

Pittsburgh Freethought Community
Statement on Women's History Month and
International Women's Day
March 2022

Pittsburgh Freethought Community (PFC) welcomes the celebration of Women's History Month in March and International Women's Day on March 8. PFC has always honored the truth that women and girls are human beings and that women's rights are human rights.

PFC has begun a Women's Initiative to promote women in freethought and women's legal, social, and economic equality. We welcome everyone interested in helping us fulfill this part of our mission. Please contact us at info@pghfreethought.org to join our Women's Initiative.

PFC recognizes numerous women for their contributions to the freethought movement. Historical women freethinkers include Susan B. Anthony, a tireless campaigner for women's suffrage; Elizabeth Cady Stanton, suffragist and author of The Woman's Bible; Margaret Sanger, birth-control pioneer and founder of Planned Parenthood; Emma Goldman, feminist activist and anarchist; and Alice Paul, feminist activist, suffragist, and author of the Equal Rights Amendment. Contemporary prominent women freethinkers include Annie Laurie Gaylor, co-founder and co-president of the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF); Mandisa Thomas, founder of Black Nonbelievers; Katha Pollitt, journalist and author; Barbara Ehrenreich, journalist, author, and social activist; Taslima Nasrin, physician, author, and feminist activist; and Pittsburgh's own Jamila Bey, journalist, activist, and radio host. All of these women fought and continue to fight against religion's major role in women's subordination.

Although women have successfully fought for their rights to own property, work for wages, access higher education, enter the medical, legal, and other professions, serve in the military, participate in athletics, vote, and hold elected office, our bodily sovereignty and autonomy are under constant attack from highly-organized and well-funded conservative and religious organizations.

In the US, the Covid-19 pandemic continues to exacerbate women's fight for economic security, including equal wages and paid parental leave. Millions of women have been forced to leave the paid workforce to provide unpaid child care, education, and elder care. Women constitute a majority of suddenly "essential workers." Women and girls continue to experience the majority of sexual harassment, exploitation, and violence. Our right to plan the size of our own families is in serious jeopardy.

Around the world, millions of women and girls cannot access basic menstruation supplies and are ostracized for this natural bodily function. Child marriage to adult men is common. Girls are permanently maimed by genital mutilation. Male relatives murder women in “honor killings.” The climate catastrophe disproportionately affects low-income women and women of color.

To advocate for women’s full political and socioeconomic equality and participation, PFC urges everyone to contact their Congressional representatives NOW to SUPPORT the following federal legislation:

- URGENT -- Now that the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) has been ratified by the necessary three-fourths of states and met all the requirements under Article V of the U.S. Constitution, the US National Archivist must immediately perform his ministerial role under 1 U.S.C. § 106b to certify the ratifications and publish the Equal Rights Amendment as the 28th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Contact him here: <https://secure.everyaction.com/-s9qMCvzV0ySX1utAnIIWg2?emci=5273675c-fa90-ec11-a507-281878b83d8a&emdi=954753f8-2e94-ec11-a507-281878b83d8a&ceid=467858&contactdata=snaOE9clr2kU61nQUQG5vyonopOMpuMymzgMbpt7GI4A%2fkIF8ufLYH7nv%2bJm%2fLWZoFGtC41gDnwf4g17Rz9nxvMCwTWmyoKwxGbpiaJA%2f5U25Jkp1UzcONVG9kv3OaoZgu0EQF9%2bUIMgXsBi8bBdR9XlvsIbcqZI40LKLchOrvfUi4OYlstPykI4oebBjEVW%2bKM4o%2fOodqbxJWmcwA0OoZ14hV9gKv4mN%2f7wgKmFco%3d&sourceid=L221TRE7&ms=L221TRE7>
- URGENT -- H.R. 2975/S. 1645: The Women’s Health Protection Act (WHPA.) This Act would protect women’s right to access abortion by creating a safeguard against bans and medically unnecessary restrictions that apply to no similar medical care. The House has already passed this Act, and now it’s up for a vote in the Senate. Contact your senators and urge them to support WHPA here: <https://www.congress.gov/members?q={%22congress%22:116}&searchResultViewType=expanded>

Here in Pennsylvania, PFC urges everyone to contact their state legislators to OPPOSE the following bills described by our allies at Planned Parenthood of Western PA: <https://www.plannedparenthood.org/planned-parenthood-western-pennsylvania/stay-informed>

PFC proudly and unequivocally promotes science, reason, and humanist values in Southwestern Pennsylvania. Organized patriarchal religion is the major oppressor of women and girls and is the motive underlying all opposition to reproductive rights. There are no scientific or rational (in

other words, nonreligious) arguments against women's full humanity. Humanist values encompass the fundamental dignity, equality, and unity of all humanity. For these reasons PFC not only honors Women's History Month and International Women's Day, but also women's full humanity at all times.