



# Women's Letters: America from the Revolutionary War to the Present

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Historical events of the last three centuries come alive through these women's singular correspondences—often their only form of public expression. In 1775, Rachel Revere tries to send financial aid to her husband, Paul, in a note that is confiscated by the British; First Lady Dolley Madison tells her sister about rescuing George Washington's portrait during the War of 1812; one week after JFK's assassination, Jacqueline Kennedy pens a heartfelt letter to Nikita Khrushchev; and on September 12, 2001, a schoolgirl writes a note of thanks to a New York City firefighter, asking him, "Were you afraid?"

The letters gathered here also offer fresh insight into the personal milestones in women's lives. Here is a mid-nineteenth-century missionary describing a mastectomy performed without anesthesia; Marilyn Monroe asking her doctor to spare her ovaries in a handwritten note she taped to her stomach before appendix surgery; an eighteen-year-old telling her mother about her decision to have an abortion the year after *Roe v. Wade*; and a woman writing to her parents and in-laws about adopting a Chinese baby.

With more than 400 letters and over 100 stunning photographs, **Women's Letters** is a work of astonishing breadth and scope, and a remarkable testament to the women who lived—and made—history.



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