

SUJET DM – TYPE MP

Women won the vote with the 19th Amendment, but hurdles remain

[...] Article I of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. constitution [...] guaranteed that "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex." Passed by Congress on June 4, 1919 and made into law in August 1920, the amendment gave women political power over 130 years after the nation's founding.

It was the culmination of nearly a century of agitation for women's suffrage. Beginning in the 1840s, women organized in a concerted effort to gain the vote. Their goal seemed almost impossible: [...] They were discouraged from appearing or speaking in public. Their lives were controlled by those of their husbands, brothers, and fathers, and most women could not sign contracts, work outside the home, inherit or own property, or receive an education.

[...] It was a difficult fight. Some suffragists voted illegally and served time in prison. Others chained themselves to the gates of the White House and refused to work once they got to jail. Still others used acts of nonviolent and even violent civil disobedience.

Their first successes were in the West, where some male legislators hoped giving women the right to vote might attract more women to territories like Wyoming, Colorado, and Utah. However, these early victories did not consist of men handing the vote to women; rather, they were long fought.

Though local suffrage slowly opened to women in many states, suffragists continued their fight for national voting rights through the 19th century. Mocked, jailed, beaten, and force-fed, they defied the era's stereotypes of female propriety.

During the early 20th century, suffragists focused their efforts on a constitutional amendment. Using tactics like massive parades and a years-long picket at the White House, they slowly bent public opinion toward voting rights for women. A suffrage amendment was first introduced in 1878; it took 41 years for Congress to send it to the states for ratification.

The 19th Amendment opened up political influence to women, but not all shared in suffrage for some time. Black women were often barred from polls through much of the 20th century; Native American and Asian American women faced citizenship bars for many years.

Nor did the amendment guarantee equal rights; a proposed amendment guaranteeing women equal protection under the Constitution has yet to become law, and women still face significant societal disparities compared to men.

Though women are outnumbered in public office three to one and the U.S. has yet to elect a woman president, women vote in greater numbers than men.

Erin Blakemore, *National Geographic*, 23 May 2019

1. Why has guaranteeing women's equal rights been such a long fight? Answer the question in your own words. (80 words, +/- 10%)
2. "Deeds, Not Words" (Emmeline Pankhurst). Clarify and discuss. Illustrate your answer with relevant examples. (180 words, +/- 10%)

THÈME

J'avais pris une femme de ménage. Elle était entrée dans ma vie comme ça, parce que j'avais tiré sur une petite languette, à la pharmacie. C'était la dernière des six qu'elle avait prédécoupées au bas de son annonce, scotchée sur la vitrine. Une languette de papier verticale, avec les huit chiffres superposés de son numéro de téléphone. Toutes les languettes qui m'eussent intéressé, sauf la sienne, sa petite dernière, donc, avaient été arrachées. Et je m'étais dit qu'il était grand temps que je m'y arrête, devant cette vitrine.

L'annonce, de type généraliste, concernait des heures de ménage et de baby-sitting. Je ne l'aurais pas prise pour baby-sitter, celle-là, bien sûr. Non que ce soit un métier, baby-sitter, mais tout de même. [...] [C]'est à cause de Constance, tout ça. Sans elle, je n'aurais jamais tiré sur cette languette.

Christian OSTER, *Une femme de ménage*, 2001.