

GROWTH AND REFORM

Biography

Over time, women reformers realized that they lacked many of the same rights that they were seeking for others, and began to work for expanded rights, including the right to vote.

◆ *As you read the following biographies, compare and contrast the experiences and ambitions of the women described. Then, on a separate sheet of paper, answer the questions that follow.*

Women Reformers

Lucretia Mott (1793–1880)

Lucretia attended a Quaker boarding school at which she later became a teacher. Mott's interest in women's rights grew when she



Lucretia Mott,
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realized that she was paid only half of what the male teachers earned. She joined Elizabeth Cady Stanton in organizing the Seneca Falls Convention. Mott worked tirelessly for women's rights, and her house was a station in the Underground Railroad. She remained

active in the feminist, temperance, and peace movements throughout her life.

Sojourner Truth (c. 1797–1883)

Sojourner Truth (Isabella Van Wagener)



Sojourner Truth,
Library of Congress

was born into slavery in New York in about 1797. The mother of several children, she earned a living by working as a cook and a maid in New York City. In the 1840s, she changed her name to Sojourner Truth and began traveling along

the east coast, working for abolition as she spread the word of God. Truth supported herself with the sale of her book, *The Narrative of Sojourner Truth*, which a friend had transcribed for her. In 1850, Lucretia Mott encouraged Truth to join the women's movement, which she did. Following the Civil War, Truth helped freed people adjust to their new lives.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton

(1815–1902)

Elizabeth Cady Stanton was born in Johnstown, NY. She was formally schooled and became aware of women's rights while working in her father's law office. Family



Elizabeth Cady Stanton,
Library of Congress

members active in the abolition and temperance movements exposed her to those causes as well. Stanton cowrote the Declaration of Sentiments and worked for suffrage with Susan B. Anthony for 50 years. Stanton proposed legislation throughout her life,

most notably the suffrage amendment in 1878, which was introduced into Congress each year until it passed in 1920, nearly 20 years after Stanton's death.

Questions to Think About

1. What steps did these reformers take to advance women's rights?
2. **Compare** Do you think Truth was limited by her lack of formal education? Explain your answer.
3. **Draw Inferences** After working in other movements, each of these reformers turned to the women's movement. Why did they do so?