

## Process Paper

In the process of choosing a topic, we decided on criteria for our subject: they had to be a native Ohioan, accomplished, and altered the world's view of women, thus breaking barriers for future generations. Upon weeks of further research, we concluded that Annie Oakley fit our parameters the best. Oakley's impact stretches further than Ohio; she broke barriers by becoming known on the world stage as a dignified, highly-skilled woman who competed outstandingly in a male-dominated profession. Her discipline and strong moral character make her a great role model and a fascinating individual to research. We aspire to achieve Oakley's good reputation, awe-inspiring impact, and accomplishments.

To create an objective historical argument, we found a variety of secondary sources from books to films. As a group we met frequently, taking notes on sources from accountable websites and reading books on Annie Oakley. In addition, we visited the Garst Museum, where we found countless primary sources exclusive to their collections, such as newspapers, autobiographies, letters, film, and diary entries. We also spoke with nationally qualified experts, like Eileen Litchfield, the president of the National Annie Oakley Center. The NAOC gave us a unique perspective on Annie's hometown roots, which offered a stark contrast to romanticized movies that portrayed her as a "hick." Furthermore, we interviewed the accomplished professor and author Mary Zeiss Stange on Oakley's impact on feminism and women's gun rights in America. Knowing the different facets of her persona, we could proceed in our research with clarity on her true identity and values.

We chose the website category because of its various opportunities and its flexible nature gave us the chance to work in a variety of spaces and times. It yields a comprehensive and widely-accessible platform of information that aids in proof-reading, sharing, and educating of Annie Oakley's life, adversity, and legacy. The website category instills a lasting impression on the reader through visual, auditory, and interactive content. In addition, we could implement software into our website, such as engaging timelines, interactive images, audio files, and videos.

Annie Oakley fits the theme of Breaking Barriers in every way imaginable. She was a self-sufficient, morally-upright woman who went up against not only the best of sharpshooters, but society's barriers as well. As a child, she was the breadwinner for her widowed mother and 8 siblings, and financially supported them throughout her life. Then, as a performer, she broke barriers by earning the respect of the media and her male colleagues, while remaining modest throughout her prosperous show business career. Finally, Oakley's unconventional marriage with Frank Butler broke barriers in society's perception of male and female roles in marriage and career. Annie remained true to her Ohio roots, donating much of her salary to hospitals near Greenville, supporting her family, and melting down her gold medals for the support of tuberculosis charities. In 1926, the famous actor and newspaper columnist Will Rogers said,

“She is a greater character than she was a rifle shot. Annie Oakley’s name, her lovable traits, and her thoughtful consideration of others will live as a mark for any woman to shoot at.”