

WOMEN'S

HISTORY

MONTH

SPECIAL

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## Women’s History Month Special!

### Women’s Fights For Right.

Probation period: 1920-1933

-The Probation period was a period just before the great depression that was brought up by concerns about abuse, poverty and crime brought upon by alcohol. Women played a major role in this era. It was mainly women's protests and movements that voiced their concerns, a major group being the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union. This woman's group was composed of women who viewed drinking as a moral failure and to save their husbands and other people pushed for alcohol to be banned. On the other side, the popular idea of the Roaring 20s was secret parties and flapper dancing and this was true for a lot of women. This allowed for women to expand their previously forced closed social circles. Before this era women were barred from saloons and drinking, the speakeasies allowed women to drink and share public spaces with men. This newfound freedom moved women to fight for more rights like the right to vote, work and other personal autonomy. The change of fashion in the 20’s also allowed women for rights and freedoms, the skirts got looser and shorter, the sleeves and necklines became less conservative. This new type of dress gave women freedom to express themselves without harsh judgment from everyone. The Jazz Age, another name for the prohibition period, gave way for even more opportunities for women. Many household jazz legends like Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday and Dolly Jones came to popularity. The popularity of women Jazz singers and musicians allowed women another opportunity to find work and express their emotions



and love

1920s Flapper Women Drinking Picture from TheCollector

of performance on the stage. In conclusion, women gained a lot of social progress, while it wasn’t a lot, it was a start.

#### Cold War:

The Cold War was a time of tension between Russia and the United States. The arms race was full out while people and other nations braced for nuclear fallout. But this era was full of accomplishments too; the Apollo mission that allowed man to land on the moon. Many people now know about the human computers that were the reason that the Apollo 11 mission was able to land on the moon. With men working in the army to keep communism at bay, women were the employees that NASA chose to work on the math that would become the landing and take-off trajectory. Marcie Roberts, a woman who came into engineering late, chose an all female team to help keep cohesion within the group, believing men would undermine and belittle the intelligence and skill of their female counterparts. As well as progressing women's

rights, this job progressed African American rights. Black women were also selected to run calculations and work the computers. Women like Dorothy Vaughan, Mary Jackson and Kathrine Johnson all were black women who were detrimental to the success of the space missions. These women all paved the way to giving women more rights in the workforce and STEM careers.

# WHAT’S HAPPENING AROUND THE WORLD?

Rev. War:

Civil War: When the United States Civil War began Dr. Mary Edwards Walker tried to enlist as a military surgeon but was denied. She was only allowed to serve as a volunteer nurse until she eventually became an unpaid surgeon treating injured soldiers at several battles. Then by 1863 she was an official contract surgeon for the Army of Cumberland and later the 52nd Ohio Infantry. She became the first female surgeon of the US Army, where she was known for crossing into confederate territory to treat union soldiers. That was what she was doing in April 1864 when she was arrested for being a “spy” and spent several months in the famously brutal Castle Thunder prison. She was awarded the medal of honor after the war due to her selfless acts. Walker is an American hero that is the only woman to be granted the medal of honor. The US honored Mary Walker with an army base named after her on August 25 2023.

WWI: During the first world war also known as the “Great War” women’s contributions and roles were largely overlooked. Women stepped up into men dominated roles in the economy becoming farmers, industry workers, and some even enlisted in the military. Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee was an US Navy military nurse during the war. She was one of the first twenty members in the U.S Navy Nurse Corps known as “The Sacred Twenty”. She was promoted and became Chief Nurse at Norfolk Naval Hospital in April 1909. Then In January 1911, Higbee became the second Superintendent of the U.S. Navy Nurse Corps. Chief Nurse Higbee was the first woman awarded the Navy Cross. Higbee died on 10 January 1941 and is buried at Arlington National Cemetery. She stands a pillar of inspiration and showed that women could accomplish as much and even more than men. To carry on her legacy the US Navy has named two vessels after her USS Higbee (DD-806) a Gearing-class destroyer commissioned in 1945 and USS Lenah H. Sutcliffe Higbee (DDG-123) an Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyer commissioned on May 13 2023.



Picture Of Dr. Mary Edwards from Health.mil



Visual by Nara Maja.

# Why Were Women SO Historically Depressed?

Article By Trishalata Shrivastava



Picture from Women&TheAMerc

Today, a woman is no less than what a man is. A woman today can read, write, vote, work, and whatever a man has always freely done. A woman has not shared the same liberty as a white man historically.

Most of us know that women were historically depressed, and we know about The Women’s suffrage movement, Women’s strike for Equality, The Equal Pay Movement, The Right to education movement.

So, what caused all this? Why did we wake up one day and chose women to be inferior to men? Why are women historically depressed? Why were women denied rights and privileges like education?

Well, there isn't just one answer. Women have been historically depressed due to a variety of reasons like biological factors, misconception of religion, colonization, economic, societal, and cultural that have evolved over centuries.

**How did patriarchal systems rise?**

Patriarchy refers to a system where men dominate and hold power. Initially men naturally started to dominate as society was forming. Men just naturally started to dominate as society was forming.

Men began to dominate in areas like livestock, land which made them take over due to how resourceful these areas were. As men were doing all the agricultural labor, Women roles became centered on domestic work and childbearing.

Since women were stuck with idea of childbearing and housework, the idea of them working in a field was unreal. The idea of women not working in fields also came from the idea that they were physically weak compared to a man.

Which is ironic considering how painful it is to give birth to a child.

**Role of Religion and Colonization**

Religious and cultural texts codified male superiority, these texts often portrayed women as weaker, mortally flawed, or secondary.

Which is not completely true cause some orthodox religious and cultural rituals were made in the delusion of protecting women.

Sati, the act where widowed women would burn themselves. This is believed to be a Hindu ritual which have been proved wrong by female rights activists such as Raja Ram Mohan Roy. The act of Sati was nowhere mentioned in the Hindu Vedas. The Ritual of Sati was introduced by women to protect themselves from European invaders and other men who would Harras them after the death of their husband.

Foot Binding in China. Ancient China (Rural parts of China still do this) has a painful practice of binding girls’ feet to keep them small. Small feet would symbol as beauty and modesty in women since it limited women’s mobility, reducing their ability to leave home and, by extension lowering their vulnerability to assault.

Child Marriage Is historically common in religion and cultures like Christianity, Hinduism, and Islam. (and other communities) It was believed that marrying girls off early will protect them from assault or premarital violations which would dishonor the family.

**Economic factors**

Eventually, Women (at least in some parts of the world) were given a bit of rights.

Yet men were still dominating. This was because education was more of a privilege than a right.

Men still had the upper hand in money. They had better pay, more jobs, etc.

At this point, men dominated because of wealth. Women were finically dependent on men. Despite women having accessible education, their depressed history had made an impact on the economy.

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**Women Today**

Women today are given broader Opportunities compared to the past. Women outnumber men in higher education. 49% of girls graduate from college compared to 38% of boys.

Yet, the battle for a woman’s liberty is still ongoing. Women are still oppressed in countries like Afghanistan, tribal parts of Pakistan, Rural areas of South Asia and Africa.

These areas still practice orthodox rituals and deny basic rights like education, healthcare, etc.

Women are still in war for rights even in developed countries regarding abortion and pay cheeks.

*Women are meant to be protected in the name of honor not oppressed. And that is a fact not an opinion.*

**Conclusion**

Women have a long history of oppression rising from biological factors like childbearing, religious and cultural scriptures, colonization, rituals made to protect the honor of the family, economic factors such as finically depending on men.

Women today are still oppressed in parts of the world, the battle for women has not ended yet.