

Women's History Month: March 2008

National Women's History Month's roots go back to March 8, 1857, when women from New York City factories staged a protest over working conditions. International Women's Day was first observed in 1909, but it wasn't until 1981 that Congress established National Women's History Week to be commemorated the second week of March. In 1987, Congress expanded the week to a month. Every year since, Congress has passed a resolution for Women's History Month, and the president has issued a proclamation.

153.6 million

The number of females in the United States as of Oct. 1, 2007. The number of males is 149.4 million.

Source: [Population estimates](#)

As of July 1, 2006, males outnumbered females through age 41. Starting at 42, women outnumbered men. At 85 and older, there were more than twice as many women as men.

Source: [Population estimates](#)



Courtesy of U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Motherhood

82.8 million

Estimated number of mothers of all ages in the United States.

Source: unpublished data from Survey of Income and Program Participation.

1.9

Average number of children that women 40 to 44 had given birth to as of 2004, down from 3.1 children in 1976, the year the Census Bureau began collecting such data. Likewise, the percentage of women in this age group who were mothers was 81 percent in 2004, down from 90 percent in 1976.

Source: [Fertility of American Women](#)

Earnings

\$32,649

The median annual earnings of women 16 or older who worked year-round, full time, in 2006. Women earned 77 cents for every \$1 earned by men.

Source: [American Community Survey](#)

98 cents

The amount women (\$48,586) in the District of Columbia, who worked year-round, full time, earned for every \$1 their male counterparts earned (\$49,544) in 2006. Among all states or state equivalents, the district was where women were closest to earnings parity with men. Connecticut, Maryland and New Jersey were the only states where median earnings for women were greater than \$40,000.

Source: [American Community Survey](#)

\$61,081

Median earnings of women working in computer and mathematical jobs, the highest for women among the 22 major occupational groups. In the community and social services group, women's earnings as a percentage of men's earnings were higher than 90 percent.

Source: [American Community Survey](#)



U.S. Census Bureau



U.S. Census Bureau

Education

32%

Percent of women 25 to 29 who had attained a bachelor's degree or higher in 2006, which exceeded that of men in this age range (25 percent). Eighty-eight percent of women and 84 percent of men in this same age range had completed high school.

Source: [Educational Attainment in the United States: 2006](#)

86%

Percent of women 25 and older who had completed high school as of 2006. High school graduation rates for women continued to exceed those of men (85 percent).

Source: [Educational Attainment in the United States: 2006](#)

26.8 million

Number of women 25 and older with a bachelor's degree or more education in 2006, more than double the number 20 years earlier.

Source: [Educational Attainment in the United States: 2006](#)

27%

Percent of women 25 and older who had obtained a bachelor's degree or more as of 2006. This rate was up 11 percentage points from 20 years earlier.

Source: [Educational Attainment in the United States: 2006](#)

894,000

The projected number of bachelor's degrees that will be awarded to women in the 2007-08 school year, who are also projected to earn 380,000 master's degrees during this period. Women would, therefore, earn 59 percent of the bachelor's and 61 percent of the master's degrees awarded during this school year. In addition, women would earn a majority (52 percent) of first-professional degrees, such as law and medical.

Source: [National Center for Education Statistics, *Projections of Education Statistics to 2015*](#)

Businesses

Source for the statements in this section:

[Women-Owned Firms: 2002](#) and

[Company Summary: 2002](#)

More than \$939 billion

Revenue for women-owned businesses in 2002. There were 116,985 women-owned firms with receipts of \$1 million or more.

Nearly 6.5 million

The number of women-owned businesses in 2002. Women owned 28 percent of all nonfarm businesses.



U.S. Census Bureau

More than 7.1 million

Number of people employed by women-owned businesses. There were 7,231 women-owned firms with 100 or more employees, generating \$274 billion in gross receipts.

Nearly one in three women-owned firms operated in health care and social assistance, and other services, such as personal services, and repair and maintenance. Women owned 72 percent of social assistance businesses and just over half of nursing and residential care facilities. Wholesale and retail trade accounted for 38.2 percent of women-owned business revenue.

13%

Percentage of women-owned firms in California. California had the most women-owned firms at 870,496. New York was second with 505,077 or 8 percent of all firms. Texas was third in number of firms with 468,705, accounting for 7 percent of all firms.

Voting

65%

Percentage of female citizens 18 and older who reported voting in the 2004 presidential election. Sixty-two percent of their male counterparts cast a ballot.

Source: [Voting and Registration in the Election of November 2004](#)



Courtesy of U.S. Department of State

Jobs

59%

On average in 2006, the percent of females 16 and older who participated in the labor force, representing about 70.2 million women. More than 50 million women worked full time. The participation rate for males in this age category was 74 percent.

Source: [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#)

37%

Percent of females 16 or older who work in management, professional and related occupations, compared with 31 percent of males.

Source: [2006 American Community Survey](#)



U.S. Census Bureau

22 million

Number of female workers in educational services, health care and social assistance industries. More women work in this industry group than in any other. Within this industry group, 11 million work in the health care industry and 8.4 million in educational services.

Source: [2006 American Community Survey](#)

39%

In 2004, among women 20 to 64 who did not work for four or more consecutive months, the percentage taking care of children or others. This was the primary reason among such women for not working. By comparison, 2 percent of corresponding men did not work for this reason.

Source: [Reasons People Do Not Work: 2004](#)

60%

Chances that your taxes will be prepared by a woman, as this is the percentage of tax preparers who are women. In addition, 77 percent of travel agents are women, so it is likely a woman will help you plan your next vacation.

Source: [Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2008](#), Table 598.

84,000

Number of female police officers. In addition, there are about 9,000 women firefighters, 315,000 lawyers, 278,000 physicians and surgeons, and 37,000 pilots.

Source: [Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2008](#), Tables 598 and 1050

Military

202,000

Total number of active duty women in the military, as of Sept. 30, 2006. Of that total, 34,000 women were officers, and 168,000 were enlisted.

Source: [Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2008](#), Table 498.



Courtesy of U.S. Marine Corps

15%

Proportion of members of the armed forces who were women, as of Sept. 30, 2006. In 1950, women comprised less than 2 percent.

Source: [Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2008](#), Table 498.

1.7 million

The number of military veterans who are women.

Source: [Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2008](#), Table 506.

Marriage

62.4 million

Number of married women (including those who are separated or have an absent spouse) in 2006.

There were 59.8 million unmarried (widowed, divorced or never married) women.

Source: [2006 American Community Survey](#)

18%

Percentage of married couples in which the wife earned at least \$5,000 more than the husband in 2006. Among 22 percent of married couples, the wife had more education than the husband.

Source: [Families and Living Arrangements: 2006](#)

5.6 million

Number of stay-at-home mothers nationwide in 2006, up from 4.6 million a decade earlier.

Source: [Families and Living Arrangements: 2006](#)

Computers

84%

Proportion of women with computers in the home in 2003 who made use of that computer, 2 percentage points higher than the corresponding proportion for men. This reverses the computer use gender gap exhibited during the 1980s and 1990s.

Source: [Computer and Internet Use in the United States: 2003](#)



Courtesy of Flickr.com

The Spirit of Volunteerism

30%

Percentage of women who volunteer. The corresponding rate for men is 23 percent. Overall, 36 million women perform unpaid volunteer activities.

Source: *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2008*, Table 568.

Sports

3 million

Number of girls who participated in high school athletic programs in the 2005-06 school year. In the 1975-76 school year, only 1.6 million girls were members of a high school athletic team.

Source: *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2008*, Table 1221.

168,583

Number of women who participated in an NCAA sport in 2005-06.

Source: *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2008*, Table 1220.



Courtesy of Josie Wolhart/Flickr.com

A list of observances covered by the Census Bureau's *Facts for Features* series in 2007:

African-American History Month (February)	Back to School (August)
Super Bowl XLII (Feb. 3)	Labor Day (Sept. 1)
Valentine's Day (Feb. 14)	Grandparents Day (Sept. 7)
Women's History Month (March)	Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15-Oct. 15)
Irish-American Heritage Month (March)/ St. Patrick's Day (March 17)	Unmarried and Single Americans Week (Sept. 21-27)
Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month (May)	Halloween (Oct. 31)
Older Americans Month (May)	American Indian/Alaska Native Heritage Month (November)
Cinco de Mayo (May 5)	Veterans Day (Nov. 11)
Mother's Day (May 11)	Thanksgiving Day (Nov. 27)
Hurricane Season Begins (June 1)	The Holiday Season (December)
Father's Day (June 15)	
The Fourth of July (July 4)	
Anniversary of Americans with Disabilities Act (July 26)	

Editor's note: The preceding data were collected from a variety of sources and may be subject to sampling variability and other sources of error. *Facts for Features* are customarily released about two months before an observance in order to accommodate magazine production timelines. Questions or comments should be directed to the Census Bureau's Public Information Office: telephone: 301-763-3030; fax: 301-763-3762; or e-mail: <pio@census.gov>.