

Power to the people, the changing role of women over time

Key Vocabulary

Activist 	A person who fights openly and vigorously for a cause.
Barons	A nobleman by birth of a particular rank.
Boycott	To refuse to buy, use, or go to, in order to make a protest or bring about a change.
Constitution	The set of basic laws by which a nation, state, or other organisation is governed.
Economic depression	A severe and prolonged downturn in economic activity.
Industrial revolution 	A complex of economic and social changes caused by the shift of production from hand or physical labor at home or in small workshops to mechanized systems in large factories.
Petition	A formal, written request by many people that is made to a person in authority.
Rallies 	To call together for some common goal; assemble.
Recession	A period of reduced or declining economic activity.
Strike	To refuse to continue working.
Suffrage 	The right to vote or the exercise of this right.
Nobles	Belonging to a class of people with a high rank or title.
Immigration	The act of coming to live permanently in a new country.
Equality 	The condition, fact, or quality of being equal.
Sexism	Discrimination on the basis of sex, especially against women.
Feminism 	The doctrine advocating the same social, political, and economic rights for women as for men.

What was the Suffragette movement?

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, only men in Britain had the right to vote. During this time, many women began to campaign for equal voting rights for women.

The Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) was one of the main groups to fight for this. Members of the union were given the nickname 'The Suffragettes' (suffrage meaning the right to vote). The group became known for using aggressive ways of protesting after they felt parliament didn't pay attention to their peaceful methods. The Union was founded in 1903 by Emmeline Pankhurst. She was born in Manchester and spent most of her life there. However, she moved to London in 1906 to run WSPU activities, such as meetings and rallies.



Some suffragette protests involved them chaining themselves to the railings of Buckingham Palace, setting post boxes alight and smashing shop windows. Pankhurst was arrested multiple times for her actions as leader of the suffragette movement. Eventually their efforts helped female householders over the age of 30 win the right to vote in 1918 and for all women to be able to vote in 1928.



Who was Rosa Parks?

Rosa was born on 4th February 1913. She grew up on a farm in Montgomery, United States. When she was growing up, black and white people living in America had to be separated by law. This was called segregation. Black people did not have the same rights as white people.

On 1st December 1955, Rosa was travelling home from work on a bus. She was sitting in a section designated for black people, at the rear of the bus. Seating for white people was prioritised on buses and if the White section became full, Black people were made to move further back or give up their seat. This happened to Rosa but she refused to move. She was threatened with police action but she stayed seated. The police arrested, charged and fined her for breaking the law.



Rosa's actions and arrest sparked a wave of protest. Around 40,000 Black people (and some white people) took part in the 'Montgomery Bus Boycott'. They refused to use the buses until the rules were changed. The boycott lasted for 381 days, before the government took action and lifted the bus segregation rules. This wasn't the end of all segregation but it was a powerful moment for the rights of black people.

Who is Greta Thunberg?

Greta Thunberg is a youth climate activist from Stockholm, Sweden. She became a passionate advocate for climate change when she was eleven. Her teacher had shown the class videos on climate change. Greta was deeply moved by the images of plastic polluting the oceans and polar bears starving. She decided that she would no longer attend school and continue an education for her future if the government wasn't helping to provide a safe future for her. She decided to strike. On the first day of her school strike she sat alone at the Swedish parliament. She packed her own lunch and held a hand painted sign that said 'School Strike for Climate'. Greta posted on her social media accounts and told her friends. On the second day of her strike, one person joined her. A few days later, more people came to join them. Soon she had thousands of people supporting her.

Her passionate and direct speeches about climate change have inspired and evoked feelings in thousands of people all over the world. She was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2019.



Who is Malala Yousafzai? Malala Yousafzai was born on July 12th 1997 in the Swat valley of Pakistan. Her father ran the Khushal Girls High School and College, and was an outspoken social activist. In 2007 the Taliban (a strict Islamic group) invaded the valley. They began closing schools for girls and did not allow women to participate in society. Yousafzai campaigned against this. She survived an assassination attempt and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2014.

