

Disney Channel's well known sitcom *The Suite Life of Zack and Cody* once said, "Girls can do anything boys can do, and [they] can do it while wearing high heels." In the past, women's roles were viewed unfairly: in ancient Rome, women were only seen as wives and mothers and even maids; during the Revolutionary War, American women were rarely given political or legal privileges. To this day, men and women are still fighting for gender equality, but many countries have come a long way from their former sexist restrictions on women's rights. The month of March has been appointed as the National Women's History Month, highlighting the contributions of women to events in history and contemporary society.

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Women Empowerment

The Road Away From Home

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In 1848, about 300 U.S. women and 40 men gathered in Seneca Falls for the very first women's rights convention, calling for change in women's social conditions. After over a century of protests and reforms, the U.S. Congress met in 1981 to request that a week in March be proclaimed "Women's History Week." The week was expanded into a month between 1987 and 1994, and Women's History Month continues standing strong in 2014.

Women's History Month recognizes the contributions of women throughout history, which were often made in oppressive male-dominated societies. Honoring these legacies encourages future generations of women to work toward their aspirations.

Furthermore, the month raises awareness of the current-day issues regarding women. Even in the U.S., inequity pervades in society. 2013 data from the U.S. Bureau of Life Statistics reveals that the median weekly income of women is still less than men in almost every single profession, hardly different from how it was a decade ago. Along with workplace discrimination, unjust social norms dictate women's lives; for example, wives may be expected to perform domestic labor while their husbands rest after the same long day of work.

Nonetheless, there has been progress for women in some areas. According to an extensive 2011 White House study, women have caught up with men in college attendance and are more likely to graduate. Also, sexual assault, which primarily affects women, has decreased by more than half since 1993 according to the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network.

"As we honor the many women who have shaped our history, let us also celebrate those who make progress in our time. Let us remember that when women succeed, America succeeds," President Barack Obama said in his proclamation of Women's History Month 2014, according to whitehouse.gov.

Past Women Educating Today

JANET GUAN Copy Editor

Women have come far in their efforts to be treated as equals to the opposite gender. Decades ago, women still did not have the most basic rights. Yet, even with these roadblocks, females of the past still shaped our experiences in education. Some major women who have shaped education today include Elizabeth Blackwell.

Raised under feminist ideals from her father, Elizabeth Blackwell eventually realized that the occupation opportunities women had during her time were limited to teaching. Despite living in a male chauvinistic era, she ventured into the medical field. Boarding with the families of two male physicians, she practiced under them as well as studied textbooks. Many medical schools refused her application until Geneva College in New York accepted her. Excluded at first, Blackwell gradually gained the respect of her peers and teachers and graduated first in her class in 1849, the first woman to receive a medical degree. Despite facing opposition, Blackwell continually insisted on treating patients and encouraging other women to earn medical degrees by establishing medical societies, institutions and schools.

Women throughout centuries worked in their own era to give women the basic rights they deserved. Their efforts disproved societal expectations and eliminated limitations imposed upon females.

R.E.S.P.E.C.T.

Street harassment is an action often done by men all over the world. This includes any forceful action or communication that is may also be disrespectful. It is often motivated by sexism toward women and how they are supposed to act or dress.

Street harassment occurs almost everywhere; according to an online survey in 2008 811 females had reported that 99 percent of them had experienced some type of street harassment that includes stalking or verbal comments in public places.

Males are usually driven to harass females because of misogyny and gender generalizations in our modern society. Men and women are often pressured to act and dress in a certain way that fits expected gender roles depicted in media and society. Women are generally considered weaker and often seen as a person who needs to rely on men. Recently, Marvel came out with T-shirts for men and women, with the male T-shirts having phrases such as "Be A HERO," while the female version had phrases such as "I Need A Hero" and "I Only Kiss Heroes," indicating that the presence of certain stereotypes and general disrespect toward women is visible not only in the public, but also in large corporations.

This problem that women face every day, there are many different types of street harassment ranging from verbally disrespecting a person, to violently harassing a person. Any type of harassment is unacceptable and should be stopped immediately.

There are several methods to stop and spread information about street harassment. Talking to peers and posting online blogs and statuses are effective examples of sharing these perspectives via online means.

Street harassment remains a problem that women still faces. However, with the growing public resources that continue to spread the discomfort women feel toward this issue, street harassment will hopefully decrease over the years.

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The MOOR Weekly
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