

WOMEN IN THE 1960s

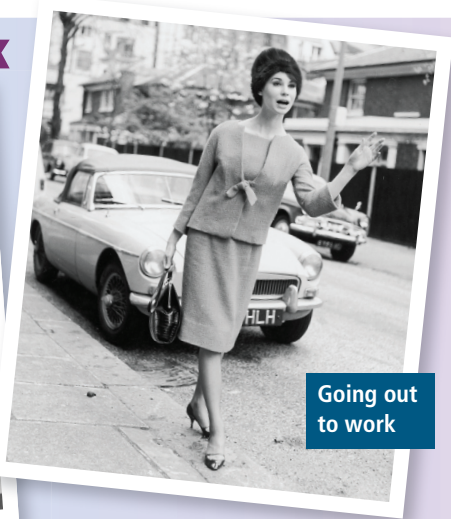
It's easy to forget what life was like for women in Britain in the 1950s and early 1960s. Equal pay, birth control and divorce are seen as normal today, but at that time, women did not have so much control over their lives. But things were about to change ...

WOMEN AND WORK



Staying
at home

In the 1950s, women usually had to make a choice between getting married and having a career. Jenny's mother doesn't go to work, she stays at home. Miss Stubbs and Miss Walters have good jobs, but they are unmarried. Jenny's father obviously thinks a good marriage is more important than a university education. Despite spending



Going out
to work

a lot of money on Jenny's education, he is happy for her to give it all up to marry David.

Women who did go out to work often earned less money than men, even if they were doing exactly the same job. They also had less control over how they spent that money. It was very difficult for a woman to buy a house, for example, or borrow money from a bank.

WOMEN AND MARRIAGE

Miss Stubbs and Jenny's mother are both worried that Jenny could get pregnant. The pill for birth control went on sale for the first time in 1961, but it was not widely available.

It was generally unacceptable for couples to live together before they got married. Society could be very unkind to a young girl who got pregnant before she was married.



THE WOMEN'S LIBERATION MOVEMENT

By the late 1960s, society was changing. People were angry about a lot of things: the war in Vietnam, rights for black people, equal pay for women ... It was a time of strikes and protests both in Europe and the States. The Women's Liberation Movement was part of this general mood of anger and need for change. The movement fought for equal rights for women, equal opportunities in education, birth control and easier divorce.

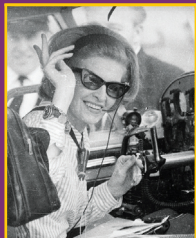
In 1968, 850 women machine operators at the Ford factory in Dagenham, near London went on strike for equal pay. Their action helped lead to the Equal Pay Act in 1970.

FIRST WOMEN

1963 Valentina Tereshkova was the first woman in space. She went around the earth 48 times!



1966 Indira Gandhi became the first woman Prime Minister of India.



1966 Sheila Scott was the first British woman to fly around the world.

1969 The Women's Football Association was formed.

In what ways is life for women in your country today different from how it was in the past?

What do these words mean?

You can use a dictionary.

control protest strike opportunity