



People

Harriet Beecher Stowe 1811–1896



Harriet Beecher Stowe was an American abolitionist and author. She came from the Beecher family, a famous religious family. Stowe wrote 30 books, including novels, three travel memoirs, and collections of articles and letters, but she is best known for her novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), which depicts the harsh conditions for enslaved African Americans. She was influential for both her writings and her public stances on social issues of the day.

Sometimes a book can help change history. One book that certainly did was *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, written by H. B. Stowe. It was a book that spoke against slavery.

At the time she wrote her novel there were over 3.5 million slaves in the United States. Stowe was determined to make people understand that slavery was evil. Each night after putting her six children to bed, she worked on her novel.

Uncle Tom's Cabin was published in 1852. Over 300,000 copies were sold in a year. People reacted strongly to the novel. In the North, many people were finally convinced that slavery must be ended, but in the South, many were very angry.

Of course, the Civil War had many different causes. Yet *Uncle Tom's Cabin* surely played a part. Stowe met President Lincoln in 1862. As Lincoln took her hand, he said, "So you're the little woman who started the big war."

Source: What it is like in the USA (Natalia Tokareva, Victor Peppard)
Wikipedia

Steven Spielberg

1946–...



Some facts about Steven Spielberg:

•He was never paid for his work on 'Schindler's List.' This movie was considered to be the most expensive black and white film ever made. But Spielberg didn't accept any payment for his work on this film; he stated that any money accepted would be "blood money," considering the Holocaust. He was given permission to shoot the film within Auschwitz concentration camp, but he decided against it, due having respect for the victims.

Famous films:

Jaws

E. T. the Extra-Terrestrial

The Color Purple

Schindler's List

Jurassic Park

War of the Worlds

Saving Private Ryan

•He was a college dropout. Steven Spielberg was thrice denied entry into USC's elite directing program due to his C-average.

•His first full-length movie had a profit of just one dollar. When Spielberg was 16 years old, he wrote and created the sci-fi flick *Firelight* on a short budget of just \$500. The cast included his high school friends, and he used his garage for the shooting location. You won't believe, he even composed the film's score on clarinet himself. The movie was shown to an audience of 500 people in Phoenix Little Theatre in Arizona. The Admission fee was like \$1 per person, but one guest must have paid double because Spielberg came out of the debut with a profit of just one dollar.

- He suggested the PG-13* movie rating. Steven Spielberg was the first person to suggest PG-13 rating. This happened because of the complaints made by parents over the PG** ratings of movies like *Poltergeist*, *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*, etc. By seeing this Spielberg suggested a new rating to MPAA president Jack Valenti for films that have too much adult content to be rated PG, but not quite enough to be rated R***. Then this PG-13 was introduced. The first film distributed with a PG-13 rating was *Red Dawn* (1984).
- He suffered from dyslexia, and he struggled for years with the undiagnosed learning disability. He was bullied during his school days because of his

*Parental Guidance-13, with parents strongly cautioned, as some material may not be suitable for children under 13

**Parental Guidance, as some material may not be suitable for children

***Restricted, with no one under 17 admitted without an accompanying parent or guardian

inability to read. He also faced mean treatment from his classmates and had school administrators mislabeling him as lazy.

- He cast his dog in several of his movies.
- He hates coffee ever since he was a kid.

Source: telegraph.co.uk

Levi Strauss

1829–1902



Best known for: founding the first company (Levi Strauss & Co.) to manufacture riveted blue jeans.

Levi Strauss was born in the city of Buttenheim, Germany on February 26, 1829. He was the youngest of six children. Growing up in Germany was tough on his family because they were Jewish. Many people there didn't like Jews and made it difficult on Levi and his family.

In 1851, Levi Strauss went from Germany to New York to join his older brothers who ran a goods store. In 1853, he moved to San Francisco to open his own dry goods business — Levi Strauss & Co. Jacob Davis was a tailor who often bought bolts of cloth from the Levi Strauss & Co. wholesale house. In 1872, Davis wrote to Strauss asking to partner with him to patent and sell clothing reinforced with rivets. The copper rivets were to reinforce the points of stress, such as pocket corners and at the bottom of the button fly. Levi accepted Davis's offer, and the two men received US patent for an "Improvement in Fastening Pocket-Openings" in 1873.

Davis and Strauss experimented with different fabrics. An early attempt was brown cotton duck, a bottom-weight fabric. Finding denim a more suitable material for work-pants, they began using it to manufacture their riveted pants. The denim used was produced by an American manufacturer. Popular legend incorrectly states that it was imported from Nimes, France.

Initially, Strauss' jeans were simply sturdy trousers worn by factory workers, miners, farmers, and cattlemen throughout the North American West. During this period, men's jeans had the flydown the front, whereas women's jeans had the fly down the left side. When Levi Strauss & Co. patented the modern, mass-produced prototype in the year 1873, there were two pockets in the front and one on the back with copper rivets. Later, the jeans were redesigned to today's industry standard of 5 pockets including a little watch pocket and copper rivets.

Today Levi's are considered a symbol of American fashion. Levi Strauss never actually wore a pair of Levi's himself. He was a businessman and the jeans were for laborers.

Source: Wikipedia, ducksters.com