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**Sent time:** 08/24/2017 03:49:14 PM  
**To:** Porter, Corinne <corinne.porter@nara.gov>; Michael Hussey <michael.hussey@nara.gov>  
**Subject:** Latest version of the concept package  
**Attachments:** Women's Rights Exhibit Conceptual Package 8.pdf

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Corinne and Michael,

Here it is. I'm ready to make any edits.

Ray

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# THE WOMEN'S VOTING RIGHTS EXHIBITION

*(WORKING TITLE)*

MARCH 8, 2019—SEPTEMBER 7, 2020



## CONCEPTUAL DESIGN

### PART 1: BACKGROUND

#### IA. FLOOR PLAN

#### IB. GRAPHIC TREATMENTS

### PART 2: THEMES

#### 2A. WHO DECIDES WHO VOTES?

#### 2B. WHY DID WOMEN FIGHT FOR THE VOTE?

#### 2C. WHY WAS WINNING THE VOTE SO HARD?

#### 2D. WHAT WAS THE IMPACT OF THE 19TH AMENDMENT?

#### 2E. WHAT VOTING RIGHTS STRUGGLES PERSIST?

### PART 3: NATIONAL INITIATIVE

### PART 4: MILESTONE SCHEDULE

# BACKGROUND

In commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, a landmark moment in American history, the National Archives presents an exhibition that tells the story of women’s struggle for voting rights as a critical step towards equal citizenship. In this country, most Americans consider the ability to vote fundamental to the enjoyment of full citizenship, yet American women were long denied that right. The 19th amendment is rightly celebrated as a major milestone made possible by decades of women’s active civic engagement. As home to some of the most important records from the woman suffrage story, the National Archives is uniquely positioned to create a powerful educational experience that relates the fuller story of the struggle to make the vote a reality for all women. Drawing on National Archives’ records and loans, the exhibit will illustrate the dynamic involvement of American women across the spectrums of race, ethnicity, and class to secure their voting rights and make the United States a more perfect union.

The story of U.S. women’s voting rights is a complicated one, however. Millions of women could vote before the amendment and millions were denied their franchise after. By revealing the complex and overlooked history of women’s struggle to be included in the electorate, this exhibition will also carry contemporary resonance that will inspire appreciation for the value of participation in the political process. The exhibition will be organized thematically following a question-driven exploration of women’s long struggle for the vote that encourages visitors to probe why an act of civic engagement that seems basic to our definition of democracy today was denied to one half of the people for so long and remains controversial. Based on initial audience testing, it is evident that this is a history that is seldom told in full.

This exhibition will resonate with Americans, in particular, younger women—coming of age in a world with a host of economic, social, and political challenges. This will be particularly true given that this exhibit will be opening during the lead-up to the 2020 elections. Stories from the past will inform their consideration of today’s issues. Web-based interactives will engage a world-wide audience.

# GOAL #1

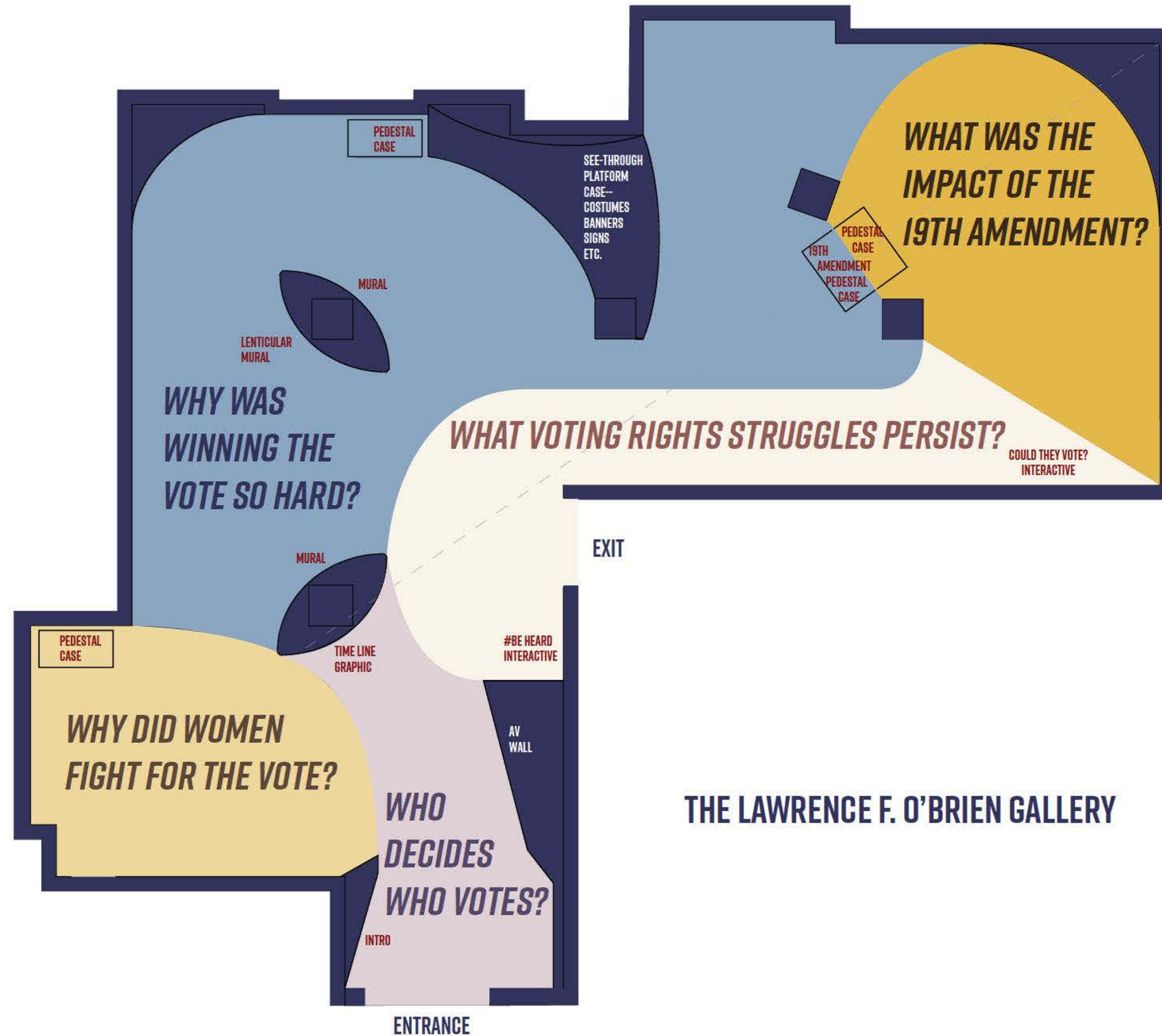
To tell a fuller story of women’s long struggle for the right and ability to vote in this country.

# GOAL #2

Inspire young people to engage with the issues of today from a firm grounding in the lessons of the past.



Woman Suffrage March, Washington, DC, March 3, 1913





# SECTION TITLE HEADER

## SECTION TEXT

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## INTRO PANEL

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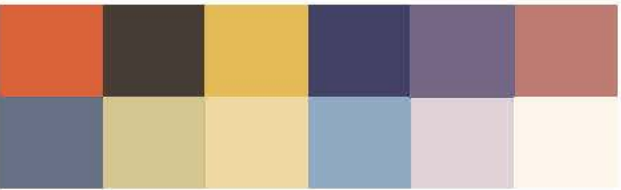
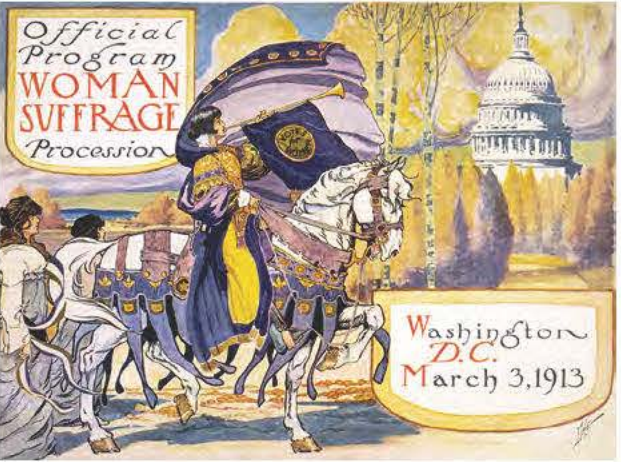
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WHO DECIDES WHO VOTES?

Today many Americans take for granted that the right to vote cannot be denied on the basis of race, sex, or economic means. Yet, at the founding of our republic voting rights were mostly limited to white men of property. When did that change? Who changed it? Why? The right to vote has been incrementally and unevenly extended to diverse groups of Americans throughout the history of the republic and the long and contested story of women’s struggle for voting rights is one chapter in this larger narrative.

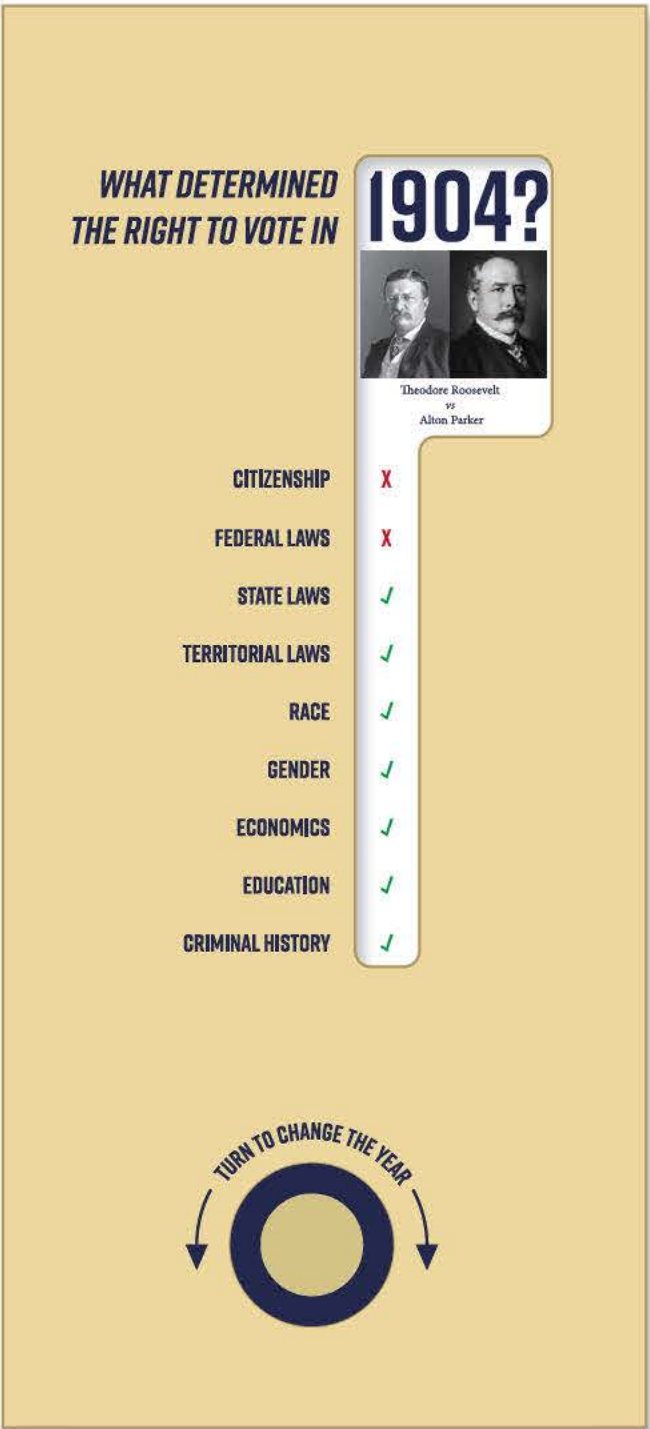
This section will give critical context to the story of the woman suffrage by clarifying that the Constitution does not guarantee citizens’ right to vote—rather it grants states the power to decide voting qualifications for their residents. The federal government has stepped in to protect voting rights under certain circumstances through amendments to the Constitution (which were or must be ratified by the states), but those amendments have only specified the conditions under which states could not abridge or deny citizens’ franchise. According to the constitution today, no state can deny the vote on the basis of race, color, previous condition of servitude, or sex; no state can require a poll tax; and no state can deny the vote on the basis of age to those 18 and over. Additionally, the vocabulary of voting will also be explained so that visitors will know that franchise, suffrage and the right to vote all mean the same thing.

CONTEMPORARY RESONANCE

Several states have passed voter identification laws. Some argue that these laws suppress citizens’ voting rights; others claim that they are intended to prevent voting fraud. Regardless, these laws reaffirm that voting rights remain in large measure up to the states.

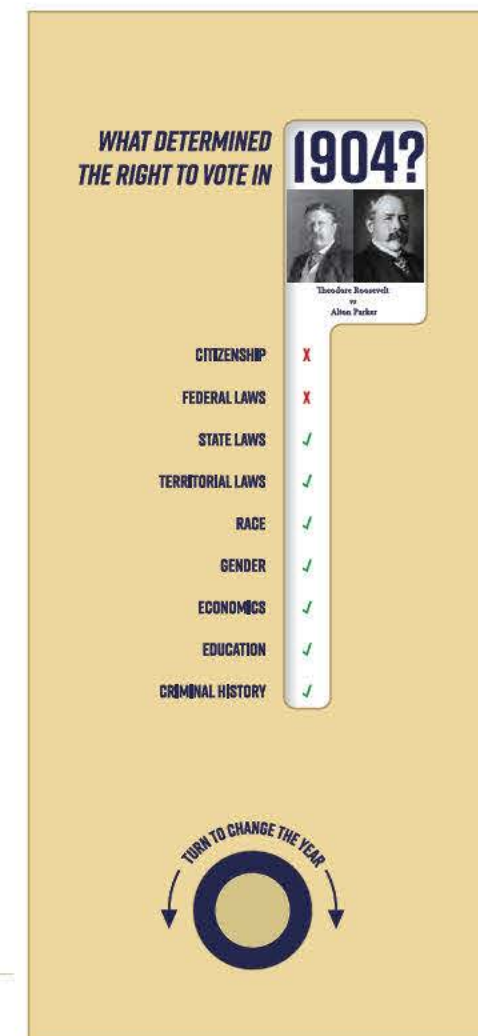
*“The right of voting, or the privilege of voting, is a right or privilege arising under the constitution of the state, and not under the constitution of the United States...Citizenship, age, sex, residence, are variously required in the different states, or may be so. If the right belongs to any particular person, it is because such a person is entitled to it by the laws of the state where he offers to exercise it, and not because of citizenship in the United States.”*

Justice Ward Hunt's Decision in *United States v. Susan B. Anthony*, 1872



INTERACTIVE DETAIL





DIAL THROUGH THE DECADES TO SEE HOW VOTING AUTHORITY HAS CHANGED OVER TIME





WHY DO WOMEN FIGHT FOR THE VOTE?

Women’s disenfranchisement did not just infringe upon the rights that many believed they were entitled to as American citizens. The absence of the vote resulted in real economic, political, and social consequences for women and their families. Through personal stories about the effects of disenfranchisement on their lives, this section will reveal why women from a diverse cross-section of the country and across a vast stretch of time claimed that they needed the vote. It will also explore women’s strategies to influence politics—locally and nationally—before they had the ballot. Despite their “political disability,” women have always found ways to champion their causes, with or without the vote. Indeed, women’s organizing around myriad social and political reform issues played a key role in building nationwide support for woman suffrage as women realized that they needed the ballot to enact lasting change in society. Regardless of their original mission, many women and their reform organizations eventually merged their collective voices into one of the most consequential political movements in American history.

GENERAL TYPES OF RECORDS

- Personal letters
- Memorials and petitions
- Records of legislative hearings/testimonies
- Newspapers/periodicals/broadsides

SOME SPECIFIC EXAMPLES

- An 1878 letter to Congress from Mariann Hosmer of Iowa stating that some men in her town—by a one vote margin—voted to construct a road through her property. Their decision required her to pay \$500 to maintain the road. Had she a vote, she could have blocked the measure.
- Suffrage petition drive instructions on collecting working-class signatures, which included strategies customized to effectively canvas working class neighborhoods. These included visiting “factories, workshops and schools during the noon hour” while workers would be on their lunch breaks.
- Annotated copy of a speech “Something for Something” given by Anne Fitzhugh Miller at a 1908 suffrage hearing before the NY State Joint Judiciary committee:

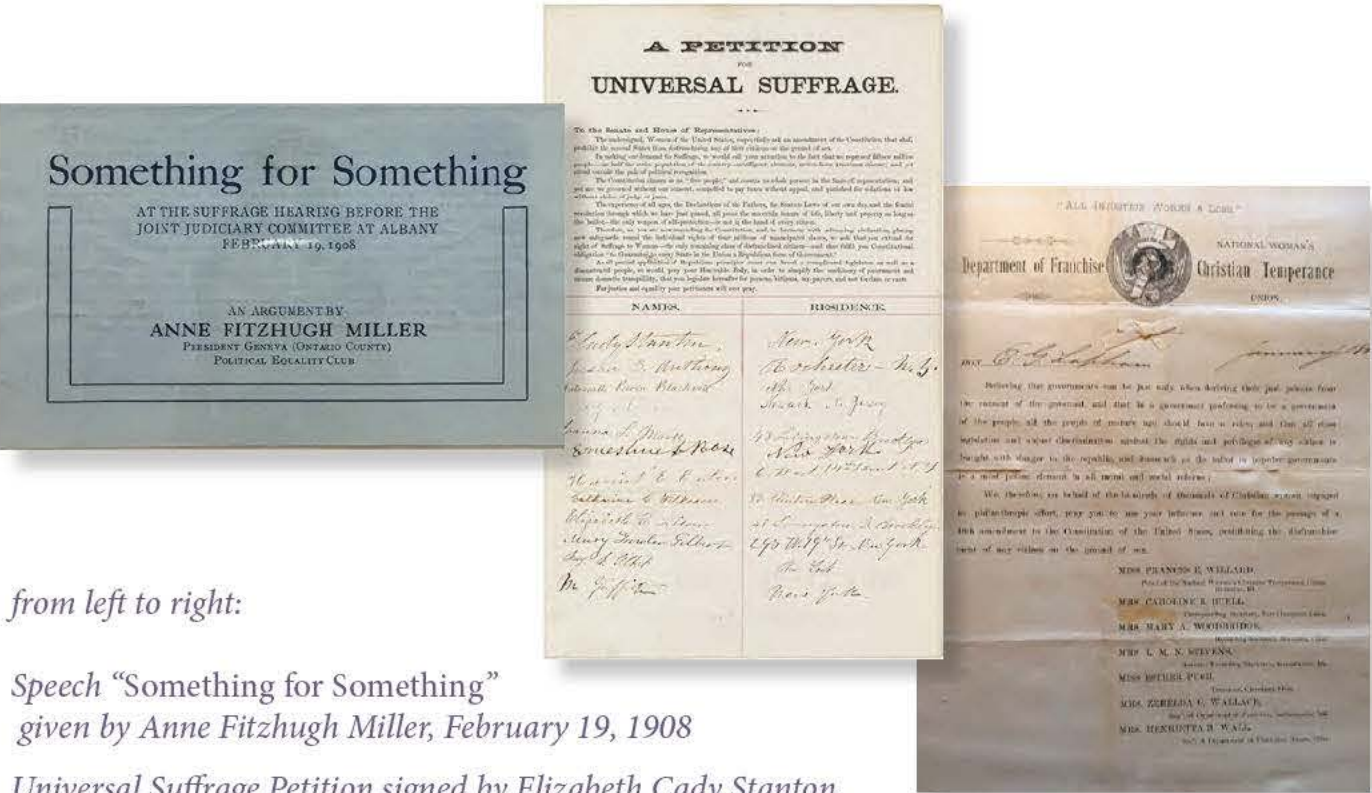
*“We denounce the law which denies us the ballot, because it involves both you and us in the abominable practice of ‘Something for Nothing’...The law compels us to give, and you seem willing to take our ‘Something for Nothing’....In the meantime I would rather be as*

*we are—forced to give ‘Something for Nothing’ then to be as you are—responsible for taking ‘Something for Nothing’...All we ask is fair play—‘Something for Something.’”*

- An example of women’s organizations promoting social reforms: a ca. 1905 letter from the President of the Pennsylvania State Federation of the General Federation of Women’s Club’s which advocated for a federal investigation into the industrial conditions of women in the United States, arguing, “It is both claimed and denied that the economic and social welfare of the country is menaced by this army of women wage-earners. We feel that sane conclusions can be reached only by having accurate data.”

CONTEMPORARY RESONANCE

In spite of increased access to the vote, women continue to face issues including a gender pay gap and the threat of violence. Visitors will be encouraged to examine both the efficacy and the limitations of the ballot box in creating change in these and other areas.



from left to right:

Speech “Something for Something” given by Anne Fitzhugh Miller, February 19, 1908

Universal Suffrage Petition signed by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Lucy Stone and others, 1866

Woman’s Christian Temperance Union petition for woman suffrage, ca. 1880



# WHY WAS WINNING THE VOTE SO HARD?

The struggle for suffrage was a long, difficult, and at times dramatic battle waged across the country. Beginning at early important gatherings, such as the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention to discuss women’s rights, the topic of woman suffrage was passionately debated by women and men from both sides of the issue. At the federal level, a resolution proposing a woman suffrage amendment was first introduced in Congress in 1868, and after 1878 it was continuously proposed in every Congress for 40 years until it passed in 1919 and was ratified by three-quarters of the states as the 19th amendment in 1920.

Of course, this story is bigger than the fight for a federal amendment: while continuing to introduce a federal suffrage amendment in every session of Congress, suffragists deployed multiple strategies in different states at different times to gain voting rights across the country. It was a long and frustrating battle, seeking suffrage state by state, and along the way they encountered stiff opposition from both men and women anti-suffragists. But by 1919 a patchwork of women’s voting rights had been established at the state level. As a result millions of women had at least some voting rights prior to 1920 and they used the vote in each state they were able to apply pressure to their congressional representatives to support a federal suffrage bill.

By drawing upon the diversity of voices, experiences and strategies from the pro-suffrage and anti-suffrage movements, this section will collectively demonstrate why it took so long to pass the woman suffrage amendment. The diversity of methods—petitioning, congressional hearings, public speaking, attempting to vote, marching, protesting, hunger strikes in jail—that women employed to agitate for the vote will be represented, as well as critical moments in the struggle that resulted from these efforts. This section will explore why extending suffrage to women was successful in certain times and places, but so deeply contested elsewhere. It will also detail the final march towards the 19th Amendment and the key events that mounted the pressure needed to shift politicians in favor of granting votes for women.

## GENERAL TYPES OF RECORDS

- Proposed Legislation
- Personal letters
- Memorials and petitions
- Legislative hearings records
- Posters
- Photographs
- Artifacts
- Newspapers/magazines/broadsides
- Political cartoons
- Court records
- Speeches
- Patents
- Motion picture



Photograph of Suffragist protesting outside of the White House, ca. 1917

## SOME SPECIFIC EXAMPLES

- An article titled “The Anthony Amendment” from the May 1918 issue of The Crisis which relays racist statements made by New Orleans suffragists Kate and Jean Gordon who opposed a federal amendment because they felt it threatened white supremacy because “while white men would be willing to club Negro men away from the polls they would not use the club upon black women.”
- A 1917 petition from the National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage that makes a number of arguments against a woman suffrage amendment, including that “it would be an official endorsement of nagging as a national policy.”

- A postcard from the Georgia Association Opposed to Woman’s Suffrage which lists a number of arguments for voting against woman suffrage including: “BECAUSE universal suffrage wipes out the disfranchisement of the negro by State law” and “BECAUSE White Supremacy must be maintained.”
- A 1916 letter from Enid Piece to Rep. Ambrose Kennedy of Rhode Island, urging him to confront. . .

*“Even those “hot headed” senators from southern states where the people struggle along, yes struggle be they black or white with the weight of horrible race hatred...try to make them listen to reason even if they would still like to use a shot gun for their best argument. Tell them that God alone chose whether to put on you or me or them a black skin or a white one, and that He alone said whether we should be created male or female, then shall either of these conditions deprive us of our birthright? Which in a republic means a voice in those conditions and laws which surround us and bind us.”*

- A WWI Red Cross nurse’s uniform worn during WWI. Women’s wartime service and support of the war effort on the home front was one of many factors that tipped the political balance in support of woman suffrage.
- Records from the 19th amendment’s journey to ratification, including:
  - Joint Resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution extending the right of suffrage to women
  - Tennessee’s ratification of the 19th amendment, the final state needed ratify the 19th amendment
  - Secretary of State Bainbridge Colby’s certification that the 19th amendment had been ratified

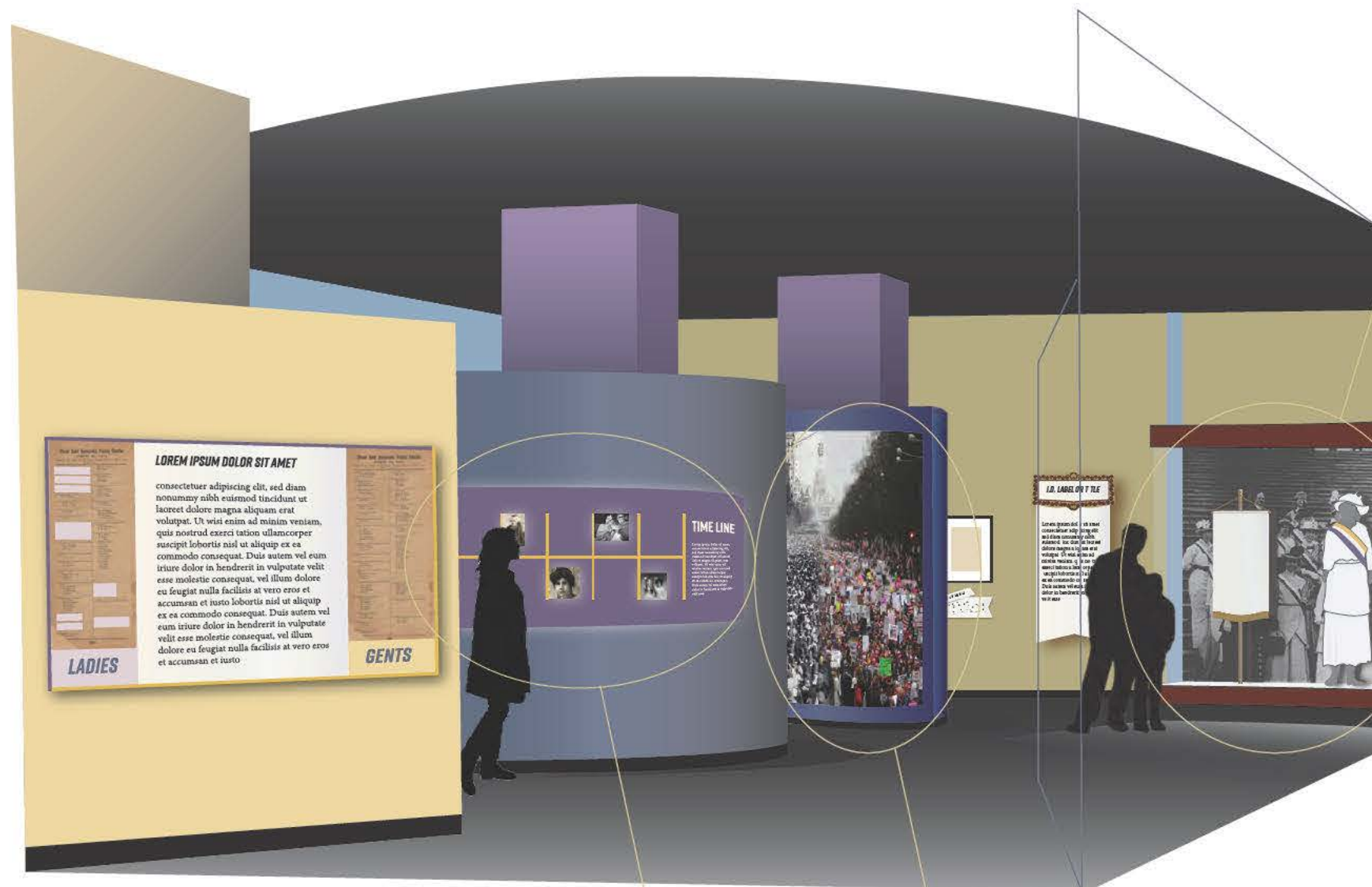
CONTEMPORARY RESONANCE

Visitors will be encouraged to consider what current issues seem resistant to resolution. The exhibition will engage visitors on contemporary women’s issues, by encouraging them to cast their vote via a “ballot box” interactive for the contemporary women’s rights issue that is their top concern.



United War Work Campaign poster, ca. 1918





LARGE, CURVED SEE-THROUGH  
PLATFORM CASE FOR  
COSTUMES, BANNERS, AND  
OTHER ARTIFACTS



1913/2017 MARCH LENTICULAR GRAPHIC

HALO-LIT TIME LINE



# WHAT WAS THE IMPACT OF THE 19TH AMENDMENT?

What did that mean for the lives of American women who were able to vote for the first time? What did such a dramatic change in the electorate mean for the country? This section will highlight the immediate impact of the 19th amendment as women use their votes in the early years after ratification to make progress on women’s reform issues including maternity care, married women’s citizenship, child labor and women’s equality.

## GENERAL TYPES OF RECORDS

- Legislative bills
- Photographs
- Newspapers and periodicals
- Motion picture
- Posters

## SOME SPECIFIC EXAMPLES

Initiatives that emerged in the wake of the 19th amendment include:

- The Promotion of Welfare and Hygiene of Maternity and Infancy act, or Sheppard-Towner Act (1921) that provided federal funding for maternity and child care
- The Cable Act or “Married Women’s Independent Nationality Act” (1922) which reversed federal immigration laws that tied women’s citizenship to her husband
- The nearly passed Dyer Anti-lynching Bill (1922)
- The drafting and first introduction in Congress of the ERA (1923)
- The passage through Congress of the Child Labor Amendment (1924) which was then never ratified by the states
- Records of campaigns to get women on juries
- Examples of initiatives to get women elected to local, state, and federal offices



Mrs. Fredahl is proud of her pioneer heritage and proud that she has never missed voting in a presidential election since woman suffrage became effective, November 1948

## CONTEMPORARY RESONANCE

Visitors will see the effects of women’s political activity beyond winning the right to vote, including important legislative and legal victories protecting women’s rights. The importance of the vote to women’s political power will also be contrasted with the women’s equality struggles that continue.





# WHAT VOTING RIGHTS STRUGGLES PERSIST?

The 19th amendment prohibited states from denying the vote on the basis of sex. But what of the millions of women—including African American women in the South, Native American women living on reservations, many Latinas, Asian immigrant women, and poor women who couldn’t afford the poll tax—who remained disfranchised on bases other than their sex? This section will explode the myth that all American women were able to vote after the 19th Amendment and will explore the ways in which they continued to be denied their elective franchise.

This ongoing disfranchisement was largely the result of racism, but it also kept many women of low socioeconomic status away from the polls. Voter suppression tools such as poll taxes, understanding clauses, literacy tests, and intimidation—both physical and economic—were instituted in many states to keep people of color away from the polls. Language minority voters, especially Latinas, were discriminated against at polls that provided exclusively English voting information and ballots. For a time, federal law excluded Asian-immigrant women and many Native American women from citizenship altogether. Even after these groups were eligible for citizenship, some states instituted laws aimed at preventing them from voting. Puerto Rican women—though citizens since 1917—were excluded from the 19th Amendment altogether and barred from voting until 1929 for literate women and 1935 for all adult women. Many of these barriers to women’s freedom of elective franchise wouldn’t be legally prohibited until the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and its subsequent amendments, although the struggle against discriminatory polling practices continues through today.

Interactive experiences which can be accessed in the O’Brien Gallery and Boeing Learning Center, and potentially online, will be developed to encourage visitors to consider the importance of the right and ability to vote and the significance of the ongoing struggle to have more American’s voices represented in their government. By understanding what past generations overcame to secure their franchise, visitors may be inspired to use the most powerful political tool any citizen has--their vote.



Photograph by Spider Martin, “Amelia Boynton beaten on Bloody Sunday,” March 7, 1965



SOME SPECIFIC EXAMPLES

• A Dorothea Lange photograph captioned “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.”

• A petition for redress of grievance to Congress from African American women and men calling for a Voting Rights Bill:

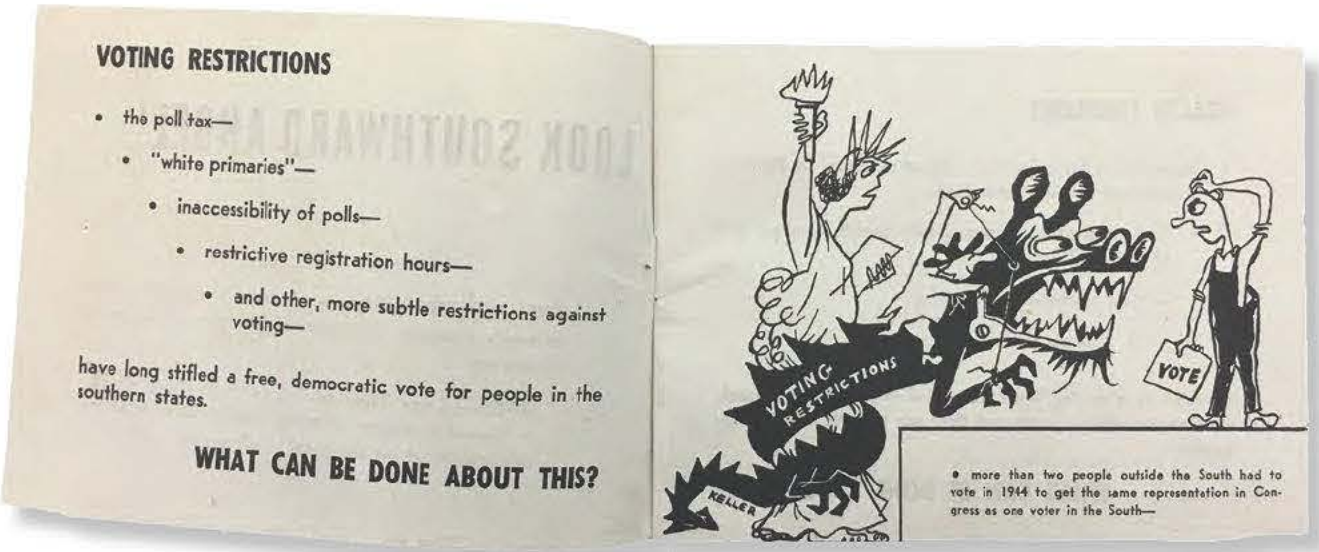
*“How can these governments be representative with the Negro citizens of these states cannot vote. We cannot because of terror, intimidation, coercion and even murder. Registrars of Voters in our States are appointed not to register persons to vote, but to keep the Negro from registering to vote. The entire power structure of these States...have engages in a conspiracy to prevent the Negro from sharing responsibility in the State governments of the south.”*

• A photograph of the ruins of a Baptist church in Gluckstadt, Mississippi, (that housed a Congress of Racial Equality voter school) after it was destroyed by a fire in 1964 when the fire department never came.

• A Universal Newsreel showing voters, many of them African American women and men voting for the first time in their lives during the 1966 primaries in Alabama.

CONTEMPORARY RESONANCE

Although this is a historical exhibition, visitors will be able to trace the battle for the 19th amendment and voting rights during the civil rights era to issues that continue into the 21st century. The political power of an individual’s ability to vote will have special resonance during the exhibition’s run-of-show as it will coincide with the presidential primaries and lead up to the 2020 election.



Pamphlet from the Washington Committee of the Southern Conference for Human Welfare, ca. 1944



**COULD THEY VOTE?** A touch-screen interactive that enables visitors to explore the voting abilities of a diverse group of notable women after the ratification of the 19th amendment and how their ability to vote changed over time.





SUBMITTING A BALLOT UPDATES THE COUNTERS AND ACTIVATES A FLASHING REFRESH OF THE MOST RECENTLY TALLIED RESULTS ON THE SCREEN



BALLOT

WHICH WOMEN'S ISSUE IS YOUR TOP CONCERN?

The struggle for women's equal rights continues today. "Vote" for the women's rights issue that you are most concerned about or write-in your own concern below.

Mark with an "x"

Reproductive Rights	
Violence Against Women	
Economic Justice	
LGBTQ Rights	
Racial Justice	
Constitutional Equality	
Write in your own:	


### A CALL TO PARTICIPATE

**#BEHEARD** A manual ballot-box interactive that invites visitors in the gallery to "cast their vote" for the unresolved women's equality issue that is their primary personal concern. "Voters" ballots will be counted as they're cast and their votes will be tabulated and the results updated periodically in the gallery on online.



## NARA-WIDE EXHIBITION AND INITIATIVE OPPORTUNITIES




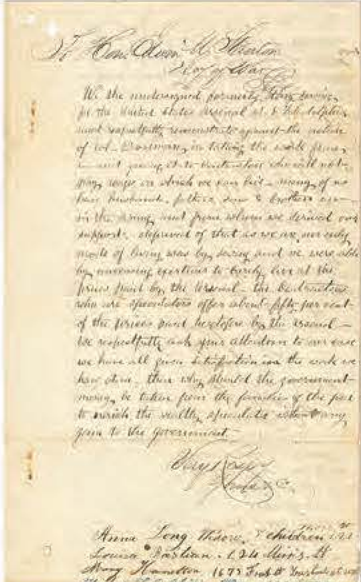
The centennial of the 19th amendment will not only spur public interest in the woman suffrage movement, but in women's history more broadly. The National Initiative can leverage that interest by highlighting other important moments in women's history and the ongoing struggle for women's equality that complement and expand upon the critical story told in the Women's Voting Rights exhibition in the Larry F. O'Brien Gallery. The Featured Document exhibit in the East Rotunda Gallery, the Landmark Document Case in the Rubenstein Gallery, and the Constitutional Amendment Case in the Public Vaults exhibit, can all be leveraged to greatly expand the reach of the initiative in the National Archives Museum to ensure that nearly every visitor encounters at least one women's history exhibition during their visit.



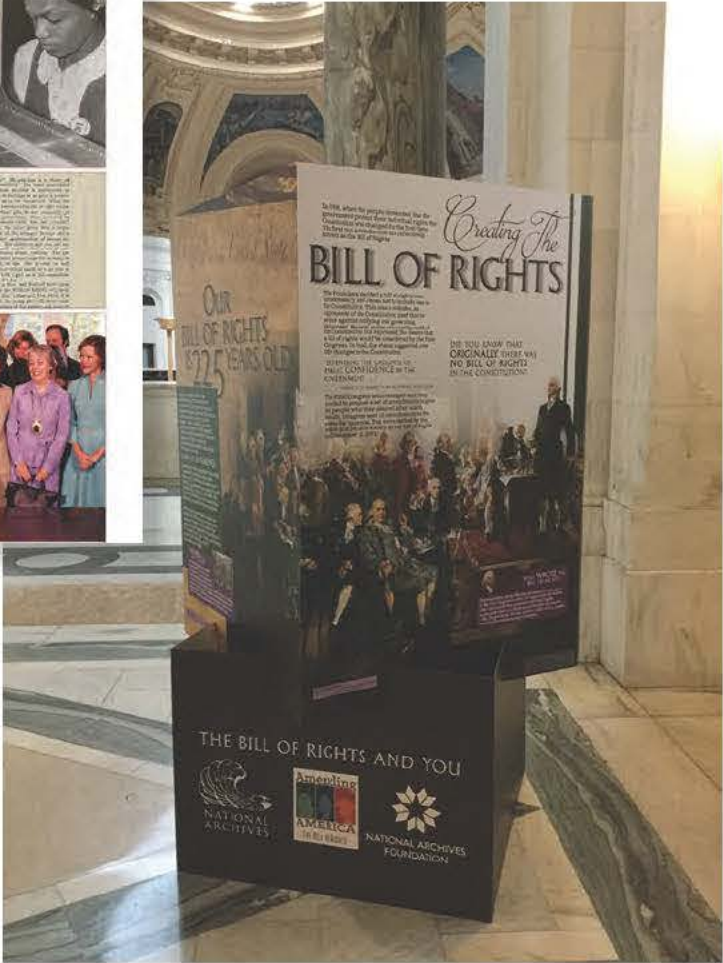
National Archives Traveling Exhibits Service

### One Half of the People: Women in American History

"One Half of the People" highlights stories from American history about women's rights and roles in our society. At the founding of our country, women's roles were rigidly defined. The women's (or private) sphere dictated that as wife, and then mother, women were caretakers for domestic issues. Sometimes quietly, sometimes with a roar, women have redefined that sphere. From the campaign for full voting rights, to expanding equality through legislation, see how those before us obtained many of the rights and privileges of citizenship enjoyed by women today.



Through our Travelling Exhibit program's general women's history exhibit, One Half of the People visitors across the country will also be able to explore the rich resources on this topic with NARA's holdings.



An example of a NARA pop-up display produced for a previous National Initiative.



MILESTONE SCHEDULE

8/11/17	Conceptual Design to AOTUS
8/31/17	Conceptual Design to NAF [Board Meeting - 9/12/17]
10/27/17	Exhibit Title and Logo to AOTUS
2/27/18	Preliminary Design and Draft Selections to AOTUS
3/1/18	Preliminary Design & Draft Selections to NAF [Board Meeting - 3/13/18]
5/3/18	Draft Final Design and Selections, Draft Script, etc. to AOTUS
5/3/18	Draft Final Design and Selections, Draft Script, etc. to NAF
8/24/18	Final Script to AOTUS
3/8/19	Public Opening