

1 **The National Organization for Women Statement of Purpose**

2 Betty Friedan

3 1966

4
5 We, men and women who hereby constitute ourselves as the National Organization
6 for Women, believe that the time has come for a new movement toward true
7 equality for all women in America, and toward a fully equal partnership of the
8 sexes, as part of the world-wide revolution of human rights now taking place within
9 and beyond our national borders.

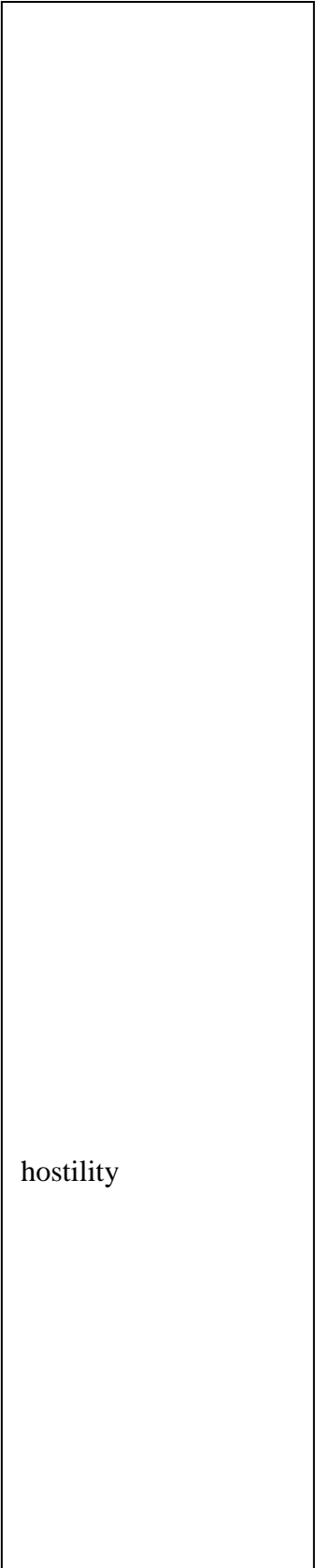
10
11 The purpose of NOW is to take action to bring women into full participation in the
12 mainstream of American society now, exercising all the privileges and
13 responsibilities thereof in truly equal partnership with men.

14
15 We believe the time has come to move beyond the abstract argument, discussion
16 and symposia over the status and special nature of women which has raged in
17 America in recent years; the time has come to confront, with concrete action, the
18 conditions that now prevent women from enjoying the equality of opportunity and
19 freedom of choice which is their right, as individual Americans, and as human
20 beings.

21
22 NOW is dedicated to the proposition that women, first and foremost, are human
23 beings, who, like all other people in our society, must have the chance to develop
24 their fullest human potential. We believe that women can achieve such equality
25 only by accepting to the full the challenges and responsibilities they share with all
26 other people in our society, as part of the decision-making mainstream of American
27 political, economic and social life.

28
29 We organize to initiate or support action, nationally, or in any part of this nation, by
30 individuals or organizations, to break through the silken curtain of prejudice and
31 discrimination against women in government, industry, the professions, the
32 churches, the political parties, the judiciary, the labor unions, in education, science,
33 medicine, law, religion and every other field of importance in American society.

34 ...
35 WE BELIEVE THAT women will do most to create a new image of women by
36 acting now, and by speaking out in behalf of their own equality, freedom, and
37 human dignity - - not in pleas for special privilege, nor in enmity toward men, who
38 are also victims of the current, half-equality between the sexes - - but in an active,
39 self-respecting partnership with men. By so doing, women will develop confidence
40 in their own ability to determine actively, in partnership with men, the conditions of
41 their life, their choices, their future and their society.



hostility

42 **Declaration of Sentiments of the National Organization for Women**
43 July 12, 1998

44
45 On this twelfth day of July, 1998, the delegates of the National Organization for
46 Women gather in convention on the one hundred and fiftieth year of the women's
47 rights movement.

48
49 We bring passion, anger, hope, love and perseverance to create this vision for the
50 future:

51
52 We envision a world where women's equality and women's empowerment to
53 determine our own destinies is a reality;

54
55 We envision a world where women have equal representation in all decision-
56 making structures of our societies;

57
58 We envision a world where social and economic justice exist, where all people have
59 the food, housing, clothing, health care and education they need;

60
61 We envision a world where there is recognition and respect for each person's
62 intrinsic worth as well as the rich diversity of the various groups among us;

63
64 We envision a world where non-violence is the established order;

65
66 We envision a world where patriarchal culture and male dominance no longer
67 oppress us or our earth;

68
69 We envision a world where women and girls are heard, valued and respected.

70
71 Our movement, encompassing many issues and many strategies, directs our love for
72 humanity into action that spans the world and unites women.

73
74 But our future requires us to know our past.

75
76 One hundred fifty years ago the women's rights movement grew out of the fight to
77 abolish slavery. ...

78
79 In 1923, on the seventy-fifth anniversary of the historic Seneca Falls convention,
80 feminists led the demand for constitutional equality for women to win full justice
81 under the law in order to end economic, educational, and political inequality.

82
83 Our foremothers -- the first wave of feminists -- ran underground railroads, lobbied,
84 marched, and picketed. They were jailed and force fed, lynched and raped. But
85 they prevailed. ...

86 ...
87 The National Organization for Women and our modern day movement have
88 profoundly changed the lives of women, men and children. We have raised public
89 consciousness about the plight of women to such an extent that today the majority
90 of people support equality for women.

91 In the past 32 years, women have advanced farther than in any previous generation.
92 Yet still we do not have full equality.

93 ...

94 Today, we reaffirm our demand for Constitutional equality for women and girls. ...
95 ...

96
97 We are committed to a feminist ideology and reaffirm our historic commitment to
98 gaining equality for women, assuring safe, legal and accessible abortion and full
99 reproductive freedom, combating racism, stopping violence against women, ending
100 bigotry and discrimination based on sexual orientation and on color, ethnicity,
101 national origin, economic status, age, disability, size, childbearing capacity or
102 choices, or parental or marital status.

103
104 We will not trade off the rights of one woman for the advancement of another. We
105 will not be divided. We will unite with all women who seek freedom and join
106 hands with all of the great movements of our time and all time, seeking equality,
107 empowerment and justice.

108 ...

109
110 How long and hard a struggle it was to win the right for women to vote. Today, we
111 fight the same reactionary forces: the perversion of religion to subjugate women;
112 corporate greed that seeks to exploit women and children as a cheap labor force;
113 and their apologists in public office who seek to do through law what terrorists seek
114 to accomplish through bullets and bombs. We will not submit, nor will we be
115 intimidated. But we will keep moving forward.

116
117 Those who carried the struggle for women's suffrage through to its end were not
118 there at the start; those who started the struggle did not live to see the victory. Like
119 those strong feminist activists, we will not let ourselves be dispirited or
120 discouraged. Even when progress seems most elusive, we will maintain our
121 conviction that the work itself is important. For it is the work that enriches our
122 lives; it is the work that unites us; it is the work that will propel us into the next
123 century. We know that our struggle has made a difference, and we reaffirm our
124 faith that it will continue to make a difference for women's lives.

125
126 Today, we dedicate ourselves to the sheer joy of moving forward and fighting back.

intolerance, prejudice

Corruption / control

Teacher's Guide

Name of Texts: *The National Organization for Women's 1966 Statement of Purpose* and *1998 Declaration of Sentiments of The National Organization for Women*

Question Composers: Andrea Ramelli and Elena Kelley

Standards:

Nevada Standards: H1.[9-12].6, H2.[9-12].14, H3.[9-12].6, H3.[9-12].9

Common Core Standards: RH.1, RH.2, RH.4, RH.5, RH.6, RH.9, RH.10, WHST.1(parts), WHST.4, WHST.9, WHST.7, SL.1, SL.3, SL.4, L.1-6,

Text Dependent Questions	Teacher Notes and Possible Textual Evidence For Student Answers
1. What do you learn from the titles authors and dates of these two documents?	<p>The National Organization for Women's 1966 Statement of Purpose, 1966 (Lines 1-3) and 1998 Declaration of Sentiments of The National Organization for Women, 1998 (42-43) Statement of purpose (lines 1-2) Declaration of sentiments (lines 42-43)</p> <p><i>This question draws attention to the dates to give readers an historical context for the documents and to draw attention to how, in the titles alone, the purposes of the documents shifted from a mission statement to a more overarching declaration. It is intended to draw students into a discussion of the differences between the two. One is written by a founding member while the other does not have a listed author and is rather coming directly from the organization.</i></p>

Text Dependent Questions

Teacher Notes and Possible Textual Evidence
For Student Answers

2. Citing several pieces of evidence from the first text, what are the purposes of NOW and what can you infer about the society it is confronting?

The first five paragraphs of the document are not necessarily hard to read and decipher, but they offer a very rich list of purposes and much can be inferred about the society in which they are confronting.

Purposes of Now

- “equality of women in America” (7)
- “be part of world-wide revolution of human rights” (8-9)
- “bring women into full participation in the mainstream...” (11)
- “exercise all privileges and responsibilities” (12, 13)
- “equal partnership with men” (7, 13)

Society NOW is Confronting

It can be inferred that there is a raging debate about “special nature and status of women” and that this debate focusses on reasons why women should not be equal and should be “prevented from enjoying equality of opportunity and the freedom of choice” (15-19). Women are not treated as equal to men and as less than human and as citizens (20). Women do not have equal decision-making powers in politics, economics, and social life (26-27). Discrimination exists in government, industry, the professional world, churches, political parties, judiciary, labor unions, science, medicine, law, religion (31-33).

Why does the Declaration of Sentiments make use of the recurring statement “We envision...”? And from these statements, what do we learn about NOWs view of the world at the time of writing this piece?

The use of this rhetorical device of repetition promotes a focus on NOWs commitment to the future. Repetition is often used in speeches or declarations to convey an emphasis on values, passion, or commitment. In this case, the emphasis is on a positive vision, but in highlighting a vision of the future, they emphasize the problems of their own time. Make sure students can infer the current problems by juxtaposing them against the vision.

Some of these problems are:

- inequality
- oppression
- unequal political representation
- social and economic injustice with basic needs unmet (food, housing, medical, education)
- lack of human rights and rights of individuals
- violence is the order
- patriarchal, male dominated

Text Dependent Questions	Teacher Notes and Possible Textual Evidence For Student Answers
<p>With a partner or small group, create a Venn Diagram that compares tone, purpose, goals, specific beliefs of the two documents. What is the same? What is different?</p>	<p>As an organization, NOW has not fundamentally changed its purpose over its 22 year history, but the tone of the documents changes drastically. Students should be able to see the similarities and differences. The first document is fairly conciliatory and focusses on equal partnerships with men. Its focus is on equality for women and promoting self-assertion. The second document is more demanding and focused on actual outcomes and both national and world-wide change. The tone is more adamant and confrontational. The organization seems to “own” the issue and even uses words associated with violence.</p> <p>Both recognize abortion rights, political and economic equality, human rights, discrimination towards large groups. In addition, both advocate a central role of women advocating for their own rights.</p>
<p>The first document sets up a picture of a “silken curtain of prejudice and discrimination,” (line 30) but says we must “break through it.” How does this paragraph compare with the language used in lines 110-115?</p>	<p>The rich and figurative language used in both documents is compelling and should be noted. The second document refers to “apologists in public office who seek to do through law what terrorists seek to accomplish through bullets and bombs” (lines 113-114). Students should discuss the force of the language in the second document: “perversion,” “subjugate,” “greed.”</p> <p>A common struggle from the first to second document is clearly established, but with much stronger language in the second document: “Today, we still fight the same reactionary forces...We will not submit, nor will we be intimidated.” (lines 110-115)</p>
<p>How does the Declaration of Sentiments make use of history to justify their vision?</p>	<p>Future requires us to understand our past (74) Women’s movement tied to anti-slavery movement (76-77) Seneca Falls and its 75th anniversary (1848 to 1923) demanded full justice under law and to end economic, educational, and political inequality (79-81) Women participated in underground railroads, lobbying, marching, picketing (83-84) Women jailed, force fed, lynched, raped (84-85) Recognition of triumphs of the women’s movement (85-92)</p> <p>In lines 117-124, NOW explains that the modern participants are responsible to the people who came before to struggle for a final victory.</p>

Writing Prompt:

Create a short informational essay that describes the purpose and goals of NOW beginning in 1966, running through 1988, and continuing through today.

- Go to NOW's website and research its current purpose and goals.
- Synthesize the documents from this reading with what you learned in your research.
- Make sure to use evidence from all texts to describe the goals that have remained the same as well as those that have changed over time.

Checklist identifying key points teachers should identify in order to measure student success or potential difficulty with this particular writing assignment and reading.

- Students should use ample evidence (6-9 concrete details) from their readings. Much of this evidence was found in the close reading activity above.
- Students should be able to clearly delineate change over time.
- There should be coherent and logical organization. This may be accomplished topically or chronologically.