



**Women's Equality Day
Resource Base**

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Table of Contents

Did you know?.....	4
People.....	9
Events & Initiatives.....	22
Quotes	25

Instructions

Choose the items you'd like to include on your document from the Resource Base. Copy and paste desired items into the blank templates located on DEOMI's Special Observances tab, under Observance Products. You can also paste facts into emails and other social media.

Women's Equality Day

Did you know?

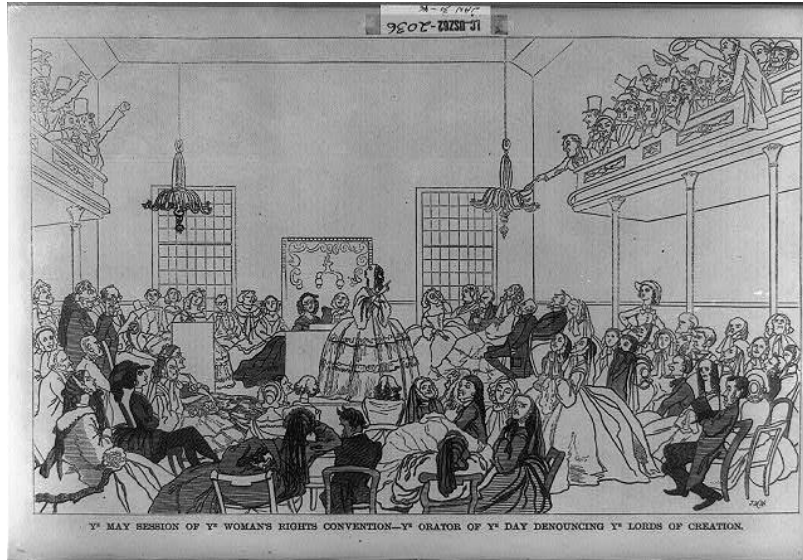


Illustration of the Seneca Falls Convention, where some men heckled the women who spoke, 1848. Harper's Weekly, Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2005685868/>

The Seneca Falls Convention Laid The Groundwork For Women's Suffrage

In July 1848, around 300 people gathered at the Wesleyan Chapel in Seneca Falls, New York. The Seneca Falls Convention was the first women's rights convention conducted in the United States. Put on by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, the convention discussed 11 resolutions for women's rights. All of which passed unanimously except for the resolution which demanded the vote for women. It wasn't until Stanton and Frederick Douglass, the famous abolitionist, gave impassioned speeches in support of the vote for women, that the resolution passed. The Declaration of Sentiments was the Seneca Falls Convention's document that described the women's demands. Primarily, it stated how important it was for women to receive equal Constitutional protections and rights. The document highlighted that women should be able to own their own property, receive equal education and roles in the church, and living wages without the need of a husband.

The five women who put on the conference included Stanton, Lucretia Mott, Mary M'Clintock, Martha Coffin Wright, and Jane Hunt. They were active in both the women's rights movement and the fight for abolition against slavery.

<https://www.history.com/topics/womens-rights/seneca-falls-convention>



*National Women's Party leaders watch Alice Paul sewing the suffrage flag, 1920. Library of Congress, Public Domain.
<https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2016827559/>*

19th Amendment Passed to Give the Vote to Women

The 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution enshrined the vote for women. The right to vote took almost 100 years of organization and campaigning by activists and reformers. Women's suffrage became prominent in 1820s and 1830s, after all white men had gotten the right to vote despite how much property or money they had.

In the wake of the Civil War, African American men also got the right to vote. Advocates of women's suffrage pushed lawmakers to include voting rights for women in the passage of the 15th Amendment, but they failed. Beginning in 1910, two western states, Idaho and Utah, extended the vote to women. Around this time, the National American Woman Suffrage Association mobilized state and local groups to advocate for the right to vote. Some organizations staged hunger strikes and pickets at the White House. World War I allowed women to show the country their patriotism and strong work-ethic, which helped lead to the passage of the 19th Amendment. The amendment was finally ratified on August 18, 1920. In the election later that year, more than 8 million women voted for the first time.

<https://www.history.com/topics/womens-history/the-fight-for-womens-suffrage>



Bella Abzug with New York Mayor Ed Koch and President Jimmy Carter, 1978. National Archives and Records Administration, Public Domain.

Bella Abzug Created “Women’s Equality Day” Legislation In 1971

Representative Bella Abzug created legislation in 1971 to designate August 26 as “Women’s Equality Day.” The resolution passed in 1973. This date commemorates the certification of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, which gave the right to vote to women in 1920. Rep. Abzug was a feminist and civil rights activist who brought attention to the inequalities women faced in the United States. Representing New York in the U.S. House of Representatives, she helped create the Freedom of Information Act, the Child Development Act, and tried to amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to increase the rights of gay Americans.

Abzug served in Congress for three terms and tried to run again in several parts of New York but failed. However, she remained a predominant figure in the feminist movement, addressing several conferences in Beijing, Nairobi, and Copenhagen. She also established the Women’s Environmental and Development Organization, a nonprofit advocacy group to raise women’s issues at the United Nations.

<https://nationalwomenshistoryalliance.org/resources/commemorations/womens-equality-day/>

<https://history.house.gov/People/Detail/8276>

National Votes For Women Trail Shares Stories

The National Collaborative for Women’s History Sites is an organization advocating for the preservation of historical sites important to the role of women in American history. The organization, founded in October 2001, helped establish the National Votes for Women Trail, a collection of thousands of sites linked to the stories of important American women. In 2016, the group created a database compiling a map across the country, telling the story of women’s suffrage. In 2020, a total of 2,350 sites were on the National Votes for Women Trail and more are added every year. Informational signs are posted at many these sites, sharing stories of the previously unknown men and women who fought for equal rights.

<https://savingplaces.org/stories/the-national-votes-for-women-trail-leads-to-success#.Y439LezMLBJ>

<https://ncwhs.org/votes-for-women-trail/>



Four F-15 Eagle pilots at Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska, 2006. U.S. Air Force, Public Domain.
<http://www.af.mil/weekinphotos/wipgallery.asp?week=175>

Military Occupations Became Fully Available to Women in 2016

In January 2013, the Pentagon eliminated a policy which forbid women serving in combat positions in the military. The ban was lifted by then-Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta, after being inspired by the valor exhibited by women in Iraq and Afghanistan. The decision was recommended by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the elation of female Service member activists. Despite this advancement, many opportunities remained closed to women. In 2016, Defense Secretary Ash Carter formally opened all positions for women to serve, as long as they qualified and meet specific standards. Despite past barrier limiting their participation, women have become a crucial part of the military since full integration began.

<https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/632536/carter-opens-all-military-occupations-positions-to-women/>



*Kathy Hochul swearing in as governor of New York, 2021. NY Senate Photo,
<https://flickr.com/photos/182869894@N06/51398989872>*

The 2022 Elections Were Significant For Women

The 2022 midterm elections advanced women to a number of prominent positions in government for the first time, though not as many women ran for positions as in 2018 and 2020.

- Vermont elected its first woman and LGBTQ congressperson, Becca Balint, to the U.S. House of Representatives. Vermont was the final state to have never elected a woman to Congress.
- Katie Britt became the first elected female senator representing Alabama.
- Sarah Huckabee Sanders became the first female governor of Arkansas, which her father represented as governor from 1996 to 2007.
- Maura Healy and Tina Kotek became the first lesbian governors in the United States after winning their positions representing Massachusetts and Oregon respectively.
- Delia Ramirez became the first Latina woman elected to Congress from Illinois.
- Kathy Hochul became the first elected female governor of New York.
- Marcy Kaptur of Ohio became the longest-serving woman in Congress, winning her 21st term.
- Summer Lee became the first Black woman to elected to Congress from Pennsylvania.

<https://www.cnbc.com/2022/11/09/meet-the-women-who-made-history-this-midterm-election.html>

Women's Equality Day

People



Cabinet card portrait of Victoria Woodhull, 1870. C.D. Fredericks & Co., Public Domain. http://natedsanders.com/early_female_activist_victoria_woodhull_cabinet_ca-lot4751.aspx

Victoria Woodhull Was The First Woman to Run For President

Born in 1838, Victoria Woodhull traveled with her parents taking part in their traveling medicine show, telling fortunes and selling homemade medicine. At age 15, she married a 28-year-old doctor and had two children. Because of her husband's alcoholism, Woodhull had to support her family as a healer and "medical clairvoyant." In 1865, she divorced her husband and became an advocate of the free love movement, which attempted to destigmatize divorce. Woodhull became successful as a medium for Cornelius Vanderbilt, a wealthy railroad magnate. In 1870, she and her sister began a brokerage firm, making them the first women to operate a financial firm on Wall Street. The sisters also began publishing a newspaper that supported women's suffrage and progressive reforms. Woodhull became a prominent figure in the suffrage movement and was the first woman to argue in front of the House Judiciary Committee, fighting for the vote.

In 1872, Victoria Woodhull became the first woman to run for president of the United States. She ran with the nomination from the Equal Rights Party, which she helped establish. Her running mate was Frederick Douglass, though he never acknowledged the nomination. The campaign failed after running into legal issues and bankruptcy.

<https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/victoria-woodhull>



*Portrait of Susan B. Anthony, between 1880 and 1906. S.A. Taylor, Library of Congress, Public Domain.
<https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/cph.3a52783/>*

Susan B. Anthony was a Champion of Women’s Rights

Susan Brownell Anthony was one of the most important leaders of the 1880’s women’s suffrage movement. Born in 1820 in Adams, Massachusetts, Anthony believed that men and women were equal from an early age. She came from a family that fought in the American War for Independence. Many of her seven siblings also went on to become activists for justice and abolition. After many years of teaching, Anthony became inspired by the works of abolitionists William Lloyd Garrison and Frederick Douglass. She began giving impassioned speeches calling for the end of slavery. In 1851, Anthony met Elizabeth Cady Stanton and the two worked together over the next 50 years for the rights of women. At a time when women often didn’t give public speeches, Anthony became a trailblazer, lecturing, organizing, and risking legal trouble for sharing her ideas in public. She and Stanton formed the National Woman Suffrage Association to push for a constitutional amendment to give the right to vote to women.

In 1872, Anthony was arrested for voting and fined \$100. This act of defiance brought greater attention to the suffrage movement. In 1876 she led a protest at the Centennial of American independence, where she gave the “Declaration of Rights” speech. Until her death in 1906, Anthony gave many speeches, gathered signatures on petitions, and lobbied Congress on behalf of women.

<https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/susan-b-anthony>



Partial portrait of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, 1889. National Portrait Gallery, Public Domain.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton Organized The Suffrage Movement

Elizabeth Cady Stanton was a prominent women's rights activist during most of the 19th century. Born in Johnstown, New York, in 1815, Stanton received a formal education at the Johnstown Academy and Emma Willard's Troy Seminary School. In 1840, she married abolitionist Henry Stanton. Together, they became anti-slavery activists, even attending a World's Anti-Slavery convention on their honeymoon in London. In 1848, Elizabeth Stanton and other advocates of women's suffrage hosted the Seneca Falls convention, where she authored the "The Declaration of Sentiments."

Upon meeting Susan B. Anthony in 1851, she and Anthony collaborated on speeches, articles, and books on women's suffrage. While she was busy raising her seven children, Stanton would often write speeches for Anthony. After the onset of the Civil War, Stanton advocated for the 13th Amendment, and she was later frustrated with the fact women were not included in the 15th Amendment, which extended the right to vote to African American men. Thereafter, she and Anthony founded the National Woman Suffrage Association, writing for and editing its accompanying journal, *The Revolution*.

At age 65, Stanton wrote three volumes of *History of Woman Suffrage*, which documented individual and local activism in support of women's rights. She also wrote the *Woman's Bible*, in which she discussed how religious orthodoxy and masculine theology interfered with women's independence. Before her death in 1902, she also wrote *Eighty Years and More*, an autobiography about her life's work.

<https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/elizabeth-cady-stanton>



Photograph of Mary Ann Bickerdyke, 1898. Library of Congress, Public Domain.

Mary Ann Bickerdyke Aided The Wounded During The Civil War

Mary Ann Bickerdyke from Mount Vernon, Ohio, was a prominent nurse during the Civil War. Known as the “Mother to the Boys in Blue,” Bickerdyke delivered \$500 worth of medical supplies to Union forces at Cairo, Illinois, to help develop and improve a number of field hospitals there. Over the course of the Civil War, she used her experiences studying herbal medicine at Oberlin College to improve techniques at about 300 hospitals. As a member of the U.S. Sanitary Commission, she followed Union forces throughout 19 western battlefields, taking care of the sick and wounded.

At the end of the war, she was honored by riding at the head of the 15th Corps of the Army of the Tennessee in the victorious Grand Review of the Armies in Washington, D.C. Bickerdyke also helped secure federal pensions for veterans and over 300 nurses who aided war efforts. A memorial to her was erected in 1904 in Galesburg, Illinois.

<https://loc.gov/exhibits/civil-war-in-america/biographies/mary-ann-bickerdyke.html>

The Forten Women Fought for Abolition and Suffrage

The Forten family was active in abolition and suffrage movements. James Forten, his wife, Charlotte Vandine Forten, and their three daughters, Margaretta, Harriet, and Sarah took part in the founding of at least six abolition and freedom organizations. In 1833, the family women helped establish the Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society, the country's first biracial organization of female abolitionists. The three Forten sisters served in high-ranking positions for the organization, even representing it at state and national conventions. Margaretta was a teacher for thirty years and supported the women's rights movement, collecting signatures for a Women's National League petition. Harriet kept abolitionists and fugitive slaves in her home for protection, working to advance the freedom of slaves. In the years toward the end of her life, she lectured against segregation and in support of suffrage.

<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part3/3p477.html>



Edith Wharton with her dog, 1889. Edith Wharton Collection, Public Domain.

Edith Wharton was the First Woman to Earn a Pulitzer Prize

Edith Wharton, born in 1862, was one of America's greatest writers. Born in New York City, she spent most of her childhood traveling Europe. Growing up in a strict aristocracy that discouraged the advancement of women, Wharton wrote to express these constraints. Her first work, *Verses*, a volume of poems, was published privately around 1872. During the 1890s, she began working on her first major book, *The Decoration of Houses*, with Ogden Codman, Jr. After moving to Lenox, New York, she wrote her works, *The House of Mirth* (1905) and *Ethan Frome* (1911) before divorcing her husband and moving to Paris in 1913.

At the outbreak of World War I, Wharton stayed in France to assist in humanitarian efforts. She established workrooms for the unemployed, hostels of refugees, and schools for children. She was one of the only writers allowed on the front lines to document the war. In 1921, her novel, *The Age of Innocence*, won the Pulitzer Prize in fiction. She was the first woman to receive the honor. In 1996, she was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame.

<https://www.edithwharton.org/discover/edith-wharton/>



Photograph of Mary Eliza Mahoney, late 1800s. Public Domain.

Mary Eliza Mahoney was the First Black Woman to Become a Licensed Nurse

Mary Eliza Mahoney was born in 1845 in Boston to former slaves. She attended Phillips School, one of the first integrated schools in the United States. She began working at the New England Hospital for Women and Children when she was just a teenager, working with only female physicians. While she mostly served as janitor, cook, and washer, she learned about the medical profession as a nurse's aide. In 1878, at the age of 33, she began school at the hospital's professional graduate school for nursing. The intensive 16-month program was completed by only four students out of 42. Mahoney, one of the graduates, was the first African American in the U.S. to get a professional nursing license. Due to discrimination in public nursing, she followed a career in nursing individual clients privately.

In 1908, Mahoney co-founded the National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses, of which she became the national chaplain. From 1911 to 1912, she was the director of the Howard Orphanage Asylum for Black children in New York City. When women received the right to vote in 1920, she was one of the first to vote in Boston. After she passed away in 1926, she received several honors. She was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame in Seneca Falls, New York in 1993, and a memorial of her was built in Everett, Massachusetts, where she was buried.

<https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/mary-mahoney>



Rebecca L. Felton, 1922. Library of Congress, Public Domain.

The First Women in the U.S. Senate Set the Stage for Greater Representation

Rebecca Latimer Felton of Georgia was the first woman to serve in the United States Senate. She was appointed to fill a vacancy on October 3, 1922. The appointment was mostly symbolic as she served only for a single day. Ten years later, Hattie Wyatt Caraway of Arkansas became the first woman to be elected to the Senate, serving for a total of 14 years. Originally appointed after the death of her husband, who also served as a senator, she won election in her own right, supporting gender equality and New Deal legislation.

There have been just 54 female U.S. senators, making up a total of 4.4% of all U.S. senators to serve in the Senate. In 2022, 24 of the 100 Senate seats are comprised of women.

<https://history.house.gov/People/Detail/44589>

https://www.senate.gov/senators/FeaturedBios/Featured_Bio_Felton.htm

Nellie Tayloe Ross Became the First Female Governor

Born in 1876 in St. Joseph, Missouri, Nellie Tayloe was well educated. She married William B. Ross, who became the governor of Wyoming in 1922. When he died, Nellie was nominated as the Democratic candidate and her husband's replacement. When she defeated her opponent, she became the first female governor in the United States. As governor, she fought for tax relief for farmers and took measures to prevent bank failure. After losing re-election, she was eventually appointed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to be Director of the U.S. Mint.

<https://www.nga.org/governor/nellie-tayloe-ross/>



*Aretha Franklin weeping after receiving the Presidential Medal of Freedom, 2005. White House, Public Domain.
https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2005/11/images/20051109-2_p110905pm-0293jpg-515h.html*

Aretha Franklin Impacted the World with Her Music

Aretha Franklin was born in Memphis, Tennessee, in 1942. As a young girl, she moved to Buffalo, New York, and later Detroit, Michigan. Her father, Reverend C.L. Franklin, raised her after the death of her mother. Rev. Franklin was an influential civil rights activist, recording sermons and lectures, and encouraged his daughter to sing in church. At first, Aretha wanted to be in a gospel choir, then her ambitions grew to music outside of the church.

After turbulent teenage years, giving birth to two sons by different boyfriends, she focused on her music career. She recorded gospel songs for a local record label before moving onto Columbia Records at 18 years old. Aretha's first single, "Today I Sing the Blues," reached the bestseller chart in 1960. The following year, she married Ted White, her manager, and released more music and performed live, earning her the nickname, the "Queen of Soul." In 1967, Aretha moved to Atlantic Records to create more expressive music, compared to her earlier "easy listening" songs. Her new music topped the charts, eventually leading to her most famous song, "Respect." This song was embraced as an anthem of the civil rights and women's equality movement.

Throughout the rest of her career, she created numerous hits and won many honors. She was presented with the Drum Beat Award of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. In 1985, she became the first woman inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. In 1991, she earned a Grammy Legend Award and, in 1994, a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award. In 2005, she earned a Presidential Medal of Freedom from President George W. Bush. Aretha Franklin passed away in 2018.

<https://achievement.org/achiever/aretha-franklin/>



Dr. Kirkpatrick with President Ronald Reagan in the Oval Office, 1984. White House Photographic Collection, Public Domain.

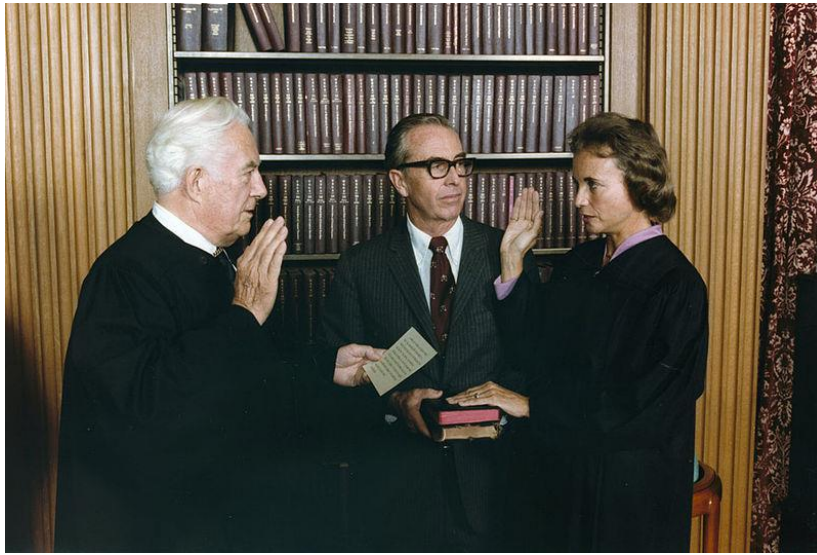
Dr. Jeane Kirkpatrick was the First Woman to Represent the U.S. at the U.N.

Dr. Jeane Kirkpatrick was born in Duncan, Oklahoma, in 1926. She graduated from Barnard College in 1948 and Columbia University in 1968. After 12 years as a political science professor at Georgetown University, she became the foreign policy advisor for Ronald Reagan during his presidential campaign. After Reagan won the presidency, she was appointed United States Ambassador to the United Nations. She became the first woman to hold the position.

She served on the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board from 1985 to 1990 and worked on defense policy from 1985 to 1993. She played an important role in supporting the United States through the end of the Cold War. In 2003, President George W. Bush appointed her to represent the U.S. on the Human Rights Commission of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

Kirkpatrick served the United States for several decades as the foremost expert on foreign policy and geopolitical issues. She was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom for her work and published several works about politics.

<https://oksenate.gov/education/senate-artwork/ambassador-jeane-j-kirkpatrick>



Sandra Day O'Connor sworn in as a Supreme Court Justice by Chief Justice Warren Burger, 1981. National Archives, Public Domain. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/usnationalarchives/5553386728/>

Sandra Day O'Connor was the First Female Supreme Court Justice

Sandra Day O'Connor was born in El Paso, Texas, in 1930. She grew up on a cattle range with her family, depicted in the memoir, *Lazy B: Growing Up on a Cattle Ranch in the American Southwest*. O'Connor went to Stanford University, studying economics and, eventually, law. Because of her success in law school, she became an editor at the *Stanford Law Review*. Despite graduating near the top of her class in 1952, no law firms were willing to hire her because of her sex. The only work she could find was as a legal secretary in Los Angeles. She worked her way up though, becoming a deputy county attorney, then a civilian attorney with the U.S. Army Quartermaster Corps. Finally, she became the owner of her own law office before the births of her sons.

In 1965, O'Connor began working as an assistant state attorney general. She also played an active role in Republican party politics, becoming an Arizona State Senator and the first woman in the nation to be a majority leader in a state legislature, fighting for the equal rights of women. In 1975, she became a trial judge and, four years later, appointed to the Arizona Court of Appeals. In 1981, President Ronald Reagan appointed O'Connor to the U.S. Supreme Court, stating she was a "person for all seasons." Over almost 25 years, she authored 676 opinions. She was often the deciding vote in many 5-4 decisions. She retired in 2006 but remained an advocate of judicial independence.

<https://www.supremecourt.gov/visiting/exhibitions/SOCExhibit/Default.aspx>



*Serena Williams at the U.S. Open, 2013. Photo by Edwin Martinez,
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/rhythmstrip/9630783949/>*

Serena Williams Became the Greatest Tennis Player of All Time

Serena Williams, born in 1981, began playing tennis at the age of three. She and her sister, Venus, used books, videos, and practice to learn to play well. Their father, Richard Williams, a former sharecropper from Louisiana, taught them on a public court near their home in Compton, California. After joining the junior United States Tennis Association tour in 1991, Serena ranked first in the 10-and-under division. Then, in 1995, she debuted professionally at an event in Quebec City but lost. However, by 1997, she rose to number 99 in the world rankings. By the following year, she reached number 20 after becoming the faster player to record five victories against Top 10 players.

In 1999, she graduated from Driftwood Academy and signed a \$12 million endorsement with Puma. That year, she won her first Grand Slam title, winning the U.S. Open, and losing in 2000 in the final to her sister, Venus. Together they won gold as a doubles team at the 2000, 2008, and 2012 Olympics. The Williams sisters were some of the only African Americans in the predominantly white tennis world and they faced racism on numerous occasions.

Over the course of her career, Serena had several health issues, but she would bounce back and win more competitions and championships. In 2017, Serena won the Australian Open, which was her 23rd Grand Slam title, breaking the record for most Grand Slam singles' titles. She's been an advocate for women in tennis, changing rules in the Women's Tennis Association in relation to childbirth and injury. Serena has also worked with UNICEF to open schools in Kenya and invested in technology companies owned by women and African Americans.

<https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/serena-williams>



Secretary of Defense, Lloyd J. Austin III, swearing in Christine E. Wormuth in Arlington, Virginia. U.S. Department of Defense, Sgt. Brittany A. Chase, Public Domain.

Christine E. Wormuth is the First Woman to be Secretary of the Army

After attending Williams College for political science, Christine E. Wormuth became a Presidential Management intern while getting her master’s degree in public policy from the University of Maryland. She began her public service career as the French desk officer at the Office of the Secretary of Defense from 1996 to 2002. After the September 11 attacks, she served as the Special Assistant to the Under Secretary for Policy, where she assisted with defense programs and legislation. She moved her way up in government when she became a principal at DFI Government Services, where she developed projects for the Department of Defense and the Department of Homeland Security.

In 2007, Wormuth became the staff director for the independent commission on the security forces of Iraq, where she focused on Iraqi police force readiness. She worked on defense and homeland security policy development and military readiness throughout the late 2000s. Under President Obama, she became special assistant to the President and Senior Director for Defense Policy and Strategy. Her expertise eventually led to her appointment by the U.S. Senate to Under Secretary of Defense of Policy in 2014. Then in 2021, she was confirmed by the U.S. Senate and appointed as the 25th Secretary of the Army, the first woman to hold the position.

<https://www.defense.gov/About/Biographies/Biography/Article/602788/christine-e-wormuth/>



Official headshot of Deb Haaland, 2021. Department of the Interior, Public Domain.

Deb Haaland became the First Native American Appointed to Cabinet Secretary

Deb Haaland is a member of the Pueblo of Laguna, growing up in a military family. At age 28, she enrolled in the University of New Mexico and later at UNM Law School. She began a small business producing salsa, served as a tribal administrator, and became the first woman elected to the Laguna Development Corporation Board of Directors, overseeing tribal enterprises in New Mexico. In 2014, she ran for New Mexico Lieutenant, coming the first Native American woman to be elected to lead a State Party. She was one of the first Native American women to serve in the U.S. Congress. In 2021, she became the first Native American to serve as a cabinet secretary when she was appointed Secretary of the Interior.

<https://www.doi.gov/secretary-deb-haaland>



Carla Hayden in the Library of Congress Main Reading Room, 2020. Library of Congress.

Carla Hayden is the first woman to lead the Library of Congress

In 2016, Carla Hayden became the first woman and first African American in charge of the United States Library of Congress. Nominated by President Obama, Hayden was sworn in as the 14th Librarian of Congress. Prior to this, she was CEO of the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore, Maryland, and a member of the Nation Museum and Library Services Board. In 1995, she was the first African American to be honored with the Library Journal’s Librarian Award for her outreach services.

<https://www.loc.gov/about/about-the-librarian/>

Women’s Equality Day

Events



Lena Horne with members of the Tuskegee Airmen, 1945. *The Jackson Advocate*, Public Domain.

Lena Horne Theater Established In New York City

In November 2022, Lena Horne became the first African American woman to have a Broadway theater named after her. Horne, born in 1917, was a singer and actress from Brooklyn, New York. She had her Broadway debut in *Dance With Your Gods*. In 1942, she became the first African American to sign a contract with a major film studio, MGM. She starred in various films, such as *The Wiz* (1978). Horne earned several Grammy awards, the African American Film Critics Association Legacy Award, NAACP Image Award, a Kennedy Center Honor, and two Emmy nominations before her death in 2010.

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/lena-horne-first-black-woman-to-be-honored-with-broadway-theater-new-york/>

Nettie Depp Kentucky Statue Unveiled in Kentucky

In November 2022, a statue of Nettie Depp was put on display inside the Kentucky state capitol building. She is the first woman to have a monument in the state capitol. The unveiling ceremony was attended by the governor, Andy Beshear, his wife, and the lieutenant governor. The statue was made by Lexington artist, Amanda Matthews to honor Nettie Depp and the unsung women who dedicated their lives to their community. Depp advocated for fair wages for teachers and public education. Because of her work, she was the first female elected to public office in Barren County, Kentucky, as superintendent of schools in 1913. She's responsible for creating the county's first four-year high school and making various structural improvements to damaged schoolhouses.

<https://www.cnn.com/2022/11/10/us/kentucky-first-woman-statue-state-capitol/index.html>

<https://explorekyhistory.ky.gov/items/show/342>



Jakki Krage Strako presents stamps celebrating female cryptologists, 2022. USPS, <https://link.usps.com/2022/10/20/allies-secret-weapon/>

U.S. Postal Service Honors Female Cryptologists in WWII

In October 2022, the U.S. Postal Service released a new issue of stamps honoring the female cryptologists who helped defeat the Axis powers in WWII. Jakki Krage Strako, the chief commerce and business solutions officer of the organization, led a ceremony to launch the stamps at the National Cryptologic Museum in Maryland. The stamp's designs include an image from a Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service (WAVES) recruitment poster and a cipher. The 11,000 female cryptologists in the service processed and deciphered many enemy messages for the Allies during WWII, helping to achieve victory.

<https://www.govexec.com/management/2022/10/postal-service-honors-women-cryptologists-wwii-new-stamp/378679/>

The New York Fire Department Appointed First Female Leader

In November 2022, Laura Kavanagh became the first female commissioner for the New York Fire Department. As the 34th commissioner, she is the youngest leader of the department in over a century. She began working at the agency in 2014, working in several high-ranking positions after earning her master’s degree in public administration from Columbia University. The New York Fire Department is the largest fire department in the country with 17,370 employees. Of this number, there are only 144 female firefighters, marshals, and officers. Kavanagh pledged to create a more diverse workforce in both race and gender.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/08/nyregion/nyc-laura-kavanagh-fire-comissioner.html>



Headshot of Jennifer Klein, director of the Gender Policy Council. The White House, Public Domain.

Joe Biden Establishes Gender Policy Council

On March 8, 2021, President Joe Biden issued Executive Order 14020, establishing the White House Gender Policy Council, which promotes gender equality throughout all the United States government. The council seeks to combat discrimination, biases, and sexual harassment, and increase economic security, healthcare, and equal opportunities for women.

The council is led by Jennifer Klein, who also serves as an assistant to President Biden. The staff is comprised of many domestic and global gender policy experts. The council is part of the first-ever National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality in the United States.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/gpc/>

Women's Equality Day

Quotes

“Woman must not depend upon the protection of man, but must be taught to protect herself.”

“If I could live another century! I do so want to see the fruition of the work for women in the past century. There is so much yet to be done, I see so many things I would like to do and say, but I must leave it for the younger generation. We old fighters have prepared the way, and it is easier than it was fifty years ago when I first got into the harness. The young blood, fresh with enthusiasm and with all the enlightenment of the twentieth century, must carry on the work.”

“To refuse to qualified women and colored men the right of suffrage and still count them in the basis of representation is to add insult to injury as it is unreasonable. The trouble, however, is farther back and deeper than the disenfranchisement of the negro. When men deliberately refused to include women in the 14th and 15th Amendments to the National Constitution that left the way open for all forms of injustice to their and weaker men and peoples. Men who fail to be just to their mothers cannot be expected to be just to each other. The whole evil comes from the failure to apply equal justice to all mankind, men and women alike.”

Susan B. Anthony

<https://susanb.org/susan-b-anthony-quotes/>

“Luck has nothing to do with it, because I have spent many, many hours, countless hours, on the court working for my one moment in time, not knowing when it would come.”

“You can be whatever size you are, and you can be beautiful both inside and out. We're always told what's beautiful and what's not, and that's not right.”

Serena Williams

<https://www.brainyquote.com/authors/serena-williams-quotes>

“We are assembled to protest against a form of government, existing without the consent of the governed – to declare our right to be free as man is free, to be represented in the government which we are taxed to support, to have such disgraceful laws as give man the power to chastise and imprison his wife, to take the wages which she earns, the property which she inherits, and, in case of separation, the children of her love; laws test against such unjust laws as these that we are assembled today, and to have them, if possible, forever erased from our statute-books, deeming them as a shame and a disgrace to a Christian republic in the nineteenth century...”

“The strongest reason for giving woman all the opportunities for higher education, for the full development of her faculties, her forces of mind and body... is the solitude and personal responsibility of her own individual life.”

“Nothing strengthens the judgment and quickens the conscience like individual responsibility.”

Elizabeth Cady Stanton

<https://www.loc.gov/item/today-in-history/july-19/>

<https://www.brainyquote.com/authors/elizabeth-cady-stanton-quotes>

“True originality consists not in a new manner but in a new vision.”

“Life is the only real counselor; wisdom unfiltered through personal experience does not become a part of the moral tissue.”

“In spite of illness, in spite even of the archenemy sorrow, one can remain alive long past the usual date of disintegration if one is unafraid of change, insatiable in intellectual curiosity, interested in big things, and happy in small ways.”

Edith Wharton

https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/16.Edith_Wharton

“Democracy not only requires equality but also an unshakable conviction in the value of each person, who is then equal.”

“Solidarity was the movement that turned the direction of history, I think.”

“I was a woman in a man's world. I was a Democrat in a Republican administration. I was an intellectual in a world of bureaucrats. I talked differently. This may have made me a bit like an ink blot.”

Jeane Kirkpatrick

<https://www.brainyquote.com/authors/jeane-kirkpatrick-quotes>

“You cannot define a person on just one thing. You can't just forget all these wonderful and good things that a person has done because one thing didn't come off the way you thought it should come off.”

“We all require and want respect, man or woman, black or white. It's our basic human right.”

“In terms of helping people understand and know each other a little better, music is universal - universal and transporting.”

Aretha Franklin

<https://www.brainyquote.com/authors/aretha-franklin-quotes>

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