

Movie review on reaction paper – she's beautiful when she's angry

[Experience](#), [Anger](#)



The documentary *She's Beautiful When She's Angry* provides an in-depth look at the women's lib movement of the mid to late 20th century. I liked the really positive and exuberant portrait of the many advances women made in the 1960s and 1970s when they got to fight for their rights. The best part was when the documentary shuttles around various parts of the country to find the various local battlegrounds of the past to see where these major battles were fought, like the legalization of abortion in *Roe v. Wade* and Nixon's national childcare bill veto. These parts of the documentary are very interesting, and offer a detailed history of the movement and the challenges it faced.

The director, Mary Dore, does a great job of juggling all of these various elements into a seamless whole. A lot certainly had to be fit into this single documentary, but I think she handles it with great care, using original texts and dramatization to provide first-hand evidence of the events and dynamics of the women's lib movement. At the same time, some of that feels a bit conventional and ordinary, I didn't think she asked too many big questions or challenge many ideas about what the feminist movement was like back then. Ideally, I would have liked a harder-hitting documentary that was not afraid to ask tougher questions about the way women were treated in other revolutionary movements at the time, or into more detail about the people who still have regressive attitudes about women today.

One of the most interesting elements of the documentary, for me, is the way they tie the struggles of the women's liberation movement with the state of women's rights today. For one thing, it reminded me of the hard work that women went through to get what rights they have, compared to the seeming

lack of progress that is being made on those issues today. Even as the women of the lib movement in the 70s made advances toward equal pay and reproductive rights, the fact that so many of those ideas are starting to backslide today makes me worried. It was very moving to me when activists in the documentary talk about how sad they are to see their hard-won victories start to lose ground, as well as the problems inherent to modern women’s movements and their inability to find a place in the current consciousness.

All in all, though, I found myself really liking *She’s Beautiful When She’s Angry*. It provides a very basic, elementary understanding of the women’s lib movement, covering all of the major points without doing anything too confusing or complicated, offering a crash course in that part of American (and women’s) history. Even when the investigation into the politics of women’s rights efforts in the 70s doesn’t go too much under the surface, the details that are there make for compelling viewing. Seeing the bright, optimistic spirit of the women of that time rebelling against the status quo, feeling like anything was possible, is a very inspiring thing that is possibly the most important takeaway from this documentary. After seeing *She’s Beautiful When She’s Angry*, it is very easy to start thinking about continuing the fight for women’s rights yourself; the film makes it clear that there is still work to be done.