

Citizens at Last: Texas Women Fight for the Vote

Citizens at Last is a documentary film that tells the story of the grit, persistence, and tactical smarts of the Texas women who organized, demonstrated, and won the vote for women. **Citizens at Last** follows the early days of organizing, explores the strategic role Texas suffragists played in the national movement, and exposes the pro-Jim Crow policies of the anti-suffragists who stood in their way. Like all the former Confederate states, Texas saw women's suffrage as a threat to white male supremacy. Because of Texans such as Minnie Fisher Cunningham, Annette Finnigan, Marianna Folsom, Jovita Idar, and Maude Sampson, Texas became the first state in the South and the ninth in the nation to ratify the Nineteenth Amendment. But it was a segregated victory. While white suffragists celebrated in major American capitols, African American women were left without the vote in Jim Crow Texas, and Tejanas were ruled by the South Texas bosses. Exasperated but undaunted, African American women and Tejanas continued their fight for equal voting rights until long after 1920.

Citizens at Last elucidates the crucial role Texas women played in the long struggle for equal voting rights. The words of Suffragist, Jane Y McCallum, captured the thrill of voting for the first time after a long, hard fight, whether for the passage of the 19th amendment in 1920, or the Voting Rights Act in 1965, when she wrote, "With what high hopes and enthusiasms women stepped forth into a world in which they were citizens at last!"
(Description text taken from the film's About page)

Visit https://www.citizensatlastfilm.com/ to view the film.

Visit https://www.citizensatlastfilm.com/bibliography for an extensive bibliography of Texas Woman Suffrage resources.

Visit https://www.citizensatlastfilm.com/archives for a list of archival resources related Texas Women's history.

Listen to filmmakers Ellen Temple and Nancy Schiesari speak with the Briscoe Center's Dr. Sarah Sonner about their Texas Woman Suffrage projects here: https://podcasts.la.utexas.edu/american-rhapsody/podcast/episode-7-on-with-the-fight-documenting-womens-suffrage-and-activism/

The History Center holds the Ellen Clarke Temple papers, which document her work to record, preserve and publish Texas Women's History. Access the finding guide at this link:
https://www.thehistorycenteronline.com/guides/entry/temple-ellen-clarke-papers-1960s-2010