

SECOND DRAFT

Parts/ Points of View

- [F] LEADER (L) Peggy and Nancy
- [M] ANGRY MAN (AM) Michael and Rich
- [M] MALE SUPPORTER (MS) Gregory and Howard
- [F/M] MORAL CENTER (MS) Jen and Ashleigh
- [F] STRIDENT SUFFRAGIST (SS) Paula and Mimi
- [F] UNITY SUFFRAGIST (US) Cindy and Ashleigh
- [M] Sheriff (SH) Pete and Rich

ITALICS Indicate text from the Seneca Falls (NY) Declaration 1848

[ENTER SINGING SUFFRAGE SONG]

LEADER (L): Please draw near. There has been a document in wide circulation for some years now that is still of the greatest importance to our democracy. This was a brave declaration of the rights of free Americans. I should like to read it to you, please give sober consideration to what follows. [SHE READS]

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one portion of the family of man to assume among the people of the earth a position different from that which they have hitherto occupied, but one to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes that impel them to such a course.

Strident Suffragist (SS): What in the world does that mean?

LEADER (L): It means that we women want the same rights as men!

[SHE READS]

*We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and **women** are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of...*

ANGRY MAN (AM): (INTERRUPTING) Shame. Shame on you for taking the Lord's name in vain when you use it in your blasphemous "Declaration"; and in the public streets! The Lord God Almighty has created a proper sphere for each sex. Yours is in the home; not on public street corners! Go home and tend to your children and your house.

LEADER (L): Would you bar half of the United States from using their public streets? Why not? *You have already usurped the prerogative of Jehovah himself, claiming it as a matter your right to assign woman a sphere of action, when that belongs to **her** conscience and to her God.*

MALE SUPPORTER (MS): Come now Gentlemen, Who among us can safely swear before the Almighty that they have not known at least one woman who was clearly smarter than most of the men you know? And yet, *we withhold from her rights that are given to the most ignorant and degraded man -- both native and foreigners.*

MORAL CENTER (MS): But sir, many men become degraded as a result of the oft times grinding daily realities of business and politics. Women must be sheltered from such activity. This is very important, you know. The Mother is the Moral Center of the Family. And the Family is the Moral Center of the Nation! What will befall the nation should Woman become as degraded as man? I do fear for our Society.

STRIDENT SUFFRAGIST (SS): You need not fear, madam. When Woman takes her rightful place in both business and politics, she shall bring new light to dark places; we do most of the cleaning as it stands now. We shall clean there too. We shall let sunshine in on dark deeds, and fresh air into smoke-filled rooms!

(AM) I thank God to know that I will not live long enough to see women in government. These are serious discussions and decisions. They are not to be made by moody or hysterical women, swayed by emotion. Besides, most women have little or no education.

(L) That is *because men have denied us a thorough education, all colleges being closed to us.*

(SS) And yet we are about to give the vote to two millions of ignorant former slave men. All the while the best educated women are turned away or arrested at America's polling places! I know that their ignorance is through no fault of their own, but still; men who cannot read the name of their candidate will vote and I will not. This is a betrayal of our cause!

UNITY SUFFRAGIST: (US) While this is a great blow, I believe we must stay united to achieve our goals. We must hold out the olive branch to all women and men who would see us as equals before the law.

(SS) I shall stand with Elizabeth Stanton and Susan Anthony, and invite you all to join their new organization dedicated to achieving equality in our lifetimes: the National Woman Suffrage Association! We shall not take this grievous insult demurely!

(US) Most of us started in an Abolition Society and we are also disappointed in this result. But, we have achieved one half of our lofty goals: four millions that were Slaves are now Free! In this we must rejoice and take heart that our rights are next. Or, do you believe yourself so innately superior to the African men whose rights you would now disdain? If you truly see all of God's races as your equals then you must rejoice in their freedom and continue to work together for our freedom.

(L) Four millions are Free that just one year ago were held in bondage; owned like so much cattle. More than half a million American men of all colors sleep beneath the soil to make it so. We must never forget the dreadful cost; and we must work toward a day of equality for all

Americans. But we cannot wait forever because *women do feel themselves aggrieved, oppressed, and fraudulently deprived of their most sacred rights, and we insist that they have immediate admission to all the rights and privileges which belong to them as citizens of the United States.*

(SS) Now, in view of this entire disfranchisement of one-half the people of this country, their social and religious degradation, in view of the unjust laws above mentioned, and because women do feel themselves aggrieved, oppressed, and fraudulently deprived of their most sacred rights, we insist that they have immediate admission to all the rights and privileges which belong to them as citizens of the United States.

(L) Please join us in this worthy effort Freedom and Liberty for all Americans!

SHERIFF: Mrs. Pettegrew, Iv'e talked to you about this mam and I have warned you about rabble rousing in the public thoroughfares. Gentlemen raise your right hands. You are all members of a posse commatatus and will asset me in clearing this street. Move on Ladies! Last Chance! [Sheriff leads posse]

[EXIT CHANTING AS THEY ARE ARRESTED; VOTES, RIGHTS, EQUALITY!]