

# “Women’s Rights Are Human Rights”

“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. Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of those who suffer from it to refuse allegiance to it, and to insist upon the institution of a new government.... ..”

Now in view of this entire disfranchisement of one-half the people of this country, their social and religious degradation—in view of the unjust laws above mentioned, and because women do feel themselves aggrieved, oppressed, and fraudulently deprived of their most sacred rights, we insist that they have immediate admission to all the rights and privileges which belong to them as citizens of the United States.

In entering upon the great work before us, we anticipate no small amount of misconception, misrepresentation, and ridicule; but we shall use every instrumentality within our power to effect our object. ...”

*Elizabeth Cady Stanton. “Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions, Seneca Falls”  
July 19, 1848. Seneca Falls, New York*

“The time for equality in the United States of America is never ended, never defeated, never killed. And to suggest otherwise, to suggest that equality in this great country has a deadline of expiration, a date of finality, is to renounce the very values which are America.”

*Florida Governor Bob Graham, speaking at ERA rally in Tallahassee, Florida, 1982*

“Human rights are defined by a constitution: they’re defended by an impartial rule of law; they’re secured in a pluralistic society. The advance of women’s rights and the advance of liberty are ultimately inseparable.”

*President George W. Bush.*

*Efforts to Globally Promote Women’s Human Rights, March 12, 2004*

“There are those who say that democracy is for men alone. In fact, the opposite is true; Half a democracy is not a democracy. As one Muslim woman leader has said, “Society is like a bird. It has two wings. And a bird cannot fly if one wing is broken.”

*Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.*

*Remarks at the American University, Cairo, Egypt, June 20, 2005*

“Every constitution written since the end of World War II includes a provision that men and women are citizens of equal stature. Ours does not. I have three granddaughters. I’d like them to be able to take out their Constitution and say ‘here is a basic premise of our system, that men and women are persons of equal citizenship stature.’ But it’s not in there. We just have the equal protection clause, which everyone knows was not meant in the 1860s to change anything with regard to women’s status. Women didn’t get to vote until 1920.”

*Supreme Court Justice, Ruth Bader Ginsburg.*

*Remarks as honored guest of the “Great Lives in the Law” series at Duke University Law School, January 31, 2005*