



Victoria Woodhull

Topic Guide for Chronicling America (<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov>)

Introduction

Victoria Claflin Woodhull Martin (1838-1927), born in Homer, Ohio, was the first female candidate for President of the United States. She was also a magnetic healer, spiritualist, lecturer and, with her sister Tennie Claflin, the first woman to own a Wall Street brokerage firm and among the first to found a newspaper. Woodhull was an advocate for women's rights, including "free love" (a woman's right to marry, divorce and bear children without government interference) and suffrage as well as labor reform. In 1872, she was nominated by the Equal Rights Party for President of the United States. She lost the election and moved to England in 1877 where she gave public lectures and operated a magazine with her daughter, Zula Woodhull, from 1892 to 1901. After her third husband died in 1901, she retired from publishing. She died in 1927.

Important Dates

- September 23, 1838: Victoria California Claflin is born in Homer, Ohio.
- November 20, 1853: Claflin marries Canning Woodhull in Cleveland, Ohio. They later divorce.
- ca. 1866-1876: Woodhull is married to Col. James Harvey Blood (until their divorce).
- 1868: Woodhull moves to New York City.
- 1870: Woodhull and her sister start Woodhull, Claflin & Company, a Wall Street brokerage firm.
- May 14, 1870: Woodhull and her sister establish *Woodhull & Claflin's Weekly*. The newspaper's main purpose is to support Woodhull's future bid for U.S. President.
- May 10, 1872: Woodhull is nominated as the Equal Rights Party candidate for U.S. President.
- November 2, 1872: Reacting to criticism for her stance on "free love", Woodhull publishes an article on Reverend Henry Ward Beecher's adultery and is arrested for printing obscene content.
- 1877: Woodhull moves to England.
- 1883-1901: Woodhull is married to John Biddulph Martin (until his death).
- 1892-1901: Woodhull publishes *The Humanitarian*, a magazine, alongside her daughter, Zula.
- June 9, 1927: Woodhull passes away in England.

Suggested Search Strategies

- Search the following terms in combination (as an "all" word search), as phrases or in proximity: Victoria Woodhull, Victoria Woodhull Martin, Tennie Claflin, Beecher, president, divorce, free love, freeloove, suffrage, reform, broker, Wall Street.
- Use date limits to find information about specific events.

Sample Articles from Chronicling America

- ["The Bewitching Brokers"](#) *Charleston Daily News* (Charleston, SC), February 14, 1870, Image 1, col. 5.
- ["Lecture on Free Love"](#) *Donaldsonville Chief* (Donaldsonville, LA), Dec. 2, 1871, Image 4, col. 1-2.
- ["A New York Scandal"](#) *Spirit of Jefferson* (Charleston, WV), November 12, 1872, Image 2, col. 4.
- ["The Beecher-Woodhull Affair"](#) *Highland Weekly News* (Hillsboro, OH), November 21, 1872, Image 2, col. 5.
- ["Back to Familiar Scenes"](#) *Evening World* (New York, NY), February 20, 1888, Image 2, col. 7.
- ["Victoria Woodhull nee Martin..."](#) *Perrysburg Journal* (Perrysburg, OH), May 14, 1892, Image 4, col. 2.
- ["Spinster Problem Solved"](#) *Omaha Daily Bee* (Omaha, NE), March 15, 1908, Image 13, col. 1-3.