



The Early 1800's

The influences that shaped the League of Women Voters began in the early 1800s. Changes were slowly proceeding to “transform the status and role of women...in society.” Women were working both individually and together to contribute their positions on the political issues of the time. They sought ways to influence public policy through questions and debate.

In the 1820's Emma Willard and Frances Wright lobbied for universal education. Wright, a social reformer, published, *Views of Society and Manners in America*. She pressed for universal equality of education and women's rights.

In the 1830's antislavery societies were formed in several states. Lucretia Mott was an inspiration to women abolitionists. She pushed to reform the position of women's rights in society. A version of the Equal Rights Amendment of 1923 was named the Lucretia Mott Amendment for her work. “Men and Women shall have equal rights throughout the United States and every place subject to its jurisdiction. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.”

Sarah and Angelina Grimke were writers, orators and educators. They advocated for women's rights and abolition. They were among the first female public speakers. The sisters defended their right to speak, ensuring a bond with the slavery question and with women's rights. They “drew an analogy between the conditions of women and slaves and insisted on equality for all under the law.” They spoke in front of mixed audiences, stepping out of “woman's proper sphere”, setting a precedent at the time. They insisted that women need to educate themselves and others, to discuss and circulate petitions, raising women to action and not turning back but moving forward.

Great women excelled in free thinking, education or professional work which inaugurated the drive for progressive reform.

Thank you to Wikipedia, *Rethinking Women's Suffrage in New Jersey, 1776-1807* by Jan Ellen Lewis, *One Woman, One Vote*, edited by Marjorie Spruill Wheeler, “Ourselves and Our Daughters Forever” by Linda Kerber, *In the Public Interest* by Louse M. Young, *The Concise History of Woman Suffrage*, edited by Mari Jo Buhle and Paul Buhle.

Noted June dates:

- June 4 Congress passed the 19th Amendment (1919)
- June 10 Illinois ratified the 19th Amendment (1919)
- June 11 Anniversary of women getting the right to vote in Illinois for local and national Offices (1913)

BE INFORMED AND VOTE

Celebrate the League of Women Voters and the 19th Amendment

1920 - 2020