

Letters between Abigail Adams and John Adams (1776)

Abigail Adams to John Adams, Braintree March 31 1776

I long to hear that you have declared an independancy—
and by the way in the new Code of Laws
which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make
I desire you would Remember the Ladies,
and be more generous and favourable to them than your ancestors.
Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of the Husbands.
Remember all Men would be tyrants if they could.
If perticular care and attention is not paid to the Laidies
we are determined to foment a Rebellion,
and will not hold ourselves bound by any Laws in which we have no voice,
or Representation.

John Adams to Abigail Adams, [Philadelphia] Ap. 14, 1776

As to your extraordinary Code of Laws, I cannot but laugh.
We have been told that our Struggle
has loosened the bands of Government every where.
That Children and Apprentices were disobedient —
that schools and Colledges were grown turbulent —
that Indians slighted their Guardians and Negroes grew insolent to their Masters.
But your Letter was the first Intimation
that another Tribe more numerous and powerfull than all the rest were grown
discontented.
Depend upon it, We know better than to repeal our Masculine systems.
Altho they are in full Force, you know they are little more than Theory.
We dare not exert our Power in its full Latitude.
We are obliged to go fair, and softly, and in Practice you know
We are the subjects.
We have only the Name of Masters, and rather than give up this,
which would compleatly subject Us to the Despotism of the Peticcoat,
I hope General Washington, and all our brave Heroes
would fight.