

Suffrage at 100: Women and American Politics Since 1920: NEW DUE DATE: October 16, 2018

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Call for 500-word Proposals: NEW DUE DATE: October 16, 2018

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Collection Overview

As the 100th anniversary of the Nineteenth Amendment approaches, women are seemingly at a crossroads in American politics. They appear to be gaining traction in this traditionally masculine realm, but are still far behind. Women continue to grapple with the disappointment that gender parity in politics did not easily follow the right to vote.

Will this trend change in the twenty-first century? Many journalists and political pundits anticipate a “pink wave” in 2018 midterm elections. More women candidates have come forward than in any other period on record, spurred in part by the historic Women’s March in 2017 and mobilization around #blacklivesmatter, #metoo, and #timesup, the latter with its own legal defense fund. In all this expectant fervor, Debbie Walsh, director of the Center for American Women and Politics, has cautioned, “We are not going to see, in one cycle, an end to the underrepresentation of women in American politics that we’ve seen for 250 years. . . . This is a marathon, not a sprint.”

This collection will map out the last 100 years of this lengthy struggle, focusing on efforts to recognize, appreciate, and cultivate women’s civic engagement since the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment. Our purpose is not celebratory. Instead, we seek to trace the uneven road to suffrage and public office women of different backgrounds and means experienced after 1920. We also intend to expose the institutional barriers and masculinist conceptions of leadership that women in politics have faced and continue to tackle. Women have exhibited considerable democratic imagination within and outside the traditional channels of electoral politics. Melding gender, social, cultural, and political history, this collection seeks to capture examples of women acting together and on their own within and outside electoral and governmental channels to claim a political presence, enlist state action, and create alternative services and solutions. In doing so, we use this historic centennial to make visible the determined presence of women in politics since 1920, while also calling attention to the ways these women have and continue to be written out of history.

Collection Structure and Themes

We welcome new articles (8,000 to 10,000 words including notes) broadly addressing women and American politics since 1920. We also welcome related historiographic essays and interpretive analysis accompanying relevant primary source document(s). We hope to fully cover 1920-2020, dividing the collection into themes. Below are some questions that potential contributors might consider.

Women at the Ballot Box

- How has the achievement of women's suffrage and full expression of political citizenship proved elusive for different groups of women since 1920?
- In what ways have women tried to build on the Nineteenth Amendment? When have these efforts been successful, partial victories or failures, and why?
- What have been the limitations and advantages of thinking about a "women's voting bloc" for activists and for historians?
- How has gender factored into party realignment from 1920 forward? What is the history and usefulness of the "gender gap" concept, and its relation to voting patterns based on race, class, sexuality, religion, ideology, and region?
- How has racial gerrymandering impacted women? Is there such thing as "gender gerrymandering"?

Women Who Run

- What paths to electoral politics have women taken or chosen not to travel? And what does this tell us about the structure and function of U.S. democracy?
- What can we learn from women candidates not only who have won, but who have lost elections?
- Have gender and other intersectional forms of oppression (*e.g.*, race, class, sexuality) acted as barriers to entry for women in politics? What solutions, if any, have female candidates divined as a result?
- What tactics have women used to navigate party patronage systems, develop campaign financing, and build a constituent base? Have women used grassroots or party channels most?
- How have organizations such as the National Women's Political Caucus, Emily's List, or the Concerned Women for America developed over time? Have these groups been effective?

Women Who Lead

- Does proportional representation in U.S. legislatures matter?
- What reformist strategies have women leaders pursued to change the culture and structure of governance?
- How do women function as power brokers? How should we assess the disempowering actions

women with and in pursuit of political power take impacting other individuals?

- How has the cultural representation of women in politics changed over time? Is there an enduring male leadership mystique in U.S. society?
- Do women lead differently? Are “women’s issues” all issues? What are the costs and benefits of women legislators caucusing together?

Women Redefining Politics

- In what ways have women creatively imagined and shaped their place in politics?
- How have women purposefully resisted or reshaped the gendered (or other) parameters of civic engagement and governance? How have they actively defined their political identities or created alternative governance systems?
- What are the advantages and costs of engaging in politics using the mantle of “women’s issues” or maternalism? What intersectional approaches to issues and organizing have women in politics used?
- What is the relationship between women’s domestic and global engagement in politics? How have women navigated multiple political arenas at once?

Women in Political History

- Should women’s political history complicate the usual conceptualization of “political time” centered on presidential politics and divided by election cycles?
- What might political history look like if gender was at the center instead of the periphery?
- How might we evaluate women’s political citizenship through an intersectional lens?

The Nineteenth Amendment as a Milestone

- What place has the Nineteenth Amendment had in the national story of the United States since its passage?
- Is the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment relevant as a political milestone for any group other than white, cisgender, middle-class and elite women?
- How has the achievement of the Nineteenth Amendment been memorialized and debated through monuments and exhibits?
- How have activists and politicians referenced the Nineteenth Amendment as a tool to forward their agendas and actions?

Collection Production Timeline

We believe this will be the only collection marking the suffrage centennial from the angle of 1920

forward, and we have had interest from top university presses. We expect the production timeline for this collection to be swift, based on the schedule a university press would need to follow to publish by August 2020.

Please send article abstracts of 500 words and a CV by October 16, 2018 to: Stacie at staranto@ramapo.edu or Leandra at lrzarnow@central.uh.edu. We also welcome questions and comments at those email addresses.

Applicants will be notified by November 1, 2018. The due date for polished drafts will likely be in January 2019.

We hope you will consider contributing to this exciting collection!