

MIDDLE SCHOOL SECOND RUNNER UP 2020

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“We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men and women are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights governments are instituted, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.”

Declaration of Sentiments

When people read this quote, they probably believe they are reading a section of the Declaration of Independence, the document that set America free from Great Britain, but this document, the Declaration of Sentiments, did not set everyone free from Britain’s rule. There was still a large part of the American population that was not free. This population of people decided they wanted to have their freedom and so a small group of people got together to have a tea party. Eleven days later, 32 men and 68 women signed the Declaration of Sentiments and the document became legitimate at the first Seneca Falls Convention starting the Women’s Rights movement.

At first, even before this tea party was held, two women would have to meet. Elizabeth Cady Stanton was at the World Anti-Slavery convention in London along with her husband Henry Brewster Stanton. There, Stanton met Lucretia Mott where they, along with other women, were denied the right to participate in the convention. Together, these women decided enough was enough and agreed as soon as they were back in the United States they would have a meeting to discuss women’s rights. Though the meeting was delayed, the women met at a Quaker service on Sunday, July 9, 1848. The Quakers followed a belief that all people are created equally. After this service, Jane Hunt decided to have a tea party and invite Mott who was visiting Waterloo, New York, at the time. Mott along with her sister Martha Wright arrived at Hunt’s house where she, Mary M’Clintock, and Stanton awaited their arrival. All the women there were quakers but Stanton. As the women drank the tea, Stanton talked about all the unfair laws towards women and how they should have the right to vote. By the end of the party the group of women decided to have a meeting at the Wesleyan Chapel in Seneca Falls. On the following Sunday the group of women drafted the Declaration of Sentiments modelled after the Declaration of Independence. On the second day of the convention the document was read aloud and ratified by the members of the convention. Then, 68 women and 32 men signed the document making it legitimate, starting the women’s rights movement.

In conclusion, the women’s rights movement will be remembered forever. Even as none of those women who started the convention ever got to see the 19th Amendment added to the constitution, it shows how something as small as a tea party can launch something as big as a nation-wide movement allowing for all people to be treated equally.