



Born for Liberty

By Sara Evans

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The most concise and comprehensive one-volume history of American women—from the indigenous women of the 16th-century wilderness to the dual-role career women and mothers of contemporary times—this book brings American womanhood to center stage, exploring the lives of pioneers and slaves, immigrants and factory workers, executives and homemakers.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

It is the view of Evans, director of the Center for Advanced Feminist Studies at the University of Minnesota and author of *Personal Politics*, that "to understand the force of women's experience . . . we must adjust our vision so that we can see the world not only through the major male figures in the foreground but also through the eyes of female figures--a Puritan good wife, an African slave, an Iroquois matron, a westering woman, a female immigrant, a settlement house worker, a secretary." She advances to this end by melding the stories of representative, sometimes well-known, women into the larger sphere of American politics and public life. Richly diverse accounts exemplify the challenge and struggle that have defined and continue to alter the roles of women in our nation's development. In this respect Evans's useful exploration of the participatory nature of women's history in the United States differs from the majority of feminist literature.

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From School Library Journal

YA-- A fascinating, readable volume that discusses the continual reshaping of the role of women in America from the 17th century to the 1980s. Evans' chapters roughly coincide with standard textbook organization of history (early settlers, Revolutionary era, 1845-1865, etc.), which makes the book useful to students of American history searching for another viewpoint. Unlike earlier histories, which only discuss women in the home, Evans shows the impact husbands, brothers, and sons had on the women's lives and thinking, and the effect of women's actions on men's politics. Although women's place in society remains unchanged in many basic ways, the intervening 300 years have seen great changes in the acceptance of women in public and political spheres. Evans makes these changes understandable to lay readers who may not yet have a sense of the totality of American history. No library should be without this title that offers such unique insight into women's roles and history from early settlers and native Americans to modern CEOs. --Dorcas Hand, Episcopal High School, Bellaire, TX

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From Library Journal

In this synthesis, Evans reviews the evolution of work and family life with sensitivity to the fissures of class, national origin, region, occupation, marital status, sexual preference, and, especially, race. As in her earlier work, Evans spotlights the "public spaces"--reform, religious and educational organizations--that women created in order to achieve political and social objectives. Enriched by the fruitful scholarship of the last decade, this densely written book is a worthy execution of a difficult task. There are only a few comparable works: Glenda Riley's *Inventing the American Woman* (Harlan Davidson, 1986); Nancy Woloch's *Women and the American Experience* (Knopf, 1984); and Mary P. Ryan's most recent edition of *Womanhood in America from Colonial Times to the Present* (Watts, 1979; 1983). Recommended.

- *Cynthia Harrison, Federal Judicial Ctr., Washington, D.C.*

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