Beila Abzug had the courage and the determination to blast open doors and to forge the way for other women. Her entire career has been spent at the vanguard of women and movements in her quest for full equality for all. She was the first to vote for the Equal Rights Amendment, the first to introduce bills on child care, abortion rights, GOP rights, rehabilitation for Vietnam veterans, and the first to dedicate women's concerns toward saving our planet.

Rejected by Harvard Law School in the 1940s because they did not accept women, she obtained a scholarship to Columbia University Law School as one of the first handful of women to attend that law school. As a civil rights and labor lawyer throughout the 1950s and 1960s, she defended victims of racism and McCarthyism, and led campaigns against nuclear testing and the Vietnam war. At age 50, she ran for national office.

With her slogan, "This woman's place is in the House - House of Representatives," Ms. Abzug became the first woman elected to Congress on a women's rights/peace platform. She served from 1971 to 1977 and was chosen by her Congress for a special task force, which she later helped organize for Women USA Fund, Inc., which was dedicated to women's concern and became involved in a worldwide environmental effort. This prompted the creation of the Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO). As co-chair, Ms. Abzug conceived and presided over numerous women's conferences throughout the world. In September 1995, she will be part of the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing.

Last year, Ms. Abzug was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame, in Seneca Falls, New York, where the first woman's rights meeting was held in 1848. Her name was added to the prestigious list of other leaders of the American women's movement.

Ms. Abzug graduated from Hunter College and earned her law degree from Columbia University Law School (1944). Mrs. is a widow and has two daughters.