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**How a Public School Teacher Fought for Feminism and Southern Education Reform**

*LSU Press to publish new biography of Celeste Parrish in December*

**Baton Rouge, LA—*Celeste Parrish and Educational Reform in the Progressive-Era South*** follows a Civil War orphan's transformation from a Southside Virginia public school teacher to a nationally known progressive educator and feminist. In this vital intellectual biography, Rebecca S. Montgomery places feminism and gender at the center of her analysis and offers a new look at the postbellum movement for southern educational reform through the life of Celeste Parrish.

Because Parrish's life coincided with critical years in the destruction and reconstruction of the southern social order, her biography provides unique opportunities to explore the rise of reactionary racism and sexism in the workplace and educational system. As with many women of the last Civil War generation, Parrish's drive to acquire a college education and professional career pitted her against male opponents of coeducation and female intellectual opportunities. When coupled with women's lack of formal political power, this resistance to gender equality discouraged progress and lowered the quality of public education throughout the South.

The marginalization of women within the reform movement, headed by the Conference for Education in the South, further limited female contributions to regional change. Yet, because men allowed female participation in grassroots organization, the southern movement provided an alternate source of influence and power for women. It also restricted the impact of their social activism to mainly female networks, however, which received less public acknowledgement than the reform work conducted by men. By exploring the consequences of gender discrimination for both educational reform and the influence of southern progressivism, Rebecca S. Montgomery contributes a nuanced understanding of how interlocking hierarchies of power structured opportunity and influenced the shape of reform in the U.S. South.

**Rebecca S. Montgomery** is associate professor of history at Texas State University and the author of *The Politics of Education in the New South: Women and Reform in Georgia, 1890–1930*.

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320 pages, 6 x 9, 7 halftones

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Cloth \$47.50s, ebook available

History of Education / Southern History / Women's Studies

To request a review copy or set up an interview with the author,  
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