The first “national” Woman’s Rights Convention was held in Worcester, Massachusetts in 1850.

**Answering the Call**

Two years after the Seneca Falls women’s rights convention, a group of activists met in Boston and issued a “Call” for a national gathering. In October, 1850 nearly one thousand women and men from eleven states convened in Worcester’s Brinley Hall. Prominent speakers, including those pictured below, envisioned a world of equal pay and equal education, employment in all professions, the option to combine career and family, and the prospect of women voting and holding public office.

**No Such Thing as Bad Publicity**

Press coverage fueled the movement. The New York Daily Tribune was somewhat supportive. That granting suffrage “would improve the lot of Women may be doubtful, but we are willing to give the Democratic theory a full and fair trial” wrote Horace Greeley. The rival New York Herald was scathing. “The motley gathering of fanatical mongrels, of old grannies, male and female, of fugitive slaves and fugitive lunatics, called the Woman’s Rights Convention... has put forth its platform and adjourned.”

**Medical Malpractice**

Dr. Harriot Hunt read her rejection letter from Harvard Medical School to the convention. After an apprenticeship, she began practicing medicine and was later allowed to monitor classes at Harvard but not formally enroll. “We ask that the medical colleges may be opened to MIND, not to sex,” she urged in Worcester. In 2016 49.8% of students entering medical school in the United States were women.