had committed a crime in the presence of her husband the law said she must have been coerced and were guiltless- women owned nothing so had no responsibility for their debts, thus the husband had to pay for them instead. The only exceptions to this were murder, treason and if wealthy families took out complicated trusts for their daughters to secure money in their own right, but these were expensive and time consuming, and few women even knew about them.

**How did women begin to take control of their personal lives?**

**Answer:** They campaigned and became involved in politics in various ways to try and improve injustices they faced.

**Evidence:** An example is in the case of Caroline Norton (see Caroline Norton sheet); *How did Caroline Norton work to try and change the married women’s personal lives:* being an accomplished poet and author, she wrote many political writings and pamphlets, including *The Natural Claim of a mother to the Custody of her children as affected by the Common Law Rights of the father,* which she presented to her friend Lord Melbourne when she realised she had lost her children when she had deserted her abusive husband; she made it clear what she wanted and how unfair the law was in cases such as her’s, where it was not her own fault that her husband was abusive towards her- as a result, a bill was created and passed the second time Lord Talfourd put it to Parliament, creating the *Custody of Children Act of 1839.*

**What did the Custody of Children Act say?**

**Answer:** It gave custody of children to mothers who were split from their husbands, if the child was under 7 and the mother was ‘suitable’.

**Evidence:** They could have custody of under 7 year olds as long as the Lord Chancellor agreed that the mother was of ‘good character’. in 1886, the *Guardianship of Infants Act* also came into place, allowing women further access to their children, as it stated that when determining the custody of the child, the child/children’s welfare should be taken into account, not just the social standing of the male being their guardian. *Regarding marriage= Caroline refused to hand over her legacies to her husband, and he campaigned against her by refusing to support the children, so she campaigned again, involving a pamphlet named English Laws for women in the Nineteenth Century (1854) and A Letter to the Queen on Lord Cranworth’s Marriage and Divorce Bill (1855). The Divorce and Matrimonial Causes Act was passed in 1857, partly because of Caroline’s efforts.*

**What did the Divorce and Matrimonial Causes Act of 1857 say?**

- Allowed divorce to happen through law courts instead of a Parliament Act (which was expensive and time consuming), and for a husband to divorce his wife he had to prove her adultery effectively, though if a wife had to divorce her husband, she had to prove adultery AND one of the following: bigamy, rape, sodomy, bestiality, cruelty or long-term desertion. From Caroline’s experience, other clauses were inserted: a wife deserted by a husband could keep her income; courts could order payment of maintaining a wife; a wife could inherit/bequeath property the same as a single woman; and wives separate from their husbands could sue/be sued in civil court.

- Caroline was not alone in her campaigns, and had a great deal of support from women in similar experiences- women were starting to feel the ‘angel’ and ‘separate spheres’ should be challenged.

She understood, **importantly,** the necessity of getting MP support, thus impacting Parliament.

**What was the significance of the Jackson case of 1891?**

**What happened:** Mr Jackson returned from New Zealand to find his wife had refused to see him, so he planned, along with two friends, and when she was leaving church they bundled her into a carriage and took her to his house. Here, he locked her up, though her good friends campaigned for her release, as the Matrimonial Causes Act denied the husband the right to lock his wife up if she refused to have sex with him. Though it was a long process, the judge ruled Mr Jackson was in the wrong.

**Significance:** This reinforced what the Matrimonial Causes Act had to say.

**How significant were the Married Women’s Property Acts of 1870 and 1882?**

**Answer:** Very significant in two ways.

**Evidence One:** concessions they made to women’s rights over what was, to all intents and purposes,
husbands would have 2 votes or engage in marital dispute; but votes confined to spinsters/widows they would be rewarding those without husbands (failures of society); clearly, couldn’t enfranchise any women and this argument was thought fetching; local G’ment blocked stepping stone to the vote; men decided there were 2 spheres of politics: domestic (education, poor law, hospital) which women could/should do, and imperial (war, empire, commerce, finance) which women couldn’t; women found their appropriate service in Local G’ment, not needed/wanted at Westminster.

Unit Four: Suffragists Getting Started (c. 1860-1903)

Key Questions

Why did a national campaign for female suffrage begin?

How did men and women contribute to the early suffragist campaigns?

What was the nature of the debate about women’s suffrage?

What were the arguments in favour of women having the vote?

• 1866: People will favour listening to the views of women to represent the minority and the under classes, who have been “unjustly overlooked” and sex is not a proper grounds of distinction in political rights;
• 1868: A home owning widow can pay rates and taxes, but she cannot vote- this is unfair;
• Nobody wants to disregard the male/female differences, women are not represented by the men as they are different so men cannot know how to think like a woman or help her through the votes, women would like to know about what goes on in politics mainly for some degree of control over domestic issues that would affect her;
• Women without equal rights can become trapped and ensnared by men, seduced by them and then turn to prostitution;
• 1907: No race/class/sex can have its interests ‘safeguarded’ unless it is represented directly; non-voters are disregarded economically; a woman will be a better wage earner as politics and economics go hand in hand; women cannot have an equality of laws until they get the vote; they are denied public services and positions in jobs etc; reform has always followed women becoming voters, which is why we feel women will be better wives/mothers/housekeepers with the feeling of ease at having the vote.

What were the arguments against giving votes to women?

• God created men and women differently so they should remain separately in the separate spheres sort of issue, and ‘unsexing’ women would become heartless;
• Women are emotional and incapable of voting as they let their feelings get in the way of their logic;
• Women would become manly and unfeminine if they were given the vote and began to move into the male sphere, like bluestockings;
• A social revolution would follow, which is not necessarily a good thing, and could cause some, if not a lot, of damage;
• Women would concentrate on domestic issues, which are not cared about by men, who must vote regarding more important issues, such as war and the Empire

How effective was the women’s franchise movement?

How important to the cause of female suffrage was the election of John Stuart Mill to the House of Commons?

Election of JSM to HOC in 1865 was important for:

• Election on female suffrage platform; refused to canvass but gave a pre-election address in which he made clear he was in favour of female suffrage; agreed to Barbara Bodichon’s (BB) request to present a petition to Parliament in support of female suffrage (FS).
• BB, Emily Davies, Jesse Boucherett, Elizabeth Garrett and Helen Taylor (JSM’s daughter) drew up petition demanding votes for all householders.
• 1866: BB formed 1st Women’s Suffrage Committee, which had collected 1500 signatures in 2
Key Questions

How far had the education of women and girls improved during this period?
To what extent did education overturn the ‘separate spheres’ policy?

If a woman wanted to play a part in society, and how it was governed, she had to be enabled to enter the world of work and on the same terms as men, so had to be educated.

How important was legislation in providing education for working-class girls?

- Pre-1870: elementary education was provided for working class children by the Church. The British Foreign Schools Society/Anglican National Society were given grants from the government; others, such as dame schools, were a minority; education wasn’t compulsory and cost money, so most working class girls ended up staying at home to look after siblings, and getting a job in domestic services when they could leave home.
- Times changed: population growth meant pressure on the ability of the voluntary sector to provide a reasonable education level, there were gaps in the provision, and in the end, Liberal MP W.E Forster put forward his education bill.
- 1870 Education Bill: He said it was no use if all the workforce in all areas were unskilled through lack of education, as it would bring the nation down and it would decline; England had to be governed by a popular Government, and the people shouldn’t have to wait for education.

The Bill stated that:

- Every school district should supply a sufficient amount of public elementary schools for all children.
- School Boards should be formed in areas where there is insufficiency.
- Each child should pay a fee prescribed by the Board, unless they saw fit to reduce this due to poverty.
- Boards satisfying educational needs: expedient to provide a school where no fees required.
- Local rate paid for any sum necessary to meet deficiency.
- Board could make bye-laws forcing parents to put 5-13 year olds in schools, unless they had a good reason or HM’s inspectors certified the child had completed a good educational standard.

This showed the state was now starting to fill in the gaps left by voluntary schools, so they could still run but elementary schools would be provided for those who couldn’t attend. 1880 Mundella’s Act made school compulsory for children from 5-10. 1891 made school free and committees were set up to deal with this.

1902 Education Act

- Pre 1902: Full time education past elementary school was open to families who could afford grammar, public or private school fees, so mainly middle class families; school boards struggled to provide forms of Secondary/Technical Education, since they were too small; even bright working class students had a small chance of post-elementary education; the Education Act was introduced by a Tory government, run by Arthur Belfour, which abolished the 2568 school boards to replace them with 328 county council education authorities, which were large enough to build/maintain elementary schools; though they did this, fees were always intended to be paid; 1907 found a significant change made- secondary schools receiving public fees were required to use 25% of their places to be left free to clever elementary children: BUT this didn’t work only 1/30 from elementary schools won the competitive written exams to get the place; there was opportunity for working class children to realise their potential, but this was rocky and in 1930 1/8 children from Elementary Schools went to Secondary Schools, with 1 in 240 starting Elementary Education attending University; 80% of children remained in the same school for their whole education, and this figure is mostly relevant to girls.
was from 10-3, with holidays and recreational time as well.

- Buss wanted girls to able to sit public exams and achieve recognition for female education; she and Emily Davies lobbied for this and in 1863, 15 girls unofficially sat exams and passed without signs of nervous exhaustion, which is one of the reasons given for girls not sitting exams (that it would be too stressful); this led to 1867 exams being officially opened to girls; and the school itself went from strength to strength, and Camden School (a sister school) opened in 1871; by 1878, 894 girls with 140 on a waiting list were being educated; by this time as well, schools had changed status from private to endowed, so scholarships and reduced fees could be given to poor, clever girls.

Miss Dorothea Beale

- Privileged background; went to privileged school as headmistress for 48 years; turned Cheltenham Ladies’ College into prestigious boarding school for daughters of privileged; after 1 year as head, at Clergy Daughter’s School in Casterton, took time out to write *Text Book of English and General History*; Cheltenham College for boys was founded in 1841 and flourished/was successful but only for boys, 1853- Principal, Vice and 4 professional gentlemen had daughters of similar age and were progressive enough to want to give them an education like the boys= they were determined to set up a similar school; they did so in 1854 with 82 girls and Annie Proctor as the headmistress, but after 4 years she resigned and Beale began her work (by her death in 1906 the College had over 1000 pupils).
- Curriculum traditional enough to appease worried parents, such as dancing and music, but also reformist enough to appease others; always expanding and contained scripture, languages, grammar, arithmetic, geography, botany, zoology and hockey by end of Century; aimed to provide education based on religious principles, preserve modesty and gentleness of female character and should so far cultivate girls’ intellectual powers to fit her for future duties/responsibilities in the home; deliberately catered for socially elite section of society than NLCS and so did schools following this example.

Differences between Miss Frances Buss and Miss Dorothea Beale

- Both were pioneers in field of education for women; friends and had deep lasting respect for each other’s work but were different:
  - **Beale**: avoided financial problems by ensconcing herself in a highly privileged institution; secure and prosperous background; knew nothing of personal financial activity; tastes were frugal, devoted large personal sums of money to the College and towards helping needy students; Council determinedly rejected “daughters of trade”; Increase in prestige- privileged and secure; Beale didn’t need to sully herself with dubious business of financial appeals/social propriety remained un tarnished.
  - **Buss**: public appeals meant she got her hands and reputation dirty; knew all about penny pinching/making ends meet way of life= her background was not as secure as Beale’s and her father’s income not sufficient enough to support family well; good entrepreneur- NLCS= highly successful commercial enterprise, and until 1872 was her own property; restless ambition and zeal to do something about all kinds of female education never allowed her to retreat into privilege; her/friends begged/cajoled potential sympathisers for support- swallowed pride/accepted humiliation; not ladylike behaviour/antagonism, contempt, scorn that public fundraising brought was immense.

Significance of Girls’ Public Day School Trust

- Establishment of Trust in 1905= one of the most important developments of 1870s; objective: set up good and affordable day schools for girls; scheme unveiled at meeting in Royal Albert Hall 1871; prime movers behind scheme: sisters Maria and Emily Shirreff and Mary Gurney; Up and running by 1873; Plan: to establish schools in response to local demand and locals to become shareholders in the company, so had ownership of schools in their towns.
- Official approval was not long in coming- Lady Stanley of Aldery, other peers, MP and eminent men in educational field gave support and HRH Princess Louise gave the royal seal of approval, also agreeing to become the Company patron.
- NLCS not a Trust school (had already been established 23 years earlier) but taken as a model for Trust schools; GPDST schools spread throughout London/provinces to towns with no 2ndary
education for girls; by 1898 - Trust had established 34 schools in several parts of England; Headmistresses of all schools had to visit NLCS before starting work to study teaching, curriculum and admin/organisation.

• Other influential girls schools were:
  - 1874: Manchester High School founded by Manchurians; regarded that rules/regulations for carrying on NLCS/Camden Schools adopted as basis of permanent constitution of the school, and in 1898 Sara Bustall (previous NLCS teacher) appointed as head, and exerted considerable influence on girls’ education development in the North.
  - 1911: Dame Henrietta Barnett founded school in her name in Hampstead; leaned heavily on advice of Sophie Bryant (successor of Miss Buss as Head of NLCS).

• These schools educated only relatively small numbers of middle class girls; 1900: 70% middle class girls receiving education outside the home was in an old-fashioned, privately owned small-scale academies; 1902: Education Act led over 1000 new grammar schools developed by 1913; number of lower middle class girls receiving education increased; by 1st WW more local authorities organising education they provided along lines of ability rather than class; over half places in State grammar schools filled by working class, and half of these were girls.

What next? How easy was it for young women to go to University?

• Little point in educating girls so they succeeded in public exams if those were able could carry on their education to University; provision of higher education for young women always been considered as final blow to ‘angel’ and end of ‘separate spheres’ because they believed possession of a degree would open the professions to women and alter the relationships between men and women in marriage; but this was a theory; in reality there was still a great deal of opposition to women in Universities and a great deal of prejudice to overcome.

The beginnings of Higher Education for young women

1848: Queen’s College London founded to educate middle class women to become governesses and teachers, and governed by men.
1849: Bedford College London founded offering women full liberal arts education, including women on its governing body; mainly used to become teachers.
1878: University of London opened degrees to women; Bedford Westfield/Royal Holloway became constituent colleges (for women only) of the University.
• Great municipal universities, such as Manchester or Leeds, admitted women. Now women wanted access to Oxbridge.

What was the problem with Oxbridge?

• They carried great symbolic weight; renowned worldwide; by reality was the campaign to admit women was part of larger campaign to turn Oxbridge into 1st-class research/teaching institutions rather than places for gentlemen to pursue classical studies.
• Campaigns to make Oxbridge open to women spearheaded by Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, Dorothea Beale, Barbara Bodichon, Frances Buss and Emily Davies. Alongside others, they founded North of England Council for Women’s Suffrage, Society for Promoting the Employment of Women and The Englishwoman’s Journal. Local organisations supported the campaigns. Many towns had ladies’ Educational Associations; local businessmen pledged financial support; determination and steady/persistent pressure led to victory.
• Late 1860s: house purchased in Hitchin for women students, moved to Girton (small village outside Cambridge) in 1872. 1871: Henry Sidgwick and Mrs Fawcett opened another women exclusive college called Newnham (placed in charge of Anne Clough); most professors gave Girton and Newnham students permission to attend lectures (except, importantly, medical professors) allowed them to take Uni exams and received official certification for doing so, but not degrees; 1879: Oxford, following Cambridge’s lead, opened 2 colleges for women.
• Oxford allowed admitted full membership to women in 1920, followed by Cambridge in 1947.

Why was medicine such a difficult subject to study?