

*The  
President's  
Commission on  
the Celebration of  
Women in  
American History*

*March 1, 1999*



Susan B.  
Anthony



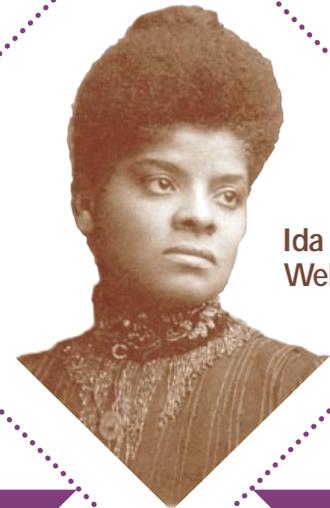
Elizabeth  
Cady  
Stanton



Sojourner  
Truth



Lucretia  
Mott



Ida B.  
Wells

***“Because we must tell and retell, learn and relearn, these women’s stories, and we must make it our personal mission, in our everyday lives, to pass these stories on to our daughters and sons. Because we cannot—we must not—ever forget that the rights and opportunities we enjoy as women today were not just bestowed upon us by some benevolent ruler. They were fought for, agonized over, marched for, jailed for and even died for by brave and persistent women and men who came before us.... That is one of the great joys and beauties of the American experiment. We are always striving to build and move toward a more perfect union, that we on every occasion keep faith with our founding ideas and translate them into reality.”***

**Hillary Rodham Clinton**

*On the occasion of the  
150th Anniversary of the First Women’s Rights Convention  
Seneca Falls, NY  
July 16, 1998*

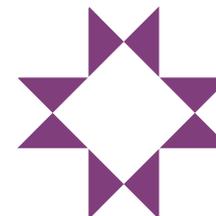
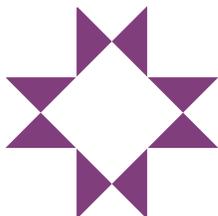


# ***Celebrating Women's History***

## ***Recommendations to President William Jefferson Clinton***

*from the*

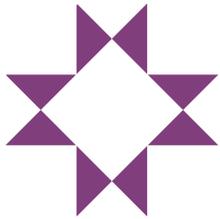
### ***President's Commission on the Celebration of Women in American History***



***Commission Co-Chairs:*** Ann Lewis and Beth Newburger

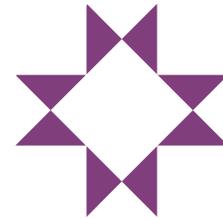
***Commission Members:*** Dr. Johnnetta B. Cole, J. Michael Cook,  
Dr. Barbara Goldsmith, LaDonna Harris, Gloria Johnson,  
Dr. Elaine Kim, Dr. Ellen Ochoa, Anna Eleanor Roosevelt,  
Irene Wurtzel

***March 1, 1999***



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***“The Commission shall make recommendations to the President, through the Co-Chairs of the Commission, on ways to best acknowledge and celebrate the roles and accomplishments of women in American history. Recommendations may include, among other things, the feasibility of a focal point for women’s history located in Washington, D.C., and the use of the latest technology to connect existing and planned women’s history sites, museums, and libraries. The Commission shall meet to carry out its work concerning the celebration of women in American history.”***

*—Executive Order 13090: Establishing the President’s Commission on the Celebration of Women in American History  
July 2, 1998*

**E**xecutive Order 13090 established a Presidential Commission to recommend how America should recognize the contributions of women to our nation’s history. In itself, the Executive Order was a historical document. John F. Kennedy raised the issues affecting women in contemporary society when he authorized the President’s Commission on the Status

of Women in 1961. William Jefferson Clinton became the first President to recognize the importance of women’s historical contributions to the creation and development of our country

when he established the *President’s Commission on the Celebration of Women in American History*. The recommendations offered in this report are based on the suggestions

received in the open meetings of the Commission, by letter and through our website. We hope this report will also convey the enthusiasm with which the Commission was greeted as we traveled around the country, and the appreciation expressed everywhere for the leadership of President William Jefferson Clinton and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton in making this work possible.



## MEETINGS OVERVIEW

To develop the recommendations included in this report and required by Executive Order 13090, the *President's Commission on the Celebration of Women in American History* traveled to every region of the country. In each, the Commission held open meetings and solicited ideas from historians, archivists, activists, academics, business leaders, students and many others. We also heard testimony from other people who came to present their ideas.

The response to our efforts was positive and constructive. Not only were there tremendous excitement and enthusiasm for the work of the Commission, but many invited speakers and members of the public also noted that the Commission itself was making history.

Each of our meetings was held in a historic venue to inspire the dialogue. All meetings were publicized and well attended by the public. The invited speakers represented the full range of diverse cultural backgrounds and issues of importance to women.

***“We have spanned the arc of history. Our first meeting was in a courtroom where Susan B. Anthony was convicted of voting. Now we meet in the same building where Madeleine Albright is Secretary of State.”***

*Ann Lewis  
Commission Co-Chair*

### **Canandaigua, New York**

Our first meeting was held at the Ontario County Courthouse in Canandaigua, New York. Commission Co-Chairs Ann Lewis and Beth Newburger called the meeting to order in the very courtroom where Susan B. Anthony was convicted of voting in the 1872 presidential election. The meeting was held in conjunction with First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton's visit to Seneca Falls to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the first Women's Rights Convention of 1848.

The public participation in the first meeting was impressive because of the enormous attention focused on neighboring Seneca Falls that day. Each of the Commissioners presented his or her vision for the work we would do as we developed our recommendations. The public discussion revealed an intense interest in

addressing the need to include women's history in our lives and revolved around the lack of women's history in school curricula. A high school student made an eloquent plea for including in her history book the *Declaration of Rights and Sentiments*, the document endorsed in 1848 to specifically declare the equality of all citizens including women.

### **Albuquerque, New Mexico**

The Albuquerque meeting was held in the Albuquerque Museum, where an exhibit of Hispanic women at work was on display. Hosted by Commissioner LaDonna Harris, the Commissioners heard from distinguished American Indian scholars and prominent Latinas. They also heard testimony from Molly Murphy MacGregor, co-founder and president of the National Women's History Project. A recurring theme at this

meeting was the need for inclusiveness and diversity. Again and again, speakers urged the Commission to speak for and to some of the oft-forgotten.

### **Chicago, Illinois**

The Chicago meeting was held in the Claudia Cassidy Auditorium at the Chicago Cultural Center. Hosted by Commissioner Anna Eleanor Roosevelt, the meeting was expanded to two days to accommodate the number of speakers who asked to be heard. The themes that emerged from members of the public, as well as from invited speakers, were the needs to focus on the work of local communities and ways to empower and recognize local programs.

### **Washington, DC**

At the meeting in the East Auditorium, Department of State, speakers introduced a macro approach to women's history recommendations. The Commission heard from respected women's leaders including Betty Friedan, Eleanor Smeal, the Honorable Pat Schroeder and the Honorable

Louise Slaughter. The women gave the meeting a modern historical context, linking the work of our foremothers to the more recent professional and political struggles. National groups, such as the General Federation of Women's Clubs, National Woman's Party Sewall-Belmont House and the National Council of Women's Organizations provided guidance on how to connect national projects with community action. We also heard from archivists who discussed the need to change the way historical documents are catalogued to increase the visibility of women.

**Berkeley, California**

"History is who is the historian and who collects history. History is also today and what is tomorrow."

*Sara Kaplan*

When professors and graduate students gathered at the University of California at Berkeley, a frequently expressed theme was that more "recently arrived immigrant women (Latino, Asian and others) must be included in the process of celebrating women in American history." Several speakers stressed the need to recognize that history is today and what happens tomorrow. They strongly recommended that there be support for local community

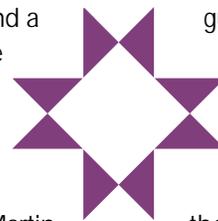
***"As a working grandmother, as a trade unionist, as a woman of color I want two things to come from this Commission. First, I want the voices of all women to be heard at this celebration. Well known women and unknown women, women from the inner cities, farm women, migrant women, educated and uneducated, women in the fields and the mines as well as the schoolrooms, hospitals and offices. Second, I hope the information that is being documented and collected all across the country will be shared with today's working women and their children. Women factory workers should learn not only about their own history but about women scientists, musicians and poets. Our children should know the stories of their mothers and grandmothers and great grandmothers because then they will know what they themselves are capable of doing."***

*Gloria Johnson  
Commissioner*

programs that empower these new American women. There was strong support for the notion of a traveling museum, the use of murals and a video project that would be attractive to young people and non-English speakers.

**Atlanta, Georgia**

The meeting in Atlanta at the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site was held during the celebration of Dr. King's birthday and hosted by Commissioner Dr. Johnnetta Cole.



Inspired by a message from Coretta Scott King, many of the speakers invoked the words and spirit of Dr. King, Jr., as a guiding force in all efforts toward equality and greater understanding of fellow women and men. Speakers focused on issues important to women and urged the Commissioners to include lesbians, women with disabilities, non-traditional religious groups and women of diverse cultures in any recommendations. Students from local

colleges talked about the need to reach young people. Georgia was recognized for its leadership in establishing the first state historical initiative to memorialize the lives of women, i.e, the Georgia Commission on the Preservation of Women's Historical Landmarks.

**FINDINGS**

The Commission found that there is growing interest in the field of women's history, with parallel growth in research and scholarship. The result is a body of information in new books, articles and journals, a coordinating council for women in history to encourage networking at local and national levels, and conferences for historians and historic sites. There is more attention to the importance of preserving the papers of women pioneers and an increasing emphasis on oral history projects to preserve the stories of women in every walk of life.

There is also a growing trend to preserve women's historical sites. Community organizations and volunteers have stepped forward to develop innovative ideas, such as the women's park built this past year in Yellow Springs, OH. Women's history museums, either

planned or open, including the International Museum of Women (San Francisco, CA), the Women's Museum: Institute for the Future (Dallas, TX), the Women's History Museum on Wheels (Wheeling, WV), Women of the West (Boulder, CO), the Women In Military Service For America Memorial Foundation (Washington, DC), the National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame (Fort Worth, TX), the National Women's Hall of Fame (Seneca Falls, NY), the Women's Rights National Historical Park (Seneca Falls, NY) and the National Museum of Women's History (Washington, DC).

We can be proud of the leadership in this area by federal agencies, including the National Park Service of the Department of the Interior, National Archives and Records Administration, Department of Education, General Services Administration, NASA, Library of Congress, White House Office of Women's Initiatives and Outreach, and the White House Millennium Council.

As appreciation of the value of recognizing women's history increases, we find an even greater demand for:

- more public recognition of the contributions women have made to building this country

***“As a historian I have observed how, whenever women leave the barricades, things slip back and we become invisible again. As Frederick Douglass said, ‘There is only one way: Agitate, Agitate, Agitate.’ Every tool at our disposal, whether it is the use of the performing arts, or a visual medium, or technology, should be utilized so that women’s history will become as much a part of our lives as brushing our teeth, so that people will know the Women’s Declaration of Rights and Sentiments that states, ‘All men and women are created equal,’ as well as they know that other Declaration of Independence.”***

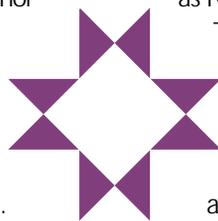
*Dr. Barbara Goldsmith  
Commissioner*

- more emphasis on bringing history to life by connecting exciting academic discoveries with community celebrations, with school classrooms and with the popular culture venues
- more attention to ways we honor our past, through acknowledging the roles that women have played and imagining a future in which women's lives and achievements are fully valued.

While professional historians, archivists and academics lead efforts to recognize and document women's lives, much of the work in site preservation and community celebrations has been undertaken by dedicated

volunteers and community activists. The National Women's History Project is an excellent example of a young organization (just 20 years old) that has succeeded in raising the national awareness of the importance of women's history by designating March as National Women's History Month.

The National Women's History Project was cited again and again as a national resource deserving greater support. A constant theme was the request for more attention and support for work specifically dedicated to women's history and — because women do not live separately from men and families — for more attention to women's lives as a part of existing historical celebrations and sites.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations that follow represent a distillation of the hundreds of ideas presented to the Commission and suggest ways to celebrate women in American history that will have the greatest impact into the next millennium. This millennial agenda begins at the national level, reaches across the country with 10 recommendations for states, communities and local organizations, recommends a focal point in the nation's capital and provides a challenge to the popular culture.

### THE NATIONAL AGENDA

#### We Recommend Design and Display a Traveling Exhibit

“Whatever is done to celebrate women in American history, more people will experience it if the celebration comes to where they live, rather than having people come to the celebration... Use traveling interactive exhibits to celebrate women's history... Emphasize ways to reach young

women... Focus on ways that women can make a positive difference...."

*Dr. Janet Hauber  
Math/Science Network*

"Traveling exhibits which include posters, postal cards and other memorabilia... The exhibit should feature electronic media such as videos and interactive computer programs."

*Dr. Barbara Woods  
Association of Black Women Historians*

The Commission recommends creation of a traveling exhibit that tells the story of women's history and can be installed in communities throughout the country during our millennial year. The exhibit will be made up of panels that feature nationally and locally prominent women in pictorial displays accompanied by their stories. The national women will be selected by a jury of professional historians and academics. Women from the local community will be selected by the exhibiting institution for inclusion in the display.

The Commission recommends building two versions of the exhibit. One will be designed for libraries or other limited pub-

lic spaces. Another version of the exhibit will be specifically designed for children, with interactive features. We anticipate that this exhibit would travel to local children's museums.

To be selected to host the exhibit, local communities would be expected to organize an inclusive, representative host committee. We believe that the attention generated by this exhibit would also encourage local celebrations that would feature the achievements of women in these communities.

The traveling exhibits might spend three weeks at each location. Allowing a fourth week for travel and set up, the two versions would reach 24 communities in one year and about 45 communities if the exhibit were funded for two years.

**We Recommend  
Write and Distribute a  
How-To Community Handbook**

"No community should talk about its history, its past or its Founders Day without talking about the contributions of the women

who made life possible with better and better opportunity for everyone... Every community has a local heroine even if they have not discovered her yet."

*The Honorable Louise Slaughter  
Congresswoman, Rochester, NY*

Much of the work done by women, individually as volunteers and as members of clubs and organizations, has occurred in local communities.

Women founded libraries, hospitals, schools and parks, but many women pioneers have gone largely unrecognized because most local historical sites identify only the men who lived there.

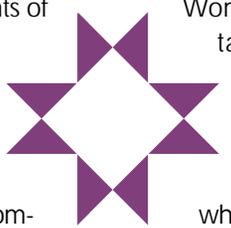
To increase awareness of the important roles local women have played throughout American history, the Commission recommends that a handbook be published to guide communities in recognizing and celebrating local women. The handbook could describe in greater detail several of the recommendations in this report. It should also include guidelines that would ensure the diverse and inclusive

nature of the project.

Possible partnerships would include sponsorship by the General Federation of Women's Clubs and others who agree to sponsor local celebrations and events with inclusive host communities. The guidebook would be privately underwritten and distributed through all organizations and local officials participating in the local events.

**We Recommend  
Build a National Women's History  
Umbrella Website**

We recommend the development of an interactive website that would serve as an umbrella for women's history sites. Regularly heard throughout the Commission hearings was the growing importance of Internet technology in disseminating information. There is a growing array of excellent women's history sites, such as the Assumption College (Worcester, MA) U.S. Women's History Workshop website (at <http://www.assumption.edu/whw/>). The Commission recognizes the value of an accessible, well-publicized site that would link to the large



***“In addition to celebrating the rich ethnic, racial, and religious diversity of your community, why not celebrate your local heroines—the women who made a difference in your community—with an event that tells their stories and leaves a permanent exhibit behind?”***

number of sites already in existence or likely to emerge. The Commission also recognizes that a centralized point of entry will provide searchers with a gateway that can heighten interest in the subject, encourage academic collaboration and expansion with minimal duplication and generally enrich the body of knowledge.

A recurring suggestion from numerous experts in women's history was the importance of oral histories in telling the stories of women in their own families and communities. Thus, the Commission recommends a site that would feature oral histories and links.

The proposed site would be a costly and time-consuming endeavor. However, given the interest of technology companies in this project, the Commission believes a technology partnership could be created to sponsor and maintain the site.

### **THE COMMUNITY AGENDA**

#### **WOMEN'S HISTORY IS EVERYWHERE: 10 IDEAS FOR CELEBRATING IN COMMUNITIES**

##### **1. We Recommend: Women Win the Right to Vote: Tell the Story of Suffrage in Local Communities**

“I started looking in Colorado, which is the first place on the planet where men voted to give women the right to vote... So we went around and we did not find one statue in the state for women. They had statues for buffaloes, covered wagons, you name it—but nothing for women.

*Ellen Lovell  
Millennium Communities Handbook  
Published by the White House Millennium Council*

“The courtyard of one of the major banks turned out to be the site of a church where they met to organize the suffrage movement in Denver—half men and half women. We went to see the head of the bank and said, ‘You are so fortunate, can you believe what historic grounds you are on?’ They were horrified... Finally they agreed to a little plaque in the courtyard. That is our big commemorative for women in Colorado. That is embarrassing.”

*The Honorable  
Patricia Schroeder  
Congresswoman (Ret.)*

“I am here as a daughter, a granddaughter, a sister, a niece, a wife, a mother, a grandmother... Only in the last four

years have I learned that Tennessee was the last state to ratify the 19th amendment, that my grandmother was the first woman in her county — Humphries County, TN — to vote in 1920, when my mother was three years old and my grandmother was about the age I am now!”

*Linda Muir  
BellSouth*

The year 2000 will mark the 80th anniversary of the passage of the Women Suffrage Amendment to the Constitution—the greatest expansion of democracy on a single day in our history as a nation. For 72 years, ever since that first convention in Seneca Falls, NY, women in ever-increasing numbers worked to win the full rights of citizenship. They went door-to-door asking for signatures on petitions. They stood on ladders on street corners

***“Eleanor Roosevelt was a prolific writer, a habit born of the last century, but her product describes the twentieth century in personal terms. Unpacking her scattered archives will continue to reveal insights into our nation’s history for decades and generations to come.”***

*Anna Eleanor Roosevelt  
Commissioner*

and wagons parked at crossroads giving speeches to anyone who would listen. They published their own newspapers, organized massive parades and precinct-level political campaigns and picketed the White House. They encountered insults, ridicule, abuse and even jail to win the rights first promised in the Declaration of Independence.

We recommend celebrating the millennial year by commemorating the 80th anniversary of women’s suffrage. Local libraries can organize story-telling sessions for children where local leaders can tell the stories of the brave women and men who achieved the suffrage victory. City officials can mark the spot where a suffrage meeting was held. Community groups can honor the leaders who organized the campaigns and the state legislators whose votes made the difference. The Commission believes that there is no better way to remember the value of our rights as citizens than to honor the pioneers who made it possible.

***2. We Recommend  
Find the “Hidden Women:”  
Develop Access and Archives***

“A graduate student at a distinguished Eastern university was looking for diaries of rural New England women. She found them in a large box, uncatalogued and marked ‘anonymous.’”

*Mary Ellen Henry  
American University  
Washington, DC*

“Many women’s historic actions and accomplishments have been lost over time. They remain uncollected, uncatalogued and unacknowledged. I stress the importance of documenting, researching, collecting, preserving and organizing for retrieval historic facts, stories, memoirs, achievements, actions and accomplishments of women and making them accessible to the public.”

*General (Ret.) Wilma Vaught  
Women In Military Service For  
America Memorial Foundation, Inc.*

“The hidden women... women about whom extensive material is actually held but [who] remain invisible because the material is contained in collections whose titles do not indicate their presence... Yesterday one of the speakers remarked about the homes and buildings of famous men, ‘there were women there too.’ The same can be said even more forcefully about the papers held in the nation’s archives.”

*Ann Newhall  
The National Historical  
Publications and Records  
Commission  
National Archives and  
Records Administration*

“As a biographer of the Founders of the United States and as a historian writing textbooks for college students, I have been constantly frustrated by the difficulty of learning about the lives of women in American history.”

*Dr. Will Randall  
Champlain College, VT  
January 22, 1999*

The Commission heard from many speakers—especially those with professional expertise as librarians, preservationists and archivists—about the need to allocate serious resources to the identification and preservation of original material. Diaries, letters and other records enable scholars to study and document the history of women’s lives, yet much of this material sits unmarked and unnoticed. Such material could be the source of valuable information that would open history for all of us.

While we share the excitement of the new work that is already underway in the field of women’s history, we realize that more scholarship requires greater access to original materials, more attention to finding and appropriately cataloguing material related to women and more money to make these discoveries accessible to the public.

***"As a Comanche woman, I understand the importance of knowing the history of my ancestors and my community. I also understand the importance of knowing the contributions of every community, including my own, to the culture and accomplishments of American society and the global society. One of the greatest benefits of being included in history is to have a sense of who you are and to know that you are a contributing member of a larger community."***

*LaDonna Harris  
Commissioner*

We recommend the use of supporting technology, such as the Internet, to facilitate the cooperation among institutions that will make these materials accessible in a useful form. We heard about several collaborative efforts to archive materials, but we also heard that institutions are reluctant to commit resources to catalogue and digitize the material. Facsimiles of original documents can be available everywhere, for scholars and students alike, but only if the institutions with custody of the materials make them available.

### ***3. We Recommend Discover/Preserve Women's History: Establish Statewide Women's History Initiatives***

"Of more than 1,600 listings in the *National Register of Historic Places* comprising over 46,000 historic properties in Georgia, fewer than 2% are listed because of their association with women. Of 1,965 Georgia historic markers, fewer than 70 markers relate to women."

*Leslie Sharp  
National Register Program Coordinator  
and Women's History Initiative Coordinator  
Georgia Department of Natural Resources*

"There were approximately 2,000 national historic landmarks when we started our project, and of those only

about 40 focus on women. We increased it by 40, which means that we doubled it, but the downside is that still fewer than 5% focus on women."

*Page Putnam Miller  
National Coordinating Committee  
for the Promotion of History*

The state of Georgia has begun an exciting new Women's History initiative to integrate women's history into existing programs that record, document, interpret and preserve historic places. The initiative will identify and document historic places associated with women, reinterpret already identified historic places to reflect our understanding of women's history, and produce publications, heritage education programs and guidebooks to increase public awareness.

This program, which began with a regional conference on women's history and

historic preservation, has been funded by the Georgia legislature. Work is now underway to develop a document establishing the historic connection for women-related historic resources. The initiative will also document at least five National Register nominations for women-related historic sites.

We commend Georgia's leadership and recommend that other states and local historic preservation societies undertake similar programs. If every state adopted Georgia's goal of identifying five women-related historic sites, we would add 250 sites in the millennial year!

### ***4. We Recommend Honor the Work of Women's Organizations: Build an Honor Roll of Local Volunteers***

"So much of the important work that women do, we do in groups, working together. We should not talk

about women's history as if women were isolated from one another. We prefer to work together, forming organization and community-based structures."

*Katherine Tijerina*

"Women have made history by empowering others. Women have volunteered, pioneered, raised money and organized to improve schools, work places and communities."

*Jean Hunt  
Chicago Area Women's History  
Conference*

"There are tremendously large numbers of women in our communities making a difference, addressing concerns and issues of education, housing, the elderly, and they make a difference... This needs to be recorded... Start at the grassroots level."

*Belen Robles  
League of United  
Latin American Citizens*

An accurate portrayal of women's history will include recognition of the important role played by women working together in groups. From the earliest days of the Female Anti-Slavery Societies to Chicago's Hull House and today's service organizations, American women have organized

joint efforts to take on some of society's greatest challenges. Women's organizations led the way in establishing public hospitals and public parks. We started libraries in new towns and established relief organizations for families in distress. From campaigns to win the right to vote to bake sales to fund children's programs, women have always been on the front lines. Individual women serving as volunteers have contributed thousands of hours to building our communities. Contemporary service organizations continue in that proud tradition.

We recommend that community organizations join together to identify groups that made significant contributions to the lives of their citizens and develop a community honor roll to memorialize both the groups and their individual leaders. Follow the example of schools and hospitals that honor their largest financial donors with plaques and add the names of volunteers whose time and effort make those institutions possible. Examine the histories of local volunteer organizations and the files of local newspapers to find these

women and their hidden roles.

**5. We Recommend**  
**Create Community Women's History Trails:**  
**Develop a Map of Local Women's History Sites**

"We are working with fourth and fifth graders, teachers, the principal, the PTA, the neighborhood association, the Colorado Historical Society and a couple of local historians to create a women's history trail. Students are going to do the research. They are going to decide which areas should be highlighted. They are going to publish a guide, and they are going to lead tours of the neighborhood."

*Marsha Semmel*  
*Women of the West Museum*

Creating history trails can bring history to life in local communities. Trails may trace the path of women's firsts, *i.e.*, the first school to admit women, the first woman doctor or newspaper publisher or engineer, the first woman elected to office. Local communities may have been

the site of a dramatic suffrage campaign, a clean milk campaign or a labor strike led by women workers. Telling the stories through a women's history trail is an effective reminder of the courage shown by those women pioneers.

We recommend bringing students to work on trail projects. Not only will the community find a source of enthusiastic researchers but it also will ensure that young people are engaged. A history trail designed by young people is likely to include information that young people find interesting.

**6. We Recommend**  
**Create a City Space to Honor Women:**  
**Build a Women's History Park**

"In Yellow Springs, Ohio, population 4,000, practically every public place — the streets the buildings, the parks, the schools — they're all named for men. So we asked the Village Council for a park to honor women. We wanted to honor all women — everyday women and outstanding women, past and present. Our Village Council said 'OK — if you design

it, help with the cost, get it installed.' And so we did."

*Gene Trolander*  
*Founder, Women's Park*  
*Yellow Springs, Ohio*  
*January 15, 1999*

Building women's parks is a creative and productive way to commemorate the lives of local historical figures and honor the women who live in the community today. In Yellow Springs, Ohio, the Women's Park was financed through the sale of tiles with the names of local women. These tiles, which honor women and their contributions to the community, their service organizations or their families, are incorporated into the park's design. The response to the Yellow Springs Park has been so positive that park organizers are now planning to produce a book featuring the women on the tiles.

Another great example of women's parks is the Hillary Rodham Clinton Women's Park in Chicago. This four-acre green space was dedicated in October 1997, in honor of the First Lady's 50th birthday. It is managed by a 15-member advisory council in the community.

***"What we say captures what we mean and our perception of reality. That is why I always note that in our country, there are many heroes but there are also many she-roes, too."***

We recommend that communities consider establishing women's parks. Both the informal organization of the Yellow Springs Park and the more formally structured Hillary Rodham Clinton Women's Park bring elected officials and broad cross-sections of residents together to honor some of their best-loved and most respected citizens.

***7. We Recommend  
Build a Cooperative  
Community Project:  
Design and Place Historic Markers***

"Why not create a contest that challenges young people to go out and discover the women whose names belong on those historic markers in their own communities?"

*Linda Witt  
Women In Military Service for America  
Memorial Foundation, Inc.*

"Design a special marker that incorporates Mrs. Clinton's theme and place it prominently at all women's history sites."

*Maxine Scarbro  
Greater Federation of Women's Clubs*

Designing and placing historic markers can help raise the visibility of women's lives and their achievements. Every step of the process calls for public participation—from researching, designing the markers, deciding where to place them and finally arranging the ceremony of actually affixing the markers.

We recommend that local governments work with community organizations to sponsor historic marker projects. Local historic societies, libraries, religious organizations and county and municipal clerks are especially rich sources of information about local historical events and sites. School children can learn about their local communities by working with these officials while becoming involved in every aspect of the work. By designing markers and researching suggested sites, children and their leaders can take history beyond the textbook to the places where women actually lived and worked. Adding markers to exist-

ing sites is also important in helping to make all our historic celebrations more inclusive by reminding us that women lived there, too.

***8. We Recommend  
Encourage Young People to  
Discover Women's History:  
Include Youth in a  
Women's History Project***

"Celebrating women's achievements in American history needs to start in the classroom because one of the things I'm angry about is why it took me so long to learn about so much when I'm in college. There are so many women out there, so much about them I didn't know... why am I 20 years old learning about it... when there was all the opportunity in the world when I was in elementary school and middle school?"

*Mashadi Matabane  
Spelman College, GA*

"I would go to the library every week and check out the same book, *Clara Barton*, who was the only woman on the shelf.... I don't want my niece Sarah, who's one year old today, and my niece Emily to go to school in the fourth grade and say, 'Where are the women? There are no books about women on these shelves.'"

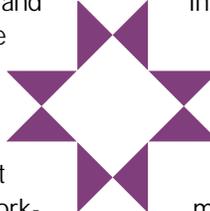
*Lissa McLean*

"Ignorance isn't bliss. Think of all the women you've missed."

*The slogan suggested for the millennium by Samantha Claire  
Girls Speak Out, Atlanta*

Among the most frequent reminders made by speakers to the Commission was the importance of reaching out and making women's history accessible to young women and men. College students and teachers told us there is a great deal of interest in women's history at the college level, but students too often arrive at college with little or no awareness of that history.

Some of the most innovative projects now underway include efforts to engage young people as participants. The increased attention to family tourism means that



women's history sites can become family destinations. We are particularly glad to see the growth of women's history sites on the Internet since technology is becoming the medium of choice for young people.

The Commission recommends that millennial planners incorporate at least one women's history project that includes young people as planners, researchers, narrators and/or audience. Projects described elsewhere in this report, such as developing local history trails, historic markers or finding hidden women in the archives are excellent vehicles for involving elementary and secondary school students.

**9. We Recommend**  
**Support Local Women's History Institutions: Create or Host Exhibits About Women**

"There are 8,000 museums in America and fewer than 10 have a female focus. Of the 2,000 National Park Service sites, fewer than 10 commemorate women. There are more women heads of muse-

ums in Islamic countries than in the United States and Europe combined."

*Cathy Bonner*  
*Women's Museum:*  
*Institute for the Future,*  
*Dallas TX*

"We want to introduce the public...to the leadership of the Civil Rights struggle in San Francisco in the mid-19th century, to the potters of the Santa Clara Pueblo, and to the scientists at Los Alamos. At our museum, these women will take their places with the history-makers of today."

*Marsha Semmel*  
*Women of the West Museum*  
*Boulder, CO*

A number of women's history museums are emerging around the country. While every community may not have the resources to establish a museum devoted to women's history, the Commission recommends that communities devote some public space to exhibits honoring local

women who contributed time and energy to the life of the community.

The national traveling exhibit recommended earlier in this report may become a starting point for a permanent collection of stories about local women. Town halls, county courts and local libraries are excellent venues for these exhibits, where the installation itself becomes a reason to celebrate women in American history. Communities interested in hosting the traveling exhibit may register their interest on the Commission's homepage ([www.gsa.gov/staff/pa/whc.htm](http://www.gsa.gov/staff/pa/whc.htm)).

**10. We Recommend**  
**Women's History Is About Every Woman: Hold an All-Inclusive Her-itage Celebration**

"As you speak of African-American women, don't put us in that chapter all by ourselves....We are Americans, and we are strong Americans because African-American

women contributed more than we were allowed at the time...We belong side by side."

*Dr. Jane Smith*  
*National Council of Negro Women*

"The British historian E.H. Carwas wrote that 'the great person is at once the representative and the creator of social forces which change the shape of the world.'...Countless working women were brave in exactly that way. What they represented, what they did, has changed the shape of our world.

"Rosa Schneiderman, Mary Kenny O'Sullivan, Florence Rood, Margaret Hailey...in the name of the Hawaiian sugar cane workers, the Somerville laundry workers, the millions of other women we will never know, I urge you from the bottom of my heart to give working women in American history the recognition they deserve."

*Linda Chavez-Thompson*  
*American Federation of Labor - Congress of Industrial Organizations*

***“The story of America is one of journey and discovery - of many groups and individuals who shared common dreams and challenges, even as their differences shaped our culture. The Hispanic community, itself of wonderfully varied backgrounds, continues to contribute to every aspect of our society - and understanding America means knowing and celebrating these stories.”***

*Dr. Ellen Ochoa  
Commissioner*

“I was at a recent program on women’s history in Washington. It talked about women’s history but it did not include us. The answer was ‘well we didn’t have enough facts in the last quarter of this century.’ So that meant for a quarter of a century I didn’t exist as a person.”

*Jeannie Jew  
Organization of  
Chinese-American Women*

“Just as gender provides a means of examining power relationships within a historical framework, disability similarly represents power relationships... As a woman with a disability who has participated in political, social and cultural developments that have changed the world for people with disabilities, I think it is critical that we document the role that disability has played in the lives of men and women.”

*Judith Heuman  
U. S. Department of Education*

“One of the key rules is to be inclusive: [from] working women to the elite, religion, race and ethnicity... If we know the white Prudence Crandall for her courage in educating blacks and the work she did for African-Americans in Connecticut, we should also mention the Haitian immigrant Elizabeth Lang who in Baltimore in the 1820s began the first school of young women of color and who also organized

the first black congregation of Catholic women in 1829....”

*Sister Dolores Liptak  
Trinity College*

At every hearing and throughout our correspondence, the Commission was reminded of the diversity of our nation’s citizens and the importance of respecting that diversity in all the projects we recommend. Just as we want to establish that the only accurate history is that which includes the lives and accomplishments of women, we are also committed to the fact that the only accurate representation of women’s history is that which includes the lives of all women.

The Commission recommends a her-itage millennial celebration that represents the diversity within the local community and focuses on the stories of the she-roes who brought their children to build a new nation. Religious and service organizations can enlist the seniors

in their memberships to tell the stories of their she-roines, of how their foremothers came to this country and what their own lives were like as children. So many ethnic bazaars, fairs and parades occur across the country, but few are multicultural and fewer focus on the accomplishments of women outside the kitchen or the craft room. Capturing the memories of first-, second- and third-generation Americans can both document their contributions and build a rich tapestry of memories about the women who pioneered the community.

**WOMEN’S HISTORY IN  
THE NATION’S  
CAPITAL**

“Millions of schoolchildren and adult visitors tour Washington, DC, every year. We have monument upon monument and museum upon museum glorifying our forefathers. Meanwhile the women’s movement has had to fight for seven decades to

have one statue to commemorate some of our foremothers placed in an honorable position in the capitol. With the new exception of Eleanor Roosevelt, there are essentially no monuments in the nation’s capital dedicated to women.”

*Eleanor Smeal  
The Feminist Majority*

**We Recommend  
Designate a Washington, DC, Women’s  
History Site**

“Washington, DC, is a town, that if someone were to visit one hundred years from now and examine our monuments and historic sites, they would assume that the role of women was of no consequence and no importance to building this country.”

*Christine Helen Grumm*

“Of the 197 statues in the Capitol building, only seven are of women.”

*Karen Staser  
Founder*

*National Museum of Women’s History*

At every hearing, the Commission heard concern about the invisibility of women in Washington, DC, especially among the institutions dedicated to teaching and celebrating our nation’s history. The success of the National Museum of Women in the Arts and the enthusiastic

response to the new Women In Military Service For America Memorial are examples of the support and interest that await serious representations of women's real roles in our lives — the partnership of men and women that has built this country, sustained our families and communities and maintained the viability of our democracy.

We applaud the visionary leadership of the founders of new institutions that have emerged in the last decade and have already become part of the fabric of our lives. By showing what can be done, they stand in stark contrast to almost all of our other national memorials. That imbalance continues to be a source of concern.

We do not assume that remedying the imbalance between memorials that honor men and women will be easy. There are already a large number of museums and monuments in the capital competing for attention and resources with many others waiting in the wings. The difficulties encountered in moving the statue of the suffragist leaders out of the basement of the Capitol and the fact that the Suffrage exhibit at the Smithsonian's Museum of American History is still designated as

***“My son’s history textbooks say that Indians brought ‘us’ corn; blacks gave ‘us’ jazz; Chinese completed ‘our’ railroad and built ‘our’ bridges. When I was young, the few Asian women appearing in the popular culture were lotus geisha girls and dragon ladies... Today our children can choose between contemporary forms of these old stereotypes and absence of images... This Commission will contribute to the vitally important work of remembering buried histories.”***

*Dr. Elaine Kim  
Commissioner*

temporary were cited by speakers before the Commission as examples of obstacles to be expected. These very problems add emphasis to the importance of creating a venue that celebrates women's history.

Thus, the Commission has concluded that appropriate celebration of women's history in the next millennium should include the designation of a focal point for women's history in our nation's capital.

Several solutions were suggested including a partnership with an existing museum or library or building upon a current historical site. Another approach is offered by the National Museum of Women's History, whose mission is to “preserve, display and cel-

ebate the rich, diverse heritage of women and bring it into the cultural mainstream.” Although it does not yet have a permanent facility, the Museum has already begun to implement its mission by leading the move to bring the women's suffrage statue into the Capitol rotunda. They have also launched a virtual museum in cyberspace with an exhibit on the suffrage movement.

The Commission recognizes the complexity of designating one site. However the focal point is chosen, we recommend that it serve as a destination for families who visit the capital to learn about our nation's history and be linked through technology with sites and

resources around the country. A number of speakers urged us to explore the use of technology in building collaborations among women's historic sites; a national center for women's history would be the logical central point for such connections. Visitors to our Washington site could be virtually transported to Elizabeth Cady Stanton's home in Seneca Falls or to any of the women's historic sites around the country. Their experience on a virtual history trail might encourage them to travel to the real sites at their next opportunity.

***We Recommend  
Organize March 2000: A National  
Celebration***

Many speakers before the Commission raised the possibility of a national event in March 2000 that would celebrate the changes in women's lives during the last century and reaffirm our commitment to even greater change and opportunity in the next. Among the suggestions were a festival of art and music, an international assembly to assess the changes in the five years since the United Nations Conference on Women in Beijing and a



gathering of young women to make plans for and compare ideas about their futures.

This celebration was viewed as a great opportunity for women to come together in Washington, DC, for one or more days. The Commission agrees that observing Women's History Month in the millennial year deserves a very special celebration.

The Commission recommends that the National Women's Millennial Celebration be inclusive and represent the broadest spectrum of diversity and issues that are important to women. It should also include local communities by virtual participation via the Internet, by interactive satellite broadcast or through simultaneous celebrations in the cities and towns of America.

## FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES

Recognition for the importance of women's history and the roles women play in today's lives are reflected throughout the federal government. As in the private sec-

***“On the outside of the beautiful new federal courthouse in Boston we have carved in stone the words of Sarah Grimke, the abolitionist daughter of South Carolina who was criticized for daring to speak in public about the evils of slavery: ‘Men and women are created equal. They are both moral and accountable beings and whatever is right for men to do is right for women.’ ”***

*David J. Barram  
Administrator*

*U.S. General Services Administration*

tor, more women are working in the government in mid-level and senior management positions than ever before. Women are starting new businesses and account for two-thirds of new business ventures. Women-owned businesses are doing business with the government in record numbers.

Agencies of the Federal government and Congress have also begun programs to recognize and advance the contributions of women in American history. Under the leadership of the Honorable Senator Chris Dodd, the Honorable Senator Ted Stevens and the Honorable Congresswoman Louise Slaughter, Congress authorized the Women's Progress Commemoration Act to recognize women's history sites. The following descriptions give an indication

of the scope of projects currently underway across the government.

### ***Millennium Council***

The President's Commission was inspired by the First Lady's concept for celebration of the millennium with the theme *Honor the Past, Imagine the Future*. The White House Millennium Council was created by the President and First

Lady to give every American an opportunity to participate in meaningful activities to mark the new millennium, with projects involving communities, elected officials and private citizens. Projects of the Millennium Council so far include Save America's Treasures, a public-private partnership to preserve historic sites, documents, art and artifacts; a Millennial Trails program to create, extend or

improve over 2,000 recreational scenic and historic trails; and Millennial Evenings, a series showcasing the best of American culture and history that are broadcast and cybercast from the White House.

Under the Millennium Council's newest project, *Millennium Communities*, states, cities, towns, communities and Native American tribal councils will receive official designation by planning local projects that reflect the national theme *Honor the Past, Imagine the Future*. The handbook for this program includes suggestions for celebrating women's history at the state and local levels.

### ***Department of Education***

“Expanding our teaching of history to include examination of the roles and contributions of all women helps boys and girls gain a better, more accurate sense of women's place in history, which in turn increases the aspirations of all children.”

*Judy Winston*

*U.S. Department of Education*

The U.S. Department of Education is considering options for using computer

***“When men went off to war, we honored them with monuments in our buildings and town squares. No such honor rolls herald the accomplishments of the women who fought poverty, disease and social injustice at home.”***

*Beth Newburger,  
Commission Co-Chair*

technology to assess current efforts that incorporate women's history in schools' curricula. Identifying these “promising practices” is the first important step toward encouraging the integration of women's history throughout all levels of education across the country.

The Department is also considering proposals for the development of curricula for teaching women's history through the Women's Educational Equity Act Resources Center. Grants will be available to those states that include women's history in their history standards. The Department will identify the best methods to make this information available to all schools through the Department's website.

Taken together, these programs can introduce women's history into elementary and secondary school education, thus ensuring that the rich diversity that comprises women's achievements, contributions and life stories is included in all children's education.

### ***General Services Administration***

***Venues for Women's History Events and Exhibits***—As the manager and owner of 8,300 Federal buildings across the United

States, GSA can accommodate women's history events and exhibits within its Good Neighbor, Living Buildings and Outleasing Programs under authority of the Public Buildings Cooperative Use Act of 1976. Interested groups or organizations may hold meetings, training sessions or lectures and display film, music, dance or art exhibits under this program. Additionally, through GSA's Public Buildings Heritage Program, exhibits on historic buildings are placed in the lobbies of Federal buildings. A natural extension of this project would be the inclusion of programs about women in American history.

***Clara Barton Historic House*** — As the real estate manager and developer for the Federal government, GSA takes care to preserve all historical and socially significant aspects of buildings and construction sites. In 1997, GSA

discovered that a building in a developing area of Washington, DC, was Clara Barton's home and office from 1861 to 1868. GSA preserved the historic building during renovations to the area and turned over the archival material—including many Civil War period newspapers and other documents—to the National Park Service for further study and preservation. GSA established a website where visitors can explore the place where Clara Barton worked and lived, from the intimate scale of her living space to a broad view of Washington during the Civil War. Most importantly, GSA required developers to preserve Clara Barton's home and work space and interpret it for the public in a historically accurate way.

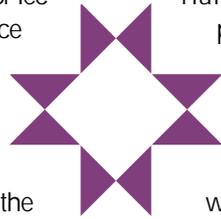
***Incorporating Women's Legacies in Construction Projects*** — GSA's court-

house construction program is the largest new Federal building program since the New Deal. In recent years, GSA has made a concerted effort to incorporate the legacies of local women in construction projects. The exterior and lobby of the new U.S. Courthouse in Boston feature quotes hand carved in stone on jurisprudence, justice and freedom. Five of these quotes are by women.

Notably, the main entrance to the Courthouse features a quotation by Leila Josephine Robinson on the administration of justice. The quotation is taken from the legal brief Robinson wrote seeking, unsuccessfully, to be the first female member admitted to the Bar of Massachusetts:

“The best administration of justice may be most safely secured by allowing the representation of all classes of the people in courts of justice.”

Inside the Courthouse a 4-foot by 30-foot Registry of Designers and Builders, lists all the people who worked on the building. Approximately 5% of the 2,600 names belong to Boston-area women in the construction and electri-



***“Based on workplace demographics, retaining and advancing talented women is critical to the success of every business. But more than being the smart thing to do, it’s also the right thing to do.”***

*J. Michael Cook  
Commissioner*

cal trades.

The Commission recommends that communities take an active role in incorporating local women’s legacies and work in these new landmarks by contacting Susan Harrison, director of GSA’s Art-in-Architecture program at:

U.S. General Services Administration  
Art-in-Architecture Program  
Room 2308  
1800 F Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20405  
susan.harrison@gsa.gov

***National Archives and  
Records Administration***

“As a direct result of the President’s Commission on the Celebration of Women in American History, we are preparing to launch next year an innovative project to publish the papers of Eleanor Roosevelt!”

*Ann Newhall  
National Archives and Records  
Administration*

The National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC), the grant-making agency affiliated with the National Archives and Records Administration chaired by Archivist of the United States John Carlin, will undertake a multi-dimensional project that will explore the work of Eleanor Roosevelt as First Lady, proponent of human and civil rights, and political figure. By combining book, film and electronic publications and using the most modern publication and technological media, the Commission expects to make these important documentary materials available worldwide.

The Eleanor Roosevelt project will draw on the experience of the NHPRC in the Founding Fathers Project and other efforts to make available the papers of some

of the foremost women in American history, including Jane Addams, Margaret Sanger, Emma Goldman, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony.

Another Archives publication—the “Our Mothers Before Us” teaching kit—provides schools with exact replicas of early American women’s petitions. School children can see for themselves how women who were denied the right to vote used petitions to build support for

such important goals as abolishing slavery, fair treatment for American Indians and suffrage for themselves.

The NHPRC is dedicated to ensuring access to primary research material collected from many sources and published under rigorous scholarly standards. The Eleanor Roosevelt project marks a significant step forward in ensur-

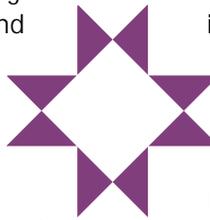
ing that the voices of women and men will join in telling the full story of American history.

***NASA***

NASA is developing a web exhibit chronicling the achievements of women in aviation and space during the 20th century and profiling women who, in the 21st century, will turn science fiction into science fact. The last component of the exhibit will forecast futuristic aerospace programs and provide links to education and career sites. The first phase of the web exhibit will be on-line by July 1, 1999.

As one element of a larger effort to document the history of spaceflight, NASA is collecting oral histories of women who have been associated with NASA in various capacities. NASA will excerpt portions for publication in a book, tentatively titled *Herstories About Space Exploration*. Many of these oral vignettes will be added to the web exhibit.

When Space Shuttle Columbia lifts off on July 9, 1999, Lt. Col. Eileen Collins



will become the first woman to command a space mission. To celebrate this historic milestone, NASA will convene several outreach and educational events for women and girls that will take place at the Kennedy Space Center, FL, culminating in the shuttle launch. The agency also plans to convene numerous on-line mentoring programs throughout the year to allow students to interact with women in various careers at NASA and with prominent women in America.

#### Library of Congress

"What's key about an event such as the 1913 Woman Suffrage Parade is that it chronicles women's history as well as reflects the larger context of American history."

*Ralph Eubanks*

*Library of Congress Publishing Office*

Specialists in 12 custodial divisions of the Library of Congress are collaborating on an illustrated guide to the Library's vast resources on American women's history. This effort is being directed by the Library's Publishing Office, with guidance from a team of six leading scholars of women's history and culture. The guide will describe materials in many media, including books, newspapers, periodicals, broadsides, legal documents, prints, photographs, films, sheet music, recorded

***"Young people, in the throes of creating an identity, are heavily influenced by the popular culture of the day. In the 1800s and early 1900s, women turned to popular magazines, where they encountered illustrations of motherhood and domestic bliss. Soon other visions appeared. . . of glamorous women who reflected the sexual ideal of the day. Bloomer Girls faded into Gibson Girls who faded into Varga Girls, leaving no doubt about the importance of good looks for young women and the joys of kinder and kuche for mature women."***

*Irene Wurtzel  
Commissioner*

sound and songs, maps and folklife documentation. This unprecedented effort will be an invaluable tool for researchers of women's history, from biographers to documentarians and filmmakers to social and cultural historians. The guide is scheduled for publication in the fall of 2000.

As the film *A League of Their Own* told millions of Americans about women players in the national pastime, so there are opportunities to tell many other stories about women's lives of she-roism and achievement. The winning of suffrage is at once the achievement of a nationwide campaign and a story filled with drama. Women's accomplishments translate into exciting theater. Consider the story of the last vote in the state legislature of Tennessee when the future of suffrage was determined by a young Harry Burns who listened to his mother, or Ida Wells Barnett, the newspaper editor who almost singlehandedly took on the horrible practice of lynching, or Florence Wald founding the Visiting Nurses, or Elizabeth Blackwell winning the right to be a doctor.

#### A CHALLENGE AND AN OPPORTUNITY FOR POPULAR CULTURE

**T**he Commission agrees with all who testified to the need to do a better job of teaching our children and ourselves about women's history. Perhaps the most powerful means of telling these stories is through the popular culture.

The group Women in Theater, in Los Angeles, has already discovered the dramatic potential in presenting the stories of women in American history. During their March 6, 1999, celebration of Women's History Month, they produced 40 separate performances in a 12-hour marathon of free theater in and around Los Angeles County. Organizer Miriam Reed, herself a performer, hopes to see this celebration become a regular annual March event "in every city and town of the United States—communities everywhere recognizing the contributions of women with performances that praise them."

The Commission urges our friends in the media, who are thinking of plots for movie and television scripts and radio programs, to consider the possibilities offered by these dramatic events. Though a number of fine movies and documentaries have been produced in the last 20 years, we believe that the surge of interest we have found for so many other aspects of women's history recorded in this report — from the growth in visitors to National Park Service sites to the construction of new museums — suggests that these stories will find a receptive and appreciative audience.

## WE RECOGNIZE

As the Commissioners have traveled across the country in search of ideas, we have visited or heard from women who are building new destinations or protecting existing properties relating to women and their contributions to American life. Following is a representative sample of the work in progress that will create the documentation of women's history for the 21st century. We commend the visionary leaders who are at once saving America's treasures and bringing women into the mainstream of American history.

### ***Women of the West Museum Boulder, CO***

In the words of its CEO and Director Marsha Semmel, the Women of the West

Museum "is dedicated to taking Western women's history beyond Annie Oakley, beyond Sacajawea, even beyond the diaries of the pioneer women on the Oregon Trail."

As they seek a physical site for their museum, the organizers are working with schools, community groups, local government and libraries to develop educational programs, including a short documentary film about women of the West, a lecture series, book discussion groups and a webpage. They have begun to develop women's history trails: "pathways of ordinary women and extraordinary women across time and across cultures that give families, tourists, school children, adults and neighborhoods a new way of understanding the

history that is in our back yard and along the highway."

### ***Women's Museum: Institute for the Future, Dallas, TX***

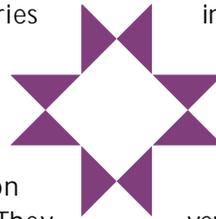
Cathy Bonner, one of the founders of the Women's Museum: Institute for the Future, became focused on developing this Dallas museum. They have found a home for their museum in an old opera house and chose Dallas because "directly in the middle of both coasts, it is the second largest convention and tourist destination."

They are developing exhibits that will include programs for people with varying levels of knowledge of women's history, including an oral history repository. A major component of the work they are doing is incorporating technology into every facet of their exhibits, developing

what Bonner calls an "electronic quilt." The opening gala is planned for September 2000.

### ***Susan B. Anthony House Rochester, NY***

The Susan B. Anthony House, a National Historic Landmark, was home to the famous activist for the 40 most politically active years of her life. It was the site of Susan B. Anthony's famous arrest for voting in 1872 and headquarters of the National American Woman Suffrage Association. In 1945, the Susan B. Anthony House was purchased by a group of women to create a museum. By 1996, visits to the house increased by over 400% due to an expansion of the site to include land around it, and due to a successful capital campaign. Every year, thousands visit the Susan B. Anthony House. In 1998, they opened a new Education and Visitors' Center.



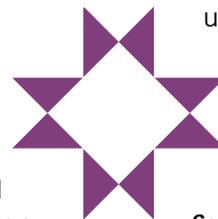
**Madame Walker Theatre Center  
Indianapolis, IA**

The Madame Walker Theatre Center is dedicated to nurturing and celebrating the achievements, art forms, culture and history of African-Americans. Named for the Theatre's founder, Madame C. J. Walker, the Center provides a forum, through the arts, for appreciation and understanding of the great diversity that strengthens all Americans. The Center offers educational, performing arts and humanities programs, and encourages positive cultural experiences for children and adults. In the 1970s, the Walker building, which was a center of culture, entertainment and business from the 1920s through the 1950s, faced demolition. However, a group of concerned

African-American citizens brought the building back to life. The fully-restored Center is currently celebrating its 10th anniversary.

**Paulsdale: Home of Alice Paul  
Mt. Laurel, NJ**

"The saving of Paulsdale is about more than preserving a site. It is the story of the awakening of a group of women to our own history and the importance of that history as a source of individual and collective empowerment," said Barbara Irvine of the Alice Paul Centennial Foundation. Volunteers have worked for 11 years to save Paulsdale, the former home of Alice Paul, a strategist of the suffrage



movement who organized the first picketing of the White House, formed the National Women's Party and wrote the Equal Rights Amendment. Paulsdale was designated a National Historic

Landmark in 1991, and plans are underway for the site to serve as a leadership center for women and girls and to provide space for women's history exhibitions and programs.

**Sewall-Belmont House  
Washington, DC**

The Sewall-Belmont House is one of the oldest houses in Washington, DC, as well as the historic headquarters of the National Women's Party and a unique museum celebrating the

struggle for women's rights. Designated a National Historic Landmark in 1974, it incorporates 300 years of American history. In 1929 Alva Belmont purchased the house and garden for the National Woman's Party. Suffragist Alice Paul lived in the house for more than 40 years, making the Sewall-Belmont House a "beehive of activity" for women's rights. The site includes historic furnishings and fine arts, one of the earliest feminist libraries and an extraordinary collection of suffragist banners, newspapers, journals, photographs, political cartoons and rare historic artifacts and archives.

## APPENDIX

### COMMISSION MEMBERS

#### President's Commission on the Celebration of Women in American History

**Ann Lewis**, Co-Chair  
*Washington, DC*  
Counselor to the President. Former White House Director of Communications. Former Vice President for Public Policy at the Planned Parenthood Federation of America. Led study group on *Going First: Women as Leaders in Contemporary Politics* for Harvard University's Institute of Politics at the Kennedy School of Government.

**Beth Newburger**, Co-Chair  
*Washington, DC*  
Associate Administrator for Communications, U.S. General Services Administration. Publisher, *Washington Woman Magazine*, founder of three technology companies, executive at the *Washington Post* and the *New Republic Magazine*. Winner of several community service awards.

**Dr. Johnnetta B. Cole**  
*Atlanta, GA*  
*President Emerita*, Spelman College and Presidential Distinguished Professor of Anthropology, Women's Studies and African American Studies at Emory University. Author. Received numerous awards, including honorary degrees from 41 colleges and universities and the first Eleanor Roosevelt Education Award on the 75th Anniversary of the Women's National Democratic Club.

**J. Michael Cook**  
*Greenwich, CT*  
Chairman and CEO of Deloitte & Touche. Chairman of the Board of Governors of the United Way of America and Chairman of the Board of Catalyst, the nation's leading organization for the advancement of women in business.

**Dr. Barbara Goldsmith**  
*New York, NY*  
Author and social historian. Has received three doctorates and numerous awards for four best-selling books emphasizing the lives of women. In 1998-99 *Other Powers: The Age of Suffrage, Spiritualism and the Scandalous Victoria Woodhull* has received three major awards. Also, Ms. Goldsmith is a national leader in the preservation and conservation of our cultural heritage and served on the Presidential Commission for

Preservation and Access. She writes for *The New Yorker* and the *New York Times*.

**LaDonna Harris**  
*Bernalillo, NM*  
President of Americans for Indian Opportunity. Founding member of the National Urban League and Common Cause.

**Gloria T. Johnson**  
*Camp Springs, MD*  
President of the Coalition of Labor Union Women, Chair of the IUE Women's Council and Director of the Union's Department of Social Action. Elected a Vice President of the AFL-CIO in 1993, the second African-American woman to hold that position. Received NAACP's First Annual Pathway to Excellence Award "Women of Labor."

**Dr. Elaine H. Kim**  
*Berkeley, CA*  
Author, film producer, and Professor of Asian-American Studies and Comparative Ethnic Studies and Associate Dean of the Graduate Division at the University of California, Berkeley. Co-Founder and Member of the Board of Directors of Asian Women United of California and Co-Founder of Asian Immigrant Women Advocates.

**Dr. Ellen Ochoa**  
*Houston, TX*  
Mission Specialist Astronaut at the NASA Johnson Space Center. Has received numerous awards, including several NASA Space Flight Medals and the Albert Baez Award for Outstanding Technical Contribution to Humanity from Hispanic Engineer National Achievement Awards.

**Anna Eleanor Roosevelt**  
*Chicago, IL*  
Executive Director of the Brain Research Foundation, an affiliate of the University of Chicago. Former Director of the Mayor's Office of Program Development for the City of Chicago. Chair of the Roosevelt Warm Springs Foundation and Vice President of the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute in New York.

**Irene Wurtzel**  
*Washington, DC*  
Playwright, freelance writer and teacher of play writing. Winner of the Margo Jones Play Writing Award, the Jane Chambers Award for outstanding woman playwright and a Cine Award for a documentary film script on the history of the American labor movement. Former Chair of the Board of the Family and Children's Trust Fund of Virginia, a commission aimed at preventing domestic violence and child abuse in Virginia.

## COMMISSION MEETING VENUES

**July 16, 1998**

**Canandaigua, NY**

Ontario County Court House  
Judge Henry Courtroom

**September 25, 1998**

**Albuquerque, NM**

Albuquerque Museum

**October 19-20, 1998,**

**Chicago, IL**

Chicago Cultural Center  
Claudia Cassidy Theatre

**November 12-13, 1998**

**Washington, DC**

Department of State  
East Auditorium

**December 10, 1998**

**Berkeley, CA**

West Coast Fact-Finding Sessions  
University of California, Berkeley  
Barrows Hall

**January 22, 1999**

**Atlanta, GA**

Martin Luther King, Jr., National  
Historic Site

## SPEAKERS

### ALBUQUERQUE

**Evelyn Lance Blanchard**

Indian Welfare Activist/Graduate  
Student, American Studies  
University of New Mexico  
Albuquerque, NM

**Dr. Veronica E. Tiller**

President, Tiller Research, Inc.  
Author - *Tiller's Guide to Indian  
Country*  
Albuquerque, NM

**Bridgid O'Farrell**

Visiting Scholar  
Women's Research & Education  
Institute  
Washington, DC

**Molly Murphy MacGregor**

Co-Founder  
National Women's History Project  
Windsor, CA

**Millie Santillanes**

Civic Activist, Retailer  
Author - *Nuestras Mujeres*  
Albuquerque, NM

**Karen K. Staser**

Founder and President  
National Museum of Women's History  
Washington, DC

### CHICAGO

**Cathy Bonner**

President  
Bonner Inc.  
Founder, Women's History Museum:  
Institute for the Future, Dallas TX  
Austin, TX

**Christine Helen Grumm**

Executive Director  
Chicago Foundation for Women  
Chicago, IL

**Norma L. Seledon**

Director  
Mujeres Latinas en Accion  
Chicago, IL

**Jean S. Hunt**

Founder & Former President  
Chicago Area Women's History  
Conference  
Chicago, IL

**Valerie Tyler-Evans**

Consultant  
Oracle Corporation  
Chicago, IL

**Ronne Hartfield**

Executive Director, Museum Education  
Art Institute of Chicago  
Chicago, IL

**Cece Lobins**

Former Director and Community  
Liaison  
Commission on Human Relations  
Advisory Council on Women  
Chicago, IL

**Yolanda Farkas Hall**

Coordinator  
Women and Labor History Project  
Chicago, IL

**Ruth Z. Sweetser**

Assistant Dean, Business & Industry  
Relations,  
Graduate College  
Illinois Institute of Technology  
Lombard, IL

**Nancy S. Chen**

Regional Administrator  
Women's Bureau Chicago  
U.S. Department of Labor  
Chicago, IL

**Eileen R. Mackevich**

President and Executive Producer  
Chicago Humanities Festival  
Chicago, IL

**Peggy A. Montes**

Chair, Cook County Commission on  
Women's Issues  
Chicago, IL

**Wilma L. Vaught**

Brigadier General USAF (Ret.)  
President  
Women In Military Service For  
America Memorial Foundation, Inc.  
Washington, DC

**Brook M. Wiseman**

Executive Director and CEO  
Girl Scouts of Chicago  
Chicago, IL

**Lynn Y. Weiner**

Professor of History and Associate  
Dean  
College of Arts and Sciences  
Roosevelt University Chicago  
Chicago, IL

**Amina J. Dickerson**

Director, Corporate Contributions  
Kraft Foods, Inc  
Northfield, IL

**Mary B. Richardson-Lowry**

Commissioner  
Department of Buildings  
City of Chicago  
Chicago, IL

**WASHINGTON****Dorothy Ruth Ferrell**

National Woman's Party  
Sewall-Belmont House  
Washington, DC

**Edith Mayo**

Curatorial Consultant  
National Museum of Women's  
History  
Washington, DC

**Sister Dolores Liptak**

President  
Archivist, Congregation for Women's  
Religion  
Trinity College  
Washington, DC

**Sarah Larson**

Executive Director  
Reston Historic Trust for Community  
Revitalization  
Reston, VA

**Dr. Page Putnam Miller**

Director  
National Coordinating Committee for  
the Promotion of History  
Washington, DC

**Barbara Irvine**

Founding President and Foundation  
Trustee, Alice Paul Centennial  
Foundation, Inc.  
Chair, Capital Campaign Committee  
Mt. Laurel, NJ

**Maxine S. Scarbro**

President  
General Federation of Women's  
Clubs  
Charleston, WV

**The Honorable Pat Schroeder**

President and CEO  
Association of American Publishers  
Washington, DC

**Mary Ellen Henry**

Department of History  
U.S. Naval Academy  
Annapolis, MD

**Dr. Roya Ayman**

Director  
Industrial Organizational Program  
Institute of Technology  
Chicago, IL

**Roberta Pilette**

Associate Chief for Preservation  
Treatment  
New York Public Library  
New York, NY

**Susan Bianchi-Sand**

Chair, National Council of Women's  
Organizations  
Washington, DC

**Mary Lou Beatty**

Acting Director of Communications  
Policy  
National Endowment for the  
Humanities  
Washington, DC

**Eleanor Smeal**

President  
Feminist Majority Foundation  
Working for Women's Equality  
Washington, DC

**Dr. Jane Smith**

President, National Council of Negro  
Women, Inc.  
Washington, DC

**Marsha Semmel**

Director and CEO  
Women of the West Museum  
Boulder, CO

**Rev. Imogene B. Stewart**

National President  
African-American Women's Clergy  
Association  
Washington, DC

**Dr. Cynthia Harrison**

Organization of American Historians  
History Department and Women's  
Studies Department  
George Washington University  
Washington, DC

**Dr. Janet Hauber**  
Research Scientist  
Program Manager of the Nuclear  
Cities Initiative  
U.S. Department of Energy  
Washington, DC

**Elise Bryant**  
Senior Staff Associate  
George Meany Center for Labor  
Studies  
Washington, DC

**Linda Witt**  
Research Fellow  
Women In Military Service For  
America Memorial Foundation, Inc.  
Arlington, VA

**The Honorable Louise Slaughter**  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Congresswoman  
Rochester, NY

**Ellen Lovell**  
Deputy Assistant to the President  
Advisor to the First Lady for  
Millennium Program  
Washington, DC

**Karen Nussbaum**  
Director  
Working Women Department  
American Federation of Labor and  
Congress of Industrial Organizations  
Washington, DC

**Ann Newhall**  
Executive Director  
National Publications and Records  
Commission  
National Archives and Records  
Administration  
Washington, DC

**Betty Dooley**  
President  
Woman's Research and Education  
Institute  
Washington, DC

**Belen Robles**  
President and CEO  
Belen Robles and Associates  
Former President  
League of United Latin American  
Citizens  
El Paso, TX

## **WEST COAST SPECIAL FACT- FINDING SESSION PARTICIPANTS**

### **Faculty**

**Barbara Christian**  
African-American Studies  
University of California, Berkeley  
Berkeley, CA

**Wanda Corn**  
Art History  
Stanford University  
Palo Alto, CA

**Loni Ding**  
Film/Chinese American Studies  
University of California, Berkeley  
Berkeley, CA

**Estelle Freedman**  
History  
Stanford University  
Palo Alto, CA

**Rosalinda Fregoso**  
Women's Studies  
University of California, Davis  
Davis, CA

**Ines Hernandez-Avila**  
Native American Studies  
University of California, Davis  
Davis, CA

**Evelyn Nakano Glenn**  
Women's Studies/Asian-American  
Studies,  
University of California, Berkeley  
Berkeley, CA

**Waldo Martin**  
History  
University of California, Berkeley  
Berkeley, CA

**Melinda Micco**  
History  
Mills College  
Oakland, CA

**Laura Perez,**  
Spanish/Chicano Studies  
University of California, Berkeley  
Berkeley, CA

**Raka Ray**  
Sociology  
University of California, Berkeley  
Berkeley, CA

**Luara Ross**  
Native American Studies  
University of California, Davis  
Davis, CA

**Mary Ryan**  
History  
University of California, Berkeley  
Berkeley, CA

**Jane Singh**

Asian-American Studies  
University of California, Berkeley  
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**Ula Taylor**

African-American Studies  
University of California, Berkeley  
Berkeley, CA

**Khatharya Um**

Asian-American Studies  
University of California, Berkeley  
Berkeley, CA

**Graduate Student Participants****Karina Cespedes****Vernadette Gonzalez****Eungie Joo****Priya Kandaswamy****Sara Kaplan****Jodi Kim****Susan K. Lee****Sandra Liu****Mimi Nguyen****Eliza Noh****Isabelle Pelaud****Rowena Robles****Mary Romero****Amy Sadao****Irum Shiekh****Harriett Skye****Caroline Streeter****Beatriz Tapia****Angelina Villafaire****Kathy Yep****ATLANTA****Coretta Scott King**

Martin Luther King, Jr., Center For  
Nonviolent Social Change, Inc.  
Atlanta, GA

**Linda Chavez-Thompson**

Executive Vice-President  
AFL-CIO  
Washington, DC

**Elizabeth Engelhardt**

Graduate Student, Women's Studies  
Emory University  
Atlanta, GA

**Ali P. Crown**

Director  
Emory Women's Center  
Emory University  
Atlanta, GA

**Judy Heuman**

Assistant Secretary of Education  
Office of Special Education and  
Rehabilitative Services  
U.S. Department of Education  
Washington, DC

**Dr. Vera Rubin**

Observational Astronomer  
Member, Association for Women in  
Science  
Washington, DC

**Leslie Sharp**

National Register Program Coordinator  
Women's History Initiative  
Coordinator  
Historic Preservation Division  
Georgia Department of Natural  
Resources  
Atlanta GA

**Anita Patterson**

Chair, Coalition of Black Trade  
Unionists  
National Women's Committee  
Atlanta, GA

**Dr. Barbara Woods**

President, Association of Black  
Women Historians  
Professor, South Carolina State  
University  
Columbus, SC

**Nellie D. Duke**

Chair  
Georgia Commission on Women  
Atlanta, GA

**Imogen Trolander**

Organizer and Developer  
Yellow Springs Women's Park  
Yellow Springs, OH

**Jeannie Jew**

National President  
Organization of Chinese-American  
Women  
Bethesda, MD

**Linda T. Muir**

Director, Legislative and Regulatory  
Matters  
BellSouth Corporation  
Atlanta, GA

**Suzanne McDermott**

Singer, writer, guitarist, painter  
Charleston, SC

**June Griffin**

Bill of Rights Bicentennial Commission  
Medal of Honor winner  
Dayton, TN

**Mashadi Matabanc**

Senior, Women's Studies  
Spelman College  
Atlanta, GA

**Edith Mayo**

Curatorial Consultant  
National Museum of Women's History  
Washington, DC

**Dr. Allida M. Black**

Historian  
Member, Board of Directorss  
Eleanor Roosevelt Center at Val-Kill  
Washington, DC

**Dr. Will Randall**

Visiting Professor  
John Cabot University  
Rome, Italy  
Faculty, Champlain College  
Burlington, VT

**Dr. Nancy Nahra**

Visiting Professor of Humanities  
John Cabot University  
Rome, Italy  
Faculty, Champlain College  
Burlington, VT

**Rosemarie Garland Thomson**

Associate Professor of English  
Howard University  
Washington, DC

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We extend our thanks to the women and men who traveled across the country at their own expense to present their ideas to this Commission. Their thoughtful testimony shaped the concepts in this report. Their enthusiasm confirmed our own commitment to bring women into the mainstream of American history.

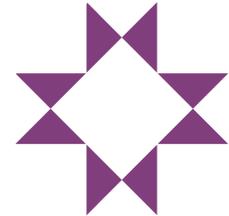
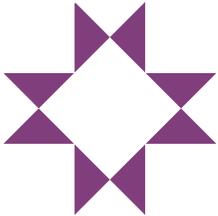
Commissions cannot accomplish their missions without competent staff. Ours was beyond compare. Ruby Shamir kept superb records and minutes with inordinate patience. Martha Davis juggled our schedules and made our arrangements so we were able to work effectively. April Kaufman understood our message and conveyed it so well to the press. Andy Black, Jill Newburger and Johnny Young designed and produced our final report with style and grace. Cindy Gilbert handled the inevitable changes with efficiency and humor.

Our appreciation goes to Gwen Berlin, Director, Art in Embassies Program, U.S. Department of State, for graciously hosting us at the East Auditorium, U.S. Department of State.

For Dave Barram, Administrator, U.S. General Services Administration, our very special thanks for recognizing the importance of honoring America's women in history and providing GSA's support for this Commission.

Finally, our enormous gratitude to President William Jefferson Clinton for his vision and commitment to the work of this Commission and to First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton for her inspirational words at the beginning of our journey to discover our foremothers. Together, we have learned how to honor our past and present this report to you with hope that the future we imagine will include women as equal partners.

*Ann Lewis & Beth Newburger  
Co-Chairs*



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Office of the Press Secretary  
(Hong Kong, People's Republic of China)

For Immediate Release

July 2, 1998

EXECUTIVE ORDER

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PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION ON THE CELEBRATION  
OF WOMEN IN AMERICAN HISTORY

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended (5 U.S.C. App.), and in order to celebrate the role of women in American history, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Establishment. There is established the President's Commission on the Celebration of Women in American History (the Commission). The Commission shall be composed of not more than 11 members appointed by the President from the public and private sectors. The public sector members shall include such persons as the President deems appropriate, including (a) the Assistant to the President and Director of Communications and (b) a person recommended by and who shall be the representative of the Administrator of General Services. The President may designate two members as Co-Chairs of the Commission. The private sector members shall represent entities interested in the Commission's work on American history, particularly the history of women in America. These entities may include, but need not be limited to, academic institutions, business entities, labor organizations, public interest organizations, arts and humanities institutions, State and local governments, athletic groups, and organizations devoted to civil rights and opportunities for minorities and women. The private sector members shall not be considered special Government employees.

Sec. 2. Functions. (a) The Commission shall make recommendations to the President, through the Co-Chairs of the Commission, on ways to best acknowledge and celebrate the roles and accomplishments of women in American history. Recommendations may include, among other things, the feasibility of a focal point for women's history located in

Washington, D.C., and the use of the latest technology to connect existing and planned women's history sites, museums, and libraries.

(b) The Commission shall meet to carry out its work concerning the celebration of women in American history.

(c) The Commission shall report its recommendations, through the Co-Chairs of the Commission, in a final report to the President by March 1, 1999.

Sec. 3. Administration. (a) The heads of executive departments and agencies shall, to the extent permitted by law and where practicable, provide the Co-Chairs of the Commission with such information with respect to women's history in America as the Co-Chairs may request.

(b) Members of the Commission shall serve without compensation for their work on the Commission. While engaged in the work of the Commission, members appointed from the private sector may be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, as authorized by law for persons serving intermittently in Government service (5 U.S.C. 5701-5707).

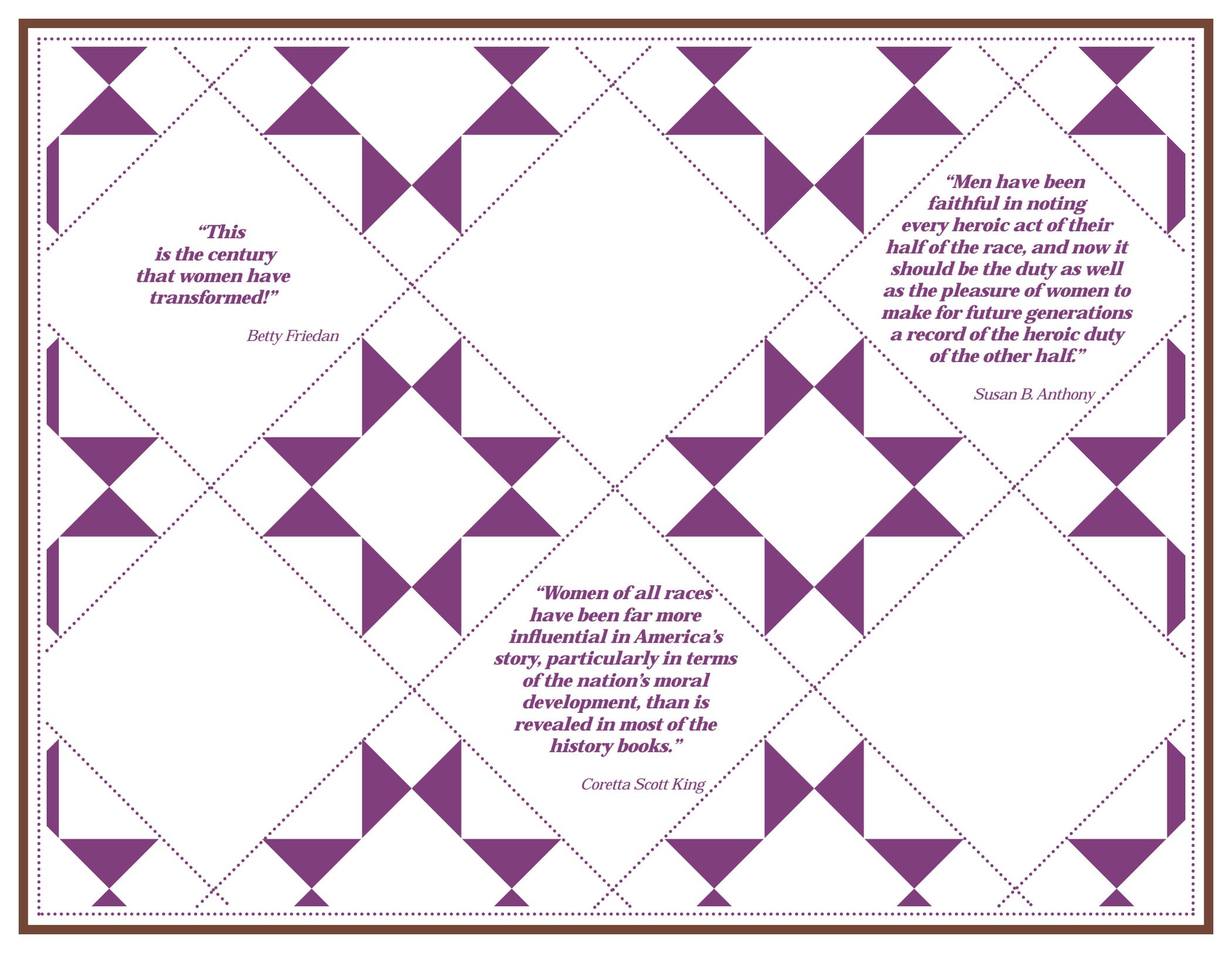
(c) To the extent permitted by law and subject to the availability of appropriations, the General Services Administration shall provide the Commission with funding, administrative services, facilities, staff, and other support services necessary for the performance of the functions of the Commission. With respect to the Commission, the Administrator of General Services shall perform the administrative functions of the President under the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended, except that of reporting to the Congress.

(d) The Commission shall terminate 60 days after the submission of its final report.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON



THE WHITE HOUSE,  
June 29, 1998



***“This  
is the century  
that women have  
transformed!”***

*Betty Friedan*

***“Men have been  
faithful in noting  
every heroic act of their  
half of the race, and now it  
should be the duty as well  
as the pleasure of women to  
make for future generations  
a record of the heroic duty  
of the other half.”***

*Susan B. Anthony*

***“Women of all races  
have been far more  
influential in America’s  
story, particularly in terms  
of the nation’s moral  
development, than is  
revealed in most of the  
history books.”***

*Coretta Scott King*