted Ethnicity	Notes	Total
Textile Industry, General	(1) photo (2) painting (3) painting			1 Photograph, 2 Paintings		(1) see Figure (2) located outside of building (3) located outside of building	3
Textile Industry, Weaving	(1) painting			1 Painting		(1) located outside of building. See Figure 4.7	2
Total	4	0	0				4

The *Watches & Clocks* exhibit represents most of the data collected from this museum. This exhibit focuses on the history of the Waltham Watch company and “tells the tale of how Waltham became known as Watch City.”⁸⁶



Figure 4.8: Wall in which most of the images included in this study were found (author’s photograph)

⁸⁶ “Watches & Clocks,” *Charles River Museum of Industry & Innovation*, <http://www.crimi.org/about-the-museum/> (accessed March 31, 2012).

Within *Watches & Clocks*, there are a total of fourteen representations of wage earning women. There are four time frames noted, three of which are in the 1890s and one in 1914. The occupations represented are all within the watch and clock making industry. Ninety-two percent of the representations are definitive in nature, leaving 8% as non-definitive. Of the total representations, 92% are definitive images with text, and there are no instances of definitive text without an associated image. One hundred percent of the total representations are photographs. There are no associated artifacts within this exhibit. Additionally, none of the representations are ethnically identifiable.

Table 4.4: Data collected from exhibit *Watches & Clocks*

Occupation	Definitive Image	Definitive Text Only	Non-Definitive	Type of Representation	Noted Ethnicity	Notes	Total
Watch and Clockmaking, Assembly Department	(1) photo			1 Photograph			1
Watch and Clockmaking, Escapement Department	(1) photo			1 Photograph			1
Watch and Clockmaking, General	(1) photo (2) photo (3) photo (4) photo (5) photo (6) photo		(7) photo 1914	7 Photographs			7
Watch and Clockmaking, Gilding Department	(1) photo - 1895			1 Photograph			1
Watch and Clockmaking, Pinion and Wheel Cutting	(1) photo - 1892 (2) photo - 1892			2 Photographs			2
Watch and Clockmaking, Secretarial Work	(1) photo			1 Photograph			1
Total	12	0	1				13

Pennsylvania, Pittsburgh
Heinz History Center

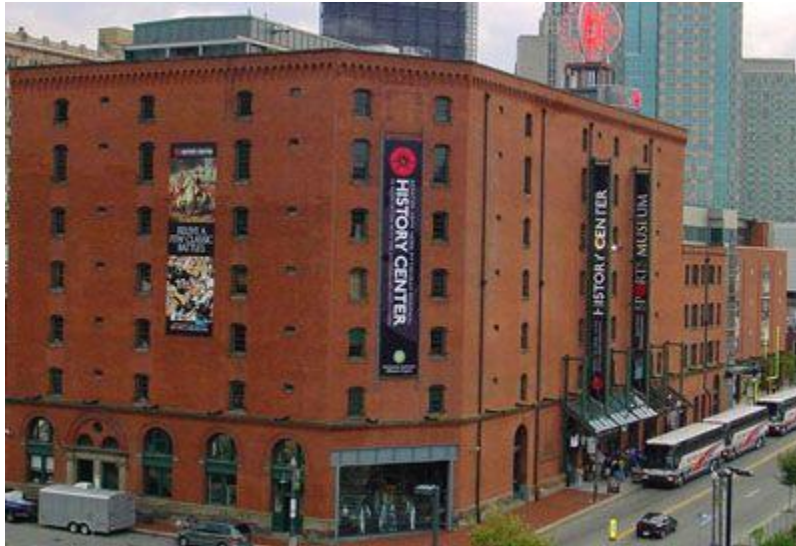


Figure 4.9: Heinz History Center, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania⁸⁷

The Heinz History Center (HHC) was founded in 1879 as the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania and is located in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.⁸⁸ The mission statement of the HHC explains that they are an “educational institution that engages and inspires a large and diverse audience with links to the past, understanding in the present, and guidance for the future by preserving regional history and presenting the American experience with a Western Pennsylvania connection.”⁸⁹ The exhibit included in this assessment entitled *Pittsburgh: A Tradition of Innovation*, spans two floors and covers 16,000 square feet.⁹⁰ The exhibit celebrates

⁸⁷ “History Center,” *Senator John Heinz History Center*, <http://www.heinzhistorycenter.org/historyCenter.aspx> (accessed May 05, 2012).

⁸⁸ Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, *Western Pennsylvania History: "Pittsburgh: A Tradition of Innovation"* (Pittsburgh: Smithsonian Institution Affiliations Program, 2009), 2.

⁸⁹ “Mission Statement,” *Senator John Heinz History Center*, <http://www.heinzhistorycenter.org/secondary.aspx?id=167> (accessed May 05, 2012).

⁹⁰ “Exhibits & Collections,” *Senator John Heinz History Center*, <http://www.heinzhistorycenter.org/exhibits.aspx?ExhibitID=3> (accessed May 05, 2012).

the region's "incredible impact on the world"⁹¹ and looks at the "amazing innovators who changed our world over the past 250 years."⁹²



Figure 4.10: Section of exhibit entitled "Shaping our Lives at Home and Work: 1900-1920" which portrays male and female industrial workers (author's photograph)

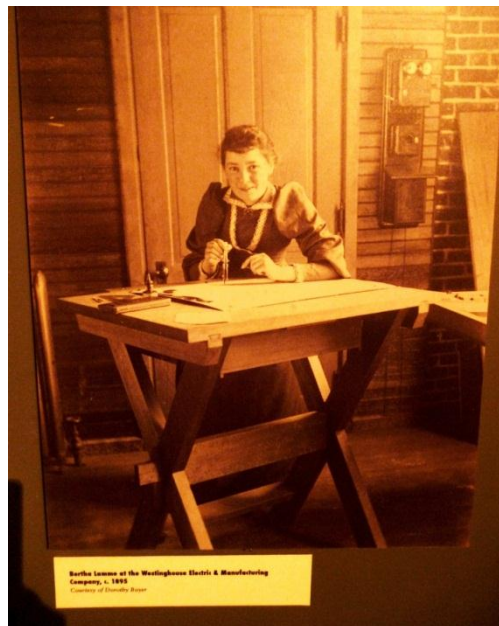


Figure 4.11: Definitive image with text of Bertha Lamme, 1895 (author's photograph)

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, 2.

Within the *A Tradition of Innovation* exhibit, there are a total of ten representations of wage earning women. There are associated time frames for each, most of which occur in the late 1800s, and early 1900s. The occupations vary within this exhibit as six of the ten representations are of prominent women, and the total ranges from Journalist to Engineer and Law Writer to Garment Worker. Eighty percent of the representations are definitive in nature, leaving 20% as non-definitive. Of the total representations, 70% are definitive images with associated text and 10% are noted as definitive text only. Approximately 70% of the representations are, or include photographs, 10% are paintings, and 20% are or include an advertisement. Additionally, 20% of the representations are, or include, artifacts. The first artifact is a board game associated with Nellie Bly, and the additional artifacts are associated with the employment of Bertha Lamme at Westinghouse Electric Company. They include an employee record, industrial drawings, and a slide rule. There were notations of ethnicity within this exhibit; however, there were none within the time period of this study and therefore none are included in the data. Subsequently, none of the representations are ethnically identifiable.

Table 4.5: Data collected from exhibit *Pittsburgh: A Tradition of Innovation*

Occupation	Definitive Image	Definitive Text Only	Non-Definitive	Type of Representation	Noted Ethnicity	Notes	Total
Domestic Service, General			(1) advertisement c 1900	1 Advertisement			1
Engineer	(1) photo and artifacts 1893-1895			1 Photograph with Artifacts		(1) Bertha Lamme - Westinghouse Electric Co., includes employee record, industrial drawing and slide rule and t-square.	1
Industrial & Factory Work, General	(1) photo 1907	(2) 1908		1 Photograph			2
Journalist	(1) photo, advertisement and artifact 1880s			1 Photograph with Advertisement and Artifacts		(1) Nellie Bly - includes advertisement and board game	1
Newspaper Editor	(1) painting - 1845			1 Painting		(1) Jane Grey Swisshelm, also noted to have been a nurse	1
Researcher	(1) photo 1910			1 Photograph		(1) Margaret Byington - Researcher for Russell Sage Foundation, later director of American Red Cross.	1
Shop Assistant			(1) photo 1895	1 Photograph		(1) Phoebe Brashear, states she was assistant to prominent (Astronomer) husband, John Brashear	1
Textile Industry, Garment Worker	(1) photo 1909			1 Photograph			1
Writer, Law	(1) photo 1900			1 Photograph		(1) Crystal Eastman - founded ACLU	1
Total	7	1	2				10

Pennsylvania, Harrisburg
The State Museum of Pennsylvania



Figure 4.12: State Museum of Pennsylvania, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania⁹³

The State Museum of Pennsylvania (SMOP), located in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, displays the history of Pennsylvania and cares for over four million objects while interpreting “the many meanings and significance of the objects for the museum’s visitors.”⁹⁴ The State Museum of Pennsylvania consists of four floors of gallery space. Data was collected for this study from the exhibit entitled, *Man and Machine: Industry and Technology*, which encompassed around two-thirds of the gallery space on the second floor. The exhibit is a “catalogue of progress” and explores “how Pennsylvania has evolved from a farming society to

⁹³ “Home,” *The State Museum of Pennsylvania*, <http://www.statemuseumpa.org/> (accessed May 05, 2012).

⁹⁴ “Collections,” *The State Museum of Pennsylvania*, <http://www.statemuseumpa.org/collections.html> (accessed May 05, 2012).

an industrial society.”⁹⁵ The collection of industrial history artifacts at SMOP includes “tools, machinery and equipment representative of Pennsylvania’s significant trades and industries.”⁹⁶



Figure 4.13: Definitive photograph of woman in textile industry (author’s photograph)

⁹⁵ “Exhibits: What’s Inside, Industry & Technology,” *The State Museum of Pennsylvania*, <http://www.statemuseumpa.org/industryex.html> (accessed May 05, 2012).

⁹⁶ “Collections: Industry & Technology, Military History,” *The State Museum of Pennsylvania*, <http://www.statemuseumpa.org/industry.html> (accessed May 05, 2012).

Within the exhibit *Man and Machine: Technology in Pennsylvania*, there are a total of three representations of wage earning women. There are two noted time frames, both in the mid-1800s. Sixty six percent of the representations are definitive in nature, leaving 33% as non-definitive. Of the total representations, 66% are definitive images with associated text and there are no instances of definitive text on its own. Approximately, 33% of the total representations are photographs and 66% include artifacts. There are two artifacts, one of which is a carding machine, and the other a coverlet. The photograph is of a woman with her back turned performing factory work. Each of the occupations depicted are within the textile industry. Zero percent of the representations are ethnically identifiable.

Table 4.6: Data collected from exhibit *Man and Machine: Technology in Pennsylvania*

Occupation	Definitive Image	Definitive Text Only	Non-Definitive	Type of Representation	Noted Ethnicity	Notes	Total
Textile Industry, Carding Room	(1) artifact 1854			1 Artifact		(1) carding machine	1
Textile Industry, General	(1) photo			1 Photograph		(1) factory work (no label text), see Figure 4.13	1
Textile Industry, Weaving			(1) artifact 1847	1 Artifact		(1) coverlet	1
Total	2	0	1				3

Maryland

Baltimore Museum of Industry



Figure 4.14: Baltimore Museum of Industry, Baltimore, Maryland (author’s photograph)

The Baltimore Museum of Industry (BMI), located in Baltimore, Maryland, is housed within what was originally the Platt & Company cannery, which specialized in oyster, fruit and vegetables and opened in 1865.⁹⁷ The mission of the BMI is “to collect, preserve and interpret the industrial and technological heritage of the Baltimore region for the public by presenting educational programs and exhibits that explore the stories of Maryland’s industries and the people who created and worked in them.”⁹⁸ There are two exhibits from the BMI included in this study, *Canning in Baltimore* and *Textile and Commercial Sewing Industry*. The exhibit entitled, *Canning in Baltimore* encompasses a large portion of the museum’s gallery space. The exhibit explains the process of canning and specifically focuses on the “farmers and oystermen who

⁹⁷ “Cannery,” *Baltimore Museum of Industry*, <http://www.thebmi.org/page/Cannery> (accessed April 7, 2012).

⁹⁸ “Mission,” *Baltimore Museum of Industry*, <http://www.thebmi.org/page/Mission> (accessed April 7, 2012).

supplied canneries with raw materials, the skilled workers who made tin cans, and the army of unskilled workers who shucked oysters, shelled peas, peeled tomatoes and filled the cans.”⁹⁹

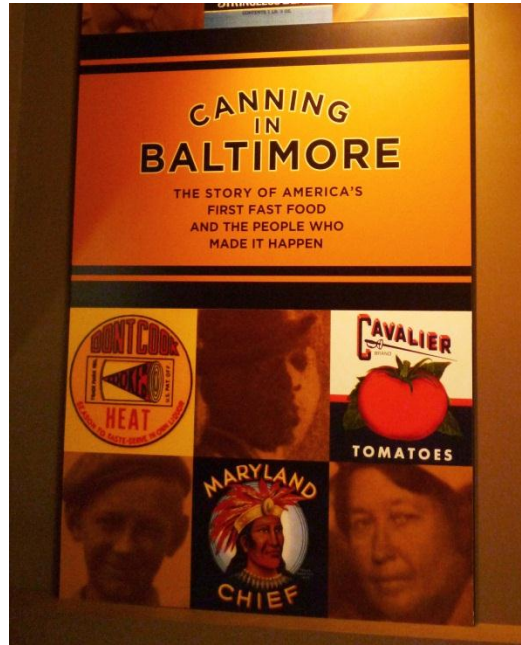


Figure 4.15: Introduction text to *Canning in Baltimore* (author’s photograph)



Figure 4.16: Engraving of women shucking oysters (1872), including artifacts (author’s photograph)

⁹⁹ “Cannery,” *Baltimore Museum of Industry*, <http://www.thebmi.org/page/Cannery> (accessed April 7, 2012).

Within the exhibit *Canning in Baltimore*, there are a total of seventeen representations of wage earning women. The associated time frames for most of the depictions range from the mid-1800s to the early 1900s. The majority of the occupations depicted are in the canning industry, but there are additional instances of meat packing and retail work. Ninety-four percent of the representations are definitive in nature, leaving 6% as non-definitive. Of the total representations, 41% are definitive images with associated text, and 53% are noted as definitive text only. Approximately 41% of the total representations are photographs, and 6% are (or include) engravings. Additionally, 6% of the representations are (or include) artifacts. The artifacts included in this exhibit are a group of items associated with oyster shucking. 29% of the total representations are ethnically identifiable, and of these 20% are "colored", 20% are "African American", 20% are "Polish", 20% are "Black" and 20% are non-specified in nature.

Table 4.7: Data collected from exhibit *Canning in Baltimore*

Occupation	Definitive Image	Definitive Text Only	Non-Definitive	Type of Representation	Noted Ethnicity	Notes	Total
Canning Industry, Filling Cans	(1) photo - 1914	(2) text		1 Photograph		(2) filling is "women's work"	2
Canning Industry, General	(1) photo (2) photo - 1909	(3) 1865 (4) 1890s (5) 1911		2 Photographs	(1) Black (2) Polish	(5) quote by female worker	5
Canning Industry, Labeling Cans	(1) photo - 1915	(2) text		1 Photograph			2
Canning Industry, Oyster Canning	(1) engraving and artifacts - 1872	(2) 1872		1 Engraving with Artifacts	(1) non-specified/non-white (2) Colored	(1) engraving from Harper's Weekly and shucking equipment, See Figure 4.16 (2) shucking, quote from local newspaper ad	2
Canning Industry, Preparing Product		(1) text			(1) African American	(1) included image from different time period	1
Canning Industry, Strawberry Canning		(1) 1867					1
Canning Industry, Tomato Canning	(1) photo - 1911			1 Photographs		(1) filling cans	1
Industrial & Factory Work, General	(1) photo			1 Photograph			1
Meat Packing Industry, General		(1) late 1800s				(1) sewing ham bags and labeling cans	1
Retail Work, Owner			(1) photo - 1880	1 Photograph		(1) ice cream & candy store - possibly family owned	1
Total	7	9	1				17



Figure 4.17: Definitive display of artifacts at entrance of exhibit (author's photograph)

Within the exhibit *Textile and Commercial Sewing Industry* there are twelve representations of wage earning women. There are associated time frames for all but one of the depictions and most occur in the early 1900s. All of the occupations are within the textile and commercial sewing industry. Ninety-two percent of the representations are definitive in nature, leaving 8% as non-definitive. Of the total representations, 92% are definitive images with associated text and there are no instances of definitive text only. Seventy-five percent of the total representations are photographs, and approximately 10% are advertisements. Additionally, 10% of the representations are artifacts. These artifacts are a group of commercial sewing items near the entrance of the exhibit. Approximately 17% of the total representations are ethnically identifiable, and of these, 50% are listed as "Irish" or "German," and 50% are non-specified "immigrant".

Table 4.8: Data collected from exhibit *Textile and Commercial Sewing Industry*

Occupation	Definitive Image	Definitive Text Only	Non-Definitive	Noted Ethnicity	Type of Representation	Notes	Total
Millinery Industry, Straw Hat Making	(1) photo - early 1900s (2) photo - early 1900s (3) photo - early 1900s				3 Photographs	(1) sewing hall (2) trimming dept. (3) sewing hall	3
Textile Industry, Commercial Sewing	(1) photo 1910 (2) photo - early 1900s (3) photo - early 1900s (4) photo (5) photo - early 1900s (6) set of artifacts		(7) text 1830s-1840s	(7) Irish or German	5 Photographs, 1 set artifacts	(6) room decorated to be industrial sewing room See Figure 4.17 (7) stated as "Irish Catholic" and "German Jew" in exhibit text	7
Textile Industry, Dressmaking	(1) postcard - 1880s				1 Advertisement		1
Textile Industry, Seamstress	(1) photo - early 1800s			(1) non-specified/immigrant	1 Photograph	(1) noted as "immigrant"	1
Total	11	0	1				12

Ohio

Ohio History Center & Museum



Figure 4.18: Ohio History Museum, Columbus, Ohio¹⁰⁰

The Ohio Historical Society (OHS), located in Columbus, Ohio and formed in 1885, owns and operates over fifty historic sites and museums of which the Ohio History Museum (OHM) is the flagship.¹⁰¹ The OHS which maintains a collection of approximately 1.6 million artifacts “conducts an expanded range of activities related to interpreting, collecting and preserving the state’s heritage.”¹⁰² The society’s mission is “to help people connect with Ohio’s past in order to understand the present and create a better future.”¹⁰³ The exhibit included in this assessment is entitled, *Ohio: Centuries of Change*. This exhibit encompasses a 15,000 square foot gallery space and “chronicles Ohio history from frontier days to the 1970s, focusing on agricultural and industrial progress, leadership and the effect of major changes on the lives of ordinary people.”¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ “Legislative Update,” *Ohio Historical Society*, <http://www.ohiohistory.org/about/lu/> (accessed May 05, 2012).

¹⁰¹ “Places,” *Ohio Historical Society*, <http://ohsweb.ohiohistory.org/places/c09/index.shtml> (accessed May 05, 2012).

¹⁰² “Welcome,” *Ohio Historical Society*, <http://www.ohiohistory.org/about/welcome.html> (accessed May 05, 2012).

¹⁰³ “About,” *Ohio Historical Society*, <http://www.ohiohistory.org/about/> (accessed May 05, 2012).

¹⁰⁴ “Places,” *Ohio Historical Society*, (accessed May 05, 2012).

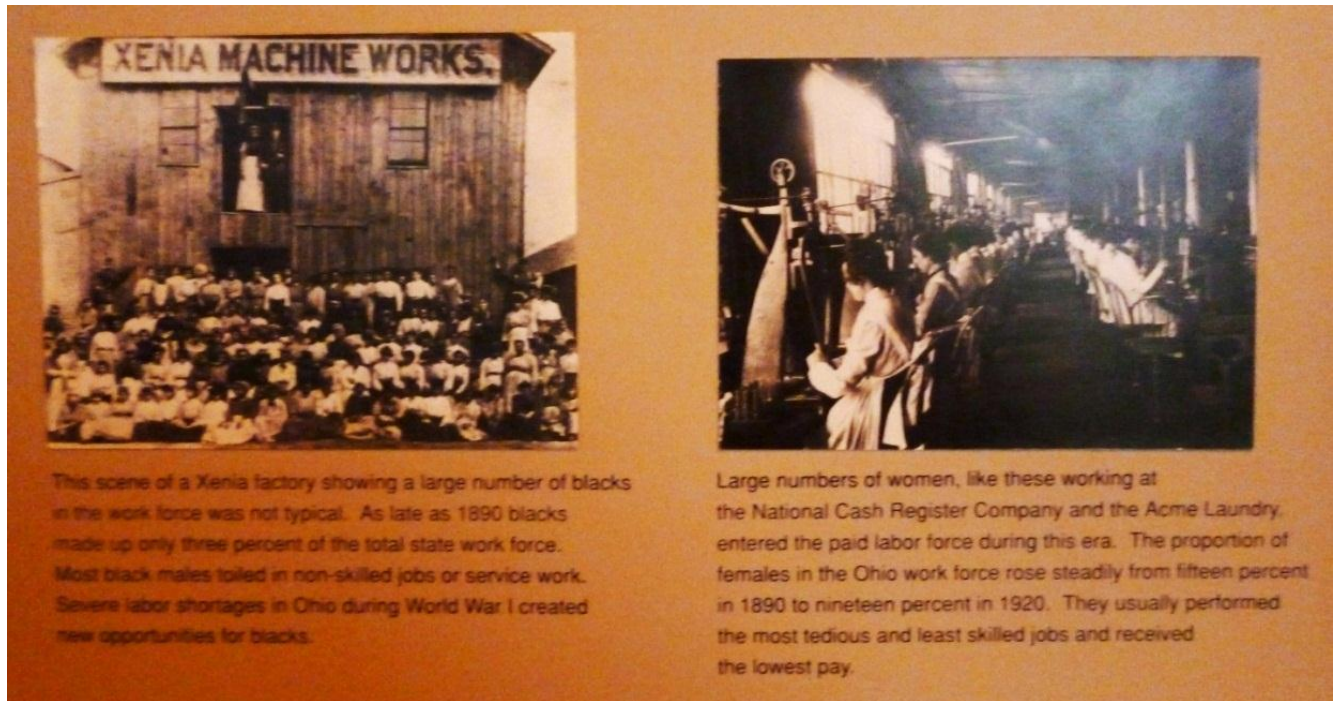


Figure 4.19: Definitive image with text, including noted ethnicity (authors photograph)

In *Ohio: Centuries of Change* there are a total of five representations of wage earning women. The associated time frames range from the 1850s to 1900. The occupations depicted range from textile and factory work to an artist. Eighty percent of the representations are definitive in nature, leaving 20% as non-definitive. Of the total representations, 60% are definitive images with associated text and 20% are noted as definitive text only. Forty percent of the total representations are photographs, 20% are engravings, and 20% are paintings. There were no associated artifacts within this exhibit. Twenty percent of the total representations are ethnically identifiable, and of these, 100% are listed as "Blacks".

Table 4.9: Data collected from exhibit *Ohio: Centuries of Change*

Occupation	Definitive Image	Definitive Text Only	Non-Definitive	Type of Representation	Noted Ethnicity	Notes	Total
Artist	(1) painting 1854			1 Painting		(1) self portrait of artist	1
Industrial & Factory Work, General	(1) photo 1890			1 Photograph	(1) Blacks	(1) Xenia Machine Works, See Figure 4.19	1
National Cash Register Co., Factory	(1) photo 1900			1 Photograph		(1) See Figure 4.19	1
Textile Industry, General			(1) engraving mid 1850s	1 Engraving		(1) video still of engraving of possible textile work	1
Union Steel Screw Company		(1) 1885				(1) possibly implying temporary female workers that had replaced men during a labor strike	1
Total	3	1	1				5

Virginia

Virginia Historical Society



Figure 4.20: Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, Virginia¹⁰⁵

The Virginia Historical Society (VHS), located in Richmond, Virginia was formed in 1831 and since that time, has grown considerably. In 1992, the headquarters building (pictured above) was expanded after raising twelve million dollars and gained “additional museum galleries, a strengthened endowment, increased public programs, a paper conservation lab, and an education department.”¹⁰⁶ The VHS has continued to grow as a 38,000 square foot wing was added in 1998, and an additional sixteen million dollar, 54,000 square feet wing in 2006.¹⁰⁷ The VHS states its mission as “connecting people to America’s past through the unparalleled story of Virginia. By collecting, preserving, and interpreting the Commonwealth’s history, we link past with present and inspire future generations.”¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ “Front View of the VA Historical Society,” *InfoBarrel*, http://www.infobarrel.com/Media/Front_View_of_The_VA_Historical_Society (accessed May 12, 2012).

¹⁰⁶ “History of the VHS,” *Virginia Historical Society*, http://www.vahistorical.org/about/history_vhs.htm (accessed May 12, 2012).

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸ “About the VHS,” *Virginia Historical Society*, <http://www.vahistorical.org/about/main.htm> (accessed May 12, 2012).

The exhibit included in this assessment entitled, *Virginians at Work*, tells the story of the history of work in Virginia. In a press release given at the time of the exhibit's opening in 2006, the VHS described the mission of this exhibit:

By focusing on ordinary people, the exhibition takes the often abstract theory behind the study of economic history and makes it viable and accessible to the visitor. Objects, photographs, oral histories, manuscripts, and multimedia stations help *Virginians at Work* tell the story of how people have made a living and why jobs in Virginia have changed.¹⁰⁹

While some exhibits within this assessment were highly focused on a particular industry or industries, this exhibit presented a complex portrait of the history of industry in the state of Virginia. Additionally, the VHS addresses the effect that social prejudices have had on the history of work in Virginia and explains “it is not only economic forces that determined how Virginians earn a living” and that for centuries “jobs were segregated not only by race but by gender” and notes that a current “more inclusive society has also meant a more inclusive economy.”¹¹⁰



Figure 4.21: Interior of exhibit space (author's photograph)

¹⁰⁹ “Press Release,” *Virginia Historical Society*, http://www.vahistorical.org/news/pr_vaw.htm (accessed May 12, 2012).

¹¹⁰ “*Virginians at Work*,” *Virginia Historical Society*, <http://www.vahistorical.org/rbhc/vaw.htm> (accessed May 12, 2012).



Figure 4.22: VHS – Definitive image with text of noted ethnicity (author’s photograph)

The results below from the exhibit *Virginians at Work* show that there are a total of 22 representations of wage earning women. The associated time frames range from the mid-1800s to the early 1900s. The occupations depicted vary greatly and range from mill and factory work to hairdressing and retail work. Eighty-eight percent of the representations are definitive in nature, leaving 12% as non-definitive. Of the total representations, 71% are definitive images with associated text and 17% are noted as definitive text only. Approximately 58% of the total representations are photographs, 8% are engravings, and 4% are paintings. Additionally, 8% of the representations include artifacts. 17% of the total representations are ethnically identifiable, and of these, 50% are listed as "Black" and 50% as "African American".

Table 4.10: Data collected from exhibit *Virginians at Work*

Occupation	Definitive Image	Definitive Text Only	Non-Definitive	Type of Representation	Noted Ethnicity	Notes	Total
Bakery	(1) photo - early 1900s			1 Photograph			1
Cotton Production			(1) painting 1880s	1 Painting	(1) African American		1
Hairdressing	(1) photo early 1900s			1 Photograph			1
Industrial & Factory Work, General		(1) text					1
Insurance Company	(1) photo early 1900s			1 Photograph		(1) possibly secretarial work	1
Millinery Industry, Retail Work	(1) photo early 1900s		(2) engraving 1850s	1 Photograph, 1 Engraving		(2) coke and coal company	2
Nursing	(1) artifact 1905 (2) photo 1912 (3) artifact 1887			2 Artifact, 1 Photograph		(1) nurse's uniform (3) reproduction of 1887 nurse's uniform (shown on "Barbie")	3
Pickling Industry	(1) photo 1870s			1 Photograph		(1) Pin Money Pickle Co., Owner Ellen Kidd	1
Reporter, Newspaper			(1) text				1
Retail, Food Service	(1) photo 1910			1 Photograph		(1) Confectionary and Ice Cream Parlor	1
Retail, Sales Clerk	(1) photo 1881			1 Photograph		(1) possible family owner (town store)	1
Switchboard Operator	(1) engraving 1879			1 Engraving			1
Textile Industry, Cotton Mill	(1) photo 1911			1 Photograph			1
Textile Industry, General	(1) photo early 1900s	(2) late 1800s		1 Photograph			2
Textile Industry, Knitting Mill	(1) photo 1911			1 Photograph			1
Tobacco Industry, Cigarette Factory	(1) photo 1911	(2) text 1887-1911		1 Photograph	(1) African American		2
Tobacco Industry, Cigar Factory	(1) photo 1900			1 Photograph			1
Tobacco Industry, General		(1) late 1800s			(1) Black		1
Tobacco Industry, Leaf Stripper	(1) photo 1890s			1 Photograph	(1) Black		1
Total	17	4	3				24

Washington, D.C.

Smithsonian - National Museum of American History



Figure 4.23: Smithsonian – National Museum of American History, Washington D.C.¹¹¹

The Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History (NMAH), located in Washington, D.C., opened in 1964 and is the sixth Smithsonian building placed on the National Mall.¹¹² The NMAH “dedicates its collections and scholarship to inspiring a broader understanding of our nation and its many peoples” and they “create opportunities for learning, stimulate imaginations, and present challenging ideas about our country’s past.”¹¹³ The museum’s basic mission is to “inspire a broader understanding of our nation and its many peoples—and to make our exhibitions and programs as accessible as possible to all visitors.”¹¹⁴

The NMAH exhibit included in this study is entitled, *Communities in a Changing Nation: The Promise of 19th-Century America* and is divided into three distinct sections. The first section

¹¹¹ “Newsdesk: Newsroom of the Smithsonian,” *Smithsonian*, <http://newsdesk.si.edu/photos/national-museum-american-history-kenneth-e-behring-center-facing-south> (accessed May 12, 2012).

¹¹² “Mission & History,” *Smithsonian*, <http://americanhistory.si.edu/about/mission.cfm> (accessed May 12, 2012).

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

“Owners, Mechanics, and Operatives: The Promise of Industrialization” focuses on “19th century industrial workers and managers in Bridgeport, Connecticut;” the second section “Jewish Immigrants: The Promise of a New Life” focuses on Jewish immigrants in Cincinnati, Ohio; and the third section “African Americans in Slavery and Freedom: Promise Deferred” focuses on “slaves and free blacks in the low country of South Carolina.”¹¹⁵



Figure 4.24: Interior of first section of exhibit (author’s photograph)

¹¹⁵ “Press Release,” *Smithsonian*, <http://americanhistory.si.edu/news/pressrelease.cfm?key=29&newskey=102> (accessed May 12, 2012).

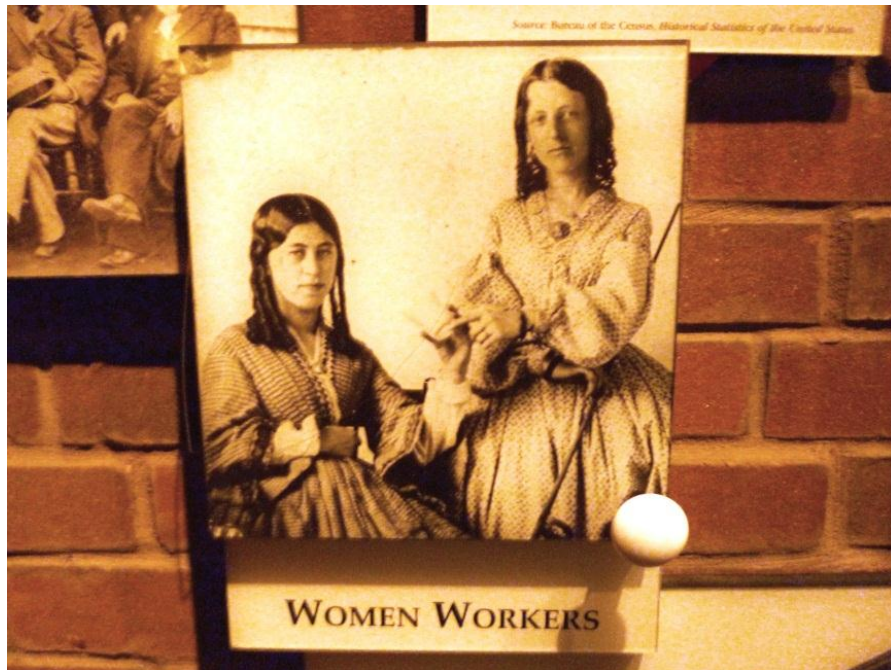


Figure 4.25: Definitive image of ceramic workers (author's photograph)



Figure 4.26: Definitive image of African American working women (author's photograph)

Within the exhibit *Communities in a Changing Nation: the Promise of 19th Century America* there are a total of thirty representations of wage earning women; twenty from section one, eight from section two, and two from section three. The associated time frames range from the early 1800s to 1900. One hundred percent of the representations are definitive in nature. Of the total representations, 73% are definitive images with associated text, and 27% are noted as definitive text only. Approximately 40% of the total representations are photographs, 17% are engravings, and 3% are advertisements. Additionally, 10% of the representations are artifacts. There are fifteen total instances of noted ethnicity; five in section one, eight in section two, all listed as "Jewish", and two in section three, listed as "African American". Therefore, 43% of the total representations are ethnically identifiable. Of these 23% are listed as "African American," 62% as "Jewish," 7.5% are "Irish" or "German," and 7.5% are "Irish or "English."

Table 4.11: Data collected from exhibit *Communities in a Changing Nation: The Promise of 19th-Century America*

Occupation	Definitive Image	Definitive Text Only	Non-Definitive	Type of Representation	Noted Ethnicity	Notes	Total
Ceramic Workers	(1) photo - 1860s			1 Photograph			1
Domestic Service, General	(1) artifact early 1800s				(1) African American	(1) Bill of sale of slaves; notes domestic service and washerwoman	1
Domestic Service, Maid	(1) photo - mid 19th cent			1 Photograph			1
Homework, Laundry	(1) artifact - 1869			1 Artifact		(1) men's shirt and home sewing machine	1
Homework, Sewing	(1) engraving - 1869 (2) artifact - 1869			1 Engraving 1 Artifact		(2) newspaper ad and home sewing machine	2
Industrial & Factory Work, General		(1) text - 1900 (2) text 1800-1900					2
Industrial Sewing, Piece Work	(1) engraving - 1869			1 Engraving		(1) engraving is from 1884 and text is quote from 1869	1
Nurse	(1) photo 1860s				(1) African American	(1) Susie King Taylor, Civil War Nurse. Noted to have been a teacher as well.	1
Peddler		(1) late 1800s			(1) Jewish		1
Retail Store, Owner	(1) photo 1860s (2) photo and artifacts 1870s to 1880s (3) photo 1800s (4) photo 1890			3 Photographs, 1 Artifact	(1) Jewish (2) Jewish (3) Jewish (4) Jewish	(2) artifacts - doll and baseball (4) men's clothing	4
Shirt Collar Manufacturers	(1) photo - 1880			1 Photograph		(1) Patton's Linen Collar Manufactory and Laundry	1
Teacher	(1) photo - 1895	(2) late 1800s		1 Photograph	(2) Jewish	(1) Oklahoma Territory	2
Textile Industry, Clothing Factory	(1) photo 1880s			1 Photograph	(1) Jewish		1
Textile Industry, Cotton Mill	(1) photo - 1870 (2) ad - early 1800s			1 Photograph 1 Advertisement		(1) Carolina Mills, Rhode Island (2) Ad from Lowell, Massachusetts, asking for women ages 15 to 35	2
Textile Industry, General	(1) engraving - 1868 (2) photo 1860s	(3) quote - 1845		1 Engraving 1 Photograph		(2) woman holding spindles (3) Lowell, Massachusetts textile Mills	3
Textile Industry, Needle Department	(1) engraving - 1884 (2) engraving - 1879	(3) text - 19th century (4) text - 1880		2 Engravings	(3) Irish, German (4) English, Irish	(1) grooving the needles, needle making	4
Textile Industry, Seamstress		(1) late 1800s			(1) Jewish		1
Tobacco Industry, General	(1) photo - 1895			1 Photograph	(1) African American	(1) Stemming Room at Mayo Tobacco Co., Richmond, Virginia	1
Total	22	8					30

Chapter Five - Overall Results, Conclusions and Recommendations

Overall Results

Below are the overall results from this study. The findings show that 93% of the total representations are definitive in nature. Seventy-four percent of the total representations are definitive images with associated text, 19% are definitive text only and 7% non-definitive in nature. There were a total of eighteen artifacts within the eleven exhibits, and this has resulted in 12% of the total representations. Eighteen percent of the total representations are ethnically identifiable. Of these, approximately 30% are "Jewish", 22% are "African American", 15% are "Black", 7% are non-specified, 7% are "Irish" or "German," 4% are "English" or "Irish," 4% are "Non-White," 4% are "French," 4% are "Colored," and 4% are "Polish."

Table 5.1: Overall results from study

	Definitive Image	Definitive Text Only	Non-Definitive	Artifacts	Noted Ethnicity	Total Representations
Baltimore Museum of Industry: "Canning in Baltimore"	7	9	1	1	5	17
Baltimore Museum of Industry: "Textile and Commercial Sewing Industry"	11	0	1	1	1	12
Charles River Museum of Industry & Innovation: "Textile History"	4	0	0	0	0	4
Charles River Museum of Industry & Innovation: "Watches & Clocks"	12	0	1	0	0	13
Connecticut Historical Museum	10	3	0	5	0	13
Heinz History Center	7	1	2	2	0	10
Ohio History Museum	3	1	1	0	1	5
Rhode Island Historical Society	12	1	1	2	2	14
Smithsonian: National Museum of American History	22	8	0	3	13	30
State Museum of Pennsylvania	2	0	1	2	0	3
Virginia Historical Museum	17	4	3	2	4	24
Total	107	27	11	18	26	145

Conclusions and Recommendations

This study has sought to find if there is a lack of representation of women of the United States' historical museums by focusing on women of the Industrial Age. While this study does not prove nor disprove that thesis question, there are conclusions that can be drawn from the collected data. The first conclusion is that by almost a 10:1 ratio, the representations of women are definitive in nature. This suggests that when women *are* presented, the representations are most often definitive and are clearly shown to be a wage earning women associated with a particular industry during the Industrial Age.

The second conclusion is that there is little artifactual information associated with these representations. It should be noted that during the course of this study, there was an abundance of artifacts displayed in most if not all of the exhibits. As the results show, only 12% of the representations include artifacts, which suggests a lack of connection, whether textual or otherwise, between the total numbers of artifacts included in an exhibit, and the representations of the wage earning women.

Interestingly, this study also shows that the exhibit at NMAH accounts for 21% of the total number of representations and for 50% of the instances of noted ethnicity. This suggests that the results of the exhibit at NMAH may have been impacted by the “gender equity” group explained by Marc Pachter in the literature review of this study.

Three recommendations can be suggested for future study. First, it may be beneficial to compare the number of representations of wage earning women to the number of representations of wage earning men in a given exhibit related to the Industrial Age. Second, it may be beneficial to compare representations of wage earning women in the Industrial Age to representations of women acting within a domestic capacity during the same time period in an appropriate history exhibit.

Third, it would be beneficial to identify and speak with exhibit curators and creators to examine the reasoning behind the inclusion of specific female representations and the lack of artifactual information associated with the representations of wage earning women. It may be that there are artifacts within museum collections that are connected to wage earning women that are not being displayed. This research might also address whether there was an attempt made at the time of acquisition to find possible connections between wage earning women and the artifacts displayed.

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