Suffragette Movement abt.1848-1920

Early beginnings: In the first 70 years of American history there were some individuals advocating for women's rights – Lydia Taft, Abigail Adams, Francis Wright, Sojourner Truth, Ernestine Roe, Margaret Fuller – but no organized effort. This changed in 1848.

Liberty Party's presidential candidate Gerrit Smith made women suffrage a plan in the party platform, in 1848. He is first cousin to Elizabeth Cady Stanton.

July 1848, the first women's rights convention is held at Seneca Falls, NY
- Hosted by Lucretia Mott, Mary Ann M'Clintock and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, they (68 women and 32 men) signed the Declaration of Sentiments, which outlines grievances and sets the agenda for the future.

1850, the first national 'National Women's Rights Convention'
- Organized by Lucy Stone, Paulina Kellogg Wright Davis, Abby Kelley Foster, William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips and six other women
  - For the first time, the convention brought together many who had been advocating individually for suffrage.
    - Key questions they explored:
    - Should the movement include or exclude men?
    - Who was to blame for women's inequity?
    - What remedies should they seek?
    - How could women best convince others of their need for equality?
    - The goal was clear: to secure for women their political, legal and social equality with men.

1866-1867, a strong drive for women's rights was tried in Kansas and failed.

January 1868, Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton began publishing 'The Revolution', writing harsh criticisms of the Republican Party (which was then pushing for African-American male suffrage).

Rival organizations and approaches emerge
- November 1868, the American Women Suffrage Association was formed
  - It was pro-Republican, had men in leadership positions and was designed to attract a political alliance with that party.
  - They supported the 15th Amendment, arguing that if black men were enfranchised, it would help their cause. They focused on gaining voting rights for women through amendments to individual state constitutions.
- May 1869, the National Women Suffrage Association was formed by Stanton and Anthony, made up mostly of women.
  - They opposed the 15th Amendment unless it was made to encompass their gender. They aimed to bring equality through a national Constitutional amendment.

10 December 1869 Wyoming passes the first women's suffrage law.
  - The following year women begin serving on juries in the territory.

1870 Through the efforts of lawyer Belva Lockwood, Congress passes a law to give women federal employees' equal pay for equal work.

Events happen to reestablish limits on women
- 1873 In 'Bradwell v.Illinois', the Supreme Court affirms that states can restrict women from the practice of any profession "to uphold the law of the Creator"
- 1873 Congress passes the Comstock Law, defining conceptive information as "obscene material".
- 1887 the US Senate votes on women's suffrage, which fails 34-16.
  - 25 (male) Senators do not bother to vote.

1887, after 20 years of working parallel toward the same goals but with bitter resentment between various leaders, the two women's rights organizations merge into the National American Women Suffrage Association

Regional differences – Western states and territories were more favorable to the idea of women's suffrage than the eastern ones.
- They had a culture of individualism and needed to encourage female immigration, while the East Coast help to stereotypical gender roles.

1909 Women garment workers strike in New York for better wages and working conditions. Over 20,000 participate.

Several groups were in opposition to Suffrage
- National Organization against Women's Suffrage
- Helen Kendrick Johnson
  - She argued that women did not need the vote in order to establish more legal and economic equality, and that the women's role in the domestic sphere was essential for the American republic. She accused suffragists of being radicals and socialists.
- In the New England region, upper-class women who thought they had a little behind-the-scenes voice often opposed suffrage because they worried it would dilute their influence.
- In the south, there was fear this would lead to black women voting.
- Ethnic politicians were against it, especially the Catholics whose women were not allowed a political voice.
- Liquor forces and drinking men were against this, because they believed (correctly) that most women would vote dry

In 1893, Colorado becomes the first state to adopt a state amendment granting women the right to vote.
- Utah and Idaho follow in 1896; Washington state in 1910, California in 1911; Oregon (through the initiative), Kansas and Arizona in 1912; Alaska and Illinois in 1913; Montana and Nevada in 1914; New York in 1917; and Michigan, South Dakota and Oklahoma in 1918

5 March 1913 – over 5,000 suffragists paraded in Washington DC.
- The crowd became abusive, hostile and knocked down marchers
  - With the local police doing little, the cavalry was called in.
    - 100 women hospitalized

1913, Suffragettes participate in hunger strikes, picket the White House and engage in other forms of civil disobedience to publicize the cause.

In 1914, Margaret Sanger calls for legalization of contraceptives in her publication, The Woman Rebel, which the post office bans from the mail.
- She used the slogan "No Gods, No Masters", and popularizes the phrase "birth control" to replace the previously used euphemism "family limitation". Fearing arrest for violating the Comstock Act, she flees to England for a year. Clarence Darrow offers to represent her for free, and Upton Sinclair publishes a defense of her.

23 October 1915 – The longest women's suffrage parade is held in New York City; 30,000 women participated, and it took over four hours for the parade to pass one spot!

National Women's Party was a women's organization founded in 1917.
- It put its focus on passing a Constitutional amendment ensuring women's suffrage.

1917, Police arrest women who had been picketing outside the White House for months in an effort to embarrass the President for his inaction on women's rights. The women go on hunger strikes while in prison, earning both sympathy and disdain from others.

In 1918, President Wilson began to advocate for women's rights.

Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution
- The first two attempts to pass it through Congress, both in 1919, fail.
- 3rd Attempt: 21 May 1919, it passed the House with a 42 vote margin, and on 4 June 1919, it passed the Senate with a vote 56-25.
  - It went to the states; 35 quickly approve the amendment; the necessary 36th state approved it on 22 March 1920.
    - Women earn the right to vote!!

Leser v.Garnett, 1922
- Oscar Lesser sued to stop women from voting in Maryland. He claimed women voting (1) destroyed State autonomy because it increased the states electorate without its consent, (2) anti-Federalist considerations invalidate the national ratification process, and (3) the ratification process was not procedurally consistent across states.
  - The Supreme Court invalidated his arguments, thereby affirming immediately reinforcing the right of women to full equality.