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Scholarship Essay

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Women's Rights Should Not Stop at Suffrage

An indescribable quantity of action and sacrifice on behalf of women's rights pioneers was necessary to gain the nineteenth amendment. The denotation of this amendment allows women the equal opportunity to vote in local, state, and national elections. However, the symbolic quality of women's suffrage is a claim in political power: the beginning of inclusion for women to practice their freedoms of speech, press, and basic principles of choice.

Within history, some women, while fighting for equal representation and political power, were arrested and tried in court for attempting to cast a vote. To male leaders in America, the mere illusion of a woman daring to have a voice in an election process was worthy of time in jail. As archaic as this mindset may sound to the current generation of young females, this change in our society --- the addition of the nineteenth amendment --- was added to our constitution only a century ago. The significance of this event has allowed our nation to undergo the start of metamorphosis in how women choose to conduct themselves on a variety of fronts.

Socially, politically, and economically, the women's suffrage movement has allowed for females a greater sense of societal involvement --- calling for a cultural shift in women becoming perceived as strong and tenacious forces to be reckoned with, as opposed to quiet passengers in the vehicle (or country) that is male-dominated. Women, through this movement, were allowed an initial sense of validation --- one that was long overdue, as well as currently incomplete.

Socially, through the right to vote, women have been allowed a more significant space within traditionally male dominated careers and educational paths. More women, since, have pursued higher levels of education as well as employment within the professions of law, medicine, and other STEM and business-related careers. With higher educational opportunities available to females, paired with more excellent representation within the working class, women have begun to make strides in terms of changing pre-suffrage gender roles and culture surrounding gender and the ability to lead professional teams and companies.

Politically, women have become increasingly more active and have rightfully earned a more significant role in managing local, state, and national politics and issues. Post-suffrage movement, women were then able to hold high positions within courts and run for various offices. Still, however, the representation of women in politics is not necessarily evenly balanced. The factors of modern racism and prejudice regarding socioeconomic status still play a significant role in the limited sense of diversity. Yes, women are active in politics. But, across the board, it is a segment that is still underrepresented. And due to that lack, not enough productive and inclusive conversation can be had.

On an economic level, however, the ability for females to receive higher levels of education has allowed for women to increase their presence in higher-paying career fields, thus securing a greater sense of economic freedom. Although women's salaries have increased, females are still not (in all sectors) being paid equally to men within the same jobs.

While the passing of the nineteenth amendment was a victory for generations of women to come, so much work is still to be done. We, as a society, need to ensure the protection of this act. We need to ensure that the momentum of breaking sexist barriers in government and culture

both continues and extends to other contemporary ideas --- such as greater diversity and equal pay.

To ensure that the hard work that women of the suffrage movement and beyond is maintained --- education of the younger generations of females is imperative. As a society, we must be willing to foster young people's minds.

Young girls need to learn about the history of women's rights. Only then will they be able to truly appreciate the sacrifices of those who have paved the way. Programs put in place to help push societal boundaries would be beneficial for young women --- such as those encouraging young girls to pursue STEM careers and leadership roles. Women who have exceeded societal limits would make excellent mentors and could utilize social media and networking platforms to enact more widespread change and awareness of issues related to women.

Through investing in the continuation of women's success, the initial act of women's suffrage should, in turn, continue the domino effect of gaining more considerable social change. Liberation and human rights should be guaranteed for all American citizens without classifications of gender, race, or class is a limiting or inhibiting factor.