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Suffrage or No Suffrage, An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Sources

Kayla Peterson
St. Cloud State University

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**Annotated Bibliography of Selected Sources
in the Gilded Age, 1877-1900
by
Kayla Peterson**

Primary Sources:

“Discriminating Against Mothers” *Tulsa daily world*. (Tulsa, Indian Territory [Okla.]), 03 Nov. 1918.
Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers. Lib. Of Congress. [Accessed
October 12, 2015] <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85042344/1918-11-03/ed-1/seq-31/>

This article looks at the opinions of influential men of the time and why they are against women’s suffrage. The opinions stated in this article are from men of high caliber, such as the following: Thomas Jefferson, Grover Cleveland, William Howard Taft, and several men of the church. The article then goes on to ask several questions that aim to convince the reader that if women were to gain the right to vote, it would be useless, as the mother has very specific roles in the household and does not have spare time for such silly matters. The article also gives the impression to the reader that if women gain the right to vote, it would destroy the family. The article is aimed towards the male population of voters, which can be gleaned from the overall theme of the article, as well as the content it is expressing. The article also uses scare-tactics to get the undecided or moderate voter to swing over to the anti-suffrage side of the argument. The scare tactics the article uses are obvious in addressing the “Opinions of Patriots against woman suffrage.” This gives the reader the message that if you support women’s suffrage, you are not patriotic, and therefore against your country. I would use this article in the classroom by having the students analyze it themselves and have a discussion on their findings with the class. Using this would highlight the different opinions of people at the time and to show that not everyone was for women’s suffrage.

“Petition for Universal Suffrage” petition. 1866. [Accessed October 12, 2015]
<http://ecssba.rutgers.edu/docs/petuniv.html>

This petition addresses the main goals of the women of the suffrage movement and what they wanted to accomplish. The petition is addressed to Congress and cites the US Constitution many times. By doing this, they are using what would normally be thought of previously to this as the document that is withholding their rights from them. This gives the petition signers a ‘leg-up’ on the people who are going to argue against them whilst using the same documents. The petition asks that women be given equality, for justice and to become equal with the rest of the country, as they make up half of the nation. The authors claim that they are “intelligent, virtuous, and native-born American citizens.” This puts them on the same level as men and highlights the unfairness in the fact that women cannot vote. The petition also has a ‘documentation without representation’ feel, as the women bring up that they are overseen by the government but have no way of asserting their opinions and beliefs onto the government officials in the same way a man can. This document highlights the basics of why the suffrage movement was occurring and why it was justified. I would use this in the classroom so they could get a feel for the time period and what women actually had to go through. I would have the students analyze the document on their own and, afterwards, the entire class would have a discussion on their findings.

Anthony, Susan b and Gage, Matilda Joslyn and Stanton, Elizabeth Cady. Appeal for a Sixteenth Amendment. Tenafly, NJ: National Woman Suffrage Association, 1876. [Accessed October 12, 2015]
http://docsteach.org/documents/306647/detail?mode=browse&menu=closed&era%5B_0%5D=the-development-of-the-industrial-united-states&page=6

This is a letter addressed to the women of the United States. In it, Anthony makes a plea to all of the women in this country to stand up and fight for their rights. She describes what she wants the sixteenth amendment to do, which is it “shall prohibit the several states from disfranchising any of their citizens on

account of Sex.” This means that women should call on Congress to pass a law that prohibits any state to discriminate on the basis of sex. This would give women the right to vote, if it were adopted as part of the US Constitution. Anthony also lists the many attempts by women to gain suffrage that failed. Their petitions are “piled up mid the National archives unheeded and ignored.” She makes the case, that if this particular petition were to be so extensive, then the government would not be able to ignore it or their cause. She also makes a point of bringing up the fact that black men can vote, but women still cannot, which heeds the point of asking if the two are not, in fact, equal, in the eyes of the law. I would use this in the classroom to represent the agency of the women who took lead in this cause and how hard they had to fight for their right to vote. The students would analyze the document in class, on their own. The class would then come back together to have a discussion on their findings.

“A Squelcher for Woman’s Suffrage.” *Puck*. 1894. [Accessed October 26, 2015]

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2012648727/>

This cartoon, which was published in a humor magazine at the time, from the Gilded age shows a woman being denied the opportunity to vote. The woman is wearing a dress and a hat that are too wide to fit into the ballot booths that are labeled “Ballots must be prepared in these booths.” This cartoon is labeling the woman as the reason that women do not have the right to vote. By having the woman’s dress be preventing her from getting in the booth to vote, it is putting the blame on her and the way she is dressing. If she were to be wearing something that was not as wide, she would be able to get into the booths to vote, although society expectations are most likely the reason the woman is dressing that way in the first place. There is a cop in the background of the cartoon. The cop is just observing the situation happening. This reconfirms what the woman’s dress is saying. If women were not able to vote at all, the guard would not let her anywhere near the ballot booths, but in the cartoon she is standing right next to them. This is reconfirming that the cartoon is putting the blame onto the woman herself for not being able to vote instead of the state or law. I would use this in the classroom during the lesson and have a discussion/debate with the students about what they think this cartoon means. The students would analyze it on their own, and the class would come back together to discuss their findings. It would show how many people can interpret one image in a multitude of ways.

“At The Emancipated Women’s Club.” *Puck*. 1896. [Accessed October 26, 2015]

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2002720317/>

This cartoon, which was published in a humor magazine from the time, shows a group of women congregated at a women’s club meeting. The main woman in the picture is lounging in a chair, not paying any attention to the girl who is speaking to her. The girl is calling out to the woman, who is presumably her mother, and is trying to get her attention to tell her something good that happened with the other children. In the picture, there is a man and three children standing in the doorway. Like the girl, the woman in the chair is paying the man no attention. The title also gives way to the theme of the cartoon, equating women obtaining the right to vote with abandoning her family. This cartoon is symbolizing that when a woman starts to care about her own rights, she is showing that she no longer cares about her family. This cartoon is acting as anti-suffrage propaganda. It is trying to tell women not to vote or fight for their own rights, as it shows their family that they are no longer of vital importance to them. I would use this in the classroom as an example of the anti-suffrage material that was out at the time of the Woman’s Movement. The students would analyze the documents on their own, and the class would have a discussion after to talk about what they saw in the cartoon. It would also show the students that not everyone was for women’s suffrage.

Frank Boylen and Joseph D. Payne, *Shall Women Vote*, 1900. [Accessed October 26, 2015]

<http://www.loc.gov/item/sm1881.10757>

This song shows the voice of women at time of the Gilded Age. The five verses of the song ask rhetorical questions about why women do not have the same right to vote as men do. The song makes it obvious that women should have the right to vote. The first verse makes reference to freedom and how one can’t say no

to women suffrage and still boast about the freedom of the country. The song also asks about reasons why women do not have the right to vote. It references alcohol and asks if the reason is because men can drink more than women. This song is a rallying call for women during this movement. It also acts as a device to get men to see why the women want the right to vote. I would use this in my classroom as an example of all of the ways that women were fighting for their rights by reading them the lyrics. I would also use it as an extra credit opportunity for anyone to sing it, either in class or on a video to show the class.

Frank Howard, *We'll Vote Against the Terrible Men*, 1869. [Accessed October 26, 2015]
<http://blogs.loc.gov/music/2011/08/sheet-music-of-the-week-suffragette-edition/>

This song shows the voice of the women at the time of the Gilded Age. The four verses of the song go into detail of how they are treated and why their lives are bad. The song also uses two verses of specific stories of women in their neighborhood. One woman, Mister Brady's wife, is thought to live grand and great, as she buys dresses every week and rides around in a carriage. The verse then says that they will not speak of her trifles, but she has them. The other woman, Mistress William Brown, is said to be the talk of the town. She walks round the town and flirts, as well as attends suffrage circles while leaving the children home with her husband. This is an example of how socially unacceptable it was to step outside of the expected gender roles of the time. The chorus of the song has the message that their lives are terrible now, but once they gain the right to vote, they will fix these "terrible men." I find this song to be very amusing and I would use this in my classroom as an example of all of the ways that women were fighting for their rights by reading the students the lyrics. I would also use it as an extra credit opportunity for anyone to sing it, either in class or on a video to show the class.

Secondary Sources:

Flexner, Eleanor. *Century of Struggle: The Woman's Rights Movement in the United States*. Forge Village, Massachusetts: McClelland & Stewart, 1959.

This book gives a closer look at the Women's Suffrage Movement and the events that led up to women gaining the right to vote. The book documents the events from the early 1600s to the first few decades in the twentieth century. Flexner lays out the movement chronologically, starting with what the woman's role was prior to the suffrage movement. The book focuses on the suffrage groups and their fight. The book ends with the passing of the 19th amendment, which secured the woman's right to vote. Flexner also talks about the early happenings of the fight for equality between the sexes. This includes the battle for an education that women faced and how women were involved in the labor movement. The book gives a more complete picture of how long the struggle for equality went on and how the women were living through it, as well as before the movement gained momentum. I would use this in the classroom for my benefit in order to gain a better understanding of what all happened. I might incorporate certain segments into the lesson, but overall, I would probably condense the book into a two or three-day lesson on woman's suffrage, roughly following the basic outline of what the book all talks about.

Websites:

"Women and Social Movements in the United States, 1600-2000." Woman's History. [Accessed October 19, 2015] <http://womhist.alexanderstreet.com>

This website contains multiple sources on woman's suffrage. They are all listed in separate tabs as follows: "Document Projects and Archives", "Teacher's Corner", "Scholar's Edition", and "Full-Text Sources." They also have an "About Us" page. On their home page, it gives a brief description of what they website is and what it provides. The website includes 118 document projects and 4,800 documents and 162,000 additional

resources. These documents are mostly secondary sources that answer a question like “Why Were Illinois Indian Women Attracted To Catholicism, 1665-1750?” By reading that article, you would answer that question. The documents and resources they have accessible are all on the topic of woman’s rights and woman’s suffrage. They have Primary documents available, which would be helpful when planning a lesson. They have lists of Primary Source Collections, but do not provide links to said collections, which is a little disappointing. This could prove a problem when students are not able to find a resource listed on an additional website. They also have an entire section full of resources for teachers. Some of these resources are examples of document-based questions and other teaching strategies that one could use to teach an event. I would maybe use this in planning a lesson for woman’s suffrage, as I saw websites that had more information that would be helpful to at teacher and their students. Students could use this website for research purposes on a project having to do with Women’s Suffrage.

“Women’s History Teacher’s Guide.” Feminist Majority Foundation. [Accessed November 23, 2015]
<http://www.feminist.org/research/teachersguide/teach1.html>

This website has many different types of sources that would be beneficial as a student gaining knowledge through research and as a teacher planning lessons. Strictly under the Teacher’s Guide, the website has “Feminist Teaching tools,” which is an introduction into the lesson. It does not have a lot of information, but it sets the tone of the lesson. The site also has a short summary and link to a book to read online called *The Feminist Chronicles: 1953-1993*. This book could be helpful in student research, as it dramatizes the ongoing fight women went through to improve their lives and statuses in the country. The site also has links to two lessons that center around *The Feminist Chronicles*. There is a one-day lesson plan and a five-day lesson plan. The aim of these lessons is to help students understand the modern day struggle for women’s equality and how it got to this point. The website also has a link with 28 citations of different books for further information. These books vary on the topics of the following: Women’s History, Feminist theory, and Contemporary Women’s Issues. Students could use this in order to gain a knowledge of what books to use for their research and where to go to get more information. This is a more reliable option, for the student, as they already have a list of good books to at least start from and get a foundation of knowledge. The website also has links to 20 places where women and men can go for help, more information, and such. A few examples of such places are *Center for the American Woman and Politics*, *Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights*, and the *National Women’s Studies Association*. On the main site as well, there are many other links where students can find more information based around the following tabs: “Newsroom”, “Events”, “About Us”, “Career Center”, “Take Action”, “Our Work”, “Research Center”, “Hotlines”, and “Shop.” There is also a place where students can sign up for a newsletter by email and an additional link where people can donate to their cause. I could see myself using this website in the classroom with lessons, and also as a basis of research for students doing a project centered around Women’s Rights and History.