

The Women Who Never Backed Down

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Susan B. Anthony was a woman of courage and commitment at the forefront of the women's suffrage movement paving the way for girls like me to know our worth and follow in her footsteps. Anthony had a normal childhood compared to the extraordinary things that she accomplished. Born April 15, 1820 in Adams, Massachusetts, she grew up in the Quaker religion, and was an exceptional child, learning how to read and write by the age of three and excelling in school. She attended a variety of schools, from her hometown school in Adams, a district school in Battensvill, New York. When her parents moved, she attended a boarding school in the Philadelphia area. Completing school, Susan decided to take a position teaching at an all-girl Quaker seminary in New Rochelle, New York. Susan's story started when she met passionate and courageous abolitionists including Frederick Douglass, Parker Pillsbury, William Henry Channing, and William Lloyd Garrison— all people with commitment to their work. It was after meeting these abolitionists that her passion and commitment for this movement was ignited.

Anthony had a rough start to her new career and life purpose. She was immediately rebuffed from an attempt to speak at a temperance meeting in 1852 Albany, New York. It took courage after immediately being shut down, but Susan found that courage and founded the Woman's New York State Temperance Society, pushing her further into the movement. She became so committed to this pressing cause that in a short period of time, after working tirelessly, she was recognized as one of the faces on the forefront of this movement. With this newfound public recognition came a lot of hate and abuse from the public and news, but Susan again found the courage to continue onwards despite the opposition that she received.

Out of many powerful, courageous, and smart female abolitionists at the time, Susan B. Anthony was one of the leaders. In 1856 Anthony served as the chief New York agent of the

American Anti-Slavery Society. From her new position, she helped to organize the Women's National Loyal League during the early stages of the Civil war. She courageously spoke out against slavery and was a major advocate for emancipation without having rights herself. After the 14th amendment was passed, Anthony, being one of the many voices in this journey, went on a campaign to include women in this new amendment. Sadly she was unsuccessful. Though she experienced defeats in her early journey for women's suffrage, her perseverance and hard work always showed through, and after the passage of the 14th amendment, she became more committed to her goal.

In 1866, Susan became the secretary of the American Equal Rights Association, a newly found association formed after the 14th amendment. Throughout the year of 1867, she tirelessly campaigned around Kansas which resulted in another failure to persuade the passage of equal rights laws. With perseverance to try again, Anthony became the publisher at *The Revolution*. Here she used her voice and spread the message of the fight for rights that women were going through. In the same year, this hard-working woman organized and represented the Working Women's Association of New York, at the National Labor Union Convention. The next year Susan B. Anthony along with Elizabeth Cady Stanton organized the National Woman's Suffrage Association (NWSA), where Anthony served as its spokeswoman and its principle leader. After she ran her course at *The Revolution*, Anthony relinquished her position, in order to go on a lecture series about this pressing issue she was committed to solving.

Susan used all of the courage she had to cast a vote in the 1872 presidential election to test the 14th amendment, but was arrested for doing so. Proving what Anthony had been working so hard against, she was unjustly proved guilty of her "crime" before her trial even started. Anthony, as the strong-willed and courageous woman that she was, refused to pay the fine, and

won a small battle in the war of women's suffrage by getting her case dropped. Once again Anthony did not let this little hiccup stop her, and went on a campaign lasting many years to many states: California in 1871, Michigan in 1847, Colorado in 1877, and many more states to continue her fight.

Throughout almost a lifetime of commitment to a cause and courage to speak her mind, she had largely overcome all of the abuse she faced in her earlier career, so much so she was warmly welcomed to many expositions from 1893 till 1899. Anthony's honorable and inspiring career finally came to an end in 1900 at the age of 80, where she retired from the National American Woman Suffrage Association. After committing her entire life to the women's suffrage movement, she sadly died in 1906, which was 14 years before the Nineteenth amendment was passed, never being able to see how her hard work had paid off. She lived as an amazing example of a woman who had courage, perseverance and commitment to a cause that was largely reformed thanks to her.

Susan B. Anthony is someone who fills me with inspiration to know my worth, and that my voice matters. She always had the courage to persevere even when things got tough, reminding me that if I have a passion and am committed, I should never give up when working to achieve my goal. I aspire to emulate even half of her courage and perseverance, and accomplish half the number of good deeds. She has paved the way for so many other girls with a passion and a voice, and I am so glad that her story is being taught in an honorable way that reflects what she has done. She deserves all of the honor that we give her, for she not only paved the way for the 19th amendment, but forged a path for me and girls all over America.

References

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