

In presented by friedan in "a new life

[Family](#), [Marriage](#)



In the years when women were only seen as wives and mothers and most weren't able or expected to work outside their own houses, appeared the soon-to-be best-seller by Betty Friedan, called *The Feminine Mystique*. She is said to be one of the main figures which helped to spark the beginning of second-wave feminism in the United States. The purpose of this paper is to present the significance of the text for the gradual evolution of the women in the 1960s until today. I believe that this text published in 1963 is one of great importance to the women from that time, as it changed the way they saw themselves and therefore the way they were perceived by the society. It inspired women with the much needed inspiration to come out of their shells and be their own persons. I am going to talk about the ideas and actions in "A New Life Plan for Women" which succeeded to bring about some important changes in the fight for women's rights and equality.

One of the most essential ideas presented by Friedan in "A New Life Plan for Women" was the lack of education of the young mothers and housewives. Because of the fact that their lives were pretty much already decided for them and they didn't seem to have a say in that, most of them conformed with those unwritten rules of the time. (1) (Friedan, 233) But there were some who strived higher and wanted to change this once and for all. "The problem that has no name", as Friedan named it in her book "described the dilemma of a generation of college-educated women who aspired to something more than diapering babies and mastering new recipes for their working husbands." (2) (May, *Women's Roles in Twentieth-Century America*, p.

20) Changing this would bring women the opportunity to be educated, therefore considered normal, intelligent citizens, and they could even be regarded as equal to men. What was thought by society back then was "that women could find fulfillment through housework, marriage, sexual passivity, and child rearing alone." (3) This was something which later on showed to be false.

In her book, Friedan suggested that an educational program resembling the GI bill, but for women, should be created. She also mentioned it would be meant for women with a passion towards continuing their studies and applying that burning desire into a future profession. The certified ones would be given tuition fees and a supplementary subsidy to help them with the cost of other expenses such as books, travel and if needed, some help in the household. This measure wouldn't cost as much as the GI bill.

In this way mothers could "study and research projects at home during the years when regular classroom attendance is impossible." (4) (Friedan, 232) A different idea, but nevertheless still an interesting one would have to be the national program inspired by the Danish Folk-High-School movements. The housewives will be sent once again "into the mainstream of thought" with a complete six-week summer course, just like an intellectual "shock therapy." Through this the activation of identifying their purposes would happen and the college