



SUFFRAGETTE OR SUFFRAGIST?

A Molly Brown House Museum

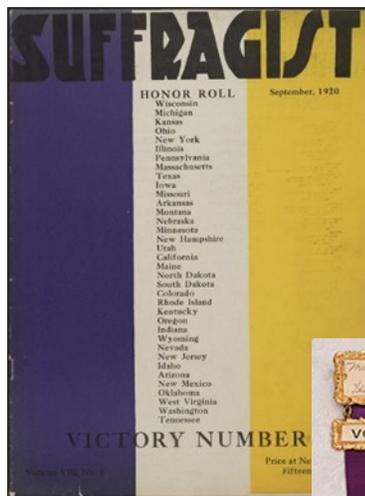
History @ Home Activity

Suffragette or Suffragist, what is the difference? Both refer to women who were fighting to gain the right to vote. Suffragettes were from England, whereas, Suffragist was the term preferred by American women, like Margaret Brown.

In 1906, a reporter writing in a newspaper in England coined the term *suffragette* to belittle the women demanding the vote (when you add “ette” onto a word it makes that thing little, such as kitchenette or lauderette.) These women embraced the new name, even adopting it for use as the name of their own newspaper.

In the United States, the term suffragette was seen as an offensive term and the women used *suffragist*. Anti-suffragists used suffragette as a slur in their fight to deny women in America the right to vote.

There was also a difference in the colors used by the two movements:



England's Suffrage Colors:
 Purple for loyalty and dignity
 White for purity
 Green for hope

U.S. Suffrage Colors:
 Purple for dignity
 White for purity
 Gold for enlightenment

Margaret was a suffragist. When Margaret “Molly” Brown was born, most women did not work outside the home, engage in politics, or travel alone. They did not wear pants, play sports, and they certainly did not vote. Margaret own story as a suffragist reflects the changing role of women 100 years ago and her story shows us how you too will soon be able to vote!

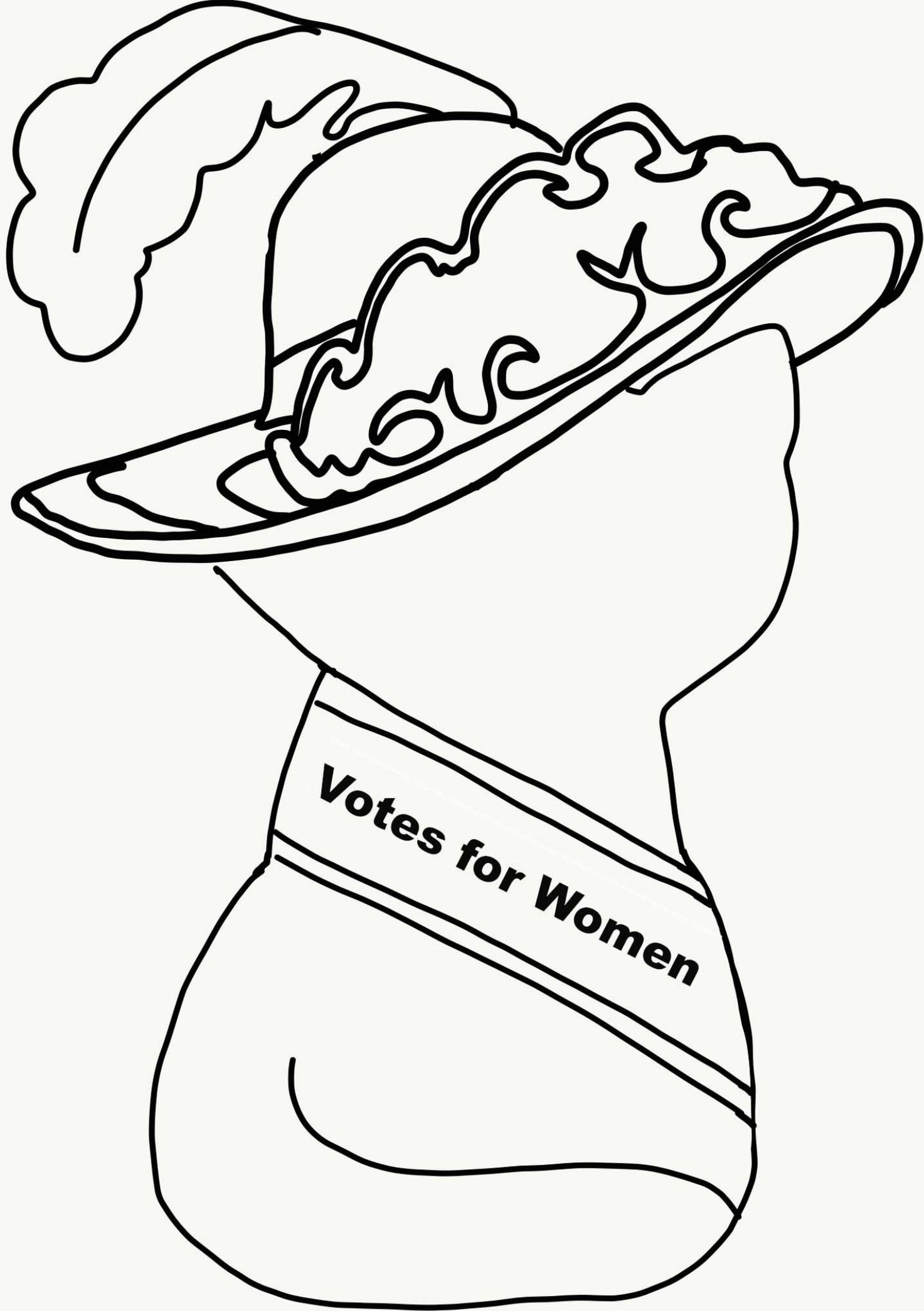
In Margaret Brown’s time 100 years ago, women started their own social clubs and book groups as a way to be a part of their community. These clubs were how women could be a part of the women’s right to vote movement. Margaret was a member of the National American Women’s Suffrage Association and the Denver Women’s Press Club. After moving to Denver in 1894, Margaret joined the Denver Women’s Club, which was led by suffragist Sarah Platt Decker. The club also built parks, playgrounds, and started summer camps to make Denver a better place for kids.

Colorado was the first state to give women the vote (in 1869 that the *Territory* of Wyoming enfranchised women and the Utah *territory* followed in 1870.) On Tuesday November 7, 1893, the men of Colorado went to the polls and voted in favor of suffrage. As a result, Colorado was, technically, the first state to grant women the right to vote as a referendum put to the voters, because Wyoming and Utah were territories when they gave women the vote.

We believe Margaret was involved in the Colorado suffrage movement, but we know for sure that she helped support and fight for women’s suffrage on the national level. It would take 27 years after Colorado women gained suffrage for women across the nation to also earn that right.

In June of 1919, the 19th Amendment granting women the right to vote finally passed and was sent on to each state for something called ratification. Ratification means each state had to agree that women across the US could vote. On August 26, 1920, the needed three-fourths of the states ratified the Nineteenth Amendment granting women full voting rights.

Now it’s your turn! Color one of the images on the following pages. Share your finished picture on Facebook or email to education@mollybrown.org and you could be featured in a special online exhibit!



Votes for Women

