



Amelia Bloomer (1818-1894)

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Amelia Bloomer thought that those who willfully surrendered to authority should not concurrently have the right to a voice in political matters. Using her superb writing skills, Bloomer fought restrictions against women participating in politics. From 1849 to 1853, she published the newspaper, *The Lily*, that she described as the first paper “devoted to the interests of woman and as far as I know, the first one owned, edited, and published by a woman... It was a needed instrumentality to spread abroad the truth of the new gospel to women, and I could not withhold my hand to stay the work I had begun...” Bloomer also advocated for change in women’s clothing from simply stylish to practical. While she did not invent the loose trousers that became popular for women in 1850, the outfit became known as ‘bloomers’ in her honor.

Excerpts from, *The Lily*, Jan. 1, 1848 and the essay, “Woman’s Right to the Ballot,” 1895

It is WOMAN that speaks through the LILY. It is upon an important subject, too, that she comes before the public to be heard. Intemperance is the great foe to her peace and happiness. It is that, above all, which has made her home desolate, and beggared her offspring. It is that above all, which has filled to brim the cup of her sorrows and sent her mourning to the grave. Surely, she has a right to wield the pen for its suppression. Surely, she may, without throwing aside the modest retirement, which so much becomes her sex, use her influence to lead her fellow mortals away from the destroyer’s path.

It is a principle of all free governments that the people rule. Each member of the community, in theory at least, is supposed to give assent to the Constitution and laws to which he is subject... And since all the people must be subject to the Constitution and laws, so all the people should be consulted in their formation; that is, all who are of sufficient age and discretion to express an intelligent opinion. No one who claims to be a republican or lover of freedom at heart can dispute these positions. And I insist, not only that woman is entitled to the enjoyment of all these rights which God and nature have bestowed upon the race, but that she is entitled to the same means of enforcing those rights as man.