



Highsted Knowledge Organiser

Subject: High Performance Learning

Year 7: Changing Representations of Women in the Twentieth Century.

What I need to know

- We will be considering the following aspects of women's lives across the twentieth century.
- Politics
- Economic rights
- Education
- Family life
- Legal rights
- Appearance
- Social aspects of life
- We will look at how adverts and film have represented women and gender relationships differently across the twentieth century

Key Vocabulary

Feminism – belief in and support for equality for women, expressed especially through organised activity on behalf of women's interests

Stereotype – a generalised belief about a group of people which is not based on fact or evidence.

Legislation – the process of making laws

Equality – equality is when each person is seen as equal in the eyes of the law. They are not treated differently because of race, religion, gender, sexuality or disability

Political – things to do with government and how a country is ruled.

Social – to do with people and how they live their lives.

Economic – to do with money, business and jobs.

Student reference point

- At the beginning of the twentieth century most people in Britain believed that men and women were totally different in personality and aspiration. Women were naturally nurturing and kind, it was their job to manage the house and look after the children and family. They were usually not as intelligent as men and needed to be protected.
- In 1919 (after World War One), women gained the vote and the right to join professions such as law and medicine even when married. They could also sit on juries and be awarded a degree.
- However, most women had only basic education that focused on domestic skills. Most women still aspired to marriage above a career.
- In the 1950s women were still encouraged to make the home and family their focus. Magazines showed the ideal woman as one who kept the house looking stylish, looked after the children and was still beautiful for her husband when he returned home from work.
- The women's rights movement made significant progress in the 1970's and women began to win equal economic rights with men. The sex discrimination act of 1975 made it illegal to discriminate against women in employment, education and training. They could also apply for a loan or a credit card making it easier for them to become financially independent.
- 55% of women worked and 20% of people in management positions were female, this meant the stereotype of the traditional housewife was becoming far less typical. Women began to have many more opportunities in a wider range of professions.

- In 1979 Margaret Thatcher became the first female Prime Minister
- Since the 1990s more women than men have attended university, however, women are still on average paid less than men (about 9 % less in Britain, 23 % across the world)
- Changes in attitudes to women and gender are reflected in advertisements, film and other aspects of the media.



Advert from the 1950s



Advert from 2019

Challenge question

- Analyse which of the decades from the twentieth century that you have learned about was most significant in changing attitudes to women and improving their lives?
- As an extension you could consider political, economic and social change. Were there crucial time periods for different areas of life?
- How have portrayals of women in adverts and films changed over time? How does this reflect changing attitudes to women in society?
- Are Disney Princesses still appropriate and useful role models for children of the 2020s?
- What would a new heroine/hero for 2022 be like?

Suggested reading

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-40682933> article on the FA and Disney princesses

[Women's Rights - changes in the 20th century - BBC Teach](#)