

WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY AUGUST 26



Although there is no proclaimed heritage in August, Women's Equality Day is celebrated on August 26th as the August 26, 1920 certification of the 19th Amendment to the US Constitution first gave women the right to vote. Congresswoman Bella Abzug first introduced a proclamation for Women's Equality Day in 1971.

This day in 1920 was the result of 72 years of campaigning by a massive civil right moment. Prior to these movements, "respected thinkers such as Rousseau and Kant believed that woman's inferior status in society was completely logical and reasonable; women were 'beautiful' and "not fit for serious employment'." Rosa Parks, Eleanor Roosevelt and others have certainly proved those beliefs to be false.

Although the 19th Amendment gave women the right to vote nationally on August 18, 1920, it was not made official until certified by the correct government official. Secretary of State Bainbridge Colby signed the proclamation behind closed doors at 8:00 AM in his home in Washington, DC. The New York Times reported Colby wanted to avoid a public scene at the signing although women's suffrage leaders Alice Paul and Carrie Chapman Catt requested Colby to allow groups to witness the signing and film the event.

The observance of August 26 also calls attention to the continuing efforts toward full equality. Groups supporting women's equality today provide women worldwide with equal opportunities to education and employment and to resources to fight violence, suppression, discrimination and stereotyping which continue to occur in our society and in other countries.

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Did you know?

Congress passed the proposed amendment in 1919 and it was supported by President Woodrow Wilson but by the middle of 1920, 35 states had voted to ratify the amendment which was not official until August 1920.

Sources:

Retrieved from <http://www.nwhp.org/resources/commemorations/womens-equality-day/>

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