

Great American Women You've Never Heard Of... Part 3

By Kerry Mauk and Sandie Bolyard

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Great American Women, You Have Never Heard Of

Part 3

By Kerry Mauk with the assistance of Sandie Bolyard

This lesson, Great American Women, You Have Never Heard Of, Part 3 is presented as seven interviews. Our Reporter, Baba Wawa will have a fictional interview with each of these women about their life and accomplishments. We have great respect for each of these women, and this lesson was written to honor them.

Baba: Welcome everyone to “Great American Women, You’ve Never Heard Of” Part 3. I am Baba Wawa and I will be interviewing seven women from American’s past. These women are sitting out in our audience. You could be sitting next to one of them, right now.

Today, we will be speaking with **Ann Story**, a patriot from our Revolutionary War, Maria Mitchell, an astronomer, Sarah Winnemucca, an advocate for the Paiute Native American Tribe, and Mary Bethune, adviser to President Franklin Roosevelt. We will also be speaking with Jeannette Rankin, the first woman elected to the U.S. Congress, Hedy Lamarr, actress and inventor, and lastly Judith Heumann, activist for the rights of the disabled.

Baba: Let’s welcome our first Great American Woman, Ann Story. (Ann enters)
Thank you for coming.

Ann: Well, you are surely welcome. Glad to be here with you folks.

Baba: You were born Hannah Reynolds on February 27, 1735 in what will become the state of Vermont. Your parents died when you were eight and you were raised by your Uncle. There were six of you children. That was quite a burden on your Uncle.

Ann: On the other hand, he gained six workers that he didn’t have to pay.

Baba: Good point.

Ann: My folks were farm laborers. They didn't own the land they worked on. In 1775, I married Amos Story. He was determined to own the land he worked, so he got a Grant for 100 acres of land by Salisbury, in the Vermont Wilderness. He was only the second man to settle in that area. By then we had five children, three boys and two girls. Amos took our oldest son, Solomon with him to build a log cabin on the property.

Baba: Then tragedy struck. Amos was killed, when a tree he was cutting fell on him. Solomon walked to his neighbor, Ben Smalley. Ben and his sons returned with Salomon and they buried Amos.

Ann: Solomon came to me with the news of Amos' death. Right there and then I decided that we were going to make a home out of that place. So in the spring of 1776, the children and I moved to the log cabin and continue clearing the land.

Baba: You did this despite the fact that the Revolutionary War was at your doorstep. Not only did you face dangers from wild animals, but also from Tories (colonists who were loyal to the British Crown) and the Native Americans, who sided with the British.

Ann: I was for the Patriots, (those who wanted independence from British rule). I raised my crops and cared for my animals and provided whatever food and supplies I could to the Patriots. My children and I dug a cave in the banks of the Otter River and hid a canoe there in which we placed the supplies. At night we would take the canoe down river to where the "Green Mountain Boys" would be waiting for us.

Baba: Who were the Green Mountain Boys?

Ann: They were the local militia, who defended the colonists, using Gorilla Tactics. They were not part of the regular army and were usually not supplied by them. So we helped them out as we could.

Baba: You took a terrible risk and paid a high price. In 1777, the Native Americans burned down your log cabin. And you were caught one night by a Tory, while you attempted to deliver your canoe full of supplies.

Ann: My children and I rebuilt our cabin. As for the Tory, Ezekiel Jenny, he spotted me taking my canoe out from the cave. He threatened to shoot me if I didn't tell him where the Patriot camp was. I refused to tell him anything, except, I told him I was not afraid of being shot by a consummate coward. He turned around and left. The next day he was captured by the Green Mountain Boys and turned over to the Revolutionary Army.

Baba: You are a brave woman. The Revolutionary War ended in 1783. In 1792, after your children had grown up and married, you married Ben Smalley, the man who helped bury your husband, 18 years earlier. Ben died in 1807.

Ann: Ben left me poor as a church mouse. I worked as a midwife and nurse to make ends meet. In 1812, I married Captain Stephen Goodrich, a war veteran. He was a good man and we had a good life.

Baba: Thank you for coming by and telling your story. You are a remarkable woman.

Ann: You are most welcome. I enjoyed the look back. (Ann exits)

Baba: Ann died April 5, 1817 in Middlebury, Vermont. She was buried under the name of Hannah Goodrich. The Daughters of the American Revolution placed a headstone at her gravesite explaining that she was Ann Story, the Revolutionary War Hero. There is also a monument at the sight of her Revolutionary War farm and a replica of her Log Cabin was built there.

Baba: **Maria Mitchell** is our next Great American Woman. She is an astronomer from Nantucket, Massachusetts. Wonderful to have you join us.

Maria: Lovely to be here. Please call me Maria.

Baba: Maria, you were born August 1st 1818, in Nantucket. You grew up as a Quaker. Your Father was a school teacher and your Mother was a librarian. You are one of ten children. Could you tell us how you became interested in astronomy?

Maria: I grew up in Nantucket, which is a whaling town. Knowing how to read the stars was very important to the fishermen. As well as being a teacher, my father was an amateur astronomer. There was a small Observatory on top of the Pacific Bank Building. We would go there. I would assist my father with his observations of the night sky. One night, when I was twelve years old, I helped my father calculate the exact moment of a solar eclipse. It was breathtaking. I knew right then and there that I would be an astronomer.

Baba: Besides the training from your father, you attended the local schools and became a teaching assistant. In the Quaker tradition, girls and boys were educated on an equal basis. In 1836, you became the first librarian at the Nantucket Library, which was called the Atheneum. You held that position for twenty years. Would you tell us about your discovery of your Comet.

Maria: I would love to. At 10:50 on the night of October 1, 1847, while at the Observatory on top of the Bank Building, I noticed an unknown object flying through the sky, where there hadn't been any activity. I was sure it was a Comet. I published a notice of my discovery in Silliman's Journal in January of 1848. The following month, I submitted my calculation of the Comet's orbit. This ensured that I would get credit for the discovery.

Baba: Congratulations! Your Comet was named "Miss Mitchell's Comet". On October 6, 1848, you were awarded a Gold Medal for your discovery by King Christian, the 8th of Denmark. King Christian created this honor to celebrate the first Comet discovered by telescope. You were also celebrated at the First Women's Rights Convention at Seneca Falls, New York, that same year. You were the first woman to receive an award in astronomy.

Maria: I felt as though, I was in a whirlwind. At first there was a question as to whether I was the first to discover the Comet. Another claim was registered by Francesco de Vico, a prominent Italian astronomer, but his discovery was two days after mine.

Baba: You became a celebrity. Several prominent scholars visited you. Ralph Waldo Emerson, Herman Melville, Frederick Douglass, and Sojourner Truth, all

dropped by to say “Hi”. Then, in 1849, you received a Field Research position for the U.S. Coast Guard, tracking the movement of planets and compiling data about their positions to help sailors with navigation. That makes you the first professional female astronomer. You were also the first woman elected to be a fellow at the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1850.

Maria: In 1865, I was appointed Professor of Astronomy at the brand new Vassar College for Women by Matthew Vassar, the founder. I didn’t hold any college degrees, so I concluded that Mr. Vassar thought I had enough knowledge and practical experience to qualify as a Professor. I was a Professor there for 23 years. At one point, while teaching at Vassar, I discovered that women professors were paid less than younger male professors. We the female professors demanded to have our salaries increased, which they did.

Baba: I would like to point out that you now hold honorary degrees from Hanover College, Columbia University and Rutgers College. So much for not having a degree! Thank you so much for taking time to come visit with us today.

Maria: It was my pleasure. (Maria exits)

Baba: Maria Mitchell died on June 28, 1889 at the age of 70. She had no children. The Maria Mitchell Association preserves her legacy in Nantucket with a Natural History Museum, an Aquarium and a Science Library. Maria was inducted into the Woman’s Hall of Fame in 1994. Her telescope is on display at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington D.C.

Baba: Our next guest is **Sarah Winnemucca**. She is a Northern Paiute Native American. (Sarah enters) Welcome Ms. Winnemucca.

Sarah: I am proud to be here. You may call me Thocmentony. It means Shell Flower.

Baba: Okay. Could you repeat that name for me?

Sarah: (she laughs) A little Paiute humor. You may call me Sarah.

Baba: Thank goodness. Sarah you were born in 1844 in Humboldt Lake, Nevada. Your Father was Chief Winnemucca and your Grand Father was Chief Truckee. These names are well known to the folks in the western states. That must be why you have been called an Indian Princess.

Sarah: Yes, I guess you could say that. My family was well known. We had friendly relations with the Spanish and the White Settlers for many years. Then came the gold strike of 1848 in California and the silver strike in Nevada of 1858. White Settlers and miners poured into our land. They built farms and ranches where we lived and hunted and foraged. Hostilities were inevitable.

Baba: You were educated in a Catholic School so you were familiar with White customs. You can read and write English, and I understand that you speak Spanish, and four Indian dialects as well.

Sarah: Yes I do. When I was 27, I was hired to work for the Bureau of Indian Affairs at Fort McDermitt in Nevada. The Paiute People were moved to a Reservation near their home and were promised food and supplies to sustain them until they could learn farming. The corrupt Indian Affairs Agents and Christian Charity Organizations sold the supplies and food to white settlers, and pocketed the profits. My people were starving.

Baba: That incited the Bannack War in 1878. Bannack Paiute and Shoshone Tribes left the Reservation and began hunting and foraged on White Settler's land. There were incidents that ended in killings. The U.S. Military was ordered to round up the Tribes and force them back on to the Reservations. Then the U.S. Government decided to move all the Paiute People to a Reservation at Yakama, Washington. This was hundreds of miles from their homes.

Sarah: That's right. And again the supplies the Paiutes were promised were never received by my people. Starvation again plagued them. I visited the Reservation at Yakama. I became an interpreter and teacher for the Women and Children there. I decided that I needed to inform the White Americans about the plight of the Native American, so I traveled to Washington, D.C. to lobby Congress. They listened politely but nothing changed.

Baba: You met President Rutherford B. Hayes when he toured the West.

Sarah: I appealed to him to let my people return to their native lands. His wife was moved to tears but he was unmoved.

Baba: In 1883, you wrote your autobiography, "Among the Paiutes, their wrongs and claims". You bluntly told it as you saw it. You asked to have the Indian Agency System removed and to give the Paiutes a permanent home. Not a popular stand.

Sarah: No. But it needed to be said. Thank you for having me here.

Baba: Glad you could come. (Sarah exits)

Baba: Sarah died of tuberculosis on October 17, 1891, at her sister's home in Henry's Lake, Idaho. She was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame in 1994. Her statue was placed in the National Statuary Hall at the U.S. Capitol, in 2005.

Baba: I would like to introduce, a remarkable woman, **Mary McLeod Bethune**.
(Mary enters) Welcome Ms. Bethune.

Mary: Thank you for the invitation. Please call me Mary.

Baba: Mary, you were born in Mayesville, South Carolina on July 10th, 1874. Your parents, the McLeods, were former slaves. Are you really one of 17 children?
(Mary nods) After the Civil War, your Mother worked for her former owner until she earned enough money to buy a small farm for her family and grow cotton.

Mary: Yes, I picked cotton on our farm, but my parents made sure their children received an education. I was a student at the Scotia Seminary and graduated in 1894. I then went to a missionary school in Chicago. I returned and became a teacher at the Haines Institute in Augusta, Georgia. "The whole world opens up to you when you learn to read"

Baba: Yes it does. You met and then married Albertus Bethune in 1898. You had a son named Albert in 1899. The three of you moved to Palatka, Florida. Albertus left in 1907, but you never divorced.

Mary: Divorce was frowned upon on in those days. I opened a boarding school for black girls. It was called the “Daytona Beach Literary and Industrial School for Training Negro Girls”.

Baba: That is quite a title. In 1929, you merged your school with a boy’s school to form the Bethune-Cookman College. It was the first Black College in Florida. It is still operating and is a very prestigious college.

Mary: I became very involved with bringing forward racial and gender equality. I encouraged women to register to vote. I became President of the National council of Negro Women in 1935. Because of that, I met Eleanor Roosevelt.

Baba: Yes, you must have impressed her because in 1936, you became the highest ranking African American Woman in the U.S. government. Franklin Roosevelt (FDR) named you Director of Negro Affairs of the National Youth Administration. You kept that position until 1944. You were also a leader in FDR’s Black Cabinet. Could you explain to our audience what the Black Cabinet was?

Mary: Yes, of course. FDR assembled a group of African American Leaders into an “unofficial” advisory board. They made suggestions to the President about legislation that could benefit black citizens, as well as the white population in regards to “The New Deal” programs. “The New Deal” was Roosevelt’s plan to get the U.S. out of the depression of 1933.

Baba: That was a great responsibility. In 1940, you became Vice President of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, (NAACP). You held the position for 15 years. You were also on the advisory board that created the Woman’s Army Corp. Mary, in your long career of Public Service, what was your proudest moment.

Mary: One of my proudest moments was in 1945, when President Truman appointed me to be in the U.S. delegation, at the founding conference of the United Nations.

Baba: Thank you for sharing your remarkable life story with us.

Mary: It was my privilege to be here. Let me offer this thought. “ I leave you a thirst for education. Knowledge is the prime need of the hour. (Mary exits)

Baba: Mary died May 18th 1955 at the age of 79. She was inducted into the National Women’s Hall of Fame in 1974. She ranked #10 on America’s Greatest Women List. She has a postage stamp issued in her honor. Mary became the first African American to have a statue in the National Statuary Hall Collection at the U.S. Capital.

Baba: This guest is a woman of unshakeable conviction. Please welcome **Jeannette Rankin**. (Jeannette enters)

Jeannette: I am pleased to be here. You may call me Jeannette.

Baba: Jeannette, you were born on June 11th 1880 in Missoula, Montana. You were the oldest of six children.

Jeannette: Yes, my parents moved to Montana in search of Gold. But that didn’t pan out. (she chuckles)

Baba: Very funny. Since you were the oldest, I suspect that you were expected to help with a variety of chores.

Jeannette: Living out in the wilds of Montana, women worked alongside of the men. I cared for animals as well as building and repairing out buildings. I learned to fix machinery and fences and chase away predators. The women and men here know that women are just as capable as the men are.

Baba: Along with your chores, you received an education and you attended the University of Montana. There you earned a Degree in Biology in 1902. After which, you traveled all over the U.S.

Jeannette: Yes I did. While in New York City, I helped organize the New York Woman’s Suffrage Party. I became a speaker and helped women fight for the right to vote in several cities, such as San Francisco, Spokane, and Seattle. I returned to

Montana in 1911, and argued for Woman's Suffrage in front of the State Legislature. Apparently, I was the first woman to do so.

Baba: Montana was the 7th State to grant women the unrestricted right to vote. This was in 1914. Six years before the Federal Government allowed women to vote in Federal Elections.

Jeannette: In 1916, I decided to run for the U.S. House of Representatives, and I won. I was going to be one of the two Representatives from Montana. Also, I was the first woman to be elected to the House of Representatives in U.S. history. I was so excited!

Baba: Unfortunately, four days after you were sworn in, Congress voted on whether to enter the 1st World War against Germany. You voted "No" along with 50 of your colleagues. You would not be reelected.

Jeannette: "I wish to stand for my country, but I can not vote for war". Before my term was up, I did have the privilege to vote in favor of the 19th amendment, which gave women the right to vote.

Baba: So you were the only woman in U.S. history, who got to vote to give women the right to vote. That is extraordinary.

Jeannette: After my term in office, I bought a farm in Georgia. I gave speeches for the Women's Peace Movement and the National Council for the Prevention of War. Then I decided to run for Congress in Montana, again, in 1940. And I won, again.

Baba: Again, War reared it's ugly head. The Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Congress again had to vote on whether to go to war. Again you voted "No", but this time you were the only dissenting vote. I imagine you were not very popular.

Jeannette: No I wasn't. I was chased down the street and had to hide in a phone booth until the Capital Police rescued me. And I was not reelected to office. I returned to private life. In 1960, I studied Pacifist Teachings with Mahatma Gandhi.

Baba: Your time had come when the Vietnam War became unpopular and the anti war protests surfaced. You helped organize an antiwar rally in Washington D.C. in January of 1968. 5000 people attended. You were 88 years old. Good for you! Thank you for dropping by and talking with us today.

Jeannette: You are very welcome. (Jeannette exits)

Baba: Jeannette died May 18th 1973. She never married. She left her farm in Georgia to help “mature unemployed women workers”. Her ranch in Montana is on the National Registry of Historic Places. Her Rankin Foundation awards scholarships to low income women. Statues of her are in the U.S. Capital Statuary Hall and the Montana Capitol Building.

Baba: Our next Great Woman is known as an actor but did you know that she was also an inventor? Please welcome **Hedy Lamarr**, the inventor. (Hedy enters)

Baba: We appreciate you coming out of seclusion to have a chat with us.

Hedy: You drew me out, when you told me you wished to center the conversation on my inventions.

Baba: You were born Hedwig Eva Maria Kiesler on November 9th, 1914 in Vienna, Austria. You were the only child of a jewish couple, Gertrude and Emil Kiesler. Gertrude converted to Catholicism and raised you as a Catholic. Hedy, how did you become interested in machinery?

Hedy : My father would show me devises, such as clocks and music boxes and explained how they worked. As a young girl, I took apart a music box.

Baba: Did you put it back together?

Hedy: No. I learned a valuable lesson, that it is easier to take something apart than it is to put it back together. (she chuckles)

Baba: How did you become interested in acting?

Hedy: At twelve years old, I won a beauty contest, then my mother signed me up for acting classes. I decided I didn’t need acting classes, I just wanted to be an

actor, right now! So, I forged a note from my mother excusing me from class, and I was hired at Sascha Films as a script girl. They had me play small roles. Eventually, I was cast in a lead role which required nude scenes. I was so appalled that I switched from movies to stage acting.

Baba: You were a successful stage actor. You played a leading role in the play “Sissy”. The critics gave you great reviews. Of course, you had plenty of admirers trying to get back stage to meet you.

Hedy: That I did. The most persistent man was Friedrich Mandl. He was a wealthy arms merchant. I was fascinated with him and at 18 years old, despite my parent’s warnings, I married him. This was 1933. I would accompany him to his meetings with scientist and others involved with military technology. I listened as they talked about new war inventions and improvements to weapons.

Baba: Mandl hosted many Dinner Parties for top Nazi and Italian government officials. The conversation always centered on what equipment would be needed to successfully fight a war. Again, you listened, and learned.

Hedy: Mandl would not allow me to leave the house alone or do anything without his permission. I knew that if I was going to have a life, I would have to leave him. He was a dangerous man and the only way to escape was secretly. I waited for the next Dinner Party. Before the guests arrived, I put on all my jewelry, dressed up as a maid and fled to Paris, and on to London.

Baba: London is where you met Louis B Mayer, the head of MGM studio. He offered you \$125.00 a week to be under contract to MGM Studios. You refused the offer, but you did book a ticket on the same ship that he was sailing on. Shrewd.

Hedy: It worked. During the cruise, he offered me \$500.00 a week. I accepted. I played in some very good movies with some great co stars. I was in Algiers with Charles Boyer, Boomtown with Clark Gable and Spencer Tracy in Tortilla Flats, plus many more.

Baba: You were advertised as the “World’s Most Beautiful Woman”. That is not the best image for an inventor who wants to be taken seriously.

Hedy: I did have friends who understood my desire to invent. Howard Hughes encouraged me. He took me to his Airplane Factories and showed me how planes were built. I was able to talk to the scientists who came up with innovations. They inspired me to do research and come up with a new concept for an airplane wing. Howard called me a genius.

Baba: I understand that you invented an improved Stop Light and a tablet, that when dropped in water, creates a soda pop. Your most important invention was the improved guidance system for torpedoes. Tell us how that came about.

Hedy: It was 1940 and I met George Antheil, a musician and composer, at a Dinner Party. We talked about the war and I mentioned my idea for a new guidance system for torpedoes. He thought that frequency hopping radio waves might keep the enemy from interfering with radio waves. We patented our invention in 1942.

Baba: The U.S. Navy decided not to pursue your invention. In 1962, your invention was brought out of mothballs and given a new life. It became the foundation behind the technology for spread spectrum communications. The principle directly influenced the development of secure wireless networking. This includes Bluetooth, WiFi, and GPS. Unfortunately, your patent had run out years before, so you received no financial compensation.

Hedy: Well, it was good to have acting to fall back on. (she chuckles) Thank you for inviting me to talk with you about my real love.

Baba: Thank you for accepting our invitation. (Hedy exits)

Baba: Hedy Lamarr became a U.S. Citizen in 1953. Her final movie was released in 1958, "The Female Animal". She died January 19, 2000. She has a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. As an inventor, she received the Electronic Frontier Foundation's Pioneer Award in 1997. She was inducted in the National Inventors Hall of Fame, posthumously in 2014.

Baba: Last of our Great Women has the title of “Mother of the Disability Rights Movement”. Please welcome **Judith Heumann**. (Judy enters)

Judy: I am delighted to join you. Please call me Judy.

Baba: Thank you Judy. Would you tell us about your childhood?

Judy: I was born in Philadelphia on December 18th, 1947 to Werner and Ilse Heumann, who were German Jewish immigrants. I grew up in Brooklyn, New York. I contracted Polio when I was 1 ½ years old. I have used a wheelchair for most of my life.

Baba: My goodness, what a tragedy.

Judy: “Disability only becomes a tragedy for me, when society fails to provide the things we need to lead our lives. Job opportunities and barrier-free buildings, for example. It is not a tragedy to me that I’m living in a wheelchair.”

Baba: Well said. I stand corrected. Speaking of barriers, your parents tried to enroll you in the Public School. The Administrators refused to allow it. Their reasoning was that you were a fire hazard, because you couldn’t walk. They claimed that you would block the egress out of the building. How absurd!

Judy: The Administration set up home instruction for me which consisted of a teacher coming to the house, one hour a day, twice a week. My Mother challenged this arrangement. So the School Administration put me in a special school for disabled children. This continued until I was of High School age. Then the School Board tried to put me back in home instruction. My Mother and other parents pressured the School Board and the Policy was changed. I entered High School in 1961.

Baba: I understand that from age 9 to 18, you attended Camp Jened, every summer. It is a camp for disabled children.

Judy: While there, we would swap stories about the challenges of being disabled. I met Bobbi Linn and Freida Tankus there. When we grew up we would work together as Disability Rights Activists.

Baba: After High School, you graduated from Long Island University in 1969, and earned your Master's Degree in Public Health at U C Berkeley in 1975. While at University, you organized rallies demanding wheelchair ramps and other necessities to assist mobility.

Judy: After I graduated from College, I applied for a teaching license to the State of New York. They denied it. They used the same old "In case of fire, I would not be able to get my students and myself out of the building. This time, I sued the New York Board of Education for discrimination. I received support from a local newspaper, whose headline read "You can be President, but not a teacher with Polio". The case was settled without a trial. I became the first Wheelchair User to teach in New York City.

Baba: You founded the "Disabled in Action" organization. Your goal was to pass the "Rehabilitation Act of 1973". The Act prevented discrimination against disabled individuals from any Federal Agency, or any Contractor supplemented by Federal Funds. It prohibited discrimination against disabled individuals from any Federally Funded Program. It also created programs to train disabled individuals to live independently. And it required any building designed, built, or leased with Federal Funds to be accessible to people with disabilities. It was signed into law on September 26th, 1973.

Judy: That is not the end of the story. Section 504 of the bill was supposed to specify exactly what "reasonable accommodations" for the disabled meant. Specific regulations were to be drawn up, so the alterations to buildings could be made. There was pressure placed on Joseph A Califano Jr. the U.S. Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, by the people responsible for making the changes to the Federal Buildings, Schools, and Hospitals to stall on signing off on Section 504. There was a great deal of expense involved in making the changes to ramps, bathrooms, widening halls, etc. Califano refused to sign off on section 504.

Baba: In response, San Francisco and in 10 other cities, the disabled people staged a "Sit In" in the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

building. After a few days the “Sit In” in the other cities ended. In San Francisco, the “Sit In” lasted 28 days. How did you manage the logistics?

Judy: We called in our supporters and organizations sympathetic to our plight. One organizer figured out how to keep the medicines for the protesters cold. Salvation Army supplied food for a couple of days, then, the Black Panther Party took over the food situation and supplied meals for the rest of the time. They had members who were disabled so they felt compelled to help. 125 people participated in the “Sit In”. On day 28, Califano signed off on section 504, ending the longest “Sit In” in a U.S. Federal Building.

Baba: Congratulations. That was remarkable. You went on to co found the World Institute on Disability in 1983. You got married in 1992 to Jorge Pineda, who was also a wheelchair user. From 1993 to 2001, you served as the Assistant Secretary of the office of Special Education and Rehabilitation at the U.S. Department of Education.

Judy: (she chuckles) Could that title have been any longer?

Baba: Your efforts gave disabled persons the opportunity to live independent and mobile lives. I would also like to thank you for ramps, and handicap bathrooms, and all the other changes that were made. Many of us are now using these accommodations.

Judy: I was glad to have helped. Thank you for inviting me to be one of your guests. (Judy exits)

Baba: In 1977, Judy was Time Magazine’s “Woman of the Year”. The BBC made her one of their BBC 100 women. She was a Senior Fellow at the Ford Foundation from 2017 to 2019. She worked with governments around the world to improve disabled programs. Judy died March 4th 2023.

Baba: There you have it, seven outstanding women. It was a privilege to bring their stories to you. How about a hand for the actresses, who brought these women to life? This is Baba Wawa saying Good Bye for now.





en: Maria Mitchell born in 1818, died 1889. She discovered a

More details



Sarah Winnemucca

More details

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Jeannette Pickering Rankin (1880-1973), a member of the United States House of Representatives who was elected in 1916



Hedy Lamarr publicity photo for the film *The Heavenly Body*,

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Unknown author - eBay





TOKYO, Japan (December 4, 2014) Ambassador Caroline Kennedy welcomes Special Advisor for International Disability Rights Judith Heumann to Japan.

More details

East Asia and Pacific Media Hub U.S. Department of State - Ambassadors
Kennedy Greets Sp. Advisor for Disability Rights Heumann in Tokyo

Great American Women, You've Never Heard of, Part 3

Leader's Guide

This lesson consists of a dialog between a Television Reporter and seven Great American Women. The reporter interviews each of the women, separately. The dialog is written out for you.

You will need at least two participants, but if you wish to divide up the roles, that works also. You could have up to seven members of your Study Group play the roles of the women, and one member to play the reporter. You will need a table with two chairs, facing the audience. Name cards for each character would be helpful. Props and costumes would be fun. Be sure that each character is represented respectfully. These Ladies are outstanding representatives of Great American Women.

The student handout consists of a list of the seven women in the lesson with a short biography of them. I suggest that you hand it out AFTER the lesson.

Have fun with this lesson.

Kerry Mauk

Author

Great American Women, you Have Never Heard Of, Part 3

Student Handout

A synopsis of the interviews with the Great American Women, part 3

Ann Story 1735-1817

Ann was a Settler who bought land in the Vermont Wilderness. She and her husband planned to farm the land. While building a log cabin, Ann's husband was killed. Ann decided to stay on the land and she and her five children farmed it. The Revolutionary War was being fought in the area. Ann was a Patriot and she would deliver food and supplies to the folks fighting for Independence. She was caught by a Tory, who threatened to shoot her if she didn't reveal where the Patriot camp was. Ann told him that she was not afraid of being shot by a coward. After her children grew, she remarried. He died 15 years later. Then, she remarried again, and lived comfortably until her death.

Maria Mitchell 1818-1889

Maria was an amateur astronomer. She discovered an unknown Comet. The discovery gave her fame and a gold medal from the King of Denmark. She met celebrities and became the first professional female astronomer. In 1865, Maria was appointed Professor of Astronomy at the brand new Vassar College. She taught there for 23 years. She received honorary degrees from Hanover College, Columbia University and Rutgers College.

Sarah Winnemucca 1844-1891

Sarah was the daughter of Chief Winnemucca and granddaughter of Chief Truckee, of the Northern Paiute Tribe, so she was called an Indian Princess. She spoke English, Spanish and four Native American dialects. Sarah was hired by the

Bureau of Indian Affairs, as an interpreter. The Northern Paiutes were moved to an Indian Reservation. The U.S. Government was supposed to furnish food and supplies to them. The food and supplies were sold to white settlers by corrupt Indian Affairs Agents who pocketed the profits. In 1878, war broke out between the Bannack Paiutes and the U.S. Army. It was called the Bannack War. The Native Americans were defeated and were moved to the Yakama Reservation in the state of Washington. The Northern Paiutes were also forced to move there, which was hundreds of miles from their home. Sarah went to Washington D.C. to lobby for assistance for her Tribe. She was not successful.

Mary McLeod Bethune 1875-1955

Mary was one of 17 children born to former slaves. Her parents believed in giving their children an education. Mary completed her education and became a teacher. She married Albertus Bethune in 1898. She had a child, Albert. Her husband abandoned them in 1907. Mary opened a girl's school, which merged with a boy's school in 1929, to form the Bethune-Cookman College, a prestigious Black College. In 1936, Franklin Roosevelt made Mary the Director of Negro Affairs of the National Youth Administration. She also became a leader in Roosevelt's Black Cabinet. In 1940, Mary became the Vice President of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, (NAACP). In 1945, President Truman appointed Mary to be in the U.S. delegation at the founding conference of the United Nations.

Jeannette Rankin 1880-1973

Jeannette was born in Missoula, Montana. She was raised on a ranch. She earned a degree in Biology at the University of Montana in 1902. She was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1916. She was the first woman to serve. She voted "No" to the U.S. entering WWI. Jeannette also voted for the 19th Amendment, which allowed Women the right to vote. She was not reelected. In 1940, She, again ran for the House of Representatives and was elected. Again,

she voted "No" when Congress voted to enter WW2. She was not reelected. In 1968, during the Vietnam War, Jeannette helped organize a Peace Rally in Washington D.C. She was 88 years old.

Hedy Lamarr 1914-2000

Hedy was born in Vienna, Austria, the only child of a Jewish couple. She had a fascination with devises and how they worked. Her father encouraged her curiosity. After winning a beauty contest, her Mother signed her up for acting lessons. Hedy got a job at Sascha Films as a script girl. Eventually, she got a lead acting role. From there she became a stage actor. She got a leading role and had numerous men pursuing her. One man in particular, Friedrich Mandl, was a wealthy and charming, Arms Merchant. Hedy married him in 1933 at the age of 18. Mandl was overbearing and Hedy became a prisoner in her own house. She put on all her jewelry, dressed as a maid and fled to Paris and on to London. She met Louis B. Mayer of MGM Studios and accepted an acting contract with him. She played leading roles in several movies. Hedy met George Anthel and the two of them invented a torpedo guiding system. They patented it in 1942. The U.S. Navy was not interested in it until 1962. Unfortunately, the patent ran out. Their invention became the foundation for Spread Spectrum Communications. This is the principle behind Bluetooth, WiFi, and GPS.

Judith Heumann 1947-2023

Judy became disabled at age 1 ½ years old from Polio. The Public School refused to allow her to attend classes. Their reason was that she was a fire hazard. Judy's Mother pressured the School Board and Judy was allowed to attend High School. Judy continued her education and received a Master's Degree at U.C. Berkeley in 1975. She helped get the "Rehabilitation Act of 1973" passed along with the all important Section 504. It took a 28 day "Sit In" by the Disabled Advocates to get Section 504 passed. After that, Judy traveled all over the World, advising various Governments on improving the lot of their disabled citizens.

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