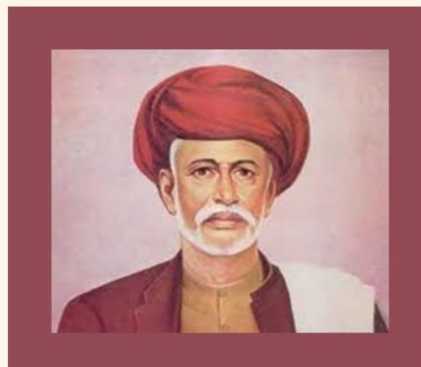
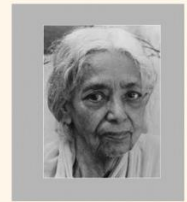
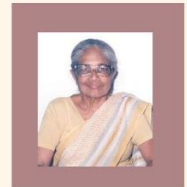
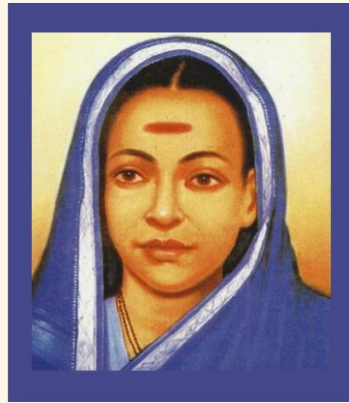




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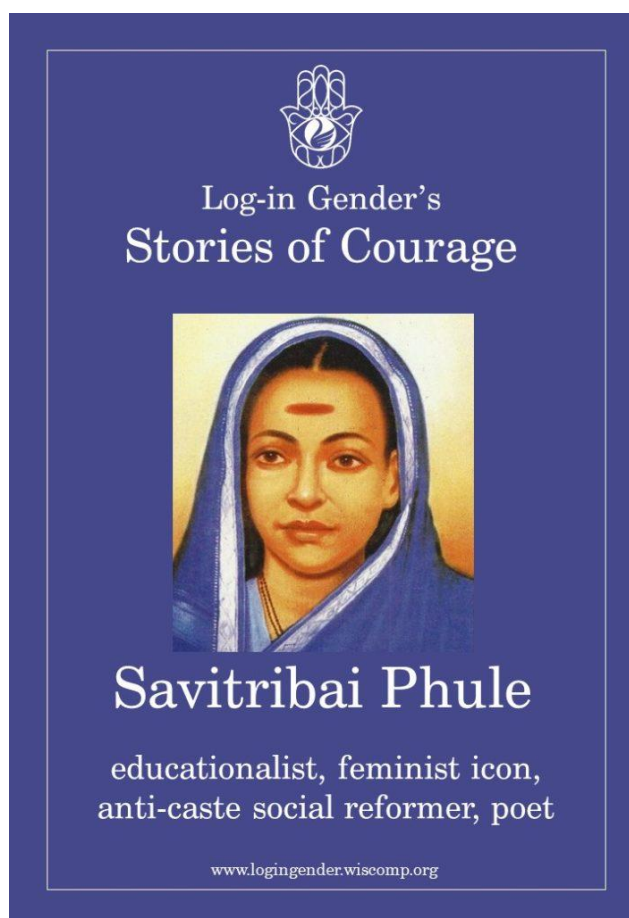
Stories of Courage



Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace
an initiative of the
Foundation for Universal Responsibility
New Delhi

www.logingender.wiscomp.org

Stories of Courage #1: Savitribai Phule

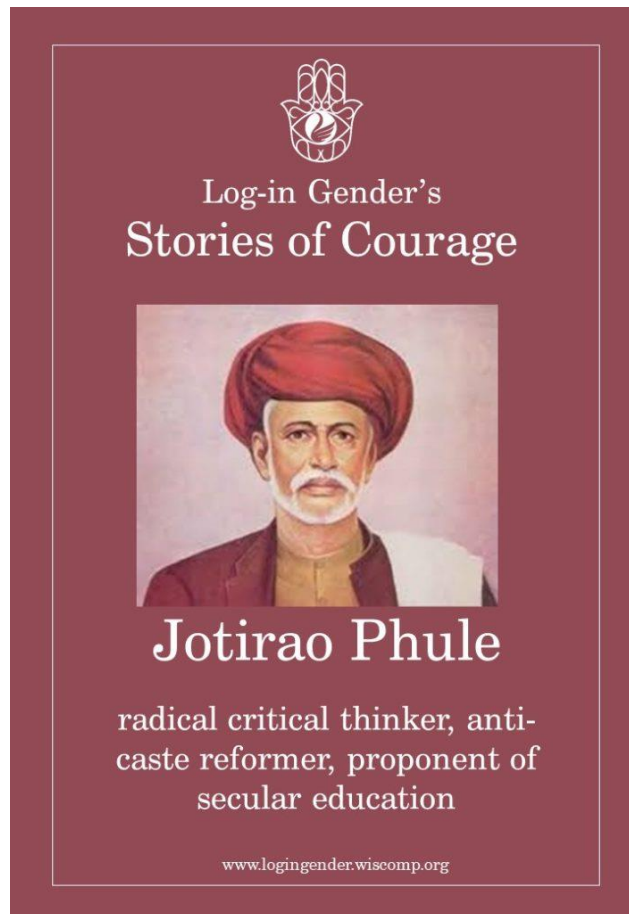


Savitribai Phule (3 January 1831 – 10 March 1897) was an **educationalist, feminist icon, poet, and anti-caste social reformer** from what is today the Satara District in Maharashtra, India. She, like her husband, Jotirao Phule belonged to the Mali community, which is today considered to be an Other Backward Caste (OBC).

Educated by her husband, against the wishes of their community in specific and society in general, Savitribai Phule went on to complete teacher training courses and is considered to be the **first woman teacher in India**. The couple set up several schools for girls and for students from the lower castes.

Savitribai Phule's actions invited the ire of conservative upper caste and lower caste members of society alike. As a result, she is said to have carried an extra sari on her way to teach school to change into after being attacked with cow dung by detractors. Savitribai Phule toiled tirelessly to spread education, which she believed would help eradicate regressive practices such as child marriage, sati, and untouchability.

Stories of Courage #2: Jotirao Phule

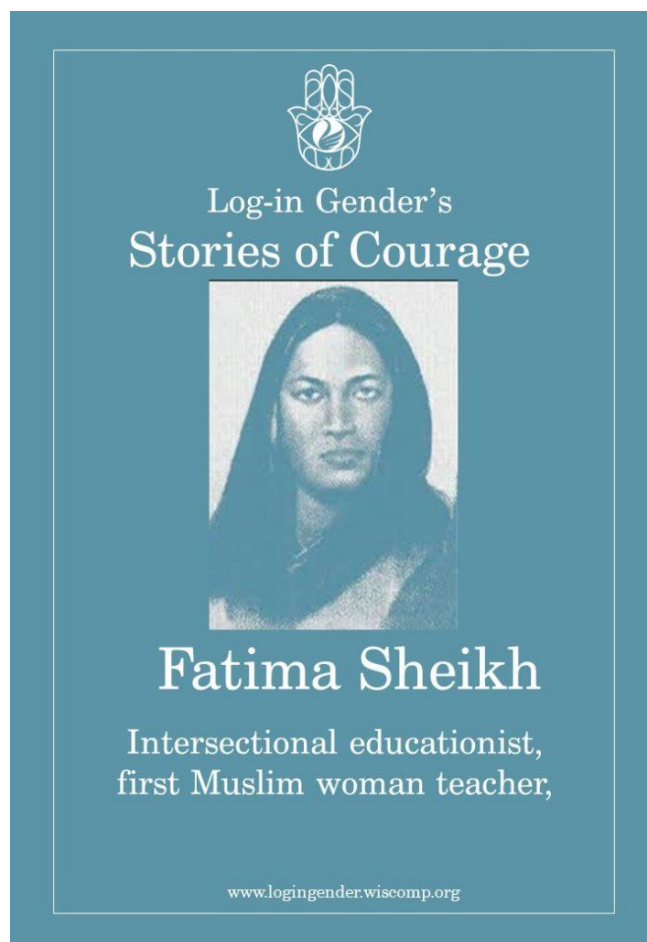


Jotirao Phule (11 April 1827 – 28 November 1890) was a **radical critical thinker and anti-caste, pro-secular education social reformer**. He was from the Satara District in Maharashtra, India and belonged to the Mali community, which is today an Other Backward Caste (OBC). He believed that secular education would be the means by which the lower castes could liberate themselves from Brahmanical hegemony and hypocrisy.

Jotirao Phule was married to Savitribai Phule, and along with her set up schools for girls and for students from the lower castes. These schools are considered to be the **first indigenous-run schools in India**. He condemned Vedic knowledge, as it upheld the exploitation of the lower castes, and instead taught modern science at his schools.

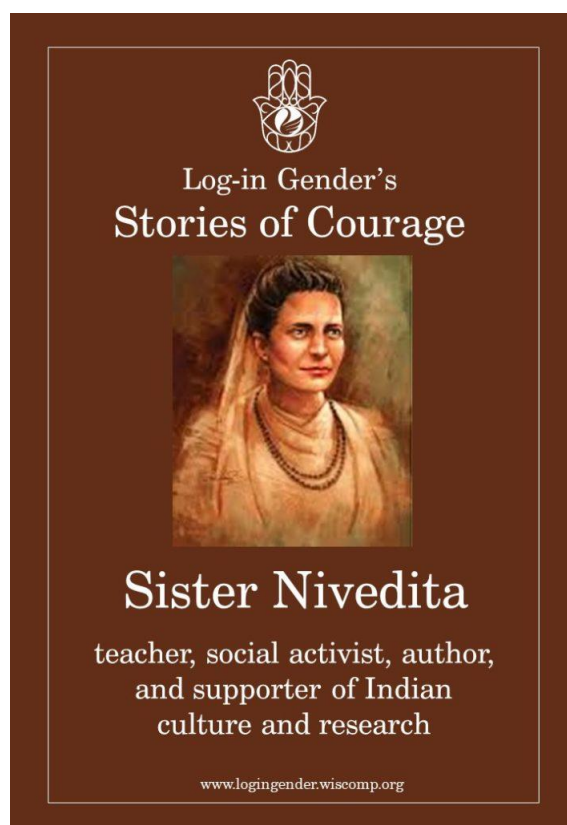
Additionally, Jotirao Phule believed that education would aid the lower castes in their attempts to transcend untouchability (a practice that he condemned), archaic conventions such as shaving the heads of Hindu widows, and inflexible ritualistic religious practices.

Stories of Courage #3: Fatima Sheikh



Although little is known about Fatima Sheikh, it is widely held that she was the **first woman Muslim teacher in India**. She taught alongside Savitribai Phule and attended teacher-training courses with her in order to gain legitimacy as teachers. Fatima Sheikh and her brother Usman offered their home up to the Phules so that a revolutionary school could be set up that would provide **education to the oppressed castes and to women**. Fatima Sheikh was dauntless in her commitment to the education of those historically excluded from educational spaces, as is evident in her conviction in the face of great opposition from upper-caste Hindus and orthodox Muslims. Sheikh is even said to have personally persuaded families to send their girls to get an education. Fatima Sheikh's contributions to education in India are truly **intersectional**.

Stories of Courage #4: Sister Nivedita

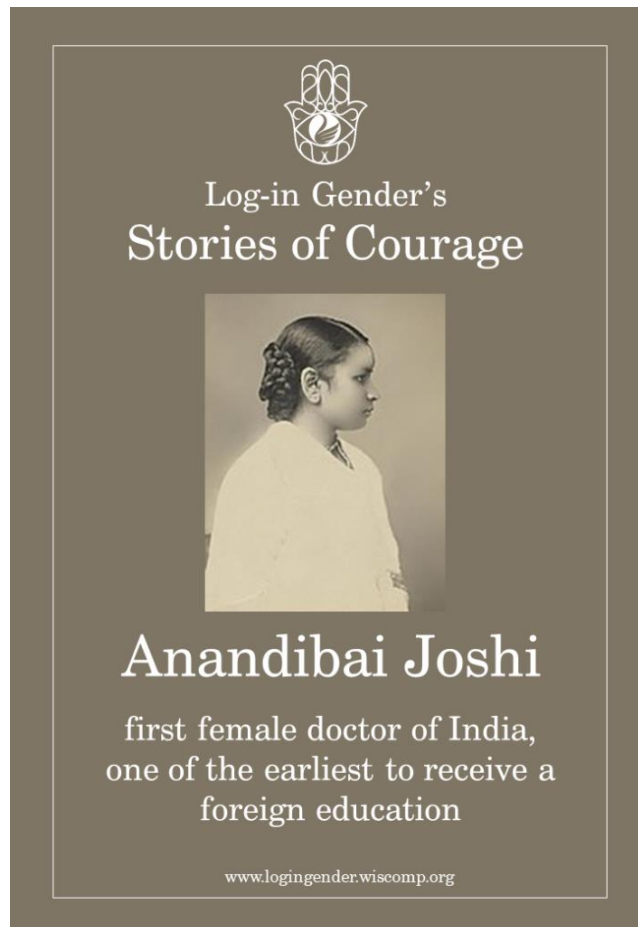


Margaret Elizabeth Noble (28 October 1867 – 13 October 1911) was an Irish woman who dedicated herself to **education, writing, and social activism in India**. She was a disciple of Swami Vivekananda who named her Sister Nivedita. From her early years itself, Sister Nivedita believed that serving her fellow humans was true service to God and this was why she dedicated herself to variety of altruistic projects.

Sister Nivedita believed in the **education of women and the depressed classes – generally groups that did not have access to any education**. She took it upon herself to tour America and Europe to raise funds towards setting up a school that would provide access to education to those who were deprived of it. Swami Vivekananda invited her to India with a view of having her set up a school to provide modern education to Indian women. This **school was set up in the Bagbazar area of Calcutta** in November 1898, and remains an important school of the city even to this day.


Sister Nivedita also supported and **promoted Indian culture and scientific research**, famously aiding the Indian scientist Jagdish Chandra Bose when the British government treated his work with indifference.

Stories of Courage #5: Anandibai Joshi




Anandibai Joshi (31 March 1865 – 26 February 1887) was born in Kalyan in Bombay Presidency, India. Born, Yamuna, she was married to Gopalrao Joshi, nearly twenty years her senior, when she was nine years old. He named her Anandi and was obsessive about her education. She was the **first woman** from the erstwhile Bombay Presidency of India **who studied and graduated in Western medicine** in the United States where she received her degree from the Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania. She was appointed the **Physician-in-Charge** of the Female Ward at the Albert Edward Hospital in Kolhapur. Anandibai Joshi was only 21 when she died of tuberculosis. There is a **crater on Venus named after her**.

Stories of Courage #6: Asima Chatterjee



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Stories of Courage

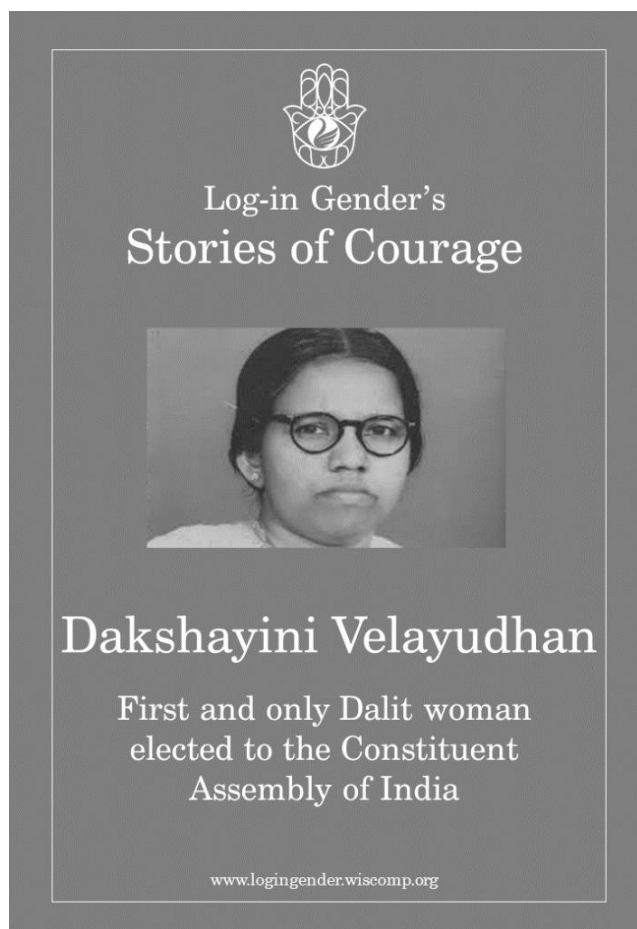


Asima Chatterjee
first woman to receive a
Doctorate from an Indian
University, developed
anti-epileptic and anti-malarial
drugs

www.logingender.wiscomp.org

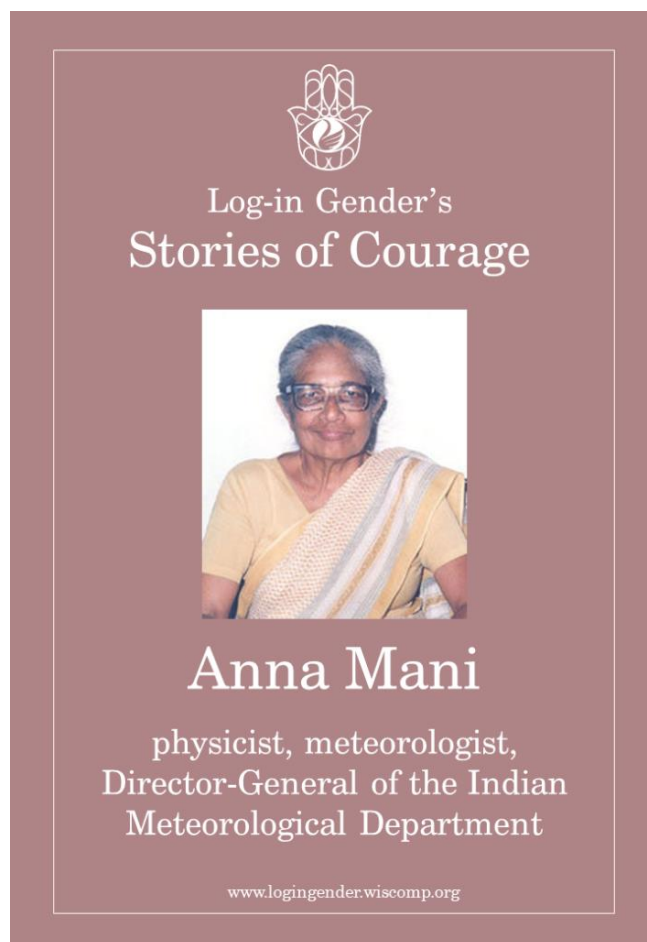
Asima Chatterjee (23 September, 1917 – 22 November, 2006) was an **organic chemist** and worked in **phytomedicine** who is notable for being the **first woman to receive a Doctorate of Science** from an Indian University. She graduated with honors in chemistry before earning a Master's degree and a doctoral degree from the University of Calcutta. She was also the **first woman** to be elected as the general **president of the Indian Science Congress**. Her research on vinca alkaloids and the development of anti-epileptic and anti-malarial drugs are her most significant contributions to science. She was awarded the **CV Raman Award** and the **Padma Bhushan**.

Stories of Courage #7: Dakshayani Velayudhan



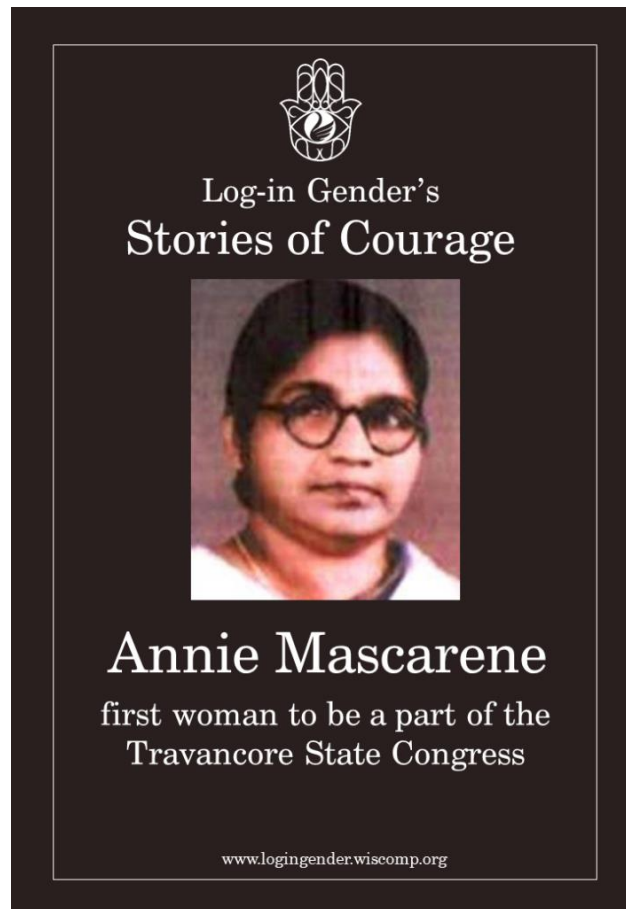
Dakshayani Velayudhan (4 July, 1912 – 20 July, 1978) was born into the Pulaya community in Mulavukad in Cochin State (now Kerala). She was the **first and only woman Dalit member of the Constituent Assembly** of the Indian Constitution. She was among the first people in her community to be educated. She is the **first Scheduled Caste woman graduate** in India, and the first woman from her community to **wear an upper cloth** in defiance of upper caste laws against lower caste women covering themselves. She was a vocal member of the Constituent Assembly, advocating for the **education of people from Scheduled Castes**. Today the Government of Kerala bestows the Dakshayani Velayudhan Award on women who contribute to the empowerment of women in Kerala.

Stories of Courage #8: Anna Mani



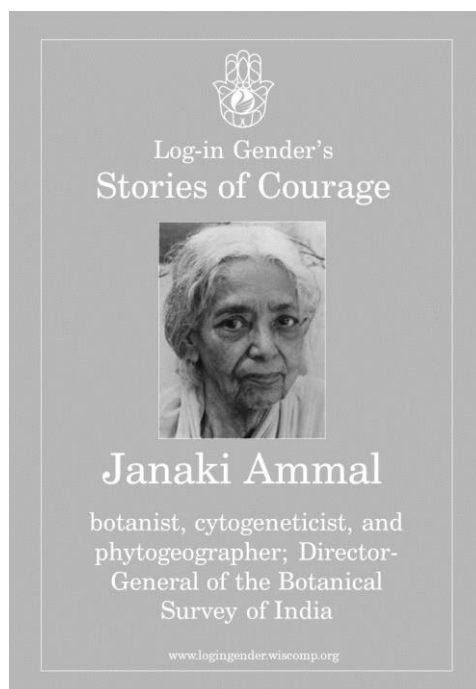
Anna Mani (23 August, 1918 – 16 August, 2001) was a **physicist and meteorologist** who was born into a Syrian-Christian family in Travancore, Kerala. She is said to have asked for the Encyclopedia Britannica for her birthday instead of a pair of diamond earrings. Inspired by Gandhi and the Vaikom Satyagraha, Anna Mani was drawn to **nationalist politics**. She completed an Honours programme in physics from the University of Madras, before winning a scholarship to work as a graduate student in C. V. Raman's laboratory at the Indian Institute of Science. Despite submitting her Ph. D. Dissertation to the University of Madras, she was never accorded the degree on a mere technicality that she did not have a Master's degree. Anna Mani completed an internship at the Imperial College London, in England in a course on meteorological instrumentation. Anna Mani retired as the **Director-General of the Indian Meteorological Department** and returned to the Raman Research Institute as a visiting professor for three years.

Stories of Courage #9: Annie Mascarene



Annie Mascarene (6 June, 1902 – 19 July, 1963) was born into a Latin Catholic family in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, and grew up to be a **freedom fighter and Member of Parliament**. She earned a **double Master's degree** in History and Economics and taught in Sri Lanka (then Ceylon) before earning a Law degree. Annie Mascarene was one of the **first women to join the Travancore State Congress** and was instrumental in the movements for Independence and integration of Travancore State with the Indian Union. She was arrested and imprisoned several times. She is said to have spearheaded the demand for women's representation in the 1940s. She was the **first woman MP from Kerala**, elected as an independent candidate from the Thiruvananthapuram Lok Sabha constituency.

Stories of Courage #10: Janaki Ammal

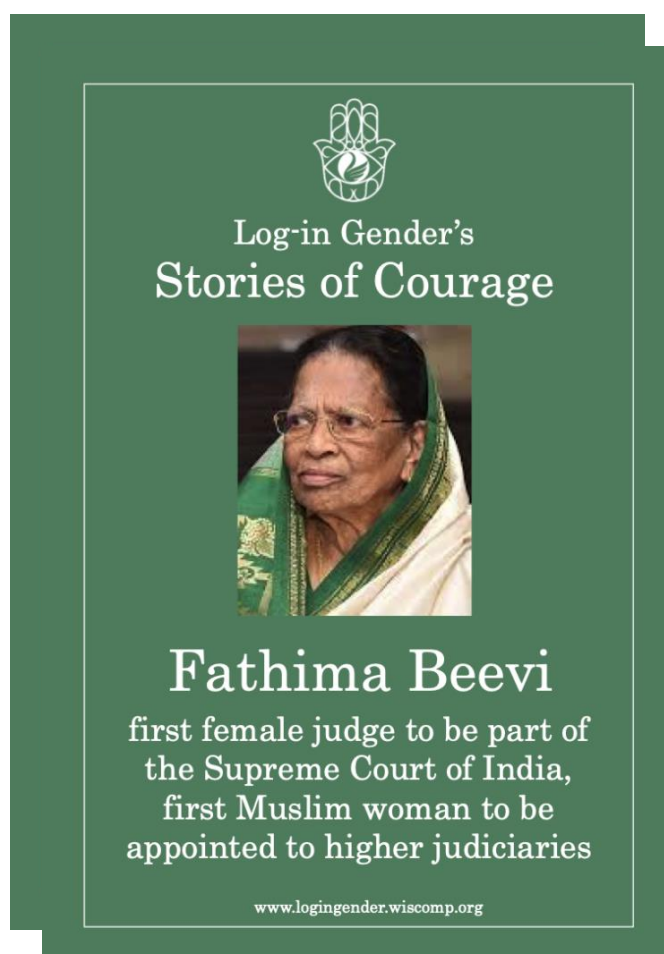


Janaki Ammal (4 November 1897 – 7 February 1984) was a botanist, cytogeneticist, and phytogeographer. She was born in Tellicherry (now Thalassery, Kerala) and completed her schooling there before moving to Madras to obtain her Bachelor's Degree from Queen Mary's College before receiving her Honours Degree in Botany from Presidency College in 1921. It was while she was teaching at Women's Christian College that she was awarded the prestigious Barbour Scholarship from the University of Michigan in the USA. She earned her MAster's Degree and Doctorate from here and was then appointed Professor of Botany at Maharaja's College of Science in Trivandrum.

In 1935, Janaki Ammal was selected to be a research fellow by the famous scientist and Nobel laureate C. V. Raman in the very first year of the Indian Academy of Sciences. However, she faced several difficulties among her peers on account of being a single woman and because she was from what was considered a backward caste.

Janaki Ammal's most notable work was on sugarcane and the eggplant (brinjal). She has collected various valuable plants of medicinal and economic value from the rain forests of Kerala. She was appointed Officer on Special Duty to the Botanical Survey of India (BSI) in October 1952. Later, she served as Director-General of the BSI. She was elected Fellow of the Indian Academy of Sciences in 1935, and of the Indian National Science Academy in 1957. The University of Michigan conferred an honorary LL.D. on her in 1956 while the Government of India awarded her the Padma Shri in 1977.

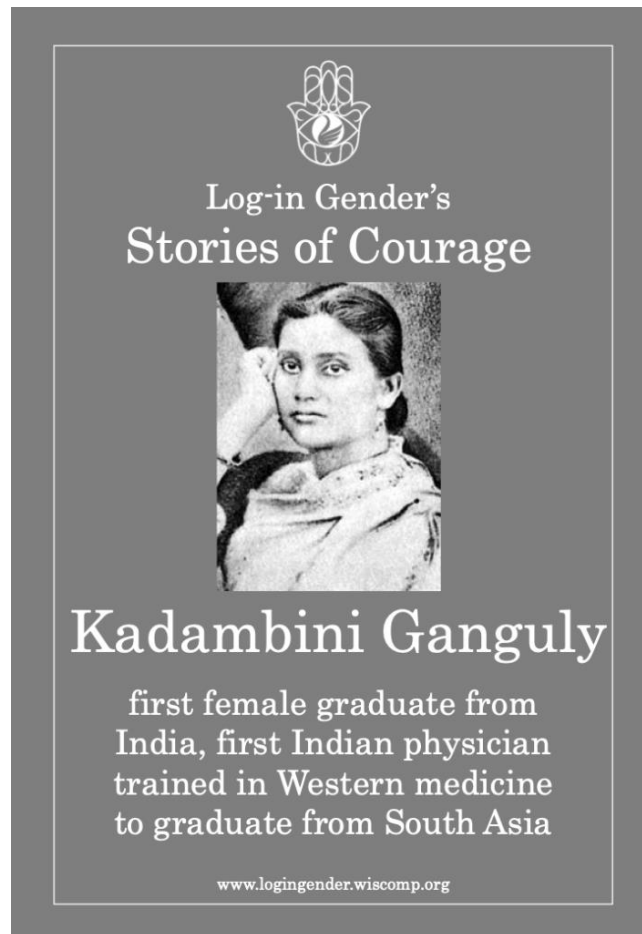
Stories of Courage #11: Fathima Beevi



Fathima Beevi was born in Pathanamthitta, Travancore, (Now Kerala) in 1927. She is a **former judge of the Supreme Court of India**, having been appointed to the Court in 1989. She was the **first female judge** to be a part of the Supreme Court and **first Muslim woman to be appointed to a higher judiciary** in India. Later, she served as **Governor of Tamil Nadu** and on the National Human Rights Commission. Fathima Beevi studied law at Trivandrum Law College and was one of only five women in her class in the first year. Unfortunately, even that number dwindled by the second year. **She was the first woman to top the Bar Council of India's examination.**

In recent interviews she acknowledges that women are not equally represented in the legal profession and that there is a need to elevate their position.

Stories of Courage #12: Kadambini Ganguly



Kadambini Ganguly (18 July 1861 – 3 October 1923) was the **first female graduate from India** as well as from the entire British Empire. She was also the first Indian as well as South Asian female physician, trained in **western medicine**, to graduate in South Asia. She was born in Calcutta, West Bengal in the Bengal Presidency.

She studied medicine in Calcutta Medical College with a government scholarship for women students. She graduated a **gynaecologist** and had a successful private practice until 1888 when she was appointed to Lady Dufferin Women's Hospital. Unsurprisingly, Ganguly **faced criticism and censure** for her choices from orthodox sections of society and even from teaching staff.

She became the **first woman to find a place on the dais at an Indian National Congress session**; she also occupied several other important positions, including becoming the first chair of the Transvaal Indian Association, formed in South Africa by Mahatma Gandhi to protest against anti-Indian legislation. **Kadambini Ganguly also drew the awe and attention of Florence Nightingale and Annie Besant.**

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