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Casting a ballot and voting in elections is a simple civic duty that American citizens must do. Being able to vote is a privilege that many take for granted. It may seem simple, but in actuality, we owe it to the women who fought for the Nineteenth Amendment to be put into action. Women like Sojourner Truth, Viola Liuzzo, and the Suffragette Movement gave me and every other woman in America that privilege that otherwise we would not have. The fighters and advocates for women's suffrage should always be appreciated and remembered when discussing the right to vote and their impact on modern America.

The Nineteenth Amendment granted women suffrage, or the right to vote. The president at the time, Woodrow Wilson, was reluctant to do so until organizations like the National American Woman Suffrage Association began protesting in the streets of America. Before this, people feared the act of letting women vote and freeing them from their oppression (Benson et al. 1151). Women's protests gained momentum around the beginning of the Civil War, approximately seventy years of dissent from female citizens. A front-runner of this movement was Susan B. Anthony, who was arrested for voting in the election of 1872 ("Women's Suffrage"). Anthony used her arrest to gain publicity for her crusade. She spun Enlightenment era beliefs of civil and natural rights to relate to her cause, cleverly using the same beliefs that the American Constitution was founded on. This was proven to be effective in her Supreme Court hearing, arguing against Chief Justice Ward Hunt (Anthony). Her impact set her legacy for the entire future of America and the women's suffrage movement.

However, one woman, in particular, is arguably the most inspirational. Sojourner Truth, a woman who was freed from slavery and an outspoken abolitionist. She had met with Susan B.

Anthony, as well as Fredrick Douglass. She noticed the hypocrisy of Susan B. Anthony's movement and rewrote her message for racial and gender equality, the former Anthony not standing for. Truth did this through her incredible speech entitled "Ain't I A Woman?", delivered in a women's rights conference in Ohio (Michals). One of the most powerful quotes from the speech is, "If my cup won't hold but a pint and yours holds a quart, wouldn't you be mean not to let me have my little half measure full?" She uses this metaphor of a cup to symbolize African American women's rights versus white women's rights, which were disproportionate from one another ("Sojourner Truth: Ain't I A Woman?"). Her speech directly criticizes the inequality of the movement led by Anthony. The latter once stated she'd rather cut her own arm off than let black people in America vote ("Black Women & The Suffrage Movement: 1848-1923."). Sojourner Truth's battle for justice should be told when discussing the suffrage movement.

Other women to recognize are the women who were murdered for the cause. Women like Viola Liuzzo, inspired by the "Bloody Sunday" attacks on March 7, 1965, on Edmund Pettus Bridge (Mendelsohn, 1966, p. 182). Viola felt like she needed to support the cause, and went to a march from Selma to Montgomery on March 21. Once the march had ended, she helped in shuttling people back to Selma. Members of the Ku Klux Klan shot her in the head as she was in the car, and she died ("Viola Liuzzo."). This encouraged President Lyndon B. Johnson to pass the Voting Rights Act, which prohibited racial discrimination in voting. This specifically targeted the unfair and biased literacy tests that needed to be passed when registering to vote ("History Of Federal Voting Rights Laws."). Due to these unfortunate and untimely deaths, the government listened to their people and improved the country's laws.

Voting rights are ones that people take for granted. The women and supporters fought for their lives to cast a ballot, and in some countries, women still cannot vote or have a say in their government. The Nineteenth Amendment was only passed in 1920, one hundred and thirty-one years after the Constitution was formed, which previously granted only white men to vote, and even then under certain circumstances. In modern-day America, gerrymandering from state governments suppresses minority groups from getting accurate representation. This is most prevalent in battleground states, such as Pennsylvania (Li and Lo). For the democratic primaries in 2020, LA County, which is very heavily populated, had few places to vote. The UCLA college campus had lines that stretched for hours and ultimately led to many young voters unable to have their voices heard due to the horrid voting system (Myers et al.). The fight for equal voting rights has not stopped globally, or even nationally, but the Nineteenth Amendment allowed the world's superpower to create monumental change.

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