#### **Women Have Limited Property Rights**

1769

The colonies adopt the English system of property ownership for married women, meaning women cannot own property in their own name or keep their own earnings. By 1900, every state will have passed legislation modeled after New York's Married Women's Property Act (1848), which grants married women the right to keep their own wages and to own property in their own name.

#### First Women's Rights **Convention Held**

1848

About 300 activists gather in Seneca Falls, N.Y., to strategize on how to achieve women's suffrage nationwide. Participants, including Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott, sign the Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions, modeled on the Declaration of Independence, which calls for equal treatment of women and men under the law and voting rights for women.

#### **National Labor Union Backs Equal Pay for Equal Work**

1868

The National Labor Union, one of the nation's first organized labor advocacy groups, pushes for equal pay for equal work, the concept that a woman must be paid the same as a man for doing the same or equivalent job with the same qualifications.



Postage stamp featuring Elizabeth Stanton, Carrie Chapman Catt, and Lucretia Mott

Photo: WikiMedia Commons

#### Racial Equality Issue Splits Two Suffrage Associations

→ 1869 -

Disagreements over the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments and the relationship between women's suffrage and the movement for racial equality divide the women's rights movement between two organizations: the National Woman Suffrage Association and the American Woman Suffrage Association. The rivals will merge in 1890 to form the National American Women's Suffrage Association.



### **Territory of Wyoming Gives** Women the Right to Vote

**1869** 

The Territory of Wyoming passes the first law in the nation giving women over age 21 the right to vote. After joining the Union in 1890, Wyoming becomes the first state to permit women the right to vote in all elections, although in 1887, Kansas allowed women to vote in municipal elections.

### **Congress Requires Federal Equal Pay for Equal Work**

**→ 1872** 

A federal law that grants female federal employees equal pay for equal work is enacted. This right was not extended to the majority of female employees who work for private companies or state and local governments until the adoption of the Equal Pay Act in 1963.



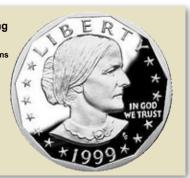
"The age of brass. or the triumphs of Woman's rights," a satirical print published in 1869

Photo: WikiMedia Commons



Dollar Coin Honoring Susan B. Anthony

Photo: WikiMedia Commons



# First Woman Nominated for President

# Susan B. Anthony Arrested for Attempting to Vote

**► 1872** 

#### Supreme Court Denies Voting Right to Women

1874

**► 1872** 

Nominated by the Equal Rights Party, Victoria Chaffin Woodhull is the first woman to run for president of the United

any other woman is allowed to vote.

States. But neither she nor



Victoria Chaflin Woodhull
Photo: WikiMedia Commons

Susan B. Anthony casts her first vote to test whether the 14th Amendment would be interpreted broadly to guarantee women the right to vote. She was arrested and tried on June 17-18, 1873, in Canandaigua, N.Y., and convicted of "unlawful voting."

The Supreme Court decides in *Minor v. Happersett* that a Missouri law limiting the right to vote to male citizens is constitutional. The Court rejects the claim by Virginia Minor that the state law deprives her of one of the "privileges or immunities" of citizenship in violation of the 14th Amendment. While women are "persons" under the 14th Amendment, the Court says, they are a special category of "non-voting" citizens, and states may grant or deny them the right to vote.

# National Association of Colored Women Organized

**→ 1896** → **1903** -

Women's Trade Union League Is Established

The 19th Amendment Is Ratified

**► 1920** 

Leaders of more than 100 African American women's clubs unite to form an organization to promote equality for women, raise funds for projects that benefit women and children and oppose segregation and racial violence. In 1935, Mary McLeod Bethune will organize the National Council of Negro Women, a coalition of black women's groups that lobbies against job discrimination, racism and sexism.

This national labor group is created to unionize working women and advocate for improved wages and working conditions for women. Its leaders will go on to form the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union.



Seventy-two years after the Seneca Falls Convention, the 19th Amendment, which gives women the right to vote, is ratified. Only one person who had signed the convention's Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions, Charlotte Woodward, is alive and able to exercise her right to vote. The amendment reads: "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex."

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#### League of Women Voters Created

#### First Equal Rights **Amendment Introduced**

#### **Eleanor Roosevelt Leads** Commission on the Status of Women

1920

**► 1923** 

1961

After ratification of the 19th Amendment, the League of Women Voters is founded to educate women about their right to vote and encourage them to exercise it. Today, the league promotes greater participation in the democratic process and advocates on a wide range of public policy issues.



unveiling in Washington, D.C., 1921

Photo: WikiMedia Commons

Alice Paul and the National Woman's Party succeed in having a constitutional amendment introduced in Congress that says: "Men and women shall have equal rights throughout the United States and every place subject to its jurisdiction." In 1943, it is revised to what is known today as the Equal Rights Amendment. The ERA was sent to the states for ratification in 1972 with a seven-year deadline and quickly won 22 of the necessary 38 ratifications. But the pace slowed as opposition began to organize. Although Congress granted an extension until June 30, 1982, the ERA fell short. It was reintroduced in Congress on July 14, 1982, and has been introduced before every session of Congress since.

President John F. Kennedy establishes the President's Commission on the Status of Women and appoints Eleanor Roosevelt as chairwoman. Although she dies in 1962, a report is issued in 1963 documenting substantial discrimination against women in the workplace. It makes recommendations for improvement, including fair hiring practices, paid maternity leave, and affordable child care.



**Eleanor Roosevelt and President** John F. Kennedy

Photo: WikiMedia Commons

#### **Equal Pay Act Becomes Federal Law**

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 Passed

#### **Supreme Court Issues Landmark Ruling on Contraceptives**

**>** 1963 -

**→ 1964** -

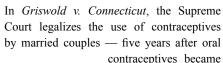
1965

First proposed 20 years earlier, the law says employers must give equal pay for men and women performing the same job duties regardless of the race, color, religion, national origin or sex of the worker.

Title VII bars employment discrimination by private employers, employment agen-

other grounds. To enforce the law, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission is created. In 1980, the commission will issue guidelines that define sexual harassment as illegal sex-based discrimination under Title VII.

cies and unions based on race, sex, and



available to American

women. The ruling will

be extended to single

women in Eisenstadt v.

Baird (1972). Margaret

Sanger, a feminist and

family planning activ-

ist, advocated legaliza-

tion of contraceptives

in 1914.

**Margaret Sanger** Photo: WikiMedia Commons

#### **Civil Rights Protections Extended to Women**

#### Congress Passes Title IX of the Education Amendments

### Supreme Court Establishes **Abortion Right**

→ 1967 -

**► 1972** -

→ 1973 -

President Lyndon B. Johnson issues Executive Order 11375, which expands affirmative action policies of 1965 to cover discrimination based on sex. As a result, federal agencies and contractors must take active measures to ensure that women, as well as minorities, have the same employment and educational opportunities as men.

The law requires that schools receiving federal funds provide equal access to educational programs for men and women. Among other things, Title IX is credited with the explosive growth of sports for women and girls at the high school, collegiate and professional levels. The law will take effect in 1976 after withstanding repeated court challenges.

In Roe v. Wade, the Supreme Court decides that a woman has a constitutional right to choose whether to have an abortion or carry her pregnancy to term, effectively nullifying anti-abortion laws in 46 states.



U.S. Rep. Donna F. Edwards speaks with Senior Chief Yeoman Dee Allen during the 12th Annual Women in the Military Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Women in Military Service for America Memorial.

Photo: WikiMedia Commons



The passage of the Pregnancy Discrinimation Act in 1978 made it illegal for employers to discriminate against women based on their plans to have children.

natory act.

Photo: istockphoto/kirza

### **Women-Only Branches in U.S. Military Eliminated**

## **Employment Discrimination** Against Pregnant Women Banned

#### Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act Signed Into Law

**► 1973** 

2009

The federal law expands workers' right to sue

for pay discrimination and relaxes the statute of

limitations on such suits. Ledbetter had sued her

employer, Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co., when

she neared retirement and learned that she was

paid much less than her male colleagues. But the

Supreme Court threw out her case, saying she

should have filed her suit within 180 days of the

date that Goodyear first paid her less than her

peers. Courts repeatedly had cited the decision as

a reason for rejecting lawsuits claiming discrimination based on race, sex, age and disability. The new law changes Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which said discrimination complaints must be brought within 180 days of the discrimi-

The male-only draft during the Vietnam War ends, and women are integrated into all branches of the U.S. military as they become all-volunteer forces. In 1976, U.S. military academies will be required to admit women. Over the years, military policy that prevented women from combat assignments will ease. In the Afghanistan

and Iraq wars, women will become more fully involved on the battlefield.

The Pregnancy Discrimination Act ensures that employment discrimination on account of pregnancy is treated as unlawful sex-based discrimination. As a result, employers cannot question potential hires about their plans to have children and have to extend benefits equally.



Photo: WikiMedia Commons

President Obama signs Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act

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