

*Hundreds of women gave the  
accumulated possibilities  
of an entire lifetime,  
thousands gave years of their lives,  
hundreds of thousands  
gave constant interest,  
and such aid as they could.  
It was a continuous, seemingly  
endless, chain of activity.  
Young suffragists who helped forge  
the last links of that chain  
were not born when it began.  
Old suffragists who forged the  
first links were dead when it ended.*

—CARRIE CHAPMAN CATT AND  
NETTIE ROGERS SHULER

**Woman Suffrage and Politics: The Inner  
Story of the Suffrage Movement**

## Introduction

# A Short History of the Woman Suffrage Movement in America

Marjorie Spruill Wheeler

**O**ne Woman, One Vote: Rediscovering the Woman Suffrage Movement, and the documentary, "One Woman, One Vote," were inspired by the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Nineteenth Amendment that enfranchised American women. We honor those women who dedicated their lives to this great cause. Few Americans realize, however, that it required almost seventy-five years for suffragists to achieve this victory: between 1848, when a resolution calling for woman suffrage was adopted at the Seneca Falls Convention, to 1920, when the federal woman suffrage amendment was finally ratified, several generations of suffragists labored tirelessly for the cause. Many did not live to see its successful conclusion.

### Origins: 1848–1869

The woman suffrage movement, which began in the northeastern United States, developed in the context of antebellum reform. Many women including Sarah and Angelina Grimké, Abby Kelley Foster, Lucretia Mott, Maria Stewart, Antoinette Brown Blackwell, Lucy Stone, Susan B. Anthony, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, began speaking out for woman's rights when their efforts to participate fully in the great reform movements of the day—including antislavery and temperance—were rebuffed. These early feminists demanded a wide range of changes in woman's social, moral, legal, educational, and economic status; the right to vote was not their initial focus. Indeed, those present at the Seneca Falls Convention in upstate New York regarded the resolution demanding the vote as the most extreme of all their demands, and adopted it by a narrow margin at the insistence of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Frederick Douglass.

After the Civil War, women's rights leaders saw enfranchisement as one of the most important, perhaps *the* most important of their goals. Enfranchisement, they believed, was essential both as a symbol of women's equality and individuality and a means of improving women's legal and social condition. They were extremely disappointed when the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments did not provide universal suffrage for *all* Americans, but extended the

franchise only to black men. In fact, women's rights advocates divided acrimoniously in 1869 largely over the issue of whether or not to support ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment.

### Suffrage Strategies During "The Schism": 1869–1890

Two woman suffrage organizations were founded in 1869, with different positions on the Fifteenth Amendment and different ideas about how best to promote woman suffrage. The National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA) headed by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony opposed the Fifteenth Amendment, but called for a Sixteenth Amendment that would enfranchise women. Led exclusively by women, the New York-based NWSA focused upon the enfranchisement of women through federal action, and adopted a more radical tone in promoting a wide variety of feminist reforms in its short-lived journal, *The Revolution*.

The other organization, the American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA) with headquarters in Boston, was led by Lucy Stone with the aid of her husband Henry Blackwell, Mary Livermore, Julia Ward Howe, Henry Ward Beecher, Antoinette Brown Blackwell, Thomas Wentworth Higginson and others. It supported ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment while working for woman suffrage as well. While endorsing a federal amendment for female enfranchisement, this organization concentrated on developing grassroots support for woman suffrage. Employing agents who traveled all over the nation, establishing local and state suffrage organizations, speaking and circulating literature, and working through its newspaper, *The Woman's Journal*, the AWSA engaged in a massive educational campaign designed to make woman suffrage and other feminist reforms seem less radical and consistent with widely shared American values. AWSA members promoted state suffrage amendments and various forms of "partial suffrage" legislation, including bills giving women the right to vote on school or municipal issues or in presidential elections; they believed that these measures were desirable in themselves and a means to the eventual end—full suffrage for all American women.

Meanwhile, suffragists associated with the NWSA, disheartened by the response to the proposed federal amendment, and disdaining the state-by-state approach, tried to win their rights by other approaches, known collectively as the "New Departure." These suffragists challenged their exclusion from voting on the grounds that, as citizens, they could not be deprived of their rights as protected by the Constitution. Victoria Woodhull, a radical, iconoclastic, and beautiful figure who briefly gained the support of Stanton and Anthony in the 1870s (before her scandalous personal life and advocacy of free love were revealed at great cost to the movement), made this argument before Congress in 1871.

In 1872, Susan B. Anthony attempted to vote, hoping to be arrested and to have the opportunity to test this strategy in the courts; she was arrested and

indicted for "knowingly, wrongfully and unlawfully vot[ing] for a representative to the Congress of the United States." Found guilty and fined, she insisted she would never pay a dollar of it. Virginia Minor, a suffrage leader in St. Louis, succeeded in getting the issue before the United States Supreme Court, but in 1875 the court ruled unanimously that citizenship did not automatically confer the right to vote and that the issue of female enfranchisement should be decided within the states.

### The West Pioneers in Woman Suffrage

Even as the NWSA and the AWSA competed for support and tried several strategies for winning female enfranchisement to no avail, woman suffrage was making headway in the West. While most eastern politicians were dead set against woman suffrage, politicians and voters in several western states enfranchised women and, at times, battled Congress for the right to do so. In 1869 Wyoming led the nation in the adoption of woman suffrage while still a territory; in 1890, when it appeared that Congress would not approve its application for statehood as long as Wyoming allowed woman suffrage, the legislature declared "we will remain out of the Union a hundred years rather than come in without the women." Even the Mormon stronghold of Utah enacted woman suffrage as a territory in 1870 and came into the Union with woman suffrage in 1896. Colorado (1893) and Idaho (1896) were the other "pioneering" suffrage states.

Historians differ as to the reason why the West was so precocious in its adoption of woman suffrage. One theory was that frontier conditions undermined traditional gender roles and that women, having proven their ability to conquer difficult conditions and do "men's work," were rewarded with the vote. Another theory was that the politicians hoped that women voters would help to "civilize" the West. Most historians stress practical politics as opposed to advanced ideology as the explanation, arguing that western politicians found it expedient to enfranchise women for a variety of reasons. In Utah, for example, Mormons were confident that the votes of women would help preserve Mormon traditions—including polygamy—and that enfranchising women would help to dispel the idea widely accepted in the East that Mormon women were an oppressed lot.

For whatever reasons, these four western states were the *only* states to adopt woman suffrage in the nineteenth century. The next round of state victories did not come until 1910, and these were also in the West (Washington, 1910; California, 1911; Oregon, 1912; Kansas, 1912; and Arizona, 1912).

### Woman Suffrage and Temperance

Meanwhile, the suffrage movement won a valuable ally when Frances Willard, as president of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), led thousands of otherwise quite traditional women to "convert" to the cause of

woman suffrage as a way of protecting the home, women, and children. Following its official endorsement in 1880, the WCTU created a Department of Franchise under Zerelda Wallace and Dr. Anna Howard Shaw (later president of the NAWSA), which encouraged state WCTU chapters to endorse suffrage and distributed suffrage literature. Though Willard was a member of the AWSA and invited Susan B. Anthony to speak before the WCTU, the temperance organization's work for woman suffrage was particularly valuable in creating support for suffrage among women who might have considered the existing suffrage organizations and their leaders eccentric or radical.

The WCTU endorsement, however, gained for the suffrage movement a powerful opponent when the liquor industry concluded that woman suffrage was a threat to be stopped at all costs. Indeed, NAWSA President Carrie Chapman Catt later referred to the liquor industry as "the Invisible Enemy" and believed that its corrupt manipulation of American politics long delayed the coming of woman suffrage.

### Unity Restored Through the NAWSA: 1890

One of the most important turning points in the history of the woman suffrage movement came in 1890 as the two national suffrage organizations reunited in one major organization. At the instigation of younger suffragists, the movement's aging pioneers put aside their differences sufficiently to merge their rival organizations into the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA). Elizabeth Cady Stanton was elected president; Lucy Stone, head of the executive committee; and Susan B. Anthony, vice president; but it was Anthony who actually took command of the new organization. (She became president officially in 1892 and remained in office until 1900.) While continuing to demand a federal amendment, NAWSA leaders concluded that they must first build support within the states, winning enough state suffrage amendments that Congress would approve a federal amendment and three-fourths of the states would be sure to ratify.

Though Stanton continued to address a wide range of feminist issues, many of them quite radical (including an indictment of Christianity in her 1895 *The Woman's Bible*), most NAWSA leaders including Anthony thought it imperative that the movement focus almost exclusively on winning the vote. In keeping with this new approach and influenced by the conservatism of new recruits, the suffragists went to great lengths to avoid association with radical causes.

### Woman Suffrage and the Race Issue

This new approach included shedding the traditional association of women's rights with the rights of blacks. Although the NAWSA never stopped using natural rights arguments for woman suffrage, white suffragists—still indignant that black men were enfranchised ahead of them and angry at the ease with which

immigrant men were enfranchised—drifted away from insistence upon universal suffrage and increasingly employed racist and nativist rhetoric and tactics.

The new NAWSA strategy included building support in the South. There the historic connection between the woman's movement and antislavery made suffrage anathema to the white conservatives who once again controlled the region and made advocacy of woman suffrage quite difficult for the influential white women the NAWSA wished to recruit. In the 1890s, however, with Laura Clay of Kentucky as intermediary, NAWSA leaders went to great lengths to, in Clay's words, "bring in the South."

Using a strategy first suggested by Henry Blackwell, northern and southern leaders began to argue that woman suffrage—far from endangering white supremacy in the South—could be a means of restoring it. In fact, they suggested that the adoption of woman suffrage with educational or property qualifications that would disqualify most black women, would allow the South to restore white supremacy in politics without "having to" disfranchise black men and risk Congressional repercussions.

The NAWSA spent considerable time and resources developing this "southern strategy," sending Catt and Anthony on speaking tours through the region, and holding the 1895 NAWSA convention in Atlanta. Eager to avoid offending their southern hosts they even asked their aging hero Frederick Douglass—who was an honored participant in women's rights conventions elsewhere in the nation—to stay away from the Atlanta meeting. By 1903, however, it was becoming clear that this southern strategy had failed; the region's politicians refused (in the words of one Mississippi politician) to "cower behind petticoats" and "use lovely women" to maintain white supremacy. Instead, they found other means to do so that did not involve the "destruction" of woman's traditional role.

White suffragists largely turned their backs on African American women in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and, in the South, excluded them totally from white suffrage organizations. Nevertheless, a growing number of African American women actively supported woman suffrage during this period. Following a path blazed by former slave Sojourner Truth and free blacks Harriet Forten Purvis and Margaretta Forten who spoke at antebellum women's rights conventions, and Massachusetts reformers Caroline Remond Putman and Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin who were active in the AWSA in the 1870s, black women persevered in their advocacy of woman suffrage even in these difficult times. Prominent African American suffragists included Ida B. Wells-Barnett of Chicago, famous as a leading crusader against lynching; Mary Church Terrell, educator and first president of the National Association of Colored Women (NACW); and Adella Hunt Logan, Tuskegee faculty member, who, in articles in *The Crisis*, insisted that if white women needed the vote to protect their rights, then black women—victims of racism as well as sexism—needed the ballot even more.

Still, white suffrage leaders, who either shared the nativism or racism endemic to turn-of-the century America or were convinced they must cater to it in

order to succeed, continued in their attempts to shed the movement's radical image and enlarge their constituency.

### Rebuilding: 1896—1910

From the late 1890s to around 1910, in a period historians once described as "the doldrums" of the woman suffrage movement, the NAWSA went through a major period of rebuilding—in regard to membership as well as image. Under the leadership of Carrie Chapman Catt, president from 1900 to 1904, the NAWSA began successful efforts (known as the "society plan") to recruit large numbers of socially prominent and politically influential women, such as Alva Smith (Vanderbilt) Belmont, who thereafter contributed lavishly to the suffrage movement. Rebuilding efforts also included convincing growing numbers of middle- and upper-class women involved in women's clubs that woman suffrage would be a boon to their civic improvement efforts. NAWSA leaders also reached out to the new generation of college-educated women, many of them professionals, reminding them that their opportunities were owed to the pioneers of the woman's rights movement, and challenging them to take up the torch.

The suffrage movement profited greatly from the new ideas and energy of younger leaders such as Maud Wood Park and Inez Haynes Irwin who formed the College Equal Suffrage League, and Mary Hutcheson Page of Massachusetts and Harriot Stanton Blatch (the daughter of Elizabeth Cady Stanton) of New York. These women reinvigorated the suffrage movements in their states by introducing new tactics borrowed from English suffragists or working-class political activists including open-air meetings and parades. Blatch also organized the Equality League of Self Supporting Women (1907), later called the Women's Political Union.

The NAWSA also expanded its educational efforts, distributing literature to schools and libraries, sponsoring debates, disseminating a new and less radical image of their movement's own history in which Anthony was virtually canonized. Together these rebuilding efforts greatly expanded the suffrage constituency, brought in able and talented workers, and made it much more difficult for anti-suffragists to label the movement as marginal or extreme. Yet, particularly after Catt resigned in 1904 (due to the illness of her husband) and Dr. Anna Howard Shaw inherited the presidency of the NAWSA, the de-centralized NAWSA provided little in the way of a national political strategy. Between 1896 and 1910, no new states were won for woman suffrage; only six state campaigns were attempted and all of them failed.

### The Suffrage Movement and Progressivism

There was, however, considerable grounds for optimism in 1910. The Progressive Movement, which began around 1900 at the grassroots level and swept both national political parties, was proving to be a tremendous boon to the

cause of woman suffrage. In all sections of the United States, women and men who supported Progressive reforms (including pure food and drug legislation, protection for workers, an end to child labor, and legislation to curb political corruption) believed that women's votes would help obtain such reforms. Countless women, many of them involved in civic improvement clubs, enlisted in the suffrage movement as they became frustrated at their inability to secure such reforms through "indirect influence" or lobbying.

Leading Progressive reformers including the revered Jane Addams, founder of the famous Chicago settlement house, Hull House, and Florence Kelley, Executive Secretary of the National Consumer's League, were strong supporters of woman suffrage. And labor leaders, including Rose Schneiderman, labor organizer and speaker with the Women's Trade Union League; and Leonora O'Reilly, who headed the industrial committee of the New York City Woman Suffrage Party, worked hard for suffrage as a means of achieving improved conditions for workers. Many working-class women joined the movement, welcomed by middle-class and elite leaders such as Harriot Stanton Blatch (who had objected to the NAWSA's "society plan") who worked to unite women of all classes into a revitalized suffrage movement. As opponents were quick to point out, many socialists supported woman suffrage, playing an important role in the suffrage movement particularly in New York, Wisconsin, and California—though some socialists including Emma Goldman thought it foolish to expect that much progress would come from female enfranchisement.

### Anti-suffragists in the Progressive Era

As in the case of temperance and suffrage, however, the idea that women would support Progressive reforms provoked opposition. Industries that stood to lose from Progressive reform, such as the cotton textile industry of the South that employed large numbers of child laborers, joined the liquor industry as formidable opponents of woman suffrage, and worked together with the growing number of anti-suffrage organizations to oppose state suffrage referenda. They rarely attacked directly the idea of women exercising influence, however, instead arguing that *direct* involvement in politics rather than continued reliance upon *indirect* influence would be harmful to women, as politics was such a dirty game.

It is significant, however, that in the Progressive Era, female anti-suffragists (known as "Antis"), widely proclaimed that they *avored* woman's involvement in public affairs including nonpartisan political activity. Pointing to their own records of community service, they insisted that they opposed woman suffrage primarily out of the belief that involvement in partisan politics would dispel women's energies and dilute their influence. Indeed, as the suffrage movement entered what proved to be its last decade, a tradition of women's civic activism had developed—and been accepted—to the point that the argument over suffrage was more often framed in terms of how women could be most effective,

rather than whether or not women should concern themselves with life outside a narrowly defined “woman’s sphere.”

### Alice Paul and the National Woman’s Party

Around 1912, the increased support for suffrage resulting from Progressivism, and the series of victories in the western states seemed to breathe new life into suffragists all over America. The return of Alice Paul from England, where she was inspired by the energy and boldness of the “militant” British suffragists, was also a major factor in the new suffrage activism.

Paul, her able associate Lucy Burns, and the circle of women who gathered around them, had no patience with the slow, state-by-state plodding that had consumed much of the NAWSA’s energy since the 1890s. Working at first through the Congressional Union, the NAWSA-affiliated organization Paul organized to lobby for the federal amendment, these women insisted that the NAWSA focus its attention almost exclusively upon the federal route to enfranchisement. This infuriated some suffragists, particularly a small but vocal group of states’ rights devotees led by Kate Gordon of New Orleans who favored woman suffrage by state action only. Still, the NAWSA did indeed renew its campaign for a federal amendment—but not before it parted company with Paul and her followers.

The central issue in this new rift in the suffrage forces was Alice Paul’s advocacy of a strategy derived from the British suffragists, to oppose the “party-in-power” until it adopted woman suffrage, a strategy that violated the NAWSA’s longstanding policy of non-partisanship. Forming a separate organization, soon known as the National Woman’s Party (NWP), Paul and her associates continued to pursue a federal amendment using bold new tactics designed to force President Woodrow Wilson and the Democratic Party to support the federal amendment. These actions ranged from mobilizing women voters in western states against all Democrats in the 1916 election (especially Wilson who was running for re-election), to burning the president’s war-time speeches in praise of democracy publicly in front of the White House.

Alice Paul proved to be brilliant at attracting and keeping the attention of the press—refusing to allow the press to continue to ignore the suffrage movement—and thereby forcing it to the forefront of public debate. The massive, dramatic suffrage parade that she organized during Wilson’s inaugural celebration—featuring more than eight thousand suffragists spectacularly arrayed with costumes and banners and led by the striking Inez Milholland in flowing white robes on a white horse—captured the nation’s attention. That the throngs assembled for the parade attacked the marchers after spitting on them and pelting them with lighted cigars, and that the police failed to protect them, led to a Congressional investigation—and attracted sympathy for the cause not unlike similar events during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s.

Indeed Paul and the NWP were among the first Americans to employ many of the tactics of civil disobedience: they were the first, for example, to picket the White House for a political cause. Again crowds attacked the demonstrators, but the pickets—not their attackers—were jailed. Imprisoned on charges of obstructing traffic, they were given prison terms of up to six months. When they protested this violation of their rights by going on hunger strikes, they were forcibly fed—a brutal and dangerous procedure—recorded in shocking detail in Doris Stevens’s classic of 1920, *Jailed for Freedom*. All of this however, only increased their determination to expose the hypocrisy of a nation which, during World War I, proclaimed itself the leader of a crusade for democracy while jailing and abusing women for protesting the nation’s denial of the vote to half of its adult citizens.

### Carrie Chapman Catt and the “Winning Plan”

Carrie Chapman Catt was equally determined to bring the long struggle to a conclusion with the adoption of the federal suffrage amendment, but pursued this end with a strategy that contrasted sharply with that of Alice Paul. Catt’s return to the NAWSA presidency in late 1915, and the adoption shortly thereafter of her then top secret “Winning Plan,” harnessed the power of the massive but sluggish NAWSA and initiated a final, victorious suffrage drive. Catt insisted that further state work was vital, but made it clear that the federal amendment was still the ultimate goal. Her plan called for suffragists in states that had not adopted woman suffrage—and where a victory seemed possible—to launch campaigns at once. In states where defeat was likely, she insisted that suffragists avoid such an embarrassment to the cause and seek only partial suffrage—municipal, presidential, or primary suffrage—as they thought best. She urged suffragists in states where women already voted to pressure their national representatives to support the federal amendment.

Meanwhile Catt and her lieutenants, Maud Wood Park and Helen Gardener, worked hard to convince President Wilson to support woman suffrage by federal as well as state action, and conducted a massive lobbying effort to enlist congressional support. Dubbed by the press as the “Front Door Lobby” because of the contrast between their open and honest methods and those more common among Washington’s lobbyists, the suffragists kept constant watch over members of Congress. Women from all parts of the nation came in “relays” to reinforce those stationed at NAWSA’s Washington headquarters, who studied the congressmen with microscopic intensity, seeking the right words or arguments with which to persuade them to support the federal amendment. It had long since become clear to the suffragists that “justice” arguments alone would not be sufficient; politicians had to be convinced that it was expedient for them personally as well as for their party to support woman suffrage. Though some loved it and some loathed it, suffragists found it necessary to learn the art of “practical politics.”

As Catt and Shuler later recalled in *Woman Suffrage and Politics*, this was an all-absorbing effort. "It is doubtful," they wrote, "if any man, even among suffrage men, ever realized what the suffrage struggle came to mean to women before the end was allowed in America. How much of time and patience, how much work, energy and aspiration, how much faith, how much hope, how much despair went into it. It leaves its mark on one, such a struggle." In these years Catt, like Anthony in final decades of her life, set aside other causes to focus exclusively upon winning the suffrage battle. When the United States entered World War I, Catt put her own pacifism on hold and urged suffragists to support the war effort—a policy that disappointed many peace advocates but enhanced the patriotic image of the movement with the public and powerful decision-makers, including Wilson.

A growing number of state victories and Woodrow Wilson's conversion (he began working for the federal amendment in 1918) finally led Congress to approve the Nineteenth Amendment and to submit it to the states in June 1919. Historians debate the relative contributions of Catt and the NAWSA versus Paul and the NWP to the victory in Congress. But clearly Catt's careful coordination of suffragists all over the nation and skillful political maneuvering, together with the pressure on Wilson and members of Congress that Paul and other militant suffragists applied by less orthodox methods of persuasion, were all major factors.

## The Fight for Ratification

The final chapter in the suffrage story was still ahead: thirty-six states had to ratify the amendment before it could become law. As the struggle over ratification began, Illinois and Wisconsin competed for the honor of being the first to ratify, while Georgia and Alabama scrambled to be the first to pass a "rejection resolution." Most states took longer to act, and many battles were hard fought, with suffragists and anti-suffragists using all powers of persuasion at their command. By the summer of 1920, suffragists were dismayed to find that while only one more state was needed, no further legislative sessions were scheduled before the November 1920 election. Desperate, suffragists began pleading for special sessions. President Wilson was finally able to pressure the reluctant governor of Tennessee into calling such a session.

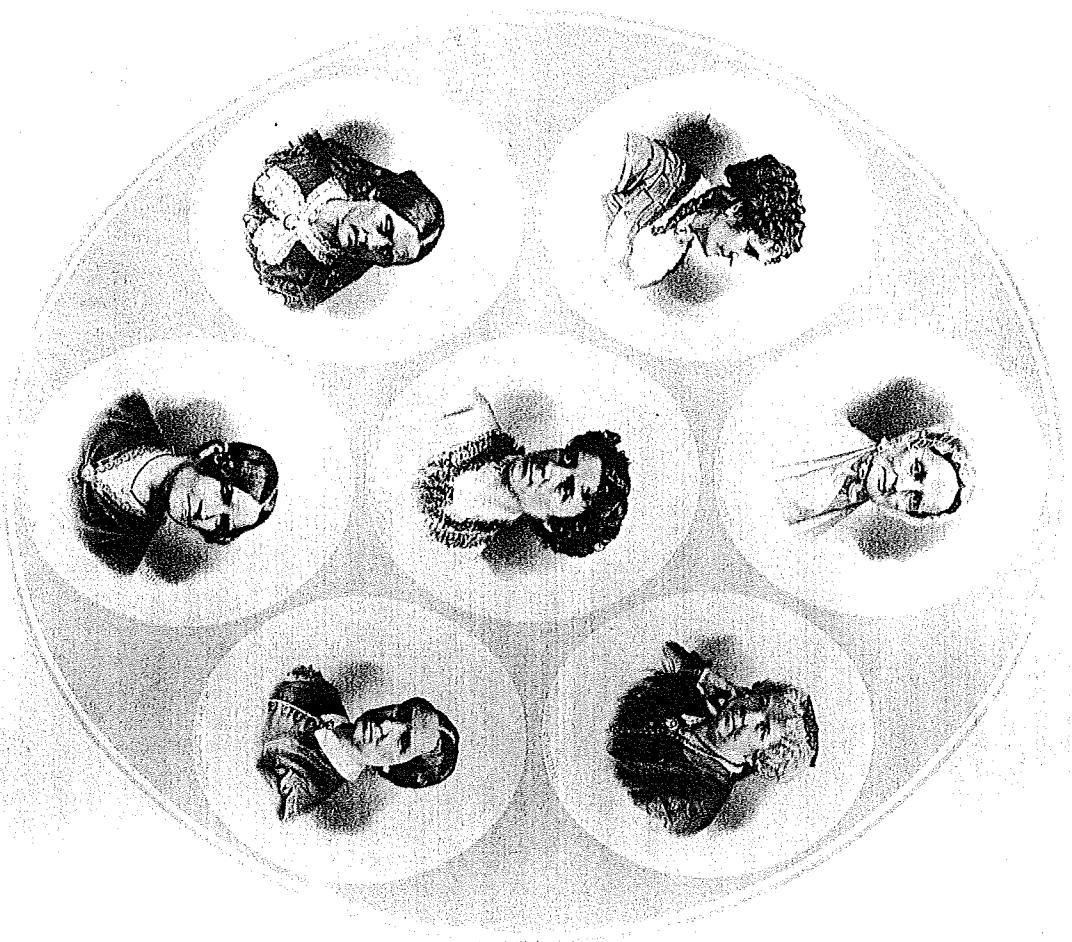
Thus the final battle over woman suffrage took place in Nashville, Tennessee in the long, hot summer of 1920. In that final, dramatic contest, anti-suffragists as well as suffragists from all over the nation descended upon the state in a bitter struggle over ideology and influence. That the suffrage movement's "Armageddon" took place in the South added to the suffragists' difficulties, as many white southerners regarded the federal amendment as "an extension" of the much-resented Fifteenth Amendment, and anti-suffragists presented the federal amendment as a threat to white supremacy and states' rights. The liquor industry and its corporate allies also appeared to be actively engaged in the struggle.

Despite the glare of national publicity, the suffragists watched with dismay as a comfortable margin in favor of ratification gradually disappeared, and they were quite uncertain of the result when the vote took place. When, on August 18, it appeared that Tennessee had ratified—the result of one twenty-four-year-old legislator from the mountains, Harry Burn, changing his vote at the insistence of his elderly mother, Febb King Ensminger Burn—the antis still managed to delay official ratification through parliamentary tricks. While anti-suffrage legislators fled the state to avoid a quorum, their associates held massive anti-ratification rallies and otherwise attempted to convince pro-suffrage legislators to oppose ratification. Finally, Tennessee reaffirmed its vote for ratification, and the Nineteenth Amendment was officially added to the United States Constitution on August 26, 1920.

## *One Woman, One Vote: Rediscovering the Woman Suffrage Movement*

This short history of the movement, as the reader will see, is drawn largely from the essays that follow. The nineteen essays, each focusing on a particular aspect of the suffrage story but presented in roughly chronological order, together tell the fascinating story of the woman suffrage movement from the failure of the Constitution to enfranchise women to the participation of women in politics after 1920. The authors of the essays, scholars in the fields of History, American Studies, Political Science, and Sociology, help us to "rediscover" the woman suffrage movement as they cover new ground, offer intriguing and sometimes conflicting interpretations, and challenge widely accepted theories about the movement's history.

Together the essays describe why a suffrage movement was necessary, how the movement began, and how it changed over time in response to changes in American society and politics. Through them we are introduced to several generations of suffrage leaders and learn of the supportive relationships as well as tensions that developed among them. We learn of the growing diversity of the suffrage constituency in terms of region, religion, race, class, ethnicity, and even attitude, and that the suffrage story included both a record of harmony and cooperation between diverse groups of suffragists, and a disturbing record of discrimination and betrayal. We come to a better understanding of the reasons that some American men and women opposed woman suffrage, and how—despite so many obstacles—suffragists finally prevailed. Finally, we discover that, though the diverse coalition known as the suffrage movement did not—and indeed, could not—turn into a united voting "bloc" after 1920, women continued to be politically active in a wide range of organizations and movements. Above all we learn that the franchise was not given to women when the Nineteenth Amendment was ratified seventy-five years ago: generations of suffragists labored long and hard to win this acknowledgment of woman's right to vote in the United States.



*"Representative Women." 1870 lithograph. Clockwise from top: Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Mary Livermore, Lydia Maria Child, Susan B. Anthony, and Grace Greenwood. Anna Dickinson is in the center. Library of Congress*

leading period, was lauded ye sary, an

After inferior celebrat by John women says Ken did not men, we ately ex *explicitly* assignec pretered t could h: can poli tional an

In the voting a moved t to vote ) began te laration parts de includin After Congres



# ONE WOMAN, ONE VOTE

REDISCOVERING THE  
WOMAN SUFFRAGE  
MOVEMENT

EDITED BY  
MARJORIE SPRUILL WHEELER



NEWSAGE PRESS



## One Woman, One Vote

Rediscovering the Woman Suffrage Movement

Edited by Marjorie Spruill Wheeler

Copyright © 1995 by NewSage Press  
and Educational Film Company  
1995, 1996 Second Printing

Softcover ISBN 0-939165-26-0

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or used in any form or by any means without permission in writing from the publisher.

Address inquiries to:

NewSage Press  
P.O. Box 607  
Troutdale, OR 97060  
503-695-2211

Designed by Robert Cooney

Digital composition by Greg Endries

Printed in the United States

*Cover Photo:* Members of the Women's Political Union at the State Fair suffrage tent, Syracuse, New York, c. 1915  
Frank Corbeil Collection

*Back Cover Photo:* Suffrage parade, 1913  
New York Public Library

Distributed by Publishers Group West  
1-800-788-3123

## Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

One Woman, One Vote : rediscovering the  
woman suffrage movement / edited by Marjorie Spruill Wheeler.

p. cm.

Includes biographical references and index.

ISBN 0-939165-26-0

1. Women—Suffrage—United States—History. I. Wheeler, Marjorie  
Spruill,

JK1896.054 1995

324.6 '23 '0973—dc20

95-34128

CIP

# Contents

## Introduction

A Short History of the Woman Suffrage Movement in America

Marjorie Spruill Wheeler . . . . . 9

1. "Ourselves and Our Daughters Forever":  
Women and the Constitution, 1787–1876  
Linda K. Kerber . . . . . 21
2. The Seneca Falls Convention  
From the *History of Woman Suffrage*, 1881.  
Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and  
Matilda Gage, eds. . . . . 37
3. A Feminist Friendship:  
Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony  
Alice S. Rossi . . . . . 45
4. White Women's Rights, Black Men's Wrongs, Free Love,  
Blackmail, and the Formation of the American  
Woman Suffrage Association  
Andrea Moore Kerr . . . . . 61
5. Taking the Law Into Our Own Hands:  
Bradwell, Minor, and Suffrage Militance in the 1870s  
Ellen Carol DuBois . . . . . 81
6. How the West Was Won for Woman Suffrage  
Beverly Beeton . . . . . 99
7. Frances Willard and the Woman's Christian Temperance  
Union's Conversion to Woman Suffrage  
Carolyn DeSwarte Gifford . . . . . 117
8. African American Women and the Woman Suffrage Movement  
Rosalyn Terborg-Penn . . . . . 135
9. The Suffrage Renaissance:  
A New Image for a New Century, 1896–1910  
Sara Hunter Graham . . . . . 157
10. Jane Addams, Progressivism, and Woman Suffrage:  
An Introduction to "Why Women Should Vote"  
Victoria Bissell Brown  
Why Women Should Vote  
Jane Addams . . . . . 179