



Women's Suffrage through Popular Music

Materials related to "Women's Suffrage in Popular Music Culture" in the collections of the Center for Popular Music, Middle Tennessee State University.

Compiled by: Miranda Barnett, Dec. 2022

What does suffrage mean?

Suffrage is the right to vote in elections. Suffrage in the United States was not always available to everyone, and there are still issues going on currently regarding the right and access to vote. The Seneca Falls Convention in 1848 is widely stated as being the beginning of women trying to gain suffrage, but there is evidence as far back as the 1790s of women beginning the fight to gain the right to vote. It was not until the passing of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920 that women gained the right to vote, and it was a long and hard fought battle to get the amendment passed.

Why does women's suffrage research matter?

Women's suffrage is important because for a large part of American history, women did not have the ability to vote in any elections. The argument made was that women were unfit for politics, or that they would become corrupted by participating in it. The battle to get the amendment passed was long and hard, and many suffragists were victims of violence because of their support for the amendment. Without the amendment being passed, women would still be unable to vote and equally participate in American democracy.

What can this women's suffrage research guide do for me?

This guide will provide a few ways and resources to help you understand the ways that suffrage can frame your historical research. The types of primary and secondary sources included in this guide are sheet music, song broadsides, photographs, sound recordings, and secondary source books.

Additional research material is included at the end of this research guide and includes: outside databases, online repositories, and online exhibits with information about women's suffrage in the United States to help broaden your understanding and research.

“How do I search for these primary source materials?”

Online Searching:

Most of these primary source materials are searchable online through the Center’s website. Sound recordings can be searched in the Center’s Reading Room through the in-house database.

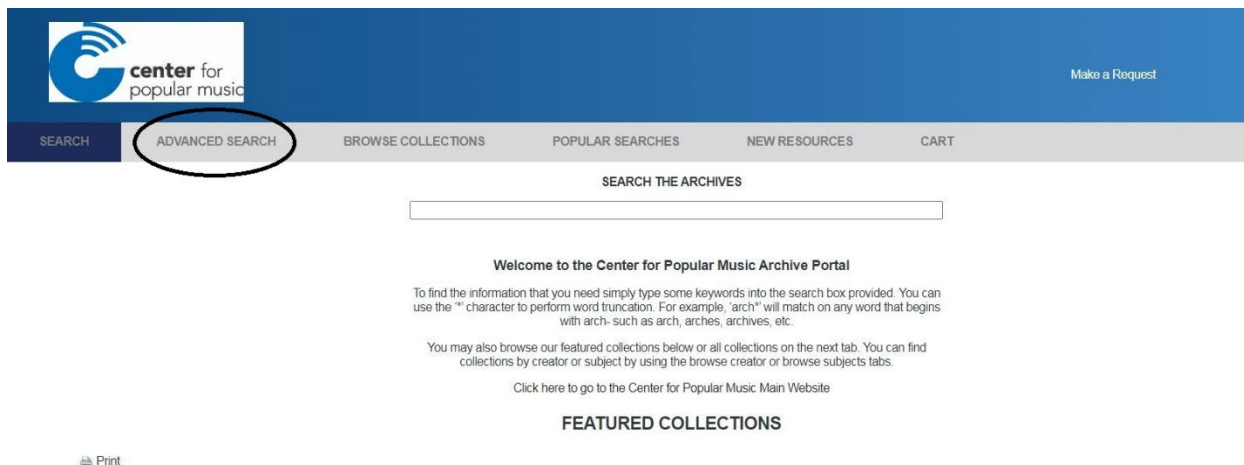
To search for these materials online, visit the [CPM's website](#). The catalog will search for materials in the following collection categories: **Manuscript Collections, Rare Books, and Scores; Song Broad­sides; Posters, Playbills, and Programs; Trade Catalogs; Photographs; and Periodicals: Secondary Collection.**

To search the materials in the Center’s archive, click on “**Archive Collection Search**”.



You can search for specific titles, songs, or artists in **Basic Search** or **Advanced Search**. You can examine secondary source materials before searching for primary sources if you do not have any specific names in mind. Terms such as “Women Voting” and “Suffragists” have not been used in the cataloging process, so they will not yield significant results. Searching using terms such as “suffrage” will yield lists of items that may or may not correlate to the topic.

To limit your search to a particular field or type of material, click on the [Advanced Search link](#). You can limit your search by title, dates, song lyrics, song titles, collections, creators, authors, performers, and many other different specifications.



At the Center (in-house searching only):

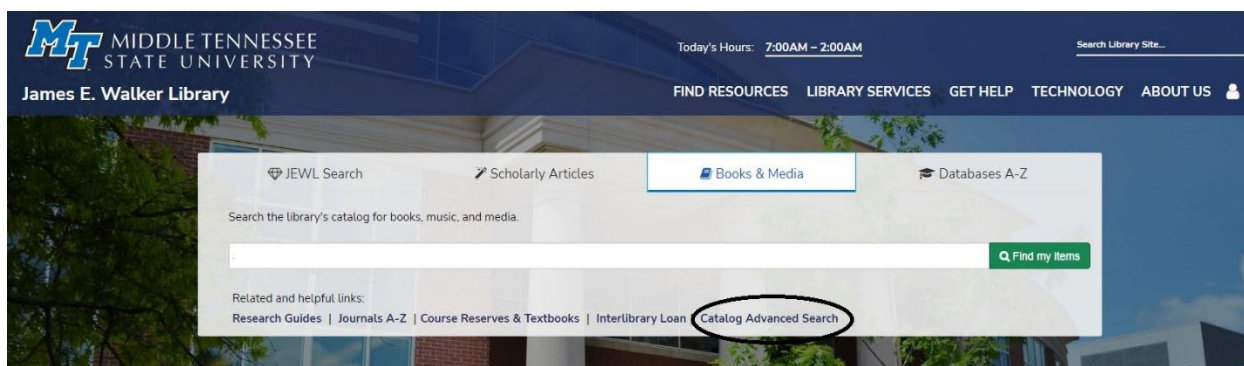
To search for Sound Recordings, please visit the Center and use our in-house database or email **Rachel Morris** Rachel.Morris@mtsu.edu or **Martin Fisher** Martin.Fisher@mtsu.edu.

Some photographic and manuscript materials also require staff assistance to locate. Please contact **Rachel Morris** with questions.

“What secondary source materials do you have?”

To search for Secondary Source Materials available in the Center’s Reading Room– go to MTSU’s [Walker Library catalog](#) and use search terms like “Women’s Suffrage,” “Suffrage,” “Suffrage Songs,” “Women’s Rights,” and “Voting Rights”.

If you are only interested in materials held at the CPM, click on “Catalog Advanced Search” at the bottom of the Search box.



Then select “Center for Popular Music (Mass Comm.)” under the “Collection” menu.

Advanced Search

Search for: [] [All Fields] [Match: ALL Terms]

[Add Search Field]

[Add Search Group]

[Find] [Clear]

Limit To

Call Number: [A - General Works] [B - Philosophy, Psycholog] [C - Historical Sciences] [D - World History] [E - United States History] [F - General American Hist] [G - Geography, Anthropol] [H - Social Science] [J - Political Science] [K - Law]

Language: [Afrikaans] [Akkadian] [Albanian] [Algonquian] [Amharic] [Ancient Egyptian] [Ancient Greek] [Arabic] [Aramaic] [Armenian]

Format: [Audio] [Blu-ray Disc] [Book] [Cassette] [CD] [Conference Proceeding] [Database] [DVD] [eBook] [Electronic]

Collection: [Center for Popular Music] [Consulium Collection] [Gore Research Center] [LP Collection] [Main Collection] [Media Collection] [Music Collection] [Periodicals] [Popular Reading] [Reference]

Illustrated: [] [Year of Publication]

Women’s Suffrage through Popular Music Bibliography

Primary Sources

Iconographic

Suffragette Parade on Michigan Ave., Chicago. Center for Popular Music Iconographic Collection. | Call Number: GEN-CD-00051.

Commercial Sound Recording

Knight, Elizabeth with Sol. Julty. *Songs of the Suffragettes*. New York: Folkways, 1958. | Call Number: FH5281 Folkways

Broadsides

Foster, Stephen Collins. *There’s a Queer Time Coming, Boys*. Philadelphia, PA: J. H. Johnson, 1858-1859 & 1863-1876. | Call Number: 001438-BROAD

McArdle, J. F. *When the Pigs Begin to Fly*. Philadelphia, PA: A. W. Auner, 1875-1891 | Call Number: 000705-BROAD

The Husband's Commandments. NY: E. Nanson & Co., 1884-1886. | Call Number: 001836-BROAD

Secondary Sources:

Books

Barnet, Richard D. *The Story Behind the Song: 150 Songs that Chronicle the 20th Century*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2004. | Call Number: ML 2811 .B37 2004

Crew, Danny O. *Suffragist Sheet Music: An Illustrated Catalogue of Published Music Associated With the Women's Rights and Suffrage Movement in America, 1795-1921, With Complete Lyrics*. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2002. | Call Number: ML128.W7 C74 2002

Meacham, Jon and Tim McGraw. *Songs of America: Patriotism, Protest, and the Music that Made a Nation*. New York: Random House, 2019. | Call Number: ML 3917.U6 M43 2019

Sullivan, James. *Which Side Are You On? : 20th Century American History in 100 Protest Songs*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2019. | Call Number: ML3917.U6 S85 2019

Wolff, Francie. *Give the Ballot to the Mothers: Songs of the Suffragists: A History in Song*. Springfield, Mo.: Denlinger's Publishers, Ltd., 1998. | Call Number: M1664.W8 W65 1998

More Archival Resources

Other Databases and Online Repositories:

[Black Women's Suffrage](#)

[California Commission on the Status of Women and Girls](#)

[Internet Archive](#)

[Library of Congress](#)

[Museum of the American Revolution](#)

[National Archives](#)

[National Park Service](#)

[National Women's Hall of Fame](#)

[National Women's History Museum](#)

[Oxford Music Online](#)

[Rightfully Hers](#)

[Smithsonian](#)

[Speaking While Female](#)

[Suffragist Memorial](#)

[Tennessee Encyclopedia](#)

[Tennessee State Museum](#)

[The Birthplace of Country Music Bristol Museum](#)

[US House of Representatives](#)

[US Senate](#)