

Ask a Suffragist

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Synopsis

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A new and more diverse generation of feminists is raising questions about how to effect change. *Ask a Suffragist* channels the first generation of American feminists for modern inspiration. Activists with urgent causes to support don't have time to read dull history textbooks. Fortunately, American suffragists lived radical lives that were in no way boring.

Instead of droning on like an encyclopedia about dates, meeting minutes, and genealogy charts, *Ask a Suffragist* discusses relationships, strategies and activism, focusing on stories that are particularly relevant for modern feminist activists, whether for inspiration and emulation or to avoid repeating past mistakes. Each chapter considers a question today's feminists might ask the great feminists of the past, celebrating diversity instead of neatly pointing listeners into one right way of living. After all, the passionate, inspired and flawed people who started the movement often disagreed with each other.

The audiobook describes events that transpired during the 1830s through the 1860s, when the idea of equality for women was new and its supporters were vilified. Instead of laying out a comprehensive, strictly chronological history, *Ask a Suffragist* focuses on stories that are particularly relevant for modern intersectional feminist activists, whether for inspiration and emulation or to avoid repeating past mistakes.

It discusses first-wave feminism more broadly, including struggles toward abolition of slavery, racial justice, temperance, expansion of educational and professional opportunities for women, the advancement of feminist theology in churches, and dress reform (the right to wear pants or bloomers instead of those exasperating dresses and petticoats). For example, the audiobook highlights the work of Harriot Hunt and Elizabeth Blackwell to open the field of medicine to women, Antoinette Brown's journey to become the first woman ordained as a Protestant minister, and how Sarah and Angelina Grimké defied their slave-holding background to become abolitionists.

Reader's comments

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