

# This Day In History

MARCH | 31

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1776

## Abigail Adams urges husband to "remember the ladies"



In a letter dated March 31, 1776, [Abigail Adams](#) writes to her husband, [John Adams](#), urging him and the other members of the Continental Congress not to forget about the nation's women when fighting for [America's independence](#) from Great Britain.

The future First Lady wrote in part, "I long to hear that you have declared an independency. And, by the way, in the new code of laws which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make, I desire you would remember the ladies and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of the husbands. Remember, all men would be tyrants if they could. If particular care and attention is not paid to the ladies, we are determined to foment a rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no voice or representation."

Nearly 150 years before the [House of Representatives](#) voted to pass the [19th Amendment](#) giving women the right to vote, Adams letter was a private first step in the fight for equal rights for women. Recognized and admired as a formidable woman in her own right, the union of Abigail and John Adams persists as a model of mutual respect and affection; they have since been referred to as "America's first power couple." Their correspondence of over 1,000 letters written between 1762 and 1801 remains in the [Massachusetts](#) Historical Society and continues to give historians a unique perspective on domestic and political life during the revolutionary era.

Abigail bore six children, of whom five survived. Abigail and John's eldest son, [John Quincy Adams](#), served as the sixth president of the United States. Only two women, Abigail Adams and [Barbara Bush](#), have been both wives and mothers of American presidents.

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### Citation Information

**Article Title** Abigail Adams urges husband to "remember the ladies"

**Author** [History.com Editors](#)

**Website Name** HISTORY

**URL** <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/abigail-adams-urges-husband-to-remember-the-ladies>

**Date Accessed** July 14, 2023

**Publisher** A&E Television Networks

**Last Updated** March 30, 2020

**Original Published Date** October 22, 2009

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