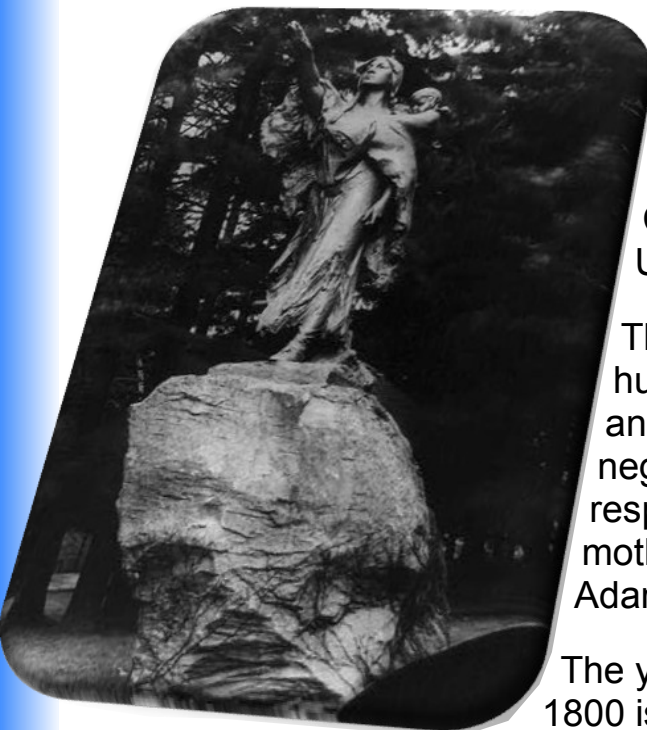


Weaving Her Story Into History ~Mothers~



In May of each year, on one day, most of us take some time to celebrate our mothers. It would be nice to celebrate the women who gave birth to us, the women who nurtured us through many of life's ups and down and the women who made sacrifices for us so that we could live our dreams EVERY day, but our busy lives generally preclude that option. One special day and its celebration is a declaration of the importance of motherhood!

Our busy lives, as packed and rushed as they may be, are also possible because of what mothers and women before us did to develop our American society. Women fought hard for the right to vote, the right to own property and for many rights and privileges we enjoy today. In keeping with our desire to educate you about the women on whose shoulders we all stand, we're going to do some brief profiles of a dozen important mothers who also contributed to America in a myriad of additional ways. One dozen—one for each month—maybe we can start a new tradition today? Come join us on a little Mother's Day journey through U.S. history.



The year is 1776. **Abigail Adams** writes a letter to her husband John (future president of the United States) and urges him to "Remember the Ladies" in the negotiations of the Continental Congress. John responds that he laughed at her saucy letter. The mother of six children, one of whom died at birth, Abigail Adams is to be remembered as an early feminist.

The year is 1800. The birth rate for women in the U.S. in 1800 is 7.04. This means that during her child-bearing

years, the average woman in the U.S. in the year 1800 would be expected to have 7.04 children. Maybe it isn't a surprise that today we know of so few women from the 1700s and early 1800s – they were quite busy with their families! But think of some of the mothers of whom we are aware during this time frame.

The year is 1805. A member of the Shoshone tribe, **Sacagawea** serves as a guide and an interpreter for the Lewis and Clark expedition as they seek a water route through North America and explore the uncharted West. Because she has her baby with her, the Native American tribes whom they encounter during their journey recognize that the expedition is peaceful.



The year is 1837. **Sarah Josepha Hale**, who initially turned to writing as a way to support her five children after the death of her husband, is named the editor of a new monthly women's magazine, *Godey's Lady's Book*. For forty years, she fights for greater educational opportunities for women through its editorial columns.

The year is 1844. Businesswoman, humanitarian and land owner **Juana Briones** is a pioneer in the San Francisco area. This mother prospers and raises eight children on her own. She has a garden and cows and sells milk and vegetables to ship's crews. She purchases 4,400 acres to expand her cattle and farming interests. Her fame as a healer and her generosity make her both a role model and a legend.

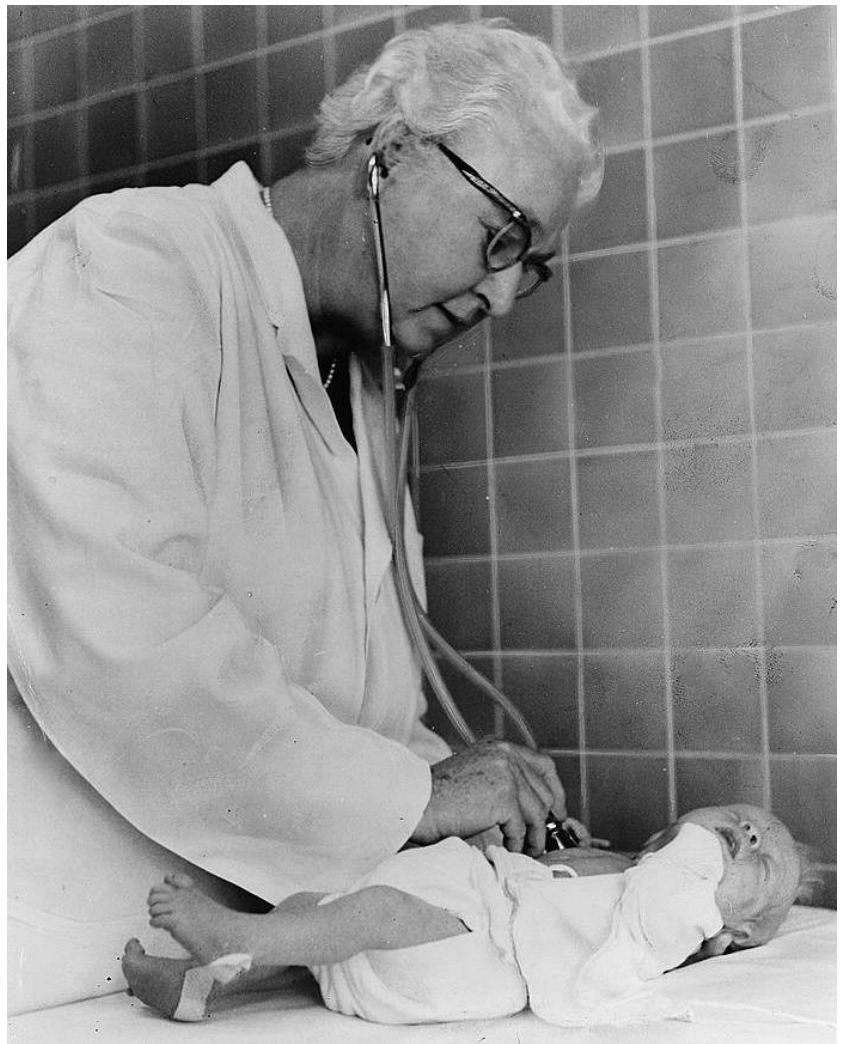
The year is 1848. In Seneca Falls, New York the first Woman's Rights Convention is held. One of the organizers is **Elizabeth Cady Stanton**. Stanton will give birth to seven children. She leads the discussion of the group in putting together the Declaration of Sentiments. This document, based on the Declaration

of Independence, lists eighteen grievances – rights to which women are denied. First, women are denied the right to vote. An additional grievance and most significant to note is that women are denied the right to custody of their children in the case of a divorce.



The year is 1851. Another well-known mother in the women's rights movement, as well as the abolition movement, is former slave and preacher **Sojourner Truth**. In her speech at the Akron, Ohio Women's Rights Convention, Truth delivers her famous "Ain't I a Woman" speech. In it, she states, "I have borne thirteen children, and seen them most all sold off to slavery, and when I cried out with my mother's grief, none but Jesus heard me! And ain't I a woman?"

The year is 1887. **Harriet Strong**, who is left penniless with four daughters to raise when her husband commits suicide, receives a patent for her invention related to water storage. Later called "The Walnut Queen", this mother helped make California the agricultural region that it is today.



The year is 1914. President Wilson proclaims Mother's Day as a national holiday. Women's suffrage is still not a reality. It will be six more years until the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment which enfranchises women across the U.S. But we are "on our way" to taking at least one day a year to honor our mothers!

The year is 1931. **Lillian Gilbreth**, who is often referred to as the "First Lady of Engineering," spends a good deal of her time testing her theories of time and motion studies to use in the workplace by observing the antics and the working relationships between and among her twelve children.

The year is 1933. First Lady **Eleanor Roosevelt** breaks with tradition by holding her own White House press conferences and allowing only women reporters. This mother of six children, five of whom survived infancy, was a strong advocate for human rights and one of the most admired individuals of the 20th century.

The year is 1952. Physician **Virginia Apgar** develops a series of rapid checks to use on newborn infants to determine if the babies need medical attention. The Apgar score is now administered in hospitals around the world at one minute and five minutes after birth. When we do talks, it is often an "ah-ha" moment when we discuss "Apgar." Most people recall the name but have NO IDEA that it was a woman who

created this important test.

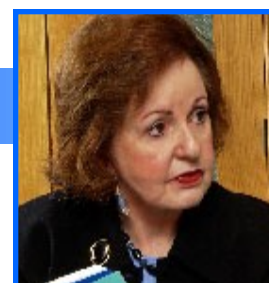
The year is 1981. Writer and human rights advocate **Bette Bao Lord** writes her first novel, *Spring Moon*, which becomes an international best seller. This mother writes both novels and nonfiction works and her writings have been translated into fifteen languages. She also frequently lectures on foreign affairs.

The year is 1993. The final mother to bring to your attention is **Ruth Bader Ginsburg** who is the second woman appointed to serve on the United States Supreme Court. When she graduates from Harvard Law School in 1959, no law firm hires her as she is Jewish and a mother. Is this a double prejudice? Ginsburg faced these issues only a short fifty years ago. Are women still faced with these barriers today?

As you celebrate your mother in 2010, remember the many mothers on whose shoulders we stand.

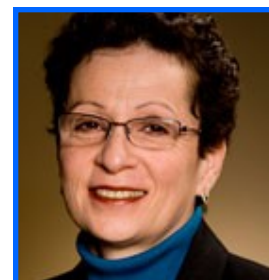
Charlotte Waisman and Jill Tietjen

Charlotte S. Waisman, PhD, is a national champion and advocate for women as a professor and keynote speaker. As an executive coach, Waisman coauthored *50 Activities for Developing Leaders* and *The Leadership Training Activity Book*. She is a principal with a consulting company specializing in leadership and workforce excellence initiatives.



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