

The pros and cons of the women's suffrage movement

[Sociology](#), [Human Rights](#)



As you know, as of June 4th, 1919, the 19th Amendment has passed congress. Even though us women are finally earning our deserved rights, it has come to my attention that we did not earn them in a very respectable or honorable way. In 1848, several men and women were invited to Seneca Falls, New York to discuss women's rights.

They were lead by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott. This became the beginning of our pursuit for women to earn voting rights. At the time, the only states that allowed women to vote were Wyoming, Oklahoma, South Dakota, New York, Arkansas, Michigan, Nebraska, Indians, North Dakota, Illinois, Alaska, Kansas, Arizona, Oregon, California, Washington, Idaho, Colorado, and Utah. In total, before 1919, only 19 states allowed women to vote, leaving 31 states that still did not allow women to vote. The law in the Wyoming Territory, the first state to allow women to vote, reads: Female Suffrage

Chapter 31

An Act to Grant to the Women of Wyoming Territory the Right of Suffrage, and to Hold Office

Be it enacted by the Council and House of Representatives of the Territory of Wyoming:

Sec. 1. That every woman of the age of twenty-one years, residing in this territory, may at every election to be holden under the laws thereof, cast her vote. And her rights to the elective franchise and to hold office shall be the same under the election laws of the territory, as those of electors.

Sec. 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage.

Approved, December 10, 1869.

This law proves that even though congressmen were putting in the effort to give women equal rights, women will still not be seen as equals to men.

Throughout our 70 year journey to earn our rights, women have been involved in many violent protests. On November 10, 1917, 33 women suffragists were beaten, tortured, and arrested by the guards at the Occoquan Workhouse while they were picketing outside the White House for their right to vote. Violence, such as this situation, gives America a seemingly less polite society. Additionally, the 1st Amendment, adopted on December 15, 1791, 57 years before the women's suffrage movement began, states, Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances. Therefore, unless the women in that parade were being violent to the guards, the people that beat the women in protest were breaking the 1st Amendment.

To add on, suffragist movement was not very inclusive among African American women. African American suffragists were forced to march separately in women's suffrage parades, instead of with all the other women. Black women still aren't able to vote in many states. The History of Woman Suffrage volumes by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony largely overlooked the contributions of African American suffragists in favor of a

history that featured white suffragists, despite the fact that African Americans organized political societies and participated in political meetings throughout the women's suffrage campaign.

Despite all the unfavorable junctures in our movement, including flying over in the end we did earn our right to vote. We have even earned higher roles in war efforts. Now, in times of war, we can serve as nurses, repair airplanes, drive trucks, and perform clerical work to free up men for combat. However we still cannot go into war the same way men can and physically fight in wars. I suppose it was all the parades and protest were worth it in the end. Please let me know if you agree with my conclusion. My husband is a traditionalist, meaning he is against women's rights and wants history to stay the same. He insists I never speak about the women's suffragist campaign in respect of his opinion. I hope that you understand and agree with all of my valid points.

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