US History

**Women’s Suffrage DBQ**

**Prompt:**

**Analyze the arguments in favor of, and in opposition to women’s suffrage. Group the documents as you summarize the various arguments in favor of, and in opposition to, women’s suffrage. How was the women’s suffrage movement a product of the Progressive Movement, as well as inspire the Progressive Movement? (it was both a cause and an effect.)**

**You must use outside information to provide adequate historical context for this issue. You must include all the documents in your essay.**

**Your essay must employ impeccable grammar and spelling to be considered for extra credit. It must also adhere to standard conventions (Typed, Double-Spaced, 1-inch margins, size 12 Times New Roman Font)**

**DUE: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Document 1:**

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| ***Source: Excerpt from Molly Elliot Seawell, an anti-suffragist from Virginia who published the anti-suffrage book, The Ladies’ Battle, in 1911***  It has often been pointed out that women could not, with justice, ask to legislate upon matters of war and peace, as no woman can do military duty; but this point may be extended much further. No woman can have any practical knowledge of shipping and navigation, of the work of trainmen on railways, of mining, or of many other subjects of the highest importance. Their legislation, therefore, would not probably be intelligent, and the laws they devised for the betterment of sailors, trainmen, miners, etc., might be highly objectionable to the very persons they sought to benefit. If obedience should be refused to these laws, who is to enforce them? The men? Is it likely they will? And if the effort should be made, what stupendous disorders would occur! The entire execution of the law would be in the hands of men, backed up by an irresponsible electorate which could not lift a finger to apprehend or punish a criminal. And if all the dangers and difficulties of executing the law lay upon men, what right have women to make the law? (pp. 31-32)  But that woman suffrage tends to divorce, is plain to all who know anything of men and women. Political differences in families, between brothers, for example, who vote on differing sides, do not promote harmony. How much more inharmonious must be political differences between a husband and wife, each of whom has a vote which may be used as a weapon against the other? What is likely to be the state of that family, when the husband votes one ticket, and the wife votes another? (p. 113). |

**Document 2:**

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| ***Source: Article from an anti-suffrage newspaper, The Woman’s Protest Against Woman’s Suffrage, published in New York by the National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage, in October 1912.***    It is the Suffragists whose ideal is the kitchenless house fed from a mechanical institutional centre. The main proportion of Suffragist writing and speaking is on this pots and pans pattern, simply a denunciation of housekeeping as degrading. It is the Suffragist theory that the woman's sphere in life should be the same as the man's that has condemned her to share with him what is so hideous a misfit in the miscalled education of our industrial classes, whose girls are all taught as if destined for literary rather than manual occupations, as if the National funds were collected to compel the training of a surplus of cheap short-hand typists for the office, and to compel a lack of expert housewives in the home. It is the Suffragists who are destroying the wholesome personal element in female life, by their doctrine of degradation in the washing of pots and pans for husband, father and son, while they demand the vote, and opportunity to serve the State, the husbands, fathers, and sons of other people, with what? What service? An abstract service of legislation and administration, they reply: in fact all that barren "social service" which can be performed without the sweating of the brow, the soiling of a finger! Is it not clear how this hideous feminism is sapping our vitality as a nation? Is it too much to say that it is at the root of half the unhealth and disease of which to-day's unrest is symptomatic?  There are many wealthy women who have espoused Suffragism, and who, to promote it, do daily a very dangerous thing in preaching to working women that housework is degrading. And dangerous as is that direct denunciation of housework universal among Suffragists, of which the Woman's Labor League president's pots and pans speech is typical, there is another way inculcating contempt for it, which is even more dangerous because more insidious and less direct. An example of the insidious way in which the mischief is spread is shown in a letter to the Times of December 21 last, advocating the suffrage for women. It was written by a lady from the standpoint of the leisured and cultured classes, as she expressly said. "We more fortunate women," she wrote, plead for the franchise, not for our own sake, but for the sake of the working women (whose "round of toil" she stigmatized as "drudgery"), because "it shall bring them at once something at least of the respect and consideration which form the basis upon which we more fortunate women build our lives." |

**Document 3:** Tennessee Representative John A. Moon

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| ***Source:*** *Representative John A. Moon of Tennessee, speech in House of Representatives, January 10, 1918, on the issue of the woman suffrage amendment.*  It has been insisted that the real-purpose of this amendment is the basis for political legislation that will ultimately deprive the Southern States of representation in part in Congress and their force in national affairs ....  In those Southern States where the colored population outnumbers the white to double the number of ignorant voters by giving the colored woman the right to vote would produce a condition that would be absolutely intolerable. We owe something to the wishes and the sentiments of the people of our sister States struggling to maintain law and order and white supremacy....  We are engaged now in a great foreign war. It is not the proper time to change the whole electoral system... Patriotism, in my judgment, forbids the injection of this issue into national politics at this time. |

**Document 4:**

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| *Two Suffrage Cartoons*  http://womenshistory.about.com/library/graphics/suffrage_cartoon1.jpghttp://www.tennessee.gov/tsla/exhibits/suffrage/images/33902_thumb.jpg |

**Document 5:**

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| **Source:** *NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OPPOSED TO WOMAN SUFFRAGE, 35 West 39th St., New York City.*  **Why We Oppose Votes for Women**   * Because the basis of government is force—its stability rests upon its physical power to enforce its laws; therefore it is inexpedient to give the vote to women. Immunity from service in executing the law would make most women irresponsible voters. * Because the suffrage is not a question of right or of justice, but of policy and expediency; and if there is no question of right or of justice, there is no case for woman suffrage. * BECAUSE IT IS THE DEMAND OF A MINORITY OF WOMEN, AND THE MAJORITY OF WOMEN PROTEST AGAINST IT. * Because it means simply doubling the vote, and especially the undesirable and corrupt vote of our large cities. * Because the great advance of women in the last century—moral, intellectual and economic—has been made without the vote; which goes to prove that it is not needed for their further advancement along the same lines. * Because women now stand outside of politics, and therefore are free to appeal to any party in matters of education, charity and reform. * Because the ballot has not proved a cure-all for existing evils with men, and we find no reason to assume that it would be more effectual with women. * Because the woman suffrage movement is a backward step in the progress of civilization, in that it seeks to efface natural differentiation of function, and to produce identity, instead of division of labor. * Because in Colorado after a test of seventeen years the results show no gain in public and political morals over male suffrage States, and the necessary increase in the cost of elections which is already a huge burden upon the taxpayer, is unjustified. * Because our present duties fill up the whole measure of our time and ability, and are such as none but ourselves can perform. Our appreciation of their importance requires us to protest against all efforts to infringe upon our rights by imposing upon us those obligations which cannot be separated from suffrage, but which, as we think, cannot be performed by us without the sacrifice of the highest interest of our families and of society. * Because it is our fathers, brothers, husbands and sons who represent us at the ballot-box. Our fathers and our brothers love us; our husbands are our choice, and one with us; our sons are what WE MAKE THEM. WE are content that they represent US in the corn-field, on the battle-field, and at the ballot-box, and we THEM in the school-room, at the fireside, and at the cradle, believing our representation even at the ballot-box to be thus more full and impartial than it would be were the views of the few who wish suffrage adopted, contrary to the judgment of the many. * We do, therefore, respectfully protest against the proposed Amendment to establish “woman suffrage” in our State. WE believe that political equality will deprive us of special privileges hitherto accorded to us by law. * Our association has been formed for the purpose of conducting a purely educational campaign. If you are in sympathy with this aim and believe as we do in the righteousness of our cause, will you not send your name to us and pass our appeal on to someone else? |

**Document 6:**

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| *Mrs. Gilbert E. Jones, A Women Assails Woman Suffrage (1910)*  Taxation without representation is tyranny, but we must be very careful if define what we mean by the phrase.... We have a "tyranny" here, we are told. Because some women pay taxes, yet do not vote. If this is true without any qualification, it must be true not only of women, but of everybody. ...This League cannot find that the ballot will help the wage-earning woman. Women must reason to organization, association, and trade unions, and then they can command and maintain a standard wage. Supply and demand will do the rest.  Women are not well trained and often very deficient and unskilled in most of their occupations. Married women should be kept out of industry. As scientists, physicians, and sociologists all state that as women enter into competitive industrial life with men, just so does the death rate of little children increase and the birth rate decrease.  "Anti's" ask for more discrimination and better selection of industrial occupations. The average woman has half of the physical strength of the average man, and the price she must pay when in competition with him is too great for her ultimate health and her hope of motherhood.  The question of woman suffrage should be summed up in this way: Has granting the ballot to women in the two Suffrage states where they have had it for forty years brought about any great reforms or great results? No.  Have the slums been done away with? Indeed no. Are the streets better cleaned in the states where women vote? No, they are quite as bad as in New York City.  Have women purified politics? No.  Have women voted voluntarily? Some do; but thousands are carried to the polls... otherwise they would not vote.  Are there laws on the statute books that would give women equal pay for equal work? No, and never will be. Are women treated with more respect in the four suffrage states than elsewhere? Not at all - certainly not in Utah. |

**Document 7:**

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***Document 8:***

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| *To The Men of New Jersey*  *Song: She's Good Enough To Be Your Baby's Mother And She's Good Enough to Vote With You* | |
| No man is greater than his mother  No man is half so good  No man is better than the wife he loves  Her love will guide him What „ere beguile him  She’s good enough to love you and adore you  She’s good enough to bear your troubles for you  And if your tears were falling today  Nobody else would kiss them away  She’s good enough to warm your heart with kisses  When your lonesome and blue  She’s good enough to be your baby’s mother  And she’s good enough to vote with you  Man plugs the world in war and sadness  She must protest in vain  Let’s hope and pray someday we’ll hear her pain  Stop all your madness, I bring you gladness | She’s good enough to love you and adore you  She’s good enough to bear your troubles for you  And if your tears were falling today  Nobody else would kiss them away  She’s good enough to warm your heart with kisses  When your lonesome and blue  She’s good enough to be your baby’s mother  And she’s good enough to vote with you  She’s good enough to give you old Abe Lincoln  She good enough to give you Brandon Sherman Robert E. Lee and Washington too  She was so true she gave them to you  She’s good enough to give you  Teddy Roosevelt Thomas A. Edison too.  She’s good enough to give you Woodrow Wilson  And she’s good enough to vote with you. |

**Document 9:**

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| *Two Pro-Suffrage Cartoons*  Suffrage cartoons: cleaning up politicshttp://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/Whelpyou.jpg |

**Document 10:**

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| ***Senator Robert Owen Supports Women (1910)***  Women compose one-half of the human race. Working women receive a smaller wage for equal work than men do, and that the smaller wage and harder conditions imposed on the woman worker are due to the lack of the ballot.  Equal pay for equal work is the first great reason justifying this change of governmental policy.  Women are the equals of men in intelligence, and no man has the hardihood to assert the contrary.  Women are better informed about house government, and she can learn state government with as much facility as he can learn how to instruct children, properly feed and clothe the household, care for the sick or make a house beautiful.  First, when Colorado granted Suffrage, it did give women better wages for equal work; second, it led immediately to a number of laws the women wanted, and the first laws they demanded were laws for the protection of the children of the state, the better care of the insane, the deaf, the dumb, the blind, improving prisons of the state; improving the hospital services of the state; improving the sanitary laws affecting the health of the homes of the state. Above all, there resulted laws for improving the school system.  Several important results followed. Both political parties were induced to put up cleaner, better men, for the women would not stand a notoriously corrupt or unclean candidate. Every evil prophecy against granting the suffrage has failed.  First, it has not made women mannish; they still love their homes and children just the same as ever, and are better able to protect themselves and their children because of the ballot. Second, They have not become swaggerers and insolent on the streets. They still teach good manners to men. [Suffrage] has increased the understanding of the community at large of the problems of good government.  It has not absolutely regenerated society, but it has improved *it.*  The great doctrine of the American Republic that "all governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed" justifies the plea of one-half of the people, the women, to exercise the suffrage. The doctrine of the American Revolutionary War that taxation without representation is unendurable justifies women in exercising the suffrage. |

**Document 11:**

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| *Source: National American Women Suffrage Association, Headquarters 505 Fifth Ave, New York*  **VOTES FOR WOMEN! THE WOMAN’S REASON. BECAUSE**  **BECAUSE** women must obey the laws just as men do, they should vote equally with men.  **BECAUSE** women pay taxes just as men do, thus supporting the government, they should vote equally with men.  **BECAUSE** women suffer from bad government just as men do, they should vote equally with men.  **BECAUSE** mothers want to make their children’s surroundings better, they should vote equally with men.  **BECAUSE** over 5,000,000 women in the United States are wage workers and their health and that of our future citizens are often endangered by evil working conditions that can only be remedied by legislation, they should vote equally with men.  **BECAUSE** women of leisure who attempt to serve the public welfare should be able to support their advice by their votes, they should vote equally with men.  **BECAUSE** busy housemothers and professional women cannot give such public service, and can only serve the state by the same means used by the busy man—namely, casting a ballot, they should vote equally with men.  **BECAUSE** women need to be trained to a higher sense of social and civic responsibility, and such sense develops by use, they should vote equally with men.  **BECAUSE** women are consumers, and consumers need fuller representation in politics, they should vote equality with men.  **BECAUSE** women are citizens of a government **of** the people, **by** the people and **for** the people, and **women are people,** they should vote equally with men. |

**Document 12:**

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Document 13:

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