

# Introduction To The Psychology of Women

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The Beginning

# The Psychology of Women

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Emerged from the Women's Studies movement of the 1970s and 1980s

Women's Studies was born out of the 1960s women's movement

# The Psychology of Women

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- Women Movement of the 60s led to an examination of theories about women.
  
- New branch of Psychology emerged

# The Psychology of Women

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- ❑ Feminist Psychology: emphasizes connection between theory and women's studies
- ❑ Psych of Women: focus on women's lives and experiences
- ❑ Psych of Gender: Social and biological processes that create gender difference

# The Psychology of Women

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- Findings showed that:
  - Women left out of research
  - Research based on male experiences
  - Theories constructed from male as norm
  - Theories based on gender stereotypes
  - Stereotypes of women not questioned

# The Psychology of Women

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- ❑ Psychologist began to realize that knowledge about women and gender was androcentric
- ❑ Women psychologist starting speaking out that psychology misrepresented women

# The Psychology of Women

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- Naomi Weisstein psych did not know women
  
- Phyllis Chesler
  - Women and Madness claimed Psych and psychiatry were used to control women

# Psychology & Women's Rights

## First Wave

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Beginning of modern women's movement can be traced to 18th century with Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* that women have the same abilities as men, but have been conditioned by society to be subservient, and non-intellectual.

- Dismissed as a bluestocking and prostitute.

# Struggle for Women's Rights

## First Wave

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- ❑ 19th century- Elizabeth Cady Stanton continued to raise consciousness about how women were being conditioned by society in ways that left them vulnerable to economic, physical, and emotional abuse by their husbands.
- ❑ Proposed social change, including divorce rights and suffrage for women.
- ❑ Viewed as too radical.

# Struggle for Women's Rights

## First Wave

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- ❑ Woman Movement became split and became more conservative, focusing almost exclusively on the drive for the vote.
- ❑ Movement lost direction in 1920 when women won right to vote.

# Increase Discrimination & Dissatisfaction

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- ❑ 1930's Depression, women were discriminated against in the workplace, and were often fired to make way for men.
- ❑ 1940's during World War II, women were encouraged by the government to take jobs in heavy industry, but were fired as soon as the war was over.

# Increase Discrimination & Dissatisfaction

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- 1950's Return to traditional roles
- Women told that their only true fulfillment could come through housework and mothering, and that to do anything else was to demonstrate character flaws and or mental instability.

# Increase Discrimination & Dissatisfaction

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1950's

- ❑ Educated white middle class were dissatisfied with their roles and housework.
- ❑ Joining work force in large numbers, especially after their children reached school age.
- ❑ Earning often made the difference between middle class and lower-middle class economic status.
- ❑ Still powerless in and outside of the home.

# Struggle for Women's Rights Second Wave

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- ❑ Result of Civil rights movement.
- ❑ Black and white women who were working side by side black civil rights leaders in the south, found themselves in subordinate positions.
- ❑ They chose to organize for themselves, and started looking at the social constructs that created "women's place" and how to combat those constructs.

# Struggle for Women's Rights Second Wave

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## Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*

- ❑ Wrote of the disconnect between the realities of work and education, and ideals of womanhood.
- ❑ Wrote that housewives were bored and unhappy for a good reason, not because they were neurotic.

# Struggle for Women's Rights

## Second Wave

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Simultaneously in the 1960s the Kennedy administration found evidence of pervasive discrimination against women

- Married women could not get credit cards in their own names.
- Women were being kept out of graduate programs and high-level jobs for which they were qualified.

# Struggle for Women's Rights

## Second Wave

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### Women's Studies

- ❑ Few courses appeared in 1960s.
- ❑ 1970s feminism and the women's movement gained recognition on college campuses. First time Women's Studies term used.
- ❑ Against strong resistance two or three courses developed into thousands of courses, and programs.

# Women's Studies

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- According to the National Women's Studies Association (NWSA), the number of undergraduate programs listed between 1988 and 1990 increased 23% (creating more than 500 programs)
- By 1990 there were 102 programs offering work at the graduate level.

# Women's Studies Today

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In U.S. today

- Over two-thirds of university
- Half of four-year colleges
- More than 40% of institutions of higher education

# Struggle for Women's Rights

## Third Wave

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Movement focused on:

- Reproductive freedom
- Ending violence against women
- Equal pay
- Increasing women representation in politics

# First Generation of Women in Psychology

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Laurel Furumoto and Elizabeth Scarborough researched first generation of American women psychologist and found:

- similar to their male peers in age and training, but they were unlikely to achieve the same professional status
- excluded from important educational and employment opportunities
- family responsibilities interfered with advancement

# First Generation of Women in Psychology

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- Faced discrimination
- Work was invisible
- Contributions to field was ignored

# First Generation of Women in Psychology

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- Experienced discrimination in obtaining degrees. All started as “special students”
  - Christine Ladd-Franklin John Hopkins
  - Mary Calkins Harvard completed degree in 1895 she was refused the degree because she was a woman. In 1902 she was offered a degree from Radcliff but refused it.
- Harvard granted women the PhD degree in 1963

# First Generation of Women in Psychology

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Margaret Washburn Columbia

- ❑ First woman to receive a PhD in Psychology in 1904 from Cornell University.
- ❑ Denied position at research university and at the Experimentalist

# First Generation of Women In Psychology

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- ❑ Masculine bias about women's place in workforce
- ❑ Women weren't hire to teach in research universities
- ❑ Women were regulated to women's colleges which weren't valued
- ❑ Women preferred service and people oriented fields which weren't valued

# Early Research on Women

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1. Focused on women as a group not individuals in a group.
  - Viewed women based on their biology.
2. Did not research women's experiences.
  - Theories based on men's experiences.

# Early Research on Women

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3. Viewed women negatively.

- Male traits viewed as superior.

4. Early research focused on gender differences and it was influenced by sexist beliefs.

- Discriminatory practices

# Florence Levin Denmark

## Pioneer of Psychology of Women

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- ❑ Born on January 28, 1931.
- ❑ With her leadership, psychology of women became a respected and well-recognized field of study.
- ❑ Her research became the guideline of new programs.
- ❑ Researched discrimination and the disadvantaged status of women in psychology.
- ❑ Florence wrote many papers on the role of women in the history of psychology, so their many contributions would not be forgotten.

# American Psychological Association

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- **Association for Women in Psychology:** Established as a branch of the American Psychological Association in 1968 to promote research about women.

# American Psychological Association

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## **Division of the Psychology of Women of the American Psychological Association:**

Founded in 1973 by women psychologist in order to advance research and knowledge of women in the field of psychology and in society.

# American Psychological Association

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- ❑ **Society for the Psychology of Women  
Division 35 of the  
American Psychological Association.**

Purpose:

- ❑ Promote feminist scholarship and practice,
- ❑ advocate action to advance equality and social justice for women.

# Important websites

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□ American Psychological Organization  
<http://www.apa.org/>

□ Division 35 Society for the Psychology  
of Women  
[http://www.apa.org/about/division/  
div35.html](http://www.apa.org/about/division/div35.html)

# Important websites

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- **American Psychological Association [www.apa.org/](http://www.apa.org/)**
  
- **America Association of University Women**  
**<http://aauw.org>**