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***American Women Strife and Suffering for
Equal Rights in a Dialectically Changing
Society in the 20th Century***

**Extended Essay Submitted to the Department of English in Partial
Fulfillment of the Master Degree in Literature and Civilization.**

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Dedications

I dedicate this work to:

My Parents; Cherife and khadija Ain Sebaa Chami.

My brother Issam and my sister Nabila.

My perfect grandmother Fatima Wasti.

My uncles Kuider, Tawfik and Mouhamed.

My friends Fethi, Naziha, Fatima Zahra, Iman, Sara and Aicha.

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Abstract

Before the 20th Century opened, gender discrimination has been widely inscribed in society. Therefore, women were oppressed by a society that view women's role primarily identified with her family rather than an individual. Besides, by marriage the husband and wife became one person and that person was the husband. American women strife and suffered for equal rights in a dialectical society. The findings of this research is to show the transformation of these women into committed feminists until the revival of feminine activism in the 1960's. We understand the importance of this evolution undertaken by women to gain visibility and significance. The main objective of this extended essay is to show the importance of the Feminists in the history of America generally, and women especially. In fact, it was the voice that was needed within society. That pushed women to become complete. As a result, to create a world when men and women share not only children, home, and garden, not only the fulfillment of their biological roles, but the responsibilities and passions of the work that create the human future and the full human knowledge.

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

AWSA	The American Women Suffrage Association
EEOC	The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
ERA	The Equal Rights Amendment
GSA	The General Services Administration
NAR	The National Archives and Records
NAWSA	The National American Women Suffrage Association
NOW	The National Organization for women
NWP	The National Women Party
NWSA	The National Women Suffrage Association
WCTU	The Women's Christian Temperance Union
WEAL	The Women's Equity Action League

General
Introduction

General Introduction

The theme of this research is about American women strife and suffering for equal rights in a dialectically changing society in the 20th Century. Throughout American history, women were oppressed and discriminated by a patriarchal society either socially, politically or economically, but this life no longer appeared splendid. Therefore, their fight began with the suffrage movement until women get equal rights.

The findings of this research evidence that women were really trapped by a government that limited their ambitions and opportunities and forced them to live a domestic life style. In fact, it was a strategy by the government to fulfill their aims in the American Dream, because the nation at that time suffered from wars and poverty. How can women save the situation and take their decision to start fighting against a strong and selfish male society ? In fact, why women choose the government as the only way to express their needs and demands ? or how could women realize their dream in a society that refused them totally ? The aim of this study is to analyse the transformation of women from housewives to the feminist. In fact, to understand how these housewives said no to all that was supposedly ideal and perfect, and started the fight for a battle of a society that accepts women who enjoy their complete rights.

In chapter one we show the struggle and suffering of women for equal Rights. Rights that establish the same social, economic, and political status for women as for men. Throughout the history of Western civilization, cultural and traditional beliefs allowed women only limited roles in society. Many people believed that women's natural roles were as mothers and wives. These people considered women to be better suited for childbearing and homemaking rather than for involvement in the public life of business or politics. Widespread belief that women were intellectually inferior to men led most societies to limit women's education to learning domestic skills.

In chapter two we aspire to show organized efforts by women to achieve greater rights that occurred in two major waves. The first wave began around the mid of the 19th century, when women in the United States campaigned to gain suffrage that is, the right to vote. This wave lasted until the 1920's when several countries granted

women suffrage. The second wave gained visibility during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960's, when the struggle by African Americans to achieve racial equality inspired women to renew their own struggle for equality. In the late 18th century, in an attempt to correct these inequalities, political theorists and philosophers asserted that all men were created equal and, therefore, were entitled to equal treatment under the law. In the 19th century governments in America began to draft new laws guaranteeing equality among men.

Chapter
One

Chapter One : American Society and Women’s Status before the 20th Century

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1.1 Introduction

Two hundred years ago, women in American society were regarded as second class citizens, with few opportunities to improve their lowly status in society. In fact, women did not have the choice, their future was already defined: going to college to prepare for marriage, meeting with a boy who would suit their family, getting married and having a large number of children.

Before the 20th century, there was ignorance of politics and such important worldly matters. In most countries, women were considered property of men and had no rights of their own. Usually, they could not own property or sign contracts. They had no control over their own body. They could not vote. They had no legal way to end marriage and they had no access to their children after a divorce.

Prior to 1920, women's status in the American economic market was not better than in politics. Women almost always held different posts from those occupied by men. In fact, it was forbidden for married women to work outside the home. Even if they worked, they were unable to access to skilled works.

1.2 Society

Throughout American history, female participation was limited and in many ways insignificant. In fact, the norm has been gender inequality, and the justice and morality of that inequality have been inscribed in religion, custom and law, which has often resulted in men's abuse, oppression and exploitation of women (Fox-Genovese, 1999, p 26).

1.2.1 Women in the Colonial Era

Life in early Colonial America, particularly in the 16th Century, was extremely hard. Woman had a specific place in the lives of their communities. They were to perform traditional roles such as cooking, cleaning, raising and educating the children. In fact, women worked in and around the house, they also worked in the fields tilling the land and farming (Kathlee, 1996, p 82).

Schooling for girls began as early as 1767 in New England. It was optional and some towns proved reluctant. Northampton, Massachusetts, for example, was a late adopter because it had many rich families who dominated the political and social structures and they did not want to pay taxes to aid poor families. Northampton assessed taxes on all households, rather than only on those with children, and used the funds to support a grammar school to prepare boys for college. Not until after 1800 did Northampton educate girls with public money (Sklar, 1750-1820, pp 511-542).

During the Colonial period, women were expected to bear and give life to many children; pain suffering and even death during childbirth were considered part of the female's destiny. Therefore, Latin American women had the highest proportional number of maternal deaths as a result of unsafe abortion and insufficient health care. An estimated number of 20.000 Latin American women die every year from unsafe abortion (Nothup and Shifter, 2015, p i).

1.2.2 Marriage and Reproductive Rights

During the late 18th and early 19th centuries, women's marriage and employment were almost always less important than men's. Historian Francoise Bash focuses her views on marriage when she writes, "In the Nineteenth century, the oppression of women appeared starkly in the marriage relation: wedding bells rang in major inequalities between bride and bridegroom and sternly prescribed different gender roles", meanwhile, marriage was considered as a form of slavery and a source of oppression, and that marriage represented the overall issues of the lack of rights for women (Basch, 1986, pp 18- 22).

Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Henry Black Well and Lucy Stone believed that women were like slaves, because they lost their names and took the name of the person who essentially owned them. As a British lawyer puts it, "The husband and wife are one, and that one is the husband"(Ibid). As a result, the role of those American young girls were suddenly transformed from the role of individuals to their husband's possession. A women expresses love in terms of surroundings. She empowers her husband by accepting his leadership, and by believing in him (Ibid).

1.2.3 Violence against Women

During the mid-nineteenth century, there were many historians who remarked an increase in the violence phenomenon such as Pamela Haag, who noticed that violence in New York City was considered by male society as their right to beat their wives. Pamela also examined criminal trials of wife's murder, that neighbors would call domestic violence, but they could do nothing to stop it (Haag, 1992, pp 462-463).

Accompanied with violence and divorce there was another surprising aspect, the alimony. It was not the idea of alimony¹ itself that was shocking, but its very low amount. Furthermore, alimony existed in the English law as a yearly payment and it could also be ruled as a lump sum. Thus, it was always separate from child support under a justification that it was the husband's role to support and nourish his wife with a portion of this property. As a result, many states like Indiana and New York in 1852 declared alimony a lump sum (Basch, 1999, p 101).

However, the biggest surprising issue concerning alimony was that if a woman brought in something like a dowry² into her marriage she had to get that amount back with the alimony. Moreover, Historian Norma Basch states that there was no alimony in reality, because most American people at that time were poor and lived in financial troubles, which led to an increase in divorce rates (Ibid).

Traditionally, alimony was considered kind of punishment for misconduct that ended the marriage. So, if the husband committed adultery and the wife was innocent, she was entitled to alimony. By contrast, if the wife committed adultery, the law directly prohibited her from alimony as a punishment for her misconduct (Vernier and Hurlbut, 1939, p 19).

Indeed, over time women started to get tired, bored and dissatisfied. This domestic life began to affect American women not only physically but, also mentally. As a result, many women started to show symptoms of their insanity. The most known

¹ Is a legal obligation to provide financial support to his spouse before or after a marital separation.

² The dowry system is thought to put a greater financial burden to the bride's family.

one was Mrs. Elizabeth Parsons Ware Parkand. Park and after experiencing a two years as an insane person, could finally decide to take her case to trial to prove her sanity and she was really successful (Ibid).

1.2.4 Women and the Civil War

Women worked hardly during the Civil War to support the war effort. Women did what they could to help soldiers. During the summer of 1864 many women gathered together to raise money, sew clothing and bedding, and knit socks for soldiers (Linthicum, 1956, p1).

Many women also worked and volunteered for the many U.S. Army Field Hospitals. In these hospitals women worked nursing the sick and wounded. However, nursing jobs were much different than nursing jobs today, especially for women. For women in the field hospitals, nursing included cooking, washing floors and cloths, and general care for soldiers. During this time professional nursing had not been developed, and army nurses were more likely to be male than female. Winning the war required much more than soldiers. Food, clothing, and shelter were also needed. Though providing these services was not the most glamorous job, women filled these positions and did whatever they could to help win the war (Ibid).

1.2.5 Women and the First World War (1914 – 1918)

World War One, also marked many new changes for women. During this time, for example, women were allowed to enlist in the U.S. Navy for the first time in American history. The First World War created a huge demand for sailors and workers. For this reason, the United States Navy decided to enlist women. Women also occupied noncombat jobs such as yeomen, radio electricians, pharmacists, chemists, draftsmen, accountants, and telephone operators (Linthicum, 1956, p1).

Another change that occurred during World War One was the increased participation of professional female nursing. The number of female professional nurses increased and it became a much more acceptable field for women. When the war hit America more than 12,000 nurses from the Army Medical Service and the U.S. Navy were called onto active duty. Women dedicated volunteerism and hard

work during war. When their country was called to arm women employed both domestic and non-domestic jobs. For this reason, the Great War also helped set the stage for women to work outside the traditional domestic sphere and push for equal rights (Ibid).

1.3 Politics

Discrimination against women through Anglo-American history has been documented solely on the basis of sex. Women were denied legal political rights, and it is well described by Blackstone in one of his commentaries, “Partly because it is impossible their testimony should be indifferent, but principally because of the union of person.... But though our law in general considers man and wife as one person, yet there were some instances in which she was separately considered as inferior to him, and acting by his compulsion” (Zaher, 2002, p 459).

Traditionally, English Common law was affected by the legal traditions of Romans and Normans with the Canon law of the Catholic Church, which stated that married women were generally considered to be under the protection and cover of their husbands (Basch, 1979, pp 346-347). Furthermore, concerning widows and unmarried adult women rights, they could own property collect rents, manage shops and have standing court. But once they got married their personal and real property go directly to their husbands (Ronner, 1996, p19).

During the last half of the 19th century, the incomes of the Industrial Revolution brought many changes. Victorian ideals for womanhood were actionally shaping American society .Moreover, those changes were widely reflected in the law, in which the concept of coverture took another way under a new rationale (Rifkin, 1980, pp 83-85). Indeed, women of the time were regarded as individuals, but individuals who operated in a separate sphere and this sphere was the private world of the home (Ibid).

As America really became an industrialized country, the stable transition of wealth became highly desirable and achieved social values. As a result, married

women property acts were issued aiming to achieve their personal rights as legal persons who could own and sell property without any control of their husbands and they could sue their husbands for divorce, gained custody for children and entered professions, especially law (Ertman, 1996, p 1107).

Although the pervasive doctrine of Coverture had been carried out, married women found it hard to overcome the presumption of unity and civil death (Hoff, 1991, p165). More than that, the severe laws and customs made women more dependent on men. Married women of the time could not enter into a contract or into an attorney's without the consent of their husbands (Buonocore Porter, 2000, pp 1-6).

1.3.1 Women Rights across The US States

Until the late nineteenth century, men still had the absolute power among their families. In fact, fathers in English common law had the legal obligation to protect and hold support and educate their children, and even after divorce the father had all the right to custody of their children. Unlike mothers, who had just a very restricted access or rights of their own children (Kelley, 1994, p121).

Indeed, during the second half of the nineteenth century in America, control over one's own body like contraception was forbidden, and it was rare of women using modern methods of birth control or abortion as well (Ibid). Latin American countries had some of the most restrictive health laws, particularly with regard to abortion. In part, this stems of not recognizing reproductive freedom as a fundamental human right. Instead, harsh laws compelled women to risk their lives and health by seeking out unsafe abortions (Nothup and Shifter, 2015, p ii).

1.3.1 Women's Rights across the US States

Until the nineteenth century, under the Common Law, women lost their identity after marriage. They could not hold property or land in their own name, write bills or contracts, nor did they have legal control over their own children. However, there were some remarkable changes in the legal position of married women,

particularly in what concerns child custody decisions. In 1838 Iowa was the first state that permitted custody to mother, followed shortly by some other states (Mason, 1994, p 12).

Although, American women had not gained legal rights equal to men in all respects, in particular, women still suffered a lot from discrimination. In fact, women continued to face unequal legal treatment in the labor market long after they had gained the right to vote. Indeed, women voting differently from those counterpart men. One argument is that women have intrinsically different preferences, and in particular care more about children and public health and less about defense than men. Other evidence on women political rights comes from natural experiment that instituted quotas for female politicians (Goldin, 1990, p 7).

1.3.2 Women and Economic Challenges

Since America's formative years, women in the workforce had greatly evolved in the traditional views, that prior to the World War Two era female participation was limited and in ways insignificant in the American economy prior to 1900's. Although economists and historians seem to agree that women entered the workforce in a fairly continuous influx, between the years of 1800's and 1900's, the female workforce participation rate was fairly stable at around 20 percent. Thus, between 1860 and 1870 there was a dip in participation down to below 15 percent, but in 1900 this ratio once again climbed to the stable 20 percent level (Banazak, 2012, p1).

Perkins Edwin in 1989, discusses the role of women in the Colonial American economy. Although, Perkins's study based much on the entrepreneurial achievements of men during the Colonial Period, he also agree that women made a significant Contribution. Therefore, according to Perkins it is so important to distinguish between single women, married women and widows (p 54).

During the colonial period, many wives contributed to the economic activities, helping their husband's harvest and perform household chores, unlike widows who possessed a bit more freedom than women. At that time, widows

inherited their husband's businesses they were able to function in the roles of owner and entrepreneur. They would, in fact, employ people and negotiate business contracts. Indeed, most colonies started inheritance laws that ownership of the business would be transferred to the next eligible male heir, instead of their widows. As Perkins added and explained: "Colonial women in the most favorable circumstances remained strictly on the periphery of the entrepreneurial" (Ibid).

In Walter Licht's book "Industrialization America" in 1995, particularly in a chapter entitled "Paths", the book included the various Paths across the country in pursuit of industrialization in which Walter presented the massive effects of these economic developments on women especially. Thus, one of these Paths was the Mill Village developed by Samuel Slater in the late 18th century. At that time, these new factories faced a lack of labor, and Slater solved this problem by attracting families to the villages proposing male heads of household jobs in management and agriculture, while wives and children worked in factories (p23). Although, women were employed, the Slater's systems did not succeed completely, because they only relied on the husband to both disciplines and advocates for their working family member (Ibid).

As Slater's mill town system failed, Francis Cabot Lowell raised the system of "One Industry City", included a relatively unpopulated area with young married women schooling to staff the factories. These women known as "The Lowell Girls", were provided safe housing on company land, a fair wage and activities when they were not working. Consequently, many other factories began to employ women directly, like New England Shoe Makers (Ibid).

Goldin also cited the example of Deborah Franklin, whose husband Benjamin Franklin wrote: "that she assisted cheerfully in my business, folding and stitching pamphlets, tending shop, purchasing old men rags for the paper makers" (Goldin, 1980, p 46). But, this is not until the industrialization and urbanization took place, which encouraged women to leave home. Thus, wages increased for both married and unmarried women in relation to those of older males, and the average of marriage was a few years older than it had been. This does not mean that a gender gap did not

exist, for example. Furthermore, in Goldin's study of Philadelphia Census data from 1790 to 1860, Goldin discovered that female participation rate was an average of 44%. In fact, the majority of those women worked in sewing, domestic service or small retail business ownership (p47).

Economists and historians like Robert A. Margo and Joel Parلمان in their famous book "Women's Work: American school teachers from 1650 to 1920", discuss one of the largest side from Industrial occupations, which eventually came to include women, was the field of Education. Margo and Parلمان argued that education was an important task for women, as well as, for children. Consequently, Massachusetts law required that children must be provided Education in reading and writing (p16). In order to do this, Dame Schools were established, where women would be provided both instruction and care

By 1860, women made up 76 percent of total teachers in urban areas and rural areas. In fact, women accounted for 61 percent of teachers teaching children of all ages and genders. Indeed, there are many reason behind this disproportionate ratio. According to Prelmann and Margo, one reasons is the large gender gap in wages. In the mid 1840's Norther Eastern female school teachers were payed less than a male of the same profession, because it was cheaper to hire a female teacher than a male. Consequently, due to the Industrial Revolution single women were freed from domestic duties (Ibid).

It is clear that the central fact given by Margo and Parلمان based on their chosen occupations, which were different in the South and North, meanwhile, economy in the South was much more heavily based on agriculture in which many women assisted their husband's work. Furthermore, they made their time much more valuable in the home. Unlike the Southern culture norms, they believed that women's place was inside the home; women were considered inferior, weak and not able to descipline, control or adequately educate children (Ibid).

As we can see, single women dominated the U.S female labor force from 1870 to 1920. Occupational segregation by sex was a partial product of the method of

payment, and the early termination of human capital investment was a function of the life – cycle labor force participation of these women (Golden, 1980, p 81).

1.3.3 Characteristics of Single Working Women (1888 - 1907)

Single working women in the history of American economy played a significant role in their homes and occupations. At that time, their jobs were predominantly task-oriented and were frequently paid for the piece. Between 35 percent and 47 percent of women in manufacturing in 1890 worked on piece rate, and it was often different from those occupied by men. However, single women of 16 to 24 years old were neither at school nor working outside their homes in 1900's (Golden, 1980, p 82).

According to Carol Wright's working women earnings data, women doing manual work in both 1888 and 1907 may be colloquially termed unskilled or more than that semiskilled .So, women were involved in substantial learning and just after some years of job training would be professional. As a result, young women worked in various industries and factories such as men's clothing, moving up on the earnings function, involving job mobility, what exactly changed the character of the work and involved a period of reduced productivity and wages (Wright, 1908, p 477).

1.5 Conclusion

America was created by males, and all aspect of the society were designed to ensure that males would continue to dominate the social, economic and political realms until the 1960's. Therefore, women were marginalized and subordinated to the tasks of keeping the home and rearing the children without rights or a voice in a public founded on the ideals of liberty and inalienable rights.

American women lived in a time when a woman had no way out of marriage. That was not healthy and at the same time dangerous. She tried to change the situation, but she did not fully succeed at the beginning. Thus, she came to the conclusion that she had to leave the home towards divorce. Consequently, she faced

the public's attitudes. In the following chapter we will deal with women's struggle for equal rights and better status.

Chapter
Two

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2.1 Introduction

In 1848, at the Seneca Falls Convention, the Women's Rights Movement formalized its position with the publication of the "Declaration of Sentiment". The document listed a series of economic, political, and social grievances.

As the 19th century progressed, organizations like the National Woman Suffrage Association and the American Woman Suffrage Association were founded to promote suffrage. After the ratification of the 19th Amendment that granted women the right to vote, Alice Paul the president of the National Women Party drafted the Equal Rights Amendment in 1923.

Political philosophers in Europe began to question the traditional ideas. They argued that all human being were born with natural rights and this led to strong debates and dialectics between philosophers and egalitarian social structures that could correct these inequalities.

2.2 The Socond Great Awakening

The Second Great Awakening was caused by the spread of secularism and deism of the time after the Revolution, which swept through the nation from 1800 to 1845 (Carwadine, 1993, p 2). The Second Great Awakening influence was quite big. Groups of people who had always been oppressed suddenly barged into politics like women and slaves. The Second Great Awakening launched two important political movements, Abolitionism and the Women's Movement (Morone, 2003, p 5).

2.3 The Women's Movement

Women's suffrage also known as woman suffrage or woman's right to vote, is the right of women to vote in elections. Limited voting rights were gained by women just in some western U.S. states in the late 19th century. National and international organizations formed to coordinate efforts to gain voting rights (Du Bois, 1998, pp 174–176).

2.3.1 The Seneca Falls Convention “The Declaration of Sentiments”

The Seneca Falls Convention¹ was one of the first major women’s rights conventions to be organized in the United States. It took place in Seneca Falls, New York during July 19-20, 1848. It was attended by approximately three hundred people, both men and women. The convention was organized by Elizabeth Cady Stanton² and Lucretia Mott³. Stanton and Mott were aided in their organization by Martha Coffin Wright. All the women argued that there should be equality for men and women ([http:// en wikipedia.org /wiki/Declaration of Sentiments](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Declaration_of_Sentiments)).

2.3.2 The 19th Amendment’s Ratification

Widespread agitation for Women Suffrage began immediately after the Civil War. The Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments did not provide universal suffrage for all American, but extended the franchise only to black men. In fact, women’s rights advocates divided angry in 1869, largely over the issue of whether or not to support ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment (Spruil wheeler, 1995, pp 9-10).

2.3.2.1 Organization for Women’s Rights

Two Women Suffrage Organizations were founded in 1869, the American Women Suffrage Association (AWSA)⁴ led by Lucy Stone⁵. The husband Henry Black Well, Julia Ward Howe, Thomas Wentworth Higginson and Henry Ward Beecher supported the 15th Amendment, believing a federal women suffrage Amendment was not yet possible (Spruil Spruill, 2011-2012, p15).

¹ It advertised itself as a convention to discuss the social, civil and religious condition and rights of woman.

² Was an American suffragist, social activist abolitionist and leading figure of the early women’s rights movement, (November 13,1818- October 19, 1893).

³ Was an American Quaker; abolitionist a women’s rights activist, and a social reformer (January 3, 1793- November 11, 1880).

⁴ Was founded in November 1869, in response to a split in the American Equal Rights Association, its founders supported the Fifteenth Amendment, and strongly supported securing the right to vote for African American men.

⁵ Was a prominent American Orator, abolitionist and suffragist and a vocal advocate and organizer promoting rights for woman.

The National Women Suffrage Association (NWSA)⁶ headed by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony⁷ based in New York City opposed the 15th Amendment which prevents the US from denying a citizen the right to vote on the basis of race and color, because it left women out. In the 1870's began a "New Departure", claiming that as citizens they had the right to vote and they tested this claim in the courts (Ibid). However, in 1875, the court ruled unanimously that citizenship did not automatically confer the right to vote and that the issue of female enfranchisement should be decided within the states (Spull Wheeler, 1995, p 11).

2.3.2.2 Women Suffrage and The Western States

Indeed, Women Suffrage was making head way in the West, while most Eastern Politicians were dead set against women suffrage. Therefore, Politicians and voters in several western states enfranchised women and at that times battled in congress for the right to do so. In addition, Utah enacted Women Suffrage as a territory in 1870, Colorado 1893 and Idaho 1896, were the other pioneering suffrage states. For whatever reason, these four western states were the only states to adopt women suffrage in the nineteenth century : Washington 1910, California 1911, Oregon 1912 with Kansas and Arizona (Spull Wheeler, 1995, p 12).

2.3.2.3 Women Suffrage and Temperance

The Suffrage Movement won a new ally in 1880, when Frances Willard as president of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU)⁸ and thousand of women joined the suffrage, as the only way to protect their home and to gain their rights. The Temperance Organization⁹ created support for suffrage among women who

⁶ Was formed on May 15, 1869 in New York city, its founders Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton opposed the Fifteenth Amendment unless it included the vote for women.

⁷ Was an American reformer and feminist, who played a pivotal role in the Women's Suffrage Movement.

⁸ Was the first mass organization among women devoted to social reform, with a program that linked the religious and based on applied Christianity.

⁹ Temperance organizations of the United States played an essential role in bringing about ratification of the eighteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution establishing national prohibition of alcohol.

might have considered the existing suffrage organizations and their leaders eccentric or radical (Spruill Wheeler, 1995, p13).

2.3.2.4 The NAWSA and the Race Issue (1890 – 1910)

In 1890, the AWSA and the NWSA put aside their differences and merged their or Spruill Wheeler ganizations into one powerful national association led by Susan B. Anthony. They argued that the ultimate goal of the NAWSA, better known simply as the national was a Federal Suffrage Amendment but that they must first build support state by state. They concluded that the movement must focus almost exclusively on winn In 1880ing the votes and shedding its radical image and avoiding Association with radical causes in the future, to gain direct influence through the vote (Spruill Wheeler, 2011-2012, p 23).

This new approach included shedding the traditional association of women's rights with the rights of blacks (Spruill Wheeler, 1995, p12). In the 1890's White Southern Politicians sought to restore white supremacy in politics, southern suffragists with backing of NAWSA leaders suggested that southern states adopted women suffrage with restriction. They warned that denying Black men their right to vote was a violation of the Fifteenth Amendment and that Federal Government might not tolerate it (Ibid).

This Period was described by historians as “the Doldrum” of the Chapman Catt 1900 to 1904. The NAWSA began successful efforts to rescruit large numbers of socially prominent and politically influential women. The suffrage profited greatly from the new ideas and energy of the younger leaders such as Maud Wood Park and Inez Haynez Inwin who formed the College Equal Suffrage League (Spruill Wheeler, 1995, p14).

2.3.2.5 The Progressive Era (1900's)

This era included the revered Jane Addams, founder of the famous Chicago settlement house, Hull house at that time. Many socialists supported women suffrage, playing an important role in the Suffrage Movement, particularly in New York,

Wisconsin and California through some socialists including Emma Goldman and thought the idea to expect that much progress would come from female enfranchisement (Spruill Wheeler, 1995, p15).

2.3.2.6 Alice Paul, The National Women's Party and Suffrage Militance

The central issue in this new rift in the Suffrage forces was Alice Paul's advocacy of a strategy derived from the British Suffragists. A strategy that violated the NAWSA's long standing policy of non-partisanship by forming a separate organization known as the National Women's Party (NWP). Paul and her associates used new tactics designed to force President Woodrow Wilson and the Democratic Party to support the federal Amendment. However, during Wilson's inaugural celebration, more than a thousand suffragists arrayed with banners, captured the nation's attention and attacked the marchers, which led to a congressional investigation (Ibid).

2.3.2.7 Carrie Chapman Catt and "The Wining Plan"

During World War One, Catt and the suffragists supported the war effort, a policy that enhanced the patriotic image of the movement with the public and powerful decision of Wilson. At the end of the war, the 19th Amendment of the Constitution gave all American women the right to vote. It came up before the House of Representatives in 1918. However, the Senate failed to pass the Amendment that year. It was approved by Congress next year on June 4, 1919 and the states started ratifying it in 1920 (Spruill Wheeler, 1995, pp17- 18).

Indeed, as it moved on to the house, Distillery Lobbyists came to fight the Amendment, when Harry Burn, the youngest member of the House received a letter from his mother telling him to be a good boy and to help Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt. The Amendment ratified that day August 18, 1920 and officially becoming part of the Constitution as laws on August 26, 1920 later became known as women's Equity Day (Ibid).

2.3.2.8 Women Suffrage Movement Victory 1920

The feared voter block never materialized, as women voted with their husbands or fathers, a logical occurrence since after all women tended to share the same concerns socially, economically and politically, as the men in their lives. The automobile's invention and mass production also added to the feeling of liberation for all Americans. This era of good feeling ended when Alice Paul started to draft the Equal Rights in 1923 (Radek, 2001, p 1).

2.3.3 Equal Rights Amendment's Ratification (ERA)

The proposed Equal Rights Amendment¹⁰ (ERA) to the United States Constitution is a political and cultural phenomenon which people feared about the changing status of women. Alice Paul drafted the ERA in 1923. Therefore, the first proposal for Equal Rights Amendment drafts by Alice Paul¹¹ presented it as the "Lucretia Mott Amendment" and later introduced in the 68th Congress in 1923, the text of the Amendment read as follows :

« Men and Women should have equal rights throughout the United States and in another place subject to its Jurisdiction »

« Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate Legislation »
(Francis, 2015, pp 2-3).

The 1960's brought a revival of women's Rights Movement and more insistence on the change in social rights and responsibilities. The fact of women's involvement in the Civil Rights Movement and the anti-war created a social context in which many women became active supporters of enhanced Legislation for themselves (Neale, 2014, p 5).

¹⁰ It is based on the verb amend, which means to change, Amendments can add, remove or update parts of these agreements, they are often used to change the document than to write a new official one.

¹¹ Was an American Suffragist, feminist and women rights activist, Alice spend a half century as leader of National Women 's Party, in which fought for her Equal Rights Amendment to secure Constitutional equality for women.

By the time, the concept of an ERA emerged as a National issue, it also won popular support as measured by Public Opinion Polling¹² (Mansbridge, 1986, pp 206-209). Furthermore, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 banned discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, religion and sex. The proposals for an ERA had gained support in other areas, such as the Republican Party 1940, followed by the Democratic Party 1944 and by 1970 Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon all on record have endorsed on ERA (Ibid).

On January 16, 1969 Representative Martha Griffiths¹³ proposing an ERA in the House of Representatives, but no further action was taken. On June, 1970 Griffiths took the unusual step of filing a discharge petition¹⁴ to bring the proposed to the floor. A discharge petition allows measure to come to the Floor for consideration. As reported at that time, the use of the discharge petition had seldom been invoked successfully (Neale, 2014, p 6).

By June 20, 1970 Representative Griffiths announced that she had obtained the necessary 218 member's signature for the petition. The Senate Resolution was inceptable to ERA supporters. However, the House stripped out the Committee Amendments, and on October 12, it approved the Resolution by a bipartisan vote of 354 to 24. Moreover, the Senate began debate on the Amendment on March 17, with Senator Birch Bay of Indiana, a longtime ERA supporter and floor manager. On the same day President Richard Nixon released a letter to Senate Republican Leader Hugh Scott of Pennsylvania reaffirming his endorsemant of ERA (Ibid).

After two days, Senator Sam Ervin of North Carolina offered a series of Amendments that exempted women from compulsory Military Service and Service in Combat Units in the U.S Armed Forces and reserved existing gender- specific state and Federal Legislation that extended special exemptions or protection to women.

¹² Openion polls are usually designed to represent the openions of a population by conducting a series of quetions and then extrapolating generalities in ratio.

¹³ Was an American Lawyer and Judge, she was the first women to serve on the House Committee on ways and means and the first women elected to the United Congress.

¹⁴ Is means of bringing a bill out of Committee and to the Floor for consideration without report from the Committee.

Therefore, over the course of two days Senator Ervin's Amendments were serially considered and rejected generally (Ibid).

2.3.2 Congress and the Seven- Year Ratification Deadline in 1982

When the Equal Rights Amendment was proposed, it was the Congress that stipulated in the preamble of the joint Resolution that the ERA was to be ratified by Constitutional requisite member of State Legislatures. Within seven years of time, it was proposed in order to become a valid part of the Constitution, with the exception of the Nineteenth Amendment and the Child Labor Amendment (Neale, 2014, p 8).

By the end of 1972, Congress once proposed the Equal Rights Amendment. However, it began to coalesce around Organizations like «Stop ER ». Opponents also broadly asserted that the ratification of the Amendment would lead to other unanticipated negative social and economic efforts. In 1976, ERA supporters established Organizations like «ERAMeric » to serve as a high-profile national advocate for the Amendment. Following the first 22 state approvals, 8 additional states ratified in 1973, 3 more in 1974, and 1 each in 1975 and 1977, for an ultimate total of 35,3 short of Constitutional requirement of 38 State Ratifications (Kyvig, 1976-1995, pp 409-412).

On October 26, 1977 representative Elizabeth Holtzman proposed a Resolution to extend the deadline an additional seven years. However, this led to a compromise Amendment to the Resolution that reduced the proposed extension to three years, three months and eight days. The ERA supporters accepted the shorter period, which led to other changes. One that would have recognized the right of states to rescind their ratifications, the second required a passage of the extension in the full House by a two thirds super majority. They were both rejected by the Committee when it reported the Resolution to the House on July 30 (Neale, 2014, p10).

By the time, the Amendment's extended Ratification Deadline passed in 1982, the Legislatures of more than 17 states had considered rescission. On May 9, 1979 the State of Idaho joined by the State of Arizona and brought legal action in the

U.S District of Idaho asserting that the states did have to rescind their instruments of Ratification. The plaintiffs further asked that the extension enacted by Congress be declared null and void. Consequently, neither the Idaho nor the Arizona legislature had passed a Resolution of rescission (Ibid).

On December 23, 1981 District Court judge Marion Callister ruled (1) that Congress had exceeded its power by extending it from March 22, 1979 to June 30, 1982 and (2) that states had the authority to rescind their instruments of Ratification, provided they took this action before an Amendment was declared to be an operative part of the Constitution (Carroll & Freeman, 1982, pp 151-161).

2.3.3 Renewed Legislature and Constitutional Proposals (1982 to 2015)

Interest in the proposed Equal Rights Amendment did not end when its extended Ratification Deadline expired on June 30, 1982 (Neale, 2014, p12). The 15 states whose legislators have not ratified the Equal Rights Amendment are Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Utah and Virginia (Francis, 2015, p 3).

In 1994, Representative Robert Andrews introduced a bill in each Congressional session. In 2011 he joined lead sponsor Representatives Tammy Baldwin who supported his bill to remove ERA's Ratification Deadline and make it part of the Constitution, when three more States ratified (Ibid).

Five States: Idaho, Kentucky, Tennessee and South Dakota have attempted to withdraw their approval of the ERA. For example, during the Ratification process of the 14th Amendment, New Jersey and Ohio voted to rescind their Ratification after first voting yes, but they were both included in the published list of States approving the Amendment in 1868. On October 25, 2012 a letter responding to a query from Congress woman Cardyn Maloney, lead sponsor of the ERA in the House of Representatives wrote :

NARS's (National Archives and Records Administration's): "Constitutional Amendment states that a proposal Amendment becomes part of the Constitution as

soon as it is ratified by Three –Fourths of the States indicating that Congressional action is not needed to certify that the Amendment has been added to the Constitution. It also states that Certification of the legal sufficiency of ratification documents is final and conclusive ”(Ibid).

As a result, the Amendment published with his Certificate specifying the States by which in the same way they have been adopted and that the same has become valid as a part of the Constitution without further action by Congress. States which guaranteed Equal Rights on the basis of sex in various ways are: Utah, Wyoming, Colorado, Hawaii, Florida, California, Louisiana, Rhode Island that affirms Equal Rights either explicitly or implicitly for male and female citizens. Therefore, five states with State-level Equal Rights Amendment or guarantees are: Florida, Illinois, Louisiana, Utah and Virginia, have not yet ratified the federal ERA (Ibid).

State Equal Rights Amendments have been cited in a few State Court decisions in Connecticut and New Mexico, regarding a very specific issue of reproductive rights. Thus, a requirement that if the State pays for childbirth expenses for low-incomes won on medicaid it must also fund medically necessary abortions for women in that government program. Furthermore, ERAs and some States like Pennsylvania enforce significant restrictions that give women the right to choose whether or not to terminate a pregnancy (Francis, 2015, p 3).

Over 40 years of the struggle, the ERA could finally constitute 20% of the U.S Military Women and provide then the « Equal Justice Under the Law », but it can not protect those women against involuntary military service, women as well as men draft by Congress during World War Two and the Vietnam War. Thus, exempted or included into Military Service still be granted to those unqualified to serve for a relevant reason (Francis, 2016, p15).

Opponents of the ERA have disapproved a claim that the ERA work just to eliminate the existing of such benefits and protection such as alimony, child custody and certain social security payments. ERAs and Court decisions, in the recent years approved that those benefits are provided in a sex-neutral manner based on function

rather than on stereotyped sex roles, such as by designating primary care given instead of mother (Ibid).

2.3.4 The ERA's Victory

Opinion Research Corporation Poll of Princeton¹⁵ commissioned in 2001 and ERA Network declared nearly all U.S adult 96% believed that male and female citizens should have Equal Rights. In fact, U.S Citizens during the time changed their mind radically and overwhelmingly supported a “Constitutional Equal Rights Amendment on the basis of Sex” (Ibid).

2.4 The Dialectics of Enlightenment

According to Emanuel Kant¹⁶, « Enlightenment is in man's emergence from his self imposed immaturity. Immaturity is the inability to use one's understanding without guidance from another » (Kant, 2010, p 1). Enlightenment marked the emergence of such marginalized groups like women who started gaining visibility and significance (Ibid).

2.5 Feminist Enlightenment

The benefits of Enlightenment were widely distributed. The growing population led to shortages of good farmland, on which young families could establish themselves; one result was to delay marriage, and another was to move to new lands further west. In the towns and cities, there was strong entrepreneurship, and a steady increase in the specialization of labor. Wages for men went up steadily before 1775; new occupations were opening for women, including weaving, teaching, and tailoring (Main and Main, 1999, pp121–50).

¹⁵ Is a demographic, health and market research company based in Princeton and New Jersey.

¹⁶ Was a German Philosopher who is considered the central figure of modern philosophy, politically Kant was one of the earliest exponent of the idea that perpetual peace, could be secured through universal Democracy.

2.5.1 The Transition of Women from Housewives to Feminism

The feminist Movement has never been as widespread as in the twenties. Feminist struggle and demands were strong enough to change the old rules and structures to give women happiness and fulfillment as freedom, equality and respect, “Our goal is to harness the energy of young women and men by creating a community in which members can network, strategize, and ultimately, take action. By using our experiences as a starting point, we can create a diverse community and cultivate a meaningful response” (Heywood & Drake, 2003, p 7).

By the end of the Depression and World War Two, soldiers came back to their homes, looking for a new life, but they faced an enormous housing crisis. This led millions of them to leave cities to settle other areas, especially the suburbs, where families found safety and community feeling. At that time, the government aimed at limiting expansion outside the cities in order to force families to live in a suburban life style (Lamb, 2011, p 5).

However, social thinkers criticized this homogeneity of race, unlike the young couples who were so happy and satisfied. Before the 1950’s, the reality of American way of life was absolutely based on the traditional role of the male and female in family, it means that marriage was the powerful institution and the secured one (Ibid).

During the war, when women replaced men’s work, they discovered that they had the same abilities as men, and many of them refused to return to their traditional role as housewives and mothers. Therefore, a sense of dissatisfaction arose within

society at that time, a sense that women could play a vital part in the constitution of society either politically, socially or economically, that would transform women's reality and ambitions (Ibid).

As a result of this early feminist movement, a group of women was so active in society like Rosa Park, who gave a great attention to the Black Movement, Eleanor Roosevelt also remained a cobattant journalist and some other women writers. They were all aiming at the acceptance of femininity as a positive force in the World. In addition, female employment was suddenly increasing, the proportion of wives that held jobs doubled from 15 percent in 1940 to 30 percent in 1960. Harvey describes this trasformation of women: “ I had a wonderful job, I worked for big model agency in Manuhattan, I took the train up to Fifty - Seventh where the office was, when I get on the subway to go to the work, it was like travelling into other World” (Harvey, 2002, p 139).

Concerning black women, their situation was really quite hard. It was made even harder to find a job and even if they were servants. “ Now this woman did not want me to work but two hours a day, but she wanted to do everything in two hours. And I tried to do it. And one day. I just finished work and was walking down the street and this Italian woman called me: Hey little colored girl ” (Ibid). During the hard period of the war, the American government used feminity as a concept to produce a perfect family life, which was more idealistic than real, this is why the government refused to see those changes that American women started to live and adopt (Lamb, 2011, pp16 - 17).

2.5.2 The Impact of Women's Magazines and Advertisements

Before the 1940's, the domestic themes were the central subject of the feminine magazines, that teach women how to be good housewives and mothers. However, these subjects were replaced by other interesting ones "Togetherness". Feminine magazines gave women a sense of new identity and power as Walker says: "Although the Magazines thus, played a role in the creation of the domestic World wells before 1940's the political need for a new American self-definition and arising stand of leaving made this role both insistant and more vexed after that point" (Walker, 2000, p 132).

2.5. 3 1950's : Women Looking for a New Role in Society

In this speech Friedian describes the crisis that expanded by American women in the 1950's: "I asked myself, why I am so dissatisfied, I have got my health, fine children, a lovely new home, enough money, my husband has a real future as an eletronics engineier. He does not have any of these feelings, he says may be I need a vacation" (Friedian, 1997, p 65). It means that women did not know the real cause that made them so dissatisfied. We are still searching for an answer to their feelings (Ibid).

The reality of the American society during the Fifties was that the government created the idea that home and family were the only way to promote "The American Way of Life". In reality, it was to trap women into something that they could not identify. Consequently, women wanted to change their life radically (Lamb, 2011, p 31).

American women, finally started to awaken from a long period of unconsciousness, thanks to a group of women thinkers and writers like Betty Friedan of the National Organization for women, who pushed women into an early feminist Movement in the 1960's as Margaret Mead declared in her speech: "We can, if we wish, move away from the situation where it is perfectly clear, what men do and what women do, we had already moved a little away from this single solution and we can move farther" (Mead, 1956, p 23). The government continued to limit women's ambitions and opportunities, leaving women suffering silently until they were sick(Ibid).

As a result, Friedan criticized this government when she says: " It is no longer possible to ignore that voice to dismiss the desperation of so many American women, this is not what being women means, no matter what the experts say, for human suffering there is a reason, perhaps the reason has not been found because the right questions have not been asked or pressed for enough. I do not accept the answer that there is no problem because American women have luxuries that women in other times and lands never dreamed of" (Friedan, 1997, p 71).

Doctors and psychologists of the time searched the cause of women's frustration that was the emptiness of the housewife's role or the housewife's fatigue, but when the idealized image of women sent them back home, housewifery had to expand into a full time career, and the problem of emptiness was solved. Women again feared of not spending enough time with their families due to these new responsibilities outside the house (Lamb, 2011, pp 35-40).

In fact, women were really lost between a career and their domestic routine, until they were truly trapped, but the reality that trapped women was that they did not have the right to develop her interest and passion, and even if they had enough time and space, they would not know what to do with it. However, women of the time found the solution in drinking or smoking all the day, as an escape from the situation. Analysts and doctors of the fifties realized that the housewife's syndrome seemed to become increasingly pathological: malaise, fatigue, nervousness, and even suicides (Ibid).

Friedan concludes that women must fight for their lives and responsibilities, as she illustrates: "But is her house in reality a comfortable concentration camp? Have not women who live in the image of the feminine mystic trapped themselves within the narrow walls of their homes? They have become dependent, passive, childlike, they have given their adult frame of reference to live at the lower human level of food and things. The work they do not requires adult capabilities it is endless, monotonous, unrewarding. American women are not of course, being readied for mass extermination, but they are suffering a slow death of mind and spirit" (Friedan, 1997, p 425).

Moreover, the reality that trapped American housewives was in their own minds and spirit as Friedan says: "The loss of femininity was not the result of too much education or the difficulties of domesticity, in fact the reality was far more than that. It" was a call for national transformation, as well as a voice that said : « I want more than my husband, my children, and my house" (Lamb, 2011, pp 38-45).

Women of the fifties felt somehow ashamed to discuss the problem, or to talk about it in public, but in a day during a tea party women realized that they had the same problem. The problem that takes a long period of time for each woman to find an answer for, was declared by Friedan in her speech: “The changes necessary to bring about the equality were and still are very revolutionary for men and women which will restructure all our institutions: childrearing, education, marriage, the family, the architecture of the home, the practice of medicines, politics, the economy » (Friedan, 1997, p 519).

According to Friedan women now must make a move: “Political Movement”, we need radical changes in the rules, the structures, the traditions that limited women’s ambition. This does not mean that women must choose between their role as a mother or a career (Friedan, 1997, p 519).

2.5.4 The Revival of the Movement and Egalitarian Feminists¹⁷

In 1961, as a symbolic first step of a new awareness of women’s problems, President Kennedy created a Presidential Commission on the status of women, American women, followed by an action of the women’s Bureau aiming at the abolishing of sex discrimination in such areas, equal payment education to stimulate the ambition of the younger ones. Just after a year, Congress added the law of equal salaries for equal work. By construct, there was a hidden non-feminist motivation that refused those changing sexual discriminations and created the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) reached in 1960 (Lamb, 2011, pp 50-51).

¹⁷ Is a perspective within feminism that calls for equality between all people.

As a response, Betty Friedan created the National Organization for women (NOW) in 1966, it was the first Organization that struggled against sex-discrimination in all areas, pushing women to participate in society within their real voice. Besides, she stressed the need for a radical change in the old rules and structures that forced women to live a domestic life style. Furthermore, Friedan proposed a Bill of Right in 1967, in the second annual conference, including a request to: paid education help system, free birth control, legalizatiion of Equal Right Amandment, legal and safe abortion (Ibid).

Moreover, this action was just after the vilence of Martin Luther King's march for Civil Rights. Consequently, the government in order to avoid another mass movement legalized the new law against sex discrimination in 1968. At that time the ERA and egalitarian feminist were considered as a rejection of an imperfect and discriminatory reality. However, the movement did not stop at this level. Women wanted to achieve the true child centers, the right of contraception and safe abortion was so crucial (Ibid).

Centuries passed and Egalitarian Feminists are still looking for solutions, this time by proposing two other names Simone de Bouvoire and Indira Ghadi, but according to Castro those solutions were so limited as she analyses in her speech: "The usual objection is that the solution proposed by egalitarian feminists can only be addressed to a minority of women; those who have what it takes to raise themselves up to the highest ranks of the social hierarchy" (Castro, 1990, p 75).

The egalitarian feminists drew by themselves a utopian¹⁸ society based on four institutions aiming at women's full participation in society, education, family, work and home. Moreover, the egalitarian feminists's society defied stereotyped roles for women as housewives and for men as home providers, that they should receive a pay for their domestic work, what exactly led to a strong division and debates between the different feminist organization in which the issue of abortion and contraception was the central subject of the debate (Lamb, 2011, pp 60-69).

As a result, the militant of the NOW created a separate organization called the Women's Equity Action League (WEAL), whose numbers struggled with NOW on the approval of ERA. Consequently, the Radical Feminists emerged by the end of the sixties. The time knew the emergence of three main tendencies: The Radical Feminism, Political Lesbianism and finally Feminist Social Radicalism. The most important one was the Feminist Radicalism, which sets a part from NOW, and according to Kate Millet and Shulamith Firestone, it was a Revolutionary Feminist that attempted to see men as a collective oppressor class and as the enemies. Thus, the militants now must choose between men or women as victims (Lamb, 2011, pp 61-62).

Besides, the Radical Feminist stated a law that women was the responsible owner of her own body. Consequently, the militants joined, while the Egalitarian Feminists did not respect women's rights to liberty. They were finally considered unconstitutional. As a solution, Shulamith Firestone in 1970 published her book "*The*

¹⁸ Is a community that in theory possesses highly desirable or nearly perfect qualities.

Dialectic of Sex”, she insisted that the only solution for the sexual social class problem was a Radical Feminist Revolution (p142).

2.5.5 The Radical Feminist Revolution

The Radical Feminists structured themselves in three main phases: a Sexual Revolution, an economic Revolution and a cultural Revolution. Moreover, Radical Feminists’s first step was to abolish every notion of power by ending separatism. It means a struggle against institutional sexism. However, Shulamith refused and warned about the danger if such a solution were applied in American society. Instead, she proposed an artificial production as a way of guarantee for a post revolutionary future (Lamb, 2011, pp 76-77).

Therefore, to end discrimination based on sex in education and employment The Radical Feminists foresaw two basic phases. The first was that industrialized countries would be allow for women’s full participation, integration in industry, and the second the industrialization of domestic labor that would end all maternal responsibility for childrearing, thanks to the establishment of free nurses or child care centers (Ibid).

In the 1960’s and 1970’s, the American Feminist Movement was characterized by a large variation of organized structure. But, those groups organized on a National scale with a hierarchical structure, what exactly made their problem as Genate Castro analyses: “In 1975, Jo Freeman deplored the fact that the Movement had spread without first building a base, and criticized the Radical Feminists’s function for their inertia and for allowing themselves to get bogged down in discussion over the same old issues” (Castro, 1990, p 175).

According to Castro the only solution to overcome these ideologies was to create what we called « The Militants Sisterhood » as a symbol of new cooperation between heterosexual and lesbian feminists, in addition to outliving the issue of sexism and stopping to look at men as enemies. In fact, it was about creating a new woman with a new identity and self-realization, which was more conscious than the past (Ibid).

Since the media showed women just as objects, NOW created a special committee to deal with this issue as a first action for feminists, while the second action was the voluntary interruption of pregnancy, abortion and violence against women which was clearly declared by the Supreme Court on January 22, 1973 that women during the first trimester were free to keep or not their babies. In addition, the feminist battle against rape was another important issue. In August 1973 it declared rape prevention, aiming at the general public and men, especially to respect and join informational actions (Lamb, 2011, pp 83-84).

2.6 Conclusion

American women of the 20th Century were living a very different life than that of the past, either socially, politically or economically. Over 40 years of the struggle within the US Constitution, the Equal Rights Amendment could finally clarify their legal status in the Courts without regard to their sex. Consequently, the American women enjoyed full legal and political equalities with men.

Thanks to the vigilant presence of the Radical Feminists, American housewives did not fall into the earlier error made by some suffragists. Women struggle to change the societies's views on women's rights led to the emancipation and granted women

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more autonomy. This was a liberation for the whole women in the world. This striving of American women was the root of many changes in the world concerning women's liberty.

*General
Conclusion*

General Conclusion

Throughout American history, we find that service, sacrifice and even death equalities which come to women faithfulness and obedience engailed them in a selfish, unjust and illegal male society. Women's American history shows how for centuries sex has inscribed a durable inequality into the structure of American society. No longer women were legally disenfranchised and discriminated on account of race and gender. They have also increased their social citizenships as presented by access to jobs and education. On the whole, they found themselves in relation to men as poor as ever.

In the United States, widespread religious revivalism at the beginning of the 19th century inspired the early women's rights Movement. Large numbers of women joined evangelical societies, whose efforts centered on religious conversion and social reform. These women campaigned to improve the lives and save the souls of prostitutes, increase the wages of working women, and expand employment, an effort that became known as the Temperance Movement.

As the Sixties century progressed, groups of women like Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Mott and Alice Pall have broken new grounds, they pass through a process of transformation. A dialectics which signifies for them a change from bondage to freedom, from indecision to self assertion and from weakness to strong strength. All those women and many other envision a world which should be based on equality sharing and harmony between the two sex. In fact, all those women sacrificed themselves for a world build on equality between men and women, male and female where we can see a high level of satisfaction, respect and love.

Thanks to the efforts of the suffrage and the presence of the radical feminists. Women did not trapped into an early errors that made by some anti-feminist suffragists. Instead, women were participated fully in the political process by registering, voting, campaigning and holding office. However, slowly changes are being made. We applaud the wonderful women who are leading the way to make great contributions to our state and nation.

Discrimination against women throughout American history has been well documented, solely on the basis of their sex. Less than two centuries ago, in the United States, women had no legal existence separate from their husbands, less than one century ago, women had no political rights, even in the most developed countries women still faced severe discrimination and lacked many rights in different areas of life, even after until the ERA gave women their complete rights.

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