

# Women's Rights as Citizens

## **Course Information**

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This is a 200 level course and has no prerequisites. It is open to anyone, but especially those interested in a WGST minor, as it is focused on women.

## **Course Description**

Women have not always been seen as citizens in the United States. This is shown by the rights women have lacked. This course demonstrates the significant progress made in women's rights, and thus, citizenship. This course also highlights the continued need for more women's rights and lack of equality in the US today.

# Course Schedule

## Unit 1: Republican Motherhood

**Big Question:** How did Republican Motherhood change the rights of women? How did those rights affect their citizenship?

**Argument of Unit:** Republican Motherhood was a large leap for women. It granted them many more rights, which in essence made them more of a citizen.

**Key Words:**

- Republican Motherhood
- Moral
- Non Compos Mentis
- Thornback
- Feme Covert
- Feme Sole

**Source 1:** [Revolutionary Transformation of Women's Role in Society](#)

**Explanation:** In this video, the development and importance of the Republican Mother is explained in historical context. More specifically, it discusses the attitudes and views on women, rights possessed by women (both married and single), the new roles and responsibilities of a mother, how Republican Motherhood came about, how this was significant, and why it was allowed. She goes into detail as to how this was a large leap for women's rights as citizens during the colonial time period and its significance today. This is important to this unit, as it depicts how Republican Motherhood changed the rights for women in a drastic way. This was done by giving examples of women's rights before, after, and during the colonial era. The advancements made for women's rights during this time were significant in the growth of women's citizenship. More rights = more citizenship. However, women still were far from true citizenship, but had made drastic progress.

**Source 2:** [American Women's History Journey: Republican Motherhood](#)

**Explanation:** Throughout this podcast, Republican Motherhood is explained, along with its advancement. She discusses specific cases both before and during the time period, and how that affected republican motherhood. The examples given in this podcast are important to this unit, as they demonstrate the changes in rights women received. Which, ultimately, affected their abilities as citizens.

**Source 3:** [Morals, Manners, and the Republican Mother](#)

**Explanation:** This journal discuss the moral obligations, appropriate "manners", the accumulated responsibilities, and new found rights of Republican Motherhood. It also demonstrates the politics, views, and ideas from the time period. This journal is exceptional at bringing the mindframe of that era to life, which helps to create an especially accurate depiction overall. The examples and arguments in this journal add to this unit in a rather large

way. It helps to further understand the gains made by women of the time and their significance. Through this the reader can see how such advancements were key in the evolution to today. The journal also demonstrates the citizenship of women before and during this era. Clear progress can be seen through these observations.

**Source 4:** [Republican Motherhood Video](#)

**Explanation:** In this video, the development, advancement, and future created by republican motherhood are explained. This is a quick video that summarizes the the unit, while reinforcing some key points about republican motherhood and what it meant to America. This is important to this course as it helps to center the students on the main point of unit and how it relates to the big questions. It demonstrates the rights gained by women and what that lead to. Citizenship is equality to rights, and while women did not have this, it was a large step in the right direction. Women went from not being citizens to being lower teared citizens.

## Unit 2: Women's Suffrage Movement

**Big Question:** How does voting pertain to citizenship? How did women's citizenship progress?

**Argument of Unit:** To be a citizen one has to have the right to vote. A say in legislation is citizenship. Women became constitutionally recognized citizens by gaining the right to vote.

**Key Words:**

- Suffrage
- National Women's Party
- National American Women Suffrage Association
- Amendment
- Representation

**Source 1:** [Suffrage and Representation](#)

**Explanation:** This chapter talks about the importance of representation and suffrage within the United States and what that has meant throughout the nation's history. There are five key topics in this chapter: the concepts of representation in the revolutionary era, representation in the states, representation in the nation, suffrage, and the exclusion of women, slaves, and free blacks. All of these key topics are discussed in reference to many different time periods in America's history. It also discusses the importance of these things and how they are relevant today. This is key to this unit, as it demonstrates how representation and voting are key to citizenship, which helps to further the understanding of citizenship of women by the achievement of the 19th amendment.

**Source 2:** [Iron Jawed Angels](#)

**Explanation:** This movie is a recollection of the story of Alice Paul during the Women's Suffrage Movement. It shows how she was kicked out of the National American Women Suffrage Association and how she created the National Women's Party. Also, it depicts

President Wilson, Alice Paul's incarceration, National Women's Party's protests, and the relationship between National American Women Suffrage Association and the National Women's Party. This film is key to this unit, as it demonstrates the challenges faced by Alice Paul and other women suffragettes during this time period. It also helps to emphasize the importance of the right to vote, as it pertains to citizenship. The film also helps to show the progress made by gaining the right to vote.

**Source 3:** [Gender and Citizenship after the Nineteenth Amendment](#)

**Explanation:** This journal demonstrated the reinvention of citizenship for women by achieving the right to vote. It explains the role of citizenship in American politics and how suffrage was important to that. Men and women, previously, had a large political distinction, but after the ratification of the 19th amendment it drastically changed. It also accurately depicts the hierarchy within the movement and the complicated relationship between the large organizations during this time period. This is especially key to this unit, as it specifically talks about suffrage and its direct relation to citizenship in the United States. The addition of this information is key to helping the student understand the argument of this unit.

**Source 4:** [National Women's History Museum](#)

**Explanation:** The National Women's History Museum is a museum specifically dedicated to all things women in history. On their tour they have a section on the Women's Suffrage Movement. There one can learn all about the movement, the women within it, and its significance to today using artifacts from the movement. This is key to this unit, as it helps to show the reality of this movement, as well as add another perspective or two to this topic. The level of citizenship possessed by women prior to this movement are especially apparent and will help to emphasize the progress made by women in regards to their citizenship.

## Unit 3: Women's Liberation Movement

**Big Question:** How does equality pertain to citizenship? Was any progress made for women in citizenship? Is there more progress to be made?

**Argument of Unit:** Citizenship is about having equal rights amongst all. Women progressed a lot in their citizenship in this movement; however, more progress is still needed, as full equality has not yet been reached.

**Key Words:**

- Liberation
- Birth Control
- Feminism
- Militant
- Equality

**Source 1:** [The Pill and the Women's Liberation Movement](#)

**Explanation:** This article discusses the increase in the availability of contraceptives, the

causes and changes of the movement, reasons for equality, and continuing issues today. The article rather quickly sums up some of the key points of the movement and ongoing issues today, with a focus on birth control. This is relevant to this course, as it allows the student to better understand the need for equality and its relation to citizenship. Although, it is better explains the continued need for equality today.

**Source 2:** [She's Beautiful When She's Angry](#)

**Explanation:** In this film you are given first hand accounts of the Women's Liberation Movement of the 1960s. Many of the women were spearheads of the movement, whereas some were simply a part of it. In the film, they discuss the fragmentation of the movement and the smaller movements from that, race and sexuality within the movement, leadership, birth control, equal rights, large protests, and the overall importance of it all. The women discuss their personal feelings and experiences during the time period and help to fully capture the scope and spirit of the movement itself. This film is extremely important to this unit. It allows for a better understanding of all the rights demanded by this movement, along with some of the ongoing issues today.

**Source 3:** [Friedan, \*The Feminine Mystique\* \(excerpt\) \(1963\)](#)

**Explanation:** This excerpt from *The Feminine Mystique* by Betty Friedan is about the need for equality. It shows common causes of distress for housewives based on the lack of rights. This book was a key part of the Women's Liberation Movement and helped housewives realize they weren't alone in their feelings. This is key to this unit, as it furthers the subject of equality and how that relates to citizenship. It can also be used as an example of how progress is still necessary today, by the commonalities between the excerpt and women today.

**Source 4:** [Women's Liberation Movement Documentary](#)

**Explanation:** In this documentary you hear from women who were leaders within the Women's Liberation Movement of the 1960s and 1970s, both within and outside of the United States. Throughout the film, they discuss, the world before and after the movement, feminism, lesbianism, abortion, equal rights, protests, key events, and common themes amongst the movement(s). It is also discussed whether or not the movement was 100% effective, and if there is still a need for it today. This is especially relevant to the course, as it is several first hand accounts of the larger, overall movement and the smaller movements within it. The women also discuss the necessity of the movement and how it made such a drastic difference. This film is important to this class, as it allows for a better understanding of citizenship through equality and end with several points on progress needed today.