



Rightfully Hers: *American Women and the Vote* Exhibit Overview

Corinne L. Porter, Curator

February 19, 2020
Cleveland State University





May 10, 2019—January 3, 2021

Lawrence F. O'Brien Gallery

National Archives Museum
Washington, D.C.

Exhibit Approach

Celebrates 19th Amendment's historical meaning and contemporary relevance through inclusive retelling of women's struggle to vote

- Broad diversity of suffrage activists
- Diverse bases on which American women have been barred from voting

Educational Objective

- Guide visitors through complex history of the 19th Amendment
- Inspire critical thinking about what this history means for voting rights struggles today
- Appreciation for the value of participation in the political process

Exhibit Organization

Five sections that will answer the following questions:

- Who decides who votes?
- Why did women fight for the vote?
- How did women win the 19th Amendment?
- What was the 19th Amendment's impact?
- What voting rights struggles persist?



Who Decides Who Votes?

Main messages:

- States determine eligibility requirements for voting
- Millions of women could vote before the 19th Amendment
- 19th Amendment did not effectively enfranchise all women



Bettmann/Getty Images

Why Did Women Fight for the Vote?

Main Messages:

- Reasons women fought for the vote
- Justice and citizenship rights
- Protection of women's lives, livelihoods, property and children
- Special burdens and risks for women of color



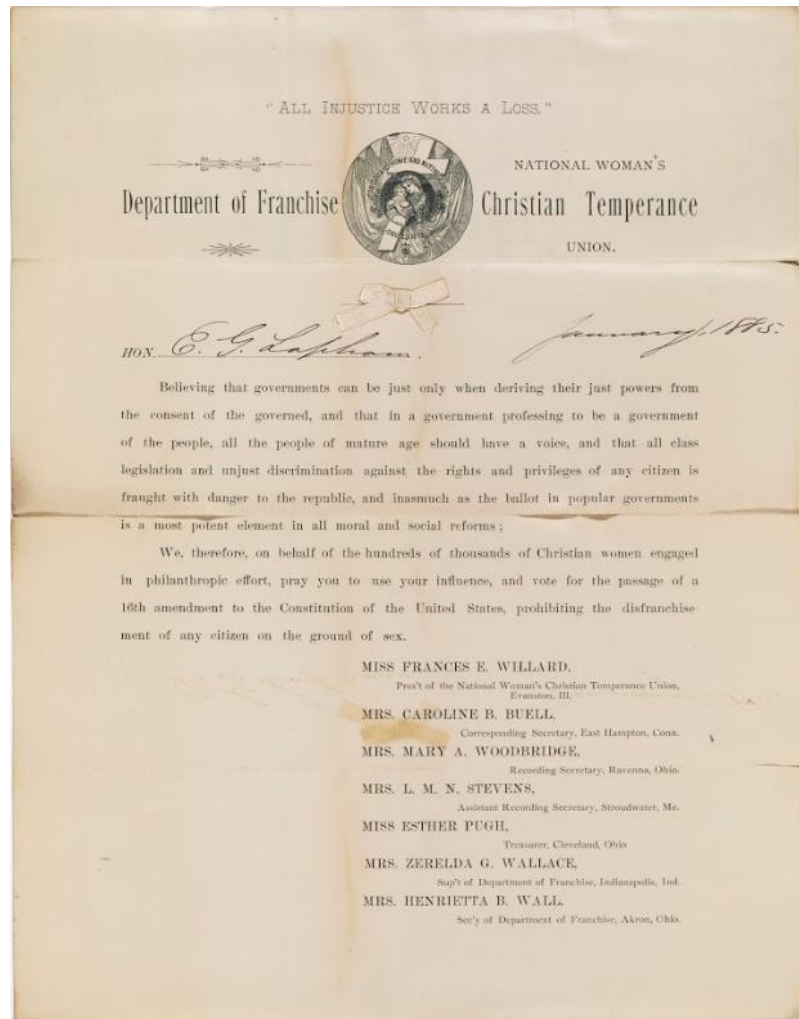


*Petition of Emily K. Barber for relief from
Political Disabilities.*

*To the Senate and House of Representatives of the
United States, in Congress assembled:*

*Emily K. Barber, a citizen of the United States, and a
Resident of the State of Pennsylvania, County of Cam-
bridgesburg, Town of Steubens, hereby respectfully petitions your
Honorable Body, for the removal of her political disabili-
ties, and that she may be invested with full power to exer-
cise her right of self-government at the ballot box, with
State constitutions and statute laws to the contrary not-
withstanding.*

*Your petitioner respectfully represents that she is com-
pelled to pay equal taxes on the same amount of prop-
erty as men, but is denied the right to a voice in their
disbursement;—that, with acknowledged superior cap-
acities for teaching and governing schools, she has
been obliged to teach for one third of the wages accord-
ed to a male teacher in the same school.*



National Archives, Records of the U.S. Senate

How Did Women Win the 19th Amendment?

Stories and Strategies from the fight for Woman Suffrage:

- Suffrage movement origins and “schism” over strategy
- Critical role of African American and working class suffragists
- Political and personal motivations of anti-suffragists
- Women’s public demonstrations: attempts to register and vote, marches, protests, picketing
- Impact of WWI on suffrage movement
- Passage of proposed amendment and battle for ratification



A PETITION FOR UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE.

To the Senate and House of Representatives:

The undersigned, Women of the United States, respectfully ask an amendment of the Constitution that shall prohibit the several States from disfranchising any of their citizens on the ground of sex.

In making our demand for Suffrage, we would call your attention to the fact that we represent fifteen million people—one half the entire population of the country—intelligent, virtuous, native-born American citizens; and yet stand outside the pale of political recognition.

The Constitution classes us as "free people," and counts us *whole* persons in the basis of representation; and yet are we governed without our consent, compelled to pay taxes without appeal, and punished for violations of law without choice of judge or jury.

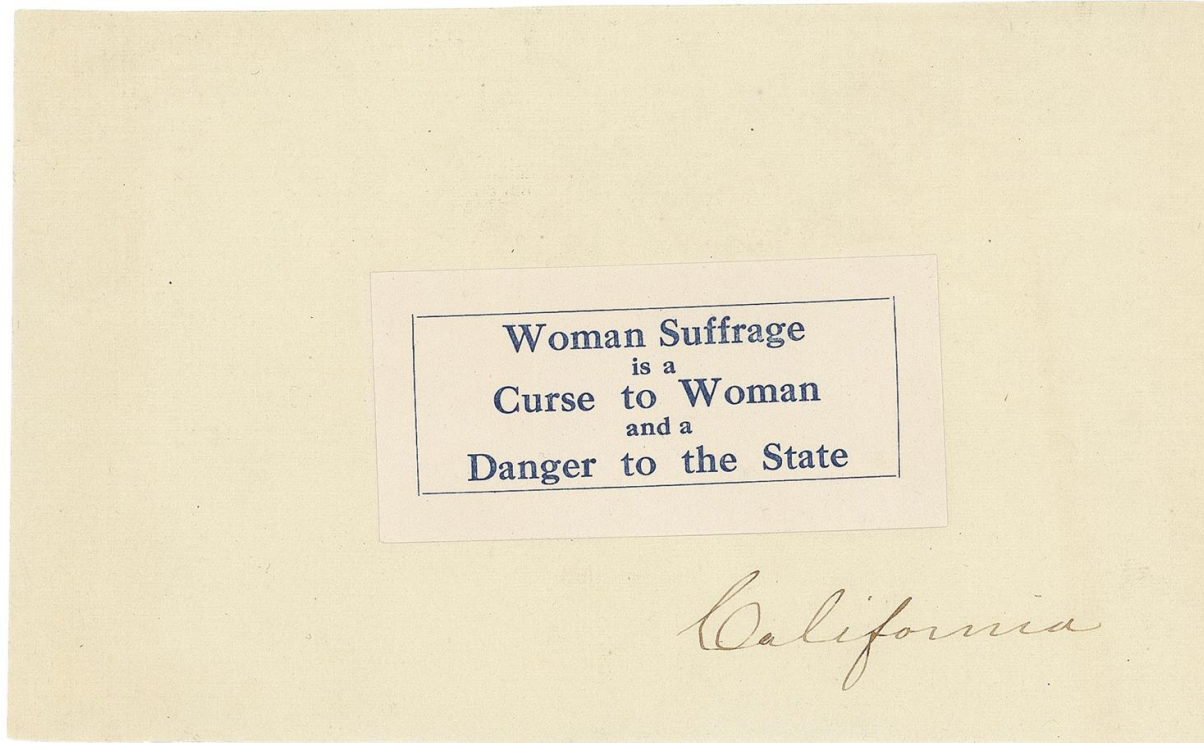
The experience of all ages, the Declarations of the Fathers, the Statute Laws of our own day, and the fearful revolution through which we have just passed, all prove the uncertain tenure of life, liberty and property so long as the ballot—the only weapon of self-protection—is not in the hand of every citizen.

Therefore, as you are now amending the Constitution, and, in harmony with advancing civilization, placing new safeguards round the individual rights of four millions of emancipated slaves, we ask that you extend the right of Suffrage to Woman—the only remaining class of disfranchised citizens—and thus fulfil your Constitutional obligation "to guarantee, to every State in the Union a Republican form of Government."

As all partial application of Republican principles must ever breed a complicated legislation as well as a discontented people, we would pray your Honorable Body, in order to simplify the machinery of government and ensure domestic tranquillity, that you legislate hereafter for persons, citizens, tax-payers, and not for class or caste.

For justice and equality your petitioners will ever pray.

NAMES.	RESIDENCE.
Elisby Stanton	New York
Susan B. Anthony	Rochester - N. Y.
Antoinette Brown Blackwell	New York
Mary Stone	Newark, N. Jersey
Joanna C. Morse	48 Livingston St. Brooklyn
Emeline P. Rose	New York
Harriet E. Eaton	6 West 14th Street N.Y.
Catharine C. Wilkeson	88 Clinton Place New York
Elizabeth C. Wilson	48 Livingston St. Brooklyn
Mary Evelyn Gilbert	293 W. 19th St. New York
Mary E. Elliot	New York
Mr. Griffith	New York.



National Archives, Records of the U.S. House of Representatives



Vote **Against Woman Suffrage**

- BECAUSE the women of Georgia do not want the vote.
- BECAUSE under equal suffrage election expenses show increase of 20 per cent.—consequent increased taxation.
- BECAUSE universal suffrage wipes out the disfranchisement of the negro by State law.
- BECAUSE of the danger to farmers' families if negro men vote in addition to 2,000,000 negro women.
- BECAUSE farm lands would depreciate under universal suffrage.
- BECAUSE the South has been notified that Federal authorities will supervise elections.
- BECAUSE White Supremacy must be maintained.

THE GEORGIA ASSOCIATION *OPPOSED TO WOMAN'S SUFFRAGE*
Headquarters 132 High St., Macon, Ga.

National Archives, Records of the U.S. House of Representatives



Shivry family papers, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library



*National Archives,
Publications of the U.S.
Government*





*National Archives at St. Louis,
Records of the U.S. Civil Service
Commission*



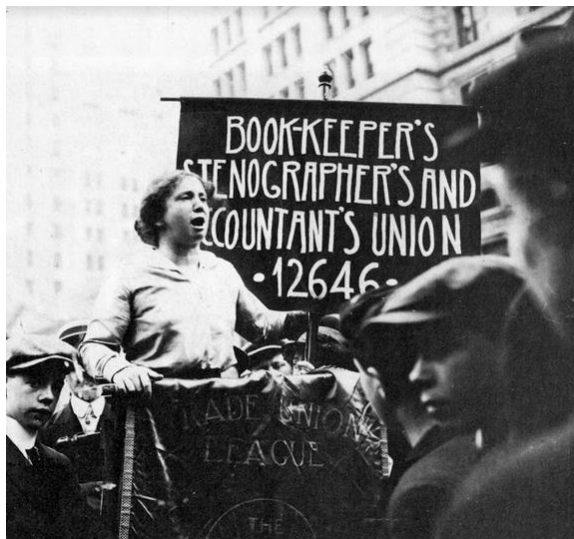


Wells, Ida B. Papers, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Suffragist Spotlights



Mabel Ping-Hua Lee
Barnard Archives and Special Collections



Rose Schneiderman
Pictorial Press Ltd / Alamy Stock Photo



Adelina Otero-Warren
State Archives of New Mexico

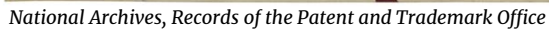
Suffragist Spotlights



Fannie Lou Hamer
National Archives, Records of the U.S. Information Agency



Vilma Martinez
Getty Images





National Archives, Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs

H. J. Res. 1.

Sixty-sixth Congress of the United States of America;

At the First Session,

Began and held at the City of Washington on Monday, the nineteenth day of May,
one thousand nine hundred and sixteen.

JOINT RESOLUTION

Proposing an amendment to the Constitution extending the right of suffrage
to women.

*Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States
of America in Congress assembled (two-thirds of each House concurring therein),
That the following article is proposed as an amendment to the Constitution,
which shall be valid to all intents and purposes as part of the Constitution when
ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States.*

"ARTICLE ————

"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."

F. H. Lister
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Thos. R. Marshall
Vice President of the United States and
President of the Senate.

EXECUTIVE CHAMBER, CAPITOL, NASHVILLE
STATE OF TENNESSEE.

I, A. H. Roberts, by virtue of the authority vested
in me as Governor of the State of Tennessee, and also the
authority conferred upon me therein, do certify to the
President of the United States, to the Secretary of State
of the United States at Washington, District of Columbia,
to the President of the Senate of the United States, and
to the Speaker of the House of Representatives of the
United States, that the attached paper is a true and per-
fect copy of Senate Joint Resolution Number 1, ratifying
an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, de-
claring that the rights of the 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, and that the Congress
shall have power to enforce said article by appropriate legis-
lation, as set out in said resolution; and that same was passed
and adopted by the first extra session of the Sixty-First Gen-
eral Assembly of the State of Tennessee; constitutionally
called to meet and convened at the Capitol, in the city of
Nashville on August 9, 1920, thereby ratifying said proposed
Nineteenth Amendment to the said Constitution of the United
States of America, in manner and form appearing on the Journals
of the two houses of the General Assembly of the State of
Tennessee, true, full and correct transcript of all entries
pertaining to which said Resolution Number 1, are attached
hereto and made part hereof.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto signed my name as
Governor of the State of Tennessee, and have affixed hereto
the Great Seal of the State of Tennessee, at the Capitol, in
the city of Nashville, Tennessee, on this the twenty-fourth
day of August, 1920, at 10-17 A. M.

A. H. Roberts
Governor of the State of Tennessee.

National Archives, General Records of the U.S. Government

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.

What Voting Rights Struggles Persist?

Many women remained unable to vote after the 19th Amendment for reasons other than sex:

- Racial and class discrimination
- Uneven citizenship rights
- Inaccessibility of polls
- New voter restrictions





Porto Rico Gov. Question #7

ASOCIACION PUERTORRIQUEÑA DE MUJERES SUFRAGISTAS
APARTADO 1329
SAN JUAN, P. R.

THE WHITE HOUSE
JAN 23 1929
RECEIVED

SECRETARY'S OFFICE.
JAN 24 1929
WAR DEPARTMENT.

January 16, 1929.

Ack.
1/24/29

RECEIVED
FOR CONSIDERATION
JAN 24 1929
3377-500

War

PRESIDENTAS HONORARIAS:
ANA ROQUE DE DUPREY
RIO PIEDRAS, P. R.
AMINA TIO DE MALARET.
SANTURCE, P. R.
TRINA PADILLA DE SANZ
ARECIBO, P. R.

CONSEJEROS:
JACINTO TEXIDOR
LUIS MUÑOZ MORALES
SANDALIO TORRES MONGE
TEODORO AGUILAR MORA
COMITE DIRECTIVO CENTRAL

PRESIDENTA:
ANA LOPEZ DE VELEZ.
RIO PIEDRAS, P. R.

VICE-PRESIDENTA:
ANGELA NEGRON MUÑOZ.
SANTURCE, P. R.

SECRETARIA DE ACTAS:
ADELA GERARDINO.
SANTURCE, P. R.

SECRETARIA DE CORRESPONDENCIA:
LUISA B. SALGADO.
SANTURCE, P. R.

TESORERA:
ADELA NEWMAN DE GERARDINO.
SANTURCE, P. R.

VOCALES:
MARIA CADILLA DE MARTINEZ.
ARECIBO, P. R.
BENITA G. DE MUÑOZ.
CAGUAS, P. R.
BEATRIZ LASSALLE.
SANTURCE, P. R.
ROSARIO BELLBER GONZALEZ.
SANTURCE, P. R.
ISABEL ANDREU DE AGUILAR.
SANTURCE, P. R.
CRISTINA RIVERA.
CRISTINA DE LUQUILERA.
PUERTA DE TIERRA, P. R.

Hon. Calvin Coolidge,
President of the United States,
Washington, D. C.

S i r :-

Your Excellency is undoubtedly aware of the fact that a House bill amending our organic law to the effect that the electoral franchise be not restricted by reason of sex, thus granting suffrage to the women of Porto Rico, is now before the Senate after having been reported on favorably by the Senate Committee on Territories and Insular Possessions.

This Association, wishing to make every possible effort in behalf of this measure of justice, takes the liberty of appealing through this to your sentiments in favor of any just cause, requesting your signature to the bill in the event it passes the Senate.

With the assurance of our gratitude, we remain, Sir,

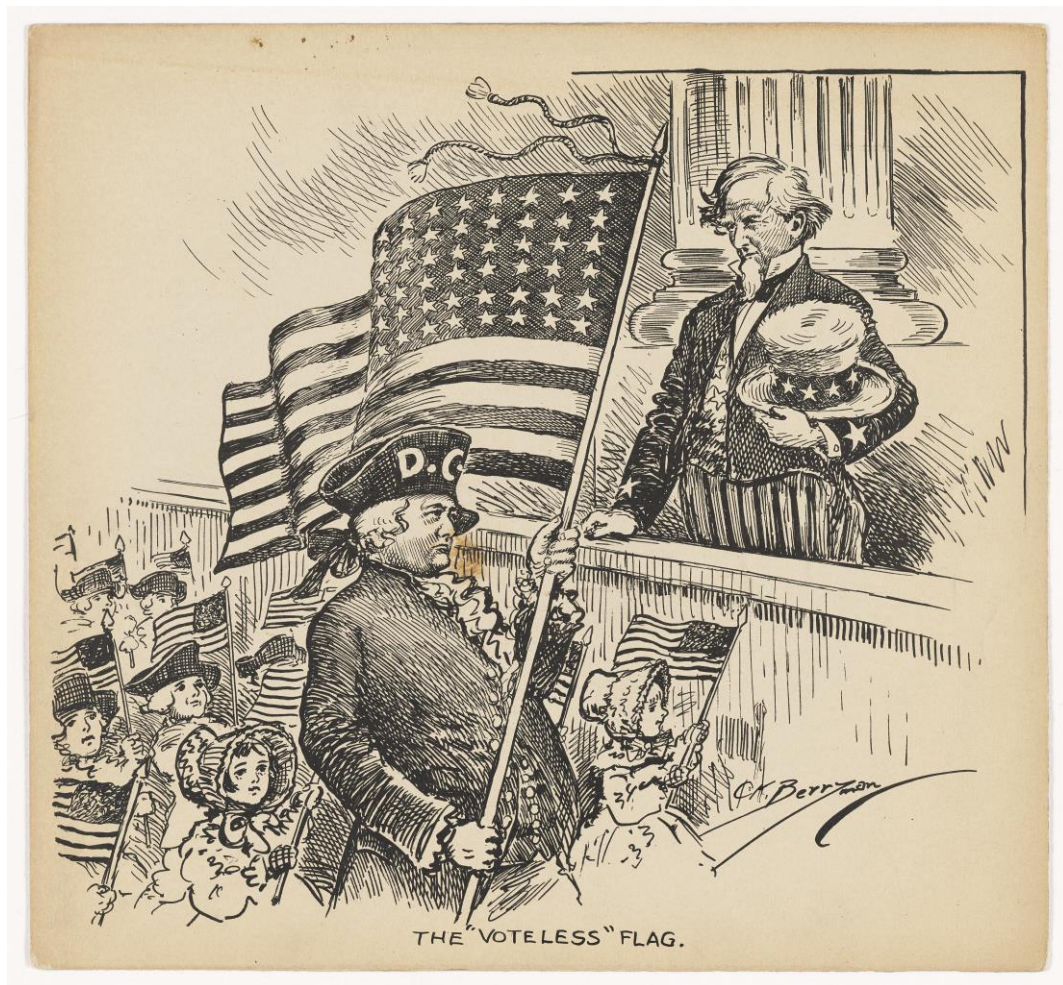
Respectfully,
Ana L. de Velez
ANA L. VELEZ,
PRESIDENT.

E.A.

File
3377
500

ASSISTANT AND CHIEF CLERK
JAN 24 1929
WAR DEPT.

27260
15
1929





“San Bruno, California. Entering Recreational Hall where election is being held for Councilman. A general election for five members of the Tanforan Assembly Center Advisory Council is being held on this day. The Issei have never been able to vote before because of American naturalization laws.”

Photograph by Dorothea Lange, June 16, 1942

National Archives, Records of the War Relocation Authority



VOTING RESTRICTIONS

- the poll tax—
- "white primaries"—
- inaccessibility of polls—
- restrictive registration hours—
- and other, more subtle restrictions against voting—

have long stifled a free, democratic vote for people in the southern states.

WHAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT THIS?



- more than two people outside the South had to vote in 1944 to get the same representation in Congress as one voter in the South—

STATE: MISSISSIPPI
COUNTY: BOLIVAR

This is to certify that I, Mary Hampton, of Route 1, Box 52, Mound Bayou, Mississippi, of the 2nd Judicial District of Bolivar County did on Wednesday September 17, 1958 at 1:10 p.m. enter the Circuit Clerk's Office for the purpose of registering.

I was given a form to fill out and was given Section 50, Article 4 of the Constitution of the State of Mississippi which simply says that any State Official is liable to impeachment if he can be or bribed or if he is guilty treason, crime in office. I do not see where this section requires a lot of explanation. This is my third visit to the Circuit Clerk's Office. She has given me sections 50, 73&156. I feel sure that I have given reasonable explanations to these sections of the Constitution of Mississippi. because of It is my sincere belief that race or color I have not been allowed to register. "Part of yours is right, but you don't have it all right," said the clerk.

This is to certify that the above statement is correct to the best of my ability.

Mary Hampton
Mary Hampton

Witnesses Ann M. Zelle
Millie B. Wadson

Subscribed and sworn before me this 17th day of Sept. 1958

My Commission Expires July 11, 1959

Jack H. Palye
Notary Public
Bolivar County, Mississippi

Shiprock, New Mexico
May 6, 1946

AFFIDAVIT

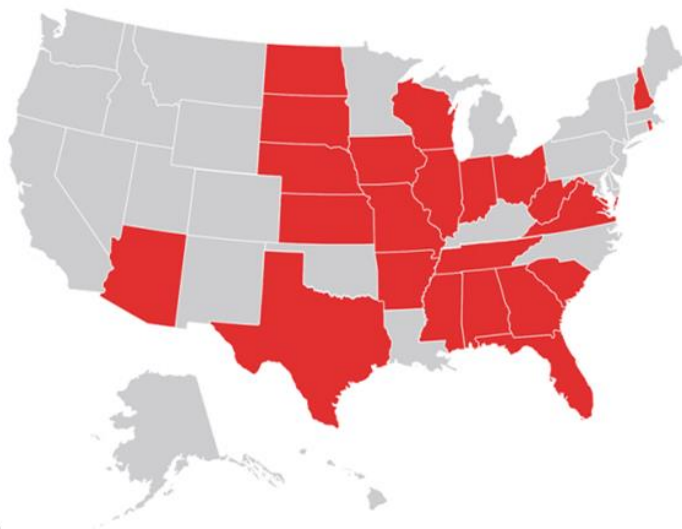
I, Mrs. Julia Denetclaw, C#22698, hereby certify that on May 6, 1946 I appeared at the Shiprock Public School, Shiprock, New Mexico for the purpose of registering in order to vote in the coming elections. I was there refused permission to register. I have been a resident of the State of New Mexico 48 years; the County of San Juan, 48 years; the voting precinct #13, 48 years.

Signed Mrs. Julia Denetclaw

Witnesses:

E. J. Jones
William S. Jodge

Restrictive Voting Laws Since 2011



BRENNAN
CENTER
FOR JUSTICE

The State of Voting 2018, Brennan Center for Justice



In the Classroom

- What were the methods of the women's suffrage movement? How effective were they?
- Why did women want the right to vote?
- How did women organize?
- What role does the government play in expanding and limiting rights?
- Should voting be a right of citizenship?
- How have individuals exercised their rights to bring about societal change?

Other resources

Docs Teach

Women's history primary sources and teaching activities

<https://www.docsteach.org/topics/women>

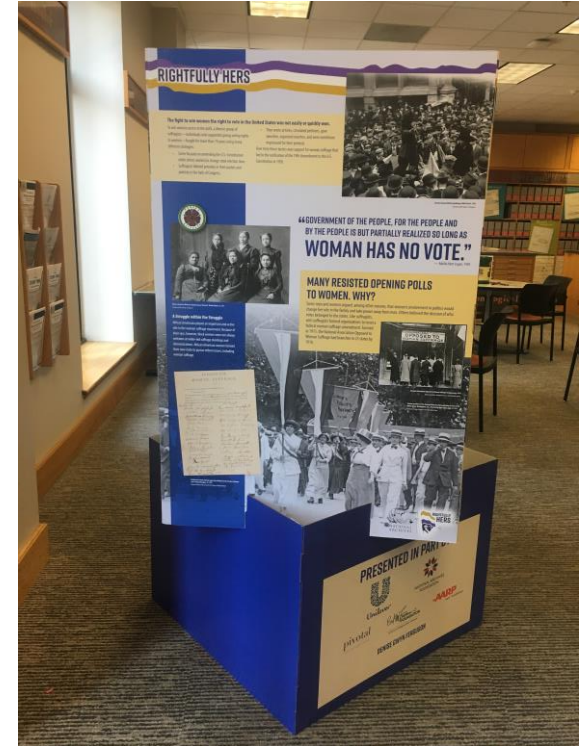
Document analysis with students

<https://www.docsteach.org/resources/document-analysis>

Rightfully Hers Pop-Up Exhibit

<https://museum.archives.gov/rightfully-hers>

<https://education.blogs.archives.gov/>



Thank you!

Corinne L Porter
corinne.porter@nara.gov



“Rightfully Hers” & “One Half of the People” exhibit webpage:
<https://museum.archives.gov/rightfully-hers>

NARA’s Women’s Rights Resource page
<https://www.archives.gov/women#event-/timeline/item/nineteenth-amendment-to-the-united-states-constitution>