Daily **Life**

Remembering Five Women's Rights Activists for Women's History Month

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March 1 marks the beginning of Women's History Month, a time in which the history of women's rights and their accomplishments are honored and celebrated. Women's History Month began as only a day in the early 20th century. By the 1990s, it became an entire month.

Many women contributed to the women's rights movement and achieved greatness in the 19th and 20th centuries. Five of them are listed and discussed in this article.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815-1902)

Elizabeth Cady Stanton was a massive leader of the women's rights movement. Her experience in advocating for women's rights began when she attended the World's Anti-Slavery Convention in London, where the recognition of several women delegates was denied.

During her time as a suffragist, Stanton had many activism movements. In 1848, Stanton hosted the Seneca Falls Convention with Lucretia C. Mott. At the convention, Mott and Stanton introduced the Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions, a document based on the Declaration of Independence that accounted for the inferior status of women.

Stanton also wrote speeches, including "Solitude of Self." She also worked with Susan B. Anthony in addressing gatherings, conventions, speeches and campaigns.

Additionally, Stanton contributed to the passage of an 1860 law that granted married women equal guardianship of their children and their rights to their wages, after giving a speech that addressed the New York legislature.

Amelia Jenks Bloomer (1818-1894)

Amelia Jenks Bloomer was another notable suffragist. Before advocating for women's rights, she was a teacher in her hometown, Homer, N.Y. Eventually, she moved to Waterloo, N.Y., where she joined the Women's Temperance Society and became involved in the social and political communities of Seneca Falls.

Bloomer's career in the women's rights movement began in 1848 when she attended the Seneca Falls Convention. Not long after, Bloomer became editor of the Lily, a women's newspaper that covered various topics, including the women's rights movement.

Besides being editor, Bloomer contributed to the spread of bloomers, full-cut pantaloons that were worn under a short skirt. The bloomers weren't developed by Bloomer, but they were named after her when she began wearing them in public. They were symbolic in the women's rights movement as an alternative choice to dresses.

Susan B. Anthony (1820-1906)

Susan B. Anthony is one of the most famous icons of the women's rights movement. Before joining the women's rights movement, Anthony was a teacher in Canajoharie, N.Y. In her teaching career, Anthony discovered a massive salary difference between male teachers and female teachers. As a result, she joined the teacher's union.

In 1851, Anthony met Stanton after being introduced to her by Bloomer. From that moment on, Anthony and Stanton worked together to advocate for women's rights together. One thing Anothony did was give her "Failure is Impossible" speech in 1906. In addition to her speech, Anthony attended suffrage hearings in Washington, D.C.

During her time as an activist, Anthony faced a few barriers. In 1854, Anthony's request to speak at the Capitol and Smithsonian in Washington was denied. In 1872, Anthony was arrested for voting.

Nevertheless, Anthony made a significant impact on the women's rights movement. The 19th amendment, which granted women the right to vote, was named after her. Additionally, her face appeared on the United States dollar coin between 1979 and 1981 and again in 1999.

Betty Friedan (1921-2006)

Betty Friedan was one of the most influential women's rights activists in the mid-20th century. In her early life, Friedan worked as a reporter in New York. However, when she got pregnant with her second child, Friedan was canned from her job. As a result, she became a housewife. Eventually, Friedan began to question the role of women as housewives, marking the beginning of her career in feminist activism.

Friedan surveyed many women in Smith College and across the country asking them their feelings on being housewives. She found that many of the women she surveyed were dissatisfied with their roles. The results she found led to the publication of her book, "The Feminist Mystique," which contributed to the beginning of the second wave of the women's rights movement.

In addition to her book, Friedan founded the National Association for the Repeal of Abortion Laws in 1969. In 1971, Friedan co-established the National Women's Political Caucus with Bella Abzug, Gloria Steinem and other feminists. Friedan's work was often criticized for excluding women of color, uneducated women and homosexual women. Still, Friedan was considered a powerful feminist voice in the mid-20th century.

Gloria Steinem (1934-)

Gloria Steinem is a political activist, writer and feminist organizer who focused her work on women's rights, gender equality, child abuse, nonviolent conflict resolution, indigenous cultures and origins of race and sex hierarchies.

One way Steinem advocated for women's rights was by founding an array of organizations. In 1971, she co-established the National Women's Political Caucus with several other women's rights activists. She also co-founded the Free to Be Foundation, the Women's Media Center and the Ms. Foundation for Women. She also founded some organizations to connect with other countries, two being Equality Now and Direct Impact Africa.

Steinem also produced many documentaries that focused on gender inequality and the abuse of women. In 1993, Steinem co-produced "Better Off Dead," a TV show that critiqued the upholding of the death penalty and the opposition of abortion. She also co-produced VICELAND, a documentary series that focused on the global abuse of women.

Throughout her career, Steinem has received numerous awards, including the Front Page and Clarion awards, the Women's Sports Journalism Award and the 2015 Richard C. Holbrooke Distinguished Achievement Award.



A black-and-white portrait of Susan B. Anthony, a well-known activist for women's rights. The 19th Amendment, which allows women to vote, is named after Anthony.
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A portrait of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, a major figure in the women's rights movement. Stanton is known for hosting the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention, along with many other activism efforts.
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