



# “We Stand *on their* Shoulders”

*A History of Wisconsin Women and Voting*



WISCONSIN  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY

TRAVELING DISPLAY PROGRAM KIT

WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

# Traveling Display Program Kit

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FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT US ONLINE AT  
[wisconsinhistory.org/votesforwomen](http://wisconsinhistory.org/votesforwomen)





# Exhibit Overview

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“We Stand on their Shoulders: A History of Wisconsin Women and Voting” explores women’s suffrage and leadership after the ratification of the 19th Amendment.

The 19th Amendment laid the groundwork to enfranchise women but did not extend voting rights to all. A series of additional legislation between 1920 and 1982 broadened opportunities for women of all races to vote. This exhibit explores the landmark legislation, political advancements of women from 1919-1982, and the continuing conversation surrounding voting rights.

Note: Wisconsin’s history regarding the race to the 19th Amendment constructed the core of the exhibit “The Woman’s Hour Has Struck” which stood in the Wisconsin State Capitol from April through November 2019. The full text of that exhibit and more information can be found in the [Women’s Suffrage Centennial Celebration Toolkit](#).



Members of the Oshkosh Equal Suffrage League in their 4th of July float made up with a sailboat. Banners read “Votes for Women” and “We are Rudderless, We Need The Ballot.” Identified in the picture are Lilian Clark, Bernice Mocke, Helen West, Gertrude Hull, Josephine Van Slyke, Hester Lancaster, Katherine Forward, Jennie Robinson, and Maria Hilton. WHI IMAGE ID 5157

# Set-Up Instructions & Suggested Layout

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“We Stand on their Shoulders” is comprised of four stands with four two-sided banners measuring about 39 inches wide and 87 inches tall. Distance between the banners and any other structure (wall, chairs, or other banners) should measure at three feet for accessibility.

Visual instructions on how to assemble the banner stands can be found [online](#).

The exhibit content is organized chronologically. The order of the panels are:

- **[Panel 1]** “We stand on their shoulders” : A History of Wisconsin Women and Voting
- **[Panel 2]** “It is coming as the harvest follows the patient” : A Timeline of Wisconsin’s Suffrage History
- **[Panel 3]** “I received a signed statement that Wisconsin was first” : Wisconsin Ratifies the 19th Amendment
- **[Panel 4]** “Wisconsin is already in advance of most other States” : Passing the Equal Rights Amendment of 1921
- **[Panel 5]** “Declared to be citizens of the United States” : Affirming American Indian Suffrage
- **[Panel 6]** “No voting qualification or prerequisite to voting” : Protecting Voting Rights
- **[Panel 7]** “Women will have to make as hard a struggle for positions in our governing bodies as we did for suffrage” : Wisconsin’s Women Leaders
- **[Panel 8]** “We stand on their shoulders” : Continuing to Fight for Voting Rights

Citations for each of the quotes can be found running along the size of the banners. If possible, pairing the exhibit with local artifacts, stories, or reading suggestions would best serve your local visitors. Our focus is on national and state stories.

## Condition Report

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Please complete the condition report and return it to the WHS Outreach Office within one week of receiving the display. If the display is missing pieces or damaged beyond normal wear and tear, please contact us immediately at [travelingexhibits@wisconsinhistory.org](mailto:travelingexhibits@wisconsinhistory.org).



# Program Suggestions

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- Host a discussion about women in local leadership positions
- Organize a voter registration drive
- Feature a movie night featuring films with powerful lead women characters (or suffrage movies like *Iron Jawed Angels* or *Suffragette*)
- Host a flapper party, “EqualiTEA,” or potluck to celebrate women’s enfranchisement
- Organize a women’s leadership book club (suggested reading list, pages 5-7)
- Host a naturalization ceremony
- Work with your local newspaper/blog to feature articles about the centennial commemoration and local activities
- Create social media posts to highlight women’s suffrage history and voting rights using historical materials in your collection if possible
- Conduct an oral history program with volunteers or students to record women’s voices and accomplishments in your community

The 2020 Women’s Vote Centennial Initiative website features a [program planning manual](#).

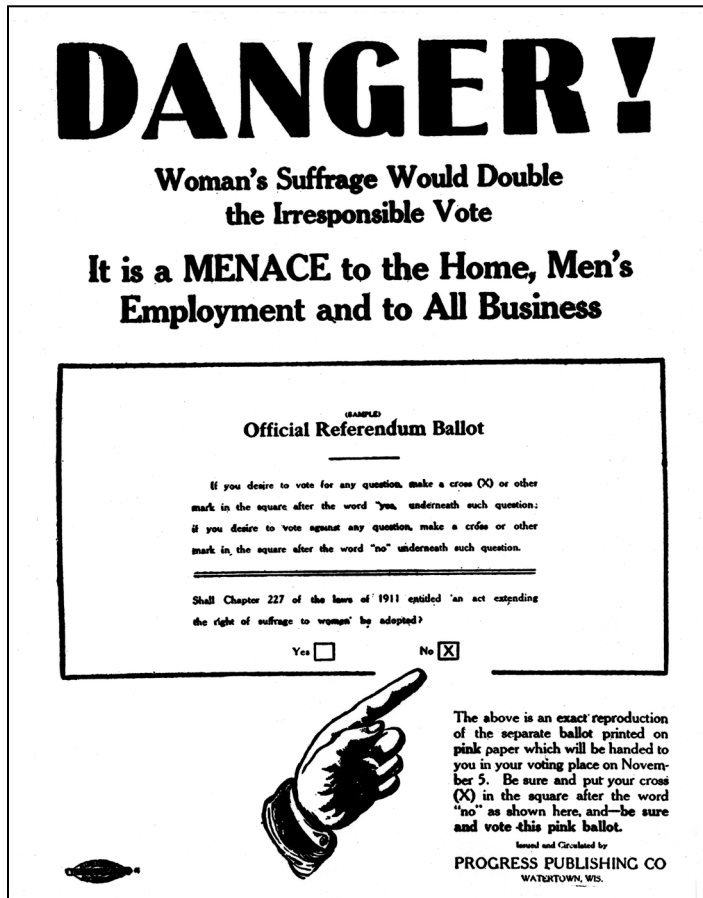


Parade tunic worn in Chicago, 1916.  
Wisconsin Historical Museum, 1956.1450

# School Resources

Check out the work that the Department of Public Instruction and the Wisconsin Historical Society created on the history of women's leadership in the [History Makers Classroom Resource](#).

Library of Congress Women's Suffrage [Teacher's Guide](#) with primary sources.



**Left:** Anti-woman suffrage poster that reads, "Danger! Women's Suffrage would double the irresponsible vote! It is a menace to the Home, Men's Employment and All Business!" Printed in Watertown in 1912. WHI IMAGE ID 1912

**Right:** Suffragist Catherine Waugh McCullough of Illinois speaks from an open car, ca. 1912. Suffragists traveled across the United States to support the state-by-state suffrage effort. WHI IMAGE ID 1879

# Reading List

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## THE HISTORY OF VOTING:

- Keyssar, Alexander. *The Right to Vote: The Contested History of Democracy in the United States*. New York: Basic Books, 2000.
- Waldman, Michael. *The Fight to Vote*. Simon & Schuster, 2016.

## WISCONSIN WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

- McBride, Genevieve. "Theodora Winton Youmans and the Wisconsin Woman Movement." *Wisconsin Magazine of History*: Volume 71, number 4, Summer 1988, 242-75.
- McBride, Genevieve. *On Wisconsin Women*. Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993.
- "Theodora Winton Youmans 1863-1932." Wisconsin Historical Society.  
"Theodora Winton Youmans (1863 - 1932) | <https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS14693>
- "The Woman's Suffrage Movement." Wisconsin Historical Society.  
<https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS419>
- Unger, Nancy. *Belle La Follette: Progressive Era Reformer*. New York: Routledge, 2015.
- Youmans, Theodora W. "How Wisconsin Women Won the Ballot." *Wisconsin Magazine of History*: Volume 5, number 1, September 1921, 3-32,  
<http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/WIReader/WER0124-12.html>

## WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

- Egge, Sara. *Women Suffrage and Citizenship in the Midwest, 1870-1920*. University of Iowa Press, 2018.
- Gordon, Ann, et al. *African American Women and the Vote, 1847-1965*. Amherst, Massachusetts: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997.
- Marshall, Susan E. *Splintered Sisterhood: Gender and Class in the Campaign against Women Suffrage*. Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1997.
- Sherr, Lynn. *Failure is Impossible: Susan B. Anthony in Her Own Words*. Broadway Books, 1996.





## MODERN VOTING

- Fowler, Robert Booth. *Wisconsin Votes: An Electoral History*. Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2008.
- Nealy, Lisa Nikol. *African American Women Voters*. Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 2009.

## FOR KIDS

- Bardhan-Qualle, Sudipta. *Ballots for Belva: The True Story of a Woman's Race for the Presidency*. Harry N. Abrams, 2015.
- Bausum, Ann. *With Courage and Cloth: Winning the Fight for a Woman's Right to Vote*. National Geographic Children's Books, 2004.
- Kann, Bob. *Belle and Bob La Follette, Partners in Politics*. Madison, Wisconsin: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2008.
- Robbins, Dean. *Miss Paul and the President: The Creative Campaign for Women's Right to Vote*. Knopf Books for Young Readers, 2016.
- Shamir, Ruby. *What's the Big Deal About Elections*. Philomel Books, 2018.
- Winter, Jonah. *Lillian's Right to Vote: A Celebration of the Voting Rights Act of 1965*. Schwartz& Wade, 2015.

# Local and National Information and Inspiration

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## LOCAL

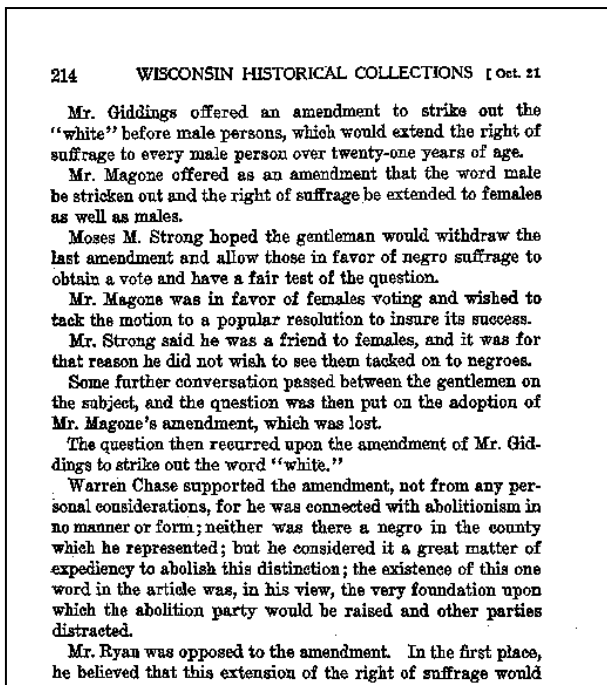
- Neenah Historical Society [exhibit celebrates 100th Anniversary of women's right to vote](#)
- Oshkosh Women's Suffrage [Hometown Stories](#)



## NATIONAL

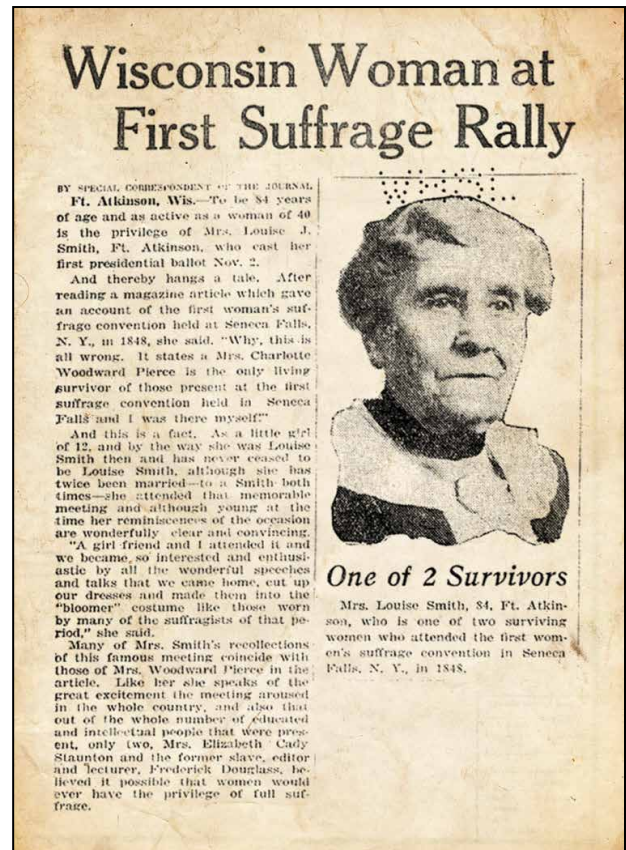
- American Association of State and Local History [19th Amendment Centennial Values Statement](#)
- [Indiana Women's Suffrage Centennial](#)
- Library of Congress "Women Fight for the Vote" [exhibition](#)
- National Women's History Museum [Online Exhibits](#)
- 2020 Women's Vote Centennial Initiative [website](#)
- American Library Association Public Programs Office [resource round-up](#)

Information on other traveling banner displays available through the Wisconsin Historical Society can be found at [wisconsinhistory.org/travelingexhibits](http://wisconsinhistory.org/travelingexhibits). For additional information, email please email [travelingexhibits@wisconsinhistory.org](mailto:travelingexhibits@wisconsinhistory.org) or contact Kristen Leffelman at (414) 988-8655.



Left: Report of the Wisconsin Constitutional Convention, October 21, 1846

Right: *Milwaukee Journal*, December 5, 1920



# Media Resources

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## PRESS RELEASE TEMPLATE

For immediate release

Contact name

Contact phone number

Contact email address

<Date it will be sent>

### **New Travelling Display Celebrates the History of Wisconsin Women and Voting**

<City or Town Name>, Wis. – The Wisconsin Historical Society is touring a new travelling display, “We Stand on their Shoulders,” which celebrates the history of Wisconsin women and voting. The banner exhibit will be on display at <Name of Location> from <Dates it will be at location>.

“In 1920, after more than 70 years of activism, some women in the United States were granted the right to vote,” said Simone Munson, archivist at the Wisconsin Historical Society. “But what a lot of people may not realize is that Wisconsin was the first state to ratify the 19th Amendment and pass a statewide Equal Rights Amendment.”

“We Stand on their Shoulders: A History of Wisconsin Women and Voting” explores women’s suffrage and leadership after the ratification of the 19th Amendment. The 19th Amendment laid the groundwork to enfranchise women but did not extend voting rights to all. A series of additional legislation between 1920 and 1982 broadened opportunities for women of all races to vote. This exhibit explores the landmark legislation, political advancements of women from 1919-1982, and the continuing conversation surrounding voting rights.

<Quote from a local source on the excitement and importance of the display coming to your area. (this could be someone at the location where it will be, a local politician, local historical society or other important community leader)>

Along with the travelling display, the Wisconsin Historical Society has provided information for program suggestions, school resources, reading lists and local and national information.

<If you have an events that will go along with the display, put that information here>

For more information about the travelling exhibit visit [wisconsinhistory.org/suffrageexhibit](http://wisconsinhistory.org/suffrageexhibit).

### **About Wisconsin Historical Society**

The Wisconsin Historical Society, founded in 1846, ranks as one of the largest, most active and most diversified state historical societies in the nation. As both a state agency and a private membership organization, its mission is to help people connect to the past by collecting, preserving and sharing stories. The Wisconsin Historical Society serves millions of people every year through a wide range of sites, programs and services. For more information, visit [wisconsinhistory.org](http://wisconsinhistory.org).

<About HOST SITE NAME>  
<INFORMATION>



# SOCIAL MEDIA

## Recommended hashtags:

#WisconsinHistory

#HerStory

We encourage your organization to post to Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Encourage community members and visitors to do the same! This will help highlight activities, celebrations, and organizations around the state and provide inspiration for other communities and organizations.

Please tag the Wisconsin Historical Society in the posts, stories or tweets so the Society can share the posts, retweet the tweets, and/or add to Society's Instagram stories.

**Facebook:** @wisconsinhistoricalsociety

**Instagram:** @wisconsinhistoricalsociety

**Twitter:** @WisHistory

**CLAIM WISCONSIN FIRST TO O. K. SUFFRAGE**

**SUFFRAGE SPEAKER TELLS HOW ILLINOIS WAS BEATEN**

Convention Members Cheer Oldest Worker, 99, at Victory Luncheon

Miss Ada James, Richland Center, suffrage descendant of a suffrage family, is not only as keen as a Missourian about "being shown," but she believes also in "showing."

Thus it was that the Wisconsin Woman Suffrage association, gathered 300 strong at its Victory luncheon in the Milwaukee Athletic club, Saturday afternoon, was "shown" positive proof why the recent claim of Illinois women that their state was the first to ratify the suffrage amendment to the constitution of the United States, is false, Senator Medill McCormick to the contrary, notwithstanding, says Miss James.

**Receipt Proves Claim.**

In her response to the toast, Wisconsin First, Miss James told the tale of the appointment of her father, D. G. James, as a special messenger to carry Wisconsin's ratification papers to the state department at Washington, June 13, last, and of his encountering Illinois' messenger going into that department as he was coming out. The messenger was carrying under his arm a certificate from the chief of the bureau that Wisconsin was the first state whose ratification of the amendment received official notice at Washington.

Luckily for Wisconsin women, D. G. James, equally with his daughter, believes in "showing," so he carried his certificate and receipt back home with him, and none now can gainsay Wisconsin's claim to the honor of first having ratified the suffrage amendment.

**Honor to Aged Suffragist.**

Miss James' presentation of the certificate of Wisconsin's claim was loudly applauded by the convention, the applause being equaled at one time only, when Mrs. Henry M. Youmans, president and toastmaster, introduced as a guest of honor Miss Dasha Cornwall, West Allis, aged 99, as the oldest worker for suffrage present, and the entire 300 diners rose in a body in greeting to her.

Mrs. Frederick Carberry responded to the toast of Citizenship. After describing the problem of the housekeeper in towns where apartment buildings, habercs and other aids to housekeeping are not found, she told how industries have gathered in women workers until there are none left to aid the housewife.

**Suggests Standard of Dress.**

"If the Wisconsin Woman Suffrage association wants an object to work for," said Mrs. Carberry, "let it take up propaganda for community kitchens in every city in the state."

"Another object the association might work for is standardization of dress for women."

Mrs. Mary D. Bradford, Kenosha, told of the struggle women have waged against prejudice, for centuries until now they are at the point of victory. She said the struggle had been slow until in the nineteenth century when Lauretta Mott, Margaret Fuller and Susan B. Anthony began the last lap of the struggle for victory. "Sterning the prejudice of the world," she said.

**Budget Almost Complete.**

The new treasurer, Mrs. A. J. Frame, urged the women to contribute for citizenship work. Something more than \$5,000 of the \$6,500 of the budget adopted at the convention has been raised.

Mrs. Nancy M. Schoonmaker spoke briefly of the conversion to suffrage of former President Taft because he found during war work the unseemable conditions under which millions of women are working in the United States. Miss Schoonmaker said, that although they have won much, they must exert themselves still for others less fortunate than themselves.

**Efforts of Journal Acknowledged.**

Mrs. Youmans acknowledged a debt of deep gratitude to The Journal for the extensive publicity it has given to suffrage work preceding and during the convention. At an executive board meeting, held before the luncheon, Mrs. Schoonmaker presented a resolution

**F902 SU**

Milwaukee Journal, November 2, 1919





# “We Stand *on their* Shoulders”

*A History of Wisconsin Women and Voting*

Location | Date

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[URL here](#)

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# WHS Contact Information

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Former Wisconsin State Senator David G. James, Republican from Richland Center (1908–1912) and the father of suffragist Ada James. The photograph was likely taken June 13, 1919, after James delivered Wisconsin's ratification of the 19th Amendment in Washington, DC. James is surrounded by suffragists at the National Woman's Party headquarters building at 14 Jackson Place. The document he is holding is his appointment by Governor Philipp as Special Courier to deliver the ratification. WHI IMAGE ID 35075



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