

# Womens suffrage movement

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Womens suffrage movement BY raider2014 Victoria Woodhull- The first woman to declare herself as a candidate for president, Woodhull announced her run on April 2, 1870, by sending a notice to the New York Herald. This was an absolutely astounding thing to do: women only recently received the right to vote in the two relatively obscure territories of Wyoming and Utah, and it would be another fifty years before the ratification of the 19th Amendment that assured the ballot to all American women. Moreover, she took this step without contacting any leading suffragists, who by then had been well organized for more than two decades.

Susan B. Anthony and others were stunned by the action of this controversial woman, whose "open marriage" was the talk of New York City. The next presidential election was two years away, and Woodhull used this time to bring attention to women's issues, including the right to vote. Undaunted by the fact that women could not vote and that she was not yet old enough to legally become president, Woodhull traveled the country campaigning. Her speeches not only advocated the vote, but also birth control, "free love," and other positions that were a century ahead of her time.

Many listeners were surprised to find themselves more sympathetic than they had expected: her beauty, soft voice, and reasoned arguments took the edge off of such shocking statements as her belief that marriage was "legalized prostitution." Woodhull and her sister, Tennie C. , were in jail, however, when the 1872 presidential election occurred. Because they wanted to draw attention to the era's hypocrisy on sexual matters, their newspaper published the facts about an adulterous affair between the

nationally popular Rev. Henry Ward Beecher and a leader of the women's movement, Elizabeth Tilton.

It was true, but not politically correct, and the sisters were indicted for both libel and obscenity. The charges eventually were dropped, but the scandal was enough to end Woodhull's presidential aspirations, as she spent election day in jail. Belva Lockwood- Belva Ann Bennett McNall Lockwood was a self-made woman who adopted bold positions in support of equal opportunity for women. She lived her life fighting to ensure that women had the same opportunities as their male counterparts, both by example and in her law practice.

Lockwood was set to graduate from law school in 1873, but was notified that she would not receive her degree. She appealed to President Ulysses S. Grant and he intervened on her behalf. Later she refused to take no for an answer again when she lobbied Congress for the right to argue in front of the federal courts and helped get the bill passed in 1879. She also joined the National Women's Suffrage Association (NWSA) lecture circuit, which made her money and gave her recognition.

She would upset the NWSA, though, with her decision to run as a presidential candidate for the National Equal Rights Party in 1884. Susan B. Anthony and others felt that Lockwood's decision was self-serving and distracting from their greater mission, but she saw it as a way to bring attention to women as genuine citizens. Although always a fringe group, the party had its strongest support in California, where San Franciscan Maria W. Stowe served as the vice-presidential nominee.

The party's platform was not just limited to feminism: it included positions on foreign affairs, civil service reform, and other issues, including an innovative proposal for federalization of family law. The Lockwood/Stowe ticket won just over 4,000 votes in six states, but Lockwood was not discouraged and ran again in 1888. "Women should not merely talk about what needed to be done", she said, "but should do it". Margaret Chase Smith - Margaret Chase Smith served 32 years in Congress and was the first woman elected to both the House and Senate.

Although a champion for women's issues, she was always clear about being seen as a U. S. Senator and not a woman Senator. In 1964, she became the first credible female candidate for president. Unlike her predecessors, she had legislative experience. A liberal Republican closely associated with her native state of Maine, Margaret Madeline Chase was born to a blue-collar Skowhegan family in 1897. Her entry into politics began when her employer suggested that she be added to the Skowhegan Town Committee.

She still was carrying out traditional wifely duties, however, as this helped husband, Clyde Smith, be elected to the U. S. House in 1936. She moved to Washington and served as his aide, doing research on pending bills and assisting with speeches. When Clyde died in 1940, Margaret won the special election to succeed him, and three months later, Maine voters elected her to the first of four full House terms. Smith moved up to the Senate in 1948, defeating both Maine's current governor and a former governor.

Her 1960 re-election was a milestone for women, as it was the first time that two women were nominated for a U. S. Senate seat: Smith easily defeated

Democratic nominee Lucia Cormier. Nationally respected by 1964, Smith ran for president. Most states did not yet conduct primaries, but she ran credibly in those that did, and won the votes of 27 delegates at the Republican National Convention that nominated the more conservative Barry Goldwater. At 66, ageism joined sexism as a factor in her loss.

She was not credited for her greater experience; instead pundits speculated about whether Senator Smith was menopausal. Her point that "I haven't seen the age played up in the case of the men candidates" was in vain. Patsy Takemoto Mink- Patsy Takemoto Mink was the first woman of color to serve in the United States Congress, but it was the work that she did there that should be remembered. Mink represented many groups that, prior to her election, had been absent from national politics, working tirelessly to serve women, minorities and the poor.

She brought attention to issues that others ignored. Takemoto learned firsthand that she could not take citizenship and the promise of the U. S. Constitution for granted: her family was put under surveillance after the attacks on Pearl Harbor, and her father was taken from their home for interrogation. Like most Hawaiians of Japanese descent, the Takemotos were not sent to an internment camp, but the awareness that most inland Japanese Americans were incarcerated was an important factor in Patsy's development.

She graduated from law school in 1951, however no Chicago law firms would hire her, which she initially thought was due to her ethnicity, but her gender and married status were also negative factors. Instead of allowing herself to

be defeated, she and her husband moved to Hawaii. She opened her own law practice, becoming the first female Japanese-American lawyer in Hawaii.

Active in the territorys Democratic Party, she also was a founder of the Young Democrats of America. This led to her election to the Territorial House of Representatives in 1956 and to the Hawaii Senate in 1958.