

# **Celebrating Diversity in the Women's Suffrage Movement**

Humanities and Social Sciences

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# Abstract and Outcomes

As we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment this year, let us take a moment to explore the diversity within the women's suffrage movement. The topics explored in this panel are as follows: historical overview of the movement, lesser-known suffragettes from the National Women's Party, male suffrage allies with a spotlight on Frederick Douglass, National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage (NAOWS), and federal and state voting legislation and laws prior to the passage of the 19th Amendment. These diverse suffragist topics complicate the "typical notion" found in U.S. history books that maximize the main actors; without showcasing the fascinating diversity of the multi-fabricated social movement. Finally, our panelists and audience will have an open discussion on the importance of highlighting the centennial anniversary.

1. Explore the diversity within the women's suffrage movement.
2. Identify historical individuals including those who opposed it, laws, and organizations of the women's suffrage movement period.
3. Discuss the importance of celebrating the 19th Amendment Centennial Anniversary.

## Women's Rights Convention.

A Convention to discuss the social, civil and religious condition and rights of Woman, will be held in the Wesleyan Chapel, at Seneca Falls, N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday the 19th and 20th of July current, commencing at 10 o'clock A. M.

• During the first day, the meeting will be exclusively for Women, which all are earnestly invited to attend. The public generally are invited to be present on the second day, when LUCRETIA MOTT, of Philadelphia, and others both ladies and gentlemen, will address the Convention.

In 1848 a Women's Rights Convention held in the small community of Seneca Falls, NY essentially launched the suffrage movement. Serving as a catalyst, Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and other leaders within the movement, began a tireless campaign to education the public of the issue of women's suffrage. It took nearly 72 years to reach their goal of universal suffrage for women, culminating with the passage of the 19th amendment in 1920.

## Overview and Background

# **Militancy & strife in the suffrage movement (1890 – 1920)**

**Jennifer Harrison**

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# Strife within the movement

- **American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA) (1869 - 1890)**
  - *Founded by Lucy Stone and Julia Ward Howe, with the support of Henry Ward Beecher*
- **National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA) (1869 – 1890)**
  - *Founded by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony*
- Both AWSA and NWSA would form as a result of disagreements over state vs. federal rights.
  - **NWSA** preferred enfranchising women via a federal constitutional amendment
  - **AWSA** felt enfranchisement state-by-state would be more effective

# Strife within the movement: 1890 - 1920

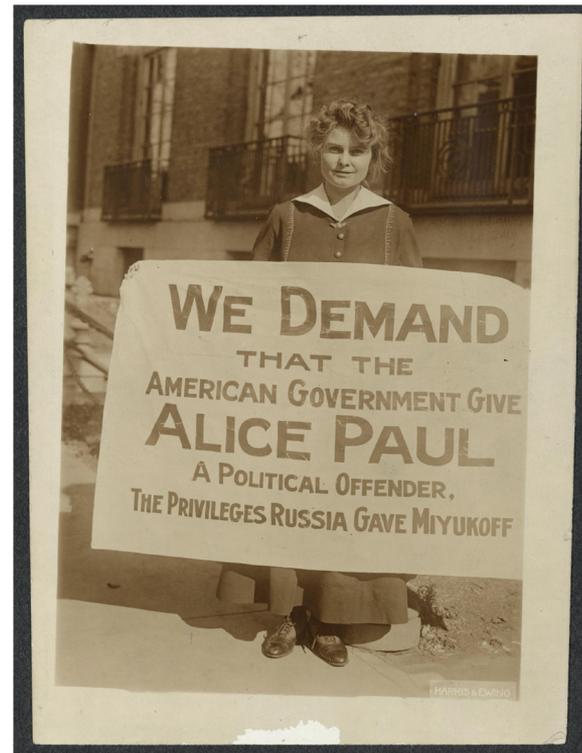
- **National American Woman's Suffrage Association (NAWSA) (1890 – 1920)**
  - Becomes the League of Women Voters in 1920
  - Leaders: Carrie Chapman Catt, Frances Willard, etc.
  - More conservative, state-by-state, approach
- **National Woman's Party (NWP) (1914 / 1916 – present)**
  - Initially forms in 1914 as the Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage; renamed as NWP in 1916
  - Promote Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) beginning in 1923
  - Leaders: Alice Paul, Doris Stevens, Lucy Burns
  - More militant / aggressive approach

# The last two decades: Societal expectations & militancy

- The New Woman ideology
- Terminology change from “woman suffrage” to “votes for women”
- Inclusion of more wealthy and lower class women, as well as more women of color

Photo: Lucy Branham, Oct / Nov 1917 (one of the women sentenced to 60 days in Occoquan (VA) Workhouse)

Retrieved from <https://www.loc.gov/item/mnwp000009/>



# The last decade of the movement



Image retrieved from <https://www.loc.gov/item/mnwp000231>

- **More militant in nature**
  - Efforts often initiated by suffragists such as Alice Paul and Lucy Burns
- **The Silent Sentinels**
  - White House picketing efforts begin in January 1917
- **Occoquan Workhouse: Night of Terror**
  - November 14, 1917 abuse and beatings

# March 1913: Suffrage parade in Washington, DC



Image retrieved from <https://www.nps.gov/bepa/learn/womens-suffrage>

# March 1913: Suffrage parade in Washington, DC



Inez Milholland, 1913 – white attire, crown, and white horse  
Photo retrieved from: <https://www.loc.gov/item/mnwp000008/>



# Occoquan Workhouse

**Lucy Burns**, November 1917 photo

- Key organizer of the 1913 march
- Generally led majority of picket demonstrations
- Also served the most time in jail, including 4 prison “terms” in England



- 1917 arrests for picketing: (1) June 1917: sentence of 3 days; (2) September: sentence of 60 days; (3) arrested 10 November: sentence of 6 months
- 1919: January – arrested at the watchfire demonstrations: sentence: one 3 day and two 5 day sentences.

# Watchfires of Freedom demonstrations

January 1919 (beginning date)

- NWP members gathered outside the White House with copies of President Wilson's speeches (topics covering democracy)
- Burned speeches in urns / fire pits outside the White House – and other public buildings in DC.
- Typically carried banners
- Women often arrested



# *Anti-Suffrage Movement*

*Vote No on Women's Suffrage  
Dissenting Voices Across the States*

Michele Riley  
Department Chair  
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# *Why Were Women active in the Anti- Suffrage Movement?*

What were their main reasons  
for opposing suffrage for  
women?

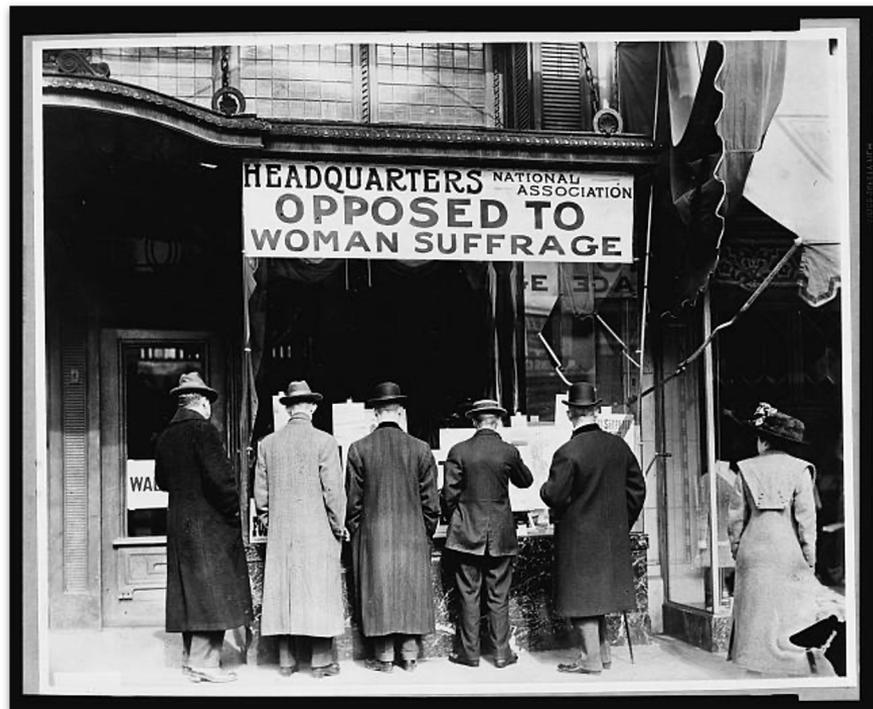


(Source: Gustin,  
E.W. ca. 1909)

# *New York - No Votes for Women's Epicenter*



(Source: New York Times, May 31, 1913, p. 6)

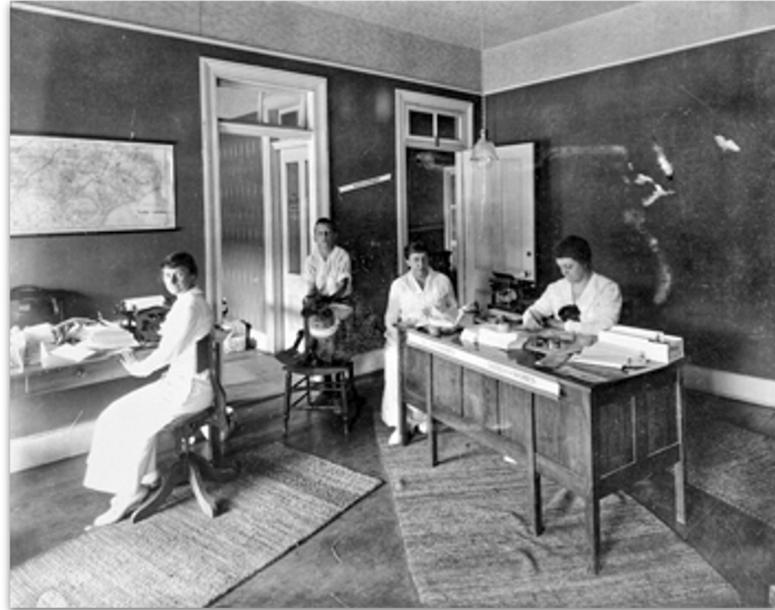


(Source: Library of Congress)

# *North Carolina - Southern State Divided*



(Source: North Carolina Digital Collections)



(Source: North Carolina Office of Archives and History)

# Tennessee - Showdown in Nashville

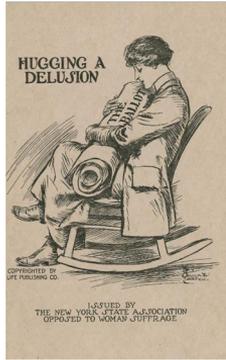


(Source: Tennessee Virtual Archive)



(Source: Tennessee Virtual Archive)

# Massachusetts - Anti-Suffrage Marketing Headquarters



**MR. VOTER!**

**REMEMBER** That woman suffrage has produced no reform in social conditions; no laws to regulate woman or child labor; no improved corporation legislation; no prison reforms; no health reforms; no purification in politics; no increase in wages in any of the states that have granted it that has not been equalled or surpassed in MAN SUFFRAGE States.

**REMEMBER** That woman suffrage is only an experiment and we cannot afford to undertake such an experiment under present conditions.

**REMEMBER** That woman suffrage means suffrage for every woman and not only for your own female relatives, friends and acquaintances.

**REMEMBER** That the average woman is no better than the average man.

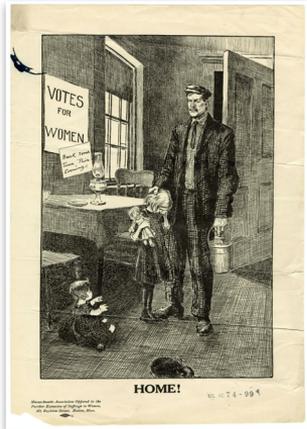
**REMEMBER** That every Socialist and every Feminist is a Woman Suffragist, and

**REMEMBER** That the great majority of women do not want the ballot thrust upon them by the fanatical minority!

**Vote AGAINST Woman Suffrage**

WOMEN'S ANTI-SUFFRAGE ASSOCIATION OF MASSACHUSETTS  
687 Boylston Street, Boston.  
Mrs. John Halch, President. Mrs. Charles P. Strong, Secretary.

**VOTE  
NO  
ON  
Woman Suffrage  
NOV. 7  
AND PROTECT  
Your wives, mothers and sisters opposed to votes for women**



(Source: Massachusetts Historical Society)

# *Rallying the Troops in DC, 1920*



(Source: Library of  
Congress, Carrie  
Chapman Catt  
papers)

# Frederick Douglass and Women's Suffrage

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# Douglass Background

Escape from Slavery

Anti-Slavery advocate and orator

*North Star* masthead: “Right is of No Color and No Sex.”

# Frederick Douglass at Seneca Falls

Resolution No. 9: “Resolved, that it is the duty of the women of this country to secure to themselves their sacred right to the elective franchise.”

Opposition from attendees

Douglass speech in favor

# After Seneca Falls

Douglass editorial in the *North Star* (July 28, 1848): “We are free to say that in respect to political rights, we hold woman to be justly entitled to all we claim for man. We go farther, and express our conviction that all political rights which it is expedient for man to exercise, it is equally so for woman.”

Rochester Conference (August 2, 1848)

# Douglass vs. Anthony and Stanton

American Equal Rights Association

The debate over the wording of the 15th Amendment: Who gets the vote first?

Criticism from Douglass

Future relationships with Anthony and Stanton

# Douglass Continues Support

Proposed Sixteenth Amendment

Conventions and Conferences

1888 International Women's Convention: “There are few facts in my humble history to which I look back with more satisfaction than to the fact, recorded in the history of the woman-suffrage movement, that I was sufficiently enlightened at that early day, and when only a few years from slavery, to support your resolution for woman suffrage. I have done very little in this world in which to glory except this one act—and I certainly glory in that. When I ran away from slavery, it was for myself; when I advocated emancipation, it was for my people; but when I stood up for the rights of woman, self was out of the question, and I found a little nobility in the act.”

# Final Years

Autobiography: “In a word, I have never yet been able to find one consideration, one argument, or suggestion in favor of man’s right to participate in civil government which did not equally apply to the right of woman.”

Professor David Blight: A “women’s rights man.”

# The U.S. Constitution, Federalism, and Voting Laws Prior to the 19th Amendment

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*“I long to hear that you have declared an independancy—and by the way in the new Code of Laws which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make I desire you would Remember the Ladies, and be more generous and favourable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of the Husbands. Remember all Men would be tyrants if they could. If perticular care and attention is not paid to the Laidies we are determined to foment a Rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any Laws in which we have no voice, or Representation. That your Sex are Naturally Tyrannical is a Truth so thoroughly established as to admit of no dispute. . . . Why then, not put it out of the power of the vicious and the Lawless to use us with cruelty and indignity with impunity.”*

Abigail Adam’s letter to her husband, John Adams, 1776

# U.S. Constitution, 1787

## Article I, Section 1: (Legislative Branch)

All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

## Article I, Section 2: (The House)

The House of Representatives shall be composed of **Members** chosen every second Year by the **People** of the several States, and the Electors in each State shall have the Qualifications requisite for Electors of the most numerous Branch of the State Legislature.

No **Person** shall be a Representative who shall not have attained to the Age of twenty five Years, and been seven Years a **Citizen** of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an **Inhabitant** of that State in which he shall be chosen.

*Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective Numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free **Persons**, including those bound to Service for a Term of Years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three fifths of all other **Persons**.*

# U.S. Constitution, 1787

## Article I, Section 3, Clause 3: (The Senate)

No **Person** shall be a Senator who shall not have attained to the Age of thirty Years, and been nine Years a **Citizen** of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an **Inhabitant** of that State for which **he** shall be chosen.

## Article I, Section 4: (Election Clause)

The Times, Places and Manner of holding Elections for Senators and Representatives, shall be prescribed in each State by the Legislature thereof; but the Congress may at any time by Law make or alter such Regulations, except as to the Places of choosing Senators.” (U.S. Constitution, Article I, Section 4)

# U.S. Constitution, 1787

## Article II, Section 1: (The Executive Branch)

The executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. **He** shall hold his Office during the Term of four Years, and, together with the Vice President, chosen for the same Term, be elected, as follows

Each State shall appoint, in such Manner as the Legislature thereof may direct, a Number of Electors, equal to the whole Number of Senators and Representatives to which the State may be entitled in the Congress: but no Senator or Representative, or **Person** holding an Office of Trust or Profit under the United States, shall be appointed an Elector.

# U.S. Constitution, 1787

## Article IV, Section 2:

The **Citizens** of each State shall be entitled to all Privileges and Immunities of Citizens in the several States.

A **Person** charged in any State with Treason, Felony, or other Crime, who shall flee from Justice, and be found in another State, shall on Demand of the executive Authority of the State from which **he** fled, be delivered up, to be removed to the State having Jurisdiction of the Crime.

*No **Person** held to Service or Labour in one State, under the Laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in Consequence of any Law or Regulation therein, be discharged from such Service or Labour, but shall be delivered up on Claim of the Party to whom such Service or Labour may be due.*

# U.S. Constitution, 1789

## 5th Amendment:

No **person** shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any **person** be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against **himself**, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

## 6th Amendment:

In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against **him**; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the Assistance of Counsel for his defence.

## Northwest Ordinance, 1790

Northwest Ordinance, Section 9:

So soon as there shall be five thousand free **male** inhabitants of full age in the district, upon giving proof thereof to the governor, they shall receive authority, with time and place, to elect a representative from their counties or townships to represent them in the general assembly: Provided, That, for every five hundred free **male** inhabitants, there shall be one representative, and so on progressively with the number of free **male** inhabitants shall the right of representation increase, until the number of representatives shall amount to twenty five; after which, the number and proportion of representatives shall be regulated by the legislature: Provided, That no person be eligible or qualified to act as a representative unless he shall have been a citizen of one of the United States three years, and be a resident in the district, or unless he shall have resided in the district three years; and, in either case, shall likewise hold in his own right, in fee simple, two hundred acres of land within the same; Provided, also, That a freehold in fifty acres of land in the district, having been a citizen of one of the states, and being resident in the district, or the like freehold and two years residence in the district, shall be necessary to qualify a **man as an elector of a representative**.

# New Jersey

## New Jersey Constitution, 1776

- **[A]**ll inhabitants of this Colony, of full age, who are worth fifty pounds proclamation money, clear estate in the same, and have resided within the county in which they claim a vote for twelve months immediately preceding the election, shall be entitled to vote for Representatives in Council and Assembly; and also for all other public officers, that shall be elected by the people of the county at large.

## New Jersey Constitution, 1790

- ...all **free Inhabitants** of this State of full Age, and who are worth Fifty Pounds Proclamation Money clear Estate in the same, and have resided with the County . . . for twelve Monthsll and adds an innovation, that —no Person may vote in a county other than that —in which **he or she doth** actually reside.

## New Jersey Constitution, 1807

- “...free, white, **male** citizens”

# 13th Amendment

## **Section 1:**

Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

## **Section 2:**

Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

# 14th Amendment

## Section 1:

All **persons** born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside. No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any **person** of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

## Section 2:

Representatives shall be apportioned among the several states according to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each state, excluding Indians not taxed. But when the right to vote at any election for the choice of electors for President and Vice President of the United States, Representatives in Congress, the executive and judicial officers of a state, or the members of the legislature thereof, is denied to any of the **male** inhabitants of such state, **being twenty-one years of age**, and citizens of the United States, or in any way abridged, except for participation in rebellion, or other crime, the basis of representation therein shall be reduced in the proportion which the number of such male citizens shall bear to the whole number of **male** citizens twenty-one years of age in such state.

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