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## Abigail Adams

Abigail Adams was a renaissance woman. Abigail lived at a time when women were supposed to focus on being good mothers and not make any decisions for the family. She defied the rules of society and ran the family farm and business! She paved the road for many other women's rights advocates and therefore she is well worth studying.

Abigail could easily be considered the first feminist. She wished for equal rights for both men and women. She said in a letter to her husband, John Adams, "I long to hear that you have declared an independency (sic). 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." Unfortunately, John Adams did not take her advice. Imagine how different our history would have been had he taken her letter to heart.

Mrs. Adams had herself and her children vaccinated against smallpox. The smallpox was a problem. All of the Adam's children lived through the inoculation. The vaccination was a dangerous procedure and could be fatal. John Adams survived the inoculation, and even though Abigail had her doubts, she went to Boston and said later in a letter to her husband, "I had many disagreeable Sensations at the Thoughts of coming myself, but to see my children through it I thought my duty, and all those feelings vanished as soon as I was inoculated...". Her strength saw her "little flock" safely through the smallpox.

Abigail believed that all people should have an education and have equal rights. Mrs. Adams thought that slavery was evil, and wrote, "I wish most sincerely there was not a slave in the province,". Once, she taught a young african american servant boy to read and write in her parlor despite her neighbors judgment. Then, she sent him to an evening school at his request. Remember, she lived at a time when most people would have frowned heavily upon educating african americans. Her strength was shown yet again with this act of kindness.

Abigail Adams suffered losses in her life, yet with great perseverance, she supported her family and continued to fight for women's rights her whole life. She lived by her morals and strove to make the world a better place for people of all genders and all races. Her courage in expressing her ideas should be recognized and learned from.

Source Materials:  
[National Women's History Museum](#) ,  
[The Washington Post](#),  
[Wikipedia.org](#)  
[National First Ladies' Library](#), RE