

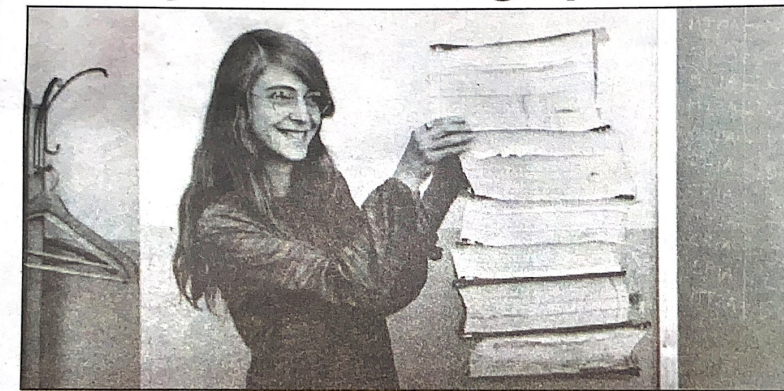
Women's History Month brings powerful reminders

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When I found out that March is Women's History Month, I was surprised and had a few questions. How had I not heard of this before? Why is the celebratory month not spoken about more often?

Women's History Month commemorates the study and celebration of women and their vital role in American history. The Library of Congress, Smithsonian Institution and National Archives and Records Administration are among several organizations that aim to encourage and showcase influential women in history during this month.

Up until the 1970s, the United States' education curriculum did not include a women's history section. But a movement began in 1978 when the Education Task Force of Sonoma County, Cal., dubbed the week of March 8 as "Women's History Week." The movement gained support, and by February 1980, President Carter made it a nationally recognized week of celebrating women in American history. With more support and lobbying, March became "National Women's



Margaret Hamilton is pictured with her code for the Apollo Landing in 1969. (photo courtesy of Smithsonian Magazine)

History Month" by presidential proclamation in 1987.

Throughout history, women have seldom been seen as equals to men. For a long time, women were seen as their husbands' property and subservient to them. Society expected women to learn to be the perfect housewives while their husbands made money and had successful careers.

While it is perfectly fine for a woman to stay at home, it should be her choice and not society's. Women were not allowed to have ambition, and when they did great

things, their success was often diminished or erased from history.

However, these standards did not always hinder women. American history is full of amazing women who have changed the game within the realms of politics, education, science and the arts.

One woman in American history whose story I really enjoy is Margaret Hamilton. In the 1960s, the tech and engineering field was male-dominated. However, Hamilton paved a way for women in STEM when she coded the software that landed the first

men on the moon. She pioneered modern software engineering with her work on the Apollo 11 mission. Unfortunately, her groundbreaking work is often obscured or overlooked. Without her contributions, we would not have landed on the moon in 1969.

It is so important to showcase powerful women and their accomplishments so that young girls grow up believing in themselves. Successful female role models have the power to change the lives of girls that look up to them. We just have to show girls

that these women exist.

Education is a great place to start. Teaching and celebrating women's history in schools demonstrates that women are a vital part of history. It also empowers and assures young girls that they are not inferior just because they are female. Young boys can benefit from learning this information as well, so that later in life they have a greater appreciation and respect for women, thus reducing the misogyny in our society.

In January, we inaugurated the first female vice president in the history of our nation. Not only is she the first female vice president, but Harris also is the first woman of color in the White House. Harris broke down barriers and showed that a woman can hold the second highest office in our nation's government. While this progress shows that our society is changing its view of women, we still have a long way to go. Women continue to have their accomplishments and contributions diminished, especially those of minority women.

Women are not limited by their gender, but empowered by it. We are just as smart, strong and capable as men, and we can accomplish our goals no matter how big they are.