

1. Title: Suffragettes and the struggle for women's suffrage

2. Knowledge and didactic objectives

- To understand that historical actors have different perspectives due to power and political agency.
- To understand conflicts in the women's movement in the early 2000th century
- To gain knowledge of different perspectives on women's struggle for equal political rights of that time, such as gender, class and sexuality.
- To understand how different perspectives and power relations formed different positions in the struggle for women's suffrage.

3. Timing

80—120 minutes.

4. Grouping of students

1. Individual
2. Small groups
3. Class

5. Historical thinking skills

Power relations

Intersectionality

6. Development or sequence of the activity

1. Students should have brief knowledge of the women's suffrage and

different political ideologies at the time, like conservatism, liberalism and socialism.

2. The teacher tells about the struggle for women's suffrage and especially the British suffragettes.
3. If necessary the teacher tells the students about the concepts of intersectionality and power relations and how these concepts can be applied to understand historical actors.
4. The students work individually with the documents and the working sheet to find different perspectives on the women's suffrage movement, and how different power relations come to expression in the documents.
5. Students compare their findings in small groups. The students should discuss both which perspectives that are displayed in the documents as well as which are missing.
6. The teacher collects the students' findings on the whiteboard or similar and comments them in large group or class. Discussion about what is shown in the documents, and what is not shown.
7. Discuss together different reasons of why some perspectives are shown, and some are not.

7. Assessment techniques and instruments

What to assess:

- If the student explains and analyzes what perspectives different sources show.
- If the student explains different perspectives that are not shown.
- If the student can put different perspectives in a historical context.
- If the student shows understanding for the perspectives of power relations and intersectionality.

When to assess:

- While the students work individual and in small groups.
- During the discussion in class.

How to assess:

- Formative, with the help of feedback during the work.
- Summative, using the students' work sheet.

8. Complementary resources

Description on how to work with the documents

Work sheet

Documents A–G.

9. Annexes

The web resources from the History Lab project about *Women and the change for gender equality in Europe* from the 1700s.

Worksheet: Different perspectives on women's suffrage

1. What kind of perspectives or power relations are shown in the document?

	Gender	Sexuality	Race	Class
Document A	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Document B	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Document C	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Document D	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Document E	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Document F	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2 Use documents A, B, C, and D. In these documents different actors are presented and their opinions and positions are shown.

2a) What kind of perspectives and power relations are shown?

In document A visible perspectives and power relations are:



In document B visible perspectives and power relations are:

In document C visible perspectives and power relations are:

In document D visible perspectives and power relations are:

2b) How can the perspective be explained?

In document A the perspective(s) can be explained by:





In document B the perspective(s) can be explained by:

In document C the perspective(s) can be explained by:

In document D the perspective(s) can be explained by:

2c) What kind of different political ideas do they represent?

	Conservatism	Marxism	Liberalism	Feminism
Document A	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Document B	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>





Document C	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Document D	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Why are different perspectives and power relations shown in different documents? Use the different documents to reason and to give examples.

Handwriting practice area with a large 'H' and 'LAB' watermark. The 'H' is grey and the 'LAB' is blue. The area contains horizontal lines for writing.





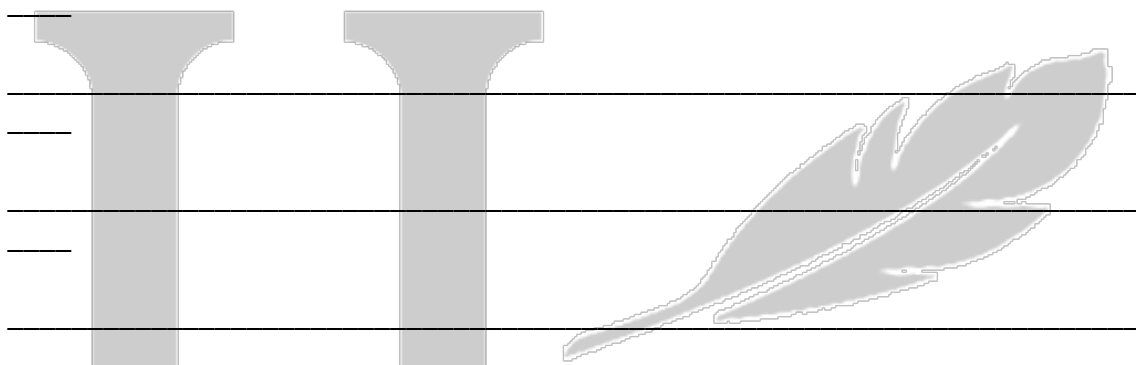
4. Look at the first table (question 1). Some perspectives are not shown in the documents. Reason about why it can be like this.



5. Which gender roles are used in document E? Which fears are announced?







Description on how to work with the documents - To be used by the teacher

This description contains brief information on different perspectives on history needed to work with the documents and the different ideological perspectives on class and gender that is apparent in the documents. It also contains information on how to use the work sheet.

Different perspectives of the female suffrage

During the second part of the 19th century, more and more European countries started to get male suffrage of some kind. At the same time, voices were being raised for equal rights for men and women.

Many of these early voices for equal rights and women's suffrage came from utopian socialists like the French philosopher *Charles Fourier* and the liberal philosopher and politician *John Stuart Mill* and many of the early feminist movements had close ties to liberal parties and politics.

Women's struggle for equal rights resulted in several organizations throughout Europe. One of the most famous was the organization *Women's Social and Political*





Union, commonly known as the *Suffragettes*, formed in the United Kingdom 1903. The goal was to achieve equal voting rights, but they did not struggle for social or economic redistribution, as a larger kind of reformation of the society as a whole.

There were many different voices, and perspectives of how to attain an equal and fair society. Which are the different voices in the documents and who and what do they represent? In what context do they belong and what interests do they represent?

To view history and historical actors through an intersectional lens:

A central way to analyze historical actors is to look at how different historical structures formed and contextualized them. These structural factors can express different forms of **power and power relations**. This means that power stratify society in different ways, giving the actors different opportunities to act. One way to make the power relations visible is to understand history from the concepts of **class, gender, sexuality** and **race**. In an intersectional analysis, you use different relations of power at the same time. Using the different biographies and texts in documents A-F the students can analyze different views on women's suffrage.

Questions to analyze structures:

The following questions can be used to deepen the analysis if there is time.

- What political circumstances could have influenced the document?
- What cultural circumstances could have influenced the document?
- What economic circumstances could have influenced the document?
- What could have influenced the historical actors in the document?
- What ideologies could have influenced the sender behind the document?



Document A

Emmeline Pankhurst and the Suffragettes

Emmeline Pankhurst was one of the British and European most famous suffragettes. She influenced activities and organization of women's movement in many countries. But who was she?

Emmeline Pankhurst was born July 14, 1858 as Emmeline Goulden in Manchester, England. Her family belonged to the middle class with a father running his own manufacturing business. He was part of the Manchester radical elite with liberal ideas. Emmeline was brought to her first suffragette rally 14 years old and left as a convinced suffragette. Both her parents were in favor of women's suffrage and her father helped the founding of the original *Women's Suffrage Committee* in 1865.

In 1879 Emmeline married the lawyer Richard Marsden Pankhurst, a friend of the liberal philosopher *John Stuart Mill* who had been the author of the first British suffrage bill in the 1860's, and was a firm supporter for equal rights for men and women.

Richard died in 1898 and Emmeline had to sell their big house and start to work. This made her realize the conditions and discrimination of poor women in Manchester which strengthened her beliefs that women had to gain suffrage if there was to be any change.

Her engagement in the suffrage movement got strengthened. In 1903 she founded the *Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU)* an organization that came to be the most famous suffragette organization in its time. The organization and its activists came to be known for their militancy. Their protests were often violent and the propaganda harsh. She, and other suffragettes, were arrested on several occasions and Emmeline was sent to prison three times.

The WSPU redirected to London from 1906 where they organized campaigns against the government. Their focus was solely on women's suffrage. Since WSPU supported equal voting rights they also accepted property qualifications, which excluded many men and women from the working class. This put them in opposition with the Labour Party. The WPSU became more an organization for the middle-class women.

At the breakout of World War one, Emmeline called off the suffrage campaign and called for support for the British government, becoming, increasingly nationalist. They encouraged men to go to war and women to keep the country going. Emmeline put the same amount of energy on nationalist support for the war effort, organizing rallies,





held speeches and tried to make the government make women replace men in labour so that they could fight. In the WSPU many members got upset by the sudden turn. This led to that the organization split up in several new organizations.

After the war she ran for office as a Conservative candidate, but her health failed her before she could get elected. Pankhurst died June 14 1928, just a few weeks before British women obtained full and equal voting rights

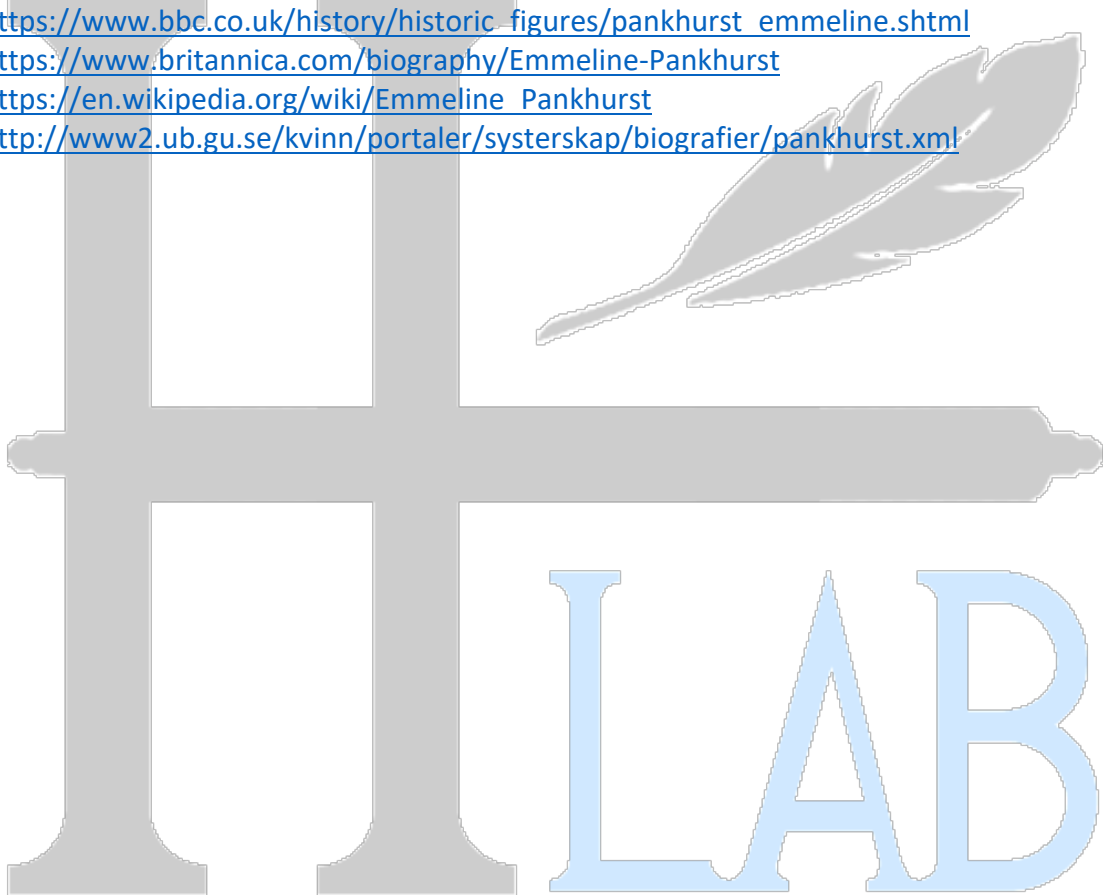
Sources:

https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/pankhurst_emmeline.shtml

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Emmeline-Pankhurst>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emmeline_Pankhurst

<http://www2.ub.gu.se/kvinn/portaler/systerskap/biografier/pankhurst.xml>





Document B

Rosa Luxemburg?

A) Who was Rosa Luxemburg?

Rosa Luxemburg was one of ideological pioneers of the German social democracy in the early 20th century. She was a supporter of women's suffrage but in the same time critical to many of the feminist movements throughout Europe, since they put women's interest over the issue of class. Luxemburg connected the struggle for women's suffrage with the conditions for the working class women. In a speech from 1912 titled "*Women's Suffrage and Class Struggle*" she addressed several issues regarding the struggle for women's suffrage and the early feminist movement. Luxemburg is considered to be a revolutionary but was not a supporter of the Bolshevik revolution in Russia, instead she believed in mass strike as a weapon in the class struggle. Rosa Luxemburg is one example of how female political actors could at the same time agree with a common goal, voting rights, but also be critical of the suffragette movement. Mainly because of the lack of different perspectives and groups.

Read more about Rosa Luxemburg: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Rosa-Luxemburg>

B) Excerpt from Luxemburg's speech "Women's Suffrage and Class Struggle":

"Why are there no organizations for working women in Germany? Why do we hear so little about the working women's movement?" With these questions, Emma Ihrer, one of the founders of the proletarian women's movement of Germany, introduced her 1898 essay, *Working Women in the Class Struggle*.

[...]

Women's suffrage is the goal. But the mass movement to bring it about is not a job for women alone, but is a common class concern for women and men of the proletariat.

[...]

The proletarian women's claim to equal political rights is anchored in firm economic ground. Today, millions of proletarian women create capitalist profit like men in factories, workshops, on farms, in home industry, offices, stores.

[...]

The current mass struggle for women's political rights is only an expression and a part of the proletariat's general struggle for liberation. In this lies its strength and its future.





Because of the female proletariat, general, equal, direct suffrage for women would immensely advance and intensify the proletarian class struggle. This is why bourgeois society abhors and fears women's suffrage. And this is why we want and will achieve it. Fighting for women's suffrage, we will also hasten the coming of the hour when the present society falls in ruins under the hammer strokes of the revolutionary proletariat.

You can read the full text here:

<https://www.marxists.org/archive/luxemburg/1912/05/12.htm>





Document C:

Mary Augusta Ward

Mary Augusta Ward (1851—1920) was a British novelist mainly working in education for the poor. She was raised in a roman-catholic family. Her father was an Oxford professor of history. She was educated at different boarding schools and started a career as a novelist. In her texts, both religious themes and Victorian values has an important role. Mary was one of the founders of the Women's National Anti-Suffrage League, an organization that opposed voting rights for women in parliamentary elections.

A. Excerpt from her novel *Delia Blanchflower* (1915)

The vote? What is it actually going to mean, in the struggle for life and happiness that lies before every modern community? How many other social methods and forces have already emerged, and must yet emerge, beside it? The men know it. They are already oppressed with its impotence for the betterment of life. And meanwhile, the women, a section of women – have seized with the old faith, on the confident cries of sixty years ago! – with the same disillusionment waiting in the path!

B) Biography of Mary Augusta Ward

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Mrs-Humphry-Ward>

C) Clip from BBC about Mary Augusta Ward

<https://www.bbc.com/news/av/uk-england-oxfordshire-42977081>



Document D

Women's National Anti-Suffrage League

The organization called *Women's National Anti-Suffrage League* was formed in 1908 in London. The organizations opposed women's voting rights in parliamentary elections. The organization was formed as a counterpart to the suffragist movement. The organization attracted many women from nobility, upper class, and religious ranks, but benefited from widespread gender conservatism across all social classes.

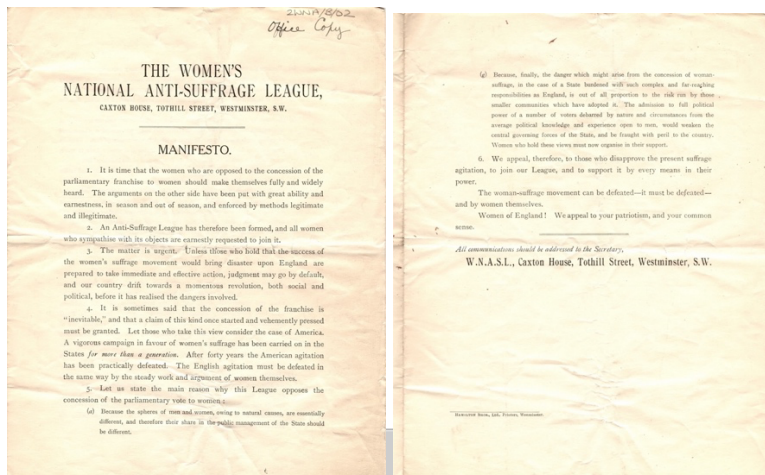
Excerpt from the Women's National Anti-Suffrage League manifesto: Main argument against women's suffrage.

Because the spheres of men and women, owing to natural causes, are essentially different, and therefore their share in the public management of the State should be different.

Because the complex modern State depends for its very existence on naval and military power, diplomacy, finance, and the great mining, constructive, shipping and transport industries, in none of which can women take any practical part. Yet it is upon these matters, and the vast interests involved in them, that the work of Parliament largely turns.

Because by the concession of the local government vote and the admission of women to County and Borough Councils, the nation has opened a wide sphere of public work and influence to women, which is within their powers. To make proper use of it, however, will tax all the energies that women have to spare, apart from the care of the home and the development of the individual life.

Because, finally, the danger which might arise from the concession of woman-suffrage, in the case of a State burdened with such complex and far-reaching responsibilities as England, is out of all proportion to the risk run by those smaller communities which have adopted it. The admission to full political power of a number of voters debarred by nature and circumstances from the average political knowledge and experience open to men, would weaken the central governing forces of the State, and be fraught with peril to the country.



The Womens National Anti-Suffrage League in full: <https://flic.kr/p/ZTXowL>

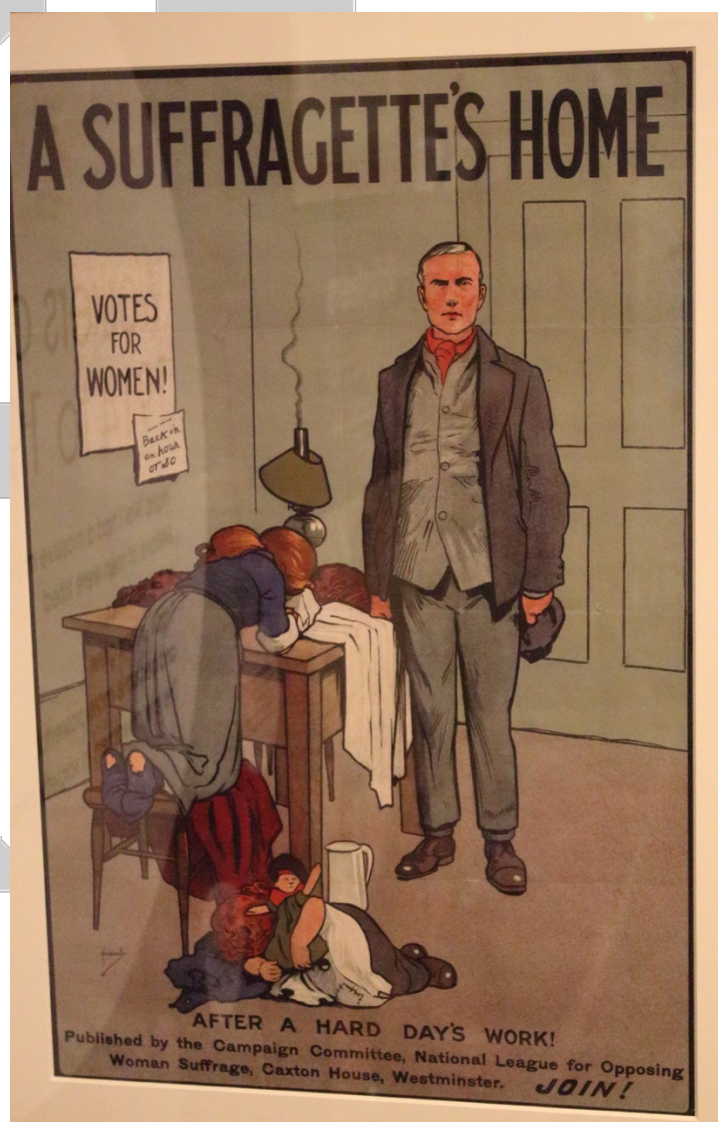


Document E

Anti suffragette propaganda

During the period of the suffragette movement and the struggle for women's suffrage a variety of propaganda against women's suffrage was produced. A number of postcards, cartoons and poster was produced. This document contains a few examples of what they could look like and what messages they wanted to send.

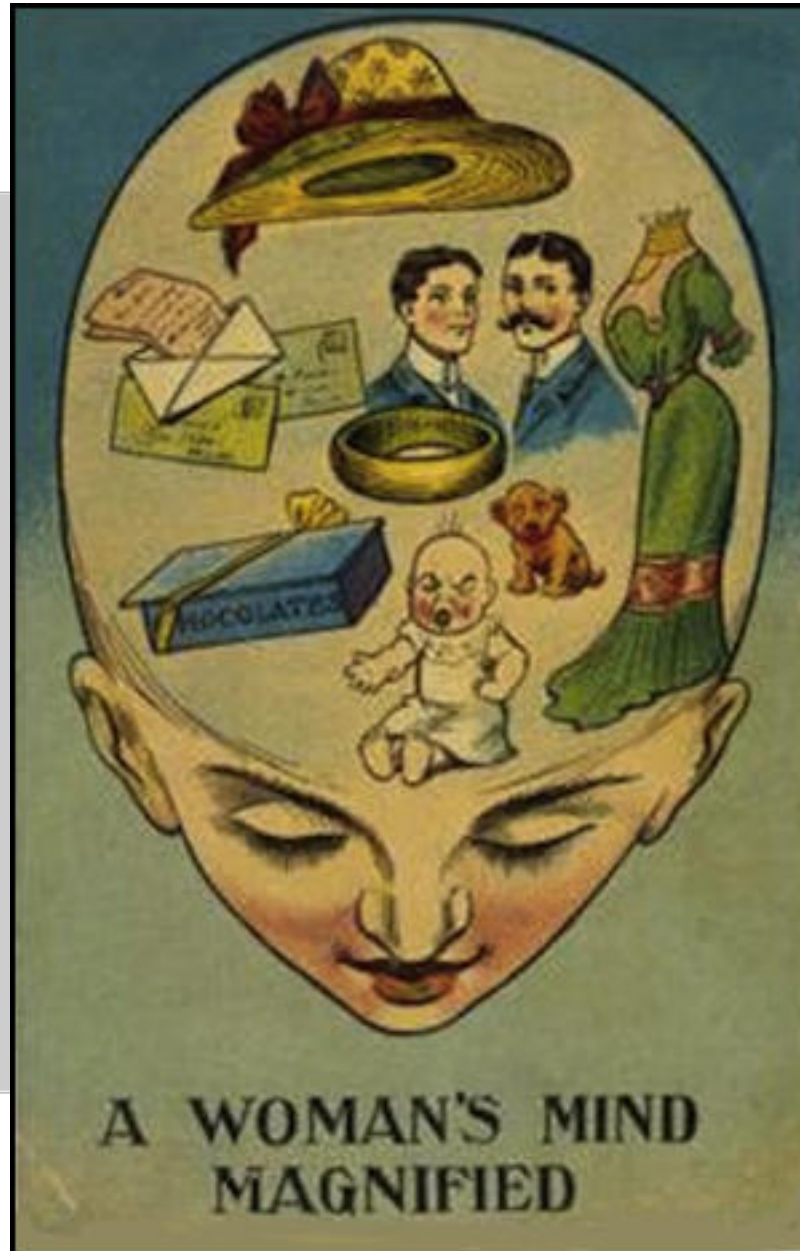
A) "A Suffragette's home"



A poster made by John Hassal, ca 1910, for the *National league for opposing Women Suffrage*.

More information on the *National league for opposing Women Suffrage*:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_League_for_Opposing_Woman_Suffrage

B) "A woman's mind magnified"



Anti-suffrage Society postcard from Great Britain, ca 1906.

<https://exhibits.library.jhu.edu/exhibits/show/hopkins19thamendment/item/1608>



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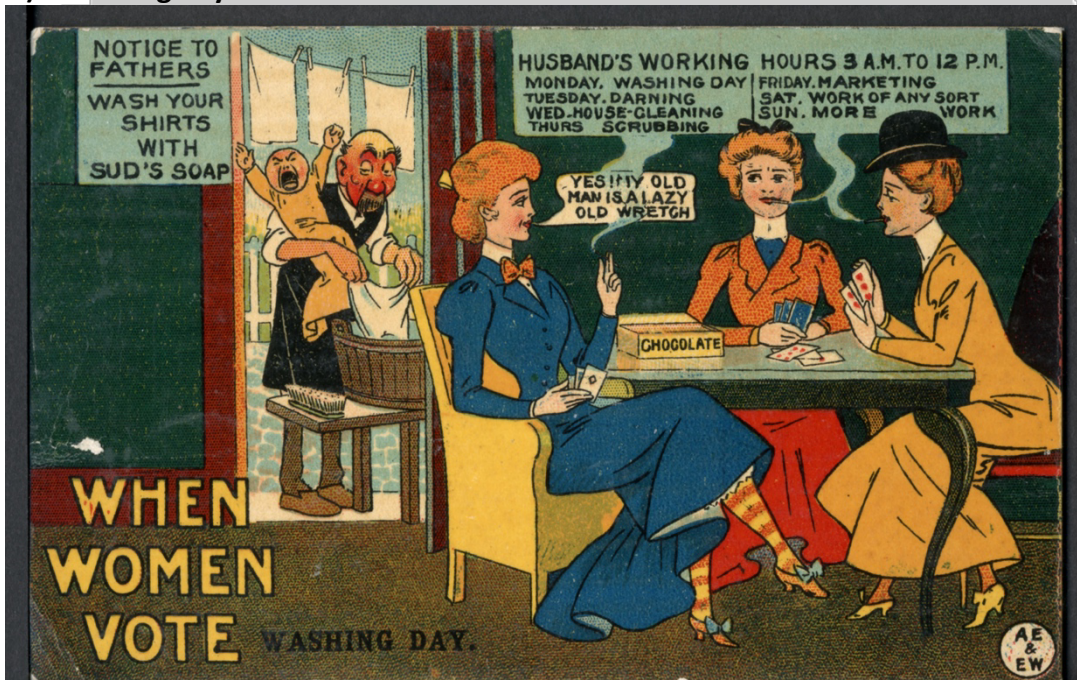
C) Suffragettes Who Have Never Been Kissed



Anti-suffragette postcard from Great Britain, ca 1907.

<https://journals.openedition.org/cve/8555>

D) "Washing day"



Palczewski Suffrage Postcard Archive

Postcard from London, Great Britain, 1906.



https://scholarworks.uni.edu/suffrage_images/581/

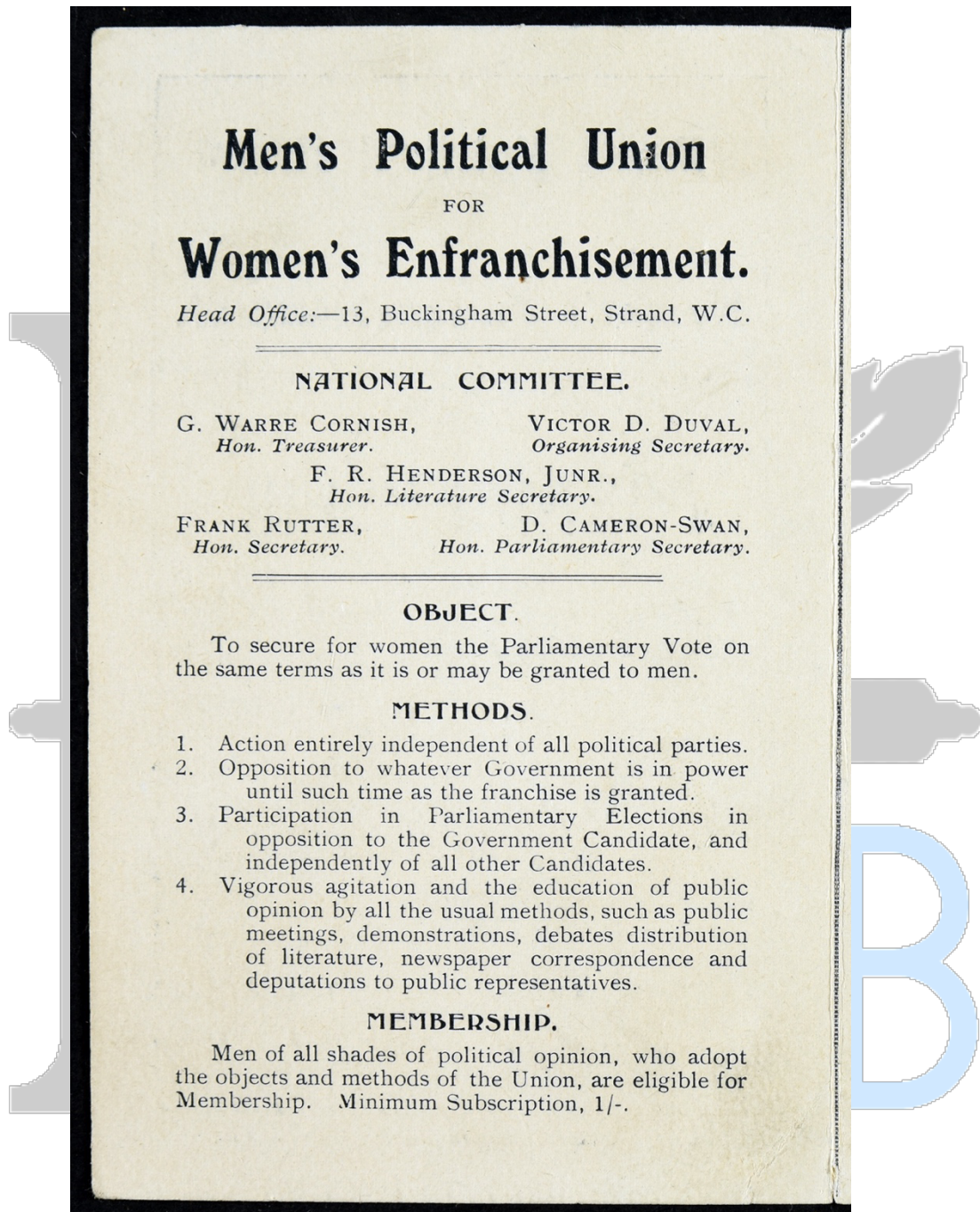
Document F:

Male suffragettes

The movement for women's suffrage wasn't just a female movement. Different men took part in the struggle for equal voting rights, both in and outside the parliament. Men's suffrage is considered to be a small step on the way to universal suffrage. Male supporters were sometimes called "*suffragettes in trousers*". Read the sources on different male perspectives on women's suffrage.



A) Men's Political Union for Women's Enfranchisement



<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/suffragettes-in-trousers/source-one-leaflet/>

Manifesto for *Men's Political Union for Women's Enfranchisement*. Founded of the liberal Victor Duval in 1910. Duval had stated that "*I am ashamed of the men who call*



themselves Liberal. I am ashamed of them because they have insulted women – they have dragged the flag of Liberalism in the gutter and have trampled on it”.

More about Victor Duval and the organization:

<https://www.suffrageresources.org.uk/resource/3248/victor-duval>

B) George Lansbury: The suffragette candidate

One of the most famous male suffragettes was George Lansbury, a socialist and a member of the British parliament between 1910–1940. Lansbury was a lifelong supporter of equal rights for women and became one of the best-known male supporters of women’s suffrage. He was a close ally to the *Women’s Social and Political Union* (The Suffragettes) and became a close friend to *Emmeline Pankhurst*.

More about George Lansbury: <https://spartacus-educational.com/PLansbury.htm>



Excerpt from the paper the Suffragette:

To the men and women of Bow and Bromley, we say in the words of the W.S.P.U. election address:—“We believe that they will join hands with Mr. Lansbury in making





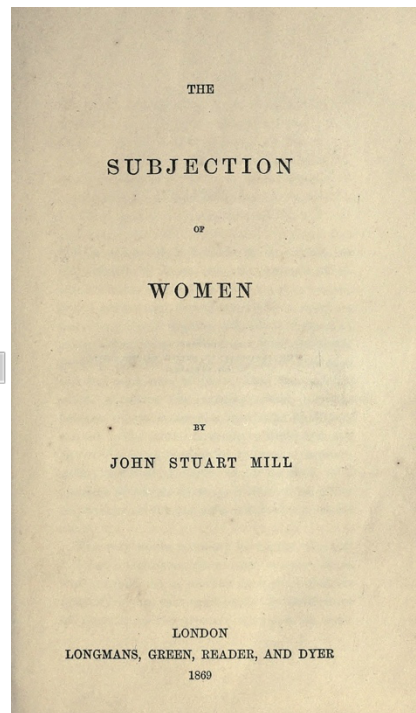
this a women's election. Each man will remember what his mother and his wife has done for him, and he will pay back the debt by voting for the Women's Candidate this time. By voting for Mr. Lansbury every man will be helping to make the world a happier and safer place for his daughters.

Let all the men and women of Bow and Bromley band themselves together against the Party politicians, and send Mr. Lansbury, the champion of the working men and working women, back to Parliament to fight the women's battle against unscrupulous and dishonest politicians."

GOOD LUCK TO LANSBURY—THE SUFFRAGE CANDIDATE



C) John Stuart Mill and the Subjection of Women



In 1869 the political philosopher John Stuart Mill wrote the essay “Subjection of Women”. In this essay Mill argues for political equality between men and women.

Excerpt from Subjection of women:

“The object of this Essay is to explain as clearly as I am able grounds of an opinion which I have held from the very earliest period when I had formed any opinions at all on social political matters, and which, instead of being weakened or modified, has been constantly growing stronger by the progress reflection and the experience of life. That the principle which regulates the existing social relations between the two sexes -- the legal subordination of one sex to the other -- is wrong in itself, and now one of the chief hindrances to human improvement; and that it ought to be replaced by a principle of perfect equality, admitting no power or privilege on the one side, nor disability on the other”

More about John Stuart Mill and his political views:

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/John-Stuart-Mill/>



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