# Women's role in the American Revolution Essay

## Introduction

Before the American Revolution, women's role was to maintain a cleaned house for their husbands and raise their children, while men typically had to work and provide for their families. However, when the Revolutionary War reached the colonies and men were drafted into the war, women had no choice but to take over the duties that their husbands or sons had been performing. The revolution opened an unusual new perception of women in society.

## The power of saying “No”

In 1765, the British Parliament passed the Stamp Act, and this event was the first direct challenge for women. In 1765, the British Parliament passed the Stamp Act, and this event was the first direct challenge for women. Since they were the primary consumers of British goods, the colonists realized that in order to repeal the Stamp Act, the most effective solution would be to extend their appeals to women in all the colonies. They embraced this idea and performed their first act of resistance by saying “No.” Women said “No” to merchants, industrialists and even their fiancés. Because of the tangible impact of the boycott declared by women to sellers of British goods, their sales plummeted and in March 1766 the Stamp Act was repealed.

As the issue of a boycott was discussed in the past, women were once again invited to implement their consumerism as a weapon in their arsenal. Committees often pressured them to refrain from buying British goods, such as sugar, cloth, tea, clothing and other goods, but there were also women who decided to boycott on their own. For example, many women designed a spinning wheel in which they could produce homespun clothing, therefore presenting a visual political statement. Ultimately, the lack of consumer demand from the colonies forced the British to abandon their plans to increase revenues.

## Significance of women over the course of the war

During the Revolutionary War, women often stayed at home alone without husbands, sons or fathers who were not engaged in household chores because they were in military service. Thus, they had to find a way to balance female and male responsibilities. Because of the difficulty of performing all duties, many women began to resent the fact that their feelings of patriotism took their husbands and sons to war. However, there were also women who encouraged their men to join the Continental Army. They spoke openly and placed appeals in local newspapers that apparently inspired other wives to allow their husbands to enter the army.

While General Washington's army was fighting for our freedom, women were struggling for their own survival. The army was critically short of ammunition and other necessities. Therefore, women who joined the “national defense” took time out of their exhausting schedules to assist their country's troops by making saltpeter or clothes. Brave women even let wounded or sick soldiers into their homes and recovered them, no matter what illness they brought. As follows, during the Revolutionary War, women fulfilled a crucial role in providing the army with all the necessary supplies, while fulfilling their domestic duties.

Furthermore, some women followed the soldiers. They carried baskets full of pots and kettles, furniture, and sometimes even children. These women took such desperate steps to feel protected, but also because of loneliness and poverty. They provided primary services to soldiers in the camps: cooking, sewing, washing their clothes.These women reminded the soldiers of the home comfort they were deprived of because of the war from their mothers or wives. They were rewarded to serve the troops, and although their income was much less than that of the soldiers, it was worthier than nothing for them.

During the war, many women, regardless of their age, decided to go behind enemy lines to gain or pass on confidential information concerning their ally. Women completed this, despite the risk of being captured or arrested. They are recognized as the “heroines of the Revolutionary War”, and this is the most appropriate name, because from generation to generation the story is told about how women chewed and swallowed documents so that the enemy did not expose them, or spied through the castle gaps and passed on to their allies messages regarding the upcoming attack. These women were spies, and they were an essential element in the course of the war. Their whole trick was to play with the stereotypes and expectations that men traditionally placed on women, resorting to all the necessary feminine qualities to gain the trust of their enemy.

## Conclusion

Throughout the Revolutionary War, women performed a dominant role while men were at the front. Left to their own devices, they took responsibility and achieved what no man in that era could barely believe. Women were nurses, carers, spies, and some even soldiers. Without the support of women and their activities in the rear, the Continental Army would have been defeated by the British troops. They provided the army with ammunition, clothing, food and vital information that would never have grasped the front lines if not for the ingenuity of the women who bravely crossed them with nothing but incredible courage and the desire to win freedom and not be caught. Women definitely changed the course of the Revolutionary War by focusing all their actions on securing their freedom after the war and making sure that their husbands and sons would eventually come home. They were the foundation of the Revolutionary War, and none of it would have become a reality if women had not stepped outside their comfort zones and done what the times demanded of them. The war was won because women played a substantial role throughout its course.