

Call for Contributors:

Teaching about Women's Suffrage in Secondary and Collegiate Classrooms

[Working Title]

Volume Editors:

Kelly Marino (Associate Professor of History – As of August 2025, Sacred Heart University),
Serene Bennett Williams (AP History Teacher and Co-Founder, Women's History in High
School), Kristen Kelly (Social Science Teacher, Sacred Heart Schools)

Summary of Project:

Much has been written about the history of the American women's suffrage movement. Scholars have analyzed the campaign from varied perspectives, including race, class, age, region, ethnicity, and religion, and have written many academic assessments. There have, however, been no large-scale works to date focused on teaching about women's suffrage from a pedagogical vantage point. As more women run for major political offices and increasingly become equal participants in areas such as government and law, reflecting on how to teach about the history of women and civic life will be a task that educators at many levels face. Kamala Harris will not be the last woman to run for the presidency, nor will future political candidates be able to ignore female voters. Students will need to know the legacy of these developments, as connecting the past and present is essential in social studies education. Covering these topics will be an important part of history and civics classes offered in schools.

This book aims to be a guide for educators at the secondary and collegiate levels for teaching about the long history of women's suffrage activism in the U.S. (1800-1920) and in many ways, women in politics in America. Chapters will be organized chronologically and thematically and focus on important topics such as the relationship between suffrage and abolition in the nineteenth century, or between suffrage and temperance and moral reform; the work of Anthony and Stanton but also Black suffragists such as Truth and Douglass; how we tackle issues like discrimination and white privilege over time; how we teach about suffrage in different regions; what are the best tactics, arguments, and examples to highlight; how should we educate students about the different perspectives of working women and upper-class women in the movement; how were their motivations different; what are the best resources to use when covering material about suffragists and use of public space in the twentieth century, or NAWSA activists v. the more radical campaigners of the NWP; what are the key questions, themes, and figures to emphasize with contemporary audiences based on the new scholarship since the centennial; how do we shed light on formerly hidden histories and voices; how do we characterize the amendment's passage; what does a transnational comparative perspective reveal?

This book's contributors will offer their experiences and ideas about these issues and more. They will offer suggestions on activities and resources. We solicit chapters from educators working in multiple settings and levels to offer their best insights based on their experiences. We see the potential for also interviewing authors about their chapters for a podcast series that would help us draw interest in the book that will be advertised on social media. We also are considering putting together a panel or roundtable with contributors for NCSS, NWSA, OAH, or AHA to help promote the work to colleagues. Given the recent campaign within education to teach diverse perspectives in the classroom, and Serene and Kristin's work to establish an AP US Women's History course (known as WAPUSH, <https://www.womenshistoryinhighschool.com/apwomenshistoryproposal>), we believe there would be an audience and market in the K-12 setting. Gender and sexuality will remain key areas that college and university faculty teach and research, despite the elimination of some women's studies programs nationwide, and will continue to be major categories of analysis within academic work. This book could be used not only by instructors at various levels but assigned to students, particularly in teacher education programs, as a discussion or preparation piece. We see it being valuable to public history and museum education professionals as well, considering what to emphasize in exhibits and programs for the general public.

At this stage, we ask for interested contributors to send a CV and a 300-word abstract. Submissions can be sent to: kellylynnmarino@gmail.com

We aim to publish our volume with a university press that we have been in communication with and can provide more information via our email correspondence with you.

Our goal is to submit a formal book proposal for the project in July, and we will be notifying contributors of acceptance of their proposals in May. At that point, we can lay out future deadlines. We ask contributors to submit their initial chapter proposals and CVs by April 1.