

PREFACE

Ms. Jacqueline Hodge, an Instructional Systems Specialist at the U.S. Armor School at Fort Knox, Kentucky, served as a participant in the Topical Research Intern Program at the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI) in July 1997. She conducted extensive research on women's rights and prepared this report. The Institute thanks Ms. Hodge for her contributions to the research efforts of DEOMI.

SCOPE

The Topical Research Intern Program provides the opportunity for Servicemembers and DoD civilian employees to work on diversity/equal opportunity projects while on a 30-day tour of duty at the Institute. During their tour, the interns use a variety of primary and secondary source materials to compile a review of data or research pertaining to an issue of importance to equal opportunity (EO) and equal employment opportunity (EEO) specialists, supervisors, and other leaders throughout the Services. The resulting publications (such as this one) are intended as resource and educational materials and do not represent official policy statements or endorsements by the DoD or any of its agencies. The publications are distributed to EO/EEO personnel and selected senior officials to aid them in their duties.

January 1998

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Living The Legacy Of Women's Rights

What If You Had No Legal Rights?

Imagine living in a society in which you have no voice. You cannot vote for representatives in government--other people do that. You cannot start a lawsuit and hope to win because everyone on the jury will vote against you. You cannot hold a job without your spouse's approval, and if you are employed, your wages belong to your spouse. Your home and children are not yours--in the eyes of the law, they belong to your spouse even though your spouse may be a negligent parent--and even the clothes you wear belong to your spouse.

If you are unmarried, you must work for your keep. You have your choice of low-paying, backbreaking work in a factory or mill, or you can be a low-paid teacher, nurse, or secretary. You cannot complain about the unfairness of the system because the law will not support you, and if you do complain, you will probably lose your job.

You do not exist in the eyes of the law. The law does not hear your voice nor recognize any of your claims. You are helpless and must rely on the good nature and wisdom of those around you. This helplessness was the status of women in America until changes were made in property laws, and until women won the right to vote.

Linda Schmittroth (6:247)

Because of the struggle, suffering, and campaigning of women since the beginning of America, there exists a tremendous legacy of legal rights. These women endured and were victorious, so that all women, African-American, Asian-American, Euro-American, Hispanic, and Native American women, can live and enjoy freedom today. They may not have reached the elusive goal of total legal equality, but the legacy of rights they have provided women today is far removed from what was known by women in colonial days.

Women, though diverse in ethnicity, share a commonality in the legacy of women's rights. The women of the late 20th century have been given a gift for their families, in politics, in economics, in education, and in the military. Many of the women who were instrumental in leaving this legacy are familiar to us; one name is that of Susan B. Anthony. Just as women recognize Susan B. Anthony for her leadership and achievements, they must recognize that there were women who made individual contributions to the legacy that were never written about in any book or any article. The contributions of these women were not captured on a piece of paper or recorded on any film, but these women have had a significant impact on the gift of legal rights. Patricia Ireland in her book, *What Women Want*, talked of her grandmother, who had done the "unheard of thing" in her day of publicly exercising throughout her first two pregnancies when she should have been *confined*, and learned to drive a car and continued to drive after the police warned her husband how dangerous it was for her to drive. Dangerous not because of her lack of driving skills, but because male drivers were not accustomed to seeing women on the road and were likely to crash. (4:12-13)

Susan Brownell Anthony

(1820-1906) The only woman besides the fictitious Ms. Liberty to appear on money in the United States. (6:250) She was a teacher, a writer, a temperance and abolition organizer, and an outstanding women's rights leader. She became involved in the temperance movement in 1848. In 1850, she met Elizabeth Cady Stanton; they became friends and worked as activists for the rights of women. Anthony published *The Revolution 1868-70*. She voted in the 1872 presidential election in Rochester, New York, where she was arrested and stood trial. Before the trial had even begun, Judge Henry Selden had written his opinion and the jury's verdict. Because she was female, Susan B. Anthony was not allowed to testify. She was convicted of voting illegally and fined \$100 which she refused to pay. She was the driving force behind National Woman Suffrage Association 1869-90, and the head of National American Woman Suffrage Association

from 1892-1900, a singularly focused champion of the Nineteenth Amendment, which granted women the right to vote. (1:12)

FAMILY LEGACY

Women have made tremendous strides socially. Women are probably more free than they have been in any era. They no longer have to contend with the laws and mores of the early 1600s--laws that severely limited the rights of women. The early American colonists continued to follow the laws of England concerning females, marriage, and the family; men believed that these laws were for the protection and benefit of their wives. A significant contributor to the laws of England was Blackstone, who said the following about marital relationships:

By marriage, the husband and wife are one person in law; that is, the very being or legal existence of the woman is suspended during the marriage, or at least incorporated and consolidated into that of the husband; under whose wing, protection, and cover she performs everything....

Blackstone's Commentaries, 1765 (1:247)

Blackstone's commentary covered relationship taboos for both the husband and the wife. A husband could not give his wife anything. If he gave her land, for example, he would declare that she was an individual; according to Blackstone, she either ceased to be or was incorporated into her husband upon marriage. He could not enter into a covenant with his wife, for he would only have made a covenant with himself. If he made any contracts with her before marriage, they were voided. She could have served as her husband's lawyer because she was only representing her lord. The husband was allowed to will her certain things because after his death she became an individual again. (1:247)

A husband was required to provide his wife with the things she absolutely needed to care for herself. If he did not provide those things and she became indebted obtaining them, then he had to pay those debts. He was not, though, obligated to pay or do anything beyond her absolute necessities. A husband was required to pay all the debts his wife had prior to marriage, for he not only married her, he married her circumstances. (1:247)

Wives were not allowed to sue for injury or damaged property without the permission of their husbands. When filing a lawsuit, they had to use the names of their husbands. A wife could not be sued for her husband was accountable for her actions. (Much the same as the military members are responsible for the acts or deeds of their family members.) Although wives were not accountable for some felonies and other minor crimes, the law did not excuse them from treason and murder. Because a husband was responsible and accountable for his wife's conduct, he was allowed to give her minor corrections, *as a man would restrain his apprentices or children for whom he was the master or parent.* (1:247)

The earliest recorded protest against these laws governing a married couple was in 1832, when Robert Dale Owen married Mary Jane Robinson. His protest read:

Of the unjust rights which in virtue of this ceremony an iniquitous law gives me over the person and property of another, I cannot legally, but I can morally, divest myself. And I hereby distinctly and emphatically declare that I consider myself, and earnestly desire to be considered by others, as utterly divested, now and during the rest of my life, of any such rights, the barbarous relics of a feudal, despotic system. (1:125)

The law gave Owen total ownership of Robinson and her property. Approximately twenty years later Lucy Stone and Henry Blackwell recorded another marriage protest. On May 1, 1855, they issued this statement with the approval of their minister, Thomas Wentworth Higginson. The minister later circulated their statement suggesting that other couples protest also.

While acknowledging our mutual affection by publicly assuming the relationship of husband and wife, yet in justice to ourselves and a great principle, we deem it a duty to declare that this act on our part implies not sanction of, nor promise of voluntary obedience to such of the present laws of marriage, as refuse to recognize the wife as an independent, rational being, while they confer upon the husband an injurious and unnatural superiority, investing him with legal powers which no honorable man would exercise, and which no man should possess. We protest especially against the laws which give the husband:

1. The custody of the wife's person. [A woman was not allowed to refuse her husband's sexual advances.]
1. The exclusive control and guardianship of their children.
1. The sole ownership of her personal, and use of her real estate, unless previously settled upon her, or placed in the hands of trustees, as in the case of minors, lunatics, and idiots.
1. The absolute right to the product of her industry.
1. Also against laws which give to the widower so much larger and more permanent interest in the property of his deceased wife, than they give to the widow in that of the deceased husband.
1. Finally against the whole system by which "the legal existence of the wife is suspended during marriage," so that in most States, she neither has a legal part in the choice of her residence, nor can she make a will, nor sue or be sued in her own name, nor inherit property.

We believe that personal independence and equal human rights can never be forfeited, except for crimes; that marriage should be an equal and permanent partnership, and so recognized by law; that until it is so recognized, married partners should provide against radical injustice of present laws, by every means in their power. (1:125)

There were several attempts to ensure that a woman's property remained within her family. In colonial New York an Act to Confirm Certain Conveyances and Directing the Manner of Proving Deeds To Be Recorded was enacted in 1771 which mandated the wife's signature and a private meeting with the judge before completion of the contract. Mississippi passed a Married Woman's Property Act in 1839, but it was mostly limited to the ownership of slaves. New York State set a precedent in women's rights. In 1848 its legislature passed a "comprehensive, landmark measure" for a married woman: It allowed her to keep any property that she owned before marriage and any money she made because of that property, and it allowed any married woman to have the last word about her property. (1:125-126) A second Married Women's Property Act passed in 1860, which gave a married woman the right to keep the money she made, gave her equal custodial rights of her children, and provided her the same rights as a widow that her husband had as a widower. (6:127)

In 1873 Congress passed an amendment to the United States criminal code which made it illegal to use the public mail system to transmit information about birth control or abortion. This was known as Comstock's Law and it prohibited:

Every obscene, lewd, or lascivious, and every filthy book, pamphlet, picture, paper, letter, writing, print, or other publication of an indecent character, and every article or thing designed, adapted, or intended for preventing conception or producing abortion, or for any indecent or immoral use; and every article, instrument, substance, drug, medicine, or thing which is advertised or described in a manner calculated to lead another to use or apply it for preventing conception or producing abortion, or for any indecent or immoral purpose.

Comstock had been victorious earlier in New York State with passage of an anticontraception and antiabortion law in 1868. By the time this law reached the Congressional level, he had the full support of the Young Men's Christian Association. As a result of Comstock's laws, statutes were adjusted in every state except New Mexico.

1. Twenty-four states decided to prohibit publication and/or advertising along with conveyance by mail.
1. Fourteen states prohibited speech regarding birth control or abortion.
1. In 1879, Connecticut passed a law forbidding the use of contraceptives.
2. New York state made Comstock a special agent and empowered him to search, confiscate, and arrest.
1. Feminist Victoria Woodhull was charged under the Comstock law in New York for speaking of "free love" in the 1870s, and Ezra Heywood was charged under the Massachusetts version for distribution of a periodical containing advertisements for birth control and articles about free love.

1. Comstock issued an injunction against the performance of George Bernard Shaw's *Mrs. Warren's Profession* in 1902.
1. Comstock ordered a newspaper, *The Call*, to eliminate Margaret Sanger's column entitled "What Every Girl Should Know." They left the title and replaced the article with the word "NOTHING." (1:41)

Connecticut's law that prohibited the distribution of contraceptive information to anyone, married or single stated:

Any person who uses any drug, medicinal article or instrument for the purpose of preventing contraception shall be fined not less than fifty dollars or imprisoned not less than sixty days nor more than one year or be both fined and imprisoned. (*General Statutes of Connecticut, Section 52-32.*) (1:89)

It was more than eighty years before the law was challenged on November 10, 1961. Estelle T. Griswold, executive director of the Planned Parenthood league of Connecticut, and Dr. Charles Lee Buxton, chair of Yale University's obstetrics department, were arrested and charged with operating a birth control clinic, for married women only. In January 1962, Griswold and Buxton were tried, convicted, and fined \$100 each. The conviction and fine were appealed and accepted through the Sixth Connecticut Circuit Court, the State Supreme Court of Errors, and the United States Supreme Court. The 1964 United States Supreme Court decision invalidated state anti-birth control laws, *Griswold v. Connecticut*, by using the constitutional "right to privacy." (1:90)

This law was central in two other reproductive-law cases: *Eisenstadt v. Baird* (1972) and *Roe v. Wade* (1973). In *Eisenstadt*, the right to use birth control was extended to unmarried persons. Justice William J. Brennan wrote in a majority opinion "If the right to privacy means anything, it is the right of the individual, married or single, to be free from unwarranted governmental intrusion into matters so fundamentally affecting a person as the decision whether or not to bear or beget a child." In *Roe v. Wade*, the Court found that the "right of privacy...is broad enough to encompass a woman's decision whether or not to terminate her pregnancy." (1:90)

Ernestine L. Rose

Ernestine Louise Sismondi Potowski Rose (1810-1892) became active in the reform movement led by social philosopher Robert Owen, who was famous for improving working conditions for mill workers and their children. In 1836 she married William E. Rose, who was also a disciple of Owen. In America her eloquence as a public speaker won her the nickname "Queen of the Platform." She traveled extensively throughout the country speaking for women's rights, temperance, and abolition. (9:191)

Elizabeth Cady Stanton

(1815-1902) Author Lisa Tuttle describes her as a founder, philosopher, and leader of the first women's movement in America. She was the founder and first President of the National Woman Suffrage Association in 1869 and lectured extensively on such topics as family life, childcare, education, and women's rights. From 1881 to 1886, with Susan B. Anthony and Matilda Joslyn Gage, she wrote the *History of Woman Suffrage*. (7:311)

Paulina Wright Davis

(1813-1877) As described by Lisa Tuttle in her book, *Encyclopedia on Feminism*, she was an American reformer. One of the earliest leaders of the first American women's movement, she worked with Ernestine Rose in the 1830s, petitioning the New York State legislature for a married women's property act. In 1850 she organized and presided over the first national Women's Rights Convention in Worcester, Massachusetts, and from 1853 to 1856, she financed, edited, and published *The Una*, a monthly journal devoted to the cause of women's rights. She was also a temperance worker, an advocate of dress reform, and lecturer to women's groups on health and physiology. (7:74)

Margaret Sanger

(1883-1966) She was an advocate of sexual freedom. She declared that, "No woman can call herself free who does not own and control her body." Her lifelong goal was to provide information about the methods of birth control to all who needed it. This was because in her role as a nurse she had seen many women suffer poverty, illness, and death related to unwanted pregnancies. (7:283)

Victoria (Clafin) Woodhull

(1838-1927) One of the most outrageous and colorful figures of the women's rights movement, she was a free thinker and a women's rights activist. She believed that women should be equal to men both legally and morally. She championed many unpopular causes of the day: spiritualism, free love, eugenics. In 1871, she scored a great victory for the suffrage movement by convincing the Senate Judiciary Committee to hear her plea for a constitutional amendment; in the same year however, she scandalized the more conservative suffragists by speaking in favor of free love, and was defeated in her bid for leadership of the National Woman Suffrage Association. Undeterred by public opinion, she ran for President of the United States, the first woman to do so. (7:372)

POLITICAL LEGACY

When the United States held its first election in 1789, and the voters named General George Washington their first president, the only persons allowed to vote were white men. When the U.S. Constitution was written in 1787, it did not recognize anyone's right to vote except white men. Black men did not win the right to vote until the Fifteenth Amendment was ratified in 1870, women could not vote until the ratification of the

Nineteenth Amendment in 1920, and Native Americans living on reservations did not receive the right to vote until 1968. (6:241)

Before women could even begin to believe that they would be granted the right to vote, they had to become a recognized participant in society. Women began by becoming a part of the American abolition movement. A symbiotic relationship has always existed between the freedom of African-Americans and the freedom of women. The movement to end slavery grew during the 1830s when politicians, ministers, and journalists began to write about the cruelties of slavery. In 1833, when Great Britain outlawed slavery, Americans began to seriously debate the issue. (6:241)

When the American Anti-Slavery Society was formed, women were allowed to become members, but only men were allowed to be decision-makers in the organization. Women sought more than membership in the organization, they also wanted to be a part of the decision-making. Disheartened with their status in the Society, the women formed the Female Anti-Slavery Society. By 1837, there were over 1000 Anti-Slavery Societies with more than fifteen thousand members; over half were women. (6:241)

Women first contributed time and money to the abolition movement; later, they became more active and more outspoken. Angelina and Sarah Grimké of South Carolina became public speakers, unheard of in their day. Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton compared the status of African-American slaves to that of women: *both were property of their white male masters*. These women learned about large scale organizations, public speaking, fund raising, and remaining focused on a single issue from the abolition movement. Then a rift occurred between the men and women of the abolitionist movement. Women were told to wait because the men believed that though the people may have been ready to end slavery, people were not ready for women to vote. (6:242)

The American Temperance Society was founded in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1826, because women were concerned about the negative effects of alcohol on their male relatives and friends. The women held a national temperance convention in 1833, attended by women from several states. This movement was successful in persuading the U.S. Congress to prohibit the sale of alcohol to Native Americans in 1834, and by 1851 Maine became the first state to ban liquor entirely. Later the women from the temperance movement took part in the suffrage and women's rights movement. (6:243)

However, women became divided on their approach to securing their rights and formed two organizations: National Woman's Suffrage Association (NWSA) and the American Women Suffrage Association (AWSA). The NWSA was headed by Stanton and Mott whose radical ideas included not only voting rights but ideas about divorce and free love, or love outside of marriage. The AWSA, headed by Stone, was more conservative and believed that they would win the vote if they remained focused, placing emphasis on establishing local and state groups and lobbying politicians. The split between these two groups lasted more than two decades. (6:247-249) It was not until 1890 that these groups united to pass the Anthony Amendment as the National American Women Suffrage Association. (NAWSA)

The Nineteenth Amendment to the U. S. Constitution, written by Susan B. Anthony, was introduced in 1878 by Senator Arlen A. Sargent. But soon, new leadership and new ideas emerged; Anthony, Stanton, and Stone became the old soldiers. They had focused on the broad federal amendment to grant the right to vote nationally while the newer leaders favored a state by state approach. Carrie Chapman Catt was one of these new leaders and under her leadership new strategies emerged:

- They began to lobby state-by-state to obtain voting rights. In 1890, Wyoming became the first state to grant women the right to vote without any restrictions.
- They began to include poor and immigrant workers, which broadened the appeal of the suffrage movement.
- They set a goal--success in six years.
- They organized local women's groups. These women rang doorbells, gave speeches, circulated petitions, held rallies, and protested outside male political meetings. They also wrote and distributed leaflets that illustrated the advantages of giving women the right to vote.
- As a demonstration, they drove from San Francisco, California, to Washington, D.C., to present a petition (eighteen thousand feet long with 500,000 names) urging Congress and the president to give the privilege of the vote to women.
- They demonstrated at the White House, with signs such as, "Mr. President, How Long Must Women Wait for Liberty?"
- They considered themselves political prisoners, bullied and confined by a system where they had no voice. Alice Paul fasted for twenty-two days after being arrested and imprisoned in a Virginia workhouse. The authorities responded by making her take a mental examination and force-feeding her.
- They connected their fight for democracy at home with the soldiers' fight for democracy during World War I.

Over 40 years after the introduction of the Nineteenth Amendment, enough men in Washington agreed, and in 1919 Congress voted for and passed the Anthony Amendment. Jeannette Rankin, a newly elected representative from Montana and the first woman to serve in Congress, reintroduced the amendment. On August 26, 1920, the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified by the thirty-six necessary states. (6:250-254)

Grimke, Angelina Emily (1805-1879)

Moore, Sarah (1793-1873)

These sisters were abolitionists who were born to a wealthy slave-owning family and later became leaders in the women's rights movement. Sarah left home for Philadelphia in 1821 and Angelina followed her in 1829; both joined the Quaker faith because it supported the prohibition of slavery. Both women published articles and letters condemning slavery and supporting efforts to end it. The sisters began to speak in "mixed" public (both men and women present). This brought them harsh criticism from both the clergy and educated women for leaving a "woman's sphere." In reply to this Sarah described women as naturally endowed with equal rights and unnaturally suppressed by men. Sarah wrote, "I surrender not our claim for equality. All I ask our brethren is, that they will take their feet from off our necks and permit us to stand upright on the ground which God designed us to occupy." (1:88-89)

Alice Paul

(1885-1977) She was a militant and a radical who wanted to see immediate improvement in the condition of women and often opted for an approach that caused her to be arrested. As a student in England she was arrested six times as a member of the "Women's Social And Political Union." When she returned to the United States in 1910, she joined the National American Suffrage Association, but there was not enough action. In April 1913 she and a friend founded the Congressional Union For Woman Suffrage to work for the passage of a federal amendment for women's suffrage, using tactics she learned in England. In 1917, she was jailed for picketing the White House. After the right to vote was won, she began to work for total legal equality for women. She drafted the first Equal Rights Amendment and submitted it to Congress in 1923. (7:243)

Carrie Chapman Catt

(1859-1947) She was an organizer, a teacher, a school administrator, and journalist. She was able to transform the women's suffrage movement with definite plans of action on a state level, a membership system, study courses (including a manual of study courses), and a manual of organization. In 1900, she succeeded Susan B. Anthony as President of NAWSA. Under her direction, and with a new determination and professionalism within the organization, there was a spark to the movement, resulting in the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920. (7:57)

Lucretia Mott

(1793-1880) She began as a Quaker anti-slavery advocate and, after meeting Elizabeth Stanton, became a leader in the women's rights movement. A planner of the first Women's Rights Convention in Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848, Mott remained true to her sense of justice for Blacks and women throughout her life. (7:209)

Women continued to be involved in politics after obtaining the right to vote. America has been through World War II, the Korean War, the Viet Nam War, the birth of television and the space age, and the Civil Rights movements. African-Americans and women connected again during the civil rights movement. Women have made a significant

change in the issues for consideration on the local, state, and national level since receiving the right to vote. Through the input of women's organizations, more women began speaking out and ensuring that Congress consider issues affecting women and allow women to participate in the decision-making process on issues that affect the world. Women have stepped forward and said, "*I will serve*," and as a result, there is a significant increase in the number of women in political offices.

- 1964 Civil rights activist Fannie Lou Hamer founded the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party and led them to the Democratic National Convention in Atlantic City, New Jersey.
- 1964 U.S. Senator Margaret Chase Smith was the first American woman ever considered a serious potential presidential candidate. She received the second highest number of votes at the electoral convention.
- 1965 Patsy Takemoto Mink (D., HI) was the first Asian-American woman elected to the House of Representatives
- 1968 Shirley Chisholm became the first Black Congresswoman.
- 1971 The National Woman's Political Caucus was founded.
- 1972 Shirley Chisholm ran for president.
- 1972 Congress passed the Equal Rights Amendment. It was never ratified.
- 1972 Francis Jean Miles Westwood was elected the chair of the Democratic National Party, first woman to chair a major political party.
- 1974 Mary Louise Smith was elected the chair of the Republican National Committee.

1974 Ella Grasso of Connecticut was the first woman to be elected governor without succeeding her husband.

- 1977 Patricia Harris was the first black woman to serve in a cabinet office, appointed secretary of Housing and Urban Development by President Jimmy Carter.
- 1982 Loretta Glickman was elected mayor of Pasadena, California, the first African-American woman to serve as a mayor of a city with a population more than 100,000.
- 1984 Democrat Geraldine Ferraro was the first woman in American history to run as a vice-presidential candidate of a major political party.

- 1985 Wilma Mankiller became the first female Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation.
- 1987 Representative Pat Schroeder was the second woman in American history to be considered a serious potential presidential candidate.
- 1989 Ileana Ros-Lehtinen of Florida was the first Cuban-American elected to Congress.
- 1992 Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein were elected U.S. Senators from California, the first time for a state to be represented by two female senators at the same time. Carol Moseley-Braun was the first African-American woman elected to the U.S. Senate. Nydia Velazquez of New York was the first Puerto Rican elected to the House of Representatives.
- 1993 Lucille Roybal-Allard of California was the first Mexican-American woman elected to the House of Representatives. (6:268-269)

ECONOMIC LEGACY

From the early days in America, a woman's work was primarily in the home. She worked in the gardens, harvested the food, planned and cooked the meals, cleaned the house, repaired the house and furniture, and did anything else that needed to be done around the house. On very limited occasions she might work as a housekeeper or maid in someone else's home. Domestic service was the largest employer of women until the late 1940s. (6:410)

As America began to enter the industrial era, women's work began to transfer from home to the factory--thousands by the 1830s. Women worked for low wages. If they did piecework at home, they were paid *30 cents a day*. A job in a Lowell, Massachusetts, textile factory paid \$2.00 per week, but if the workers had to pay for living quarters they netted *75 cents per week*. Women often worked thirteen-hour workdays with poor ventilation. These women formed the Female Labor Reform Association and fought for better pay and working conditions. In 1860, because of their complaints (seeking better pay and working conditions), the mills began to hire immigrant workers instead of native-born Americans. (6:410-414)

America's economy was in a state of shambles between 1870 and 1910, with widespread unemployment and poverty. Working conditions were extremely harsh and reflected the condition of the economy. The American Federation of Labor (AFL) was formed, but it considered women as unimportant and possibly taking jobs and wages from men. (6:414)

Mary Kenney O'Sullivan and Leonora O'Reilly noted the condition of working women and sought to make some changes. O'Sullivan organized the Woman's Bookbinder Union in 1880 and O'Reilly organized the United Garment Workers' Union in 1897. O'Sullivan and O'Reilly met at an AFL meeting in 1903, only to discover that the AFL had nothing

to offer women. This discovery led them to form the National Women's Trade Union League (NWTUL). The NWTUL had six goals: "equal pay for equal work, women's suffrage, full unionization for all women, an eight-hour work day, a mandatory minimum wage, and all of the economic benefits asked for by the AFL." (6:414-415) In 1938, Congress passed the Fair Labor Standards Act, which limited the number of work hours. (6:124)

Women became a vital part of the work force during World War II (1935-45) because many men were off fighting the war and women were needed in the factories and war industries. Over 2.5 million women were filling jobs in the factories and shipyards that were usually for men only. And, they were still paid less than men. (6:416)

After World War II was over, America expected its women to joyfully return to their homes, especially since technology had given them washers, dryers, blenders, and canned food. Many did return to their homes enthusiastically. Many did not. As America changed so did women. Where women were once eager to fill a traditional role because this was all that was available, now they sought enjoyable work. More and more married women entered the work force as it became increasingly difficult to support a family on one income. Women were then expected to juggle both a career and a family. Even today women are still primarily responsible for taking care of the children and taking care of the house, whether they work outside the home or not. (6:416-417) According to Schmittroth and McCall in the *Women's Almanac*, married women who work outside the home perform 73 percent of the household chores while full-time housewives perform 83 percent. (6:405)

Since the days of "Rosie the Riveter" in World War II, millions of women have entered the work force. Women have risen to the challenge and proven themselves capable in virtually all occupations; many have risen to the top of their chosen professions: Janet Reno, Sandra Day O'Connor, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Dianne Feinstein, Antonia Hernandez, Carol Moseley Braun, and several women who became generals and admirals in the military. The *Women's Almanac* describes women of the late twentieth century as fitting into two categories: "the first one is the growing middle class where prosperity and equality is alive for the educated, motivated women. The second is the increasing number of women who are disadvantaged and disconnected from the mainstream of American life." Although many women have been elevated to the top levels in their various fields, the majority of women still remain in lower paying and part-time jobs or earn lower wages than men who have similar jobs. Although many considerations affect the life and position of a woman today, her educational level is the most significant part. The higher a woman's educational level, the less likely she is to be unemployed. (6:403)

Since the 1960s, the government has passed several pieces of legislation that have affected the status of women in the workplace.

- 1963 The Equal Pay Act. Guaranteed women and men equal pay in jobs that require equal skills, responsibility, and effort. (6:408)

- 1964 The Civil Rights Act. Banned discrimination based on race or sex. President Lyndon Johnson asked for the help of two women members of Congress: Representative Martha Griffiths of Michigan and Senator Margaret Chase Smith of Maine. (6:409)
- 1967 Executive Order 11246. Established a controversial Affirmative Action policy, in an effort to end discrimination in hiring and persuade employers to hire minorities and women. (6:410)
- 1968 The U. S. Department of Labor reviewed government contractors to check for nondiscriminatory practices in hiring or promoting. (6:124)
- 1972 The Equal Employment Opportunity Act. A person's civil rights must be respected. (6:124)
- 1974 The Educational Equity Act. Schools must consider both males and females in their curriculum, sports programs, and counseling. (6:124)
- 1974 The Equal Credit Opportunity Act. Family income must be considered to determine whether a man or woman will be given a loan. (6:125)
- 1978 Revision to the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Employers' policies must treat pregnancy as they would other medical conditions. (6:125)
- 1986 U.S. Supreme Court agreed that sexual harassment on the job is sexual discrimination. (6:125)
- 1987 U.S. Supreme Court upheld California law that social clubs that meet in public places must admit women. (6:125)
- 1991 The Glass Ceiling Act. Established the Glass Ceiling Commission to study and prepare recommendations for "eliminating artificial barriers to the advancement of women and minorities" to "management and decisionmaking positions." (6:420)
- 1993 Family Medical Leave Act. Employees are allowed unpaid leave to take care of sick family members. (6:420)
- 1994 Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act. Provided for children and families: free vaccinations, child support collections, child care credits, etc. (6:125)

EDUCATIONAL LEGACY

For many years men--fathers, brothers, and husbands--believed that to educate women--wives, sisters, and mothers--was a waste of time and energy. Men also believed girls did not have the capacity to learn and as such did not need intellectual training as they were to be wives and mothers. Throughout the western culture and in many other societies,

girls have been second class citizens with reference to education. The authors of the *Women's Almanac* stated that

In some ancient societies, after a child was born it was laid on the ground. If the father intended to educate his child, he immediately picked it up. But if he did not intend to educate it, the child was carried away and exposed, or left out in the open without shelter. *It was usually the unhappy fate of the daughters to be exposed.* (6:344) (Emphasis that of the author.)

Even Plato, who is thought of today as a man of great intellect, declared in his *Republic* that "all pursuits of men are the pursuits of women also, but in all of them a woman is inferior to a man." The Greek society thought it useless to educate girls; most received only the basics of reading and writing because girls had "weak judgment" and would always be "under the guardianship of males." Girls were basically taught to sew and spin, and when a woman married, her husband taught her to manage his home. Often the girls of wealthier families were taught in their homes and the courses centered on the pleasures of men: music, dance, poetry, and development of feminine charms. The Roman Empire and the Christian tradition followed the model of the Greek. Because the Romans believed in family values, they tended to educate the upper-class women to make them better mothers to their sons. Early Christian attitudes increased the validity of educating women. Women preached and were taught along with men. (6:344-345)

Women were educated only in convents from the sixth century to the eleventh century where they studied reading, writing, and singing for religious purposes. Some were taught a "little" grammar and arithmetic, drawing and painting, and enough medical knowledge to "protect their modesty." Around the twelfth century education was no longer controlled by the church. Wealthier families provided religious training for their boys and sometimes social and literary training for their girls. Middle-class women sometimes had tutors but most were educated in the convents. Again, household duties were the focus. Poor families were interested in survival, educating neither the boys nor girls. (6:345)

Throughout the middle ages, when men were away fighting the crusades, women studied whatever interested them. They managed their families' businesses and gained property rights and political power. During the Renaissance, women returned to their traditional role in the home. Their education and thus their destiny was controlled by the men in their lives. The qualities men considered important for women were modesty, patience, humility, and obedience--with these qualities, women remained content and passive. During the Reformation (16th century) with the split of the Catholic Church and the establishment of Protestant churches, Protestants began to set up separate schools and curriculum for girls. This was the beginning of education for all people. (6:345-348)

Early America continued with the beliefs and the value system of Europe concerning the inferiority of women. Fathers continued in their inability to see the validity in educating their daughters; after all she would soon be a wife or mother. Only girls from wealthy families received any formal training. In 1778, Abigail Adams, wife of the future U.S.

President, wrote him and complained of "the trifling narrow contracted education of the females of my country." By 1775, if an individual could sign his or her name, he or she was considered literate; eighty percent of men and only 40 to 45 percent of women were literate. After the American Revolution, authors of books and articles began recommending that girls receive an education equal to boys. Just as the Romans had educated their girls to become better mothers, early Americans believed that an educated mother was a requirement for rearing America's future leaders. (6:348-349)

Massachusetts was the first state to provide high school education for girls and boys. High schools began with separate facilities, but smaller communities built separate entrances and classrooms in the same schools. Some people argued that it was wrong to educate boys and girls together; it was money that settled the question. Separate schools cost more money. (6:350)

The South was slow to change. It still educated women for the purpose of becoming mothers. It was also against the Southern laws for slaves to read and write; 90 percent could not do so. Slave girls often learned to read and write (when they worked in the house) by listening to the lessons of the daughters of the house. Those slaves who had learned to read and write with their masters' permission often taught other slaves in "midnight schools." If caught, slaves were severely punished for teaching their fellow slaves to read and write. (6:351)

There was less resistance to the equal education of girls in the West because pioneers settled the American West long after the East and the South. The main deterrent to education in the West was the great distances between homes. Women often taught the children in their homes. Families worked together to build a school when there were enough children in an area. (6:351)

In 1833, the first college opened for women, Oberlin College in Ohio, and it was inclusive for racial minorities. Antioch College, also in Ohio, opened in 1852 and enrolled both men and women. Because the female students performed so well at Oberlin and Antioch, other colleges and universities were persuaded to enroll women students. State universities began to enroll women, but these universities did not have the high standards of the best men's colleges. Neither did the private coeducational colleges. The opening of Vassar College in 1865 was the true beginning of higher education for women. Vassar's curriculum was too challenging for many of the young women who entered, so a preparatory department was established. Six other prestigious and challenging schools were established for women during this time: Wellesley College and Smith College in 1875, Bryn Mawr College in 1880, Mount Holyoke Female Seminary in 1888, Barnard in 1889, and Radcliffe in 1894. (6:352-356) Barnard was the first woman's school to affiliate with a men's university, Columbia University. Radcliffe is affiliated with Harvard University. In 1881 Spelman became the first Black women's college. It was originally named Atlanta Baptist Female Seminary. (6:357)

In 1869-70 there were 1,378 women who earned bachelor's degrees, but in 1993, 54.3 percent (632,692) of the bachelor's degrees conferred were to women. Over 54 percent of

those earning Master's degrees (193,515) were women and 38 percent or 16,051 women earned Doctoral degrees. (8:297).

At one time it was thought that if a woman improved her mental capabilities, she would lose her reproductive ability. She could not become a doctor because "a really feminine woman" could not function in the presence of pain and blood. Women have met the challenge and excelled in all fields of higher education. (6:356-357)

In the seventies, two key pieces of legislation were passed to increase the opportunities for girls and women to obtain a quality education: In 1972, Congress passed Title IX, which made it illegal to discriminate because of sex, and in 1974, Congress passed the Women's Educational Equity Act, simply to strengthen Title IX. Because of these two pieces of legislation, there has been an increase in the funding, scholarships, and opportunities for women and women's studies programs at universities. (6:364-365)

MILITARY LEGACY

Traditionally women have always taken a part in the protection of their nations. They have served as cooks, camp followers, nurses, and in combat. Some women have served as warriors all around the world. Queen Boadicea of the Iceni Tribe of Britain led her people in revolt against the Roman Empire in A.D. 61. In the War with the Germans, she said,

We British are used to women commanders in war! I am descended from mighty men! But I am not fighting for my kingdom and wealth now. I am fighting as an ordinary person for my last freedom, my bruised body, and my outraged daughters. . . you will win this battle, or perish. That is what I, a woman, plan to do!--let the men live in slavery if they will. (5:78)

The Germans perished during that battle. (5:78) Helen Rogan, the author of *Mixed Company* says, "Yes, women can be warlike and brave, cruel and cunning." Evidence of these skills and abilities in women in the medieval period is abundant. We acknowledge and celebrate women like Eleanor of Aquitaine; Jane of Flanders; Agnes, Countess of Dunbar; Philippa of Hainault; Mary of Hungary; Joan Hackette; Queen Margaret of Denmark; Catherine the Great; and Isabella of Spain. All of them led armies in war and commanded men. In the 19th century King Gezo of Dahomey, West Africa, had three regiments, each with 1000 women soldiers who were required to fight to the death. (5:79-80) Military history reveals that Joan of Arc planned strategy and fought with the French Army in the Hundred Years War, and Molly Pitcher served during the American Revolution, first as a nurse and water carrier and later as a field artilleryman--firing her husband's cannon when he was wounded. (3:1042) Another woman who disguised herself as a man and served in the 4th Massachusetts Regiment as Robert Shirliffe was Deborah Sampson. She completed a three-year enlistment during which she fought in several battles and completed many scouting missions. On one such mission, she was wounded and had to take care of her own wound to prevent discovery. According to John Roth, editor of the *Encyclopedia of Social Issues*, 127 documented cases of women

disguised as men exist for the American Civil War. There are estimates of close to four hundred women who disguised themselves as men during that war. (3:1042)

Yet in America, it was not until World War I that women were allowed to make their first official contributions to the military. Even then they were restricted to the type of service they could perform, and they were only allowed in auxiliary units. During World War II, when there was a manpower shortage, women were not only recruited for civilian service, but in July of 1942 Congress agreed to establish a Women's Army Corps (WAC). Of course, there were restrictions placed on the women that were not placed on the men. Among these were that the commanding officer of the WAC could never rise above the rank of colonel, and no other officer could rise above lieutenant colonel. They could only serve in noncombat positions. Over a three-year period during World War II, 145,000 women served in the WAC, 639 were awarded military decorations, and 180 were killed in the line of duty. Another 86,000 women served in the Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service (WAVES), a branch of the Navy, and about 18,000 served in the Marines. More than 1,000 served as Women's Air Force Service Pilots (WASP) and flew more than 60 million miles in noncombat missions by the end of 1944. Thirty-eight WASP were killed in the line of duty. (3:1043) Although most stories of the WASP are favorable, there are stories of a crash that resulted in the death of the pilot where sugar was in the fuel line, and stories exist of gunner trainees who shot directly at the planes causing the WASP to fear for their lives. (2:8)

The WASP disbanded in 1944, and the WAC became a permanent part of the Army in 1948. It was not until 1967 that Congress removed the limits on the number of women who could serve in the military and not until the end of the draft was there a push to bring more women into service. In the fall of 1976 women were admitted for the first time into the service academies, and in 1995 a woman graduated first in the class from the United States Military Academy at West Point. (3:1043)

As with other segments of women's rights it took legal actions to help in bringing equality to women in the military.

- In 1973, *Frontiero v. Richardson*, the Supreme Court ruled that dependents of military women were entitled to the same benefits as dependents of military men.
- In 1976, *Crawford v. Cushman*, the Supreme Court ruled that a woman could not be discharged from the military simply because she became pregnant.
- In 1978, *Owens v. Brown*, the Supreme Court ordered the Navy to open categories of ship assignments to women.
- In 1991, Congress repealed the ban on women in combat aviation.
- In 1993, the Defense Department ordered the armed services to eliminate most of the restrictions on women in combat.

- In 1994, women began to be accepted into helicopter crews, combat engineering units, and explosive ordnance units.

Women joined and continue to join the military for many reasons: to fulfill a patriotic duty, to learn a profession, to obtain help with college tuition, and to travel. Women have served in all branches of the military service, and many have risen to general/flag officer rank. They continue to prove that when given the opportunity, they can and will excel.

CONCLUSION

Whether in the family, economics, education, politics, or the military, women of today have been provided a gift from the women who have gone before them. Much has been legislated to guarantee certain rights for women. When a woman has been unjustly treated or wronged, she is free to file a lawsuit in her own name and can now expect some corrective action. Their homes and their children belong to them equally with their spouses.

If they're unmarried, it's okay. They can take care of themselves and are no longer restricted to the lowest paying jobs. Married or single, a woman can be anything she wants to be. Qualified women are free to choose their own schools, even Harvard or the Virginia Military Institute.

Women today have the freedom to choose. They use the rights they have earned to maintain that freedom for the girls and women who will follow them.

Women now have a voice--the right to vote. They must use that voice to secure rights for those who will follow them in the twenty-first and twenty-second century. They must use the right to vote to ensure that medical research is conducted on women and about women's issues, to ensure women receive equal pay for equal worth, and to remove gender-based inequality wherever it is found.

Living the legacy of women's rights is a continuing challenge, but one that must be met to continue the legacy for future generations of women.

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