

How did Annie Oakley break barriers?

By being totally herself, I'd say. She was a born risk-taker. And she knew how, and when, to follow her instincts.

What significance does Annie have on the show business industry?

She was a huge star. By way of comparison, think Beyonce or Lady Gaga, when it comes to popularity. Annie was the highest paid entertainer of her time.

How was Annie Oakley portrayed in the plays and movies produced about her?

"You can't get a man with a gun" , "Annie Get Your Gun," and all that idiotic sexist claptrap were the standards--all of which failed to capture anything like her essence or her importance. There was one exception, and that was a TV series that ran in the 1950s, starring Gail Davis

Do you think Annie was able to contribute to the Women's Suffrage Movement?

She had no interest in politics, or in feminism. She was more concerned about her image, or as she called it, her "Ladyhood." But whether she wanted to or not, she certainly had a positive impact on how women viewed themselves, and their possible political agency.

How did Annie Oakley encourage women to defend themselves with guns?

She felt a handgun was the appropriate firearm for self-defense – it could be neatly tucked away in a muff or parasol. Given her own history of apparent sexual abuse, she had good reason to take self-defense seriously. Annie was, however, insistent that anyone who wants to use a gun for any reason (she was also a fan of long guns for hunting and recreational shooting). . . anyone who wants to use a gun should take lessons in appropriate gun use.

How did Annie maintain her reputation when she had contrasting/unconventional interests in women's rights and shooting?

Both her husband and Buffalo Bill managed her publicity in ways that highlighted her open-mindedness. And Annie herself espoused some causes that were unpopular then but we would recognize as forward-thinking--chief among them, Native American rights. She also thought women should be trained for combat--an idea that is just in this century coming into favorable fashion.