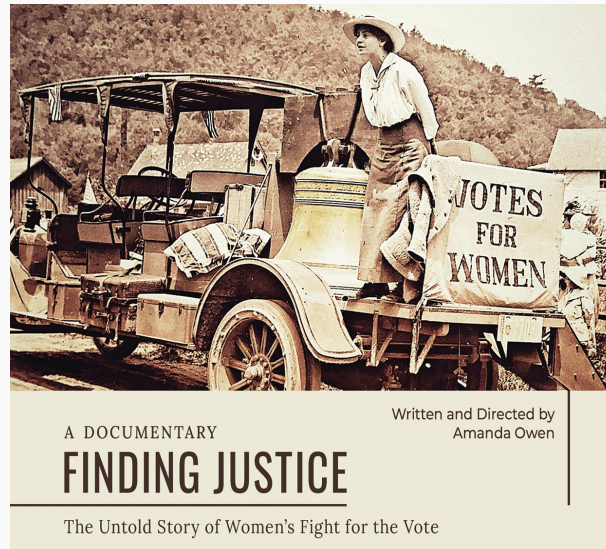


STUDENT STUDY GUIDE

FINDING JUSTICE: The Untold Story of Women's Fight for the Vote *A Documentary*



Study Guide

These lessons and activities are designed to inform, promote, and guide discussions about the idea of justice.

Sponsored by the Justice Bell Foundation

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Finding Justice Synopsis

Part present-day detective story and part a historical account of the movement for voting rights, *Finding Justice: The Untold Story of Women's Fight for the Vote* tells the story of a band of intrepid women and their one-ton bronze bell that became a celebrated icon of the women's suffrage movement. The Justice Bell—modeled after the Liberty Bell—attracted nationwide attention, which helped rally support in the last crucial years leading up to the passage of the 19th Amendment.

As current struggles for gender equality and voting rights continue to make front-page news, this account of the suffragists' courage and dogged persistence will inspire new generations in the fight for justice and equality.

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Cover photograph of Louise Hall by Oliver Hall taken during the Justice Bell tour that was part of the 1915 Pennsylvania "Votes for Women" Campaign. From the Collection of the Ethel Bret Harte Papers, 1862-1960. Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University.

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STUDENT STUDY GUIDE

Based on the documentary
Finding Justice: The Untold Story of Women's Fight for the Vote

Enduring Understandings and Essential Questions

Enduring Understanding

At the end of this unit, students will gain a better understanding of the power of protest, activism, and civic responsibility in order to affect social change, understand the importance of voting, and the value of diversity and equality for all people.

Essential Questions

1. How did the Justice Bell become a symbol of women's suffrage?
2. Why is it important to examine the process that secured the 19th Amendment?
3. How has the story of the Justice Bell defined and/or broadened your understanding of women's right to vote?
4. How is protest and activism used to achieve social change?
5. Why is it important to vote?
6. What did women do in order to overcome injustice and bring about social change?
7. Where do women still realize injustice in society?

Overview

In 1915, suffragists in Pennsylvania were looking for a way to drum up support for an amendment to the state constitution that would give women the right to vote. A referendum to approve such an amendment would appear on the ballot in the November election, so there was no time to waste. They needed to launch a campaign to win the hearts and minds of the male voters who would go to the polls. They needed to create some buzz.

That's when Chester County activist Katharine Wentworth Ruschenberger came up with an idea. Why not make a replica of the Liberty Bell, one of the nation's most enduring symbols of freedom, and drive it around the state on a multi-county tour? Throw in a few parades, some brass bands and an assortment of flags and banners, and who wouldn't sit up and take notice? Ruschenberger offered to pay the \$2,000 cost and soon members of the Pennsylvania Woman Suffrage Association traveled to the Meneely Bell Company in Troy, New York, to kick off the casting of the 2,000-pound bronze replica. The words *Establish Justice* were engraved on the bell and its clapper was chained to its side, so it would not ring until women were no longer silenced, until they could vote.

"The original Liberty Bell announced the creation of democracy," Ruschenberger said. "The Women's Liberty Bell will announce the completion of democracy."

All summer and up until Election Day, a detail of suffragists escorted the bell around the state. In town after town, crowds rushed out to witness the unusual spectacle. The Justice Bell became a galvanizing symbol not just in Pennsylvania, but around the country. Finally, in 1920, after the addition of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution that gave the nation's women the right to vote, the Justice Bell was finally rung in a huge celebration at Independence Square in Philadelphia.

Guiding Questions and Discussion Points for the Film

Before viewing, the teacher will provide students with the following quote, guiding questions, and discussion points to consider while watching the film.

Social change occurs when people get together and decide that something isn't right, and they do something about it. They march. They write. They sing. They sit. They kneel. They take a bell on tour. - Michele Stingle

- **What are the values of justice?**
- **How is justice symbolized?**
- **What does it mean to have equality?**
- **The little-known story of the Justice Bell is finally being told. Why is it important to learn about the history of the Justice Bell and her role in securing the 19th Amendment?**
- **How does peaceful protest affect public opinion and eventual social change?**
- **How could the 1915 state campaign have been more effective?**
- **Who, if anyone, was left out of this story?**
- **What was happening in the early part of the 20th century regarding racism and inequality?**
- **The struggle for voting rights was connected to the Abolition Movement, so why were African American women left out of the Women's Suffrage Movement?**

Check for Understanding

The teacher will facilitate discourse with the students using the guiding questions and discussion points to steer the conversation and make connections between the Women's Suffrage Movement and what is happening currently in our society.

- **What surprised you about the events depicted in the film?**
- **Do you have a better understanding of the connection between the fight for the 19th Amendment and women's fight for justice today?**
- **What is at least one interesting point that was made in this documentary?**
- **Why is it important to vote?**
- **What are the effects of not voting?**
- **What can you do, as an individual, to promote voting rights and voter registration?**
- **Each state has its own rules regarding the voting process. Should we have a nationwide set of standards and rules?**
- **Why is it important for women to be active participants in the voting and political process?**
- **What needs to happen in order for women to be represented fairly in government and business?**
- **What do women need to do in order to realize positions of influence in institutions that shape public policy?**
- **What was the role of African American women in the suffrage movement?**
- **What/who impeded Black women in securing voting rights?**
- **In what ways can and should we celebrate and honor the diversity of our communities?**

Check for Understanding (continued)

- **How does injustice affect individuals, communities, and institutions? What are the lingering effects?**
- **How do you know when you see or experience inequality?**
- **Who are some of the trailblazers of justice?**
- **Is justice the same for everyone?**
- **What inequalities still exist and persist today?**
- **Whose responsibility is it to ensure justice in our community, state, country, and/or world?**
- **The use of advertisements is a powerful and persuasive tool.**
 - **How did the advertisements in the early 1900s influence attitudes?**
 - **What did the advertisements promote and encourage?**
- **Are protest signs considered advertisements? If so, for what purpose? Are they effective?**
- **How has the media and advertising changed over time? In what ways are we exposed to advertisements in our daily lives? Are they effective?**
- **How did the Women's Suffrage Movement of the early 1900s link to the Civil Rights Movement, which began in the 1950s and lasted through the 1960s?**
- **How can people of color realize social equality in a country that still adheres to systemic racism?**
- **Does having privilege and rights affect one's ability to behave without bias?**

Interactive Charts and Diagrams

Warmup: The teacher will pose the question, “After learning about the Justice Bell and women securing the 19th Amendment, many changes in our society occurred. There are 535 members in the United States Congress (the Senate has 50 members and the House of Representatives has 435 members). How many female members are currently in Congress?”

Students will write their guess on a piece of paper and share with their shoulder partner or whole group. The teacher will offer the correct number of female members in Congress.

Materials Needed

[Department of Labor: Facts Over Time](#)

[Department of Labor: Women in the Labor Force](#)

[National Constitution Center](#)

[Map and list of when the women of each state won the right to vote](#)

[Center for American Women and Politics \(CAWP\)](#)

Chart paper, loose leaf paper, computers, writing utensils.

Activity

The teacher will share the links with the students so they can access the charts and graphs. Some of the sites are interactive and will offer the ability to dig deeper into information. The teacher should vet these sources to customize the lesson and to ensure appropriate content.

Optional: The teacher will place charts in each corner of the classroom, or wherever space allows. The students will be organized into small groups in order to rotate throughout the classroom.

Interactive Charts and Diagrams (continued)

The students will examine each graph or chart and glean information from the visual representations.

- **What stands out?**
- **What is the chart telling us?**

Students will formulate at least two questions based on the information they extracted from reading the charts and graphs.

- **Based on the information you have just learned from the charts, what questions do you still have?**
- **If you could ask a Congress member any question inspired by this information, what would it be?**

Wrap It Up - Check for Understanding

After the students have analyzed the information, the teacher will pose the following in order to make a connection:

“Now that we have reviewed information about the inequality that still exists in the workplace and government, how do you think Katharine Wentworth Ruschenberger would react if she were still alive?”

- **Students will write a letter to Katharine Wentworth Ruschenberger to update her about how much progress, or lack thereof, women have made in the workforce and politics in America, up until this point.**
- **Students may write a letter to their local representative or Member of Congress to demand action on current injustices.**

Links and Activities

The following can be used as teaching points before, during, or after showing the documentary.

Women's Suffrage Websites

Find more information about Katharine Wentworth Ruschenberger, Alice Dunbar-Nelson, Elizabeth McShane, Mary Church Terrell, Louise Hall and other suffragists at the following websites.

[Turning Point Suffragist Memorial](#)

[Alexander Street: Online Biographical Dictionary of the Woman Suffrage Movement in the United States](#)

[Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America](#)

[Black Past](#)

Poem Analysis

[Poets/Women's Suffrage Poems](#)

[Poetry Foundation/Alice Dunbar-Nelson Poetry](#)

Quote Analysis

[BrainyQuote/Suffrage Quotes](#)

Visit a Museum

Many state museums and local historical societies have collections of suffrage artifacts.

[National Women's History Museum](#)

The Power of Advertising

[The National Endowment for the Arts: Creativity and Persistence: Art that Fueled the Fight for Women's Suffrage](#)

[Creativity and Persistence](#) (On this site, scroll down for download link)

Activities

Selling Women's Suffrage

Women's Suffrage Artifacts

The Justice Bell Tour Memorabilia

Write a Letter

- Students may write a letter to Katharine Wentworth Ruschenberger's descendants that relays either their understanding of the Justice Bell's role and the importance of Katharine's efforts.
- Students may write a letter to a younger student relaying the importance of civic responsibility and engagement.

Speaker Series

- Educators may invite local leaders, women in business, authors, and/or activists to present students with a current perspective on social issues regarding justice and gender equality, and discuss how social attitudes have changed over time with regards to their career.

Civic Engagement

- Students may connect with organizations that promote civic engagement.

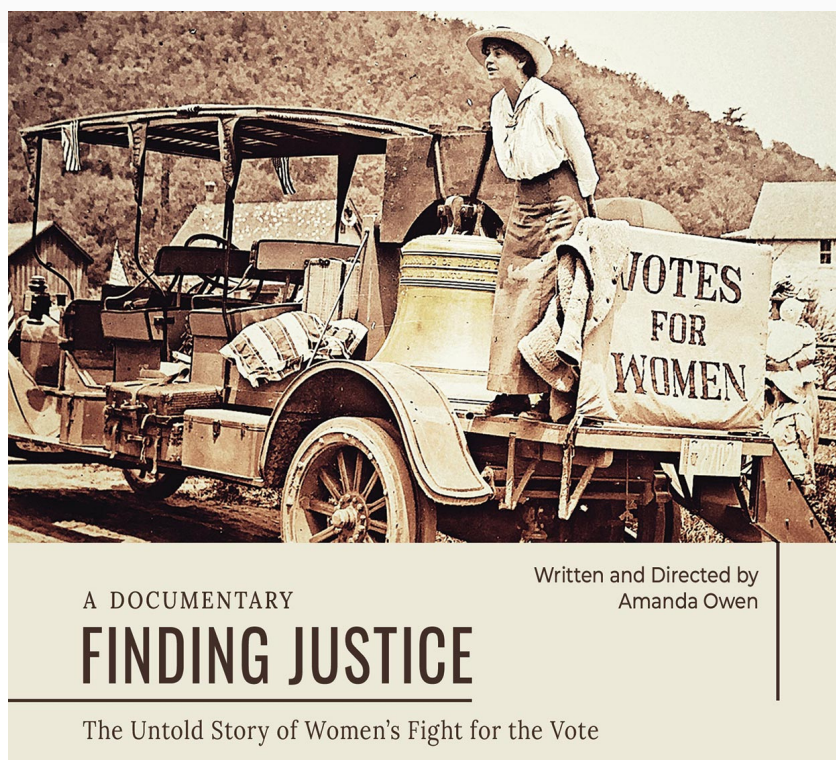
Advertising Analysis

- Students will examine current-day advertisements and make observations about the biases that are apparent within the ad.

Interviews, Writing and Art Projects

- Interview a woman who is currently in a typically male-dominated position or profession.
- Create a biographical profile of a family suffragist, or the first woman in the family to have voted.
- Create a flyer, poster, or picket sign for an event that promotes justice.
- Create a political cartoon that portrays a problem in our society.
- Create a newspaper front page with images and articles related to social justice.
- Write and illustrate a poem.
- Create a board game that demonstrates how justice can be served.
- Create a comic strip, children's book, graphic novel, or scrapbook that depicts the necessity of voting.

Ordering Information



***Finding Justice: The Untold Story of
Women's Fight for the Vote DVD***

\$24.95 | DVD HOME USE

DVD INSTITUTIONAL USE

**Ask us about a license for public viewing
for institutions, groups, and
organizations.**

**A Student Study Guide is available upon
purchase.**

Running Time: 19 Minutes

**Written and Directed
by Amanda Owen**

**Producers: Amanda Owen, Martha
Wheelock, Mingo Stroeber and
Michele Stingle**

**A Justice Bell Foundation and
Wild West Women Production**

**Order from Justice Bell Foundation
and Wild West Women, Inc.**