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[BREAKING BARRIERS: Women's Lives & Livelihoods](#)

On display July 2021 - February 2022 at The History Center

[Breaking Barriers: Women's Lives & Livelihoods](#) explores the lives of women in public and private spheres across the centuries through six interactive exhibits at our Exhibit Hall on the Ithaca Commons. Featuring historic items from The History Center archival and object collections, and artifacts on loan from collaborating organizations.

In addition to our in-person exhibits, we've created two women's history virtual exhibits that are available for free on our website, curated the Women's Voices in Tompkins County Oral History Collection available in the Research Library, and coordinated a series of events for the duration of the exhibit which highlight the rich history of #TompkinsWomen in this community.

Visit us from July 2021 through February 2022 to explore the following exhibits in person:

- *Haudenosaunee Influence on Women's Rights* ([Matilda Joslyn Gage Foundation](#))
- *The Overlooked History of Women Working* ([HistoryForge](#))
- *Serial Style: The Business of Being Irene Castle* ([Wharton Studio Museum](#) and [Cornell Fashion + Textile Collection](#))
- *Women's Social Clubs and Organizations*
- *Overcoming Barriers to Vote: Woman Suffrage Movement in Tompkins County*
- *Story Vault: Women's Voices in Tompkins County Oral History Collection*



These exhibits connect visitors with the rich and varied lives of women in Tompkins County through exploration of the stories, artifacts, and community legacies they left behind.

Stop by opening weekend to grab pins, stickers, and limited edition Breaking Barriers posters of Tompkins Women!



'Women's Voices in Tompkins County Oral History Collection' Now Available in Research Library & Story Vault



The History Center is thrilled to announce as part of the Breaking Barriers: Women's Lives & Livelihoods exhibit, through support from the [Institute of Museum and Library Services](#) two-year Building Capacity grant, the creation of a new on-going collection "[Women's Voices in Tompkins County](#)." This collection includes over 60 oral history interviews with women in our community. These interviews were recorded from 2008 to 2020 and include the voices of: Jackie Melton Scott, Anna Kelles, Mimi Melegrito, Nancy Bereano,

Katherine Karakantas, Yen Ospina, Martha Preston, Leslyn McBean Clairborne, Amy Somchanhmvong, Dr. Nia Nunn, Cory Foster, Elaan Greenfield, and many more phenomenal movers, shakers, thinkers, and creators of Tompkins County.

Audio files and transcripts of the recordings are available in our Research Library by appointment, and selected clips have been added to the Story Vault exhibit in the museum. We look forward to continuing to add to this collection over the years.

Serial Style: The Business of Being Irene Castle

Serial Style: The Business of Being Irene Castle explores Castle's participation in silent film production, fashion industry endeavors, and philanthropy in Tompkins County through a collaborative exhibit between the [Wharton Studio Museum](#), [Cornell Fashion + Textile Collection](#), and the [Rare and Manuscript Collections at the Cornell University Library](#). For the first time ever, Castle's personal photo albums - including movie industry snapshots and photos she took of her everyday life in Ithaca - will be displayed alongside extant examples of dresses from her eponymous fashion line, *Irene Castle Corticelli Fashions*.

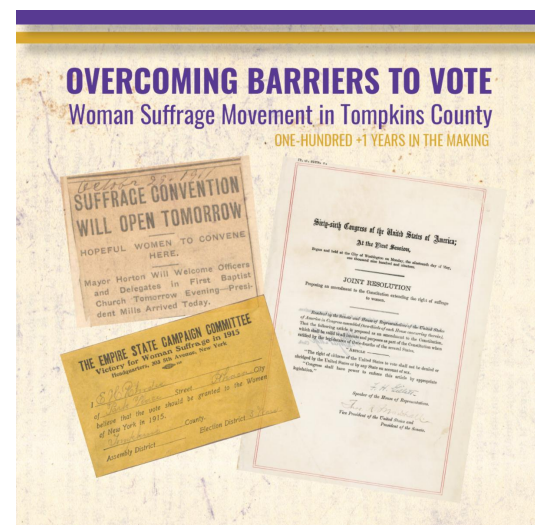


Many of these artifacts will be shown against the backdrop of a large, breathtaking portrait of Irene Castle, which was painted around the year 1920 by Professor [Olaf Brauner](#), a Cornell faculty member who was the head of the Department of Fine Arts in the College of Architecture, Art, and Planning from 1896 to 1939. Castle was an ingenious businesswoman, compelling silent film actress, and advocate for animal rights. *Serial Style: The Business of Being Irene Castle* celebrates the unique ways she broke barriers for women in film, fashion, and philanthropy during the heyday of the Wharton's moving picture production in Ithaca.



[Virtual Exhibit - Overcoming Barriers to Vote: Woman Suffrage Movement in Tompkins County - One Hundred +1 Years in the Making](#)

[Overcoming Barriers to Vote: Woman Suffrage Movement in Tompkins County - One Hundred +1 Years in the Making](#) traces the timeline of the Woman Suffrage Movement in the United States, highlighting the numerous women who broke barriers in politics and worked for the right to vote in New York State and across the nation. The exhibit features Tompkins County residents and organizations, from the Haudenosaunee women who have long been political leaders in their communities to the founders and members of various clubs in Tompkins County advocating for suffrage, temperance, women's issues, and many other reforms in the 19th and early 20th century.



[Virtual Exhibit - Sisters of Change - Unsung Sheroes for Racial Justice Whose Names Everyone Should Know](#)

The [Dorothy Cotton Institute](#) in collaboration with The History Center has created a virtual exhibit and learning curriculum from the physical exhibit "[Sisters of Change Unsung Sheroes Whose Names Everyone Should Know](#)" which was on display at the Tompkins Center for History & Culture from January 2020 to June 2021. This exhibit explores the life of the late Dr. Dorothy Cotton, and twenty-five women of the movement for Civil Rights and women's rights, whose tremendous contributions deserve a prominent place in American history.

VIRTUAL EXHIBIT



Follow Along at #TompkinsWomen



Did you know...

Effie Morse (1861-1953) was the first woman appointed Commissioner of Charities in Ithaca. She also started the first kindergarten in the 1890's.

#WomensHistoryMonth
 @TompkinsHistory

TOMPKINS COUNTY VOTES

OUR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE CENTENNIAL 1920-2020

TOMPKINS FIFTH IN ENROLLMENT WOMEN VOTERS

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Did you know...

In 1953 Beverly J. Martin became the first Black senior class president at Ithaca High School. She later became the first Black school administrator in Ithaca.

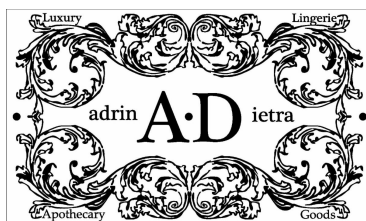
#BlackHistoryMonth
 @TompkinsHistory

Follow @TompkinsHistory on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [YouTube](#), and [SoundCloud](#) as we highlight stories of #TompkinsWomen who broke barriers, created industries, and raised communities.

Post your own stories of local women and use the hashtag #TompkinsWomen to join the conversation.

COMMUNITY SPONSORS

Thank you to our [Community Sponsors](#) for this exhibit. Please visit these women-owned businesses in Tompkins County to purchase our limited edition "Breaking Barriers Historic #TompkinsWomen" trading cards available for the duration of the Breaking Barriers exhibit. Additional thanks to our media sponsor "What's Hot" for their support of the Breaking Barriers exhibit.





HOUND & MARE
ITHACA, NEW YORK



BREAKING BARRIERS EVENTS & PROGRAMS

- 7/28 - [Connie Cook: A Documentary](#) - Film Screening & Panel Discussion - 5:30-7pm at The History Center in Tompkins County
- 8/2-8/8 - #TompkinsWomenTeach - Instagram Swap with the Museum of the Earth - Follow [@museumoftheearth](#) on Instagram as we spend a week teaching their audience and followers about female educators from Tompkins County. Be sure to visit their museum in person for their current exhibit "[Daring to Dig: Women in American Paleontology](#)" on display through the end of 2021.
- 8/7 [Printing Women on the Bill](#) - Printing Press Workshop with [Illuminated Press](#) - 10am-3pm (2 sessions) - All Ages - Registration required - Registration Opens in July at The History Center in Tompkins County
- 9/3 - Stop & Listen to HERstory - Women's Oral History Experience in the Exhibit Hall - 5-8pm - Details TBA - *This exhibit is happening in conjunction with First Friday Gallery Night at The History Center in Tompkins County but can also be accessed virtually.*
- 9/21 Corn Husk Dolls Workshop with Penny Minner (*Seneca*) - - 10am-3pm (2 sessions) - All ages - Pre-registration required - Registration opens in August
- [Without a Whisper - KONNON:KWE](#) - Film Screening - November TBA
- [Women as Bright As Stars](#) - Book Reading with author Rosemary Rowland - November TBA
- Print-a-Kitty - Printing Press Workshop with [Illuminated Press](#) using materials from the archives regarding the Ithaca Kitty inventors Celia Mattison Smith and Charity Smith - All Ages - December TBA

EVENTS CALENDAR

a visionary in the quest for women's rights

*******CONNIE*******
COOK

A DOCUMENTARY

CONSTANCE EBERHARDT COOK WAS A
 WOMAN AHEAD OF HER TIME



YOU ARE INVITED



A Film by Sue Perlot and Nils Hoover
 www.CloseToHomeProductions.com • www.ConniesFilm.com

July 28th 2021 at 5:30-7pm

at the Tompkins Center for History & Culture on the Ithaca Commons
 110 North Tioga St, Ithaca NY

This film screening is FREE and open to the public. Masks required.

This FREE community event is sponsored by Carol Bushberg Real Estate and CloseToHome Productions in collaboration with The History Center in Tompkins County as part of the 'Breaking Barriers: Women's Lives & Livelihoods' exhibit. Learn more at thehistorycenter.net



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Printing Women on the Bill

Create block prints of historic #TompkinsWomen from our archives with Laura Rowley!

**SATURDAY AUGUST 7TH
 10-12PM OR 1-3PM - FREE**

All ages (yes kids AND adults!) are invited to learn about historic women from Tompkins County and make prints putting #TompkinsWomen on stylized dollar bills pages! Laura Rowley of Illuminated Press will assist with creating prints and postcards with laser cut blocks using images from the The History Center in Tompkins County archives.



Ithaca College Gallery/CAP Artspace inside
 Tompkins Center for History & Culture
 110 N. Tioga St., Ithaca
 In "Bank Alley" on the Ithaca Commons

Participants must pre-register. Registration is limited to 15 participants per session and **all participants must wear masks** for the entire program to ensure the safety of children who are not yet eligible for vaccination. All materials will be sanitized between sessions.

Contact Zoë Van Nostrand at community@thehistorycenter.net with any questions.



The History Center in Tompkins County

Exhibit Hall, Research Library, Archives, and staff offices are located at 110 North Tioga St. (Inside the Tompkins Center for History & Culture) Ithaca, N.Y. 14850

Web: www.thehistorycenter.net

Phone: 607-273-8284

Email: Staff emails can be found [here](#)

Hours: *Wednesday-Saturday 10am-5pm**

**Please note our hours have changed due to COVID-19 and may be adjusted on a week to week basis depending on local health recommendations.*

Follow us on social media
 @TompkinsHistory



Contact Us!