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**Book Review: Her Story by Charlotte S. Waisman
A Timeline of the Women Who Changed America**

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[Jul 28, 2008](#)



An excellent documentation of the contributions of 2000 American women from 1580 to 2008, many of whom have not been previously celebrated or recognized.

Among the many things that make *Her Story* distinctive is the inclusion of hundreds of lesser-known women, including their photographs, from all walks of life that have broken barriers and created paths of noteworthy and inspiring achievement.

Female Trailblazers from all Walks of Life

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For example, it was a little-known woman microbiologist who discovered the bacterium responsible for undulant fever, which led to the pasteurization of milk or the woman who patented the paper-bag folding machines to make the square-bottom grocery bags used today or the female mathematician's whose work laid the foundation for abstract algebra. Yet, their names are hardly known and their contributions have gone mostly unnoticed.

Women Who Changed America

This one-of-a-kind book, *Her Story*, was written by Charlotte S. Waisman, Ph.D, a nationally known champion for women, and a political activist, keynote speaker and expert witness and Jill S. Tietjen, P.E, author, speaker and engineer. The timeline notes the highlights of impressive women, whether already famous or previously overlooked in their contributions to America. The women featured range from writers, artists, actors, and athletes to doctors, scientists, social and political activists, educators, and inventors and include women of all backgrounds and philosophies. In many cases, they have been trailblazers who have had a profound impact on the intellectual, social, and political development of the country.

In her Foreword to the book, Madeleine Albright comments, "Often stepping outside of the expected modes of behavior for women during their lives, the profiled women were pioneers for their causes, their professions, or their passions. Their accomplishments have advanced the arts, the sciences, politics, and business."

While the descriptions are very short, highlighting only one or two achievements, it fulfills the promise of at least giving some notice to little-known women such as physician Virginia Apgar who created the test given to newborns which quickly evaluates a newborn's physical condition after delivery and determines any immediate need for extra medical or emergency care.

Some of the entries may seem trivial, such as that of Tammy Faye Baker, Anita Bryant, Ellen De Generes and Oprah Winfrey . However, indicating the eclectic choice of women, some are politically controversial such as Jane Fonda.

The timeline also includes snapshots of events and organizations that have shaped women's experiences and women's history and thus the culture and history of America. The Women's Rights movement is tracked from the suffragettes such as Martha Coffin Wright in 1833 to Gloria Steinman in 1971.

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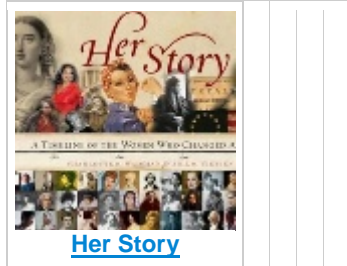
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- women pioneers for change
- women activists
- womens history


The book is laid out chronologically and in addition, there is an alphabetic index by name and another by profession, making it easy to find a specific time or women. The paintings and photographs of those cited in the book are excellent, depicting each person at the time of the achievement.

Covering 420 years of achievements by [women](#), *Her Story*, reaches across the spectrum of abilities, service and talents that bring these females to our attention. It encompasses [women's history](#) that shows them as pioneers for their causes, professions or passions.


Waisman, Charlotte S. and Jill S. Tietjen, *Her Story: A Timeline of the Women Who Changed America*. NY: HarperCollins, 2008. 260 pages.

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