



**TEXAS WOMAN'S**  
UNIVERSITY

Suffrage in Texas Expanded (SITE)  
Teaching Tool

# The United States Voting Laws

- The laws of the United States changed in 1920 and 1964 respectively regarding access to voting, allowing women to vote and not be denied on the basis of sex, race, poll tax, literacy tax or language minority (“19th Amendment”; “Voting Rights Act”).
- Ongoing extensions to expiring acts continued in 1970, 1982, 1992, and 2006 for language barriers and discrimination upon expiration (“Voting Rights Act”).
- The Voting Right Act of 1975 provided additional protections for those who spoke a “language minority” to ensure their equal access voting rights (“Voting Rights Act”).

# Jovita Idar (1885-1946)

- Idar was a writer and organizer for education, welfare, civil rights and fiscal justice. She was an active socialist and supporter of the Mexican revolution. She petitioned for women to step into the public sphere and move outside of the home as president of La Liga Femenil Mexicanista and journalist for *La Cronica*. She spent the last 20 years of her life as a teacher.
- Her writing tied labor rights to gender rights, urging for the equality of men and women's labor at the ballot box. Idar specifically used her citizenship, gender and background to argue for the need for rights for Tejanos. Jovita also fought against lynching's, children's education and emphasized the need for women to be educated and work outside the home.
- Her papers are housed at Texas Woman's University.



# Christia Adair (1893-1989)

- Christia Adair was a grade school teacher and librarian who attended segregated Texas schools and was working class.
- Adair was both a church woman and clubwoman who believed in lifelong learning and Progressive values. She was the NAACP administrator for twelve years and prior to that was a member for the previous twenty-five, her legal work helped create equal access to public for minorities including both veterans and students. She turned to activism after being turned away from voting, despite being registered.
- In addition to her civil rights work, she served as a Precinct 25 Judge. Her papers are held at the Houston Public Library.

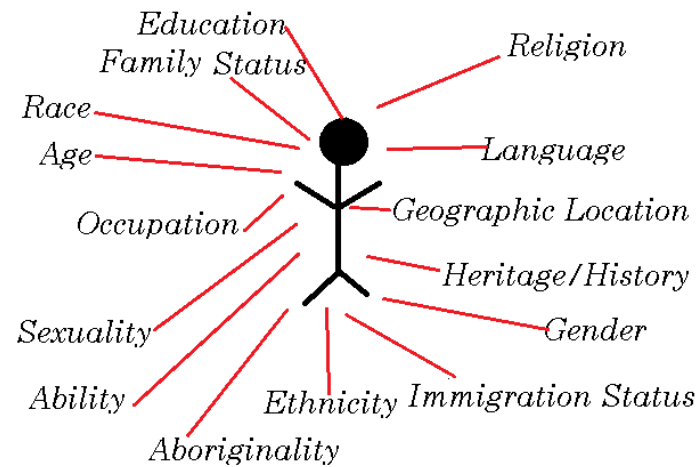


# LibGuide Project Goal

- Developing a digital collection and webliography of resources that chronicles a more inclusive vision of the struggle for women's suffrage in Texas of which the LibGuide is the result.
- Source documents include articles, books, interviews, documentaries, visual resources, cultural heritage resources, etc., which document Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) suffrage groups and movements, not currently represented in the historical narrative of women's suffrage.
- One of the challenges in documenting a more inclusive understanding of the pathways to suffrage for women in Texas is helping others to understand that suffrage granted to women in Texas in 1919 did not, in fact, include all women.

# Intersectionality and Intersectional Organizing

- Intersectionality is an analytic tool acknowledging that experiences of privilege and oppression encompass more than gender, including other vectors of identity and domination; all vectors understood as being interlocking, cumulative, and interwoven (Scott et al.)





# What activist work entails

- Listen to find the issues and information
- Agitation on the issues and lack of power
- Education on how to get power
- Preparation of objections/concerns
- Assess the activist and their commitment
- Move into action

**THERE IS NO SUCH THING  
AS A SINGLE-ISSUE  
STRUGGLE BECAUSE  
WE DO NOT LIVE  
SINGLE-ISSUE LIVES.**

**– AUDRE LORDE**



# Elements of intersectional activism

- **“Intersectional analyses encourage resistance and proactive leadership both locally and globally” (Cayleff 464)**

**Seeking both activists and allies** — Participation in other liberation campaigns can overcome emotions of isolation and impotence and take strength from numbers

**Thinking globally and visualizing interlocking concerns**— Social media resistance, environmental justice, and spiritually active work which visualizes the exploitative practices and movements worldwide e.g. military involvement and environmental concerns such as global warming

**Healing** — Reminds us why one must strive for social justice adding to the multiplicity of voice and empowerment to all for one and one for all, reminding us solidarity is forever

**Recovering one's voice and body**— Reclaiming the capacity to speak up and be radically honest



# Habits of mind and behavior

- Embracing concept of interrelatedness (Keating), not only commonalities but real differences of identity and experience between us (Keating)
- Creating new pathways to dialogue, being willing to change our beliefs or behavior, listening with “raw openness” (Keating)
- Centering people as the experts of their lives, asserting the rights of oppressed to organize for themselves
- Rejecting “inspirational” models that place oppressed on a pedestal
- Seeing love as a verb and a source of empowerment and liberation (hooks)

# Video Discussion Questions

- What did the film say or fail to say about BIPOC women?
- Why do the actors speak in these women's own words through historical re-enactments?
- How does suffrage and regional voting rights activism tie into other social justice issues?



# Homework

- Choose one BIPOC activist that is not covered extensively within the film and explore the LibGuide for homework by composing a one page response based on your findings.
- *Task:* Select one artifact from the LibGuide (for example, newspaper article, video or biographical link) and consider what it means to utilize an intersectional approach to research on women's suffrage.

# Learning Goals & Outcomes

- Exploring and reflecting on a digital research collection of resources that chronicles a more inclusive vision of the struggle for women's suffrage and considering how past lessons can be applied to today for civic engagement
- Students will identify oppressive structures and systems related to a social justice issue both via film screening and research in order to come to a greater understanding of how activist work is multilayered

# Works Cited

- "19th Amendment." Joint Resolution of Congress proposing a constitutional amendment extending the right of suffrage to women, approved June 4, 1919.; Ratified Amendments, 1795-1992; General Records of the United States Government; Record Group 11; National Archives.
- Cayleff, Susan E. "Activism for the Future." *Women in Culture: An Intersectional Anthology for Gender and Women's Studies*. 2nd ed. Edited by Scott, et al. John Wiley & Sons, 2017, 463-466.
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