

DARING to dream

What do the following have in common? A patent for an illuminated writing board. The commercialization of indigo. The process of tufting used for chenille bedspreads and industrial carpeting. The answer is: all were developed by girls while they were teenagers! Becky Schroeder, Eliza Lucas, and Catherine Evans didn't know that they were changing the world with their ideas; but they did.

These advancements happened because these young women lived in families where their ideas and dreams were supported and nourished. As parents, we have both the obligation and the responsibility to help our children's (both boys and girls) imaginations SOAR! Children need to learn about role models who can feed their enthusiasm and help their thinking expand. The book *HER STORY: A TIMELINE OF THE WOMEN WHO CHANGED AMERICA* can help you share the stories about those who came before us. Come now and learn about these amazing women who dared to dream at an early age.

In 1974, Becky Schroeder received her first patent for an illuminated writing board while she was a preteen. She got the idea while trying to do her homework in the back seat of a car in the dark.

Over 250 years ago, Eliza Lucas (later Pinckney) developed the technique for large-scale cultivation and processing of indigo for dye as a teenager when she was already manager of her father's extensive plantation holdings. Her process achieved its first commercial success in 1744. Indigo sales supported the Carolina economy for the next thirty years.

Catherine Evans (later Whitener) became captivated with an old tufted bedspread that was a family heirloom. At age 15, she mastered the technique called candlewicking and completed two quilts. Her tufted (chenille) quilts and bedspreads, mats, and bathrobes formed the basis of the Evans Manufacturing Company, which she co-founded in 1917. By 1941, the bedspread industry employed 10,000 people with sales of over \$25 million. Today, more than 90% of machined carpet production is tufted, based on Whitener's work. Talk about a goal and a dream realized!

There are many other young girls who are outstanding role models! We encourage the girls of today to read the stories of these other young women, to write school reports on them, to talk about them, and to use their stories as the basis for speeches and public presentations at school, in the Girl Scouts, and in their religious school activities. Girls from the American historical past had a very wide range of talents and abilities. So,

yes, today's girls can find historical people "like me."

Dubbed the "female Paul Revere," Sybil Ludington, at age 16, rode all night in heavy rain. She knocked on farmhouse doors in Putnam County, Connecticut, for forty miles to warn of the British approach. Because of her efforts, 400 men won the Battle of Ridgefield. Both a statue and a postage stamp commemorate her efforts.

You are probably familiar with Annie Oakley, who began hunting at age 9 to support her siblings and widowed mother. At age 21, Oakley, the first American female superstar, won her first sharpshooting contest and in 1885 she joined the Wild West Show.

Children today are very interested in music, drama and athletics and there are young role models in these areas too. Judy Garland landed the role of Dorothy in *THE WIZARD OF OZ* at age 16, by which time she had been dancing, singing, and performing in public for over 10 years! At age 18, eight-time Grammy winner and inductee into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame Tina Turner started her rise to stardom as a back up vocalist with Ike Turner. Let's not forget the terrific Serena Williams who became a professional tennis player at age fourteen (and her talented sister, Venus.)

Each of these women, and over 850 more, is profiled in *HER STORY: A TIMELINE OF THE WOMEN WHO CHANGED AMERICA*. This vivid visual timeline, with a foreword written by Madeleine Albright, brings into the public eye the many, varied, and significant accomplishments of women throughout U.S. history.

Parents and their children are encouraged to look through its pages, reading the book together or separately to find "Women Like Me." A parent and child reading a book together is a critical strategy to developing your child! When girls "dare to dream," they can accomplish so much for themselves and for our American society! We firmly believe that the story is not complete with you – we look forward to including your daughters in one of the next editions of our book! Connect with us!



Charlotte S. Waisman, Ph.D., and Jill S. Tietjen, P.E., are the co-authors of *Her Story: A Timeline of the Women Who Changed America*, www.herstoryatimeline.com. During her career, Waisman has been a professor, political activist, keynote speaker, expert witness, corporate leader and trainer. Tietjen is an author, speaker, and electrical engineer.