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Women in predicament history professor says

By KAREN ATTAWAY
Reporter

Women's Week at Texas A&M is forcing some women to recognize a predicament they have been in for years.

Are women seen as human beings or merely as females?

Women are now finding answers to this dilemma, an assistant history professor said Wednesday.

Dr. Sarah Alpern, who teaches a class on the history of American women, was the guest at a reception in Rudder Exhibit Hall sponsored by the Aggie Women's Association and Women in Communications, Inc.

Alpern said women have been misunderstood in the past. The original women's movement, was started only to abolish slavery.

As a result, women were criticized for speaking out in public.

Later, women decided to fight back.

Women in politics have always been stereotyped. To get the gender issue out of politics, you have to get the gender issue into politics. — Dr. Sarah Alpern, teacher of women's history

Alpern said women decided they wanted the right to vote, and in 1920 they got it. However, the voter turnout in the 1920 election was low, and it was assumed that the women were apathetic.

"But, assumptions become distorted history," Alpern said.

She said stereotypes began to be put on women involved in politics.

Women didn't have minds of their own and they lacked the resources for politics.

As a result of these stereotypes, women's self-images were undermined.

Alpern said women were handicapped because of these stereotypes.

This produced a double-edged sword because they were seen as human beings, but they could only gain influence by using their women's voter bloc.

"In order to get the gender issue out of politics, you have to get the gender issue into politics," Alpern said.

In conclusion, Alpern urged women to ask themselves if they were seen as women first, or as voters.

Alpern said she sees hope for the future for women's movement. She said she would like to see a group of women join together and use their skills as women.

History today

Today's Highlight in History:

On February 21st, 1965, Black Muslim leader Malcolm X was shot to death as he was about to speak to a

rally of several hundred followers in New York City.

In 1919, after World War One, the allied nations recognized the Pol-

ish government.

One year ago: The USS Intrepid returned to Beirut after being stationed in Beirut for 18 months.

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