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Women to the Polls: A Suffrage Film Festival

***The League of Women Voters of Los Angeles and UCLA Film & Television Archive Present
Screenings in Honor of the 19th Amendment and 100 Years of Women's Right to Vote***

LOS ANGELES – January 31, 2020 – As election season heats up, the League of Women Voters of Los Angeles and UCLA Film & Television Archive present *Women to the Polls: A Suffrage Film Festival* over four consecutive Sunday afternoons beginning March 8, 2020. The Festival celebrates the centennial of the passage of the 19th Amendment by showcasing a wide range of films that address issues surrounding American women's fight to win the vote. Panel discussions featuring leading figures from the political, academic and creative worlds will follow each screening. The Billy Wilder Theater is located at the Hammer Museum, 10899 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, 90024. For more information go to suffragefilmfestival.com. To reserve FREE tickets, go to [Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com) or call the League of Women Voters at (213) 368-1616.

Turner Classic Movies (TCM) is presenting media sponsor and a generous gift from The Wonderful Company supports the screenings. Sony Pictures, Farsi Voter, 4Site Realty, and Lois Banner have also provided funding. Additional sponsors include the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences and media sponsor, Ms. Magazine.

"Our film festival takes the occasion of the centennial of women's suffrage to shine a light on the varied ways in which the movement has been portrayed in movies over the years," says film historian Virginia Wright Wexman, Chair of the festival organizing committee. Wexman, who is also a member of the Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of Los Angeles, has authored numerous books on film, most recently *Hollywood's Artists: The Directors Guild of America and the Construction of Authorship* (Columbia University Press, 2020), which includes a discussion of women in Hollywood.

The fight to secure voting rights for American women has a long and complicated history. At various times divisive issues concerning sexism, racism and political expediency came to the fore. Causes like birth control, temperance and dress reform were alternately embraced and set aside. Congress finally ratified the 19th Amendment in 1920; in that year, the League of Women Voters was born.

The Festival's theme reminds us of what we owe to the courageous women who fought for the vote. "If you are a woman who wears pants, votes at election time, or signs a contract to rent an apartment or to get a credit card, then you owe a debt to those who fought so long and hard for your rights," says Renée Chanon, past president of the League of Women Voters of Los Angeles and member of the festival organizing committee.

Hollywood's depictions of suffrage have a history of their own. For example, the Festival's opening film, Alice Guy Blaché's *Making an American Citizen*, released in 1912, contrasts old-world concepts of gender hierarchy with America's ideal of equality for all. During the same period, short documentaries of suffragist marches and other such events shared movie screens with comedies like *Her First Flame* (to be screened on March 29), which ridiculed the way in which women's new political power could recast men as sculleries and nursemaids. In later years, Hollywood continued to make movies about women's new political power, though such films often ignored racial issues and buried politics beneath sentimental love plots. *The Shocking Miss Pilgrim* (March 8) and *The Bostonians* (March 15) exemplify this tradition. More recent documentaries such as *Inez Milholland: Forward into Light* and *Not for Ourselves Alone: Failure is Impossible* (both screening on March 22), fill in many details about the long and arduous journey to achieve universal suffrage.

At a time when voter suppression still exists in many parts of the country, the fight for universal suffrage is far from over, as is shown in the Festival's final film *Capturing the Flag* (March 29).

FILM SCREENING SCHEDULE -- Additional film descriptions and panelists can be found at <https://www.cinema.ucla.edu/events/2020/women-to-the-polls>

[Billy Wilder Theater](#) doors open 30 minutes prior to program start time. Tickets are free but reservations are highly recommended.

[SUNDAY, MARCH 8, 2020, 1-4 p.m.: Women's Rights and American Citizenship](#)

Making an American Citizen (1912). Director: Alice Guy Blaché.

The Shocking Miss Pilgrim (1947). Director/screenwriter: George Seaton Cast: Betty Grable, Dick Haymes, Anne Revere.

[SUNDAY, MARCH 15, 2020 1-4 p.m.: Winning the Vote: Momentum and Division](#)

The Bostonians (1984). Director: James Ivory. Screenwriter: Ruth Praver Jhabvala, from the novel by Henry James. Cast: Christopher Reeve, Vanessa Redgrave, Jessica Tandy

[SUNDAY, MARCH 22, 2020 1-4 p.m.: Suffrage](#)

Inez Milholland: Forward into Light (2016). Director/screenwriter: Martha Wheelock.

Not For Ourselves Alone: The Story of Elizabeth Cady Stanton & Susan B. Anthony, Part II: "Failure is Impossible" (1999). Director: Ken Burns, Paul Barnes. Screenwriter: Geoffrey C. Ward. Cast: Julie Harris, Ronnie Gilbert, Sally Kellerman (narrator).

[SUNDAY, MARCH 29, 2020 1-4 p.m.: The Challenges Ahead](#)

Her First Flame (1920). Director: Bruno C. Becker. Cast: Gale Henry
Capturing the Flag (2018). Director: Anne de Mare

About the League of Women Voters

The League of Women Voters, founded in 1920, is a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. For more information or to find out about voter registration, census and election or registration information, visit the local Los Angeles office at wvlosangeles.org or call (213) 368-1616.

About UCLA Film & Television Archive

Now part of the UCLA Library, the Archive is internationally renowned for rescuing, preserving and showcasing moving image media and is dedicated to ensuring that the visual achievements of our time are available for information, education and enjoyment. The sixth-largest moving image repository in the world, and the second largest in the U.S., behind only the Library of Congress, the Archive's more than 450,000 holdings are stored in a state-of-the-art facility that meets and exceeds all preservation standards, from nitrate film to digital.

The Archive Research and Study Center, located in Powell Library, provides free access to its holdings to researchers, writers and educators. Many of the Archive's projects are screened at prestigious film events around the globe, as well as [locally at UCLA's Billy Wilder Theater](#).

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