

The biography of elizabeth stanton essay

[Business](#), [Career](#)



Elizabeth Cady Stanton was an American feminist, abolitionist, writer, orator and revolutionist. She became popular as an advocate of women's suffrage by founding a women's organization and writing a book that has made her controversial.

She was never afraid to speak her mind and to support women's right when during her time, women were not acknowledge and given the privileges that women enjoyed today. In this paper, the life of Elizabeth Stanton is discussed including her family background, education, marriage, works, and ideals that had formed her thinking and courage to fight for women's right. Family Background Elizabeth Cady came from a prominent, upper-middle class family in Johnston, New York. She was born in November 12, 1815 to Daniel Cady and Margaret Livingston. Although their family is considerably rich, all of her six brothers died but her four sisters remained alive.

The death of her brothers brought disappointment to her father especially when her brother Eleazar died just before his graduation. Her brother's death encouraged Elizabeth to behave like a son to her father. She became an achiever both in academics and athletic. She learned Greek, spent many hours in the Cady library reading law books, studied equestrian and chess and other things that were limited only to boys. Her father, Daniel Cady, was a successful lawyer and politician. He served a term in the United States congress from 1808 to 1814. He ran again in 1816 and 1832 but was defeated in both elections. He later became an associate justice of the New York Supreme Court from 1847 until 1855 before he died in 1859.

Having a lawyer and politician father was a great influence to Elizabeth with regards to her interest in laws. She became exposed to law books and had conversations and debates with his father's law clerks which made her aware of the limited rights of women during that time. However, her father, instead of being proud of her achievements and intellect, was still disappointed because she was not a boy. Educational Background Elizabeth's brother-in-law and his father's law clerk, Edward Bayard greatly influenced and contributed to her education. He served as a teacher and a counselor during her childhood, read to her novels and had critical discussions on law, politics and philosophy. Elizabeth attended the Johnstown Academy, a coeducational institution where she studies mathematics and languages such as Latin and Greek. After graduation, she wanted to continue formal education at Union College.

However, during that time, no college across the United States admitted women. That was her first experience of sex discrimination. Her father also did not pursue her giving college education. It was her Bayard who convinced her father to send Elizabeth at the Troy Female Seminary. The seminary was run by Emma Willard, who later became one of the people who was admired by Elizabeth because of her intelligence and promotion of women education. At the seminary, Elizabeth was very uncomfortable because she liked more her experience at a coed institution unlike in the seminary where she felt isolated because of her gender. She graduated in 1833 and because of their family's wealth she was not forced to seek for employment right away. She spent some time doing auxiliary church activities and visiting friends and relatives.

Influential People in Her Life She frequently visited her cousin Gerrit Smith and her family in Peterboro, New York. Gerrit Smith introduced Elizabeth to the abolitionist idea. He was a leader of political abolitionists, a politician and a founder of a nondenominational abolitionist church. At her cousin's place, Elizabeth met different kinds of abolitionists, from politicians, advocates to runaway slaves and was exposed to discussions about politics, religion and any topic about the society. Discussions of abolitionists were stimulating and inspiring for Elizabeth. It was also in Peterboro where Elizabeth met Henry Stanton, an abolitionist agent who later became her husband.

Despite of the objections of Elizabeth's father and brother-in-law, Henry and Elizabeth were married in Johnstown in 1840 and were blessed with six children. Their honeymoon and wedding trip coincided with the International Anti-Slavery Convention in London where she met Lucretia Mott, an American delegate who was also a Quaker minister, abolitionist and feminist. The two women became friends after women have denied their rights to participate in the said convention. After that, they have weeks of conversation that led to Mott becoming a mentor to Elizabeth.

Elizabeth and her husband stayed at the Cady's house while Henry decided to study law and served as a law clerk for Judge Cady for political reasons. Henry practiced law by joining a law firm in Boston where his family moved later on. There, Elizabeth met prominent abolitionists, journalists, poets and philosophers like Frederick Douglass, William Lloyd Garrison. Louisa May Alcott, Robert Lowell and Ralph Waldo Emerson during their meetings . She had a good family and social life at Boston while her husband suffered defeat

in elections he joined as well as lung illness due to the weather in Boston.

Life as a Feminist They later moved to Seneca Falls in 1847 where Elizabeth Stanton became publicly active in reforms and movements. Because Seneca was a rural place far different from the social and intellectual life in Boston and where women were contented to be as a housekeeper only, Elizabeth found it hard to adjust to the place.

She then decided to become active in the community to change the way of living of the women in Seneca Falls. Along with Mott and three other women, Elizabeth initiated and spearheaded the first women's rights convention in Seneca Falls in July 1848. She prepared the document entitled A Declaration of Rights and Sentiments that was presented at the said convention.

Included in this document were economic and social injustices which were from Mott while the emphasis on political actions such as the women's right to suffrage was from Elizabeth. Elizabeth's political philosophy was influenced by her lawyer-politicians father and husband, and her cousin Smith along with the other abolitionists she had had encountered. She believed in the theory of natural rights, claiming that like American men, women were individuals endowed with natural rights and that, men and women were equal. The demand for women's right to vote made her controversial that even Mott had some reservation about that claim while many people opposed her ideas. However, it encouraged other women from different states to pursue women's right.

The Seneca Falls convention had marked Elizabeth's career as a feminist and women's movements leader. Elizabeth began writing articles for newspapers

to further encourage women with their rights to vote, equality and later about birth control. She pursued the amendments on Marriage Women's Property Rights and the Divorce Reform. Elizabeth met Susan Anthony in 1851 through a common friend. They developed deep friendship and collaboration as both of them were abolitionist and feminist.

Elizabeth would write speeches and reform statements while Anthony would be the speaker and the campaigner. They founded the first political organization for women, the Women's Loyal National League who became the mover behind the passing of the 13th Amendment to the US Constitution that gave freedom to African American. She was also one of the organizers of the Working Women's Right Association, the Woman Suffrage Association of America, and the American Equal Rights Association. The latter objected the 15th Amendment that granted the black men the right to vote. What Elizabeth and Anthony wanted then was to grant equal suffrage to the African-American men and all women. This caused schism among the abolitionists because most of their colleagues in the organization did not support their sides. Because of this, Elizabeth and Anthony founded the National Women Suffrage Association (NWSA), an organization which opposes the passage of the 15th Amendment without including the women suffrage.

Her former colleagues then formed the American Women's Suffrage Association which supported the 15th Amendment as it is. The Amendment was passed in 1870 without being changed. During the late 1860s, Elizabeth and Anthony also published *The Revolution*, a newspaper that pursued

women's right. But because of frustrations, the Revolution was sold while Elizabeth in behalf of the NWSA submitted a proposed amendment in to the US Senate. In 1892, Elizabeth ended her presidency of the organization with her Solitude of Self Speech, the fullest expression of her feminist philosophy . In 1895, Elizabeth Stanton published the first volume of the very controversy Woman's Bible which was her correction and criticism of the biblical passages which she thought to be demeaning to women.

Seven years later, on October 26, 1902, she died of heart failure without even witnessing the granting of women suffrage in the United States.