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How Women Shaped  
American Life and Culture

Prepared by

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THE JEFFERSON  
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John Adams, whose bust is opposite Thomas Jefferson's in the lobby, was a faithful correspondent with his wife Abigail while she remained in Massachusetts. In a famous letter from Abigail to her husband on March 31, 1776, she wrote:

*"I long to hear that you have declared an independency. And, by the way, in the new code of laws which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make, I desire you would remember the ladies and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of the husbands. Remember, all men would be tyrants if they could. If particular care and attention is not paid to the ladies, we are determined to foment a rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no voice or representation."*

## Day One Walking Tour

From the hotel, head south on 16th St. to Lafayette Square. The large building at H St. and Madison Place is Dolley Madison House. The stately home was built in 1820 by Congressman Richard Cutts who was married to Dolley Madison's sister Anna. Eventually the house passed to President James Madison, and then to his wife who lived there until her death in 1849. Dolley Madison created the role of First Lady and enjoyed entertaining. The home was a lively social scene during Dolley's time and is now used by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit.

*\*Fun Fact: Because Jefferson's wife Martha had died before he became president, Dolley Madison served as his hostess at the White House when he took office. The Madisons were among Jefferson's closest friends.*

Stroll two blocks south on 15th St. and turn left onto "America's Main Street," Pennsylvania Avenue. Notice the Willard Intercontinental Hotel. In November 1861, poet Julia Ward Howe was on her first trip to wartime Washington with her husband and minister. After reviewing the Union troops a day before, she composed The Battle Hymn of the Republic while staying at the Willard.

Facing west towards the Capitol on Pennsylvania Avenue, you will be walking in the footsteps of the original Women's March: the Parade of 1913. Led by attorney Inez Milholland in a white cape astride a white horse, the great parade of 9 bands, 4 brigades, 3 heralds, 24 floats and more than 5,000 participants marched down Pennsylvania Avenue the day before Woodrow Wilson's inauguration. The tireless work of Milholland and many others led to the right to vote for women in America in 1920.

Turn right onto 14th St. and walk one block south to the Smithsonian Museum of American History. Must-see exhibits include the First Ladies' Gowns worn at inaugural festivities and Julia Child's kitchen carefully rebuilt from her New England home.

*\*Fun Fact: Jefferson popularized French cuisine in the White House and his home at Monticello, but it was Julia Child's "Mastering the Art of French Cooking" that brought it into thousands of kitchens in the 20th century.*



Five blocks north on 12th Street at New York Avenue is the National Museum of Women in the Arts. It is open daily and is the only museum in the world dedicated exclusively to female artists.

You are now in Penn Quarter, a neighborhood full of restaurants for lunch.

Make your way south to Constitution Avenue and walk past the Capitol to Sewall-Be Belmont House (114 Constitution Avenue, NE.) Built in 1799, the house's proximity to Congress led activist Alva Belmont to buy it in 1929 as a headquarters for the National Woman's Party, which Alice Paul founded in 1913. The NWP organized suffragette marches and was instrumental in getting the 19th Amendment (giving women the vote) ratified in 1920. Today the NWP gives its annual Alice Award to women who have made notable contributions to "breaking barriers and setting new precedents for women." Belmont-Paul Women's Equality National Monument is now open Wednesday through Sunday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and a highlight is the Suffrage Origins Gallery.

*\*Fun Fact: The home once belonged to Albert Gallatin, Jefferson's Secretary of the Treasury and ally opposing Alexander Hamilton's economic policies.*

The next stop is the U.S. Capitol Visitors Center (CVC) located below ground near the intersection of First Street, NE, and East Capitol Street. The entrance is at the base of the wide, terraced stairs.

\*No food or drinks—even empty water bottles—are allowed in the CVC, which is the only way to access the Capitol. Medical equipment (Epi-Pens, insulin, etc.) are allowed.

Once inside, you will be in Emancipation Hall where you will see a 19' plaster model of the bronze female figure "Freedom," the statue atop the Capitol dome. Behind Emancipation Hall is the Exhibition Hall that houses historical artifacts and features several interactive displays. The CVC is where one picks up pre-arranged tickets to tour the Capitol, available through your Member of Congress's office or online.

Notice the statue of Jeanette Rankin, first female Member of Congress. She was elected from Montana in 1916. Each state sends two statues to the Capitol. They are displayed in Statuary Hall, the Crypt, or the CVC on a rotating basis. Several women including Sakakawea, Helen Keller, and Rosa Parks are among them.

*\*CVC has a large cafeteria if you need a snack while exploring.*

## Day Two Walking Tour

Head down to 16th St. and Pennsylvania Avenue then turn right on 7th St., NW. Cross the Mall to visit the National Air and Space Museum. Be sure to see the Sally Ride Collection honoring the first woman in space. Astronaut Sally Ride made history in 1983.

On the Mall side of the museum, turn left and walk east along Jefferson Drive, SW. Pass the Washington Monument. Just as Washington was the father of his country, this 555' stone obelisk is surely the mother of all monuments. Fans of the musical "Hamilton" will recall that Hamilton's widow Eliza was dedicated to raising funds to construct it. Notice the Jefferson Memorial on your left and the Lincoln Memorial straight ahead. In 1939, acclaimed contralto Marian Anderson performed a concert on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial after being denied the chance to sing at DAR Constitution Hall.

On the right (north) side of the Reflecting Pool on the Mall is the Vietnam Women's Memorial. The sculpture depicts a moving scene of two female nurses tending to a wounded soldier while waiting for a helicopter. Eight U.S. women, all nurses, died in the Vietnam War. There are eight trees in their memory planted around the statue, which was completed in 1993.



And if you have more time...

The National Museum of African American History and Culture opened in September 2016 and is so popular that timed entry passes have been issued months in advance. Intrepid travelers can try their luck getting same-day or walk-up passes. Same-day timed entry passes are available online beginning at 6:30 a.m. ET daily until they run out. A limited number of walk-up passes (one per person) are available starting at 1:00 p.m. on weekdays on the Madison Drive side of the building. No walk up passes are available on Saturdays or Sundays due to high visitation.

The museum chronicles the lives and contributions of African Americans as enslaved people on the lower floors and moves through time to the present era on the upper floors. Women featured in exhibits include Sarah Breedlove (better known as Madam CJ Walker whose line of hair care products made her the first black female self-made millionaire), Frances Albrier (the first black female welder in WWII shipyards), and Mae Reeves (Philadelphia milliner whose fashionable hats were an important symbol of dignity among women during the Jim Crow era.)

Hillwood Museum and Gardens is the home of Marjorie Merriweather Post, daughter of Post Cereal's founder. She purchased and refurbished the Georgian mansion in 1955 following her third divorce. As a socialite known for her exquisite taste and reputation as a hostess, Marjorie's Hillwood invitations were highly prized. Today the museum is best known for its French and Russian fine and decorative art, Faberge eggs, and manicured gardens.

*\*Fun Fact: Ms. Post once owned Mar-a-Lago in Palm Beach, Florida, the resort now owned by President Trump.*

### The Sulgrave Club

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, 1801 Massachusetts Ave., NW is a private social club for women. Built in 1902, it was purchased thirty years later by a group of prominent women and converted from a home designed for entertaining to a club.



The Beaux-Arts mansion is one of only two abodes facing Dupont Circle and was considered a luxury property, much as the Jefferson Hotel was the first building completed on 16th St. between the White House and Scott Circle. The two buildings share many similar design features such as a decorative porte-cochere entrance topped with a Palladian window, egg and dart molding, and the Greek key motif that was popular in the early 20th century.

Clara Barton House was the home of the founder of the American Red Cross who provided nursing care to both Union and Confederate soldiers during the Civil War. Barton never married and was notable for working outside the home when very few women did. Her home is located in Glen Echo, Maryland, and renovations are to be completed very soon.