



Phoebe Apperson Hearst was an American philanthropist, feminist and suffragist. She was wife of George Hearst and the mother of William Randolph Hearst.

Soon after marrying George Hearst, the couple left Missouri and moved to San Francisco, where Phoebe gave birth to their only child, William Randolph Hearst. Phoebe's husband was a successful miner and later became a U.S. senator. This left Phoebe often alone while George was away and she became close to her son and they shared many similar interests, including art and design. Upon Phoebe's death in 1919, William inherited a \$10 million fortune.

In the 1880s, Phoebe became a major benefactor and director of the Golden Gate Kindergarten Association and the first president of the Century Club of California. In 1902, Hearst funded the construction of a building to provide teacher training and to house kindergarten classes and Association offices. The Golden Gate Kindergarten Association had 26 schools at the time of the San Francisco earthquake in 1906.

Mrs. Hearst was a major benefactor of the University of California in Berkeley and, as its first woman regent, served on their board from 1897 until her death. That year, she contributed to the establishment of the National Congress of Mothers, which eventually became the National Parent-Teacher Association.

In 1901, she founded the University of California Museum of Anthropology (renamed in 1992 as the Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology). The original museum collection comprised 230,000 objects representing cultures and civilizations throughout history.

Hearst chose a "different way" than other radical feminists. While she believed in women having financial freedom and supported women's suffrage, she did not strongly believe in women gaining political power. She thought women should have the right to vote in order "to protect homes and children." In 1895, when the Women's Congress resolved for the passage of a federal amendment, Hearst supported it, but distantly. She officially declared herself in favor of suffrage in 1911, saying it would enable "the betterment of conditions affecting children and women particularly."

She died at her home in Pleasanton, California, on April 13, 1919, at age 76 -- during the 1918-1919 worldwide influenza epidemic. She is buried at Cypress Lawn Memorial Park in Colma, California.