

To Be Continued Cards

Instructions for teacher: Copy these pages onto cardstock and distribute them to student volunteers to read aloud.

Women and Affirmative Action

- In 1967, President Lyndon Johnson expanded on Kennedy's 1961 affirmative action order to include women. According to the National Women's Law Center, affirmative action requirements by the federal government worked: "Female employment rose 15.2% at federal contractors, and only 2.2% elsewhere. The same study showed that federal contractors employed women at higher levels and in better paying jobs than other firms."
- In the first 20 years of Affirmative Action, women benefitted more than any other group. Columbia University law professor Kimberlé Crenshaw studied the effects of these policies and concluded, "The primary beneficiaries of affirmative action have been Euro-American women."

The Equal Rights Amendment

- Almost 50 years after she proposed it, a version of Alice Paul's Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) was ratified by Congress in 1972 and sent to the states for ratification. It read, "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex." The arguments for and against the amendment in the 1970s were somewhat similar to those in the 1920s. In general, professional women supported the amendment while working class women did not.
- Opposition was led by conservative activist Phyllis Schlafly, who predicted that the ERA would mean the end of protective laws for women: for example, divorced women would no longer be able to count on alimony payments, or being favored as the default custodial parent. Schlafly argued especially persuasively that the ERA would lead to women being drafted into the military. Ultimately, the amendment was approved by only 35 of the 38 states required for ratification, and failed.

Equal Jury Service

- A 1974 Supreme Court case recalls the 1963 Presidential Commission's recommendation for equal jury service, as well as the disagreement about whether all discriminatory laws are bad.
- A Louisiana law excused women from being called for jury service unless they opted in. This law was meant to protect women from having to leave their children in order to serve on juries. It was discriminatory in that it treated men and women differently, but for what many believed was to benefit, rather than disadvantage, women. The Court struck down this law in *Taylor v. Louisiana* (1974). Interestingly, the case was not argued on the grounds that women had a right to be called to serve on juries. Rather, it was argued that defendants had a Sixth Amendment right to a trial by jury made up of a cross-section of the community, which necessarily included women.

Voting and Education

- In 1972 Congress passed Title IX of the Education Amendments, banning sex discrimination in higher education. In 1981, women began earning more bachelor's degrees than men. In 1987 women began earning more master's degrees. By 2013, the Department of Education estimated that 61.6% of associate's degrees, 56.7% of bachelor's degrees, 59.9% of all master's degrees, and 51.6% of doctorates were earned by women. The American Association of University Women reported that between 1970 and 2001, the percentage of doctors who are women tripled, going from 7.6 percent to 25.2 percent. In 2017, more women than men were enrolled in medical school.
- A University of Florida analysis of Census Bureau statistics showed that, from 1984-2016, the higher one's educational attainment, the more likely one was to vote. Close to 90% of people with graduate degrees turned out to vote; that rate was less than 50% of people with a high school diploma or less.
- According to the Center for American Women in Politics, women have voted in greater numbers than men in elections since the 1980's. The Center reported this trend was true across all races with the exception of Asians/Pacific Islanders.

Economic Equality and the Wage-Gap

- Women make up about 47% of the workforce today. Some believe there is a wage gap in the labor force and that women are paid \$.75 for every dollar earned by men. This statistic contains a bit of truth but is largely a misrepresentation. It is true that if one adds up the wages earned by all women and divides by the number of working women, and then does the same for men, the result is that women overall earn about 75% of what men do. But this disparity is in large part due to the educational, family, and career choices made by individuals.
- Free to choose their own educational paths, women have not chosen fields like engineering, computer science, and other lucrative STEM careers at the same rates as men, but have preferred to enter the social sciences, education, or other fields which tend to pay less. Men also typically work full-time until retirement, whereas women more often choose to take time off to raise children, and work part-time more often than men.
- Studies that have looked at women and men who followed the same educational and career paths have found that men's and women's pay differs by only 2%, with women earning 98% of what men do.
- The wage gap may continue to shrink as women now make up the majority of students preparing for well-paying careers in law, medicine, pharmacy, and accounting. It remains to be seen whether women will attain partnerships and leadership positions, which can take decades of work to attain, in these areas at rates near or equal to men.

Women and Public Office

- Before and since gaining the vote, women have played an active role in American public life.
- As far as roles in government go, men still vastly outnumber women: As of 2019, women held six or 26%, of cabinet-level positions, and comprised 23.6 % in U.S. Congress, 27.6 % in statewide elective offices, 28.6% in state legislatures. More than 1800 women served on state legislatures, and nine states had female governors. Three women sat on the U.S. Supreme Court.
- Both parties have run female candidates for Vice President, and in 2016 former First Lady, U.S. Senator, and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton became the first female presidential candidate from a major party.

Women and the Family

- In the 1950s, 95% of women married, three-fourths of them by age 24. In 2019, about half of U.S. women are married, and the median age at first marriage is 27. Married women are less likely than single women to live in poverty.
- In the 1950s, virtually all (more than 90%) of children lived with their biological, married parents. Today, fewer than half do. One-third of children live with a parent (usually their mother) and the parent's live-in boy/girlfriend. Eighteen percent of children in the U.S. live with a single parent, and 81% of single custodial parents are women.
- More than 27% of single parents and their children live in poverty, versus 16% of cohabitating parents, and 9.8% of married parents. Further, compared to children who live with their married biological parents, children who live in single-parent, cohabitating, or step-parent families are more likely to experience family instability, sexual abuse, and mental health problems.
- As explained in a Princeton study, “The Evolving Role of Marriage: 1950–2010” one team of social scientists links these statistics to equality of opportunity for young people. “Parents who are able to adopt a high-investment strategy are those most likely to get married and stay married, using marriage as a commitment device to support joint investments in their children. If our analysis is correct, equality of opportunity will be a major challenge in the 21st century.”

Abortion

- The National Organization for Women lobbied for the repeal of laws outlawing abortion. Citing the right to privacy that it had recognized in *Griswold v. Connecticut* (1965), the Supreme Court held in *Roe v. Wade* (1973) that states could not restrict abortion during the first trimester. There were, however, increasing levels of government interest in protecting the unborn baby during the second and third trimesters. This decision overturned or affected laws in 46 states.
- The ruling in *Roe v. Wade* remains one of the most divisive Supreme Court rulings in U.S. history. It is supported by groups including the National Organization for Women and opposed by groups such as Feminists for Life.