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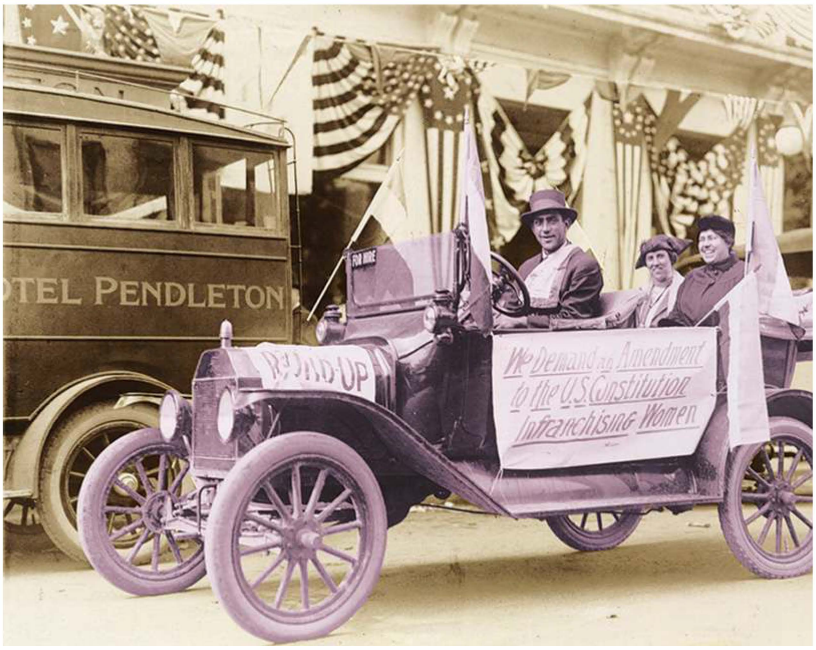
Exhibit Home

Overview

Welcome to ***On Her Own Wings: Oregon Women and the Struggle for Suffrage*** — an exhibit that explores the history of voting rights in Oregon and the United States. The exhibit covers the early republic to the present, but its focus is on the tumultuous opening of the 1900s. Beginning decades earlier, Oregon suffragists battled for a woman's right to vote. They fought until their efforts were recognized in the 1912 state suffrage proclamation and the ratification of the 19th Amendment in 1920. Still, it would be years before Native American and Asian American women were granted the right to vote. The exhibit showcases people, events, and symbolism crucial to this cause, as well as the entrenched powers acting to prevent access to the vote.



First in 1912, and then in 1916, suffragists stopped in Pendleton during the Pendleton Round-Up rodeo and gave rousing speeches from automobiles. To raise support for a national amendment, National Women's Party activists, Margaret Whittemore and Mary Fendall held rallies at the Pendleton Round-Up grounds in 1916. (Courtesy of Library of Congress)

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Introduction

Welcome to *On Her Own Wings: Oregon Women and the Struggle for Suffrage*, a web exhibit celebrating the centennial of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution affirming a woman's right to vote. The exhibit tells the story of the struggle for suffrage—both in Oregon and across the nation. Illustrated with historic photos, texts, contemporary analyses, and documents, this exhibit guides visitors through the events, context, organizations, and prominent suffragists of the era.

Party members picket at the Republican convention in Chicago in June 1920. The woman on the far right is Betty Gram. (Courtesy of Library of Congress)

On Her Own Wings focuses around 25 women's rights advocates who operated in the heyday of this early civil rights movement both nationally and in Oregon. Famous figures like Susan B. Anthony and local suffragist Abigail Scott Duniway feature alongside less-known Oregon activists like Beatrice Cannady, Dr. Marie Equi, and Hattie Redmond. Organized alphabetically, the biographical sketches in the exhibit examine the lives and ideals of these suffragists, as well as the people for whom they advocated.

It can be hard to imagine a United States without women voters, and *On Her Own Wings* offers insight into the segregated society these suffragists aimed to change. The exhibit presents the historic arguments for and against woman suffrage in Oregon, as well as social movements like progressivism and prohibition that influenced those views. Racial inequality defined many aspects of American life in this era, and the exhibit also explores some of the extraordinary barriers to voting overcome by women of color in the United States.

Activists do not operate alone, and *On Her Own Wings* details over a dozen prominent woman suffrage groups that took part in the struggle. Some have a history stretching back to the end of the Civil War and many are still active to this day. Although they vary widely in size, scope, and tactics, all believed that women suffered unjustly and that action must be taken.

The exhibit showcases those actions through some of the most famous developments during the struggle for suffrage. From the Seneca Falls Convention of 1848 to the 19th amendment's ratification in 1920,

Yellow roses, as well as sunflowers, symbolized the suffrage movement. (Oregon State Archives Image)

visitors can see how public sentiment toward woman suffrage changed over time. Finally, *On Her Own Wings* explores how through undaunted agitation, the women of Oregon used the state's unique initiative and referendum voting system to win suffrage in 1912, nearly a decade before the constitutional amendment, and laying the foundation for universal woman suffrage.

History and Context

The history of the struggle for woman suffrage in the United States is one of slowly overcoming powerful forces that protected male privilege for centuries in nearly every aspect of life—politics, legal affairs, economics, and more. The path was filled with obstacles and there were numerous dead-ends, particularly for women of color. But suffrage leaders were nothing if not persistent. They poured countless hours into organizing, writing, lecturing, marching, and other activities to turn public opinion in their favor. These pages explore the factors and challenges related to winning the right to vote.

Asian American Suffrage

Latinx Suffrage

Jewish American Woman Suffrage

African American Woman's Club Movement

Mobilizing the African American Community

Indigenous Suffrage and Access

Indigenous Voting Rights in Oregon

Hierarchy and Coverture

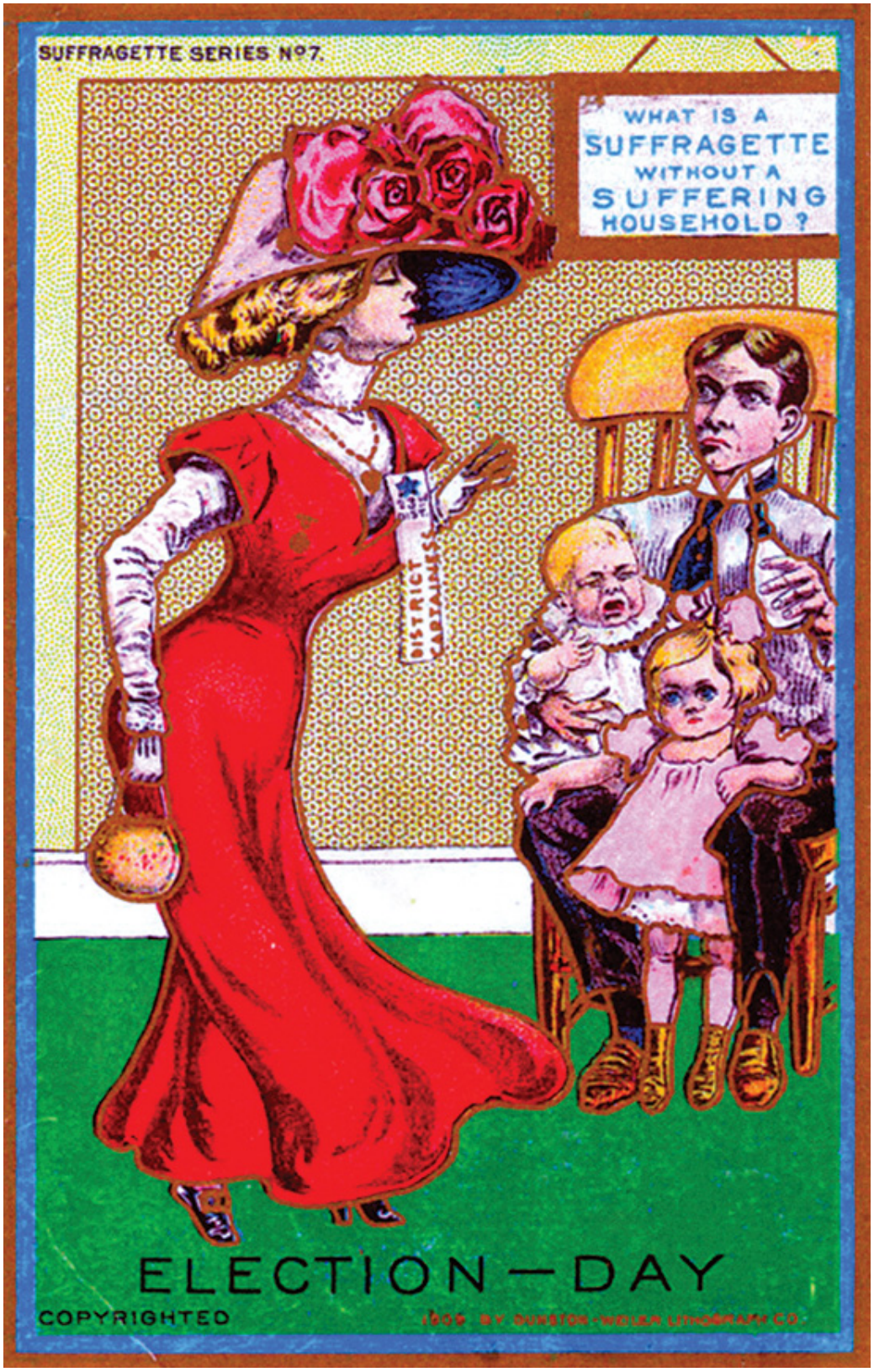
Mass Media and the Colors of the Cause

Coalitions and Related Movements

Oregon Initiative and Referendum System

Arguments in 1912 For and Against Woman Suffrage

Literacy Test as Described in 1930 Oregon Code



A postcard lampoons the women's movement by portraying a woman seemingly more interested in voting than in looking after the wellbeing of her family. Opposition to woman suffrage was fierce among traditional groups. Many feared that voting would distract women from their "domestic duties" or create family dissension. Others were concerned that women were not capable of voting responsibly or would be corrupted by the process. Some worried that women would form a solid party and outvote men. And, many men—raised and accustomed to dictating events in the political sphere—simply saw no reason to give up any power to women without a fight. (Courtesy of Oregon Historical Society)

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Asian American Suffrage

By the late 19th century, western states like Oregon had many residents from the Philippines, Korea, Japan, China, and other Asian nations. For much of American history, however, Asian immigrants and their descendants were denied citizenship and voting rights by law. Fears rooted in racist beliefs among white Americans that immigrants from Asia would undermine the economy and threaten racial homogeny culminated in the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act and 1924 Immigration Act. These laws limited entry of nearly everyone from Asia into the U.S. and banned their naturalization.

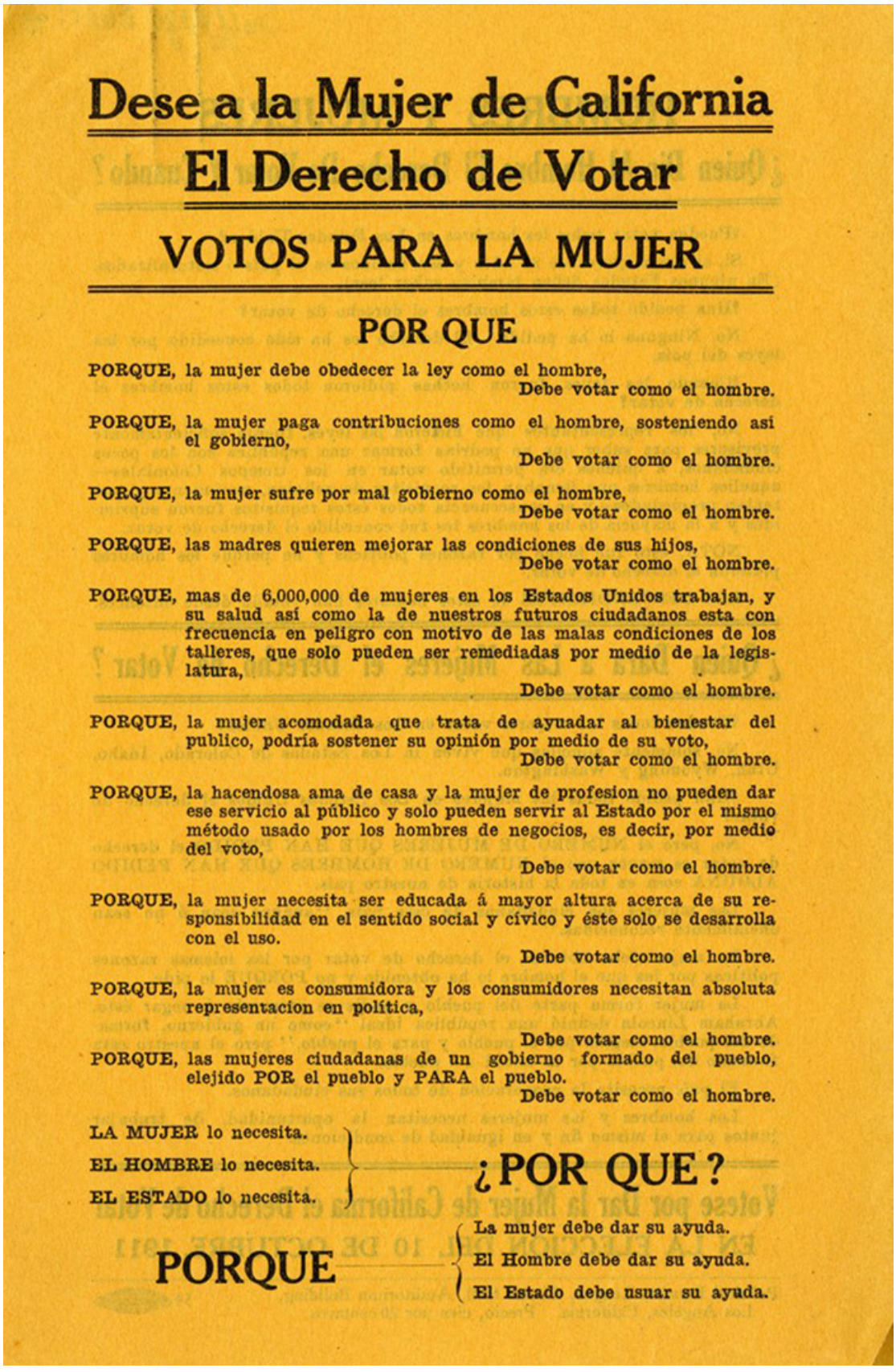
The 14th and 15th Amendments opened voting rights to all native-born American men regardless of race. Asian American communities were still restricted from suffrage through literacy tests, property restrictions, and voter intimidation. It was not until 1943 and the passage of the Magnuson Act that Chinese immigrants could begin naturalizing as U.S. citizens. Truly broad access to American citizenship and voting rights was not available to Asians and Asian Americans until the Immigration and Nationality Acts of 1952 and 1965. These acts removed race as a barrier to immigration and citizenship, effectively ending two centuries of restrictions and legal disenfranchisement.

Komako Kimura, a prominent Japanese suffragist, marches in New York on October 23, 1917. (Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons)

Latinx Suffrage

Though long discriminated against at the local level, the U.S. Latinx community has an unusual history of enfranchisement by the federal government. The 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which ended the Mexican-American War, granted citizenship to those Mexicans living in regions ceded to the U.S. However, a 1790 immigration law declared that only “free white” people could become citizens. Federally, this meant that Latinx people were legally “white” because they were naturalized, not the other way around like other immigrants at the time. However, many white Americans still considered people from Latin America their social inferiors. Thus, Latinx people in the U.S. were reluctantly granted citizenship but often forced into segregated communities, denied economic opportunities or voting rights, and faced violent reprisals for challenging Euro American hegemony.

The Latinx community in the U.S. began fighting for change after World War II and during the civil rights era, most vocally in Texas and California. Following the 1965 Voting Rights Act and growth of the Chicano Movement in the 1960s and 70s, Latinx Americans have been increasingly successful in ending discriminatory restrictions on their voting rights. Though significant barriers to voting still exist, the Latinx community represents a growing body of voters increasingly courted by politicians on both sides of the aisle.



Dese a la Mujer de California
El Derecho de Votar
VOTOS PARA LA MUJER

POR QUE

PORQUE, la mujer debe obedecer la ley como el hombre,
Debe votar como el hombre.

PORQUE, la mujer paga contribuciones como el hombre, sosteniendo así el gobierno,
Debe votar como el hombre.

PORQUE, la mujer sufre por mal gobierno como el hombre,
Debe votar como el hombre.

PORQUE, las madres quieren mejorar las condiciones de sus hijos,
Debe votar como el hombre.

PORQUE, mas de 6,000,000 de mujeres en los Estados Unidos trabajan, y su salud así como la de nuestros futuros ciudadanos esta con frecuencia en peligro con motivo de las malas condiciones de los talleres, que solo pueden ser remediadas por medio de la legislatura,
Debe votar como el hombre.

PORQUE, la mujer acomodada que trata de ayuadar al bienestar del publico, podría sostener su opinión por medio de su voto,
Debe votar como el hombre.

PORQUE, la hacendosa ama de casa y la mujer de profesion no pueden dar ese servicio al público y solo pueden servir al Estado por el mismo método usado por los hombres de negocios, es decir, por medio del voto,
Debe votar como el hombre.

PORQUE, la mujer necesita ser educada á mayor altura acerca de su responsibilidad en el sentido social y cívico y éste solo se desarrolla con el uso.
Debe votar como el hombre.

PORQUE, la mujer es consumidora y los consumidores necesitan absoluta representacion en política,
Debe votar como el hombre.

PORQUE, las mujeres ciudadanas de un gobierno formado del pueblo, elejido POR el pueblo y PARA el pueblo.
Debe votar como el hombre.

LA MUJER lo necesita.
EL HOMBRE lo necesita.
EL ESTADO lo necesita.
} **¿POR QUE?**

PORQUE {
La mujer debe dar su ayuda.
El Hombre debe dar su ayuda.
El Estado debe usuar su ayuda.

This pamphlet, by the Los Angeles Political Equality League, makes the case for woman suffrage in Spanish. In the successful 1911 California campaign, suffrage organizations, which were often led by and centered on the concerns of Anglo women, made efforts to gain the support of the Latinx community. (Courtesy of Women's Suffrage and Equal Rights Collection, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, Claremont, CA)

Jewish American Woman Suffrage

Jewish American men have long possessed the right to vote and hold office in the U.S. Women in the Jewish community, however, were disenfranchised the same as other American women before the 19th Amendment. By the 1900s there was strong support for woman suffrage among the national Jewish community and locally in Oregon among Portland's historically Jewish neighborhoods. There were detractors as well, as many Jewish men feared that a vote for women would mean an end to the sale of liquor and the shuttering of businesses that relied on alcohol.

Undeterred, many Jewish women pushed on in the struggle for suffrage, working with national groups like the National Council of Jewish Women while those in Oregon also worked with the Portland Equal Suffrage League. Many Jewish communities were tight-knit, and women had few obstacles spreading the message of suffrage among one another. Indeed, Jewish women in Portland were instrumental in convincing anti-suffragist women to stand up for their own voting rights. Though they could not yet vote, Jewish American women made up a unified bloc dedicated to raising awareness and providing volunteer activism and financial support for the suffrage movement.

Many in the woman suffrage movement used the sunflower to symbolize their efforts. (Oregon Scenic Images collection)

African American Woman's Club Movement

In the early 20th century, black women were excluded from many national suffrage organizations like the National American Woman Suffrage Association. Instead, they used social clubs as a vehicle to accomplish their goals of change and reform. These clubs became the backbone of the woman suffrage movement in the African American community. Hundreds of clubs mobilized for the vote between 1900 and 1920. Most clubs were organized from the top down, with leadership directing club strategy. Although some of the clubs represented significant numbers of working-class women, many club leaders were educated members of the middle-class.

Some clubs were independent and locally focused – formed in churches or neighborhoods to aid the community. Others were affiliated with national organizations such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Baptist Women's Auxiliary, and the National Association of Colored Women. A few belonged to secret societies such as sororities of college women and their alumnae or women's auxiliaries of Masonic orders. In addition, there were a small number of organized trade union women and black women's suffrage clubs.

In Chicago, Ida B. Wells' Alpha Suffrage Club published a newsletter, the Alpha Suffrage Record, which sought to educate African American residents about candidates and local issues that would appear on the ballot. Over 60 members of the club traveled to Washington D.C. and marched in the 1913 suffrage parade in front of the White House.

Because woman suffrage organizations generally did not welcome black women as members, they formed their own groups. Begun in 1899, this club was an affiliate of the National Association of Colored Women. It was named for the first African American poet to be published: Phyllis Wheatley Club, Buffalo, New York. (**Courtesy of Library of Congress (https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/94513827/)**)

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Mobilizing the African American Community

In the early years of the woman suffrage movement, African American women played a major role in campaigning for the vote. By 1920, most Black women lived in states were women lacked any voting rights. In an effort to redress this, African American women's clubs sought strategies for gaining their enfranchisement. As the Black women's club movement developed nationwide, a dialogue opened about common problems like intemperance, discrimination against African American women, and the local disenfranchisement of Black men at the polls.

As the movement picked up steam, African American women suffragists moved away from the abstract 19th–century argument that suffrage was a human right that all people deserved. They instead focused on what they perceived as the real issue – that African American women needed suffrage more than white women, because they were oppressed on the grounds of both sex and race.

The struggle for suffrage by African American women went beyond winning the vote and extended to using that vote as a tool on behalf of their community. Black suffragists believed the vote would allow them to advocate for better working conditions, higher wages, and greater opportunities in business. These women also believed they could regulate conditions for moral and sanitary reform in their communities better than outsiders. With political power, they argued, African American women could work to end racial discrimination, lynching, and legal injustice.

Nine African–American women pose with Nannie Burroughs holding a banner reading, "Banner State Woman's National Baptist Convention" ca. 1910. (Courtesy of Library of Congress (https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/93505051/))

Black women suffragists hold a sign reading "Head-Quarters for Colored Women Voters," in Georgia, ca. 1910. (Courtesy of New York Public Library)

Indigenous Suffrage and Access

Through much of U.S. history, people born to tribes and indigenous nations inside the borders of the United States were considered foreign nationals. Even after the passage of the 14th Amendment, most Native Americans were denied citizenship and voting rights. According to U.S. law, all foreigners needed to go through a naturalization process in order to become American citizens. For most of American history this meant that Native Americans who wished to vote needed to abandon their traditional cultures and assimilate into white society.

Women pose for a photo at Pala Mission in 1939. Native American women did not become U.S. citizens until 1924. (**Courtesy of Library of Congress (https://www.loc.gov/item/2017701226/)**)

Culturally diverse and geographically isolated, by 1900 little consensus existed among the Native American population as to whether U.S. citizenship had value. There was a deep distrust of the federal government and the states. The United States had consistently broken treaties with Native Americans, dislocated indigenous people from their land, and sanctioned the eradication of tribes and customs for generations.

Some native groups pushed for assimilation to prove their equality in the face of this discrimination, while others argued for separation to better preserve their culture. Many native women were particularly disinterested at the prospect of gaining citizenship. Depending on their tribe or nation, some of these women already had the power to vote, hold property, divorce their partner, and retain legal rights over children. Gaining U.S. citizenship could endanger their traditional powers, and force Native American women into legal dependency on men.

The situation changed after World War I, when native men who received honorable discharges from the Army also gained U.S. citizenship. Ratification of the 19th Amendment in 1920 eased the concerns of native women that they would retain rights to property and suffrage. Finally, in 1924, the Indian Citizenship Act granted citizenship to "all non-citizen Indians born within the territorial limits of the United States." Prior to its passage, though, nearly two-thirds of Native Americans in the U.S. were already citizens by marriage, military service, or forced assimilation.

Issues of Indigenous Access

Though all Native Americans in the U.S. are citizens now, with some even holding dual citizenship, there is still an ongoing struggle to secure voting rights for indigenous people. Disenfranchisement began in 1924, with states implementing poll taxes, literacy tests, and voter intimidation. The 1965 Voting Rights Act dealt with some of these issues, particularly for older Native Americans who were more fluent in their traditional languages than English.

As the courts have slowly dismantled the Voting Rights Act, many indigenous people in 2020 have less voter access than they did just a few decades ago. Native communities often suffer from stringent voter ID laws which restrict access to the ballot box. There also remains a scarcity of polling stations in – or even close to – the western reservations which nearly a million Native Americans call home.

President Lyndon B. Johnson [left] and civil rights leader Martin Luther King [right] at the signing of the Voting Rights Act in 1965. (By Yoichi Okamoto; Courtesy of Lyndon Baines Johnson Library and Museum)

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Indigenous Voting Rights in Oregon

Contrary to the national standards, Oregon had a history of opening the polls to local indigenous peoples well before the 1924 Indian Citizenship Act. Some newspaper accounts of voting in 1896 involve a controversy over voting irregularities on the Siletz Reservation – the votes of 125 residents resulted in Thomas Tongue winning Oregon's 1st District Congressional seat. In addition, a 1906 newspaper references an opinion by Oregon Attorney General Andrew Crawford for the Indian Agent on the Klamath Reservation stating that individuals with allotments would be considered eligible to vote.

The Nixyaawii Governance Center at Whitehorse on the Umatilla Indian Reservation. (Oregon State Archives Image)

Umatilla County Election registers in the Oregon State Archives holdings show names that correspond with people who appear on the Umatilla Reservation census rolls. Some are descendants of former Hudson Bay employees who may have qualified as voters due to a certain percentage of "white" blood. Reports from Umatilla County also indicate that voting precincts were located on the reservation. A comparison of the names from some Klamath County voter registers and the 1900 and 1920 census records indicate that the individuals on the registers are listed in the census as being able to read and write English. Because of this, it is difficult to determine if the advent of Oregon's literacy requirement in 1924 significantly affected voting among Oregon's indigenous population.

Hierarchy and Coverture

Resistance to the notion of woman suffrage was strong in the U.S., where arguments against opening the ballot box to women were often based on notions of hierarchy. Primarily that suffrage would upset the established social order that men – and many women – relied on.

One argument revolved around divinely ordained or pseudo-scientifically assumed separate spheres for the sexes. Many Americans held to the cult of domesticity, that a woman's place was in the home with children. Some men even feared that by engaging in business or politics wives would become masculinized – and thereby feminize their husbands.

The argument that women were too emotional or frail to uphold their duty to vote circulated widely, as did the notion that women would lose the "privileges" of not serving in juries and not fighting in wars. Some religious and progressive suffragists believed that women were spiritually purer than men and would be sullied by the corrupting nature of politics. Indeed, many anti-suffragists claimed that the women who pushed for voting rights were somehow morally deficient.

Race and ableism were also factors in the propaganda of anti-suffrage, especially in the south. Opening the vote to women meant opening it for immigrants and women of color, which threatened the hegemony of Protestant white supremacy. Others held that including women in the voting pool would not improve the quality of the vote. These anti-suffragists believed that states should restrict the suffrage of those deemed "unfit" such as felons, individuals with intellectual disabilities, and women.

Coverture

Many notions of the anti-suffrage establishment in America stemmed from the colonial English system of coverture – whereby husband and wife are legally considered the same person. When women married, they fell under the "coverage" of their husbands, subsuming their rights and identity in the process. Married women were often unable to own property, enter into contracts, earn a salary, or receive an education without her husband's permission. Because of coverture, many believed that married women had no need to vote because their husbands already could.

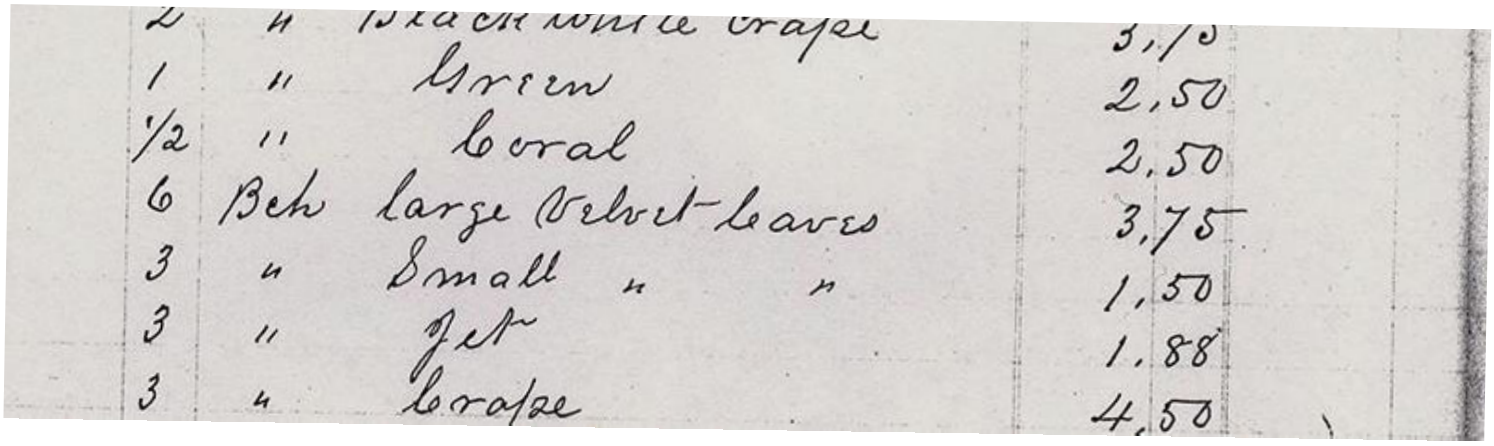
In the mid-19th century, the position of wives being akin to slavery gained popular opinion, and by the end of the Civil War 29 states challenged coverture with married women's property acts. These usually passed in three phases: first allowing married women to own property, then to keep their own income, and finally to engage in business. Oregon passed its first women's property act in 1878, and though these laws dismantled coverture, they did so in a piecemeal fashion. Laws denying women access to property remained in some states until the 1970s, and as of 2020 the Equal Rights Amendment, which would ensure equality of rights under the law regardless of sex, remains unratified.

Resistance to woman suffrage was strong. This photo shows men surveying material posted in the window of the National Anti-Suffrage Association headquarters, ca. 1911. A curious woman looks on from behind. (Courtesy of Library of Congress (https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/97500067/)

Declaration of Helen Brentano to Hold Separate property

I. Helen. Brentano make oath that that the following list of Personal property belongs to me by virtue of a purchase made with my own money acquired by me by my own labor and that I intend to hold the same separate & apart from the property of My husband Mat. A. Brentano and to engage in the business of buying and Selling Millinery on My own account and independant of My said husband, to wit,

6	Ag Flowers	$8.00
9	Bch "	11.25
6	fine	15.00
9	"	20.00
12	"	20.00
10	"	18.00
14	"	14.00
1	Doz Arrican Roses	1.75
1	" " "	2.00
1	" White "	6.00
½	" " "	1.25
2	Pink White Roses	2.00
1	Grop Daisies	3 00
1	" Frosted Birds	2.50
1	" Small "	1.50
¼	" Large "	1.50
1	" Scarlet Velvet-leaves	4.00



A page from an 1859-1902 Jackson County Register of Married Women's Property itemizes a woman's property separate from that of the husband. (Courtesy of Ben Truwe)

Mass Media and the Colors of the Cause

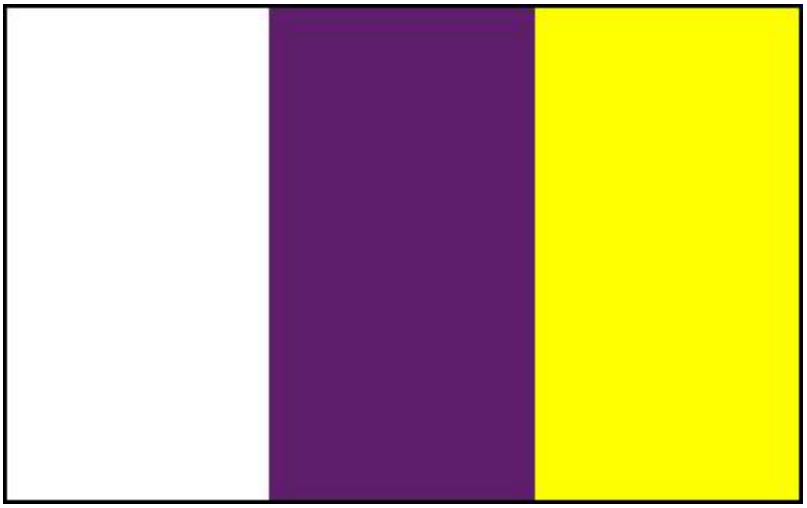
Mass Media

Congressional voting and state ratification of the 19th Amendment followed one of the most intensive advertising blitzes Americans had ever seen. Early on, suffragists made appeals to men in positions of power and influence, especially publishers, editors, poets, columnists, and journalists. By the turn of the 20th century, more women had access to these means of publication than ever before, especially in western states like Oregon. They used this unprecedented control of media to create dozens of magazines, periodicals, and newspapers highlighting women's issues and the necessity of woman suffrage. Even suffragists without access to the presses could still write editorials for their local papers, or give speeches and demonstrations to anyone who would listen.

Visual arts served as one of the most wide-reaching tools for suffragists. Artists created posters and paintings in strikingly modern styles, often incorporating the symbolic colors of the suffrage movement. Pageantry was also popular, as were processions of women wearing white and stunning parade floats. Many of these artists and parade marchers projected the image of feminine grace and purity championed by progressive reformers. It was in newspaper comics that the art became vicious, though, as suffragists lampooned anti-suffragists as petty tyrants and the women who stood against gender equality as cowardly sycophants.

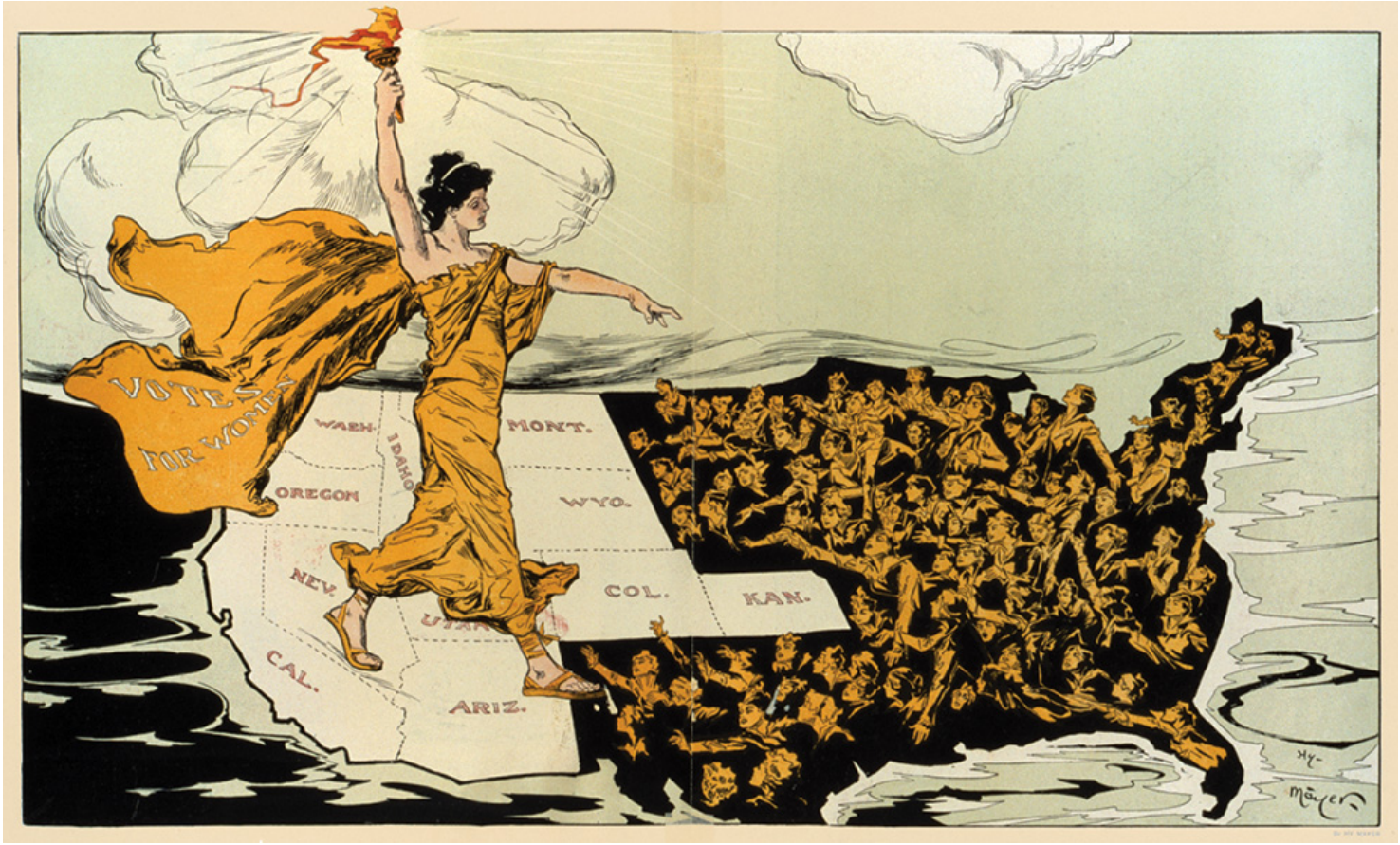
Colors of the Cause

Three colors, white, purple and yellow, played a prominent role in the iconography of suffrage. They appeared on banners, sashes, pamphlets, and all manner of tricolor badges. White was chosen to represent liberty, purity, and feminine grace. Purple, or violet, represented the vote as well as loyalty, constancy, and steadfastness.



The colors of the cause: White, purple, and yellow. (Oregon State Archives Image)

Yellow and gold were by far the most widespread colors of the movement. They emerged in 1867 when Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony were in Kansas advocating for a state suffrage referendum. The pair adopted the state flower, the sunflower, as a symbol of the suffrage cause. Suffragists began wearing gold pins and yellow ribbons to advertise their cause. Yellow roses were also popular, and served as floral badges distinguishing suffragists from anti-suffragists, who wore red roses instead.



Proponents of woman suffrage used the visual arts successfully. This 1915 illustration, entitled The Awakening, shows a torch-bearing female labeled "Votes for Women," symbolizing the awakening of the nation's women to the desire for suffrage, striding across the western states, where women already had the right to vote, toward the east where women are reaching out to her. (Courtesy of Library of Congress)

Coalitions and Related Movements

Coalitions

Universal woman suffrage was not a popular idea at the beginning of the women's rights movement in the U.S. Early woman suffrage efforts were hampered by race and class divisions – conservative opinions argued that only white or landowning women should be able to vote. The wave of suffragist victories that swept the nation in the early 20th century, however, stemmed not from division but an ability to build partnerships with other reform movements. Suffragists like Esther Pohl Lovejoy and Alice Paul discovered that campaigns succeeded best with the support of broad coalitions and diverse groups of voters. Women's rights groups also built strong relationships with the temperance and progressive movements, tied their agendas together and struggled for a common cause of social reform.

The Progessive Era represented a repudiation of the corruption and excess of the Gilded Age that preceded it. This illustration from an undated William Jennings Bryan campaign print laments the actions of the plutocrats and monopolists of the late 1800s. (Courtesy of Library of Congress)

The Progressive Movement

The progressive movement took national politics by storm from the 1890s to the beginning of the Great Depression. A reaction against the excesses of the Gilded Age, progressivism sought to eliminate the political corruption and unregulated industry which led to urban squalor. Many progressives also sought to improve conditions for women and children, pushing for child labor laws and a woman's right to vote.

Progressivism was an instrumental force in achieving national woman suffrage, though it had deeply divergent motivations. Many progressives were among the nation's first feminists, espousing the radical notion that women deserved the same rights as men – though the largely white movement was often stymied by racism. The progressive movement was also deeply religious, energized by reform-oriented branches of Christianity and Judaism. These more religious progressives often believed women were spiritually purer than men, and therefore better equipped to vote on laws that fought corruption.

The Temperance Movement

Many early feminists and progressives involved themselves in America's Temperance Movement, which

aimed to limit the widespread consumption of beer and liquor. By the early 19th century, the United States was gripped in an epidemic of alcoholism that created waves of domestic abuse and chronic poverty. Women and families, who were often economically dependent on men, could suffer because of the addictions of their husbands and fathers.

After the Civil War and the abolition of slavery, white social activists turned away from radical reforms like race or gender equality and promoted temperance instead. Though the temperance movement sought to deal with the very real problems of alcoholism, it was limited in scope. The movement primarily sought to change men's behavior as voting heads of households, rather than give women equal access to the money, property, and rights which would make them independent of men.

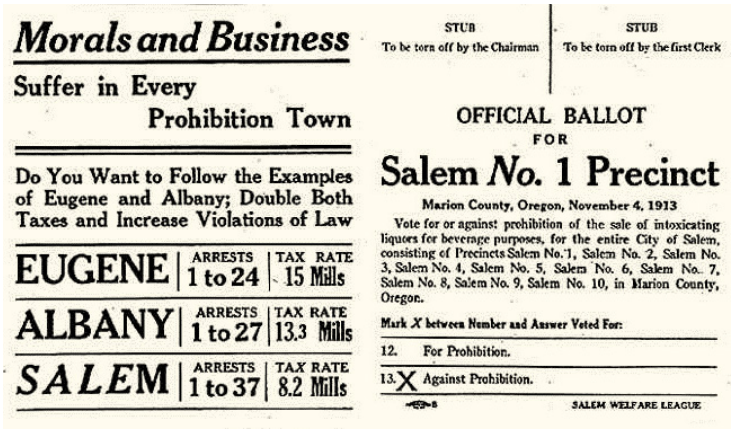
Heavily supported by religious groups, especially Evangelical Protestants, the temperance movement grew, focusing on education and providing alternatives to alcohol. Portland's many bronze drinking fountains are a product of the movement. They are known as "Benson Bubblers" after Simon Benson, the teetotaling philanthropist who paid for their installation in 1912.

Women and Prohibition

Women were a driving force behind curbing alcohol consumption in the early 20th century. Organizations like the Anti-Saloon League and Woman's Christian Temperance Union were fronted or run entirely by women. For many American women before the 19th Amendment, these movements were some of the few avenues for political action and social justice open to them.

Because women were some of the most vocal advocates of prohibition, anti-suffragists often used their views on alcohol to deny women access to voting rights. They stoked fears that woman suffrage would mean the end of alcohol, and the death of bars and breweries. These fears materialized as women gained the right to vote in some states, and then immediately passed laws limiting access to alcohol.

Not all women voted the same, though, and many rallied against the 18th Amendment which prohibited intoxicating liquors. Some joined social clubs and speakeasies where illegal drinks were sold, while others engaged in brewing bootleg alcohol in their own kitchens to get by in hard times. Some chose a legal route, and the Women's Organization for National Prohibition Reform organized in 1929. The WONPR successfully argued that prohibition encouraged crime and disrespect for the law – creating more problems than it solved.



Morals and Business
Suffer in Every Prohibition Town

Do You Want to Follow the Examples of Eugene and Albany; Double Both Taxes and Increase Violations of Law

	ARRESTS	TAX RATE
EUGENE	1 to 24	15 Mills
ALBANY	1 to 27	13.3 Mills
SALEM	1 to 37	8.2 Mills

STUB To be torn off by the Chairman | STUB To be torn off by the first Clerk

OFFICIAL BALLOT
FOR
Salem *No.* 1 Precinct
Marion County, Oregon, November 4, 1913

Vote for or against prohibition of the sale of intoxicating liquors for beverage purposes, for the entire City of Salem, consisting of Precincts Salem No. 1, Salem No. 2, Salem No. 3, Salem No. 4, Salem No. 5, Salem No. 6, Salem No. 7, Salem No. 8, Salem No. 9, Salem No. 10, in Marion County, Oregon.

Mark *X* between Number and Answer Voted For:

12. For Prohibition.
13. X Against Prohibition.

SALEM WELFARE LEAGUE

Opponents of prohibition stoked fears to encourage voters to block the effort. Beginning in 1904, an Oregon local option law gave communities the right to choose whether or not to ban alcohol. The law set off fierce debates over the issue. This mock ballot argued against prohibition in 1913. (Oregon State Library subject vertical files on prohibition, 1913) View Transcript and image

Temperance advocates argued that an innocent drink with a friend often led to tragic results. This 1846 lithograph by Nathaniel Currier illustrates the disastrous path. (Image Courtesy of Library of Congress (https://www.loc.gov/resource/ppmsca.32719/))

Official web site of

Oregon Secretary of State

Oregon Initiative and Referendum System

In 1902, progressive elements in Oregon made the state a landmark for direct democracy and the fight against corrupt government practices. That year, the electorate overwhelmingly approved a measure which enabled Oregon citizens to directly initiate amendments to the Oregon state constitution and enact new state statutes. The measure also opened the right of referendum, which permitted citizens to overturn laws passed by the state legislature. This process of initiative and referendum was known as the Oregon System.

Oregon holds the record for statewide initiatives, counting 384 between 1904 and 2014. In 1908, Oregon initiatives gave voters the power to recall public officials and made it the first state with popular election of U.S. senators. In 1910, Oregonian initiatives established the first presidential primary election system in the nation. The 1912 ballot included 27 initiatives and referendums – more than any one year before or since. These included the state's sixth and final vote on woman suffrage, which passed, making Oregon one of two states where women gained the right to vote by initiative.

View the 1912 Oregon woman suffrage initiative petition
(https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/RecordView/9430301)(Oregon State Archives).

With the caption, “Reckon You Won’t Find Much Left To Do In There, My Friend,” a newspaper cartoon illustrates the power of Oregon's initiative and referendum system. (The Oregonian, January 10, 1911)

Arguments in 1912 For and Against Woman Suffrage

Note: The following arguments were printed in the **1912 Oregon Voters' Pamphlet (https://digitalcollections.library.oregon.gov/nodes/view/24414)**.

1912 Initiative Argument in Favor of Oregon Woman Suffrage

AN OPEN LETTER

"To Every Liberty-Loving Voter of Oregon, Greeting:

The undersigned, representing as we believe the large majority of the women of Oregon, are happy to remind you that since we last appealed to you for your affirmative vote for the enfranchisement of one-half of the people, we have seen the elective franchise extended to all women on equal terms with men in our sister states of Washington and California.

We've come to you, believing that you will be glad to add Oregon to the constantly increasing number of equal suffrage states of the mighty West, thus making the Coast States a solid phalanx at the head of the great procession, and by increased representation giving our Coast more power to aid and protect her great and growing interests.

Suffrage is a duty that should be performed by every citizen of every state, otherwise Democracy is a failure; it is a duty that, if shirked, results in misgovernment, inequality, and injustice. Those who would evade this· responsibility, because it may entail labor, simply plead laziness. To call a government a democracy when half the population is barred from participation in governmental affairs is an absurdity.

The same arguments used in defense of depriving women of suffrage were used to keep the Romans enslaved, to keep the peasants of Europe in serfdom, to clog the progress of human liberty throughout the ages. The inequality of suffrage has been the basic principle that has ever oppressed humanity.

There is always an element that resents change. Many a serf fought to prevent freedom and many a slave opposed his own liberation. It should be the obligation of every individual irrespective of sex, whether householder or not, to have a voice in the making of our laws both civic and national. Liberty and responsibility for both sexes in public affairs will improve the quality by stimulating the study of government. Men and women can never be pitted against each other in government, because nature, which is higher than human law, has fitted them for companionship. They must help men in the uplifting of the world by making democracy and its consequent development, a realized dream.

The growth of public sentiment in favor of this movement all around Oregon has been, as you know, phenomenal.

Believing that our Beloved Oregon should and will prove that her progressive spirit is equal to that of the six equal suffrage states surrounding her, and add a seventh star to the galaxy of fully free states, we rest our case with you at the coming election. In the hope that we shall not be compelled again to make this expensive and laborious struggle for equality of rights as voters, we respectfully request you to vote "YES" for the EQUAL SUFFRAGE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT at the coming November election."

1912 Initiative Argument Against Oregon Woman Suffrage

ARGUMENT AGAINST WOMAN SUFFRAGE AMENDMENT

"To the Electors of Oregon:

Notwithstanding the repeated and emphatic defeat of woman suffrage amendments in Oregon, the proposition is again on the ballot. It was submitted to a vote in 1900 and beaten by a plurality of 2137; it was submitted again in 1906 and beaten by 10,173; it was submitted again in 1908 and beaten by 21,649; it was submitted again in 1910 and beaten by 23,795. Notwithstanding this repeated expression of the will of the people we note in the argument offered in support of this amendment a contention that those who favor it represent the large majority of the women of Oregon. We submit that this adverse vote rolled up again and again with increasing emphasis at each election is the best possible evidence that woman suffrage is not wanted in' Oregon, either by the women or by the men. The fact is that the agitation for woman suffrage is carried on by a small minority of the women of the State, who make up in activity what they lack in numbers. Let any man ask the women of his acquaintance, and particularly the women who are doing woman's work in the world, the women whom he most respects, and he can satisfy himself as to whether women want the right to vote.

WASHINGTON AND CALIFORNIA.

It is true, as suggested in the argument in favor of this amendment, that woman suffrage has been adopted in Washington and in California. The result in Washington was brought about by a ballot title which did not advise the voters of the State of the purport and effect of the measure on which they were -voting. Woman suffrage went on the official ballot in Washington in November, 1910, under the following title:

"For the proposed amendment of Article VI of the Constitution relating to qualifications of voters within this State."

There was a similar attempt to mislead the voters of Oregon by a false ballot title, but the attempt was exposed in the official pamphlet and by the press of the State, with the result that the amendment was defeated by the above quoted vote.

In California the amendment providing for woman suffrage was voted on at a special election held on the 10th of October, 1911. The measure carried by the meagre plurality of 3587. The entire vote cast on this question at that election was only 246,487. This was only 63% of the vote cast in November, 1910, when a governor of California was elected. The woman suffrage amendment received 28,798 votes less than the Democratic candidate for governor received at that election and yet the Democratic candidate for governor was defeated by a plurality of 22,356. There is always an active and zealous minority in favor of woman suffrage and this minority can be trusted to get out and vote. The majority of the electors opposed to woman suffrage are less zealous on the subject and less certain to register their votes. We are confident that on a full vote the measure would have been beaten in California as it has been so often beaten in Oregon.

DEMOCRACY NOT A FAILURE.

There is a suggestion in the argument presented by the advocates of this amendment that in the absence of woman suffrage democracy is a failure. No American woman with a proper pride in the history of her country would advance this contention. American democracy, with its century and a quarter of constitutional government, with its Washington and its Lincoln, with its security for personal rights, and its expansion of national power, is the most glorious success of the ages. Woman has had her part in all this, she has had her work to perform, and her burdens to bear. She has done her part in the home and not on the hustings, and her power for good is the greater because she has been content to be a woman and has not striven to be an imitation man.

IDA M. TARBELL ON WOMAN SUFFRAGE.

Few women of our day have accomplished more than Miss Ida M. Tarbell. In an article in a recent magazine Miss Tarbell says:

"Human society may be likened to two great circles, one revolving within the other. In the inner rules the woman. Here she breeds and trains the material for the outer circle which exists only by and for her. That accident may throw her into this outer circle is of course true, but it is not her natural habitat, nor is she fitted by nature to live and circulate freely there. We underestimate, too, the kind of experience which is essential for intelligent citizenship in this outer circle. To know what is wise and needed there one should circulate in it. The man at his labor in the street, in the meeting places of men, learns unconsciously as a rule, the code, the meaning, the need of public affairs as woman learns those of private affairs. What it all amounts to is that the labor of the world is naturally divided between the two different beings that people the world. It is unfair to the woman that she be asked to do the work of the outer circle. The man can do that satisfactorily if she does her part, that is if she prepares him the material. Certainly, he can never come into the inner circle and do her work."

EQUALITY NOT LIKENESS.

"The idea that there is a kind of inequality for a woman in minding her own business and letting man do the same, comes from our confused and rather stupid notion of the meaning of equality. Popularly we have come to regard being alike as being equal. We prove equality by wearing the same kind of clothes, studying the same books, regardless of nature or capacity or future life. Insisting that women do the same things that men do may make the two exteriorly more alike – it does not make them more equal. Men and women are widely apart in functions and in possibilities. They cannot be made equal by exterior devices like trousers, ballots, the study of Greek. The effort to make them so is much more likely to make them unequal. One only comes to his highest power by following unconsciously and joyfully his own nature. You run the risk of destroying the capacity for equality when you attempt to make one human being like another human being."

All evidence proves that the adoption of woman suffrage brings into evidence the bold, obtrusive woman whose conduct cheapens the sex and deprives all women of a portion of the chivalry and respect which are their birthright.

Marie Corelli has well said:

"If woman would impress man with an abiding sense of her moral and mental power and with the purity of her intellectual influence upon the time, she must begin to teach him in the nursery and school room and not at the polling booth."

OUR PROTEST.

In conclusion we, American women, citizens of the State of Oregon, protest against the proposal to impose the obligation of suffrage upon the women of this State, for the following, among other reasons:

Because suffrage is to be regarded not as a privilege to be enjoyed, but as a duty to be performed.

Because hitherto the women of this State have enjoyed exemption from this burdensome duty, and no adequate reason has been assigned for depriving them of that immunity.

Because conferring suffrage upon the women who claim it would impose suffrage upon the many women who neither desire it as a privilege nor regard it their duty to seek it.

Because the need of America, is not an increased quantity, but an improved quality, of the vote, and there is no adequate reason to believe that woman's suffrage by doubling the vote will improve its quality.

Because the household, not the individual, is the unit of the State, and the vast majority of women are represented by household suffrage.

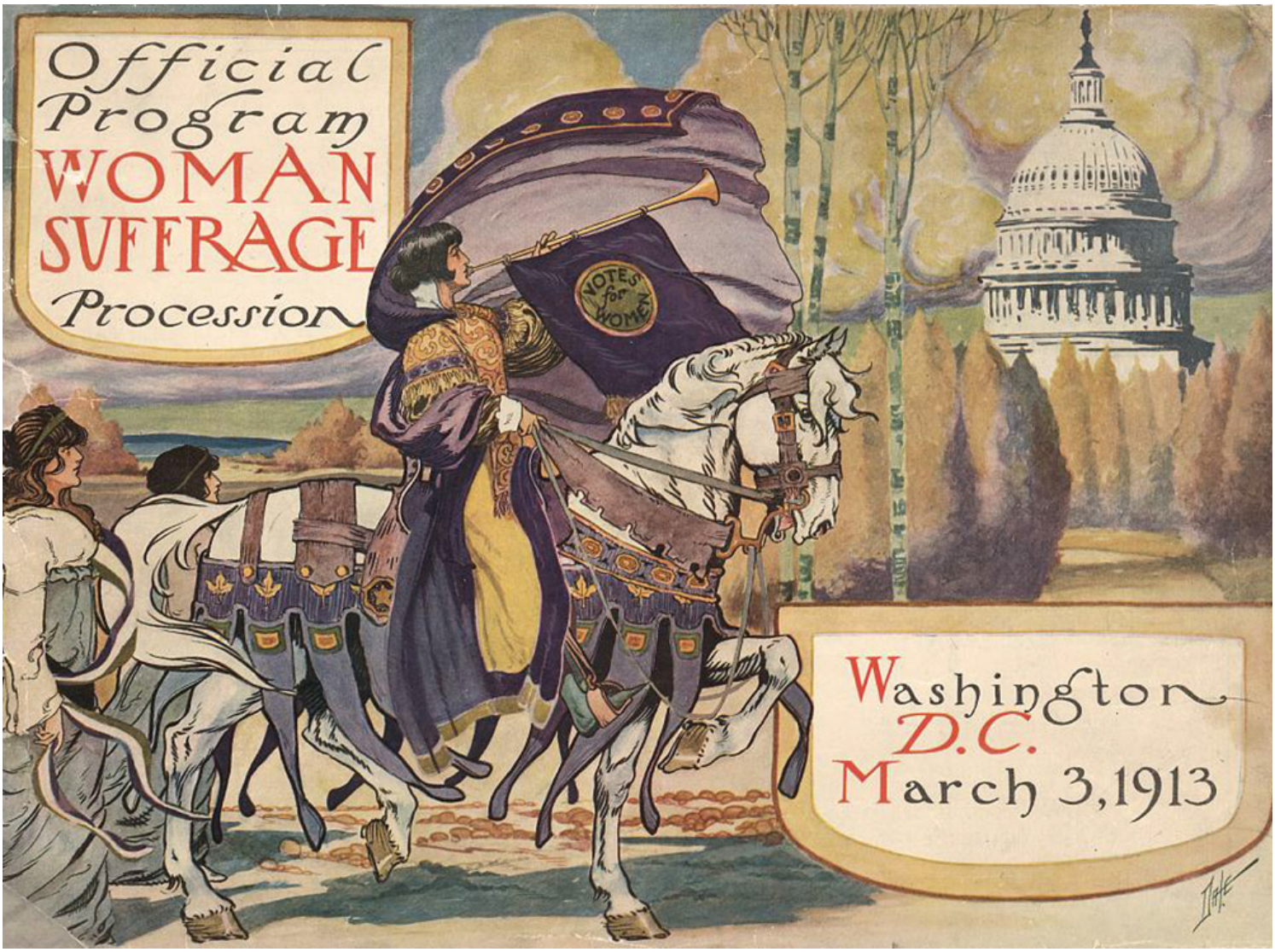
Because the women not so represented suffer no practical injustice which giving the suffrage will remedy.

Because equality in character does not imply similarity in function, and the duties and life of men and women are divinely ordered to be different in the State, as in the home.

Because the energies of women are engrossed by their present duties and interests, from which men cannot relieve them, and it is better for the community that they devote their energies to the more efficient performance of their present work than divert them to new fields of activity.

Because political equality will deprive woman of special privileges hitherto accorded her by the law.

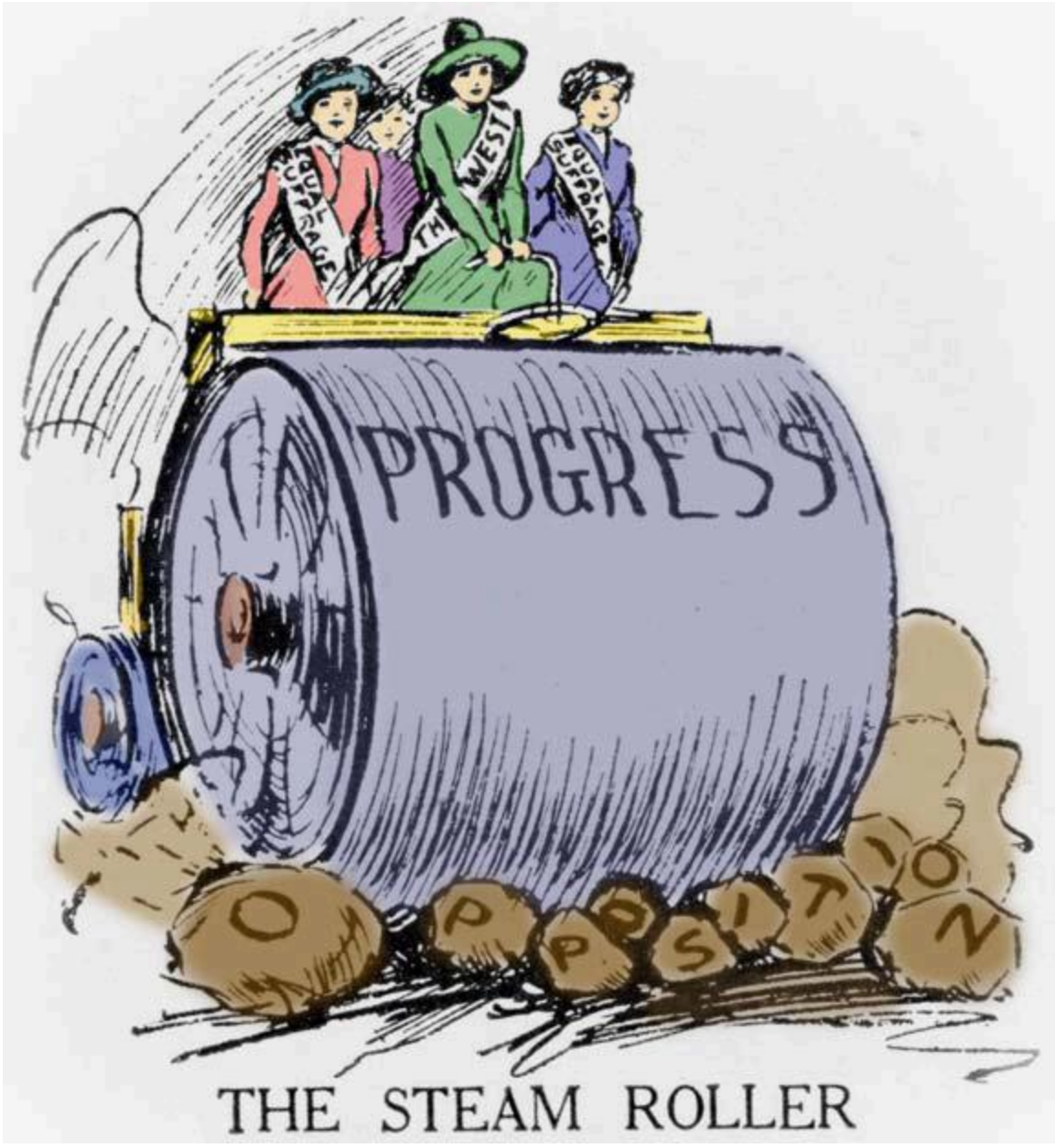
Because suffrage logically involves the holding of public office, including jury duty, and office-holding is inconsistent with the duties of most women."



Proponents of woman suffrage used heroic illustrations to drive the movement to success. Shown here is the Official Program - Woman Suffrage Procession, Washington, D.C. March 3, 1913. Image courtesy of Library of Congress: https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/ppmsca.12512/

Opponents of woman suffrage effectively employed imagery of a petulant little girl in this postcard. (Courtesy of Oregon Historical Society)

Opponents of woman suffrage also faced powerful pro-suffrage imagery. Here a political cartoon shows four women driving a steam roller of progress from the West as they crush the opposition. The cartoon, which portrays woman suffrage as inevitable, appeared in Judge magazine in 1917. Image colorized for exhibit. (Courtesy of Library of Congress) https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/cph.3c28029/



Literacy Test as Described in 1930 Oregon Code

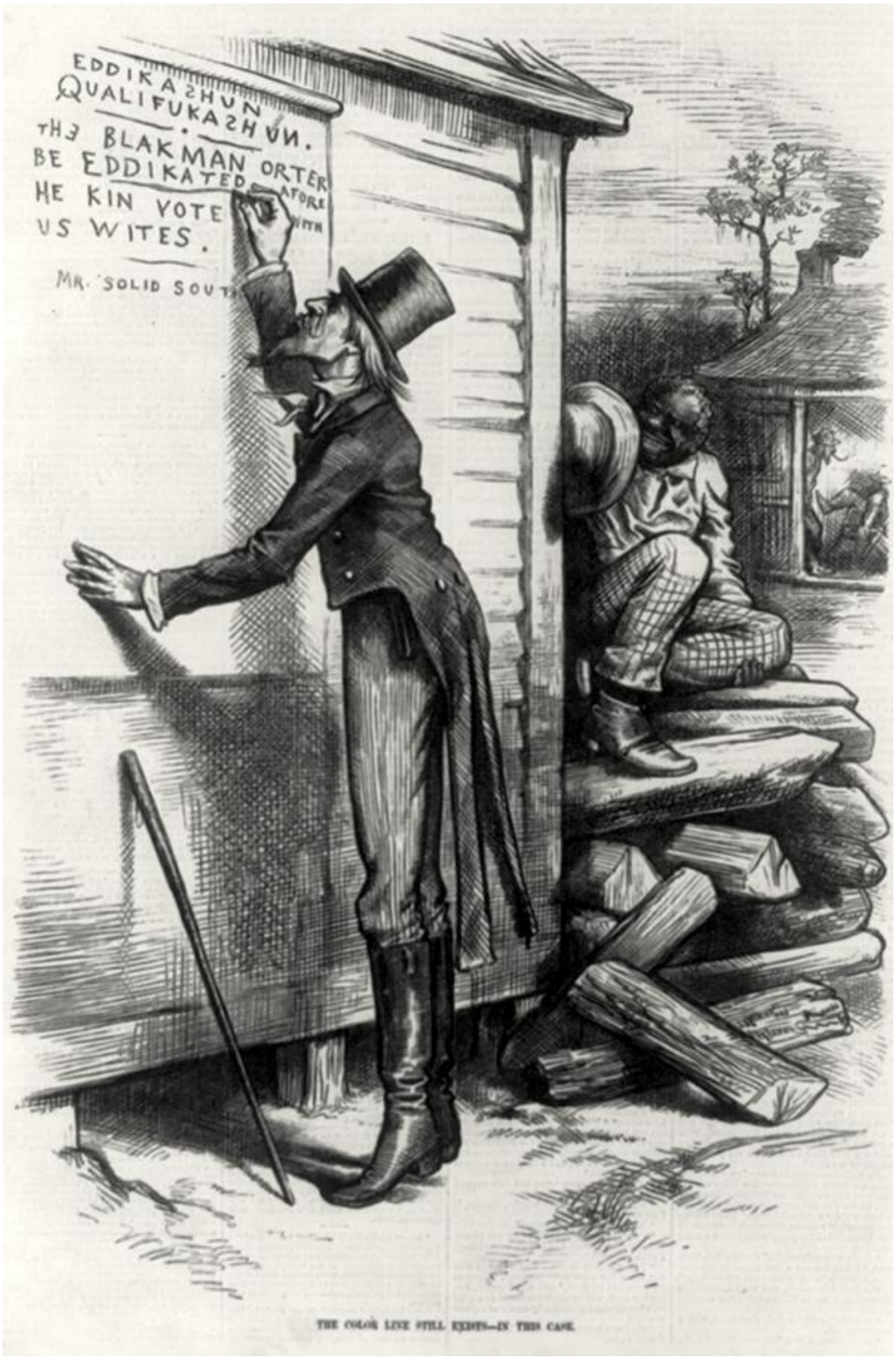
"Whenever a county clerk, deputy county clerk or judge of the election board shall have reasonable cause to suspect that any applicant to register or vote is unable to read and write the English language, or if the right of such applicant to vote shall be challenged by an elector upon such grounds, then such applicant shall not be permitted to register or vote at any state, county, town, or district election unless he shall be able, except for physical disability, to read and write the English language in the manner hereinafter provided.

There shall be provided in every voting precinct and place for registration of voters in this state 100 extracts of approximately fifty words each from the constitution of this state, which extracts shall be selected by the secretary of state and caused by him to be printed in English, on uniform pasteboard slips, in leaded pica type, and distributed to the various county clerks, by whom a sufficient number of said slips shall be furnished to each judge of the election boards in their respective counties, and said county clerks or their deputies, and said judges of the election boards shall keep said slips in a box so constructed as to conceal them from view.

Each applicant for registration who is required to prove his or her ability to read and write the English language shall draw one of such slips at random from said box and, immediately thereafter, read aloud, and in an intelligible manner, to the county clerk, deputy county clerk, or judge of the election board, in charge of same, all of the matte printed on said slip, and then write legibly in English at least ten words taken from the extract from the constitution on said slip, which work are to be selected by the county clerk, deputy county clerk, or judge of the election board conducting such test. Said slips shall be returned to the box immediately after each test, and the contents of said box shall be shaken up before another drawing from same.

Any county clerk, deputy county, clerk or judge of an election board refusing to require the test herein provided to be made when objection to the registration of an applicant has been made, in the manner hereinbefore provided shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be subject to a fine of not more than five hundred dollars ($500) or by imprisonment in the county jail for a term of not more than six (6) months, or both such fine and imprisonment."

Oregon law was inspired by longstanding Jim Crow Era efforts in the South to exclude African Americans from voting. Here, an 1879 Harper's Weekly editorial cartoon criticizes the use of literacy tests. It shows "Mr. Solid South" writing on a wall: "Eddikashun qualifukashun. The Blak man orter be eddikated afore he kin vote with us Wites, signed Mr. Solid South." (Courtesy of Library of Congress) https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2002710390/



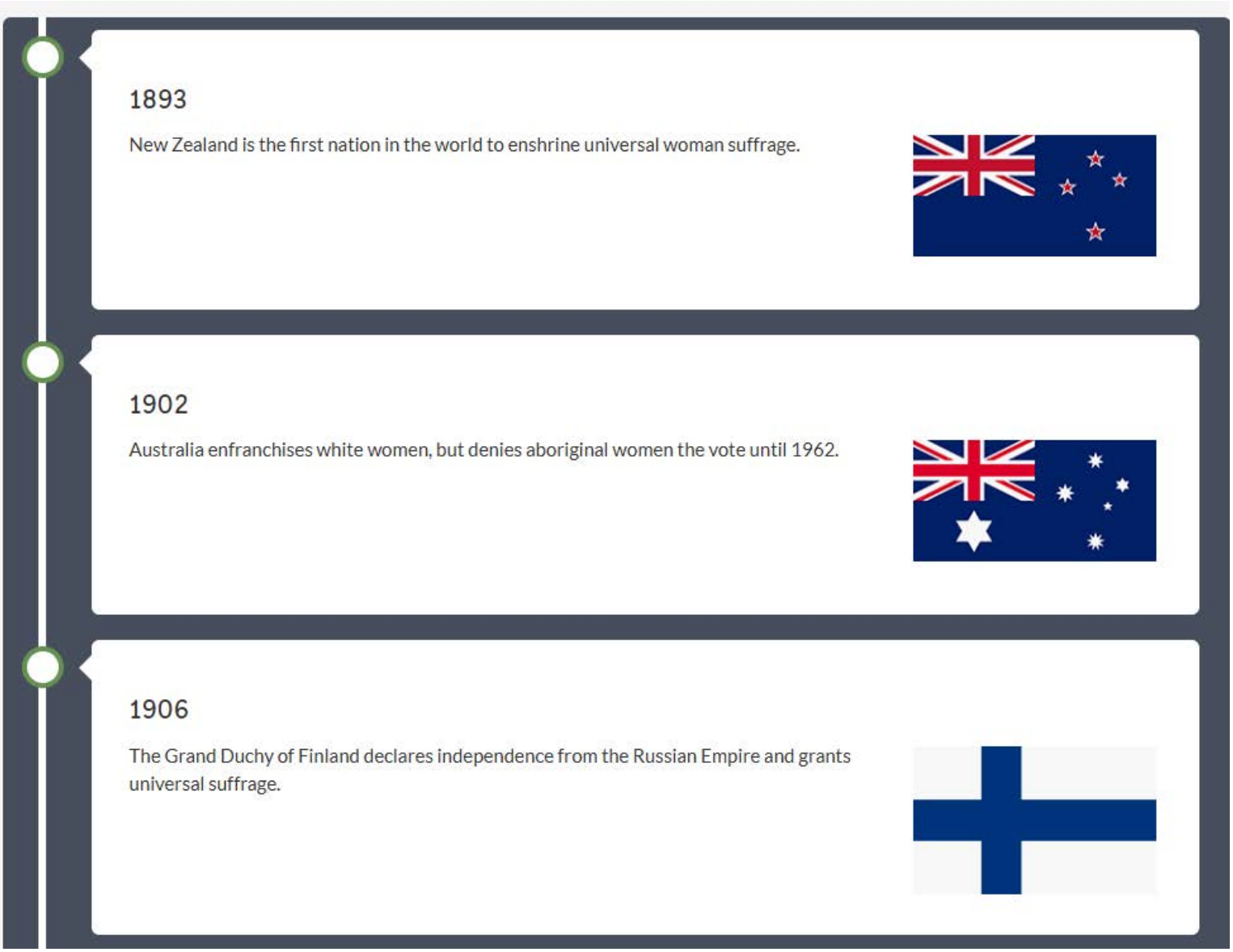
Timelines

The movement to secure woman suffrage in Oregon and the United States did not occur in a vacuum. Many countries around the world preceded the United States in reaching the goal, led by New Zealand in 1893. Efforts in the United Kingdom were particularly influential to American attitudes. Proponents eventually found success, but it came in fits and starts as protectors of traditional power structures resisted with strong campaigns of their own. The following timelines place the Oregon experience in a larger context over the course of decades.

Woman suffrage proponents take part in the suffrage hike from New York City to Washington, D.C. to join the March 3, 1913 National American Woman Suffrage Association parade. (Courtesy of Library of Congress)

International Woman Suffrage Highlights

Though the United States was one of the early adopters of woman suffrage, it was by no means the first country to do so. Beginning in the 1700s many societies began to agitate for women's rights, including the right to vote. When won, these were often local exceptions to the rule of patriarchy, and nationwide examples of woman suffrage do not emerge until the late 19th century. The first nations to grant woman suffrage were nearly all in Europe, or in places dominated by European colonialism.



1913

Norway grants universal woman suffrage after men are awarded suffrage in 1898.

1915

Denmark and its colony of Iceland adopt universal woman suffrage.

1917

The Baltic nation of Estonia grants universal suffrage after the conclusion of the first Russian Civil War.

1917

The Baltic nation of Latvia grants universal suffrage after the conclusion of the first Russian Civil War.

1917

The Baltic nation of Lithuania grants universal suffrage after the conclusion of the first Russian Civil War.

1917

The Belarusian People's Republic grants universal suffrage after the conclusion of the first Russian Civil War.

1917

Ukraine grants universal suffrage after the conclusion of the first Russian Civil War.

1917

The short-lived Russian Republic grants universal suffrage after the conclusion of the first Russian Civil War.

1917

Uruguay becomes the first nation in the Americas to grant universal suffrage.

1918

Austria adopts universal suffrage.

1918

Germany adopts universal suffrage.

1918

Poland adopts universal suffrage.

1918

Azerbaijan adopts universal suffrage.

1918

The new Kyrgyz Soviet Socialist Republic adopts universal suffrage.

1918

The Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic adopts universal suffrage.

1918

Hungary adopts woman suffrage to women over 24.

1918

United Kingdom (including Ireland) adopts woman suffrage to women over 30.

1918

Canada grants racially limited suffrage until it adopts fully universal suffrage in 1960.

1919

The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic enshrines universal suffrage into law.

1919

The First Republic of Armenia adopts universal suffrage.

1919

Belgium enshrines universal suffrage into law.

1919

The Democratic Republic of Georgia passes universal suffrage.

1919

The Isle of Man adopts universal suffrage.

1919

Czechoslovakia enshrines universal suffrage.

1919

The Netherlands adopts universal suffrage.

1919

Luxembourg passes universal suffrage into law.

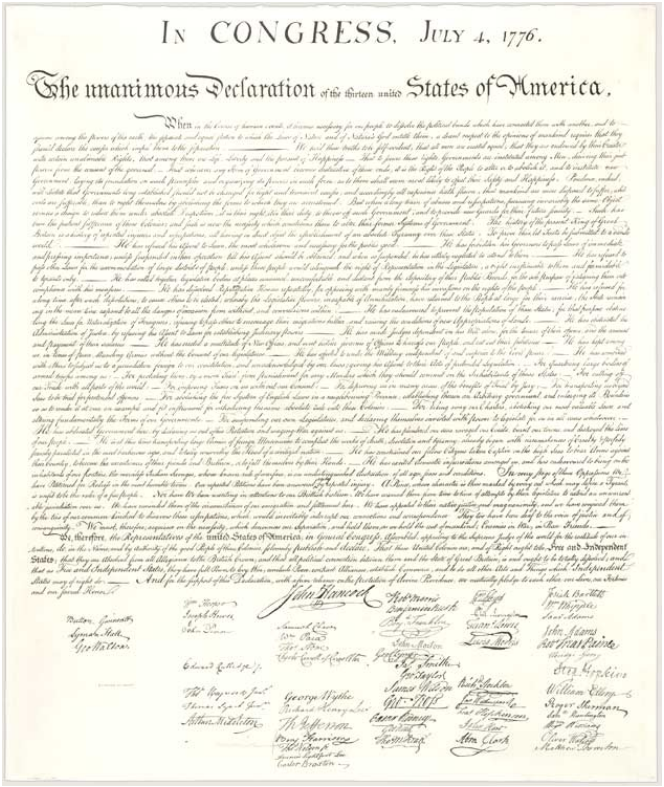
1919

Sweden adopts universal suffrage.

1920

The United States of America ratifies the 19th amendment granting woman suffrage. Native American women would be denied citizenship and voting rights until 1924, and many women of Asian heritage won't have full access to those rights until 1943.

Voting Rights in the United States


IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America,

1776

Declaration of Independence. Right to vote in the revolutionary and colonial periods limited to white male Protestants over 21 that own property. An 1823 stone engraving of the Declaration of Independence is shown here. See larger version at the National Archives. Declaration of Independence transcription at the National Archives.

1787
U.S. Constitution. States are given the power to regulate their voting laws, primarily enfranchising white, male property owners and taxpayers (about 6% of the population).

1790
Naturalization Act of 1790. Free white immigrants can become U.S. citizens.

1792-1838
Free black men lose the right to vote in many northern states.

1792-1856
States abolish property qualifications to voting for white men, which effectively brings about near-universal white male suffrage. Election Day in Philadelphia in 1815 by John Lewis Krimmel is shown here. (Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons)

1828
Maryland passes legislation enfranchising Jewish men, becoming the last state to remove religious restrictions to voting.

1848
Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo. Citizenship is granted to Mexicans living in territory conquered by the U.S. but their vote is suppressed with discrimination and violence.

1868
14th Amendment. Citizenship is granted to people born or naturalized in the U.S.

1870
15th Amendment. States cannot deny the right to vote on grounds of race, color, or previous condition of servitude, though many states erected legal barriers to voting through poll taxes, literacy tests, and the sanctioned terrorism of people of color.

1876
Supreme Court rules that Native Americans are not citizens as defined by the 14th amendment.

1882
Chinese Exclusion Act. People of Chinese ancestry are barred from naturalizing as U.S. citizens.

1887
Dawes Act. Citizenship and suffrage granted to Native Americans who disassociate from their tribe and assimilate into white American society. A U.S. Department of the Interior advertisement offering "Indian Land for Sale" in 1911 is shown here. (Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons)

1890
Indian Naturalization Act. Native Americans can now apply for citizenship in a manner similar to other foreign nationals.

1913
17th Amendment. Voters, rather than state legislatures, can directly elect their senators.

1919
Native Americans who served in the U.S. military are given voting rights.

1920
19th Amendment. Women cannot be denied voting rights on the basis of sex.

1922-1923
Supreme Court rules that people of Japanese and South Asian heritage are ineligible to become citizens.

1924
Indian Citizenship Act. All Native Americans are enfranchised as U.S. citizens regardless of their tribe or nation.

1943
Magnuson Act. Chinese immigrants are given citizenship and voting rights.

1952
McCarran-Walter Act. Citizenship is open to all people of Asian ancestry.

1961
23rd Amendment. Washington DC residents gain the right to vote in presidential elections.

1962-1964
The Warren Court establishes the "one man, one vote" system whereby states must redraw voting districts so that voting power remains relatively equal.

1964
24th Amendment. Poll taxes are prohibited from federal elections. An anti-poll tax button from the 1940s is shown here. (Courtesy of National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution)

1965
Voting Rights Act of 1965. Landmark legislation that tackles discrimination in elections, as well as provides protection for racial and language minorities to register and vote.

1966
Supreme Court prohibits both tax payment and wealth requirements in state elections.

1971
26th Amendment. Lowered the voting age from 21 to 18 in response to protests of the Vietnam War which argued that those old enough to be drafted should be eligible to vote.

1986
Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act. Gives voting rights to Americans serving on bases and ships both at home and abroad.

1993
National Voter Registration Act. Makes voter registration available at the Department of Motor Vehicles.

1996-2008
Twenty-eight states pass laws re-enfranchising felons who lost voting rights while incarcerated. Oregon felons may vote upon release from prison. A view looking down the ground floor hallway of the D-Block of the Oregon State Penitentiary in 1953 is shown here. (Oregon State Archives I mage)

2000
Supreme Court rules that residents of U.S. territories like Puerto Rico, Guam, and American Samoa (over 4 million people), though citizens, cannot vote in presidential elections and have no representation in Congress.

2009
Military and Overseas Empowerment Act. Establishes a more efficient means for expats and troops overseas to vote by mail or electronically.

2013
Supreme Court rules that part of the Voting Rights Act is unconstitutional, removing a mandate that if states or local governments want to change their voting laws they must appeal to the federal government.

A Chronology of Woman Suffrage Organizations

A welter of woman suffrage clubs, associations and other organizations waxed, waned, split, and combined over the decades from the late 1800s to the early 1900s in the United States. Ideological, strategic, and tactical differences abounded.

Strategically, some proponents, such as members of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, had their origins in the temperance and prohibition movements. They saw women voters as a big advantage in advancing their primary cause centered on limiting the negative effects of alcohol on society. Others wanted the question of woman suffrage to be separate from individual social issues and saw connections to temperance and prohibition as damaging distractions.

Tactics varied greatly too and caused rifts in the movement. For example, relations between Western suffragists, including Abigail Scott Duniway, and their eastern counterparts, such as Susan B. Anthony and Anna Howard Shaw, were often strained by different approaches to passing suffrage legislation—Duniway preferring the “still hunt” approach of restrained lobbying to win over men while Anthony and Shaw advocated for a much more aggressive public style of campaign.

Anti-alcohol crusader Carrie A. Nation personified the efforts of the Women's Christian Temperance Union in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Nation's colorful style of direct action grew into the legend of her using a hatchet to wreck saloons. Here she is shown in 1910 with her trademark hatchet and bible. (Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons)

Not surprisingly, these sorts of differences manifested themselves in a variety of organizations and associations, some of which continue to this day. This timeline shows some of the major woman suffrage organizations and how they evolved over time.

Chronology of Women's Suffrage Organizations

1896-1904 National Association of Colored Women → **1904** National Association of Colored Women's Clubs → *Present*

1912 Everybody's Equal Suffrage League

1913-1917 Congressional Union for Women Suffrage → **1916** National Women's Party →

1869-1890 American Woman Suffrage Association

1866-1869 American Equal Rights Association

1890-1920 National American Woman Suffrage Association → **1920** League of Women Voters →

1869-1890 National Woman Suffrage Association

1904 International Alliance of Women →

1893 National Council of Jewish Women →

1903 Women's Trade Union League → *1950*

1873 Women's Christian Temperance Movement →

Official web site of

Oregon Secretary of State

The Evolution of Women's Rights in Oregon

1850

Donation Land Claim Act. Allows married wo men to claim land in their own names. The Act was passed prior to any U.S. treaty negotiations with Native peoples in the area, for whom Oregon had been home for thousands of years. Only "white settlers" and "American half-breed Indians" could claim land, and the Act excluded all non-U.S. citizens, including Native peoples (who were not U.S. citizens), Blacks, and Hawaiians.

1857

Oregon State Constitutional Convention. Declares that only white men can vote. The convention produced the original Oregon Constitution (View transcribed text). The delegates to the convention reflected the racist attitudes of the white citizens of the territory. The cover title of the original document is shown here.

1864

Federal law allows "competent" Native women to testify in trials.

1866

Oregon passes miscegenation laws prohibiting whites from marrying African Americans, Chinese Americans, Native Hawaiians, and other Native peoples.

1870

First Oregon woman suffrage organizations form in Albany and Salem.

1871

Susan B. Anthony tours the Pacific Northwest with Abigail Scott Duniway. Susan B. Anthony is shown here ca. 1855. (Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons)

1871-1887
Abigail Scott Duniway publishes The New Northwest, a women's rights newspaper.

November 1872
Mrs. Mary Beatty, an African American woman living in Portland, joins fellow Oregonians Abigail Scott Duniway, Maria Hendee, and Mrs. M.A. Lambert, in casting their votes in the presidential election. The judge does not count their votes.

1878
All Oregon taxpayers, regardless of gender, may vote in school elections.

1878
Married Women's Property Act. Opens the way for married women in Oregon to own their own property and enter business arrangements without their husband.

1884
First Oregon vote on woman suffrage. For: 11,223 (28 percent); Against: 28,176.

1893
Oregon allows women to be "eligible to all educational offices within the state." Previously, women were expected to serve only as teachers. A teacher stands at the head of a Marion County class ca. 1900 in this photo. (Oregon State Archives Image)

1896
Oregon Supreme Court case State Ex Rel. v. Stevens declares the 1893 law making women eligible for educational office unconstitutional.

1898
Oregon Supreme Court case Harris v. Burr upholds taxpaying women's right to vote in school elections.

1900
Second Oregon vote on woman suffrage. For: 26,255 (48 percent); Against: 28,402.

1902
Voters adopt the famous Oregon System of initiative and referendum.

1903
Oregon makes it illegal for certain industries, such as factories and laundries, to have women work for more than ten hours per day.

1905
The National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) holds its national convention in Portland in conjunction with the Lewis and Clark Exposition. Shown here, visitors walk past the Agricultural Palace at the 1905 Lewis and Clark Exposition in Portland. (Courtesy of Al Staehli)

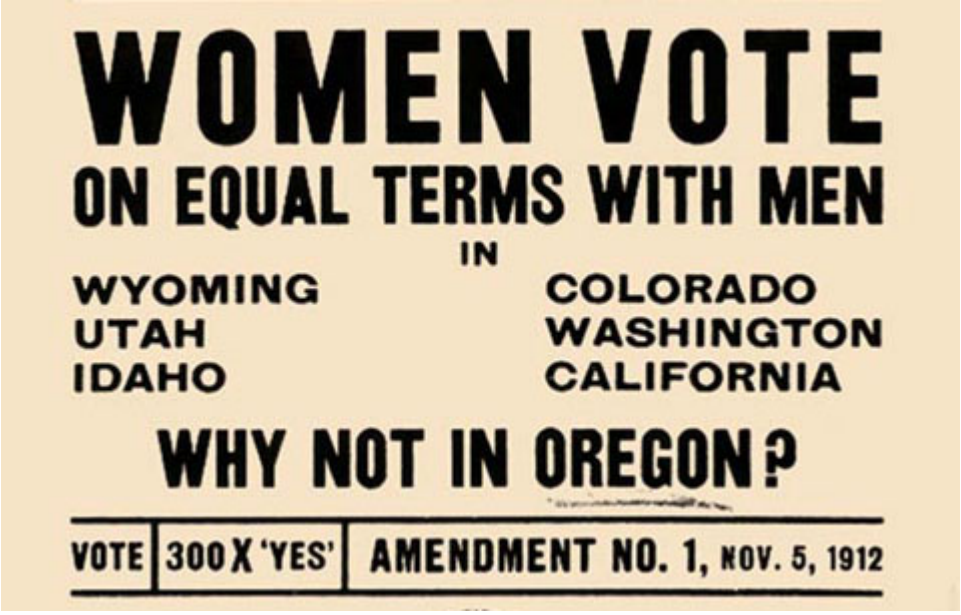
1906
Third Oregon vote on woman suffrage. For: 36,902 (44%); Against: 47,075.

1907-1922
Oregon women who marry noncitizens lose their citizenship status. The federal Expatriation Act of 1907, which enacted this status, left affected women with forfeited constitutional rights and subject to deportation. The Cable Act of 1922 nullifiedthis for all except women who married men ineligible for citizenship.

1908
Fourth Oregon vote on woman suffrage. For: 36,858 (39%); Against: 58,670.

1910
Fifth Oregon vote on woman suffrage. For: 35,270 (37 percent); Against: 59,065.

1912
Sixth and final Oregon vote on woman suffrage. For: 61,265 (52%); Against: 57,104. Shown here, a handbill calls on Oregon voters to approve woman suffrage in the 1912 election. (Courtesy of University of Oregon Library)



1914
Marian B. Towne, a Jackson County Democrat, is the first woman elected to the Oregon House of Representatives.

1915
Kathryn Clarke, a Douglas County Republican, is the first woman elected to the Oregon Senate.

1916
Voters in the City of Umatilla elected an all-female slate of candidates including Mayor Laura J. Starcher, who replaced her husband.

January 1920
Oregon becomes the twenty-fifth state to ratify the 19th Amendment.

October 1920
Marie Equi, M.D., begins her prison term for protesting World War I.

November 1920
Esther Pohl Lovejoy, Democrat from Oregon's Third District, is the first woman to run for U.S. Congress from Oregon; she gains 44 percent of the vote.

1921
Oregon voters approve jury service for women. Opponents to woman suffrage had argued that women were too sentimental to vote or serve on juries. This 1915 drawing by Kenneth Russell Chamberlain for Puck magazine pokes fun at that idea. Image courtesy Library of Congress.

1924
Federal Indian Citizenship Act. Makes U.S. citizenship possible for all Native women.

1937
Nan Wood Honeyman becomes the first Oregon woman elected to the US House of Representatives.

1952
McCarran Walter Act. Enables first generation Asian American women to acquire citizenship.

1960-1967
Maurine Neuberger is the first and only woman to represent Oregon in the U.S. Senate.

1960-1970s
Women in the Oregon legislature work to pass laws addressing women's unequal citizenship in marriage, work, health, and legal status.

1973
Oregon legislature votes to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment or ERA. Listen to audio of a Norma Paulus speech in favor of the ERA. Shown here are buttons in support of the ERA. (Courtesy of Oklahoma Historical Society)

1976
Mae Yih (born Chih Feng Dunn) becomes the first Chinese American to serve in a state Senate in the United States. She served in both Oregon House and Senate.

1977
Norma Paulus becomes first woman elected to statewide office as Secretary of State.

1979
Oregon Supreme Court case Gunther v. Washington County expands equal pay for equal work toward comparable worth.

1982
Betty Roberts becomes the first woman on the Oregon Supreme Court.

1985
Vera Katz is first woman to serve as Speaker of the Oregon House of Representatives. Of Portland's five Jewish mayors, Vera Katz, who was mayor from 1993 to 2005, is the only woman.

1990
Jackie Taylor is the first Native American elected to the Oregon House.

1991-1995
Barbara Roberts is the first woman to serve as Governor of Oregon. Shown here is a portrait of Roberts by Aimee Erickson. The portrait hangs in the Oregon State Capitol. (Oregon State Archives Image)

1996
Avel Louise Gordly becomes the first African-American woman to be elected to the Oregon Senate.

1998
Oregon becomes the first state in the nation to vote exclusively by mail.

Jackie Winters is elected to the Oregon House of Representatives. She was the first African-American Republican ever to serve In the Oregon Legislative Assembly. In 2017, Winters was elected as Senate Minority Leader and became the first African-American legislative leader in Oregon.

2002
Susan Castillo is the first female Lantinx official elected to statewide office as the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

2012
Ellen Rosenblum becomes the state's first female attorney general and the first Jewish person to hold the office.

2018
Susheela Jayapal becomes the first South Asian American elected in Oregon to Multnomah County Board of Commissioners.

2019
Jo Ann Hardesty becomes the first African-American woman to serve on the Portland City Council .

Official web site of

Oregon Secretary of State

Ratification of the 19th Amendment

Thirty-six of the 48 states were needed to ratify the amendment to the U.S. Constitution before it could become law. Oregon became the 25th state to ratify on January 12, 1920. Finally, on August 18, 1920, Tennessee became the 36th state to ratify. Since the amendment's adoption, twelve states have symbolically voted for ratification.

June 10, 1919—Illinois

June 10, 1919—Michigan

June 10, 1919—Wisconsin

June 16, 1919—Kansas

June 16, 1919—New York

June 16, 1919—Ohio

June 24, 1919—Pennsylvania

June 25, 1919—Massachusetts

June 28, 1919— Texas

July 2, 1919 — Iowa

July 3, 1919 — Missouri

July 28, 1919— Arkansas

August, 1919— Montana

August, 1919— Nebraska

September 8, 1919— Minnesota

September 10, 1919— New Hampshire

September 30, 1919— Utah

November 1, 1919— California

November 5, 1919— Maine

December 1, 1919— North Dakota

December 5, 1919— South Dakota

December 15, 1919— Colorado

January 6, 1920— Kentucky

January 6, 1920— Rhode Island

January 12, 1920— Oregon

January 16, 1920— Indiana

January 26, 1920— Wyoming

February 7, 1920— Nevada

February 9, 1920— New Jersey

February 11, 1920— Idaho

February 12, 1920— Arizona

February 16, 1920— New Mexico

February 23, 1920— Oklahoma

March 10, 1920— West Virginia

March 22, 1920— Washington

August 18, 1920— Tennessee

September 14, 1920— Connecticut

February 8, 1921— Vermont

March 6, 1923— Delaware

March 29, 1941— Maryland

February 21, 1952— Virginia

September 8, 1953— Alabama

May 13, 1969— Florida

July 1, 1969— South Carolina

February 20, 1970— Georgia

June 11, 1970— Louisiana

May 6, 1971— North Carolina

March 22, 1984— Mississippi

Events

Numerous events helped to propel the woman suffrage movement forward over the decades. They inspired women around the country to take action in their own lives, even if only in small ways. The cumulative effect over time created a groundswell of support that opponents to woman suffrage could not resist. As a result, newly empowered women asserted themselves in other ways too, such as holding political offices and moving into male-dominated professions. Here are some significant events both nationally and in Oregon.

The 1848 Seneca Falls Convention

The Election of 1912

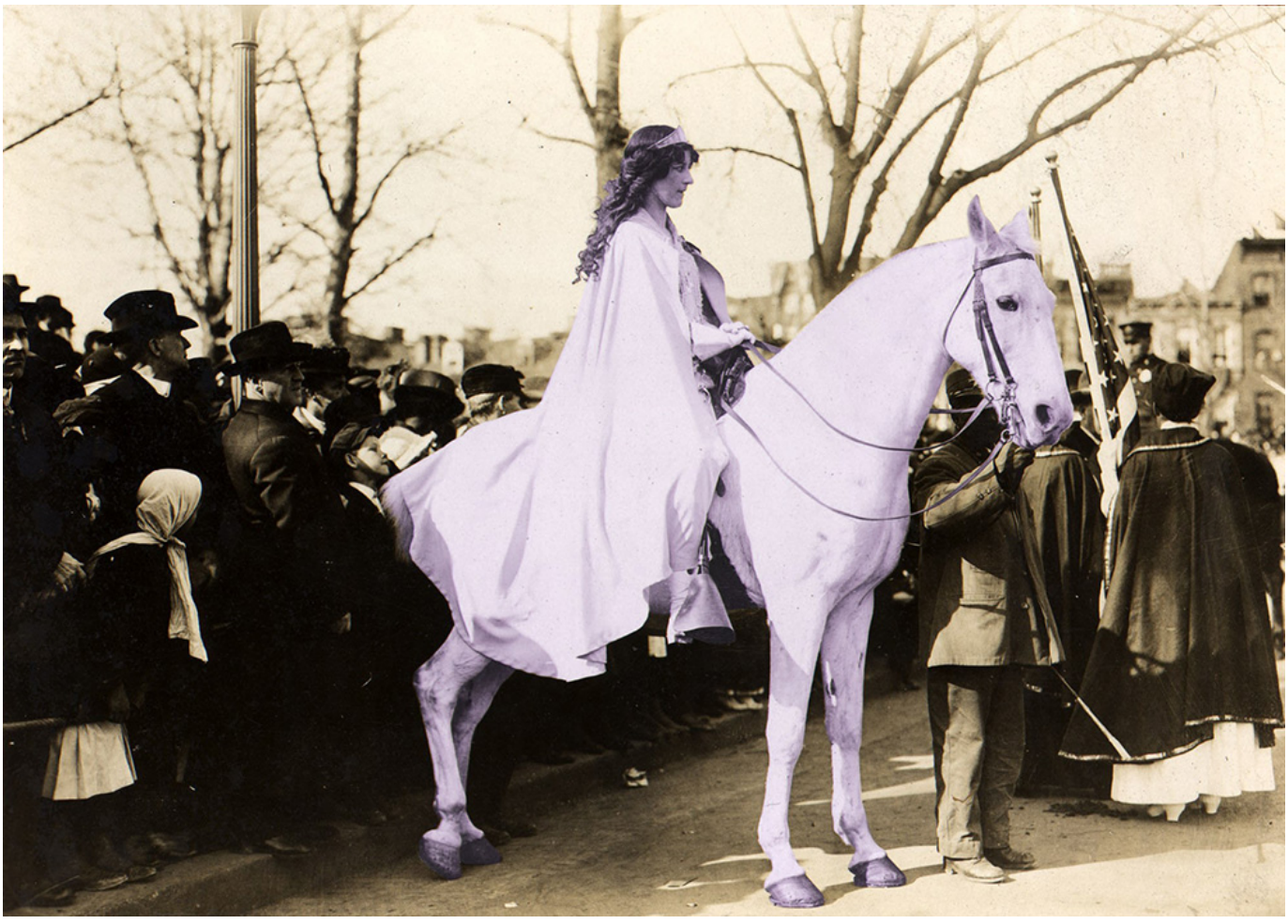
The 1913 Woman Suffrage Procession

Silent Sentinels Picket the White House

America Enters World War I

The Rise of Oregon Petticoat Governments

Ratification of Constitutional Amendments



Inez Milholland Boissevain, sits on a white horse at the National American Woman Suffrage Association parade on March 3, 1913 in Washington, D.C. (Image courtesy of Library of Congress)

The 1848 Seneca Falls Convention

The first women's rights convention was organized by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and a number of Quaker women in Seneca Falls, New York. They aimed to open discussion among the roughly 300 attendees concerning the rights and conditions of women in society, religion, and politics. The event spanned two days of speeches and discourse and was open to both sexes, but men were to remain silent observers for the first day's events.

The convention's Declaration of Sentiments, written by Stanton, was the centerpiece of discussion. Based on the Declaration of Independence, there were 15 resolutions which taken together called for sexual equality in society at large – including a woman's right to vote. Attendees heard, discussed, and then opted to sign the declaration or abstain in dissension. Nearly all points were readily agreed to, except for the question of suffrage, which prompted a heated argument.

On the second day, Frederick Douglass, the only African American present, spoke in favor of woman suffrage to the assembled crowd. "In this denial of the right to participate in government, not merely the degradation of woman and the perpetuation of a great injustice happens," he argued, "but the maiming and repudiation of one-half of the moral and intellectual power of the government of the world."

Excerpt from the 1848 Declaration of Sentiments

"...The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has never permitted her to exercise her inalienable right to the elective franchise.

He has compelled her to submit to laws, in the formation of which she had no voice.

He has withheld from her rights which are given to the most ignorant and degraded men – both natives and foreigners.

Having deprived her of this first right of a citizen, the elective franchise, thereby leaving her without representation in the halls of legislation, he has oppressed her on all sides.

He has made her, if married, in the eye of the law, civilly dead.

He has taken from her all right in property, even to the wages she earns.

He has made her, morally, an irresponsible being, as she can commit many crimes with impunity, provided they be done in the presence of her husband. In the covenant of marriage, she is compelled to promise obedience to her husband, he becoming, to all intents and purposes, her master – the law giving him power to deprive her of her liberty, and to administer chastisement.

He has so framed the laws of divorce, as to what shall be the proper causes, and in case of separation, to whom the guardianship of the children shall be given, as to be wholly regardless of the happiness of women – the law, in all cases, going upon a false supposition of the supremacy of man, and giving all power into his hands.

After depriving her of all rights as a married woman, if single, and the owner of property, he has taxed her to support a government which recognizes her only when her property can be made profitable to it.

He has monopolized nearly all the profitable employments, and from those she is permitted to follow, she receives but a scanty remuneration. He closes against her all the avenues to wealth and distinction which he considers most honorable to himself. As a teacher of theology, medicine, or law, she is not known.

He has denied her the facilities for obtaining a thorough education, all colleges being closed against her.

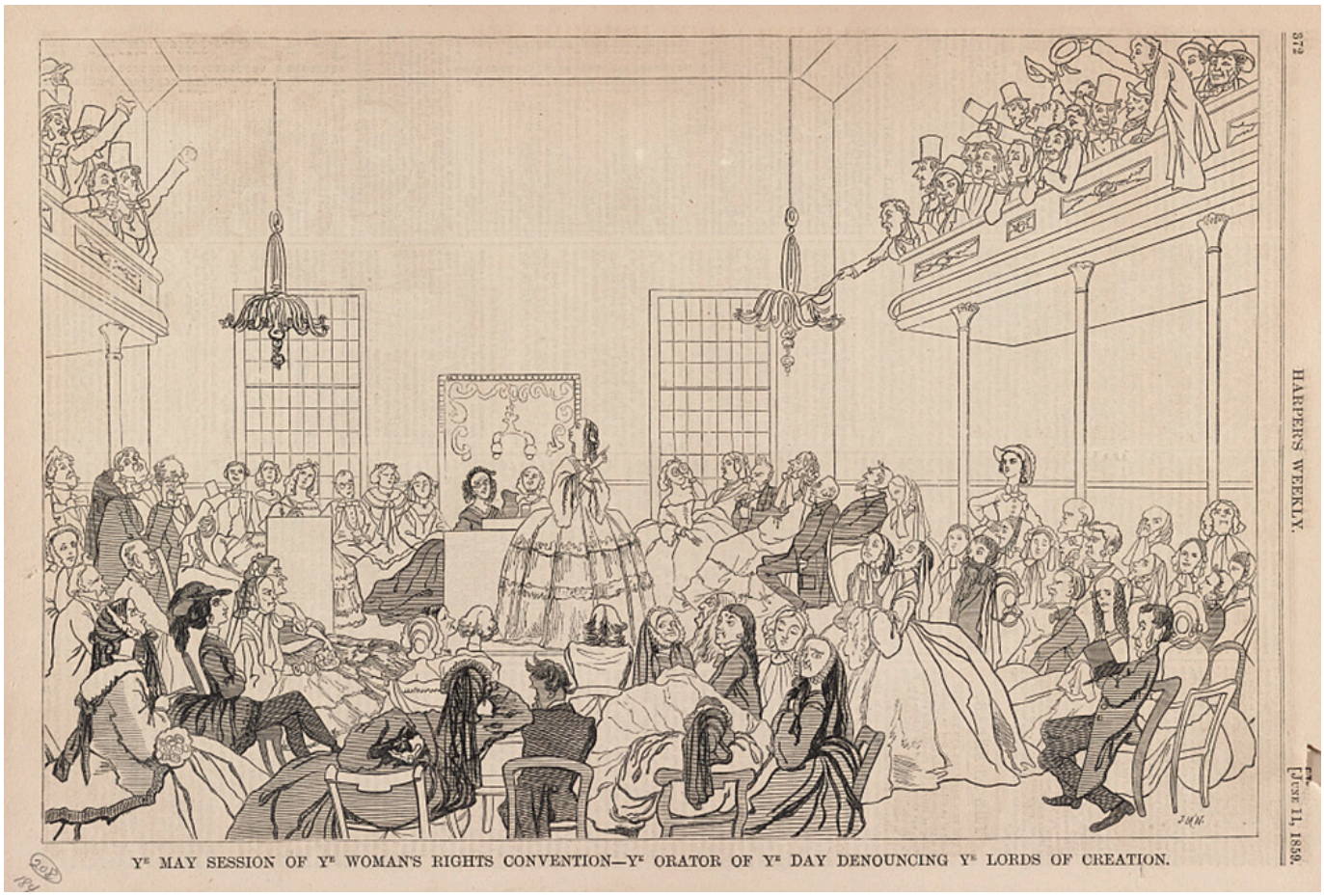
He allows her in church, as well as state, but a subordinate position, claiming apostolic authority for her exclusion from the ministry, and, with some exceptions, from any public participation in the affairs of the church.

He has created a false public sentiment by giving to the world a different code of morals for men and women, by which moral delinquencies which exclude women from society, are not only tolerated, but deemed of little account in man.

He has usurped the prerogative of Jehovah himself, claiming it as his right to assign for her a sphere of action, when that belongs to her conscience and to her God.

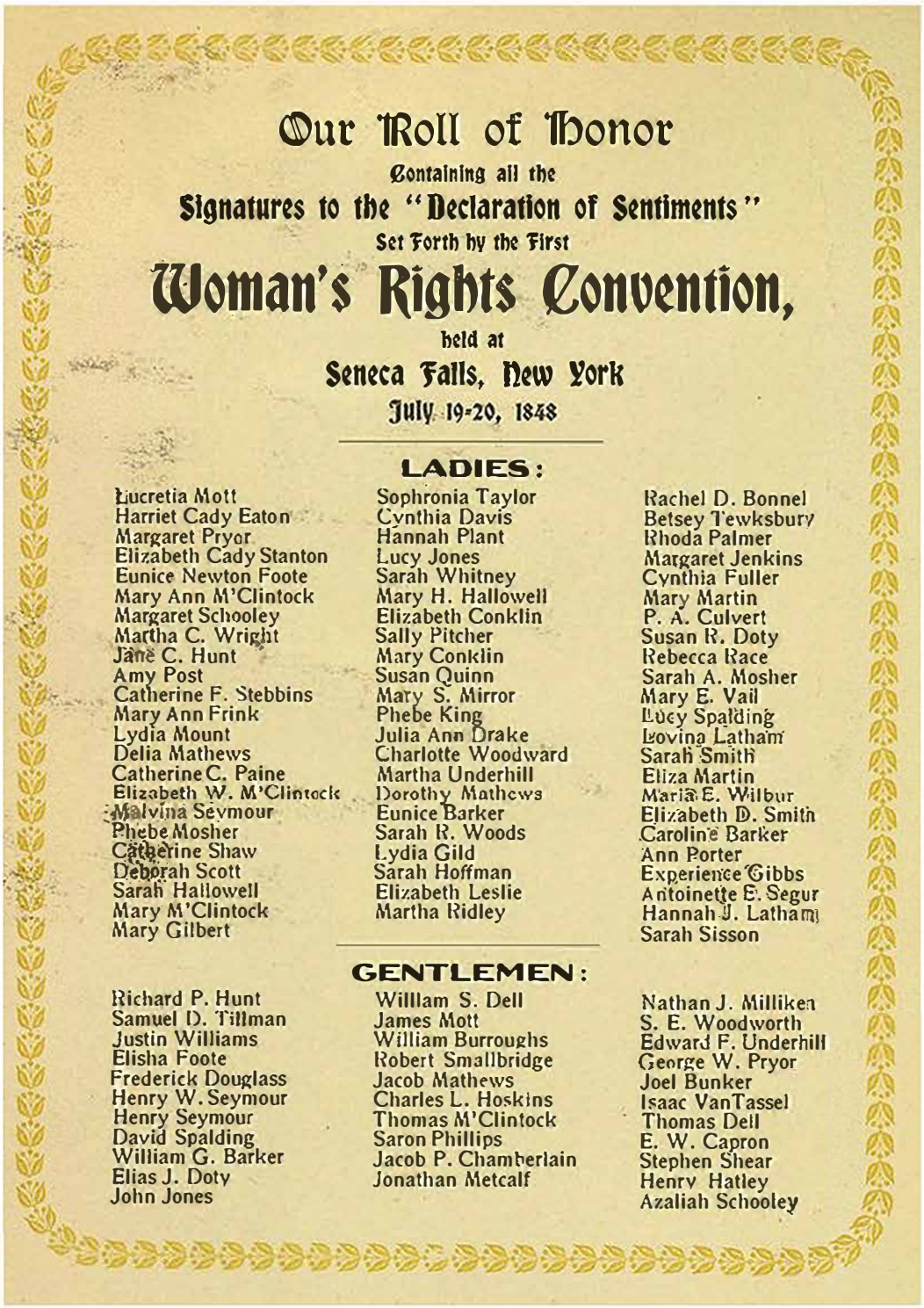
He has endeavored, in every way that he could, to destroy her confidence in her own powers, to lessen her self-respect, and to make her willing to lead a dependent and abject life.

Now, in view of this entire disfranchisement of one-half the people of this country, their social and religious degradation – in view of the unjust laws above mentioned, and because women do feel themselves aggrieved, oppressed, and fraudulently deprived of their most sacred rights, we insist that they have immediate admission to all the rights and privileges which belong to them as citizens of the United States."



Despite the support of a number of men in the decade following the first women's rights meeting in Seneca Falls, New York, the conventions that were held throughout the North and West often received unsympathetic reports in the press and encountered disruptive groups in the lecture hall. On June 11, 1859, the New York-based newspaper Harper's Weekly published a wood engraving mocking the annual conventions, with men in both galleries heckling and interrupting the woman at the dais. (Image courtesy of Library of Congress)

List of signatures from the Declaration of Sentiments 1848. (Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons)



Our Roll of Honor

Containing all the

Signatures to the "Declaration of Sentiments"

Set Forth by the First

Woman's Rights Convention,

held at

Seneca Falls, New York

July 19-20, 1848

LADIES:

Lucretia Mott
Harriet Cady Eaton
Margaret Pryor
Elizabeth Cady Stanton
Eunice Newton Foote
Mary Ann M'Clintock
Margaret Schooley
Martha C. Wright
Jane C. Hunt
Amy Post
Catherine F. Stebbins
Mary Ann Frink
Lydia Mount
Delia Mathews
Catherine C. Paine
Elizabeth W. M'Clintock
Malvina Seymour
Phebe Mosher
Catherine Shaw
Deborah Scott
Sarah Hallowell
Mary M'Clintock
Mary Gilbert

Sophronia Taylor
Cynthia Davis
Hannah Plant
Lucy Jones
Sarah Whitney
Mary H. Hallowell
Elizabeth Conklin
Sally Pitcher
Mary Conklin
Susan Quinn
Mary S. Mirror
Phebe King
Julia Ann Drake
Charlotte Woodward
Martha Underhill
Dorothy Mathews
Eunice Barker
Sarah R. Woods
Lydia Gild
Sarah Hoffman
Elizabeth Leslie
Martha Ridley

Rachel D. Bonnel
Betsey Tewksbury
Rhoda Palmer
Margaret Jenkins
Cynthia Fuller
Mary Martin
P. A. Culvert
Susan R. Doty
Rebecca Race
Sarah A. Mosher
Mary E. Vail
Lucy Spalding
Lovina Latham
Sarah Smith
Eliza Martin
Maria E. Wilbur
Elizabeth D. Smith
Caroline Barker
Ann Porter
Experience Gibbs
Antoinette E. Segur
Hannah J. Latham
Sarah Sisson

GENTLEMEN:

Richard P. Hunt
Samuel D. Tillman
Justin Williams
Elisha Foote
Frederick Douglass
Henry W. Seymour
Henry Seymour
David Spalding
William G. Barker
Elias J. Doty
John Jones

William S. Dell
James Mott
William Burroughs
Robert Smallbridge
Jacob Mathews
Charles L. Hoskins
Thomas M'Clintock
Saron Phillips
Jacob P. Chamberlain
Jonathan Metcalf

Nathan J. Milliken
S. E. Woodworth
Edward F. Underhill
George W. Pryor
Joel Bunker
Isaac VanTassel
Thomas Dell
E. W. Capron
Stephen Shear
Henry Hatley
Azaliah Schooley

The 1912 Election

Nineteen twelve was a pivotal election year for progressive causes in both the state and the nation. In Oregon, it marked the year when women won the right to vote and hold office in state elections. Oregonians had previously voted on the issue five times from 1884 to 1910 – more than any other state. Oregonians also voted in a dramatic four-way presidential election at the federal level when electors gave a referendum on whether progressivism belonged in national politics.

There were three increasingly progressive candidates from three different parties, and a decidedly conservative incumbent. Most progressive was Eugene V. Debs, perennial candidate of the Socialist Party who won nearly a million votes – 6 % of the total.

Progressive elements in the Republican Party split and formed a new party under former president Theodore Roosevelt. Called the Progressive Party, these voters wanted the government to regulate big business and enact moderate social reforms like national woman suffrage, earning 27% of the vote. The remaining Republican Party, now a party of pro-business conservatives, rallied behind Wall Street and incumbent president William Taft, taking 23%.

Before the schism, Republicans dominated national politics, and their split opened the way for the Democratic Party under Woodrow Wilson to win the presidency with just 42% of the vote but a whopping 435 electoral votes. Traditionally conservative and distrustful of a strong federal government, the Democratic Party rallied behind Wilson's lightly progressive platform of lowering tariffs, halting unfair business practices, and reforming the unstable banking sector. Wilson's administration became more progressive over time, eventually passing legislation benefiting farmers, workers, the environment, and women.

1912 National Vote

Candidate	Party	Electoral Votes	Popular Votes
Woodrow Wilson	Democratic	435	6,293,454 (42%)
Theodore Roosevelt	Progressive	88	4,119,207 (27%)
William H. Taft	Republican	8	3,483,922 (23%)
Eugene V. Debs	Socialist		900,369 (6%)
Eugene W. Chafin	Prohibition		207,972 (1%)

1912 Oregon Vote

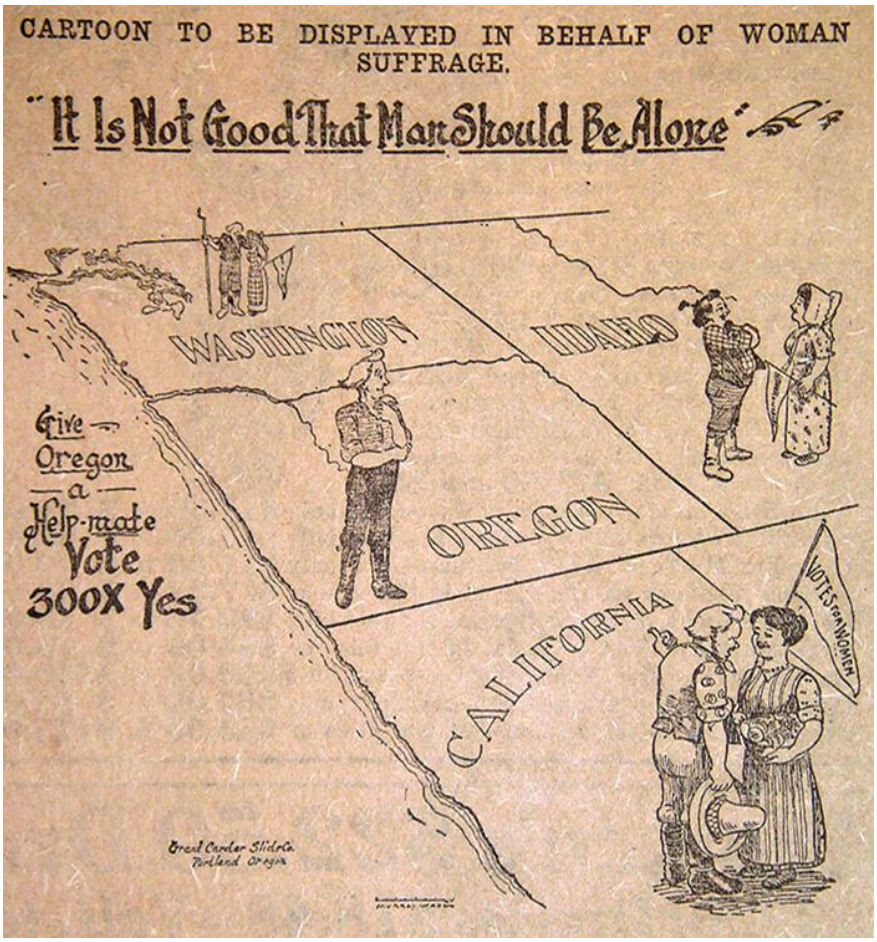
Candidate	Party	Votes
Woodrow Wilson	Democratic	47,064 (34%)
Theodore Roosevelt	Progressive	37,600 (27%)
William H. Taft	Republican	34,673 (25%)
Eugene V. Debs	Socialist	13,343 (9%)
Eugene W. Chafin	Prohibition	4,360 (3%)

Initiative Votes Before and After Oregon Woman Suffrage in 1912

After Oregon opened the polls to women, the number of voters effectively doubled and the arguments of suffragist and anti-suffragist were tested. The following initiatives reflect that change in voting numbers, as well as a focus on progressive and temperance reform after successful passage of woman suffrage:

Date	Measure	Yea	Nay	Margin
1908	Empower cities to regulate theaters, race tracks, pool-rooms, bowling alleys, and the sale of liquor	39,442 (43%)	**52,346 (57%)**	12,904 Against
1910	Grant suffrage to taxpayers, regardless of sex	35,270 (37%)	**59,065 (63%)**	23,795 Against
1912	Equal suffrage for women in Oregon state elections	**61,265 (52%)**	57,104 (48%)	4,162 In Favor
1912	Abolish capital punishment	41,951 (39%)	**64,578 (61%)**	22,627 Against
1914	Eight-hour work day and room ventilation for female workers	88,480 (42%)	**120,296 (58%)**	31,816 Against
1914	Prohibit the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors except for medical, scientific, sacramental, or mechanical purposes	**136,842 (58%)**	100,362 (42%)	36,480 In Favor
1914	Abolish the death penalty for murder, making life imprisonment to maximum punishment for any crime	**100,552 (50%)**	100,395 (50%)	157 In Favor
1916	Repeal section 6, article II of the Oregon constitution which reads “No negro, Chinaman, or mulatto shall have the right of suffrage."	100,027 (50%)	**100,701 (50%)**	674 Against
1916	Amend state prohibition to permit the manufacture and sale of malt liquor containing only four percent or less alcohol.	85,973 (38%)	**140,599 (62%)**	54,626 Against
1916	Strengthen state prohibition by	**114,932 (51%)**	109,671 (49%)	5,261 in favor

forbidding the
importation of
intoxicating liquors for
beverage purposes



This 1912 editorial cartoon was shown before movies and theater productions across Oregon. Oregon suffragists accused Oregon voting men of lagging behind neighboring states on woman suffrage. Idaho women gained the vote in 1896, followed by Washington in 1910, and California in 1911. (Courtesy of The Oregonian)

Longtime Oregon woman suffrage advocate Abigail Scott Duniway signs the first Equal Suffrage Proclamation ever made by a woman on November 30, 1912. Oregon Governor Oswald West stands next to her. (Image courtesy of Library of Congress)

View Governor Oswald West's 1912 Equal Suffrage Proclamation (Oregon State Archives): https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/9268278

Woman suffrage advocates ride the Oregon Suffrage Lunch Wagon in June 1912. (Courtesy of Amy Khedouri)

The 1913 Woman Suffrage Procession

Women march in the National Woman Suffrage Parade in Washington D.C. in 1913. (**Courtesy of National Archives (https://catalog.archives.gov/id/24520426)**)

The first suffragist parade in Washington D.C. was organized by Alice Paul and Lucy Burns for the day before President Wilson's inauguration in March 1913. Working with the National American Woman Suffrage Association, they drew thousands of marchers to rally for a national amendment on woman suffrage. Headed by Inez Milholland on a white horse, these marchers emphasized grace and femininity – a strategy Alice Paul promoted to rebuke the anti-suffragist claim that political engagement would corrupt American ideals of womanhood.

The procession was the first in a three-part demonstration. Marchers, bands, and floats representing different states and professions made their way down Pennsylvania Avenue. At the same time, an allegorical tableau was performed in front of the treasury building which featured women playing the roles of Columbia, Liberty, Charity, Justice, Hope, and Peace. In the final act, demonstrators gathered to hear speeches from prominent suffragists including Anna Howard Shaw and Helen Keller.

Though the procession included both black and white marchers, they were racially segregated. Alice Paul, fearful of losing southern support, caved to their demands to keep African American women from marching with white state delegations. Black marchers were instead relegated to the back of the parade. Ida B. Wells refused to be separated from her Illinois delegation, and waited in the crowd to jump the barriers and march with the women representing Chicago.

The procession generated massive crowds that grew increasingly hostile and blocked whole streets, forcing marchers to push through with horses and automobiles. Suffragists were verbally abused and physically assaulted while the D.C. police did little to protect them. They were instead aided by concerned citizens, including a troupe of Boy Scouts, the Pennsylvania National Guard, and a U.S. cavalry escort. In all, the marchers and their detractors generated press and sympathy for the cause of woman suffrage.

General Jones [left] and Suffrage Pilgrims arrive in Washington D.C. for National Woman Suffrage Parade in 1913, (**Courtesy of Library of Congress) https://www.loc.gov/resource/ggbain.12622/**

Silent Sentinels Picket the White House

The sentinels were a faction within the National Woman's Party who picketed the White House for two and a half years from January 1917 to June 1919 to visibly advocate for woman suffrage. Led by Alice Paul and Lucy Burns, some 2,000 women employed silence as a protest tactic, and bore signs calling on President Wilson to support suffrage and shaming him for hypocrisy. Their tactics were disliked by many, including more conservative suffrage organizations who feared they would turn public opinion against the caus.

The protesters were tolerated at first but grew increasingly harassed and assaulted as their vigil continued through the American entry into World War I. Beginning in the summer of 1917, Paul, Burns, and others were arrested for obstructing traffic in front of the White House. Detained in the District of Columbia Jail and Virginia's Occoquan Workhouse, the women began a hunger strike to protest their state as political prisoners. Striking suffragists were force-fed through tubes, and on November 14, 1917, known as the "Night of Terror," the superintendent of the Occoquan Workhouse ordered his guards to batter the sentinels into submission.

News media brought these stories of state brutality against women to the public and helped turn the tide towards suffrage. The electorate began sympathizing with the sentinels after the Night of Terror, and they were all released by November 28. The following January, President Wilson announced his support of woman suffrage. The sentinels continued to protest, even burning an effigy of the president in front of the White House in February of 1919. They continued to picket until congress passed the 19th Amendment, and then dispersed to the states where they began agitating for ratification.

Drawn by Nina E. Allender

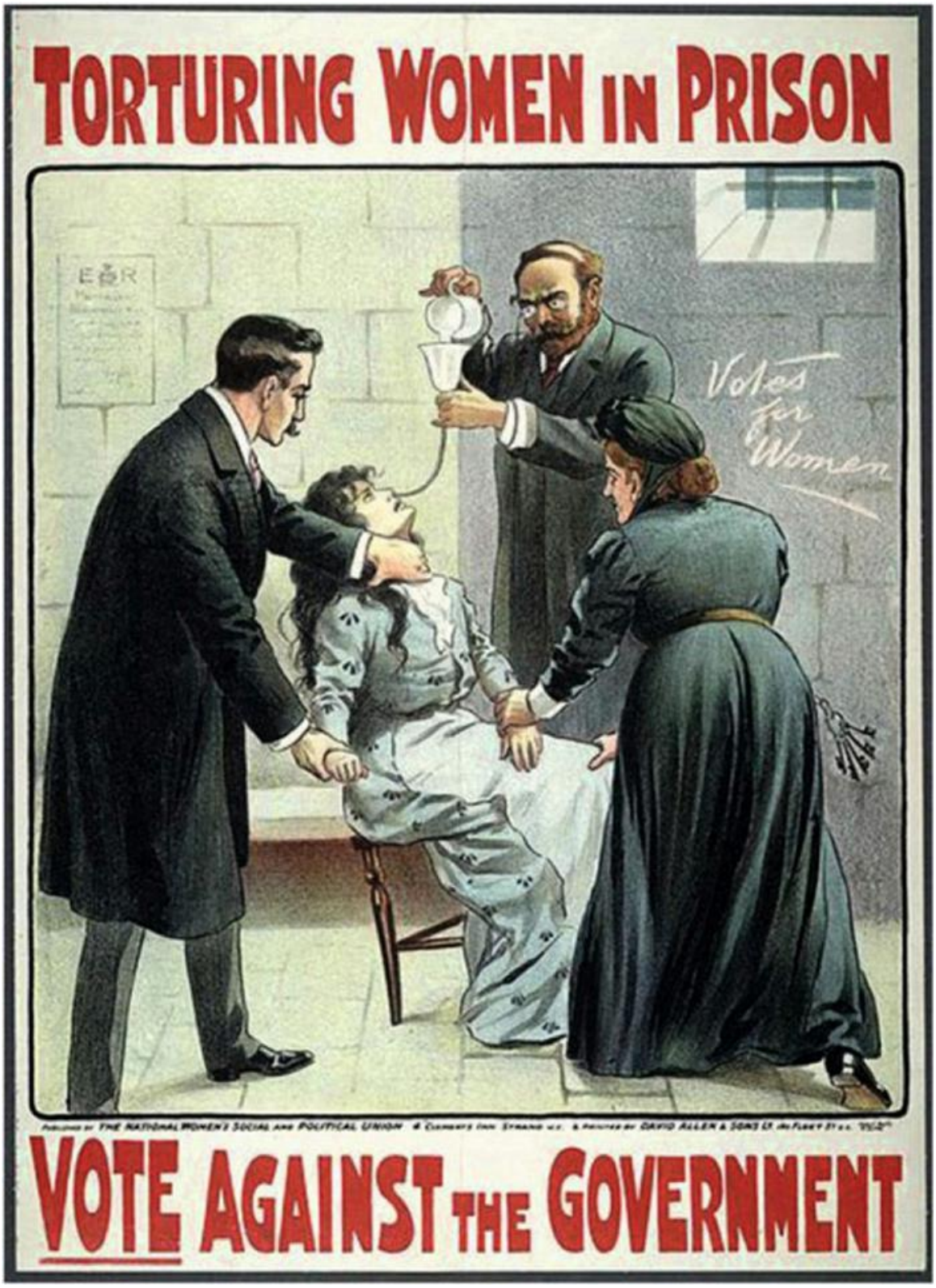
THE COURT OF LAST RESORT

Public Opinion Forces the Administration

This illustration by Nina E. Allender, entitled “The Court of Last Resort,” draws attention to the treatment of protesters. (*The Suffragist*, December 1, 1917)

Lucy Burns sits in the Occoquan Workhouse in Washington D.C. in November 1917. During a hunger strike, she was force-fed food through a tube. (**Courtesy of Library of Congress (https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/hec.09979/)**)

This ca. 1910 poster by the National Women's Social and Political Union dramatically illustrates prison torture allegations. (Courtesy of Library of Congress)



America Enters World War I

Years before the 19th Amendment, nine million American women mobilized themselves for American entry into The Great War in 1917, with American involvement from April 1917 to November 1918. The lion's share – eight million – volunteered for the American Red Cross providing goods and services as well as working as nurses and drivers for the war effort. Women also enlisted in the military in great numbers for the first time, filling non-combat roles so that more servicemen could be rotated to combat duty. Over 11,000 women performed shore duty roles for the U.S. Navy, and twice that number served in the Army and Navy Nurse Corps both at home and abroad. With many American men drafted into military service, women also stepped into the jobs they left behind, keeping U.S. agricultural and industrial sectors afloat throughout the war.

The violent reprisals of men during the 1913 Women's March were unifying memories for many, galvanizing the suffrage movement into one that advanced not just voting rights, but the rights of safety for all women. Media depictions of the war in Europe were rife with reports of violence against women perpetrated by soldiers in occupied territory. American recruitment of women into the war effort was due, in part, to a desire to use military force to protect themselves and other women from sexual assault.

Women were vital to the American war effort, and suffragists were not going to let the country forget it. They stressed the unfairness of a system that relied on the contributions of women to win the war, while simultaneously denying them the right to contribute as full citizens without the vote. Suffragists argued that women's service in the war effort totally refuted the anti-suffragist claim that women should not be enfranchised because they do not sacrifice for their country. As the war neared its end, suffragist sentiment percolated up to the federal government and President Wilson who declared to Congress, " We have made partners of the women in this war…Shall we admit them only to a partnership of suffering and sacrifice and toil and not to a partnership of privilege?"

Women work at Gray & Davis Co., an artillery plant in Cambridge, Massachusetts, during World War I in 1914. (Courtesy of Library of Congress)

Women prepare to deliver various government packages during World War I. They were members of the National League for Women's Service. Women were employed as drivers, ambulance drivers, messengers, etc. ca. 1917-1920. (**Courtesy of Library of Congress (https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/anrc.06283/)**)

Esther Pohl Lovejoy (far right) poses with other members of the American Women's Hospitals in 1918. (Courtesy of OHSU Historical Collections & Archives)

American photojournalist Helen Johns Kirtland stands in a trench during World War I. As a war correspondent, she covered many battles, photographing and reporting for *Leslie's Illustrated Weekly*. (Courtesy of Library of Congress)

A poster appeals to the patriotism of American women in 1917 during World War I. The poster, created by the Civilian Service and Labor Department, reads: “Honor roll of women who will work to win the war / Has he registered your name for service?” (Courtesy of Library of Congress)

The Rise of Petticoat Governments

Page Content

“One thing is sure, we can’t do any worse than the men have done.” – Comment by newly-elected Umatilla "Mayoress"

After decades of struggle, women gained the right to vote in Oregon in 1912. Of course, the fight continued for woman suffrage on a national basis until the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified in 1920. But beyond the right to vote, women were empowered by the movement in other ways. Many threw off societal limits on dress and behavior. Some threw their hats in the political ring and this led to instances of what became known as "petticoat governments" in Oregon. Here are three examples.

An anti-suffrage advertisement. Many men believed women were not qualified to vote or hold office or that women would be tainted by the process. (Courtesy of University of Oregon Library)

Umatilla

On December 5, 1916, the City of Umatilla elected an all-woman slate of candidates and received national newspaper coverage as the first “all female” city administration in the United States.

The City of Umatilla had a population of 300 residents with approximately 200 voters in 1916. According to the newspapers, a group of woman grew tired of watching the town fall into disrepair and the loose enforcement of the laws. They decided they could do a better job of running the town. Their campaign prevailed with a clean sweep for the six female candidates. Laura J. Starcher defeated her husband for the position of mayor by a vote of 101 to 73. Elected to council were Gladys Spinning, Florence Brownwell, Anna Means, and Stella Paulu. Lola Merrick was elected treasurer and Bertha Cherry was elected recorder. Two male members of the council were holdovers (or as one newspaper put it “leftovers”) but the mayor did not give them any committee assignments.

The new administration got to work improving the water and electrical services, approved funds for street and sidewalk projects, and organized city “Clean up weeks.” Additional accomplishments included new railroad crossing signs, founding of a town library, monthly garbage collection and appointment of a city health official during the 1918 pandemic.

One of the more interesting policy decisions they made was not to hire a city marshal. The newspapers speculated that it was because they would need to appoint a man to the job, but they could have found a woman who was proficient in the use of a gun. Mayor Starcher said the expenditure of $57 a month was unnecessary in part because a deputy sheriff was on the streets daily and the city charter empowered any member of the council to make an arrest if needed.

Yoncalla

Another petticoat government arose in the City of Yoncalla in Douglas County.

As the 1920 city election approached, it was reported that the male politicians in the community intended to let the incumbents of the various city offices hold over without opposition. One newspaper stated that the men were more concerned with state and national politics at this time. However, several women decided to organize a stealth campaign to elect a more responsive government. The male politicians were surprised when the ballots were counted and the

results showed a clean sweep for the women. One of the newly elected council members was the wife of the mayor and, as the newspaper noted, this certainly disproved the old adage that “a woman cannot keep a secret.”

The previous administrations were described by the woman as “inefficient, allowing breaks in the sidewalks to go unrepaired, speeding automobiles were not controlled, streets were insufficiently lighted and that a general sickness in municipal affairs prevailed. We intend to study conditions and do all in our power to give the city of Yoncalla a good, efficient government.”

The mayor-elect, Mary (Goodell) Burt, was a native Oregonian and graduate of Pacific University in 1873. One of her classmates there was Harvey Scott, longtime editor of *The Oregonian* and a strong opponent of woman suffrage in his day.


LEFT TO RIGHT—MRS. BERNICE WILSON, MRS. JENNIE S. LASSWELL, MRS MARY BUR
NETTIE HANNAN, MRS. EDITH THOMPSON.

City of Yoncalla Mayor Mary Burt [center] led an all-woman city council after the 1920 election. (*Morning Oregonian*, Nov 10, 1920, page 4)

The newly elected council members were: Bernice Wilson, Jennie Laswell, Nettie Hanna, and Edith Thompson. Characterized by the newspapers, “as mature women,” they had all been active in community affairs before their election and were longtime residents.

The Oregonian reported in December, 1920 that the mayor and city council resigned their positions before the expiration of their terms. The men said they took this action to let the women begin at once their program of civic betterment and pledged their support of the new administration.

Burns

Located out in the wide open frontier of eastern Oregon, the City of Burns elected a female mayor in 1920 without her even knowing.

The same year that Yoncalla voted for an all-female city administration there was an even more surprising result in the city election in Burns. Grace Lampshire was elected mayor even though she had no idea that she was running for office. Apparently, friends of Mrs. Lampshire decided she could do a good job as mayor and wrote her in on the ballot. When the results were tallied she had won!

The press, even on a national level, published numerous stories about the success women in Oregon were having in taking control of municipal governments. They often paired the stories of the Yoncalla election with reports of the news of Mrs. Lampshire’s election.

Grace had been a resident of Harney County since the early part of the century, having served as a teacher at Poison Creek north of Burns before her marriage to Edwin Lampshire. Unfortunately, he drowned just a few years later and she returned to her parents' home in Eugene. Grace returned to Burns around 1910 and married her former husband’s brother, J. J. Lampshire. She was active in a number of civic organizations and it was likely her hard work and success in these undertakings that led to the write in campaign.


WOMAN MAYOR OF BURNS PROMINENT THERE.

City of Burns Mayor Grace Lampshire got a big surprise on election day in 1920. (*Morning Oregonian*, November 25, 1920, page 8)

Lampshire served a two-year term and then appears to have returned to a less public life. She can be found in later census records with her occupation listed as florist.

City of Umatilla Mayor Laura J. Starcher. (Oregon Daily Journal, December 17, 1916, page 14)

Ratification of Constitutional Amendments

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In retrospect, ratification of the 19th Amendment looks inevitable. But at the time, the possibility of failure was real. Traditional forces mounted a determined fight in the U.S. Congress to block the long sought goal of woman suffrage. When that collapsed, the battle moved to the final arena: Would 36 states ratify the amendment to finally add it to the U.S. Constitution? The painfully slow process dragged on for more than a year before victory was sealed when Tennessee voted in favor.

The 14th Amendment, Section 1; Ratified July 1868

"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."

Passage of the 19th Amendment; June 4, 1920

The amendment guaranteeing woman suffrage was a monumental achievement for the activists who spent decades agitating for its ratification. This radical amendment was first proposed to the Senate in 1878 by Senator Aaron Sargent (R-Cal) and testified by Carrie Chapman Catt. It sat in committee for 11 years before being rejected 16-to-34 in 1887. Suffrage organizations regrouped after the loss, and focused on achieving voting rights at the state level instead.

Women's increasingly important role in World War I renewed interest in a national suffrage amendment. The National American Woman Suffrage Association and National Woman's Party garnered public sympathy by pointing out women's sacrifices to the war effort. The amendment again came before congress in 1918, passing the House by one vote, and received an unprecedented appeal by President Wilson in the Senate, but fell two votes short.

In all, the House and Senate voted on the "Anthony" amendment five times between 1918 and 1919, as Southern Democrats formed a bulwark of opposition. Then, in a special session of Congress called by the president in May, 1919, the amendment passed the House 304-to-89. It came before the Senate and after Southern Democrats abandoned a filibuster, the amendment passed 56-to-25 on June 4, 1919.

View *The Oregonian* newspaper clipping (https://records.sos.state.or.us/ORSOSWebDrawer/Recordhtml/9430303) about celebration related to national woman suffrage passage (Courtesy of Kimberly Jensen).

Text of the 19th Amendment; Ratified August 18, 1920

"The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation."

Women participate in a suffrage demonstration in Lafayette Square to get the last vote in the U.S. Senate before June 4, 1919. (Courtesy of Library of Congress)

Alice Paul raises a glass to celebrate the ratification of the 19th Amendment in 1920. (Courtesy of Library of Congress)

Organizations

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A host of woman suffrage associations flourished from the late 19th to the early 20th centuries. Many disagreed on tactics and ideology, and often had acrimonious relationships with each other. They were all united on one front, however: that women suffered unjustly without access to the vote, and that action must be taken.

American Equal Rights Association; 1866-1869

The AERA was founded after the Civil War to advance the rights of all, especially women and African Americans. The coalition of women and abolitionists broke over disagreements on the nascent 15th Amendment. Some believed that enfranchising African American men was a necessary first step in the fight for universal suffrage. Others disagreed, arguing that the amendment should be scrapped in favor of a more inclusive bill, or even that voting rights be granted to white women before black men.

American Woman Suffrage Association; 1869-1890

Created following the American Equal Rights Association's schism, the AWSA was a conservative women's rights organization. It was a single-issue group focused only on obtaining suffrage for women and ignored other movements for gender equality. It promoted state campaigns for voting rights, and supported traditional social institutions like gender roles. Nonconfrontational, the AWSA playbook made appeals to men in power through petitions, testimony, and moving oratory.

Colored Women's Equal Suffrage League; 1912

African American women in Oregon mobilized in preparation for the 1912 election. The CWESL was made up of members from Portland's five African American churches, and run by Harriet (Hattie) Redmond and Katherine Gray. The group held meetings to raise awareness of voting rights issues in their communities, and gained the endorsement of Portland's African American newspaper, *The Advocate*. The CWESL also worked alongside Oregon's white suffragists, a collaboration vital to the success of the 1912 campaign.

Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage; 1913-1917

Formed as a militant body inside the National American Women Suffrage Association by women who took a more aggressive approach to obtaining their rights. Headed by Alice Paul and Lucy Burns, the CUWS was singularly focused on the passage of the 19th Amendment. They led their organization to stage demonstrations and picket the White House.

Everybody's Equal Suffrage League; 1912

This broad group was unique to Oregon, founded by Esther Pohl Lovejoy as a force of inclusivity. Most suffrage organizations appealed to a narrow audience, defined by race, sex, or class. The EESL, by contrast, crossed those barriers and used the strength provided by this diversity to influence wide swaths of the electorate in Oregon's pivotal 1912 vote.

International Alliance of Women/Alliance Internationale des Femmes; 1904-Present

Founded in Berlin by notable international suffragists including Americans Susan B. Anthony and Carrie Chapman Catt. The IAW promotes women's rights as human rights, focusing on female empowerment and gender equality around the world. The group has general consultative status with the United Nations, and is involved with a number of national governments and international leagues.

League of Women Voters; 1920-Present

A few months before the ratification of the 19th Amendment, a confident NAWSA transformed into the League. The LWV sought to educate the growing number of America's newly enfranchised women on the responsibilities of voting. Operating to this day, the League continues to bring awareness to women's issues and works to keep women voting in the U.S. The LWV does not endorse or oppose candidates or parties, though in keeping with its roots the League actively supports a wide variety of progressive policies as feminist issues.

National American Woman Suffrage Association; 1890-1920

The AWSA and NWSA put aside their differences and merged after 21 years of separation. Run by Susan B. Anthony, Carrie Chapman Catt, and Anna Howard Shaw, the NAWSA grew from roughly 7,000 members to over two million, becoming the largest voluntary organization in the U.S. Though the group promoted women's rights in general, it was primarily devoted to securing an amendment for woman suffrage. NAWSA began exerting political pressure on the U.S. Congress in the early 20th century as states enshrined voting rights for women.

National Association of Colored Women's Clubs; 1904-Present

Drawn together from numerous African-American women's organizations, the NACWC worked to enfranchise black women, as well as provide job training, equal pay, and child welfare. In the mid-20th century, it focused on ending segregation and lynching, and succeed in advancing integration of schools and businesses. It thrives today, continuing to work for the social welfare of African American women, children, and families.

National Council of Jewish Women; 1893-Present

A wide-reaching progressive organization, the NCJW has fought for human rights in the U.S. and abroad for over a century. Originally formed to aid Jewish women and immigrants in the U.S., the NCJW grew into a force for woman suffrage, social justice, education, community service, as well as advocacy for women and children worldwide. Today the NCJW focuses heavily on women's economic and reproductive rights, as well as preventing domestic and sexual violence.

National Woman's Party; 1916-Present

The NWP grew from and then eclipsed the Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage. Emerging at the outset of World War I, the NWP was a pacifist organization which opposed American involvement in the war. Their most famous figures were the Silent Sentinels who were repeatedly arrested and jailed for holding daily demonstrations in front of the White House. After the passage of the 19th Amendment the party continued to fight for women's equality in the U.S., notably struggling to secure passage of another bill: the Equal Rights Amendment.

National Woman Suffrage Association; 1869-1890

The NWSA was a more militant women's rights group that emerged from the demise of the American Equal Rights Association. Headed by Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, it was an entirely female-led organization. More radical than its sister organization, the American Woman Suffrage Association, the NWSA promoted an array of

women's issues from their headquarters in New York City and Washington D.C. They used litigation to advance their agenda, and promoted the individual liberties of U.S. women as equal to those of men.

Woman's Christian Temperance Union; 1873-Present

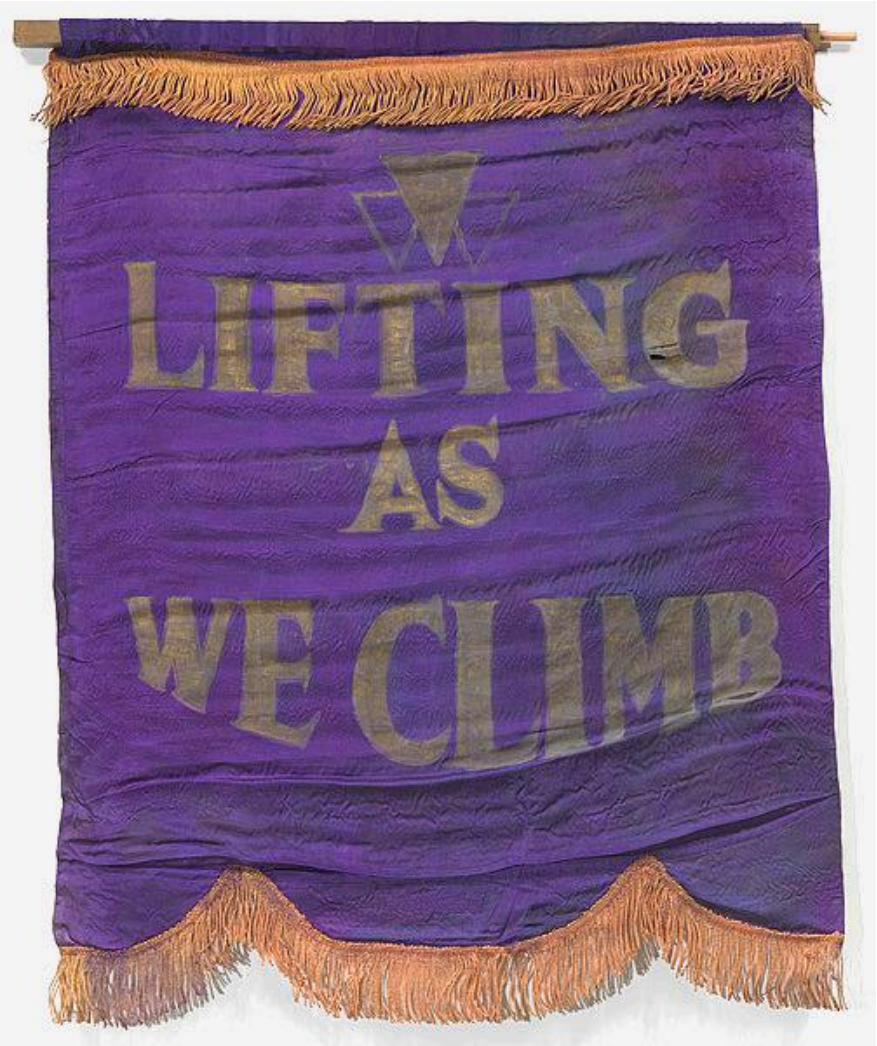
An evangelical Protestant organization, the WCTU advanced women's rights as an extension of its core campaign against drugs and alcohol. The organization viewed women as morally superior to men, and believed women needed suffrage to protect their families from social ills. Unlike other suffrage groups, the WCTU did not promote radical agendas and was viewed by many conservative Americans as a more traditionally acceptable form of women's politics. At its peak in 1927, the WCTU operated in over 40 countries and had over 700,000 members.

Women's Trade Union League; 1903-1950

The WTUL was one of the first organizations to meld women's rights with worker's rights as more women entered the workforce in the early 20th century. The group worked closely with unions and the American Federation of Labor pushing support for woman suffrage among the working class. The WTUL saw the vote as a way for women workers to gain protective legislation and provide themselves with political equality.

Delegations of women's clubs and organizations converge on Washington, D.C. for the first national suffrage parade in 1913. This photo shows the banner of the Oregon delegation. (Courtesy of Library of Congress)

This 1910 banner includes the motto of the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs and colors that represented the suffrage movement. (Courtesy of Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture)



Campaign items, including a National American Woman Suffrage Association button and ribbon, helped promote the cause. Gold or yellow served as the dominant symbolic color of the pro-suffrage movement. First adopted during a suffrage campaign in Kansas in 1867 to mimic the color of the state flower, the sunflower. Gold or yellow was often used together with white, green, or purple. NAWSA supplied packets of suffrage campaign material for states to use in their campaigns, which could include ribbons, pennants, and suffrage literature. Top: Votes for Women ribbon (Courtesy of Library of Congress); Left: Votes for Women pin (Courtesy of Shanna Stevenson); Middle and Right: NAWSA ribbon and Votes for Women pin. (Courtesy of Schlesinger Library, Harvard University)

Suffrage Leaders

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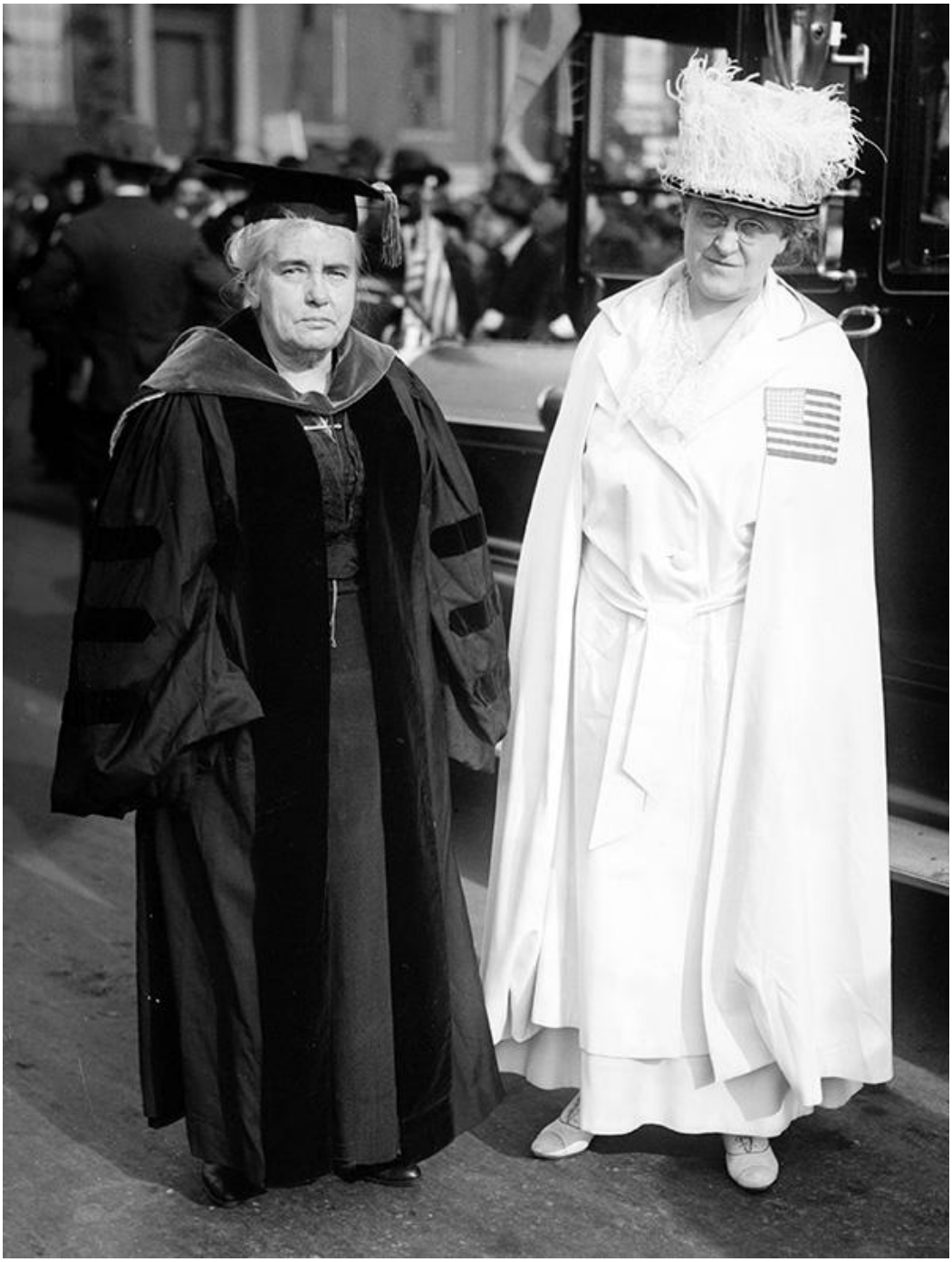
Countless women and men, both in Oregon and nationally, advanced the cause of woman suffrage over the decades. Their efforts culminated in the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1920. The names of some of the leaders listed below, such as Susan B. Anthony and Helen Keller, are familiar. But many others toiled in relative obscurity for decades to further the movement. This list is not comprehensive but it does provide a taste of the skills and experiences of some of the leaders fighting for woman suffrage.

Biographical Sketches

Anthony, Susan B. (1820-1906)
Bonnin, Gertrude “Zitkala-Ša” Simmons (1876-1938)
Bryant, Louise (1885-1936)
Burns, Lucy (1879-1966)
Cannady, Beatrice Morrow (1889-1974)
Catt, Carrie Chapman (1859-1947)
Clarke, Kathryn (1873-1940)
Douglass, Frederick (1818-1895)
Duniway, Abigail Scott (1834-1915)
Equi, Marie, M.D. (1872-1952)
Field, Sara Bard (1882-1974)
Gram, Betty (1893-1969)
Keller, Helen (1880-1968)
Lovejoy, Esther Pohl, M.D. (1869-1967)
Otero-Warren, Adelina “Nina” Isabel Emilia Luna (1881-1965)
Paul, Alice, PhD (1885-1977)
Phillips, Wendell (1811-1884)
Rankin, Jeannette (1880-1973)
Redmond, Harriet “Hattie” (1862-1952)
Schulze, Tye Leung (1887-1972)
Shaw, Anna Howard, M.D. (1847-1919)
Talbert, Mary Burnett (1866-1923)
Thompson, Mary Anna Cooke (1825-1919)
Weeks, Lizzie (1879-1976)
Wells-Barnett, Ida B. (1862-1931)

Two leaders of the suffrage movement, Carrie Chapman Catt and Anna Howard Shaw, in 1917. (Courtesy of Library of Congress)



OREGON STATE ARCHIVES

On Her OWN Wings

Oregon Women and the Struggle for Suffrage

It can be hard to imagine only 100 years ago women weren't allowed to vote in the United States. The fight for this right took many years of dedication and sacrifice from different people who make up the mixed fabric of our country. This deck of cards introduces 25 historical figures who were vital in the struggle. These profiles are part of the Oregon State Archives' 2020-21 exhibit ***On Her Own Wings: Oregon Women and the Struggle for Suffrage.*** The exhibit tells the story of the struggle for suffrage in Oregon and across the United States. It explores the circumstances in which people and organizations operated and the strategies they used. This exhibit also looks at the social movements that shaped activists' views and arguments for and against suffrage.

View our online exhibit @
https://sos.oregon.gov/archives/exhibits/suffrage/pages/default.aspx

Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

ABIGAIL SCOTT DUNIWAY

Duniway worked as an educator, editor, and activist for over 50 years. A colleague of Susan B. Anthony and other luminaries, Duniway was active on a national level, but won greatest success in her native Pacific Northwest. She was instrumental in organizing the winning vote for universal woman suffrage in Idaho, then Washington, and finally in her home state of Oregon. When the state did pass suffrage legislation in 1912, a 79-year-old Duniway personally wrote the Oregon Women Suffrage Proclamation in her own hand.

Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

ADELINA OTERO-WARREN

Otero-Warren, a member of Santa Fe's social elite, was active in politics as well as the woman suffrage movement. Otero-Warren headed the New Mexico's chapter of the Congressional Union for Women's Suffrage. To reach the widest audience, Otero-Warren insisted that suffrage literature in the Southwest be published in both English and Spanish. Her language inclusivity extended to her tenure as the superintendent of Santa Fe County schools and inspector of Indian schools where she denounced the federal government's practice of banning Spanish and Indigenous languages in boarding schools.

ALICE PAUL

Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Paul worked with the National American Woman Suffrage Association and then went on to found the National Woman's Party. She was highly educated with a master's degree in sociology, a PhD in economics, and a law degree. Repeatedly arrested and brutalized by authorities, Paul and her counterparts continued their quiet protest for over a year until congress sent the 19th Amendment to the states for ratification in 1919. Additionally, Paul agitated to end legal discrimination against women by writing what would become the Equal Rights Amendment, establishing a UN Commission on the Status of Women, and pushing to have language prohibiting discrimination based on sex in the Civil Rights Act.

BEATRICE MORROW CANNADY

Public domain image, Courtesy Barbara J. Redwine.

Cannady is considered one of Oregon's most prominent civil rights activists. She edited *The Advocate*, the state's largest African American newspaper. Cannady was also a founding member of the Portland chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1913. She was a fierce advocate for equality: regularly protesting against segregation, the Ku Klux Klan's activity in Oregon, and the prison and justice systems. In 1922, she graduated from Northwestern College of Law, becoming the first black woman to graduate from law school in the state of Oregon. She advocated for state civil rights bills, and helped to integrate public schools in Oregon and Washington.

BETTY GRAM

Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Gram was among the "Silent Sentinels" arrested for picketing in front of the White House in 1917. She was arrested twice, and eventually sentenced to serve 30 days at a workhouse. Once jailed she joined a hunger strike along with other protestors. Doctors force-fed the protestors against their will, however the strikers succeeded and were freed after two weeks. The torturous methods of feeding these women were publicized, and their suffering had a profound effect on public opinion. Gram showed the nation what women were willing to endure in order to secure their right to vote, and what the law was willing to do in order to suppress them.

CARRIE CHAPMAN CATT

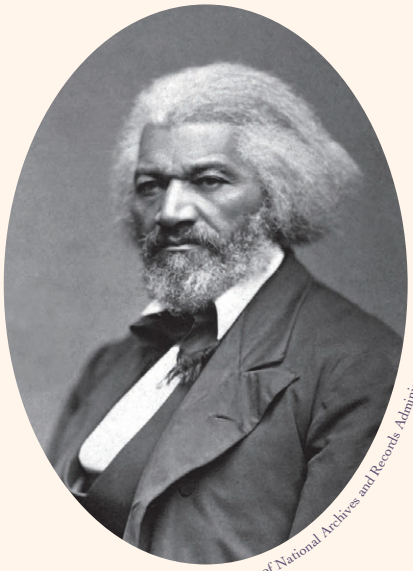
Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

Catt joined the suffrage movement and gained notoriety for her speaking skills. She became the National American Woman Suffrage Association president and during her tenure created the "Winning Plan" which coordinated the drive for the 19th Amendment with state suffrage campaigns. More conservative than younger members of her organization, Catt was wary of expanding voting rights to foreigners, the illiterate, and women of color. She also opposed militant tactics and supported President Wilson's war effort in World War I, an issue that divided the suffrage movement.

Courtesy of the Library of Congress

REP. JEANNETTE RANKIN

In 1916, Rankin ran for U.S. Congress on a platform of peace and social welfare. Rankin pushed for a congressional committee on suffrage, which proposed a constitutional amendment granting women suffrage. Rankin opened the floor debate and voted "yea" in the House, which passed the measure, but the Senate overturned the bill. Rankin again ran for Congress in 1940 at the age of 60 and won. Her commitment to peace still guided her politics, and in 1941 Rankin was the only member of Congress to vote against declaring war on Japan after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Holding to her beliefs was wildly unpopular with the public, and she would not seek office again, retiring to a life of social activism.



Courtesy of National Archives and Records Administration

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

Douglass freed himself from slavery, becoming a national leader for the causes of suffrage and abolition. Douglass was the only African American present at the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention, and one of only 32 men to sign the Declaration of Sentiments. In 1866, Douglass founded the American Equal Rights Association with Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony to push for universal suffrage. Their relationship soon soured in debates over the 15th Amendment. They disagreed over the exclusion of sex from the language of the amendment. Douglass celebrated the amendment's passage as an incremental victory, but continued to agitate for women's rights for the rest of his life.

Courtesy of Oregon Historical Society

HARRIET REDMOND

The daughter of freed slaves, Redmond lived in Portland when Oregon's laws and constitution prevented black Americans from living in the state. Portland society barred Redmond from the women's rights groups frequented by white suffragists. She instead organized meetings on suffrage and served as president of the Colored Women's Equal Suffrage Association. Like many other women of color, Redmond's life and contributions to suffrage were virtually unknown until the 21st century. Historians uncovered her records in 2012 while conducting research during the centennial of Oregon woman suffrage. Celebrated only posthumously, Redmond's grave now bears the inscription "Black American Suffragist."

Courtesy of National Portrait Gallery

IDA B. WELLS-BARNETT

Wells-Barnett spent her life fighting against the racism and sexism of white America using her journalistic skill to campaign against lynching. She studied accounts of lynching and published her findings in two pamphlets. Wells-Barnett explained that white men got away with murdering African American men by allegedly defending the honor of white women, and the unjust irony that, in contrast, black women had no recourse against sexual assault by white men. As a suffragist, Wells-Barnett shone light on the link between racial and gender discrimination, furthering the cause of black feminism. She saw woman suffrage as a means for black women to become politically involved and elect African Americans to influential offices.

HELLEN KELLER

Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Keller lost her sight and hearing but learned braille, sign language, and speech, and graduated from Radcliffe College in 1904. Best remembered as an activist for disabled peoples, Keller also spoke out for woman suffrage, birth control, and pacifism. She was a radical socialist and a member of the International Workers of the World. She advocated against U.S. imperialism and railed against the power of wealth in government. In 1920, the same year as the ratification of the 19th Amendment, Keller co-founded the American Civil Liberties Union. Then as now, the American public celebrated Keller's activism for women and disabled people while glossing over her more radical politics.

SEN. KATHRYN CLARKE

From Sunset Magazine (Public Domain)

Clarke was the first woman to serve in the Oregon state Senate and made national headlines as an example of women's progress in the government as a result of gaining suffrage. Her cousin, who was the Oregon governor, appointed her as a senator, following a subsequent resignation. Although a campaign was run against her to oust her from office, Clarke prevailed and won the election. Following her victory, she supported bills that raised salaries for county employees, and later that same year, began pushing for a federal amendment for women's voting rights.

LOUISE BRYANT

Courtesy of Yale University Library

Bryant graduated from the University of Oregon in 1909 and quickly made a name for herself as a poet, columnist, and radical feminist. In the effort to gain women's voting rights, she traveled the state, turning her writing skills to speeches and lectures. After moving to New York briefly, Bryant moved to Russia at the end of World War I to write about the Bolshevik Revolution. Her most famous work, *Six Months in Russia*, was read across the United States in part for its sensational reports of powerful female revolutionaries.

LUCY BURNS

Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Burns was a radical Irish Catholic from Brooklyn whose studies at Oxford exposed her to militant suffragists in Britain. Burns was among the "Silent Sentinels" who picketed in front of the White House. Burns was arrested and confined to the Occoquan Workhouse where she and fellow suffragists staged hunger strikes. She was held in solitary confinement, force-fed, and beaten and left overnight with her hands cuffed above her head. Once freed, Burns engaged in nationwide speaking tours until the 19th Amendment was ratified. After its passage she retired from activism, devoting her life to the Catholic Church and an orphaned niece.

DR. MARIE EQUI

Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

In her career as a Portland doctor, Equi was a fierce proponent of working-class women and children. A believer in women's reproductive rights, she also provided access to contraceptives and abortions. After witnessing a police crackdown on Portland's working-class women during a strike, Equi protested for better working conditions, aligned herself with the International Workers of the World, and declared herself a socialist and anarchist. The federal government noticed Equi's radicalism and wiretapped her home and office. In her personal life, Equi lived openly in romantic relationships with women. She even adopted a daughter with her partner Harriet Speckart, an heiress of the Olympia Brewing Company.

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DR. MARY ANNA COOKE THOMPSON

Courtesy of Joseph Gaston, Portland, Its History and Builders (vol. 2), p. 734.

Thompson began practicing medicine in 1867 and gained noteriety as the Portland's first woman physician. Like many others who came after her, Thompson's activism stemmed from her experience as a doctor. She advocated for women and infants, and pushed for sanitation, rest, and recuperation. Thompson gave speeches and lectures around the state and nation, and when the 19th Amendment was introduced to the U.S. Senate, she was one of 13 women to address the senate. In her speech, she spoke of the moral quality of women, and her sincere belief that voting rights were the cure to political corruption and vice.

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MARY BURNETT TALBERT

Courtesy of The Crisis, Vol. 13, No. 4, February 1917

Talbert was an educator, activist, human rights proponent, and one of the best-known African Americans of her time. Talbert lectured across the U.S. and abroad on the oppression of African Americans and became a major influence in bringing black women into international women's organizations. She also founded the Niagara Movement, the predecessor of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). As a suffragist, Talbert advocated for women of all races to work together for the cause. She worked to raise awareness among prominent white feminists on the importance of supporting women who were marginalized and less privileged.

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REV. ANNA HOWARD SHAW, M.D.

Courtesy of National Portrait Gallery

Shaw was both a medical doctor and ordained as the first woman minister of the Methodist Protestant Church. She was also a prominent advocate for the temperance movement, and dedicated to the cause of woman suffrage. In 1904, Shaw became president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA). While she fought for the rights of working-class women, Shaw was uninterested in obtaining suffrage for women of color. A committed nativist, Shaw's anti-immigrant politics were laced through her speeches and lectures. Under her direction, NAWSA treated African American suffragists and other minorities with hostility, leaving a mixed legacy.

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SARA BARD FIELD

Courtesy of the Library of Congress

A renowned poet and activist, Field was a committed Christian and socialist. While performing missionary work in India and Burma, she witnessed the suffering caused by colonialism and income inequality. Field's exposure to the working poor led her to adopt radical ideas. After moving to Oregon, Field involved herself with the woman suffrage campaign led by Abigail Scott Duniway. She joined the Oregon College Equal Suffrage League and toured the state giving speeches on voting rights. In 1915, suffrage leader Alice Paul chose Field to take a petition of 500,000 signatures advocating woman suffrage by car to President Wilson at the White House.

OREGON STATE ARCHIVES https://sos.oregon.gov/archives

SUSAN B. ANTHONY

Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Anthony, one of America's best-known suffragists, began her career in activism as an abolitionist. Though she was avidly anti-slavery, Anthony did not always support racially universal suffrage, and publicly voiced her belief that white women were more deserving of voting rights than African Americans. Together with Elisabeth Cady Stanton, Anthony formed the National Woman Suffrage Association which pushed for a national amendment granting women the right to vote. Though she worked for over 50 years to attain woman suffrage, Anthony would not live to see the passage of the 19th Amendment. In honor of her struggle, this decisive bill was nicknamed the "Anthony Amendment."

OREGON STATE ARCHIVES https://sos.oregon.gov/archives

TYE LEUNG SCHULZE

Courtesy of the Los Angeles Public Library

Leung Schulze, born in San Francisco, grew up in a racially segregated society. In 1910, Leung Schulze took the civil service exam and became the first Chinese American woman to be an employee of the federal government. She worked as a translator for Chinese immigrants at the Angel Island Immigration Station. After women won the right to vote in California, Leung Schulze voted in the 1912 presidential primary. She is believed to be the first Chinese woman to vote in the U.S., and perhaps the first ethnic Chinese woman to vote in the world. She continued working as an advocate for women and Chinese Americans in the San Francisco area for the rest of her life.

OREGON STATE ARCHIVES https://sos.oregon.gov/archives

WENDELL PHILLIPS

Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Phillips was an abolitionist and early advocate for women's rights. A member of the free-produce movement, he refused to wear cotton or eat cane sugar since both crops were produced by slaves. In the 1850s, Phillips used his oratory and writing skills to build support for woman suffrage. Unusual for white Americans of the era, he argued that the 14th and 15th amendments granted citizenship to Native Americans. He lobbied against using the military to dislocate indigenous peoples in the western territories, and accused the army of racial extermination. Phillips continued to support Native American land claims even after public opinion turned against him, and vocally advocated for an end to all U.S. Indian removal policies.

OREGON STATE ARCHIVES https://sos.oregon.gov/archives

ZITKALA-ŠA

Courtesy of National Portrait Gallery

A member of the Yankton Dakota Sioux, Zitkala-Ša, or Gertrude Simmons Bonnin, was taken from her home as a child to attend a Quaker boarding school. Though she enjoyed learning to read, write, and play European music, Zitkala-Ša mourned for the culture which she was stripped of by her forced assimilation. She was deeply critical of the American Indian boarding school system, publishing articles condemning it, and working to preserve traditional cultures through her role as secretary of the Society of American Indians. She also continuously advocated for citizenship, voting rights, healthcare, and education for all Native Americans.

OREGON STATE ARCHIVES https://sos.oregon.gov/archives

LIZZIE WEEKS

Courtesy of Oregon Historical Society

Weeks was an activist in Portland's African American community following Oregon's 1912 proclamation of woman suffrage. She aimed to organize and empower local black women as voters in a system that had previously disavowed their sex and race. She invited visitors to the Portland African American community, and helped build networks with activists outside Oregon. Weeks helped to organize a 1914 meeting for women of color to support the Republican party, which was popular with African Americans until the Great Depression. This led to the formation of the Colored Women's Republican Club. Weeks was elected president, and her chief aim was the registration of African American women to vote.

OREGON STATE ARCHIVES https://sos.oregon.gov/archives

DR. ESTHER POHL LOVEJOY

Courtesy of the Library of Congress

The physician and suffragist Lovejoy promoted the idea of woman voters as agents of public health. She believed that woman suffrage was the key to creating safer and healthier communities. This was a subject close to home for Lovejoy, who lost both her son and first husband to disease. Lovejoy and other woman physicians were a powerful voice in local politics and at the time around 8 percent of all physicians in Oregon were women – over double the national average. Lovejoy worked closely with these women and many other organizations, building a strong coalition to promote radical notions of equal suffrage as a remedy for social ills.

OREGON STATE ARCHIVES https://sos.oregon.gov/archives

Susan B. Anthony (1820-1906)

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"Organize, agitate, educate must be our war cry."

Anthony, one of America's best-known suffragists, began her career in activism as an anti-slavery abolitionist. Anthony was inspired by the Quaker belief of equality under God which guided her moral compass. As an abolitionist, she gained fame for her impassioned speeches railing against slavery, a rare activity for women of her time.

Susan B. Anthony, ca. 1870. (Courtesy of Library of Congress)

Anthony joined the temperance movement against alcohol, and through it began to agitate for women's rights and woman suffrage. Though she was avidly antislavery, Anthony did not always support racially universal suffrage. Prior to the passage of the 15th Amendment, Anthony publicly voiced her belief that white women were more deserving of voting rights than African American people regardless of sex. Her mother and sister attended the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention, and three years later Anthony met Elizabeth Cady Stanton, one of the event's organizers. Anthony and Stanton formed a working relationship that lasted the rest of their lives. Together they formed the National Woman Suffrage Association which pushed for a national amendment granting women the right to vote. Stanton's writing skills complimented Anthony's oratory. Stanton would say of their relationship that "I forged the thunderbolts, she fired them."

Anthony was arrested for voting in the presidential election of 1872 and fined $100 which she never paid. She traveled constantly through the next few decades supporting efforts in many states to win woman suffrage. Though she was lambasted and reviled in her youth, by the 1890s Anthony emerged as a national heroine. She was warmly received at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, and the 1905 Lewis and Clark Exposition in Portland. Though she worked for over 50 years to attain woman suffrage, Anthony would not live to see the passage of the 19th Amendment. In honor of her struggle, this decisive bill was nicknamed the "Anthony Amendment."

Gertrude “Zitkala-Ša” Simmons Bonnin (1876-1938)

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“In the land that was once his own… there was never a time more opportune than now for America to enfranchise the Red man!”

Zitkala Ša "Red Bird," ca. 1900. (Courtesy of National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution)

A member of the Yankton Dakota Sioux, Zitkala-Ša (“Red Bird”) left the reservation as a child to attend a Quaker boarding school. Though she enjoyed learning to read, write, and play European music, Zitkala-Ša mourned for the culture which she felt stripped from her by forced assimilation. She spent her adolescence moving between these two worlds, gaining insight into both while developing her skills as a writer and performer.

By 1900 she became deeply critical of the American Indian boarding school system, and published articles condemning it in *Atlantic Monthly* and *Harper’s Monthly*. In 1913, she co-authored *The Sun Dance Opera*, the first opera written by and about Native Americans, based on the outlawed Sioux ritual. In 1916, she became secretary of the Society of American Indians, which aimed to preserve traditional cultures while also lobbying for U.S. citizenship of Native Americans. Zitkala-Ša also wrote several books and articles detailing the Native American experience for the education of both indigenous and white audiences.

In 1926, Zitkala-Ša founded the National Council of American Indians. This council worked to unite U.S. tribes behind the cause of full citizenship and voting rights. She would serve as its president until her death in 1938, fighting for civil rights, access to healthcare, and education for all Native Americans.

Louise Bryant (1885-1936)

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"I suppose I will have to issue a passport to this wild woman. She is full of socialistic and ultra-modern ideas, which accounts for her wild hair and open mouth." – note clipped to Bryant's 1917 passport application

Louise Bryant, ca. 1917. (Courtesy of Yale University Library)

Bryant graduated from the University of Oregon in 1909 and quickly made a name for herself as a poet, columnist, and radical feminist. She illustrated for the *Oregon Monthly* and *Oregon Spectator* and also contributed writings to leftist publications like *The Masses*. Bryant married, keeping her maiden name, and from her Portland home entertained such radical activists as Alexander Berkman and Emma Goldman. In the effort to gain women's voting rights, she traveled the state with other activists in support of suffrage, turning her writing skills to speeches and lectures. Bryant joined the Oregon branch of the College Equal Suffrage League in 1912, and rode a suffrage parade float in Portland's Flag Day celebration that June.

After the 1912 campaign, Bryant left Oregon for Greenwich Village in 1915 to pursue two new loves: the art of journalism and a man named John Reed for whom she left her husband. Bryant and Reed lived a bohemian lifestyle in New York, agitating for progressive change and reporting on the plight of the working class. They moved to Russia near the end of World War I to publish on the civil war and rising Soviet government. While other American suffragists were mounting their campaign to pass the 19th Amendment, Bryant was observing a bloody revolution in progress. Her most famous work, *Six Months in Russia*, was read across the United States in part for its sensational reports of powerful female revolutionaries.

Lucy Burns (1879-1966)

Page Content

“Resistance to tyranny is obedience to God.”

Lucy Burns, 1913. (Courtesy of Library of Congress)

Burns spent more time in prison than any other American woman suffragist. She was a radical Irish Catholic firebrand from Brooklyn whose studies at Oxford exposed her to militant suffragists in Britain. Burns met Alice Paul in a London police station after both were arrested protesting for suffrage in front of parliament. The pair returned to the U.S. in 1913 and founded the Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage.

Burns was among the “Silent Sentinels” who picketed in front of the White House in 1917. She angered the Wilson administration by declaring that as long as women were denied suffrage, America was not a free democracy. Burns and the other sentinels were arrested and confined in the Occoquan Workhouse where they staged hunger strikes in protest to their sentencing.

Burns believed arrested suffragists were essentially political prisoners. She was held in solitary confinement, force-fed, and on the “night of terror” the jail’s superintendent ordered her beaten and left overnight with her hands cuffed above her head. In all, she was imprisoned six times. Once freed, Burns engaged in nationwide speaking tours until the 19th Amendment was ratified. After its passage she retired from activism, devoting her life to the Catholic Church and an orphaned niece.

Beatrice Morrow Cannady (1889-1974)

Page Content

"[T]he Negro Women of America must become the teachers of the white race. In this interracial program there will grow up a strong sisterhood between white and colored women which will be the safest protection of the ideals for which the NAACP stands."

Beatrice Morrow Cannady, undated. (Public domain image, Courtesy of Barbara J. Redwine)

Cannady is considered one of Oregon's most prominent civil rights activists. She edited *The Advocate*, the state's largest African American newspaper. Cannady was also a founding member of the Portland chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1913. It was the first NAACP branch west of the Mississippi.

Through *The Advocate* and the NAACP, Cannady ran a 15-year campaign limiting Portland's showings of the controversial and racist film, *The Birth of a Nation*. She was a fierce advocate for equality, and regularly protested against segregation in business and government. Cannady also used her newspaper to report on the Ku Klux Klan's activities throughout Oregon.

An activist for many causes, Cannady also promoted reforms in prisons and the justice system as well as speaking out against war and militarism. In 1922, she graduated from Northwestern College of Law, becoming the first black woman to graduate from law school in the state of Oregon. She advocated for state civil rights bills, and helped to integrate public schools in Oregon and Washington. In 1927, she represented Oregon in the Pan African Congress in New York City, and was a candidate for U.S. Congress in 1932.

Carrie Chapman Catt (1859-1947)

Page Content

“The vote is a power, a weapon of offense and defense, a prayer. Understand what it means and what it can do for your country. Use it intelligently, conscientiously, prayerfully."

Carrie Chapman Catt Postcard in Russian, 1912. (Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons)

Catt joined the suffrage movement during the 19th century in her home state of Iowa. Her speaking skills earned her a reputation among the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), and soon she was giving speeches across the country. In 1900, she was elected NAWSA president to take over the seat left by Susan B. Anthony.

Catt understood that suffrage was more than an American issue. In 1902, she founded the International Woman Suffrage Alliance and left NAWSA for a time, traveling and spreading her message abroad. Catt would return to the U.S. and resume presidency of NAWSA from 1915 to 1920. During her tenure she created the “Winning Plan” which coordinated the drive for the 19th Amendment with state suffrage campaigns. Catt’s plan advised suffragists to focus only on voting rights and the passage of an amendment. She believed that a clarity of message was important to victory.

More conservative than younger members of her organization, Catt was wary of expanding voting rights to foreigners, the illiterate, and women of color. She also opposed militant tactics and supported President Wilson’s war effort in World War I, an issue that divided the suffrage movement. After the passage of the 19th Amendment and the end of the war, Catt focused on writing a history of suffrage and creating organizations to prevent and end future wars.

Senator Kathryn Clarke (1873-1940)

Page Content

"Miss Clarke will be the second woman member of the state legislature. Miss Marian Towne was elected to the house from Jackson County last November." – The Daily Capital Journal, 1915

Clarke was the first woman to serve in the Oregon state Senate and made national headlines as an example of the progress women were making in government as a result of gaining the vote. A Douglas County hotel manager by trade, Clarke came from a privileged upbringing which helped vault her to a position of power. Her cousin Oswald West was elected governor of Oregon in 1910 and, following the resignation of a state senator in 1915, he appointed Clarke to the position.

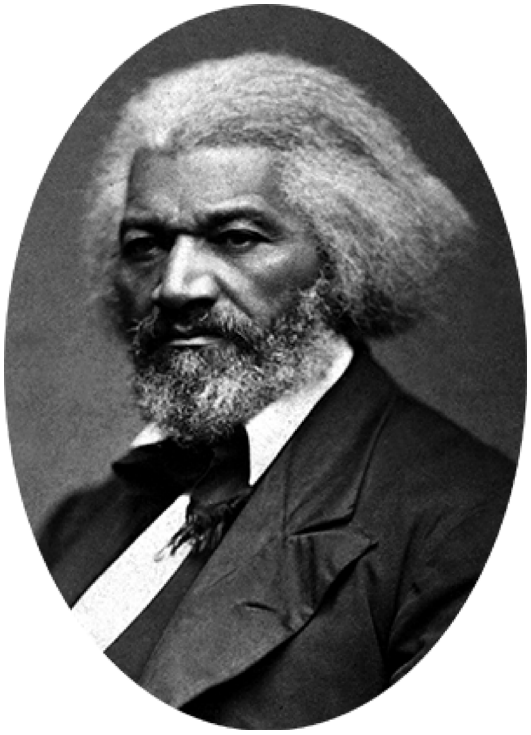
County officials, wary of this appointment, ordered a special election to either confirm or oust the freshman senator. In response, Clarke ran a strong Republican campaign which endorsed supporting law enforcement and saving taxpayer money. It was a close race, and Clarke won her position by a narrow margin of 76 votes. Following her election, she worked for her Douglas County constituents by supporting bills that amended county boundaries and raised salaries for county employees. Later that same year, Clarke began pushing for a federal amendment for women's voting rights as a member of the Oregon branch of Alice Paul's Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage.

Kathryn Clarke, first woman in Oregon Senate, April 1915. (From *Sunset Magazine*. Public Domain)

Frederick Douglass (1818-1895)

Page Content

"A man's rights rest in three boxes. The ballot box, jury box and the cartridge box. Let no man be kept from the ballot box because of his color. Let no woman be kept from the ballot box because of her sex."



Frederick Douglass, ca. 1879. (Courtesy of National Archives)

Douglass freed himself from slavery, becoming a national leader for the causes of equality, suffrage, and the abolition of slavery. He was a famously skilled orator, and published a newspaper to combat slavery and racism: *The Northern Star*. Douglass was the only African American person present at the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention, and one of only 32 men to sign the Declaration of Sentiments. He used his newspaper to press the issue further, making it a platform from which he detailed the harmony between abolitionism and feminism.

After the Civil War, Douglass worked as a statesman, holding positions in the federal government. In 1866, Douglass founded the American Equal Rights Association with Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony to push for universal suffrage. Their relationship soon soured in debates over the 15th Amendment which would guarantee male voting rights regardless of race. Stanton and Anthony did not feel the amendment went far enough and should include women. Douglass disagreed, believing that linking woman suffrage to Black male suffrage in the same bill would doom both causes. Douglass celebrated the amendment's passage as an incremental victory, and continued to agitate for women's rights for the rest of his life.

Abigail Scott Duniway (1834-1915)

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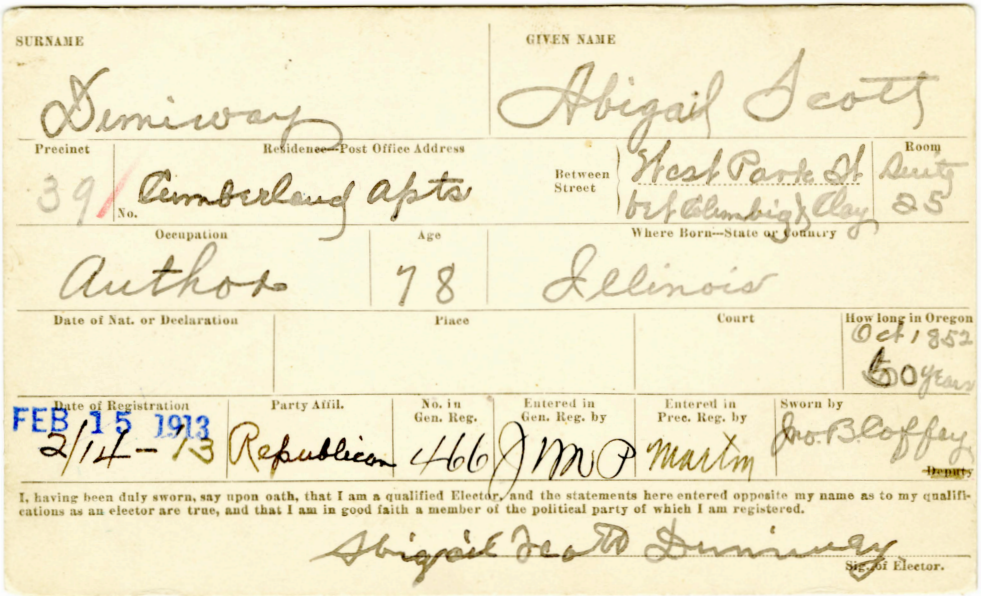
"The young women of today, free to study, to speak, to write, to choose their occupation, should remember that every inch of this freedom was bought for them at a great price. It is for them to show their gratitude by helping onward the reforms of their own times, by spreading the light of freedom and of truth still wider. The debt that each generation owes to the past it must pay to the future."

Abigail Scott Duniway, ca. 1890. (Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons)

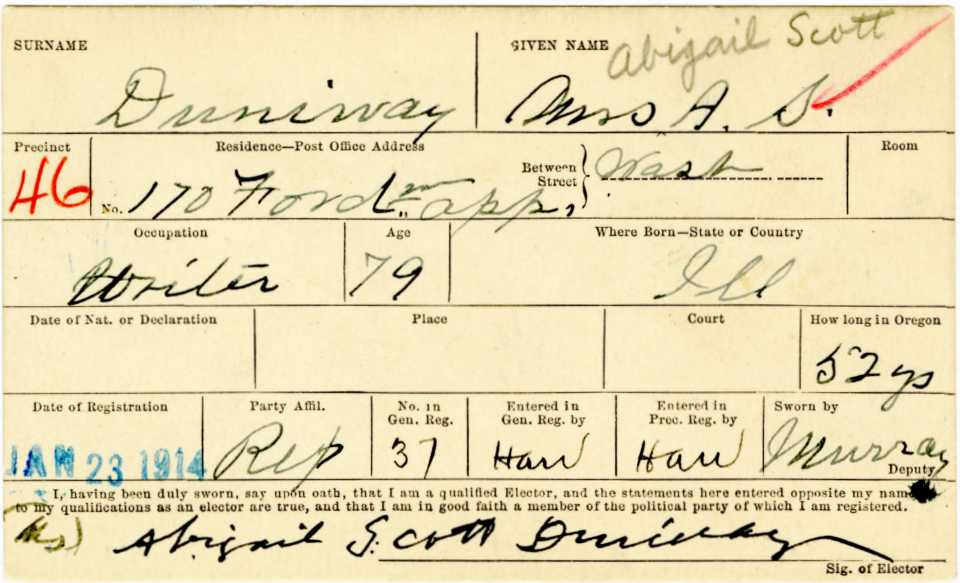
Duniway worked as an educator, editor, and activist for over 50 years. She wrote prolifically, publishing stories and serialized novels through her weekly newspaper, *The New Northwest*, devoted to women's issues and voting rights. A colleague of Susan B. Anthony and other luminaries, Duniway was active on a national level, but won greatest success in her native Pacific Northwest. She was instrumental in organizing the winning vote for universal woman suffrage in Idaho, then Washington, and finally in her home state of Oregon.

Her prime tactic, called the "still hunt" after the sportsman's tactic of quietly stalking game animals, sought to avoid confrontation. She believed that men, and specifically their votes, were the keys to winning woman suffrage and was wary of antagonizing them. To this end, Duniway worked to convince men through humor, wit, and gentle persuasion rather than marches and outspoken resistance. Her conservative approach was lauded by some but considered ineffective by many younger and more radical suffragists.

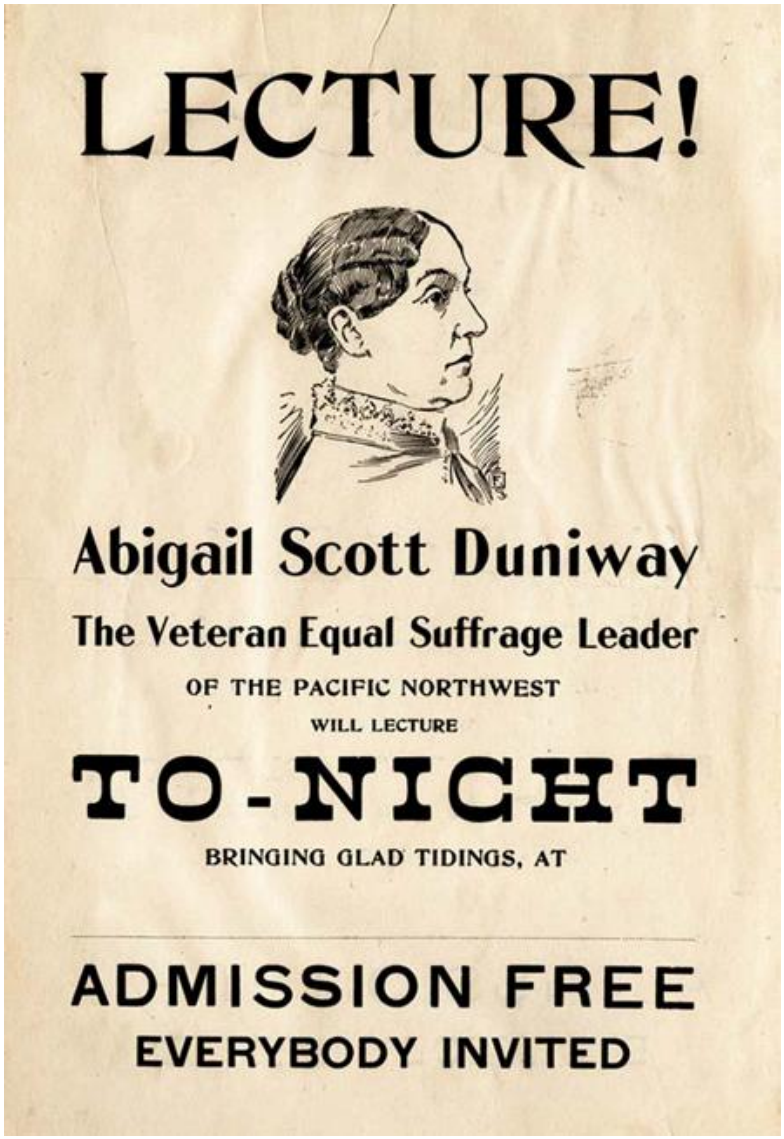
Duniway's efforts were staunchly opposed by her brother, Harvey Scott, himself an editor of the dominant newspaper in the state: *The Oregonian*. She blamed him for the five repeated failures to secure women's voting rights in Oregon, while other suffragists more often blamed Duniway's inflexible commitment to "still hunt" tactics. When the state did pass suffrage legislation in 1912, a 79-year-old Duniway personally wrote the Oregon Woman Suffrage Proclamation in her own hand.


SURNAME: Duniway
GIVEN NAME: Abigail Scott
Precinct: 39
Residence—Post Office Address: No. Cumberland Apts
Between Street: West Park St. bet Columbia & Clay
Room: Suite 25
Occupation: Author
Age: 78
Where Born—State or Country: Illinois
Date of Nat. or Declaration:
Place:
Court:
How long in Oregon: Oct 1852 60 years
Date of Registration: FEB 15 1913 2/14-13
Party Affil.: Republican
No. in Gen. Reg.: 466
Entered in Gen. Reg. by: MMP
Entered in Prec. Reg. by: Martin
Sworn by: Jno. B. Coffey Deputy
I, having been duly sworn, say upon oath, that I am a qualified Elector, and the statements here entered opposite my name as to my qualifications as an elector are true, and that I am in good faith a member of the political party of which I am registered.
Abigail Scott Duniway
Sig. of Elector.

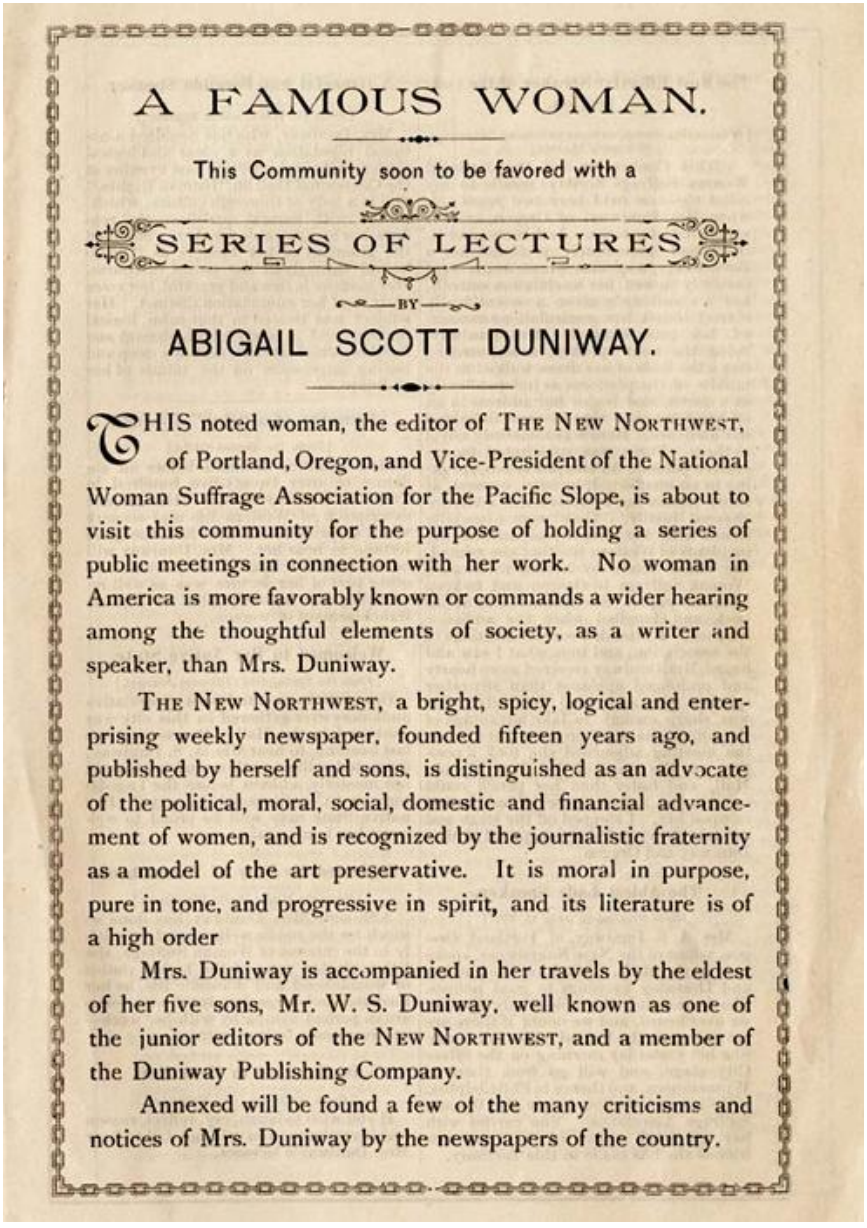
Abigail Scott Duniway's first voter registration card from 1913, just months after the successful campaign to extend voting rights to Oregon women. (Oregon State Archives)


SURNAME: Duniway
GIVEN NAME: abigail Scott Mrs A. S.
Precinct: 46
Residence—Post Office Address: No. 170 Ford Ln. apt 2
Between Street: Nash
Room:
Occupation: Writer
Age: 79
Where Born—State or Country: Ill
Date of Nat. or Declaration:
Place:
Court:
How long in Oregon: 52 yrs
Date of Registration: JAN 23 1914
Party Affil.: Rep
No. in Gen. Reg.: 37
Entered in Gen. Reg. by: Hall
Entered in Prec. Reg. by: Hall
Sworn by: J Murray Deputy
I, having been duly sworn, say upon oath, that I am a qualified Elector, and the statements here entered opposite my name to my qualifications as an elector are true, and that I am in good faith a member of the political party of which I am registered.
Abigail S. Scott Duniway
Sig. of Elector

Duniway loved public speaking and never looked back after giving her first public speech in 1870. She actively lectured, upwards of 200 lectures some years, and often spoke extemporaneously, despite Susan B. Anthony's caution to the contrary. (Courtesy of University of Oregon Library)



Announcement for a series of lectures circa 1886 by Abigail Scott Duniway. (Courtesy of University of Oregon Library)



A FAMOUS WOMAN.

This Community soon to be favored with a

SERIES OF LECTURES

BY

ABIGAIL SCOTT DUNIWAY.

THIS noted woman, the editor of THE NEW NORTHWEST, of Portland, Oregon, and Vice-President of the National Woman Suffrage Association for the Pacific Slope, is about to visit this community for the purpose of holding a series of public meetings in connection with her work. No woman in America is more favorably known or commands a wider hearing among the thoughtful elements of society, as a writer and speaker, than Mrs. Duniway.

THE NEW NORTHWEST, a bright, spicy, logical and enterprising weekly newspaper, founded fifteen years ago, and published by herself and sons, is distinguished as an advocate of the political, moral, social, domestic and financial advancement of women, and is recognized by the journalistic fraternity as a model of the art preservative. It is moral in purpose, pure in tone, and progressive in spirit, and its literature is of a high order

Mrs. Duniway is accompanied in her travels by the eldest of her five sons, Mr. W. S. Duniway, well known as one of the junior editors of the NEW NORTHWEST, and a member of the Duniway Publishing Company.

Annexed will be found a few of the many criticisms and notices of Mrs. Duniway by the newspapers of the country.

Marie Equi, M.D. (1872-1952)

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"It was beyond the imagination of these people who repeatedly attacked me, that a professional woman of established practice and reputation, of some money and high standing in the community could set these aside and get out and work for her unfortunate sisters and brothers – therefore I must be insane."

Marie Equi, ca. 1910. (Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons)

In her storied career as a Portland doctor, Equi was a fierce proponent of working-class women and children. A believer in women's reproductive rights, she also provided access to contraceptives and performed abortions. Politically, Equi was a member of the Progressive Party, as well as a staunch ally of Abigail Scott Duniway and Oregon's suffragists.

Equi's views were galvanized in 1913 after witnessing a brutal police crackdown on Portland's working-class women during a strike at a cannery. After this she regularly marched with the poorest in demand for better conditions, aligned herself with the International Workers of the World, and declared her views as radically socialist and anarchist.

The federal government noticed Equi's radicalism and wiretapped her home and office. In 1917, she was arrested for opposing American entry into World War I and served ten months in prison, the only political prisoner in the San Quentin State Prison women's ward before President Wilson commuted her sentence.

In her personal life, Equi never married, and lived openly in romantic relationships with women. She even adopted a daughter in 1915, Mary Jr., with her partner Harriet Speckart, an heiress of the Olympia Brewing Company. Following her arrest and trial, Equi would maintain that official homophobia of her same-sex partnerships was the true cause of her incarceration.

Sara Bard Field (1882-1974)

Page Content

"[Men] and women are not yet free. We have won political freedom and now man and woman, comrades in the experiment of political democracy, stand ready to advance together. Men and Women are not yet free. The slavery of greed endures."

A renowned poet and activist, Field was a committed Christian and socialist. While performing missionary work in India and Burma, she witnessed the suffering caused by colonialism and exacerbated by income inequality. Returning to the U.S., Field applied her faith by opening a kindergarten and soup kitchen. Field's exposure to the working poor led her to adopt radical ideas and support Eugene Debs' socialist campaign for president. Opposed by wealthy Christians, Field and her family fled to Portland in 1910 from their increasingly hostile Cincinnati parish.

Once in Oregon, Field involved herself with the woman suffrage campaign led by Abigail Scott Duniway. She joined the Oregon College Equal Suffrage League and toured the state giving speeches on voting rights. Following the 1912 victory in Oregon, she campaigned for suffrage in Nevada and the United States at large. In 1915, suffrage leader Alice Paul chose Field to take a petition of 500,000 signatures advocating woman suffrage by car to President Wilson at the White House. She spoke at the 1916 National Woman's Party convention and in support of Anna Henrietta Martin's (I; Nev) bid for the U.S. Senate, purportedly suggesting the campaign slogan "No votes, no babies!"

Sara Bard Field, ca. 1915. (Courtesy of Library of Congress)

Betty Gram (1893-1969)

Page Content

"We were jubilantly determined to force [the Administration] to take its choice – either to permit us to continue our peaceful agitation or to stand the reaction which was inevitable if they imprisoned us."

Betty Gram, 1917. (Courtesy of Library of Congress)

Oregonian Gram was among the 41 "Silent Sentinels" arrested while picketing in front of the White House in November, 1917. Betty, a 24-year-old teacher, and her sister Alice, a 22-year-old journalist, were charged with obstructing traffic during their nonviolent protest. They were released by a judge after warning them of the dangers of revolutionary activity. Undeterred, the sisters returned to the picket line that same day. They were again arrested for obstructing traffic, and this time sentenced to serve 30 days at the Occoquan Workhouse.

Once jailed, Alice and Betty joined a hunger strike along with other women arrested in Washington D.C. who were engaging in the struggle for national woman suffrage. The authorities responded by sending in doctors to force-feed the protestors against their will. The sister's efforts succeeded in the end, and the strikers were freed after two weeks. The torturous methods of feeding these women were widely publicized, however, and their suffering had a profound effect on public opinion. The Gram sisters showed the nation what women were willing to endure in order to secure their right to vote, and what the law was willing to do in order to suppress them.

Helen Keller (1880-1968)

Page Content

"Are the political and industrial needs of women less genuine than those of men? Let us put an end to this stupid, one-sided, one-power arrangement and have suffrage for all – an inclusive suffrage that takes in everybody. After all, the aim of every good man and woman is justice."

Helen Keller, 1913. (Courtesy of Library of Congress)

Born to wealth in Alabama, Keller lost her sight and hearing before she was two. She learned to read braille, communicate through sign as well as speech, and graduated from Radcliffe College in 1904. She was the first deaf-blind person to earn a bachelor's degree.

After college Keller became a renowned speaker and author, gaining fame advocating for her community. Best remembered as an activist for disabled peoples, Keller also spoke out for woman suffrage, birth control, and pacifism. She was also a radical socialist who focused her efforts on working people's issues and became a member of the International Workers of the World.

Later in life she advocated against U.S. imperialism and railed against the power of wealth in government. In 1920, the same year as the ratification of the 19th Amendment, Keller co-founded the American Civil Liberties Union. Then as now, the American public celebrated Keller's activism for women and disabled people while glossing over her more radical politics and her efforts on behalf of woman suffrage.

Esther Pohl Lovejoy, M.D. (1869-1967)

Page Content

"There is sickness here – famine there – war and hatred all around – ignorance and malice affecting thousands. Life is short at its longest – with all there is to do, let's get busy."

Esther P. Lovejoy, 1905. (Courtesy of Library of Congress)

The physician and suffragist Lovejoy promoted the idea of woman voters as agents of public health. President of the Portland Board of Health from 1907, she believed that woman suffrage was the key to creating safer and healthier communities. This was a subject close to home for Lovejoy, who lost both her son and first husband to disease.

Lovejoy and other woman physicians were a powerful voice in local politics and at the time around 8 percent of all physicians in Oregon were women – over double the national average. Lovejoy worked closely with these women and many other organizations, building a strong coalition to promote radical notions of equal suffrage as a remedy for social ills. She also opposed Abigail Scott Duniway's effort to create a unified suffrage organization. Lovejoy judged that a multi-headed approach could target specific audiences and avoid the pitfalls of autocratic leadership.

Lovejoy's efforts culminated in 1911 with her creation of the Everybody's Equal Suffrage League. It was open to all races and religions, men and women, rich or poor. Under Lovejoy's direction, the league worked hand-in-hand with other suffrage groups in a statewide mass-media campaign that took Oregon by storm in 1912. She went on tour around the state, promoting her vision of equality and public safety in a movement that, according to Lovejoy, had "neither head nor tail" though she was certainly its standard bearer. Following her success in Oregon, Lovejoy continued to practice medicine, presiding over several bodies while advocating for the health and well-being of women and children for another fifty years.

Adelina “Nina” Isabel Emilia Luna Otero-Warren (1881-1965)

Page Content

“Ratification of suffrage has been accomplished by the efforts of women all over the country. In every state, as was the case in New Mexico, women were the active element in bringing about ratification. We have a great reason to rejoice in the outcome of our efforts.”

Adelina Otero-Warren, ca. 1910. (Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons)

Otero-Warren was a member of Santa Fe’s social elite. Wealthy, educated, and affable, Otero-Warren was active in New Mexico politics as well as the woman suffrage movement. As her family’s eldest daughter, she balanced her activism with the traditional gender role of family matriarch following the deaths of her parents.

Otero-Warren drew the attention of Alice Paul, who chose her to head New Mexico’s chapter of the Congressional Union for Women’s Suffrage. Both Paul and Otero-Warren knew that gaining the support of what today we refer to as the Latinx community was vital to winning suffrage on the national level. To reach the widest audience, Otero-Warren insisted that suffrage literature in the Southwest be published in both English and Spanish.

In the inter-war years Otero-Warren also served as superintendent of Santa Fe County schools and inspector of Indian schools. During her tenure, the U.S. government pressured schools to assimilate Native American and Latinx people by banning traditional languages and customs. Otero-Warren pushed against this agenda, arguing that both Spanish and English be allowed in schools, and soundly criticized the Indian boarding school system in New Mexico for its cruel conditions and practices.

Alice Paul, PhD (1885-1977)

Page Content

"I never doubted that equal rights was the right direction. Most reforms, most problems are complicated. But to me there is nothing complicated about ordinary equality."

Alice Paul, 1915. (Courtesy of Library of Congress)

Paul assumed a leadership position among national suffragists after the deaths of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony. One of the most academically accredited suffragists, Paul obtained a master's degree in sociology (1907) and a PhD in economics (1912), and also earned a law degree in 1922. During her studies in England, Paul was involved with the British suffrage movement. There she learned radical tactics and accustomed herself to being arrested for the cause.

Returning to the U.S. in 1910, Paul worked with the National American Woman Suffrage Association. Under Paul's leadership, they planned the Woman Suffrage Procession of 1913. Soon after, Paul went on to found the National Woman's Party and in 1917 they began picketing the White House for voting rights. Repeatedly arrested and brutalized by authorities, Paul and her "Silent Sentinels" continued their quiet protest for over a year until congress sent the 19th Amendment to the states for ratification in 1919.

Not content to rest on her laurels, Paul agitated to end all legal discrimination against women in the U.S. and abroad. In 1923, she wrote and introduced the document that would become the Equal Rights Amendment. In 1945, she worked to get women recognized in the United Nations charter, and to establish a UN Commission on the Status of Women. Paul's efforts also pushed into the 1960s, when she agitated to have language prohibiting discrimination based on sex in the Civil Rights Act.

Wendell Phillips (1811-1884)

Page Content

"I have always thought that the first right restored to woman would be that of the full and unfettered control of all her property and earnings... Next in order of importance and time, comes the ballot. So it has always been with all disfranchised classes; first property – then political influence and rights; the first prepares for, gives weight to, challenges, finally secures the second."

Wendell Phillips, ca. 1855. (Courtesy of Library of Congress)

Phillips was a noted abolitionist and early advocate for women's rights. A member of the free-produce movement, he refused to wear cotton or eat cane sugar since both crops were produced by slaves. In the 1850s, Phillips used his oratory and writing skills to build support for woman suffrage throughout his native New England. He was an active member of the National Woman's Rights Central Committee, and a colleague of Susan B. Anthony. In advocating for women's property rights, Phillips worked to upend the social order whereby women and girls were the living property of their fathers and husbands.

A vocal advocate for the Civil War, Phillips celebrated the Union victory and the passage of the 14th and 15th Amendments. Unusual for most white Americans of the era, he argued that those amendments also granted citizenship to Native Americans. He lobbied against using the military to dislocate indigenous peoples in the western territories, and accused the army of racial extermination. Phillips continued to support Native American land claims even after public opinion turned against him, and vocally advocated for an end to all U.S. Indian removal policies. In Phillips' eyes, the rights of citizenship and voting were hollow without ownership of land and access to property.

Congresswoman Jeannette Rankin (1880-1973)

Page Content

"I want to be remembered as the only woman who ever voted to give women the right to vote."

Jeannette Rankin, U.S. Congresswoman from Montana, 1917. (Courtesy of Library of Congress)

Growing up on a Montana ranch taught Rankin a rugged sense of gender equality. She graduated from the University of Montana and later attended the University of Washington, where she involved herself in the growing woman suffrage movement. After college she traveled east to help organize and lobby for woman suffrage organizations. She became president of the Montana Women's Suffrage Association and national field secretary of the NAWSA. In 1911, Rankin became the first woman to argue for woman suffrage to Montana's state Legislature, helping to pass the measure in 1914.

In 1916, Rankin ran for U.S. Congress as a progressive Republican on a platform of peace and social welfare. Her first vote as a member of Congress was against involvement in World War I after Germany declared unrestricted submarine warfare. Rankin pushed for a congressional committee on woman suffrage, which proposed a constitutional amendment granting women suffrage in 1918. Rankin opened the floor debate and voted "yea" in the House, which passed the measure, but the Senate overturned the bill.

She ran for the U.S. Senate that same year, but only came in second in the Republican primaries. Rankin ran for Congress again in 1940 at the age of 60 and won. Her commitment to peace still guided her politics, and in 1941 Rankin was the only member of Congress to vote against declaring war on Japan after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Holding to her beliefs was wildly unpopular with the public, and she would not seek office again, retiring to a life of social activism.

Harriet “Hattie” Redmond (1862-1952)

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“Mrs. Redmond says that while there were 2500 colored women of voting age in this city the [Colored Women’s Equal Suffrage Club] has only 14 members… She attributed this largely to the influence of their husbands and ignorance of the benefits to be derived from the franchise.” – The Oregonian, 1912

Harriet "Hattie" Redmond, ca. 1900. (Courtesy of Oregon Historical Society)

The daughter of freed slaves, Redmond resided in Portland during a time when Oregon’s laws and constitution were written to prevent Black Americans from living or owning property in the state. Undeterred, Redmond struggled for acceptance and representation for Black women in Oregon and beyond. Portland society barred Redmond from the women’s rights groups frequented by white suffragists. She instead organized meetings and lectures on suffrage at Mt. Olivet First Baptist Church and in 1912 served as president of the Colored Women’s Equal Suffrage Association.

Like many other women of color, Redmond’s life and contributions to suffrage were virtually unknown until the 21st century. Widowed in 1907, she made a living as a hairdresser, domestic worker, and a duster in a department store until becoming a janitor for Oregon’s U.S. District Court in 1910 – a post she held for 29 years. Historians in Portland uncovered her records in 2012 while conducting research during the centennial of Oregon woman suffrage. Celebrated only after her death, Redmond’s grave at Lone Fir Cemetery now bears the inscription “Black American Suffragist.” Oregon State University students now pursue women’s studies in the Hattie Redmond Women and Gender Center.

Tye Leung Schulze (1887-1972)

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"I think too that we women are more careful than the men. We want to do our whole duty more. I do not think it is just the newness that makes use like that. It is conscience."

Leung Schulze, born to a Chinese American family in San Francisco, grew up in a racially segregated society. She and other native-born Americans of Asian descent were forced into ethnically segregated neighborhoods, separate schools, and denied access to many jobs. As a teenager Leung Schulze escaped an arranged marriage by taking asylum in a Presbyterian Mission. In time she became an advocate for her community – working with the Mission to end the sexual slavery of other Chinese women in the U.S.

In 1910, Leung Schulze took the civil service exam and became the first Chinese American woman to work for the federal government. She worked as a translator for detained Chinese immigrants at the Angel Island Immigration Station. After women won the right to vote in California, Leung Schulze voted in the 1912 presidential primary. She is believed to be the first Chinese woman to vote in the U.S., and perhaps the first ethnic Chinese woman to vote in the world. She continued working as an advocate for women and Chinese Americans in the San Francisco area for the rest of her life.

Tye Leung Schulze. (Courtesy of the Los Angeles Public Library)

Reverend Anna Howard Shaw, M.D. (1847-1919)

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"A gentleman opposed to their enfranchisement once said to me, women have never produced anything of any value to the world. I told him the chief product of the women had been the men, and left it to him to decide whether the product was of any value."

Anna Howard Shaw, ca. 1914. (Courtesy of National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution)

Shaw was both a medical doctor and ordained as the first woman minister of the Methodist Protestant Church. She was also a prominent advocate for the temperance movement, and dedicated to the cause of woman suffrage. Shaw believed that prohibiting alcohol and all of its associated ills could only be done by enfranchising women with voting rights. As a member of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, she traveled across the country and around the world advancing the notion that women voters would necessarily vote for prohibition.

In 1904, Shaw became president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), leaving a mixed legacy. Both Alice Paul and Lucy Burns were deeply critical of Shaw's leadership. While she fought for the rights of working-class women, Shaw was largely uninterested in obtaining suffrage for women of color. A committed nativist, Shaw's anti-immigrant politics were laced through her speeches and lectures. Under her direction, NAWSA treated African American suffragists and other minorities with hostility. Though not an advocate for racial equality, Shaw did believe in ending racial violence, and gave speeches promoting a woman's right to vote as an effective way to combat the epidemic of lynching in the Jim Crow South.

Mary Burnett Talbert (1866-1923)

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"The greatness of nations is shown by their strict regard for human rights, rigid enforcement of the law without bias, and just administration of the affairs of life."

Mary Burnett Talbert, 1917. (Courtesy of *The Crisis*, Vol. 13, No. 4, February 1917)

Talbert was an educator, activist, international human rights proponent, and one of the best-known African Americans of her time. She graduated from Oberlin College in 1886, a time when it was rare for women and African Americans to attain degrees. Talbert lectured across the U.S. and abroad on the oppression of African Americans and became a major factor in bringing Black women into international women's organizations. As a suffragist, Talbert advocated for women of all races to work together for the cause. She worked to raise awareness among prominent white feminists on the importance of supporting women who were marginalized and less privileged.

Originally from Ohio, Talbert was a leader and a prime mover among many organizations. She founded the Niagara Movement, the predecessor of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Talbert also founded and fostered women's clubs around the country. These clubs served as a forum for African American women and helped to bring those women into positions of community leadership. In 1916, she was elected president of the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs and in 1920 became the first African American delegate to the International Council of Women at their 5th congress in Norway.

Mary Anna Cooke Thompson (1825-1919)

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"The question of woman's suffrage is simply a question of equity, of equality before the law."

Mary Anna Cooke Thompson, undated. (Courtesy of Oregon Historical Society)

Thompson began practicing medicine in Portland in 1867 and made a name for herself as the city's first woman physician. Like many others who came after her, Thompson's political activism stemmed from her experience as a physician. She advocated for women and infants, especially around childbirth, and pushed for sanitation, rest, and recuperation.

Among Oregon's suffragists, she respected the person, but opposed the tactics of Abigail Scott Duniway. Thompson believed in a connection between woman suffrage and the temperance movement's urging for the prohibition of alcohol. She and others in the temperance movement believed national prohibition would end the abuse of women and children by their alcoholic husbands and fathers. Duniway opposed this connection, believing it would drive away male voters.

Undeterred, Thompson pushed on, giving speeches and lectures around the state and nation. In 1878, California senator Aaron Sargent introduced the bill which would become the 19th Amendment, and Thompson traveled to Washington D.C. to fight for it. She called on President Hayes to support the bill, and was one of 13 women to address the U.S. Senate regarding woman suffrage. In her speech, she spoke of the moral quality of women, and her sincere belief that voting rights were the cure to political corruption and vice.

Lizzie Weeks (1879-1976)

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"An organization of colored women was effected at the Public Library yesterday to support [the Republican ticket]... following which the entire party went to the courthouse where they registered every one of them as Republicans." – The Oregonian, 1914

Lizzie Weeks, 1919. (*Courtesy of Oregon Historical Society*)

Weeks was an activist in Portland's African American community following Oregon's 1912 proclamation of woman suffrage. She aimed to organize and empower local black women as voters in the system that had previously disavowed her sex and race. She invited visitors to the Portland African American community, and helped build networks with activists outside Oregon. In 1912, she served as a commissioner representing Oregon on the National Emancipation Commemorative Society to recognize the 50th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation.

Weeks helped to organize a 1914 meeting for women of color to support the Republican party which was popular with African Americans until the Great Depression. These women would go on to found the Colored Women's Republican Club and they elected Weeks as its president. The club's chief aim under Weeks' leadership was getting African American women registered to vote.

Like many other women of color from this period, records on Weeks are few and far between. Her activism is the most well documented part of her life. She is remembered for organizing African American women and working to strengthen her disenfranchised community.

Ida B. Wells-Barnett (1862-1931)

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"No nation, savage or civilized, save only the United States of America, has confessed its inability to protect its women save by hanging, shooting, and burning alleged offenders."

Born into slavery in Mississippi, Wells-Barnett spent her adult life fighting against the racism and sexism of white American southerners. Her politics were galvanized in Memphis, where she wrote and owned a newspaper: *The Memphis Free Speech and Headlight*. In the 1890s, Wells-Barnett used her journalism skills to campaign against domestic terrorism in the form of lynching after a friend was murdered by a white mob.

Ida B. Wells-Barnett, 1893. (Courtesy of National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution)

She studied accounts of lynching and published her findings in two pamphlets: *Southern Horrors: Lynch Law in All Its Phases* and *The Red Record*. Wells-Barnett explained that southern men often got away with murdering African American men by allegedly defending the honor of white women. She noted the unjust irony that, in contrast, most Black women had no recourse against sexual assault by powerful white men.

She often had poor relations with white female suffragists, whom she alleged fanned the flames of racial violence. There was little love lost, and many of these white women were unwilling to open the suffrage movement to Wells-Barnett and other women of color. As a suffragist, Wells-Barnett highlighted the link between racial and gender discrimination, furthering the cause of Black feminism. She saw woman suffrage as a means for Black women to become politically involved and elect African Americans to influential offices.

Learn More

Related Sources of Information

National

African American Women in the Struggle for the Vote, 1850-1920 **(https://books.google.com/books/about/African_American_women_in_the_struggle_f.html?id=WLuHAAAAMAAJ)**. Rosalyn Terborg-Penn

Asian Americans for Equality (https://www.aafe.org/our-history/) (video)

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National Archives (https://museum.archives.gov/exhibits)

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Oregon

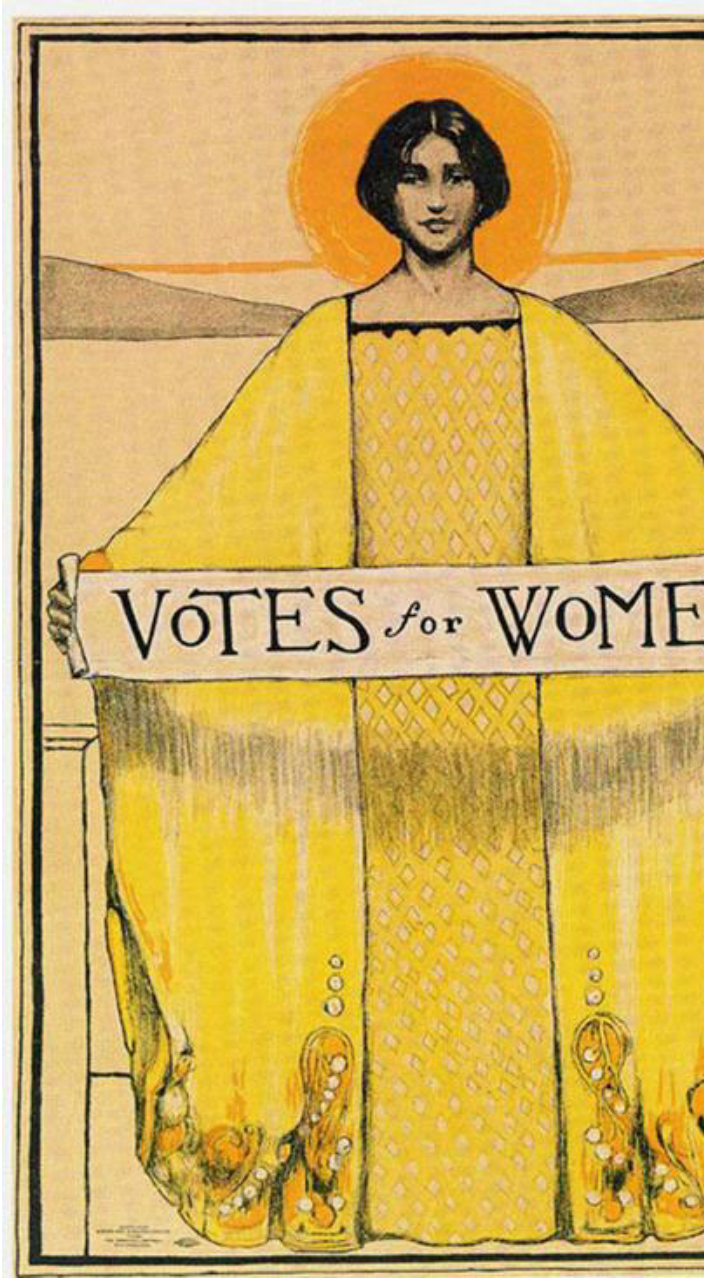
City of Portland Archives (https://www.portland.gov/auditor/archives)

Historic Oregon Newspapers (https://oregonnews.uoregon.edu/), Digital Newspapers Project. University of Oregon

Oregon Encyclopedia (https://www.oregonencyclopedia.org/)

OHSU Historical Collections & Archives (https://www.ohsu.edu/historical-collections-archives)

Oregon Historical Society (https://www.ohs.org/)



Suffragists shared posters, pamphlets and other literature across state campaigns. Oregon women used this Art Nouveau style poster by Bertha Boyé, which was designed for the California election of 1911. (Public Domain Image)

Oregon State Library (https://www.oregon.gov/library/Pages/default.aspx)

Oregon Women's History Consortium (http://www.oregonwomenshistory.org/)

PBS: **Oregon Experience episode, *The Suffragists* (https://www.pbs.org/video/oregon-experience-suffragists/)** (29:30)

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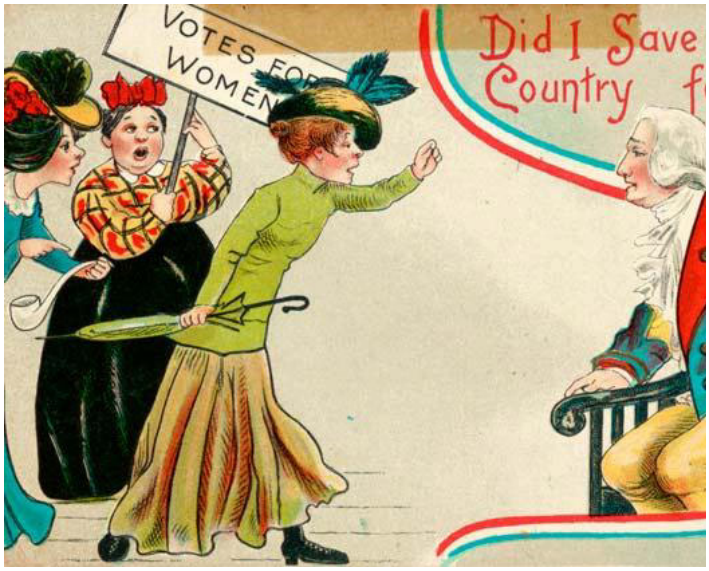

Suffrage activists evoked the spirit of 1776 in support of their cause to win freedom from what they considered to be electoral tyranny. But this ca. 1915 postcard shows that anti-suffragists also used revolutionary imagery and ideas to challenge women's rights. (Courtesy of Library of Congress)

Web Exhibit

Gary Halvorson
Technical assistance: Griffin Walker, Emma Snodgrass