

**We Did It For You!**  
**Women's Journey Through History**  
**By Thea Iberall**

First produced by  
 The Women's Journey Conference  
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 Director: Terra Taylor Knudson

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CHARACTER LIST

MELANIE High school senior, self-absorbed female, thinks she knows it all

LILLY LEDBETTER Caucasian, southern accent, contemporary

VIRGINIA WOOLF Caucasian, English accent, 19<sup>th</sup> century

MARY YOUNG PICKERSGILL Caucasian, from Philadelphia, 18<sup>th</sup> century

ANNE HUTCHINSON Caucasian, Puritan, 16<sup>th</sup> century

RADICAL 60S WOMAN High-energy, radical and ready

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT Caucasian, English accent, 18<sup>th</sup> century

ELEANOR ROOSEVELT Caucasian, upper-class New Yorker, 20<sup>th</sup> century

SOJOURNER TRUTH African-American, Spoke Dutch as child, Northerner, 19<sup>th</sup> century

SUSAN B. ANTHONY Caucasian, New England and NY, 19<sup>th</sup> century

SARAH GRIMKE Caucasian, southerner moved to Philadelphia, 19<sup>th</sup> century

ALICE PAUL Caucasian, New Jersey, Quaker, 20<sup>th</sup> century

MARGARET SANGER Caucasian, New York state, 20<sup>th</sup> century

ROSA PARKS African-American, Alabama, then Detroit, 20<sup>th</sup> century

MARY KAY ASH Caucasian, Texan,  
contemporary  
 BETTY FRIEDAN Caucasian, Illinois,  
contemporary  
 GLORIA STEINEM Caucasian, Ohioan, contemporary  
 PAULI MURRAY African-American, Southern,  
Episcopal priest  
 BELLA ABZUG Caucasian, New Yorker,  
politician, contemporary  
 BILLIE JEAN KING Caucasian, Californian,  
athlete, contemporary  
 HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON Caucasian, Chicago,  
contemporary  
 SANDRA DAY O'CONNOR Caucasian, Southwest,  
judge, contemporary

Can be performed with 8F  
 Actor1-Ledbetter; Actor2-Melanie; Actor3-  
 Woolf, Steinem, Clinton; Actor4-  
 Hutchinson, Paul, Abzug; Actor5-  
 Radical, Wollstonecraft, Anthony, O'Connor; Actor6-  
 Pickersgill, Grimke, Sanger, Friedan; Actor7-  
 Roosevelt, Ash, King; Actor8-Truth, Parks, Murray

NOTE: Any speeches in quotes are actual words of  
 characters. Permission was received to use Friedan  
 and Steinem speeches. No permission was needed to  
 use speeches by Wollstonecraft, Truth, Grimke,  
 Chapman, and Clinton.

NOTE: As a jukebox musical, the producer has to  
 get the rights to any non-public domain songs you  
 want to use.

SETTING: Dark stage. Chair stage left.  
 Screen on back wall dark.  
 Images from a projector will be  
 projected on this screen.

ON RISE: Lights on. MELANIE enters SR  
 speaking into iPhone. She is  
 wearing a jacket, holding book  
 bag, juggling textbooks,  
 notebooks, etc. SHE crosses to  
 chair, drops stuff as SHE  
 speaks.

MELANIE

(into cell phone)

Yeah, senior year is a trip all right. I  
 mean, like all the homework? Like I'm  
 going to use calculus to be a  
 nutritionist? (pause) To measure  
 vegetables? That's so funny. And then this  
 stupid history assignment. You won't  
 believe it. We have to answer this  
 ridiculous essay question, like 'who has  
 done the most for the women of today?' I  
 mean, really. (pause) Ask my grandmother?  
 Oh, that's funny. She's so old, what does  
 she know?

(Lights reveal LILLY  
 LEDBETTER, entering from SR  
 to center.)

LILLY LEDBETTER

I'll tell you what she knows. A lot.

MELANIE

(startled, into phone)

Yeah, gotta go. I'm hallucinating a strange woman in my room. I probably forgot to eat lunch again. Yeah, bye. (end call) (to Lilly) Where did you come from?

LILLY LEDBETTER

Older women today have seen amazing changes.

MELANIE

Excuse me?

LILLY LEDBETTER

You asked what your grandmother knew. Older women today have seen amazing changes.

MELANIE

I've seen a lot too. My first cell phone was so nineties. Now I've got an iPhone.

LILLY LEDBETTER

I don't just mean in telephone technology. I mean, in every aspect of their lives. The changes women today have seen are nothing compared to the changes earlier generations saw.

MELANIE

(cross to center)

Yeah, whatever. (pause) who are you?

LILLY LEDBETTER

A friend. I'm here to help you.

MELANIE

Help me do what? Wait a minute...are you a vision, like a ghost or something?

LILLY LEDBETTER

(move towards her)

Not exactly, honey. I'm an echo of all women who have come before you, just as you are a reflection of all women who will come after.

MELANIE

(step left)

OMG! Are you kidding me? Am I seriously having a paranormal experience? I'm so tweeting this immediately!

(She moves to left and pulls out her phone and starts texting as LILLY speaks.)

LILLY LEDBETTER

I'm not kidding and we are no pair a' normals! (She laughs, alone, move to center, talk to audience) Get it? Paranormal...pair a'...no? Okay, well that would have killed at Goodyear, but

whatever. Never mind. (to MELANIE) I sensed that you had a project on the most important woman in history, so I came to help.

MELANIE  
Awesome! Then can you help me with my calculus?

LILLY LEDBETTER  
No.

MELANIE  
Ok.

LILLY LEDBETTER  
Shall I begin?

MELANIE  
Yes, please.

LILLY LEDBETTER  
You might want to write this down...

(MELANIE crosses to chair and grabs pen and notebook as Lilly moves down stage center.)

(Project image of Lilly Ledbetter on screen with words "Lilly Ledbetter (b. 1938), plant supervisor, Goodyear Tire and Rubber". And then, as she talks, project images of Goodyear and her Supreme Court case.)

LILLY LEDBETTER  
They say I started all the ruckus. Goodyear was paying men more than me so I sued. Because there was a law. Of course, getting the law passed was one thing, making it stick was another. My case went all the way up to the Supreme Court, which threw the case out. They said I should have known earlier I was being discriminated against.

MELANIE  
(stands)  
That seems like a lot of trouble. Couldn't you just get another job? What's so hard about that? I do filing at Price Waterhouse Coopers.

LILLY LEDBETTER  
Oh, my dear, there's a lot for you to learn. I'm definitely going to need backup.

(LILLY LEDBETTER signals for VIRGINIA WOOLF to enter to center stage. LILLY moves to right.)

(Project image of Virginia Woolf on screen with words "Virginia Woolf (1882-1941), novelist, diarist, feminist". And then, as they speak, project images of women's lives from 13<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, elaborate clothes, frailty, being protected,

marriage, submissive, women's tasks  
such as sewing and cooking, etc.)

MELANIE

What is this, a sorority meeting for old  
ladies?

LILLY LEDBETTER

This is the esteemed novelist Virginia  
Woolf.

MELANIE

Is this the History Channel? I don't need  
help in history. I've got a C.

VIRGINIA WOOLF

(to Lilly) Oh my, I see what you mean,  
dear. Well, there's no time to lose. (to  
MELANIE) Dear Melanie, there was a time  
when women like Lilly couldn't even think  
of having a job, let alone sue for pay  
discrimination. Marriage used to be a  
woman's main goal in life.

MELANIE

(move towards WOOLF)

I want to get married someday.

LILLY LEDBETTER

Right. You want to, but you don't have to.  
Legally, back then women were treated as  
minors, the same as criminals, children  
and the insane.

VIRGINIA WOOLF

Women had to get married to survive. But  
then, a woman's legal existence  
disappeared with marriage; she became an  
extension of her husband. She had no right  
to divorce, no rights in regards to her  
own children, and no rights over her own  
body. Property passed to the eldest son  
who inherited everything. (take MELANIE's  
hand and act out the handing off. She  
speaks as she does this.) Women and  
daughters were property, handed from  
father to husband.

MELANIE

(look at hand as pull it away)

Hey, that's what happened at my sister's  
wedding.

VIRGINIA WOOLF

Exactly. That symbolism still hasn't  
changed. Do you know where the phrase  
'rule of thumb' comes from?

MELANIE

Google?

VIRGINIA WOOLF

Canon law permitted wife-beating and  
forbade divorce. A man was allowed to beat  
his wife, even encouraged, as long as the  
stick he used was no wider than his thumb.