

**From The Right to Vote the Power to Lead, or
"You've Come a Long Way, Susan B."
Woman in US National Politics 20th and 21st Centuries**

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Synopsis: The 19th Amendment was passed in 1920 giving women the right to vote, 80 years after the launching of the women's suffrage movement, and 14 years after the death of Susan B. Anthony. Today, 88 years later, we have a viable woman candidate for President of the United States. Those 88 years have seen a slow increase in women in the Congress and in the Senate. This paper will focus on a few of these women and their breaking of the glass ceiling in national politics.

Three Giants behind the political scenes, never in national office.

Carrie Chapman Catt: (1859-1947). As president of the National Women's Party she designed the ultimately successful strategy for woman's suffrage. The plan focused on achieving suffrage first in the 36 states needed for ratification, thereby using the newly enfranchised women to achieve ratification of universal suffrage in their states.

Eleanor Roosevelt: (1884-1962). Active First Lady, then appointed a delegate to the UN where she was instrumental in the drafting of the Declaration of Human Rights. Her work had enormous influence on Hillary Clinton.

Ellen Malcolm: (1947-): Founder and President of Emily's List, a pro-choice network dedicated to the election to office of Democratic women at the local, state and national levels. The work of Emily's List has helped change the face of American politics by encouraging, then supporting, Democratic women running for office.

Time Line:

1906: Susan B. Anthony dies

1916: Jeanette Rankin (R) MT, elected to US Congress from Montana where women already had voting rights

1920: 19th amendment adopted giving universal voting rights for women

1940: Margaret Chase Smith, (R) ME, elected to US Congress in her own right

1976: Barbara Jordan, (D) TX, first woman and African American to deliver keynote address at the Democratic National Convention

1984: Geraldine Ferraro, (D) NY, selected first woman Vice Presidential candidate

1986: Barbara Mikulski, (D) MD, first Democratic woman elected to US Senate

2007: Nancy Pelosi (D) CA, first woman Speaker of the House

2007: 16 % women in the Senate; 16% women in the House

2008: Hillary Clinton, (D) NY, first woman to win a state presidential primary

Susan B. Anthony's last public words before she died in 1906 were: "Failure is impossible." She did not live to see the passage of the 19th amendment, which uses her exact words now enshrined in the Constitution and copied the world over:

"The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any States on account of sex."

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In the 2008 elections we are seeing the fruition of the hard work of Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and many, many others. Until now women could only dream that some day there would be a woman in the White House. No matter what the outcome of this frantic primary season there is no doubt we have come a long way. This paper highlights a few of the political stars, from both parties.

Margaret Chase Smith (1897-1995) was a Republican from Maine, and a trailblazer in national politics. Like Montana, the home of Jeanette Rankin, Maine is a maverick state. Today Maine is represented by two Republican women Senators, Olympia Snowe and Susan Collins. Margaret Chase Smith was the first woman to be elected to both the US House and the Senate, and the first woman to have her name placed in nomination for the US Presidency at a major party convention. In 1972 she was defeated for a 5th term, and the Senate became an all male club once again. After her defeat, she said *"I hate to leave the Senate when there is no indication another qualified woman is coming in....If I leave and there's a long lapse, the next woman will have to rebuild entirely."*

She served on the powerful Armed Services Committee and was a strong advocate for women in the military. She was the first woman to seek a national party's nomination for President.

Margaret Chase Smith is well known for her stand against the Joseph McCarthy witch hunts of the 1950's. Her speech, which she called "Declaration of Conscience", was delivered in 1950.

I think it is high time for the United States Senate and its members to do some soul-searching—for us to weigh our consciences—on the manner in which we are using or abusing our individual powers and privileges....Those of us who shout the loudest about Americanism in making character assassinations are all too frequently those who ignore some of the basic principles of Americanism...

Barbara Mikulski: (1936-) Barbara Mikulski, the diminutive fireball from Maryland, is the first Democratic woman to be elected to the US Senate in her own right. She began her career as a political activist in Baltimore, saving the Inner Harbor and Fells Point from a highway designed to run through those regions. She was first elected to Congress in 1976, then to the Senate in 1986. She has won reelection easily three more times. She is popularly known as "Senator Barb." She is one of 11 Senators to vote against both the 1991 and 2002 resolutions authorizing the use of force in Iraq. She endorsed Hillary Clinton for President, noting Senator Clinton's leadership qualities and also her desire to see a woman president.

Barbara Jordan: (1936-1996) In 1972, Barbara Jordan was the first African American woman elected to the US House of Representatives. She began her political career in 1966 after a successful bid for a seat in the Texas State Senate

where she became the first African American woman to be elected to the Texas Senate. She retired from the House in 1978.

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Her major work was in the area of civil rights, education, health care and the environment. She once defined her idea of substantive measures as "how a person eats and sleeps and lives." She gave the keynote address at the Democratic National Convention in 1976, another first for an African American Woman.

Geraldine Ferraro: (1935-) She served in the House of Representatives 1978-1982. She is best known for her nomination as Vice President in the Democratic Presidential race of 1984 with Walter Mondale. 1980 saw the first election of President Ronald Reagan and Vice President George H.W. Bush. That campaign put abortion front and center where it has remained as a political issue, despite the fact both men had previously supported legal abortion until it seemed like a good political issue. (Note John McCain is using the issue today to connect with his party's conservative social issues voters.)

Geraldine Ferraro, a Roman Catholic, was publicly chastised by Cardinal John J., O'Connor for her support of abortion rights. She refused to change her position, and stated that she would not act to impose the Catholic Church's teachings on non-Catholics.

Olympia Snowe: (1947-) Senator Snowe is the senior Republican Senator from Maine – the other being Susan Collins up for reelection in a tough campaign. She began her Congressional career with her election to the House in 1978. She went on to be elected to the US Senate in 1994, part of the Republican landslide. She is extremely popular in Maine, winning her last election with 74% of the vote.

Olympia is a self-described political moderate whose voting record is independent. She is often criticized by more conservative groups, especially for her pro-choice and gay rights support. She is called by them a RINO – a Republican In Name Only. She is one of the most influential members of the US Senate because of her influential votes which often force compromise.

Nancy Pelosi: (1940-) She really broke the glass ceiling – (see the cartoon in the handout, where Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott are saying: "It's about damn time!!") Pelosi was elected Speaker of the House of Representatives in 2007 following the Democratic sweep of 2006. She is the first woman to hold this position and now is second in the line of presidential succession.

She has a long and distinguished career, beginning with a political childhood as the daughter of the Mayor of Baltimore. Her career in the House began in 1987. She represents a safe Democratic district in San Francisco, and thus has never had a serious challenge for reelection.

In her first speech to Congress after her Speaker election she said:

"This is a historic moment—for the Congress, and for the women of this country. It is a moment for which we have waited more than 200 years. Never losing faith, we waited through the many years of struggle to achieve our rights. But women weren't

just waiting: women were working. Never losing faith, we worked to redeem the

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promise of America, that all men and women are created equal. For our daughters and granddaughters, today, we have broken the marble ceiling. For our daughters and granddaughters, the sky is the limit, anything is possible for them."

She went on to say that the Iraq war was a major issue facing the 110th Congress. Her inability to lead Congress in ending the war has been a major setback for her and for the approval rating for the Democratic control of Congress. Her voting record over the years shows her to be a moderate liberal Democrat, supporting most of the main Democratic positions. My favorite: she won an "F" rating by the NRA.

Hillary Rodham Clinton: (1947-) The outlines of Hillary's biography are fairly well known. She was born into a middle class, Methodist, politically conservative family in Chicago, Illinois, the oldest of three children and the achiever. She was a National Merit Finalist in high school, and went to Wellesley College. Her career there has some interesting clues to her future: it was the era of the Vietnam protests and she led the campus in preventing the violence and ugliness that erupted on other campuses in the country. Until then, she had been a Republican, having worked for Goldwater and then as president of the Wellesley Young Republicans Club. She switched to support Eugene McCarthy and has been a Democrat ever since. She was the first (one of her many "firsts") student to be selected to give the commencement address at Wellesley, for which she received a 7 minute standing ovation. That summer she worked her way across Alaska washing dishes in Mount McKinley National Park and working in a salmon processing cannery in Valdez. She complained about unhealthy working conditions, was fired, and the plant shut down briefly.

She entered Yale law School where she was on the editorial staff of the Yale Law Review – a singular honor. As we all know, she met Bill Clinton there, and he proposed the year they graduated. She declined, worried that her own ambitions for a career would be subordinated to his, and she also was well aware of his philandering. She followed her main interests in children--their health and their status under the law--she went to work for Marion Wright Edelman's Children's Defense Fund. Ironically, she then worked on the impeachment inquiry staff of the House Judiciary Committee looking into Watergate.

She then moved to Arkansas, following Bill Clinton, and finally agreed to marry him in 1975. She was on the law faculty of the University of Arkansas, and continued her work of advocacy for children, the poor, and education. After Bill's election as governor of Arkansas, she used her position as First Lady to further education and children's health and literacy. She also served as chair of the American Bar Association's Commission on Women in the Profession. She convinced the association to adopt measures to counteract gender bias.

Bill Clinton was elected to the presidency in 1992. One conservative attack on Hillary named her "The Lady Macbeth of Little Rock." She was the first First Lady to have a advanced degree and the first First Lady to have her own professional career at the time she became First Lady. She took an office in the West Wing – a complete no no – and she is regarded as the most openly empowered presidential wife in

American history, save for Eleanor Roosevelt. Eleanor had her own share of vitriolic and hateful criticism.

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In 1993 President Clinton appointed Hillary to head the Task Force on Health Care Reform. Both of them saw health care as the #1 domestic problem in the US. However, her work there opened a political can of worms that sank health care reform and almost sank her. Emotions ran so high that there were times she had to wear a bullet proof vest. Her approval ratings fell to 35% by September, 1994. Opponents of what her enemies called "Hillarycare" turned it into a national issue, and in the 1994 elections, Republicans had a net gain of 53 seats in the House, and 7 in the Senate.

(By the way - once she lost the health care battle, she went on to found, with Senator Kennedy, CHIP - Children's Health Insurance Program, which has extended health care coverage to hundreds of thousands of poor children.)

Now began the investigations into every aspect of the Clinton's life - Whitewater, White House Travel office, the suicide of Vince Foster. Hillary returned to the White House one day to discover that the FBI had searched her private quarters, including her underwear drawer. She was the first First Lady to ever be subpoenaed. No evidence of wrong doing was ever proved.

The Monica Lewinsky story is so well known I will leave it alone, except to say that Hillary's approval ratings shot up to 71% and Bill's never wavered from the mid 60's during the whole scandal, impeachment and media feeding frenzy.

As First Lady, Hillary traveled to 79 countries, and went to Beijing, China in 1995 to deliver the keynote address to the Fourth World Conference on Women. She resisted pressure from the Chinese to soften her remarks, and here is what she said:

" It is a violation of human rights when babies are denied food, or drowned, or suffocated, or their spines broken, simply because they are girls. It is a violation of human rights when women and girls are sold into the slavery of prostitution. It is a violation of human rights when women are doused with gasoline, set on fire and burned to death because their marriage dowries are deemed too small. It is a violation of human rights when individual women are raped in their own communities and when thousands of women are subjected to rape as a tactic or prize of war. It is a violation of human rights when a leading cause of death world-wide among women ages fourteen to forty-four is the violence they are subjected to in their own homes. It is a violation of human rights when young girls are brutalized by the painful and degrading practice of genital mutilation. It is a violation of human rights when women are denied the right to plan their own families, and that includes being forced to have abortions or being sterilized against their will."

After a very long seven minutes while the speech was being translated there was silence in the hall. Then the audience roared to its feet in a pandemonium of applause. Hillary became a figure of enormous respect around the world and remains so to this day. We have seen portraits or photos of Hillary and Bill in stores and restaurants in Egypt, Morocco and Vietnam.

In 2000 Hillary ran for and won a Senate seat from New York state. It was predicted that she would lose the upstate Republicans, but she made inroads there, and in 2006 went on to be reelected with 67% of the vote. At first she took a low profile

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and compromising role in the Senate – even Trent Lott, who had promised to bury her, came to a grudging respect for her.

She did vote in favor of the October, 2002, Iraq War resolution, voted against the confirmation of Justices Roberts and Alito, voted against the Bush administration's tax cuts and called for the resignation of Alberto Gonzales.

On January 20, 2007, Hillary announced she was running for President: "I'm in. And I'm in to win." In New Hampshire she became the first woman to have won a primary in the presidential election.

An interesting twist to the current presidential campaign is the issue of race vs. gender. In 1869, when Congress offered the Fifteenth Amendment to the black leadership and Frederick Douglas which gave black men the right to vote, but not women, they took the offer. Women had to wait another 50 years.

As we are all aware, the road to the Democratic nomination is agonizingly slow. When I first signed on to give this paper, I was sure the nomination would be sewn up for someone! On our recent trip to Vietnam our guide told us he would give anything if they could have an open election with debates like ours.

So, Susan B. – you would be proud of all the shattered glass in the country! Some day, maybe soon, we will see a woman in the White House. As you told us 102 years ago in 1906, "**Failure is Impossible.**"

Doug Hoare
Apr. 18, 2008

“ADIOS, VIZCAYA”: The Tragic Fate of a Spanish Warship

One of the masterpieces of modern Spanish literature is Miguel de Unamuno's *Del sentimiento trágico de la vida y en los pueblos* (first published in Spain in 1913). In it, the Basque philosopher argued, “Suffering...is the substance of life, the root of personality, and the most immediate revelation of consciousness. In this sense, eternal anguish is the source of the tragic sense of life, ‘something far deeper, more intimate, and more spiritual than suffering.’” (Kern, 496). Unamuno's musings on this theme established him as one of the founders of existential thought in the twentieth century, but his own life and the life of his nation faithfully mirrored his theme of tragedy.

After being lionized as one of the greatest Spanish philosophers of all time (and that's a long time since Spain is an ancient land) Miguel de Unamuno ended his days under house arrest in Franco's Spain for having publicly insulted one of the *Caudillo's* generals. Likewise Spain plummeted from the heights of glory in its sixteenth-century Golden Age to the depths of humiliation in its epic confrontation with the United States in 1898 when it lost the last vestiges of its once global empire. Despairing many Spanish intellectuals agreed with Ricardo Picavea Macias when he wrote in the wake of the disaster, “All is broken down in this wretched country; no government, no electors, no parties, no navy, no army. All is ruin, decadence.” The reformer Joaquín Costa anguished that Spain was “wandering unburied amongst the tombs of extinct nationalities.” His program of national rejuvenation called for the complete overhaul of the society and the traditions that had led it into such a plight. “Seven locks on the tomb of El Cid,” he proclaimed.