

CEDAW Manuscript

**This manuscript is focused on Minnesota but may be adapted for any state.*

[black]

[title]

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was ratified in 1948 but there was no women's bill of rights.

The Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, known as CEDAW, passed in 1979, is a women's bill of rights.

Why needed? There is no universal definition of discrimination against women; no specific ways in which the elimination of all forms of discrimination should be achieved.

[Women's rights from the Bench]

(click for each case)

1855: Missouri v. Celia, a black woman is property without right to defend herself against a master's act of rape.

1873: Bradwell v. Illinois, Supreme Court ruled that a state can exclude a married woman from practicing law.

1951: Hoyt v. Florida, Supreme Court upholds Florida rules making it less likely for women than men to be called for jury duty because "a woman is still regarded as the center of home and family life."

[Women's rights from the Bench] 2

1965: Griswold v. Connecticut, Supreme Court overturns one of the last state laws prohibiting use of contraceptives by married couples.

1971: Phillips v. Martin Marietta Corp., Supreme Court outlaws the practice of private employers refusing to hire women with pre-school children.

1974: Cleveland Board of Ed. v. LaFleur, Supreme Court determines it is illegal to force pregnant women to take maternity leave on the assumption they are incapable of working in their physical condition.

[Women's rights from the Bench] 3

2015: Ewald v. Royal Norwegian Embassy – Minnesota District Court finds that Norway violated equal-pay law by paying a female employee \$30,000 less than her male counterpart.

[What are some challenges that women in the US face today?]

Discussion

[National numbers] (click for each)

(click) 1 in 4 college women will be sexually assaulted.

(click) 2,400,000 women a year report injuries from intimate partners.

(click) US ranks 61st on maternal deaths during pregnancy and childbirth.

[National numbers] 2 (click for each)

Every nine seconds, a woman in the US is assaulted or beaten.

Women constitute 94% of the victims of murder-suicides in the US.

[National numbers] 3 (click for each)

Women make 78 cents to a man's dollar, a gender gap of more than 20%.

Women of color make less.

African-American 64 cents

American Indian 59 cents

Latina 54 cents

Of 37,000,000 Americans living in poverty, 56% are women.

[Minnesota numbers] 1 (click for each)

(click) 684,000 MN women raped, stalked, or violated by intimate partner in lifetime.

(click) MN District Courts 27,000 domestic violence cases

(click) 10,965 orders for protection

(click) 45 girls under 18 sold for sex on any weekend night.

[MN numbers] 2

(click) 3,470 untested rape kits in MN, 400,000 in the US

(click) At least 115 MN women were murdered by intimate partners, 2010-2015.df

(click) at least 300 women were sexually assaulted on MN college campuses in 2015. More than one every single day of the school year.

[CEDAW logo]

[CEDAW's core principles]

Woman justice logo

(click for each)

1. **Substantive Equality**
2. **Non-Discrimination**
3. **State Obligation**

[CEDAW] Parts 1, 2

Part 1 - overview of areas to address: political, social, economic, and cultural fields; take all appropriate measures, including legislation.

Part 2 – equality in the political and public sphere, e.g. to vote, participate in governmental and nongovernmental organizations, and to acquire, change, or retain their nationality equally with men.

[CEDAW] Part 3, 4

Part 3 – equality in education, employment, and health, with special attention paid to the particular problems facing women in rural areas. E.g., the right to work, to the same employment opportunities to training, to equal pay, to access to health care, the right to bank loans, etc.

Part 4 – civil matters, ego with contracts, rights of residence, right to enter into marriage equally with men, to dissolution, to freely choose a spouse.

[CEDAW] Part 5, 6

Part 5 – establishment of a committee that will consider progress made on implementation of CEDAW, e.g. selecting members for the committee by secret ballot from a list of people nominated by the various countries, terms, etc., and the submission of reports every four years.

Part 6 – mechanics of signing the convention, making revisions, etc.

[Nations that have not ratified CEDAW] map

Sudan, Somalia, Iran, Palau, Tonga, US

[US ratification of CEDAW] human rights are women's rights, women's rights are human rights.

[Ratification Process]

1979 adopted by the UN. Process: President signs it, sends it to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

[Votes in Senate]

Needs 67 votes.

Obama administration supported CEDAW but there has been no advocacy recently in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee or the Senate.

[CEDAW's History in the US]

1980 Carter administration signed it.

1994 Senate Foreign Relations voted 13-5, bipartisan.

2002 Senate Foreign Relations voted 12-7, bipartisan.

There was a bipartisan meeting of a sub-committee of SFRC senators in 2014, men and women, urging support.

[Obstacles to ratification]

US 'exceptionalism'

No 'Proxmire for CEDAW'

Misunderstandings

[Myth 1]

MYTH #1

Ratification would give the international community too much power over U.S. law.

FACT

Bills to implement CEDAW provisions would have to be passed in the House and Senate.

[Myth 2]

MYTH #2

Discrimination is too broadly defined in CEDAW. Implementation would result in "frivolous" law suits.

FACT

The same strict standards would apply to sex discrimination claims that apply to race discrimination. CEDAW wouldn't result in frivolous lawsuits any more than challenges to race discrimination.

[Myth 3]

MYTH #3

CEDAW will destroy traditional family structure by redefining roles of men and women.

FACT

CEDAW does not regulate family life.

CEDAW urges states 'to adopt education and information programs to eliminate prejudices and practices that hinder women's full social equality.'

[Myth 4]

MYTH #4

CEDAW encourages abortion by promoting access to ‘family planning.’

FACT

CEDAW intentionally does not address abortion.

Countries where abortion is illegal have ratified CEDAW. Examples include Ireland, Burkina Faso, Rwanda.

U.S. State Department says that CEDAW is ‘*abortion-neutral*.’

[women’s rights globally] ways in which women face discrimination

Being raped; driving; wearing pants in public, standing up for their rights; being subjected to a forced marriage.



[CEDAW’s impact around the globe]

Single most important impact: gives women a stronger stake and incentive in organizing and acting for non-discrimination, with participation in international, local, and national organizations.

[Bangladesh] As many girls now go to school as boys.

[Mexico] used CEDAW to address violence against women by creating a General Law on Women’s Access to a Life Free from Violence, signed by all the states in the country.

[Kuwait] extended voting rights to women following a recommendation by the CEDAW review committee.

[Honduras] created policies to make agricultural training and loans available to women

[Uganda] created and funded programs to reduce domestic violence.

[Japan] passed equal employment practices laws and policies.

[Colombia] addressed forced sterilizations of disabled women.

[Why the US should ratify CEDAW]

Demonstrate commitment to women's rights globally, be part of the international community, and address discrimination and violence locally.

[CEDAW poster]

1 in 3 women in the world will experience physical or sexual violence.

[CEDAW postcards] don't read; update on Cities for CEDAW - goal is 100.

As of May 2016,

41 US cities overall for CEDAW Landscape

5 CEDAW Ordinance only

17 with CEDAW Resolution (These cities have adopted a resolution affirming support for the principles of CEDAW, or have one pending)-
This is where Minneapolis, STP and Edina are listed.

19 with CEDAW Ordinance and Resolution (These include cities that have begun organizing Cities for CEDAW activity (e.g., forming coalitions of civil society organizations; meeting with city council members), but have not yet formally introduced a resolution or ordinance.)

http://citiesforcedaw.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/CEDAW-toolkit_May-2016.pdf

[Action for CEDAW]

There are three Minnesota cities who have passed resolutions of support: Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Edina.

There are two Minnesota organizations who have passed resolutions of support: the Minnesota State Bar Association and the Minnesota Nurses Association.

Education and advocacy for women and men to speak up and stand up.

[Take action] (click for each one)

(click) Sign letters; **(click)** get organizational ratification; **(click)** join CITIES for CEDAW; **(click)** advocate for CEDAW in DC

[Women's rights – locally]

A day when all women and girls can reach their full potential.

[women's rights are human rights and human rights are women's rights]

Ellen, Louisa, Anna

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