

National Organization for Women

“There is no civil rights movement to speak for women, as there has been for Negroes and other victims of discrimination. The National Organization for Women must therefore begin to speak.”

—Betty Friedan, 1966

◀ Women’s rights protesters

Other Americans Seek Rights

Objectives

- Discover the gains made by the women’s movement.
- Find out how Mexican Americans struggled to win equal treatment.
- Explore how Native Americans, older Americans, and the disabled sought fairer treatment.

Reading Skill

Support Conclusions With Evidence

Like inferences, conclusions must be supported with evidence. That evidence comes first and foremost from the text but can also come from prior knowledge and personal experience. Identify conclusions that you have made while reading. Then, find the information that led you to that conclusion.

Key Terms and People

Betty Friedan
César Chávez
bilingual

mandatory
retirement
Maggie Kuhn

Why It Matters African Americans were not the only Americans to be denied equal rights, and they were not the only Americans to work for change. Women, Mexican Americans, Native Americans, and others embraced the expanding civil rights movement. Their activities brought dramatic and lasting change.

Section Focus Question: What other groups were swept up in the spirit of reform?

Women’s Rights Movement

By the 1960s, women had won the vote and made other gains. Yet many women believed they still had a long way to go to achieve full equality in jobs and education.

Betty Friedan *The Feminine Mystique*, a 1963 book by Betty Friedan, reignited the women’s rights movement. Friedan was a housewife with a degree in psychology. She argued that many women were secretly unhappy with their limited roles in society:

“The problem lay buried, unspoken, for many years in the minds of American women. It was a strange stirring, a sense of dissatisfaction, a yearning. . . . Each suburban wife struggled with it alone.”

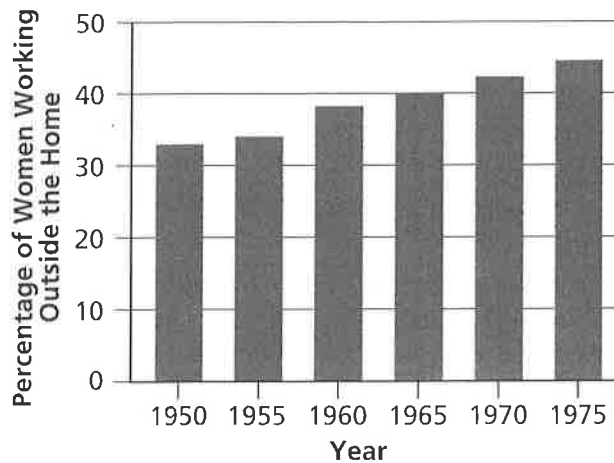
—Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*

Friedan’s book became an instant bestseller. It challenged traditional ideas about the roles of both men and women. It also inspired thousands of women to seek careers outside the home.

In 1966, Friedan helped found the National Organization for Women (NOW). NOW lobbied Congress for laws that would give women greater equality. It demanded that medical schools and law practices train and hire more women. It also campaigned for day-care facilities for the children of mothers who worked outside the home.

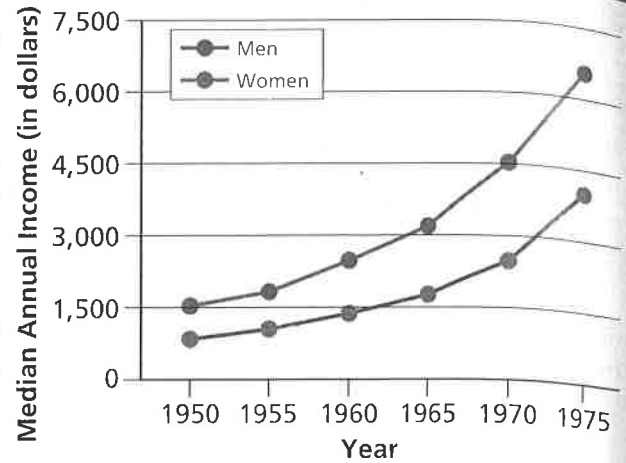
Women in the Workforce, 1950–1975

Women Working Outside the Home



Source: Historical Statistics of the United States

Incomes of Men and Women



Source: Historical Statistics of the United States

Reading Charts Skills Activity

As the women's rights movement continued, more and more women found work outside the home. Still, their incomes continued to lag behind those of men.

- (a) **Interpret Graphs** What percentage of American women worked outside the home in 1950? In 1975?
- (b) **Make Predictions** What do you think will happen to the gap between men's incomes and women's incomes in the future?



Support Conclusions With Evidence

Give evidence to support the conclusion that some American women responded sympathetically to Betty Friedan's point of view and others did not.

The ERA NOW led a campaign to ratify an Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) to the Constitution. The ERA would forbid any form of sex discrimination. Congress passed the amendment in 1972. To become law, it had to be ratified by 38 states.

The ERA touched off a furious debate. Opponents, both men and women, charged that the amendment would undermine traditional values. They warned that women might lose their rights to alimony or be forced to serve in combat. Critics also claimed that the ERA was unnecessary because several laws already protected women's rights. In the end, the ERA did not receive enough votes for ratification.

Notable Gains The women's movement did make notable gains. In 1963, President Kennedy signed the Equal Pay Act, which required equal pay for men and women doing the same jobs. A year later, sex discrimination was included in the Civil Rights Act.

In the workplace, women's salaries continued to lag behind those of men. Still, the number of women working outside the home steadily increased. In addition, more women attended colleges.

Women made gains in the political arena, too. More women were elected to city councils, state legislatures, and the U.S. Congress. In 1969, Shirley Chisholm of New York became the first African American woman elected to Congress. In 1975, Ella Grasso of Connecticut became the first woman elected governor of a state without succeeding her husband.

Checkpoint What argument did Betty Friedan make?

Civil Rights for Mexican Americans

While the African American civil rights movement was taking shape, Mexican Americans were waging their own campaign for equal rights. Mexican Americans were not subject to official segregation laws. However, in the Southwest, all-white schools closed their doors to Mexican American children. Instead, they had to attend poorly equipped "Mexican schools." Custom kept Mexican Americans out of many neighborhoods and jobs.

Organizing for Change In 1948, Mexican American veterans of World War II formed the American GI Forum. Like the NAACP, the Forum supported legal challenges to discrimination.

In 1954—the same year as *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*—Mexican Americans also won a major Supreme Court victory. A Mexican American man in Texas had been convicted of murder by an all-white jury. His lawyers argued that the conviction was invalid because Mexican Americans were excluded from serving on Texas juries.

In *Hernández v. Texas*, the Supreme Court ruled that excluding Mexican Americans from juries was illegal. Other minority groups would later use the *Hernández* decision to help secure their legal rights.

Chávez and the UFW Many Mexican Americans in the Southwest were migrant workers, traveling from farm to farm to pick crops. In 1966, César Chávez helped to form a labor union, the United Farm Workers (UFW). Its goal was to win higher wages and decent working conditions for migrant laborers.

Like King, Chávez favored nonviolent protest. When growers refused to recognize the UFW, he organized a national boycott of California grapes. By 1970, so many Americans had stopped buying grapes that growers agreed to sign a contract with the union.

Protecting Voting Rights During this same period, Mexican Americans organized campaigns to win greater rights. As a result, Congress amended the Voting Rights Act in 1975. It required areas with large numbers of foreign-speaking citizens to hold bilingual elections. Bilingual means "in two languages."

Other laws promoted bilingual education in public schools. Supporters of bilingual education said that it would help students keep up with their work as they learned English.

✓Checkpoint What did the Supreme Court decide in *Hernández v. Texas*?

Biography Quest



César Chávez
1927–1993

César Chávez was born into a hard-working Mexican American family. When the Great Depression hit, they were evicted from their land where they had a farm and grocery store. The family saw no choice but to become migrant farmworkers in California and Arizona. Chávez quit elementary school to join his family working in the fields.

Biography Quest online

When was Chávez awarded the Medal of Honor?

For: The answer to the question about Chávez

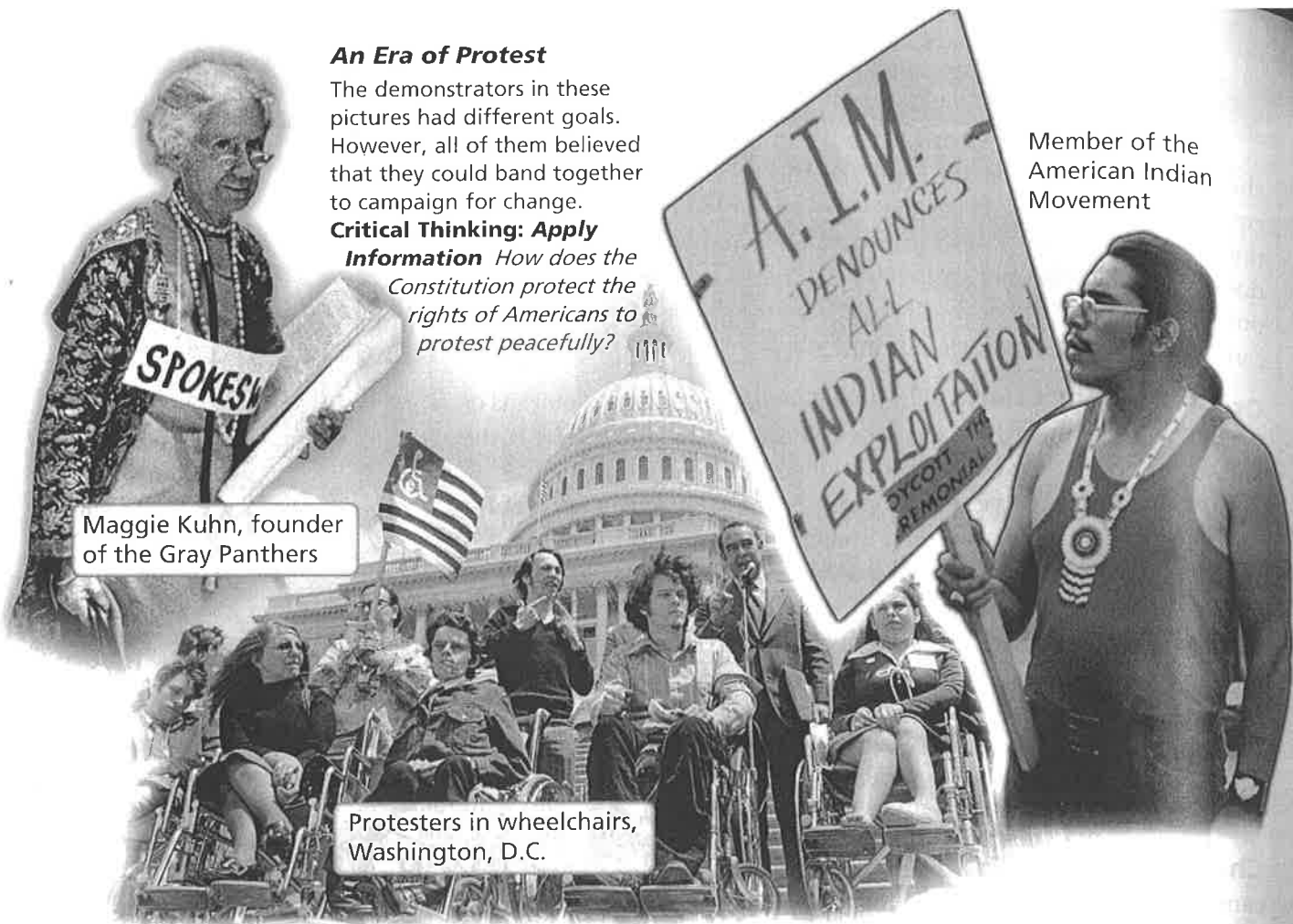
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An Era of Protest

The demonstrators in these pictures had different goals. However, all of them believed that they could band together to campaign for change.

Critical Thinking: Apply Information How does the Constitution protect the rights of Americans to protest peacefully?



Maggie Kuhn, founder of the Gray Panthers

Member of the American Indian Movement

Protesters in wheelchairs, Washington, D.C.

Organizing for Change

The spirit of reform introduced by the civil rights movement spread into every corner of the nation. More groups began to organize in order to achieve greater protection under the law.

Native Americans Indians had long been the poorest segment of the population. They were also subject to shifting federal policy. In the 1960s, activists began to demand change. The National Congress of American Indians sent delegations to Washington to regain land, mineral, and water rights. Increasingly, such efforts succeeded.

The American Indian Movement (AIM) turned to more radical protest. In 1973, armed members of AIM occupied Wounded Knee, South Dakota, for several days. As you have read in Chapter 17, Wounded Knee had been the site of a massacre of Native Americans in 1890. AIM wanted to remind people of the government's long history of unfair dealings with Native Americans.

Not all Native Americans agreed with AIM's militant tactics. But an increasing number showed greater pride in their heritage.

Older Americans The number of Americans over the age of 65 has steadily grown. Often, these older citizens had trouble paying for health care and insurance. Many jobs forced mandatory retirement, a policy that required people to stop working at a certain age. Most companies set 65 as the mandatory retirement age.

Older people organized to exert their political clout. In 1958, the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) was founded to promote health insurance for retired Americans. The AARP lobbied for passage of programs such as Medicare. Since then, the AARP has taken a stand on a wide range of issues affecting older Americans.

In 1970, **Maggie Kuhn** was forced to retire because she had reached age 65. She then organized the Gray Panthers to combat age discrimination. The following year, the Gray Panthers gained national attention by staging a protest in Washington during a White House Conference on Aging. Kuhn defined her vision as "young and old working together for a better world for the young to grow old in."

Americans With Disabilities Americans with disabilities also campaigned for equal rights. Disability rights organizations backed laws requiring public buildings to provide access for people with disabilities. As a result, public accommodations were modified to include reserved parking spaces, ramped building entrances, wheelchair lifts on public buses, and Braille buttons on elevators.

Congress also passed laws protecting the educational rights of children with handicaps. The Education for the Handicapped Act of 1975 guaranteed a free education for all children with disabilities. In 1990, Congress passed the Americans With Disabilities Act. It outlawed discrimination in hiring people with physical or mental impairments.

 **Checkpoint** How did older Americans work for change?

★ **Looking Back and Ahead** The civil rights movement was a time of increasing social upheaval. In the next chapter, you will see how the Vietnam War added to this climate of protest.

Vocabulary Builder

exert (ehks ZERT) **v.** to put into action

Vocabulary Builder

modify (MAH dih fī) **v.** to make changes to or in; to alter

Section 4 | Check Your Progress

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Comprehension and Critical Thinking

- (a) Identify** What was the Equal Rights Amendment?
(b) Detect Points of View Identify one argument for and one argument against the ERA.
- (a) Recall** Explain one way each of the following groups sought better treatment in the 1960s and 1970s: Mexican Americans, Native Americans, older Americans, people with disabilities.
(b) Compare How were the efforts of these groups similar?



Reading Skill

- Support Conclusions With Evidence** Reread the text following the subheading "Civil Rights for Mexican Americans." Give evidence to support the conclusion that many Mexican Americans faced a language barrier.

Key Terms

- Fill in the blank in each question with one of the key terms from this section.
- _____ ballots were printed in both English and Spanish.
 - Because of _____, many older people had to stop working.

Writing

- Pick one person below. List three details he or she might observe in the circumstances described:
 - Woman reentering the work force after raising her children
 - Mexican first-grader going to school for the first time in a bilingual class
 - Sixty-five-year-old worker deciding to protest mandatory retirement
 - Physically disabled person entering a building that has no wheelchair ramp