

# SECTION 3

# The Women's Movement

## Guide to Reading

### Main Idea

Women reformers campaigned for their own rights.

### Key Terms

suffrage, coeducation

### Reading Strategy

**Taking Notes** As you read the section, use a chart like the one below to identify the contributions these individuals made to women's rights.

	Contributions
Lucretia Mott	
Elizabeth Cady Stanton	
Susan B. Anthony	
Elizabeth Blackwell	

### Read to Learn

- how the antislavery and the women's rights movements were related.
- what progress women made toward equality during the 1800s.

### Section Theme

**Groups and Institutions** Women in the 1800s made some progress toward equality.

### Preview of Events

◆ 1830

1837

Mary Lyon establishes Mount Holyoke Female Seminary

1848

First women's rights convention held in Seneca Falls, New York

◆ 1860

1857

Elizabeth Blackwell founds the New York Infirmary for Women and Children

◆ 1890

1869

Wyoming Territory grants women the right to vote



Mary Lyon, pioneer in higher education for women

## AN American Story

Women who fought to end slavery began to recognize their own bondage. On April 19, 1850, about 400 women met at a Quaker meetinghouse in the small town of Salem, Ohio. They came together "to assert their rights as independent human beings." One speaker stated: "I use the term *Woman's Rights*, because it is a technical phrase. I like not the expression. It is not *Woman's Rights* of which I design to speak, but of *Woman's Wrongs*. I shall claim nothing for ourselves because of our sex. . . . [W]e should demand *our* recognition as equal members of the human family. . . ."

## Women and Reform

Many women abolitionists also worked for women's rights. They launched a struggle to improve women's lives and win equal rights. Like many of the women reformers, **Lucretia Mott** was a Quaker. Quaker women enjoyed a certain amount of equality in their own communities. Mott gave lectures in Philadelphia calling for temperance, peace, workers' rights, and abolition. Mott

## The Seneca Falls Convention

Throughout the nation's history, women had fought side by side with the men to build a new nation and to ensure freedom. Even though the Declaration of Independence promised equality for all, the promise rang hollow for women.

Female reformers began a campaign for their own rights. In 1848 Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton organized the Seneca Falls Convention. One of the resolutions demanded suffrage, or the right to vote, for women. This marked the beginning of a long, hard road to gain equal rights.

## Raising the Status of Women

Lucretia Mott (below) and Susan B. Anthony were leaders in the effort to allow women a greater role in American society.



"We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal."  
 —Declaration of the Seneca Falls Convention, 1848

### Gaining the Right to Vote, 1848–1920

The Seneca Falls Convention led to the growth of the woman suffrage movement.

**1848** →  
 Seneca Falls Convention

**1850** →  
 First national women's rights convention held in Worcester, Massachusetts

**1866** →  
 Susan B. Anthony forms Equal Rights Association

**1869** →  
 Women granted voting rights in Wyoming Territory

**1878** →  
 Woman suffrage amendment first introduced in U.S. Congress

**1884** →  
 Belva Lockwood runs for president

also helped fugitive slaves and organized the Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society. At the world antislavery convention in London, Mott met **Elizabeth Cady Stanton**. There the two female abolitionists joined forces to work for women's rights.

### The Seneca Falls Convention

In July 1848, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, and a few other women organized the first women's rights convention in **Seneca Falls, New York**. About 200 women and 40 men attended.

The convention issued a Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions modeled on the Declaration of Independence. The women's document declared: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal."

The women's declaration called for an end to all laws that discriminated against women. It demanded that women be allowed to enter the all-male world of trades, professions, and businesses. The most controversial issue at the Seneca Falls Convention concerned **suffrage**, or the right to vote.

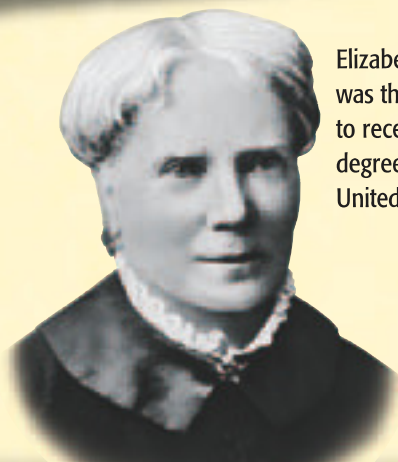
Elizabeth Stanton insisted that the declaration include a demand for woman suffrage, but delegates thought the idea of women voting was too radical. Lucretia Mott told her friend, "Lizzie, thee will make us ridiculous." Frederick Douglass stood with Stanton and argued powerfully for women's right to vote. After a heated debate, the convention voted to include the demand for woman suffrage in the United States. (See page 989 of the Appendix for excerpts of the Seneca Falls Declaration.)



Maria Mitchell gained world renown when she discovered a comet in 1847. She became a professor of astronomy and the first woman elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.



Mary Ann Shadd Cary was the first African American woman in the nation to earn a law degree.



Elizabeth Blackwell was the first woman to receive a medical degree in the United States.



Helen Keller overcame the challenges of an illness that left her deaf, blind, and mute to help others with similar disabilities.



Susette La Flesche was a member of the Omaha tribe and campaigned for Native American rights.

1893

Colorado adopts woman suffrage

1896

Utah joins the Union, granting women full suffrage

1910–1918

States including Washington, Kansas, and Michigan adopt woman suffrage

1919

House and Senate pass the federal woman suffrage amendment

1920

Tennessee ratifies the Nineteenth Amendment, called the Susan B. Anthony Amendment. It becomes law on August 26, 1920.

## The Movement Grows

The Seneca Falls Convention paved the way for the growth of the **women's rights movement**. During the 1800s women held several national conventions. Many reformers—male and female—joined the movement.

**Susan B. Anthony**, the daughter of a Quaker abolitionist in rural New York, worked for women's rights and temperance. She called for equal pay for women, college training for girls, and **coeducation**—the teaching of boys and girls together. Anthony organized the country's first women's temperance association, the Daughters of Temperance.

Susan B. Anthony met Elizabeth Cady Stanton at a temperance meeting in 1851. They became lifelong friends and partners in the

struggle for women's rights. For the rest of the century, Anthony and Stanton led the women's movement. They worked with other women to win the right to vote. Beginning with Wyoming in 1890, several states granted women the right to vote. It was not until 1920, however, that woman suffrage became a reality everywhere in the United States.

**Reading Check** Explaining What is suffrage?

## Progress by American Women

Pioneers in women's education began to call for more opportunity. Early pioneers such as Catherine Beecher and Emma Hart Willard believed that women should be educated for

their traditional roles in life. They also thought that women could be capable teachers. The Milwaukee College for Women set up courses based on Beecher's ideas "to train women to be healthful, intelligent, and successful wives, mothers, and housekeepers."

### Education

After her marriage Emma Willard educated herself in subjects considered suitable only for boys, such as science and mathematics. In 1821 Willard established the Troy Female Seminary in upstate New York. Willard's Troy Female Seminary taught mathematics, history, geography, and physics, as well as the usual home-making subjects.

**Mary Lyon** established Mount Holyoke Female Seminary in Massachusetts in 1837. She modeled its curriculum on that of nearby Amherst College. Some young women began to make their own opportunities. They broke the barriers to female education and helped other women do the same.

### Marriage and Family Laws

During the 1800s women made some gains in the area of marriage and property laws. New York, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Wisconsin, Mississippi, and the new state of California recognized the right of women to own property after their marriage.

Some states passed laws permitting women to share the guardianship of their children jointly with their husbands. Indiana was the first of several states that allowed women to seek divorce if their husbands were chronic abusers of alcohol.

### Breaking Barriers

In the 1800s women had few career choices. They could become elementary teachers—although school boards often paid lower salaries to women than to men. Breaking into fields such as medicine and the ministry was more difficult. Some strong-minded women, however, succeeded in entering these all-male professions.

Hoping to study medicine, **Elizabeth Blackwell** was turned down by more than 20 schools. Finally accepted by Geneva College in New York, Blackwell graduated at the head of her class. She went on to win acceptance and fame as a doctor.

Despite the accomplishments of notable women, gains in education, and changes in state laws, women in the 1800s remained limited by social customs and expectations. The early feminists—like the abolitionists, temperance workers, and other activists of the age of reform—had just begun the long struggle to achieve their goals.

 **Reading Check** **Identifying** Who established the Troy Female Seminary?

## SECTION 3 ASSESSMENT

### Checking for Understanding

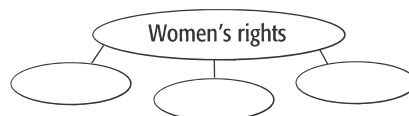
- Key Terms** Define the following terms: **suffrage**, **coeducation**.
- Reviewing Facts** How did the fight to end slavery help spark the women's movement?

### Reviewing Themes

- Groups and Institutions** Discuss three specific goals of the women's rights movement.

### Critical Thinking

- Making Generalizations** What qualities do you think women such as Sojourner Truth, Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Elizabeth Blackwell shared?
- Organizing Information** Re-create the diagram below and list the areas where women gained rights.



### Analyzing Visuals

- Sequencing Information** Study the information on the feature on the Seneca Falls Convention on pages 426–427. When did Wyoming women gain the right to vote? What "first" did Elizabeth Blackwell accomplish?

### Interdisciplinary Activity

**Music** Write and record a song designed to win supporters for the women's rights movement. Include lyrics that will draw both men and women supporters.