

A Brief History of Women in America



Property-owning New Jersey women could vote from 1776 to 1807.



- During the time of the Revolutionary War “It was almost universally believed that a woman’s brain was smaller in capacity and therefore inferior in quality to that of a man.”

Early Advocates for Women

- Abigail Adams “Remember the ladies!”
- Anne Hutchinson – challenged the authority of male religious leaders in Puritan Massachusetts.



Republican Motherhood



- The concept related to women's roles as mothers in the emerging United States before and after the American Revolution (c. 1760 to 1800).
- It centered around the belief that children should be raised to uphold the ideals of republicanism, making them the perfect citizens of the new nation.

Early 19th century Women

1. Unable to vote.
2. Legal status of a minor.
3. Single → could own her own property.
4. Married → no control over her property or her children.
5. Could not initiate divorce.
6. Couldn't make wills, sign a contract, or bring suit in court without her husband's permission.

“Separate Spheres” Concept

The Cult of Domesticity

- A woman’s “sphere” was in the home (it was a refuge from the cruel world outside).
- Her role was to “civilize” & educate her husband and family.
- An 1830s MA minister:
The power of woman is her dependence. A woman who gives up that dependence on man to become a reformer yields the power God has given her for her protection, and her character becomes unnatural!

Cult of Domesticity = Slavery

The 2nd Great Awakening inspired women to improve society.



Angelina Grimké



Sarah Grimké



Lucy Stone

■ American Women's Suffrage Assoc.
■ edited *Woman's Journal*

■ Southern Abolitionists

Cult of Domesticity

- A new ideal of womanhood and a new ideology about the home arose out of the new attitudes about work and family.
 - Called the "cult of domesticity," it is found in women's magazines, advice books, religious journals, newspapers, fiction--everywhere in popular culture.
 - This new ideal provided a new view of women's duty and role while cataloging the cardinal virtues of true womanhood for a new age.



Charles Dana Gibson, *No Time for Politics*, 1910

Cult of Domesticity

- This ideal of womanhood had essentially four parts--four characteristics any good and proper young woman should cultivate:
 - Piety
 - Purity
 - Domesticity
 - Submissiveness

Cult of Domesticity

- **Piety:** Nineteenth-century Americans believed that women had a particular propensity for religion. The modern young woman of the 1820s and 1830s was thought of as a new Eve working with God to bring the world out of sin through her suffering, through her pure, and passionless love.
- **Purity:** Female purity was also highly revered. Without sexual purity, a woman was no woman, but rather a lower form of being, a "fallen woman," unworthy of the love of her sex and unfit for their company.

Cult of Domesticity

- **Domesticity:** Woman's place was in the home. Woman's role was to be busy at those morally uplifting tasks aimed at maintaining and fulfilling her piety and purity.
- **Submissiveness:** This was perhaps the most feminine of virtues.
 - Men were supposed to be religious, although not generally. Men were supposed to be pure, although one could really not expect it. But men never supposed to be submissive. Men were to be movers, and doers--the actors in life. Women were to be passive bystanders, submitting to fate, to duty, to God, and to men.

Changes in American life during the Industrial Revolution

- Division between work and home



The demand for women suffrage emerged in the first half of the 19th century from within other reform movements.

Education for women

Emma Hart Willard

- In 1821, she opened the first endowed institution for the education of women – Troy Female Seminary in Troy, New York



The Temperance Crusade

The First Wave of Feminism

- The major demand of the first wave was the right of women to vote—
- Women's Suffrage
- Women wrote, lectured publically, and organized to achieve their aim.



Women's Rights Movement

1840 → split in the abolitionist movement over women's role in it.

London → World Anti-Slavery Convention



Lucretia Mott



Elizabeth Cady Stanton

1848 → Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiments



Susan B. Anthony and Amelia Bloomer attended the New York Men's State Temperance Society meeting while wearing short hair and bloomers.



The radical abolition movement had the greatest impact on women's rights.

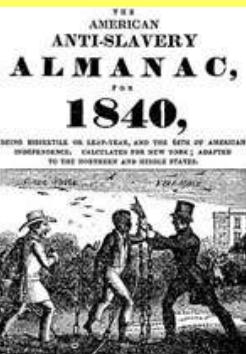


Women in the abolition movement recognized parallels between the legal condition of slaves and that of women.



Clarina Irene Howard Nichols,
Abolitionist and First Feminist of the Kansas Territory

Participation in the Anti-Slavery movement helped women develop public-speaking and argumentative skills that carried over into the women's rights movement.



Both white and black women were excluded from full membership in the American Anti-Slavery Society until 1840.

Women responded by forming their own separate female auxiliaries—by 1838, over 100 existed.



Angelina and Sarah Grimké

The Grimké sisters, nationally prominent abolitionists, connected the inequalities of women, both white and black, with slavery.



1840: The World Anti-Slavery Society denied women delegates the right to speak.



Elizabeth Cady Stanton attended the 1840 Anti-Slavery Convention and her experience led her into the struggle for women's rights.

"We resolved to hold a convention as soon as we returned home, and form a society to advocate the rights of women."



Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott met in 1848 to organize a convention to promote "the social, civil, and religious rights of women."



The Seneca Falls Women's Rights Convention, 1848



The first signatures on the Declaration of Sentiments.

... The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her. . . . He has never permitted her to exercise her inalienable right to the elective franchise. He has compelled her to submit to laws, in the formation of which she has no voice. . . .

Elizabeth Cady Stanton,
The Declaration of Sentiments



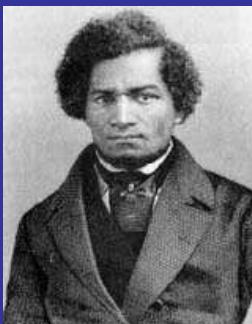
The 14th Amendment to the Constitution added "male" to its definition of eligible voters—women would need another amendment explicitly granting them the franchise.



The demand for woman suffrage presented a vision of independent women that seemed to threaten social structures.



The Seneca Falls Convention was the “birthplace of the women’s rights movement.”



Before the Civil War, black and white men and women worked together for women’s rights and the abolition of slavery.

Frederick Douglass demanded the vote for women in 1848.



War, and the Reconstruction that followed, split the Women’s Rights movement.



Both Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton were furious that Congress had given the vote to black men but denied it to women.

This image made the point that, in being denied the vote, respectable, accomplished women were reduced to the level of the disenfranchised outcasts of society.

Two Organizations are formed

- **National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA)**
 - Founded by Anthony and Stanton
 - The more radical woman’s suffrage group.
 - Accepted only women and opposed the Fifteenth Amendment since it only enfranchised African-American men.
- **American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA)**
 - More moderate in its views than the NWSA.
 - Allowed men to join and rallied behind the Fifteenth Amendment as a step in the right direction toward greater civil rights for women.
 - Leaders of the AWSA included Julia Ward Howe and Lucy Stone.



When the two groups reunited in 1890, the new National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) followed the direction set by Anthony and Stanton.



A New Argument for Woman Suffrage

- The nation needed women voters because of their special moral leadership.

"To demonstrate publicly that women have legs"

- If there's any symbol for the transformation that had occurred in the lives of American women as they approached the twentieth century, it ought to be the bicycle. In fact, Frances Willard, the head of the Women's Christian Temperance Union wrote a book about it called: How I Learned to Ride the Bicycle.



1900—10 million bikes on the road

The bicycle was a new invention that took the nation by storm – every manufacturer had a 'ladies model.' Of course, long dresses and bustles did not lend themselves to riding bikes – women went to more comfortable, useful clothing –Even Susan B. Anthony was a convert "Bicycling did more to emancipate women than anything in the world."



Who was the New Woman?



- She did more than ride bicycles ... she was independent .. She was educated... she was an activist... she was mature...she was a sportswoman...she was competent...she was a professional...she dared to live her life without a man!!

She was ..the Gibson Girl

- The Gibson girl was created by Charles Gibson in drawings that appeared in popular magazines of the time. He portrayed her as an equal to men. She was tall, slender with a full bosom, hips and bottom and a tiny waist... made so by wearing the 'swan-bill corset'.



Let's look at a few examples...



- Alva Belmont –wealthy New York socialite...wife of William Vanderbilt..
- Closed out of the '400', she had a mansion built in the city and a 'cottage' in Newport, RI.. Gave a masquerade party for 1,200 people to which even the Astors wanted to be invited.
- Then in 1895 she divorced her husband due to adultery and remarried without losing her place in society.
- After her second husband died, she became a leading suffragette and one of the first woman members of the American Institute of Architects.
- Her famous advice:" Pray to God. She will help you."

Mary Harris, "Mother Jones"



- Born in Ireland...emigrated to the U.S.
- Lived through the Irish famine and a 'coffin ship' on her way to America.
- Trained as dressmaker and teacher.
- Lost her husband and four children to yellow fever.
- Lost her dressmaking business in the Chicago fire.
- She became a major labor union organizer and advocate of child labor laws.
- She embarrassed men into taking action for unions.
- She was called 'the most dangerous woman in America.'
- In 1903 she organized the Children's Crusade, marching from Pennsylvania to TR's home in New York, carrying signs that said "We want to go to school!"

Madam C.J. Walker

- Her real name was Sarah Breedlove.
- She was the daughter of sharecroppers.
- She made enough money as a laundress to send her daughter to college.
- She became upset that she was losing her hair.
- She developed a lotion that made her hair grow back in.
- She claimed it was revealed to her in a dream by an ancestor from Africa.
- Women came from all over to learn her hair care technique, sell her products and open Madame Walker beauty parlors.
- She moved to New York, opened a fashionable salon, and built an estate on the Hudson.



Jane Addams

- Born in a small Illinois town she graduated from the Rockford Seminary for Girls where she was class president and valedictorian.
- She became determined to start a settlement house in Chicago.
- In 1889, she opened Hull House.
- At Hull House there were 50 rooms and classes for 12 hours everyday serving immigrants and other poor people.
- 1,000 people attended every week.
- There was the 'Jane Club', a residence for working girls.
- Jane began to give speeches all over the country.
- She was selected to second the nomination of Teddy Roosevelt for president in 1912.
- By 1900, there were 100 settlement houses in the U.S.
- She was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1931.



Ida Tarbell



- She was the star investigative reporter for McClure's magazine.
- Her most famous work was "The History of the Standard Oil Company ' an exposé' of greed that spurred TR to become a trustbuster.

Elizabeth Arden

- Her real name was Florence Nightingale Graham and she was a poor immigrant girl from England.
- She worked her way up from receptionist to owner of a Manhattan beauty parlor.
- She traveled to France where she learned to create beauty products.
- Her products included rouge, eye makeup (new to the U.S.) and cream.
- She revolutionized American cosmetics, bringing a scientific approach.
- It was once said that 'There are only three American names known worldwide; Singer Sewing machines, Coca Cola and Elizabeth Arden.
- Buried in Sleepy Hollow, New York in 1966.



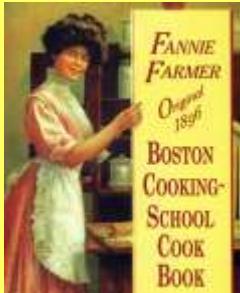
Lillian Gilbreth: The First Lady of Engineering

- In the 1890s, anything scientific was considered to be a good thing.
- Lillian Gilbreth was an industrial engineer one of the first women to hold a PH.D in that field.
- She and her husband pioneered the idea of time and motion studies and ran Gilbreth, Inc.
- Of course, she also had 12 children in 17 years... Thus the book and movie—Cheaper by the Dozen.
- One area of her concern was how to apply efficiency studies to housework.



Fannie Farmer and the Domestic Science Movement

- She studied at the Boston Cooking School.
- She ran a cooking school.
- She began to edit a cookbook designed to bring scientific methods in the kitchen to housewives.
- Her major contribution was exact amounts of ingredients giving her the title "The Mother of Level Measurements."



Ellen Richards- The founder of the science of home economics

- Ellen Swallow Richards was one of the first women to have an advanced degree in chemistry.
- She worked to improve science education for women.
- She applied chemistry to women's work, analyzing the ingredients in cleaning products and identifying the chemical processes in cooking.
- She wrote "The Chemistry of Cooking and Cleaning: a Manual for Housewives"
- She taught at M.I.T.
- She helped to found and was president of the American Home Economics Association.



Criticisms/Problems

- America wasn't ready for professional women who were also wives and mothers.. She was expected to choose one or the other.
- Therefore, almost 50% of female college graduates in the late nineteenth century remained unmarried.
- Magazines printed articles defending that choice.
- They worried about 'race suicide'.
- Very very few women had the right to vote.
- Even educated women were still focusing on a domestic agenda.
- Women were barred from joining campus organizations.
- Colleges and universities developed curriculum to attract more men.
- Working women made less money than men.

Chorus Girls



- Tell me pretty maiden, are there more at home like you? –from the Broadway musical Floradora with 6 ladies all 5 ft 4 and 130 lbs.
- The chorus girl was independent and self-supporting and admired for that even if her life was far less glamorous than most people thought it was.

Sum it up

- Women saw new opportunities at the turn of the century.
- They could get an education.
- They could engage in sports.
- They could dress in more comfortable, practical clothes.
- They could speak and lecture in public.
- They could fight for social causes.
- They could help with the war effort.
- They could become businesswomen.
- They could become leaders of society.
- They saw good things to come in the future.



The initial success of the post-Civil War suffrage movement came on the frontier.

Women voting in Wyoming, 1869



Why the West?

- Special frontier conditions?—the Turner thesis.
- Women's vote would offset votes of black men?
- Women's vote would attract women settlers to the West?
- Women played an important role in the lives of westerners?

A close correlation exists between the success of woman suffrage and states where men voted in large numbers for Populist, Progressive, or Socialist party candidates.

- Colorado (1893)
- Idaho (1896)
- Washington (1910)
- California (1911)
- Kansas (1912)
- Oregon (1912)
- Arizona (1912)
- Montana (1914)
- Nevada (1917)
- North Dakota (1917)
- Nebraska (1917)



After 1890, increasing competition among political parties made women's suffrage a hot political issue.

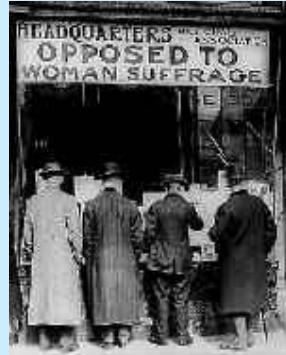


Between 1900 and 1920, the woman suffrage movement modernized, adopting new tactics of lobbying, advertising, and grass-roots organizing under the leadership of Carrie Chapman Catt.

Carrie Lane Chapman Catt (1859-1947), women's suffrage leader



1913: Illinois became the first state east of the Mississippi to grant women the vote.



Growing opposition fostered a sense of impatience among women who had waited over 50 years since the Seneca Falls Convention for the vote.



Alice Paul (1885-1977), women's suffrage leader

Alice Paul and Lucy Burns gave a new direction to the women's rights movement.

In 1913, Paul and Burns organized the National Woman's Party (NWP), adopted the radical tactics of the British suffragettes, and campaigned for the first Equal Rights Amendment.



"The Stomach Tube"

"The sensation is most painful," reported a victim in 1909. "The drums of the ears seem to be bursting and there is a horrible pain in the throat and breast. The tube is pushed down twenty inches; [it] must go below the breastbone." The prisoners were generally fed a solution of milk and eggs.



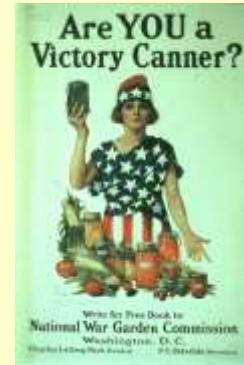
The Woman's Party was one of the first groups in the United States to employ the techniques of classic non-violent protest.



In 1916, neither party endorsed woman suffrage in its platform, but both parties called on the states to give women the vote.



Jan. 10, 1917: The NWP began to picket the White House.



World War I interrupted the campaign for woman suffrage.

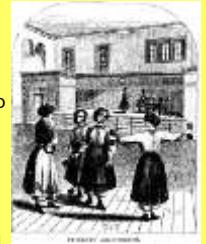
Jeannette Rankin



- Born in Missoula, Montana
- Earned a degree in biology
- Taught school
- Worked in a settlement house
- Worked to win suffrage in Washington state.
- Was elected the first woman in Congress, 1916.

College Girls

- The first generation of female college students enrolled in 1870.
- Some men worried that studying may endanger their 'female apparatus.'
- By 1890, Ladies Home Journal sponsored a contest with a scholarship to Vassar as the top prize.
- By 1910, 40% of college students were female.
- By 1920, almost 50% of college students were female ..it's highest point until the 1960s.
- Many graduates served as nurses and canteen workers in Europe during World War I.



Women's war work allowed them to claim the right of patriotic citizenship.



Finally, on Aug. 20, 1920, the 19th Amendment became part of the United States Constitution when Tennessee became the 36th state to ratify it.

19th Amendment

"The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation."

- It was ratified on August 18th, 1920.

Alice Paul

- She was the head of National Women's Party.
- Felt that the 19th Amendment wasn't enough.
 - Pushed for an Equal Rights Amendment to be added to the constitution.



January 11th, 1885- July 9th, 1977

The Equal Rights Amendment (ERA)

"Men and women shall have equal rights throughout the United States and every place subject to its jurisdiction."

- It was first introduced to Congress in 1923.
- Made all forms of discrimination based on sex illegal.
- Never passed in Congress.

Margaret Sanger

- In 1921, she founded the American Birth Control League (ABCL)
 - Today known as Planned Parenthood
- In 1923, she established the Clinical Research Bureau.
 - The first legal birth control clinic in the U.S.
- Women were then able to control their own bodies.
- This movement educated women about existing birth control methods.
- A 1936, a Supreme Court decision declassified birth control information as obscene.



"Woman was created to be man's helpmeet, but her unique role is in conception . . . since for other purposes men would be better assisted by other men."

—Thomas Aquinas, 13th century Christian theologian

Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor

- In 1920, the Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor was established to gather information about the situation of women at work, and to advocate for changes it found were needed.
- Many suffragists became actively involved with lobbying for legislation to protect women workers from abuse and unsafe conditions.

"Pink Collared" Jobs

- Gave women a taste of the work world.
- Low paying service occupations.
- Made less money than men did doing the same jobs.
 - Examples of jobs:
 - Secretaries
 - Teachers
 - Telephone operators
 - Nurses



"Pink Collared" Jobs

- Women were confined to traditional "feminine" fields in the work force.
- The "new professional women" was the most vivid and widely publicized image in the 1920s.
 - But in reality, most middle class married women remained at home to care for their children.



1928 Olympics

- These were the first Olympics that women were allowed to compete in.
- There were many arguments about these actions.
 - Some argued that it was historically inappropriate since women did not compete in ancient Greek Olympics.
 - Others said that physical competition was "injurious" to women.



The 1928 Dutch Women's Gymnastics team. They won the gold medal in the group event.

Education

- By 1928, women were earning 39% of the college degrees given in the United States.
- It had risen from the original 19% it was at the beginning of the century.
 - Example:
 - In 1926, Sarah Lawrence College was founded as an all girls school



The Depression

- FDR attempted to equalize pay for women and men but could not get enforcement.
- Eleanor Roosevelt becomes a role model.
- Frances Perkins becomes the first female cabinet member.



Women in World War II

- Rosie the Riveter
- Women in the military
- Most women still did traditional women's jobs.



After the War...

- Women were expected to go home!!!
- Mothers
- Homemakers
- Supporting their men
- Enjoying their new appliances.
- Young brides



By 1960

- Many women found that their lives were at odds with the images of women that were presented in the media.
- Suddenly, the 'trapped housewife' was discovered.
- Some argued that underemployed women were a wasted resource.

The Second Wave of Feminism

- The post war message was that truly feminine women do not want careers. Higher education, political rights – all the independence and opportunities that the old fashioned feminists had fought for.
- 60% of women dropped out of college to marry.
- Fewer and fewer women entered professional work.

Betty Friedan

- Wrote the book, *Feminine Mystique* in 1963.
- In her book, she depicted the roles of women in industrial societies.
 - She focused most of her attention on the housewife role of women.
- She referred to the problem of gender roles as "the problem without a name".
- The book became a bestseller.
- Graduate of Smith College.
- Used questionnaires from her college classmates.
- Argued that women did not have to give up their families; they could do more, have a choice, a career.



Feb. 4th, 1921- Feb. 4th, 2006

First national Commission on the Status of Women

- President Kennedy established the first national Commission on the Status of Women in 1961.
- In 1963 the commission issued a report detailing employment discrimination, unequal pay, legal inequality, and insufficient support services for working women.



Equal Pay Act 1963

- It is the first federal law prohibiting sexual discrimination.
- In 1963 the average female worker's wages in the United States were equivalent to 58.9 % of the average male worker's earnings.
- It abolished wage differences based on sex.
 - *"No employer having employees subject to any provisions of this section [Section 206 of title 29 of the United States Code] shall discriminate, within any establishment in which such employees are employed, between employees on the basis of sex by paying wages to employees in such establishment at a rate less than the rate at which he pays wages to employees of the opposite sex in such establishment for equal work on jobs..."*
 - Equal Pay Act

The Civil Rights Act of 1964

- Passed in 1964.
- It banned discrimination on the basis of color, race, national origin, religion, or sex.
- Section VII set up the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to enforce the act.



National Organization for Women (NOW)

- Founded in 1966.
- Founded by a group of people, including Betty Friedan, and Rev. Pauli Murray.
 - The first African-American woman Episcopal priest.
- Betty Friedan became the organization's first president.



NOW (con't.)

- The goal of NOW is to bring about equality for all women.
- They campaigned to gain passage of the ERA amendment at the state level.
- Issues NOW deals with:
 - works to eliminate discrimination and harassment in the workplace, schools, and the justice system.
 - secure abortion, birth control and reproductive rights for all women
 - end all forms of violence against women
 - eradicate racism, sexism and homophobia
 - promote equality and justice in society.

Presidential Executive Order 11246

- It was signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson on September 24th, 1965
- It prohibited bias against women in hiring by federal government contractors.
- *“...Prohibits federal contractors and federally assisted construction contractors and subcontractors, who do over \$10,000 in Government business in one year from discriminating in employment decisions on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.”*

Changes....

- More women attend college.
- More women enter the workforce.
- More women go into the professions.
- The Women's Liberation Movement is born.
- NOW pushes for women's reproductive freedom, including abortion.
- Generated a movement for gay rights.

The problem that has no name—which is simply the fact that American women are kept from growing to their full human capacities—is taking a far greater toll on the physical and mental health of our country than any known disease.

-- Betty Friedan



In 1972, Congress included Title IX in the Higher Education Act, providing, "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal assistance."



On March 22, 1972, Congress approved the Equal Rights Amendment.

Leaders

- Bella Abzug – Congresswoman
- Shirley Chisholm – Congresswoman
- National Women's Political Caucus
- Gloria Steinem – Ms. Magazine



Backlash

- Phyllis Schlafly – STOP Era
- Argument – it would destroy the American family by encouraging women to work and leave their children in day care centers.



By 1980

- 51.5% percent of all adult women held jobs outside the home.
- Includes over 60% of women with children between the ages of 6-17.
- Inequalities in pay still exist.
- Feminization of poverty?

Today

- Third Wave?
- Still no ERA