

Susan B. Anthony I

Lead: In a life devoted to various causes, Susan B. Anthony proved herself in many ways far ahead of her times.

Tag: *A Moment in Time* with Dan Roberts.

Content: Susan Brownell Anthony was born in 1820 in Adams, Massachusetts. Her father was a prosperous cotton manufacturer. A Quaker and an abolitionist, a man who hated alcohol, Daniel Anthony who gave his daughter a strict upbringing and demonstrated a zeal for moral crusading that Susan would follow for the rest of her life.

After graduation she became a school teacher in upstate New York at a salary of \$2.50 per week. At that time male teachers were making four times that amount. And she remembered. While Susan Anthony is best recognized for her work on behalf of a women's right to vote, her early enthusiasm was spent trying to rid the country of liquor and all its works. In 1849 she became a leader in the local chapter of the Daughters of Temperance. Her popularity as a speaker grew until she added an antislavery message to her standard speech against alcohol. Abolition was a more controversial topic and soon the invitations to speak dried up. She continued her work with the

Daughters of Temperance, and in the early 1850s was sent as a delegate to the Sons of Temperance national convention. When she rose to speak she was told by members of the Sons that Daughters were not to speak but to listen and learn. In a preview of her life ahead, Anthony and several other women stormed out of the meeting in protest. This rather obvious discrimination stimulated her interest in a drive for sexual equality.

During her travels for the Daughters of Temperance, Anthony met Elizabeth Cady Stanton, another activist and they soon discovered that their interests were shifting, away from temperance and abolition and toward feminism as their cause. In

1854, Anthony began a petition drive in New York State to gain rights for all women to have control of their personal belongings, guardianship over their children, equal pay, and the vote. Tirelessly devoted to the task she lectured in 54 of the State's 60 counties in a lecture tour advocating women's rights. The Civil War slowed the feminist movement as the North concentrated on winning and Anthony focused for a time on the abolition of slavery. With the fall of the South, she returned to the fight with renewed vigor. Next time: Susan tries to vote and goes to court.

At the University of Richmond, this is Dan Roberts.

Resources

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**Barry, Kathleen. *Susan B. Anthony: A
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**Riegel, Robert Edgar. *American Feminists*.
Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press,
1963.**