

AMERICAN HISTORY

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## American History

The general position of each woman disregarding her race was usually powered by the ideology of subordination. Nevertheless, the activism of Black females around the 1890s, 1901, and up until the 1920s has shaped not only the position of women in society but also the attitude towards race. Therefore, in 1901, the situation with women involved the orientalism of education, which led to the development of the NAACP, where Ida Wells-Barnett managed to contribute to the writing activity and the emergence of riots that led to the adoption of the Anti-Lynching Bill in 1918.

Up to 1901, African American women of the middle class had to comply with the Victorian Code of Conduct. This idea emphasized the value of strict compliance with the rules, the appreciation of education, collaboration, and the cultivation of self-worth and responsibility. The Victorian Code assisted Black girls in acquiring a sense of their mission regarding future activism on the rights of colored people, which changed the overall social outlook of Black females, as they did not have the right to education in the era of slavery<sup>1</sup>. The role of education was central, as the females were preparing not only for the roles of mothers, but for those of professional life and outer social activity. Thus, though Black females were denied civil rights, education was considered a pass to getting key leadership roles in terms of promoting the

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<sup>1</sup> Vallier, Elise. "African American Womanhood: A Study of Women's Life Writings (1861-1910s)." *Transatlantica*, (2017), 11.

mission of serving the liberation of African Americans. The cultivation of the mindset of the key role of education and the values of self-worth were powered by the book *A Voice from the South: By a Black Woman of the South* published by Dr. Anna Cooper, who advanced the idea that educated Black women could save the nation<sup>2</sup>. Thus, the book was published in 1892, and it resonated with the mindset of the African American females of 1901 who embedded Cooper's idea in the ideals of the Victorian style of behavior. Hence, since 1901, the situation with women changed through the cultivation of the mindset of responsive leaders who took on the mission of revitalizing the Black community.

The first event of the NAACP's creation was provoked by racial violence in Springfield, Illinois. In 1908, the organization was determined to push progressive reforms<sup>3</sup>. Thus, the NAACP included societal elites like lawyers and educators and aimed at vindicating the rights of African Americans in the USA overall regardless of their gender or financial status. Ida B. Wells-Barnett was an active African-American member of the NAACP who contributed to the cancellation of lynching as an oppressive condition of the US legal system. The event correlates with the situation of women as Wells-Barnett's publication of her book *Red Record* (1895) in

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<sup>2</sup> National Park Service. "Dr. Anna Julia Cooper (1859-1964)," para. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Franklin, V. "Introduction: Documenting the NAACP's First Century - from Combating Racial Injustices to Challenging Racial Inequities. *The Journal of African American History*. 94:4 (2008), 455.

which she clarified the dilemma of lynching in terms of the educational mindset of Black females in 1901<sup>4</sup>. By 1911, Black women became powerful figures in social activism. Wells-Barnett published her essay “The Northern Negro Woman's Social and Moral Condition” in 1910 where she criticized White reforms by claiming that prostitution was a forced rather than a voluntary action and that Black females had the same love for their husbands and children as Whites, claiming the inadequacy of lynching<sup>5</sup>. Finally, Wells-Barnett’s contribution led to the signing of the Anti-Lynching Bill in 1918 by Leonidas Dyer, who analyzed the testimonies of the survivors in the 1917 East St. Louis riot<sup>6</sup>. Hence, the situation with women in 1901 altered the position of Black people by 1920 due to the contribution to the Anti-Lynching Bill.

To conclude, the key situation with women in 1901 was the rise of educational awareness aimed at the cultivation of the missionary vision and leadership among Black females. The condition was crucial because Ida Wells-Barnett managed to strengthen the activity of the NAACP by criticizing White lawmakers. As an outcome, Wells-Barnett was the one whose writing activism contributed to the adoption of the Anti-Lynching Bill.

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<sup>4</sup> The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. “Ida B. Wells-Barnett.” para. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Giddings, Paulina. “Missing in Action Ida B. Wells, the naacp, and the Histori.” *Meridians*, 1:2 (2001), 11.

<sup>6</sup> Library of Congress. “NAACP: A Century in the Fight for Freedom The New Negro Movement.” 2.

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