

Document Interpretation 5: Moral Reform Movements

The Declaration of Sentiments document was paralleled to the Declaration of Independence with a goal that people would link the suffrage and worries of women at the time to those of our founding fathers. This would create sympathy for the document/issue from white males who would possibly otherwise reject the document overall. The document's main goal was aiming to recognize women as full citizens like males. The document highlighted the inequality of women and men in marriage, divorce, education, employment and government. The document mentions the fact that in marriages, women are obedient and responsive to their husbands in ways which men are not the same with their wives. The document also includes a statement which mentions the fact that married women are looked at as civilly dead. Men at the time had the right to take the property of their wives as well as wages. Men are in the power to give their wives liberty when in fact women should be able to make their own choices regardless of their marital status. The authors of the document wanted people to realize and recognize these inequalities and aim for change and equality between the sexes. The document also highlights the fact that women are also entitled to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. This document made me think about how much it had influenced the rights that many women like myself enjoy today; however it also made me think of so many countries where women are oppressed so much more.