

Abolition and Women's Rights

BEFORE YOU READ

In the last section, you read about reform movements in the United States in the 1800s.

In this section, you will learn about the calls for freedom for slaves and equal rights for women.

TERMS & NAME

Reformer	Contributions to Abolition/Women's Movements
William Lloyd Garrison	Published abolitionist newspaper Supported women's rights

Abolitionists Call for Ending Slavery

Abolition was the movement to end slavery. It began in the late 1700s. By 1804, most states in the North had outlawed slavery. In 1807, Congress made it illegal to bring new African slaves into the United States. *Abolitionists* began to demand a law to end slavery in the South. David Walker was a free African American in Boston. He printed a pamphlet that urged slaves to revolt.

William Lloyd Garrison published a newspaper called *The Liberator*. It called for the end of slavery. Many people hated his views. Sarah and Angelina Grimké were sisters who grew up in the South. Because they thought slavery was wrong, they moved north. They became Quakers and joined an antislavery society. They spoke out for abolition.

1. What did William Lloyd Garrison do to end slavery?

Eyewitnesses to Slavery

Frederick Douglass and **Sojourner Truth** were both former slaves. They became abolitionists. They spoke against slavery by telling about their lives. Douglass wrote an autobiography that described how it felt to be a slave. Douglass was a powerful speaker in favor of freeing the slaves. He also published an antislavery newspaper.

Sojourner Truth had fled her owners. She went to live with Quakers, who set her free. She spoke for abolition in the North and drew huge crowds.

2. How did Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth fight for abolition?

The Underground Railroad; Harriet Tubman

Some people helped slaves escape to freedom along the Underground Railroad. This was an above-the-ground series of escape routes from the South to the North. Runaway slaves traveled these routes on foot, on wagons, and by boats and trains.

Runaways on the Underground Railroad usually traveled by night. They hid by day in places called stations. The people who led the runaways to freedom were called conductors. One of the most famous conductors was Harriet Tubman. Tubman was an

escaped slave herself. She made 19 dangerous journeys to free enslaved persons. Among the people she saved were her parents.

3. How did runaway slaves escape to freedom on the Underground Railroad?

Women Reformers Face Barriers; The Seneca Falls Convention

Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton were also abolitionists. They were part of an American group that attended an antislavery convention in London in 1840. But when they tried to enter the convention, some men stopped them. The men said women should not speak in public. So the women had to sit behind a curtain.

To show his support, William Lloyd Garrison joined them. Most other people agreed that women should stay out of public life. Women in the 1800s had few legal or political rights. Many laws treated them

as children. At the end of the convention, Stanton and Mott decided to demand equal rights for women.

In July 1848, they held the Seneca Falls Convention in Seneca Falls, New York. It called for women's rights. The women wrote a document like the Declaration of Independence. The document listed several *resolutions*. It ended with a demand for rights. The group at the convention easily voted in favor of most of the resolutions. But they disagreed about the one for suffrage, or the right to vote. Stanton argued that the right to vote would give women political power. This would help them win other rights. The resolution won by a small margin. Many people made fun of the women's rights movement.

4. What did the women at the Seneca Falls Convention demand?

Continued Calls for Women's Rights

In the mid-1850s, three women added their support for the women's movement. In 1851, Sojourner Truth gave a speech for women's rights at a convention in Ohio. She urged men to give women their rights. Maria Mitchell was an astronomer. She helped to found the Association for the Advancement of Women.

Susan B. Anthony had worked for both temperance and abolition. She built the women's movement into a national organization. She worked to give married women the right to their own property and wages. By 1865, 29 states had such laws. Anthony also fought for women's right to vote. It was not a reality until the 1900s.

5. How did Susan B. Anthony work for women's rights?