

## **American Suffrage Association**

AWSA primary founders were Lucy Stone, Henry B. Blackwell, Julia Ward Howe, and T.W. Higginson.

“Considered the more conservative organization, the AWSA encouraged male officers, supported the Republican Party, sought simple enfranchisement, and counted the abolitionists among its ranks. Its members also believed in the necessity of organizing on the state and local levels. To that end, they drafted a constitution that called for a focus on achieving the vote for women.

Concentrating on organizing the state and local levels, the AWSA encouraged auxiliary state societies to be formed and provided an effective grassroots system for the dissemination of information about the woman suffrage movement.” <https://www.britannica.com/topic/American-Woman-Suffrage-Association> (accessed 8-7-2019).

“The second national suffrage organization established in 1869 was the American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA). Unlike the rival National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA), AWSA supported the Fifteenth Amendment that granted African American men the right to vote.

The AWSA quickly became the more popular organization because it was more moderate in its aims. . . . the AWSA focused solely on the vote to attract as many supporters as possible. Unlike the female-led NWSA, the AWSA also included prominent male reformers among its leaders and members. AWSA leaders also pursued a state-by-state strategy, which they thought would be more successful than NWSA’s efforts to pass an amendment to the Constitution.”

<http://www.crusadeforthevote.org/awsa-organize> (accessed 8-7-2019).article by Allison Lange, Ph.D. Fall 2015.

## Colorado Suffrage Excerpt

In Colorado, the victory for woman suffrage at the polls on November 7, 1893 was hard fought, a great achievement. Colorado suffragists needed the support of male voters to secure the franchise. They had to convince specific men in the state, not just legislators--a smaller and often more elite group of men--that they should share political power with women. Colorado the first state to enfranchise women through popular referendum, and it happened over a quarter of a century before the achievement of national women's suffrage in 1920.

During the territory years, political leaders in the West granted woman suffrage to enhance the image of their states or territories and encourage white women--always in short supply in the frontier West--to come and settle away from family and friends east of the Mississippi.

Colorado woman suffrage was won only after decades of political work and organizing by suffragist activists and occurred within very specific local and historical contexts. The 1877 failed attempt to gain suffrage slowed achieving the final goal, but suffragists were determined to keep trying.

Laying the foundation for Colorado's suffrage success was a provision in the state's 1876 constitution was instrumental in the 1893 success. Article 7, Section 2 allowed woman suffrage to become state law through a simple majority vote on the part of legislators and the electorate rather than through a constitutional amendment, which would have required a two-thirds majority. The suffrage bill that eventually became law in 1893 was written according to this provision. A provision of school suffrage for women was also included in Article 7. Colorado suffragists achieved their goal in 1893 with 55% of the vote; they would have needed 66% with a constitutional amendment.

This political context for Colorado's suffrage victory was reinforced by dramatic economic and social developments in 1893. The combination of the repeal of the 1890 Sherman Silver Purchase Act, the financial Panic of 1893, and subsequent depression sent Colorado's economy into a tailspin. Elected officials needed a wider voter base.

Colorado suffragists used a two-prong argument: equality with men and differences from men. In making the equality argument, suffragists claimed that women were the political equals of men and were entitled to the franchise; woman suffrage also fit within and extended the American political tradition of equality and democracy. In making the difference argument, they focused on how women's difference from men--their roles as mothers and housekeepers--made them deserving of voting rights; woman suffrage would allow women to extend their caretaking responsibilities beyond the home and use their vote to reform society.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <http://womhist.alexanderstreet.com/colosuff/intro.htm> (accessed 6-8-2019).

## First Utah Women Holding Political Office Tribute

### Martha Hughes Cannon

Dr. Cannon went medical school in Michigan, and received a pharmacy degree in Philadelphia at age 23. She married Agnus Cannon becoming his fourth wife. Angus was her opponent in a state senate election winning by more than 2,500 votes. She is the first woman to become a state senator in the United States.



<https://ilovehistory.utah.gov/people/difference/cannon.html> (accessed 8-9-2019).

### Olene Smith Walker

Olene earned her doctorate degree from the University of Utah. Utah's first woman to serve as lieutenant governor after serving eight years in the Utah Legislature. When Governor Leavitt resigned to serve as Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, Walker became Utah's first female governor. As governor, she continued her commitment to affordable housing, education funding, and literacy programs.

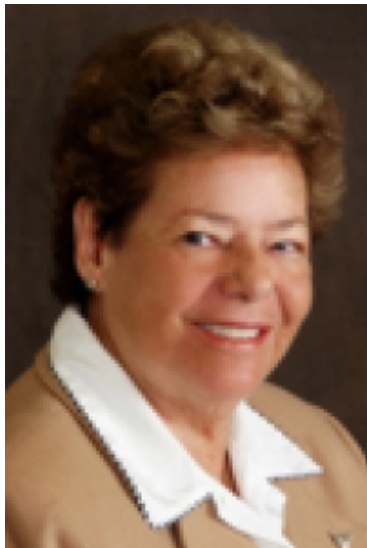


<https://utahstatecapitol.utah.gov/explore/capitol-art/governors/olene-walker> (accessed 8-9-2019).

Janice M. Fisher

Janice was the first woman elected on the West Valley City, Utah council representing district 4. She was placed as first on the roll call by others hoping the new experience would intimidate her. Janice knew enough about voting procedure to defer her vote until the last one cast. She cast the deciding vote on many issues while a council woman. She also served as in the Utah House of Representatives from April 19, 2005 to December 31, 2014.

City Council meeting meeting observation by Helen Elaine Jones, [Janice M. Fisher \(D\)](#)". [Salt Lake City, Utah: Utah State Legislature](#). (accessed 8-9-2019). Source for legislative term date.



[https://s3.amazonaws.com/ballotpedia-api/storage/uploads/thumbs/200/300/crop/best/Janice\\_Fisher.jpg](https://s3.amazonaws.com/ballotpedia-api/storage/uploads/thumbs/200/300/crop/best/Janice_Fisher.jpg) (accessed 8-9-2019).

## Idaho Suffrage Excerpt

The Territory of Idaho was officially organized on March 4, 1863 by Act of Congress, and signed into law by President Abraham Lincoln.

In 1868, the areas east of the 111th meridian west were made part of the newly created Wyoming Territory. Idaho Territory assumed the boundaries of the modern state at that time.

Although forming a sizeable minority, Mormons in Idaho were held in suspicion by others in Idaho. By 1882 notable and powerful Idahoans successfully disenfranchised Mormon voters in Idaho Territory, citing their illegal practice of polygamy. Idaho was able to achieve statehood some six years before Utah.

In 1887 Idaho Territory was nearly legislated out of existence, but as a favor to Governor Edward A. Stevenson, President Grover Cleveland refused to sign a bill that would have split Idaho Territory between Washington Territory in the north and Nevada in the south. The territory was admitted to the Union as the State of Idaho on July 3, 1890.<sup>i</sup>

"Idaho was the fourth state in the nation to give women the right to vote, but that was more the result of a push for prohibition than a bold statement about equal rights. Idaho was only a territory six years. In 1896 Idaho achieved statehood with women given the right to vote. The population changed from bachelor miners, who vehemently opposed prohibition, to gentleman farmers, who favored banning booze created the opportunity for suffrage.

Women's suffrage was "a hot topic" at the 1889 Constitutional Convention held in founding Idaho, Aiken said, "which made Idaho really unusual." State founders also asked two women Northwest suffragette Abigail Scott Dunaway and Women's Christian Temperance Union President Harriet Skelton to address the convention, "which also was highly unusual.'

The women failed to persuade the founding fathers to give women the right to vote that year, but seven years later Idaho followed the lead of Wyoming, Colorado and Utah and franchised the other half of the state population in a statewide vote that included only non-Mormon men.

"By pen, by voice, by vote," was an oft-repeated slogan in earlier years," Francena Kellogg Buck proclaimed. "Women were urged to write to legislators, to sign petitions, to speak out at appropriate times. These rights were guaranteed by the Constitution. But how about voting? How could they vote when the laws would not permit them to vote? So they worked for the Woman Suffrage bill. If they could vote, they could help bring about prohibition in Idaho."<sup>ii</sup>

Once Idaho women were given the vote, they were instrumental in making Idaho a "dry state." Prohibition was approved in 1916. Despite winning the right to vote early, women's participation in positions of political leadership has been limited in Idaho, at best.

Idaho, however, was the first state in the union to send a woman delegate to a national convention. In April 1900, Susie M. West of Lewiston was elected a delegate to the Nez Perce County Convention and there was chosen as an alternate to the national gathering at Philadelphia. She attended the National Republican Convention at Chicago in 1904. West's presence at the Chicago convention in 1904 caused quite a stir."<sup>iii</sup>

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<sup>i</sup> <http://www.elmorecountypress.com/Hi-Liting%20Idaho.htm> (accessed 7-8-2019).

<sup>ii</sup> [https://mtrribune.com/feature/women-s-suffrage-right-to-vote-came-early-in-idaho/article\\_d6e0296a-ba14-59fe-87e4-2789689dcf38.html](https://mtrribune.com/feature/women-s-suffrage-right-to-vote-came-early-in-idaho/article_d6e0296a-ba14-59fe-87e4-2789689dcf38.html) (accessed 8-7-2019).

<sup>iii</sup> Ibid. [https://mtrribune.com/feature/women-s-suffrage-right-to-vote-came-early-in-idaho/article\\_d6e0296a-ba14-59fe-87e4-2789689dcf38.html](https://mtrribune.com/feature/women-s-suffrage-right-to-vote-came-early-in-idaho/article_d6e0296a-ba14-59fe-87e4-2789689dcf38.html) (accessed 8-7-2019).

## National Women's Suffrage Association

The National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA) opposed the Fifteenth Amendment. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony founded the NWSA first. The pair believed that instead of supporting the Fifteenth Amendment as it was, women's rights activists should fight for women to be included as well. They started the NWSA to lead this effort.

The NWSA was more radical and controversial than the competing American Woman Suffrage Association, which focused only on the vote. The NWSA wanted a constitutional amendment to secure the vote for women, but it also supported a variety of reforms that aimed to make women equal members of society. <http://www.crusadeforthevote.org/nwsa-organize> (accessed 8-7-2019), author: Allison Lange, Ph.D. Fall 2015.

"The NWSA Constitution, presented five articles the association would uphold. The major goal was to "secure STATE and NATIONAL protection for women citizens in the exercise of their right to vote." The NWSA was dissolved in 1890 when it and the American Woman Suffrage Association become one, the National American Woman Suffrage Association." <http://www.crusadeforthevote.org/nwsa-organize> (accessed 8-7-2019),

### Key Points

- condemned passage of the 14th and 15th Amendments, unless they were changed to include women
- supported a federal Constitutional Amendment for women's suffrage
- became involved in other women's rights issues beyond suffrage, including the rights of working women (discrimination and pay), reform of marriage and divorce laws.
- had a top-down organizational structure
- men could not be full members although they could be affiliated

<https://www.thoughtco.com/national-woman-suffrage-association-3530492> (accessed 8-7-2019)

". . . anti-Mormon and antisuffrage forces in Congress launched repeated attempts to disenfranchise Utah women. The leaders of the National Suffrage Association protested these attempts, and in 1879 invited two Mormon women to their Washington convention. From this point on, Utah's Mormon women were affiliated with the National Suffrage Association. This connection brought the National a strong western link, but also associated it with the despised practice of polygamy and with the patriarchal LDS Church." [https://www.jstor.org/stable/3346814?seq=1#page\\_scan\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/3346814?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents) (accessed 8-1-2019). **The Mormon-Suffrage Relationship: Personal and Political Quandries** by Joan Iverson, book preview.

## Nevada Suffrage

“At the birth of the nation, married women did not possess individual political rights. Their legal status was “under the cover” of their husband, thus while citizens, they did not have the same rights awarded to their male peers. Nearly seventy years passed before women sought an independent political voice at women’s rights conventions in New York and Ohio. For the majority of states, women did not win enfranchisement until the early 20th century. The western states were the first to grant women the right to vote.

The Nevada constitution, accepted in 1864, gave the right to vote only to white men. The passage of the Fifteenth Amendment in 1870 opened the vote to black men, but women of all races would wait. In 1869, a representative from Storey County, Curtis J. Hillyer, introduced a bill to allow women the vote. He argued that women possessed at least as much intelligence as men, they followed the same laws, paid the same taxes, and most importantly would introduce a new standard of public morality to the political process. Both houses of the Nevada legislature passed the amendment that year, but it failed to pass two years later during the constitutionally mandated second vote. Forty years passed before suffrage became an issue again in the state.

Several women played instrumental roles in winning the vote for Nevada women. Nevada native Anne Martin played a decisive role in Nevada’s second suffrage campaign. A veteran of the fight for suffrage in Britain, she returned to Reno in 1911 and led the Nevada Equal Franchise Society to a winning, county-by-county strategy to gain the vote.

Bird Wilson, a lawyer practicing in Goldfield, oversaw the suffrage campaign in southern Nevada. She wrote, “Women Under Nevada Law,” a pamphlet that was sent around the state as suffrage material. No suffrage organization existed in Las Vegas until Delphine Squires, active in women’s social organizations and co-publisher of the *Las Vegas Age*, agreed to serve as the local contact to coordinate suffrage speakers. While Squires agreed that women should vote, she felt it should be achieved diplomatically and not in the more radical ways of Martin and Wilson. Despite her discomfort she played an integral part in bring woman suffrage to Nevada.

On November 3, 1914, the general vote was taken to decide whether Nevada women would be allowed the vote. It took several days for the results to be tallied, but the amendment passed with the margin of victory coming from rural regions of the state. Women in Nevada voted for the first time in local races in 1915 and in statewide races in 1916.

Women gained the right to vote nationally with the 19th Amendment to the constitution ratified in 1920.” (<https://www.womennvhistory.com/nevada-suffrage/> (accessed 7-30-2019).

For more information on Nevada woman suffrage and Anne Martin see: Anne Howard, *The Long Campaign: A Biography of Anne Martin* (Nevada: University of Nevada Press, 1985).



## Utah Suffrage Excerpt

When the Utah Territory appeared on maps in 1850, voters were free white male over age twenty-one with citizenship. Women were not included on the voting rolls. As news of at members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints accepted polygamy in 1852, newspapers printed opinions concerning the practice. The Republican Party added a position on polygamy to their party platform in 1856.

An idea about women in the Utah Territory appeared in a newspaper. "It was believed at one time that if the ballot were placed in the hands of the Mormon women they would seek their own redemption by voting with the Gentiles. An interview with former senator and Utah Commissioner Algernon S. Paddock claimed: "What may be said in favor of female suffrage elsewhere cannot be applied here. It is certainly odious as practiced here. The women are completely controlled in their action by the church authorities."<sup>i</sup>

"Latter-day Saints, on the other hand, believed that Mormon women would use their vote to show their support for polygamy. They also thought giving women the vote would change negative perceptions about the LDS Church and its treatment of women. They wanted to show that Utah women were not oppressed, helpless, and enslaved as many anti-polygamists believed."<sup>ii</sup>

The Utah Territorial Legislature was willing to make voting for women happen. A bill proposed passed unanimously. It was ready for Governor Stephen S. Mann's signature. Governor Mann signed the bill February 10, 1870. This law granted voting rights in local and territorial elections, but not the right to run for or hold public office, to "every woman of the age of twenty-one years who has resided in this Territory six months next preceding any general or special election, born or naturalized in the United States, or who is the wife, widow or the daughter of a native-born or naturalized citizen of the United States."<sup>iii</sup>

The speaker of the house when the voting bill was discussed, John Taylor, attended the meeting organizing women with membership in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on March 17, 1842. He recorded the event at the request of Joseph Smith. "At that meeting, "The women voted to acknowledge those present plus seven other as members 'in full fellowship, and admit them to the privileges of the Institution about to be formed. He propos'd that the Sisters elect a presiding officer to preside over them, and let that presiding officer choose two Counsellors to assist in the duties of her Office."<sup>iv</sup> John Taylor knew giving women suffrage would benefit the Utah Territory from his experience observing women leading the Relief Society.

A municipal election held February 14, 1870 gave Utah women the distinction of being the first women in the United States to vote. Seraph Young, a school teacher, was the first women to cast a vote under the new law. This new opportunity opened doors for political office to Martha Hughes Cannon, the first state senator in the United States.

Utah women did not use their votes to remove polygamy. The frustration of this fact influenced an anti-polygamy law proposed seventeen years after Seraph Young's first vote. The passage of the Edmunds-Tucker Act of 1887 removed voting rights from all women in the Utah Territory. It also removed all voting rights, jury duty, and political

office positions for men in the territory as well. In 1890, polygamy ended with the document called the Manifesto proposed by Wilford Woodruff at the October 1890 general conference. The Manifesto was accepted by church membership in attendance that day.

In 1995, Utah leaders tried for statehood. Congress accepted the seventh request for statehood made by Utah political leaders. As the constitution committee met at the City County Building in Salt Lake City, a proposal to add the same language on women's suffrage Wyoming used when their state constitution was accepted was presented. B.H. Roberts spoke in opposition of the idea. He didn't want the state constitution document denied because women's suffrage was included. B. H. Roberts "spoke for two days against including women's suffrage in the constitution. On the other side, Franklin S. Richards stated that he would "rather remain in territorial vassalage" than deny women equal political standing."<sup>v</sup>

Utah women used the petition strategy they knew to gather signatures on the matter. There were 24,801 signatures favoring a constitution guaranteeing women's suffrage, and a petition requesting a separate election on the issue with 15,366 signatures. The vote on the question of keeping a women's suffrage statute in the Utah Constitution on April 18, 1895 was unanimous for suffrage.<sup>vi</sup>

The final wording of the Utah Constitution Article 4, Section 1 accepted on April 18, 1895, inspired by the Wyoming State Constitution states: "The rights of citizens of the State of Utah to vote and hold office shall not be denied on account of sex. Both male and female citizens of this State shall enjoy equally all civil, political and religious rights and privileges." A few months later, Utah's male electorate voted overwhelmingly to approve the proposed constitution. Utah women were given back the vote, or re-enfranchised, when Congress accepted Utah's constitution and granted Utah statehood in 1896.<sup>vii</sup>

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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.deseretnews.com/article/700008024/Utah-women-voted-earlier-than-most-in-US.html> (accessed 8-3-2109).

<sup>ii</sup> <https://www.utahwomenshistory.org/2018/02/receiving-losing-and-winning-back-the-vote-the-story-of-utah-womens-suffrage/> (accessed 7/8/2019).

<sup>iii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>iv</sup> Jill Mulvey Derr, Janath Russell Cannon, Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, Women of the Covenant, The Story of Relief Society, Deseret Book Company, Salt Lake City, 1992, pg.28.

<sup>v</sup> <https://www.deseretnews.com/article/700008024/Utah-women-voted-earlier-than-most-in-US.html> (accessed 8-3-219).

<sup>vi</sup> Ibid.

<sup>vii</sup> <https://www.utahwomenshistory.org/2018/02/receiving-losing-and-winning-back-the-vote-the-story-of-utah-womens-suffrage/> (accessed 7/8/2019).

## Washington State Women's Suffrage

“In the time of the earliest settlers in the Washington Territory, women did not have the right to vote. In 1854, Washington nearly became the first state to grant women's suffrage, but the proposal was defeated by a single vote. In an attempt to crush the woman's suffrage movement, the Territorial Legislature soon after mandated that "no female shall have the right of ballot or vote.

In 1871, Susan B. Anthony and Abigail Scott Duniway led a crusade through the territories of Washington and Oregon and helped to form the Washington Woman Suffrage Association. Due to the group's constant protesting and pushing, full voting rights were given to women in 1883 by a bill that passed through the Territorial Legislature. But in 1887, the Territorial Supreme Court overturned that law. Another was passed in 1888, but was also overturned. This happened because women voters were making sales of liquor more difficult with their votes, and the state's liquor lobby had fought hard to remove their voting rights. In light of this opposition, some activists chose to emphasize the contributions of women workers to the community and finally, in 1910, the Washington State Constitution was permanently amended to grant women the right to vote. It would be ten years before the rest of the country's women had that right.” (<https://www.sos.wa.gov/elections/timeline/suffrage.htm> (accessed 8-7-2019).

### Women's Suffrage Comparison Chart

<b>Where Did Women Gain Voting Rights First?</b>	<b>Territory Suffrage Successes</b>	<b>Territory Suffrage Challenges</b>	<b>State Suffrage Successes</b>	<b>State Suffrage Challenges</b>	<b>Prominent Suffrage Persons or Organizations</b>
<b>Wyoming</b>					
<b>Utah</b>					
<b>Colorado</b>					

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<b>Idaho</b>					
<b>Washington</b>					
<b>Nevada</b>					

## Wyoming Women's Suffrage Excerpt

The proposal to include women's suffrage in the territory constitution was discussed as a way to encourage women to relocate to Wyoming. The document passed by the Wyoming Territorial Legislature and signed by Governor John A. Campbell on December 10, 1869 was the first document granting women's suffrage in the United States. It read:

*An Act to Grant to the Women of Wyoming Territory the Right of Suffrage, and to Hold Office  
Be it enacted by the Council and House of Representatives of the Territory of Wyoming:*

*Sec. 1. That every woman of the age of twenty-one years, residing in this territory, may at every election to be holden under the laws thereof, cast her vote. And her rights to the elective franchise and to hold office shall be the same under the election laws of the territory, as those of electors.*

*Sec. 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage.*

*Approved, December 10, 1869.*

William Bright, a Cheyenne saloon keeper, was elected a member of the territorial legislature discussing a few issues concerning women in 1869. He introduced a bill to give Wyoming women the right to vote late in the 1869 session. Lawmakers wanted some positive Wyoming publicity. Changes in Wyoming's economy after railroad completion meant more people left Wyoming than moved in. Lawmakers thought giving women suffrage would bring more women to the state. There were six men to every woman and few children when the suffrage idea was proposed. Maybe women who could vote would support the party that proposed the suffrage idea. Would the bill embarrass Governor Campbell if he vetoed the bill? There were attempts to amend the voting bill, but in the end the only change was the age women could vote. It went from eighteen to twenty-one. "The House then passed the woman suffrage bill seven votes to four, with one abstention. Governor Campbell took several days deciding what to do. He finally signed the bill into law Dec. 10, 1869."<sup>i</sup>

When Wyoming went to the polls after Governor Campbell signed the suffrage bill, over 1,000 women voted. Democrats became unhappy when women voted for candidates that had not supported the suffrage bill. An attempt to remove voting rights from women in Wyoming, but the measure failed by one vote.<sup>ii</sup>

The original voting bill passed by the territorial legislature was added to the state constitution when Congress granted statehood July 10, 1890.<sup>iii</sup> The suffrage bill became a pattern used by other states nearby.

"Stories also circulated in later years that the whole thing had been a joke, that the lawmakers were mostly kidding and the entire idea went further than anyone had expected. That may be partly, or slightly true, but it goes against the fact that they spent a great deal of time debating the issue—hardly something the legislators would have done if they hadn't taken it seriously."<sup>iv</sup>

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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.wyohistory.org/encyclopedia/right-choice-wrong-reasons-wyoming-women-win-right-vote> (accessed 7-8-2019).

<sup>ii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>iii</sup> <https://www.history.com/topics/us-states/wyoming> (accessed 8-9-2019).

<sup>iv</sup> <https://www.wyohistory.org/encyclopedia/right-choice-wrong-reasons-wyoming-women-win-right-vote> (accessed 7-8-2019).