

# Debates, Decisions, Demands: Objects of Campaigns and Activism

Politics are embedded in our everyday lives. They shape the contours of society, structure the possibilities of our present, drive our imagination for different futures. During elections, these characteristics become all the more visible. Candidates, platforms, and parties are rendered as physical objects—anything large enough for a slogan. These objects convey a devotion to a set of ideals, positions, and possibilities.

Over the decades, campaign paraphernalia has signified a pledge of loyalty to a party and its candidates. This party tie has been bound up with personal reputation and worldview, and it influenced relationships and fierce debates. In turn, party power thrived on this public support. “Our government rests in public opinion,” said Abraham Lincoln in 1856. “Whoever can change public opinion can change the government.”

Parties and their ideologies change over time, and so do voters. The fight for suffrage brought more Americans into polling places and altered the electioneering that drew them there. Beyond elections, activists call attention to issues that politicians and legislation fail to address.

What you see in this exhibit is the stuff of politics. The issues debated from soap boxes and podiums years ago may seem irrelevant now, but in their time they spurred candidates and supporters to action. The remnants of campaigns, voting, and activist movements attest to the enduring power of democracy and political participation in the United States.

The material in this exhibit largely comes from campaigns for the executive branch of the federal government and does not represent the full political experience of our nation, let alone the values and concerns of the entire population. We encourage you to reflect on the ways politics and elections are embodied in physical objects and what limits they impose on the debates, decisions, and demands of democracy.

All items in the exhibit are from the People's Collection, US History and Culture, unless otherwise noted. The People's Collection reflects the particular interests of the anonymous collectors and spans almost two centuries of US presidential campaigns.

Lincoln speech at a Republican banquet, Chicago, Illinois, December 10, 1856.



Wet'suwet'en Solidarity protesters block train traffic in Toronto. The event is in support of the Hereditary Chiefs of the Wet'suwet'en First Nation, who protest of the construction of a fossil fuel pipeline on their unceded ancestral lands. Toronto, Canada, February 8, 2020. Courtesy of Jason Hargrove. [creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.0/)



Protest against the police killing of George Floyd.  
Philadelphia, May 30, 2020. Courtesy of Joe Piette.  
[creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.0/)



Vigil for the victims of the Pulse Nightclub shooting in Orlando. Champaign, June 14, 2016. Courtesy of Travis Stansel.



The University of Illinois Korean Student Association marches to urge action against the Soviet Union for firing on a civilian Korean Air Lines flight, killing 269 people. September 8, 1983. Copyright Richard Hildwein. Courtesy of the University of Illinois Archives, image 0002746.

# Voting

The fight to participate in American politics was long and remains incomplete. The Civil War and Reconstruction brought forth Black male suffrage, and new voices echoed in city halls, state houses, and the Capitol. The following decades of restrictions and violence all but ended these freedoms. Women's right to vote in local, state, and eventually national elections expanded political participation.

Voters also fought to make the voting process itself fairer and free. The glass ballot box offered transparency in an era rife with ballot box stuffing, while mechanical voting devices attempted to remove human interference from the process.

Voting is never a straightforward act. It carries the complexity of our political system into the voting booth.



Unlike today, when we tend to know who won races by the end of election day, in the late 19th century it could take days to count the number of votes each candidate received on paper ballots. The integrity of the vote was also called into question frequently when election officials might “accidentally” tear or mark a ballot to make it invalid, stuff the ballot boxes with additional votes, or throw the entire ballot box into a body of water.

There was a real need for a new voting system, and the lever voting machine was the high-tech solution of its time. First used in 1892, it made voting faster, more accurate, and more honest. Levers and locking gears prevented voters from marking multiple candidates. In the full-size version, a curtain also closed around the voter and machine to ensure privacy.

Lever machines weren't perfect: they were physically inaccessible to some voters, required diligent maintenance, and could be tampered with by repair technicians. They were used in parts of the US until 2010, when all states finally complied with the 2002 Help America Vote Act.

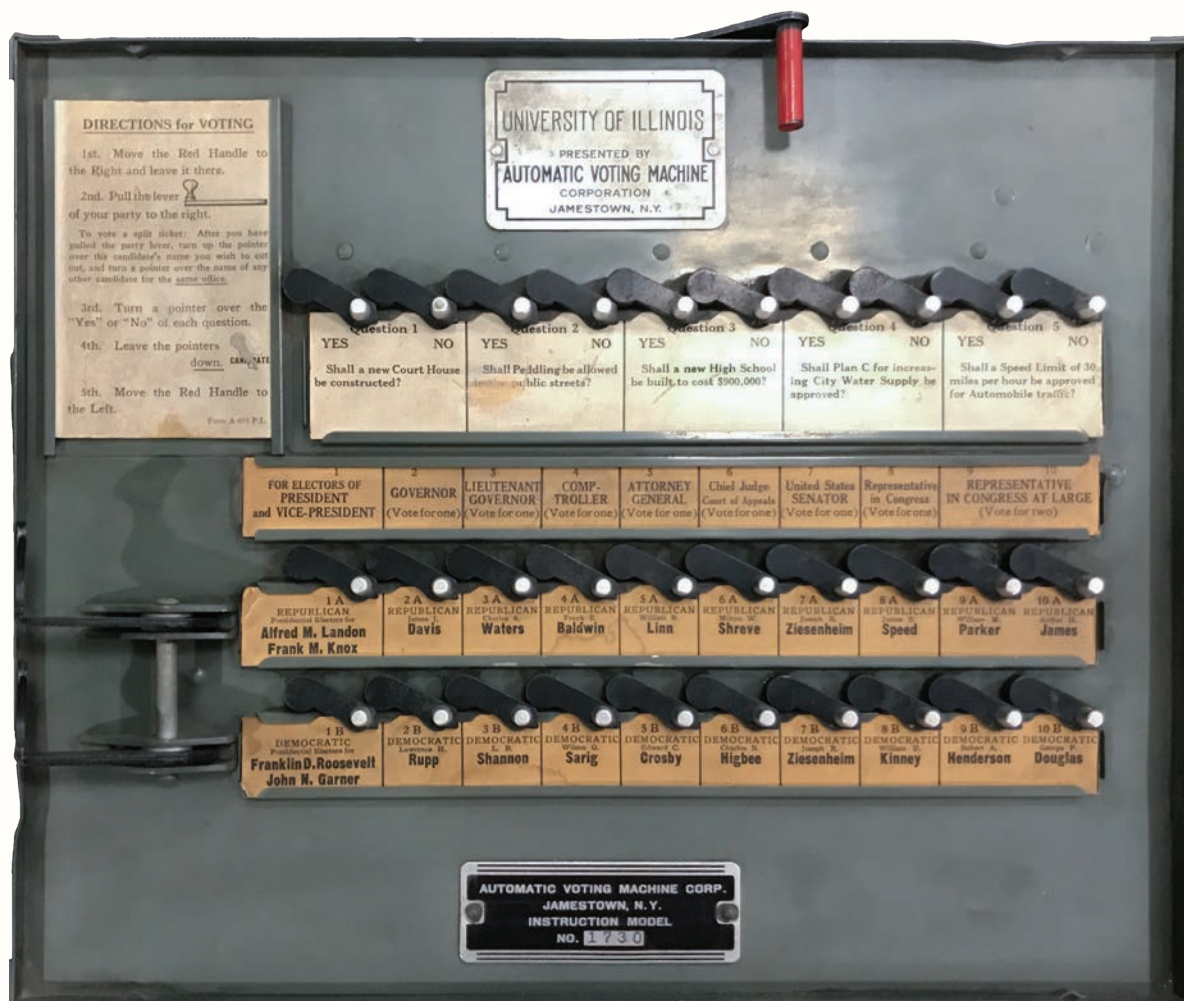
A longer story about lever voting machines is linked from the exhibit overview page of our website.

## Automatic Voting Machine Model

United States, 1932–1940

Paper, metal

1992.10.0001



This artwork depicts the signing of the treaty that granted the strip of land around the Panama Canal to the United States in return for American recognition of Panama's independence and financial support. A French engineer, Philippe Bunau-Varilla, represents Panama in the negotiation with American Secretary of State John M. Hay. The "no" ballots in the corners may represent the Panamanian delegation that arrived to the negotiation just hours after the signing and objected to ceding so many rights to the US.

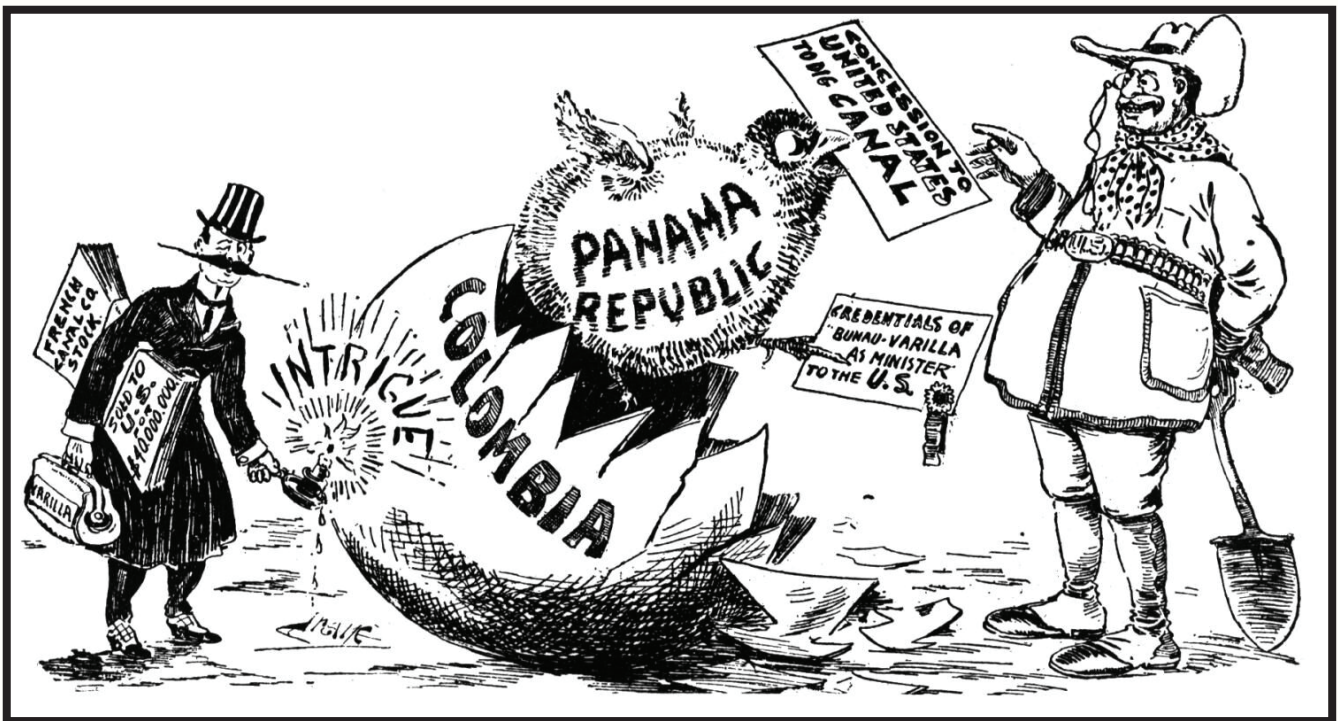
Mola: Treaty of 1903

San Blas Islands, Panama, 1968–late 1970s

Cotton

Kieffer-Lopez Collection 2008.22.0107





A 1903 political cartoon from the New York Times depicting Bunau-Varilla as profiting financially from the treaty, with US President Teddy Roosevelt happy to start digging.

The 1994 election in South Africa was the nation's first with universal suffrage. During the white supremacist policy of Apartheid (1948– early 1990s), officially sanctioned racial segregation was reflected in government, education, housing, employment, athletics, and many other services and institutions. The majority of South Africa's population was not allowed to vote.

In the 1994 election, voters were given two ballots, one for the national election and one for a provincial election. Voters checked the box next to the political party they wished to support. The 1994 election lasted for four days, with nearly 90% of the electorate voting. The African National Congress party won over 60% of the national vote, making Nelson Mandela the first post-Apartheid president.

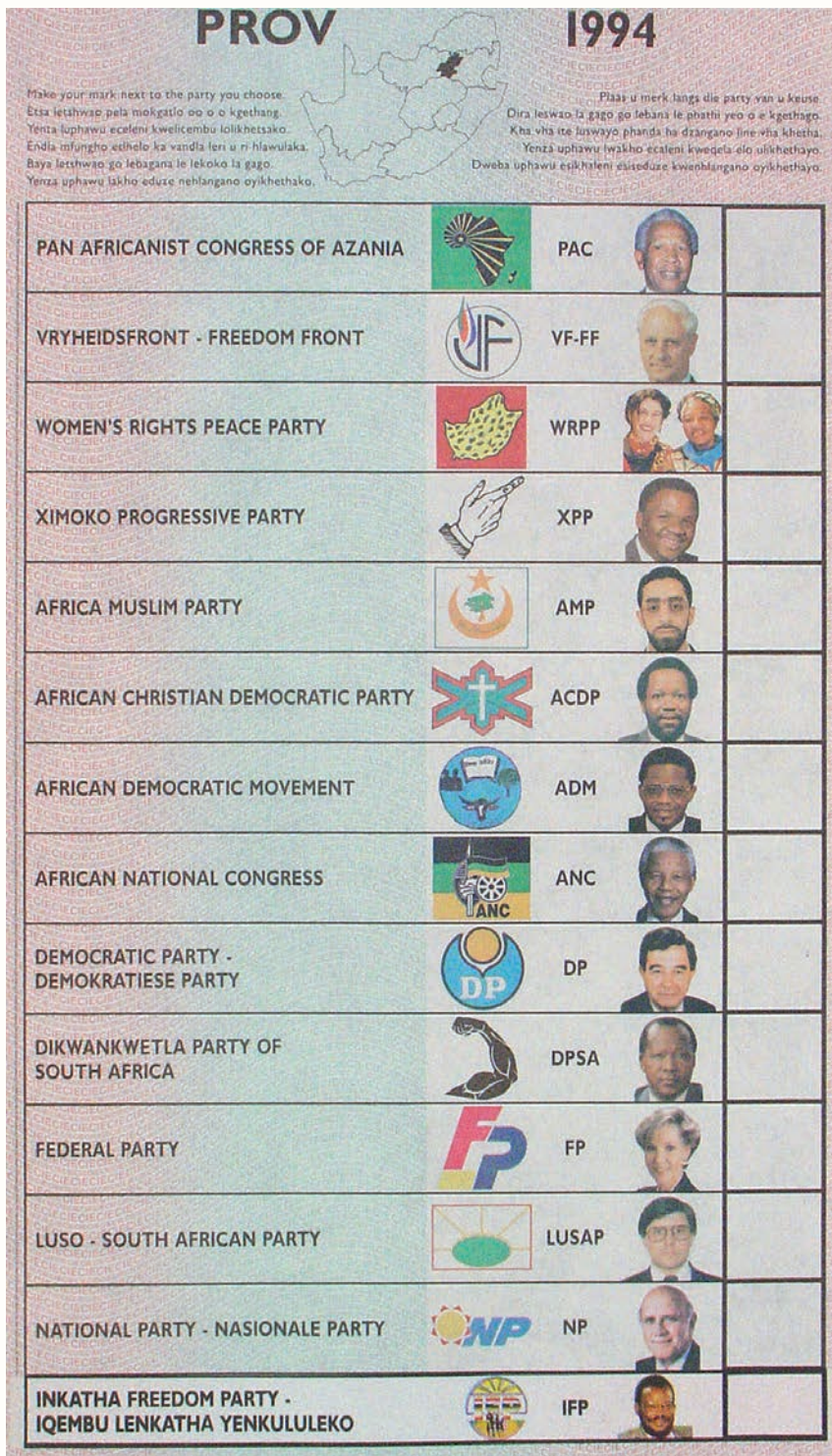
The paper ballot has become the symbol of democratic elections across the globe, but this is a relatively new technology. The earliest known use of a paper ballot is in ancient Rome in 139 BCE. Other technologies include clay and metal tokens in ancient Athens, palm leaves in medieval India, and little balls (*ballotta*) in Renaissance Italy.

# Ballot

South Africa, 1994

Paper, ink

Gift of Lynn and Mike Noel 2004.09.0001



These coins come from the Roman Republic and document political processes. One contains a voting scene showing two citizens standing on a bridge using ballots. On the left, an attendant hands the voter a tablet on which he will write the initials of his preferred candidate. On the right, another voter drops his marked tablet into a container to be counted.

Coin with Voting Scene  
Rome, 113–112 BCE  
Silver  
Purchase 1919.63.0852



The other coin depicts a jug used to hold wine for sacrifices and the curved staff of a religious official (augur). The official interprets signs sent by the gods. Together, the symbols are thought to signify the rituals held before political functions, including the investiture of public officials.

Coin with Ballot Urn  
Rome, 43–42 BCE  
Silver  
Purchase 1919.63.0082



Emmeline Pankhurst founded the Women's Social and Political Union in Britain, the first women to be called suffragettes. To make their points heard, they demonstrated, confronted politicians, burned and bombed property, and went on hunger strikes—and were tortured in prison.

The Holloway Prison brooch (below) is a medal awarded to WSPU members who had been imprisoned. Its background is shaped like the gate of the House of Commons at Parliament, and on top is a broad arrow shape found on prison uniforms, here in the suffragette colors.

The suffrage movement significantly reflected the structures of Britain's global empire and stratified society, largely ignoring the inequalities of race and class. Activists achieved partial suffrage in 1918, for women over 30 years old who met certain property requirements.



Holloway Prison  
Brooch  
England  
Silver  
2017.06.0238



Emmeline Pankhurst  
Portrait  
United Kingdom,  
1910  
Paper, wood  
2017.06.0262





Princess Sophia Dhuleep Singh selling "The Suffragette" outside Hampton Court Palace, where she has a suite of apartments.

Princess Sophia Duleep Singh, a suffragette and women's rights activist from an Indian royal family in the UK. London, April 1913. Courtesy of the British Library.

The suffragettes shocked British society. They notoriously used “unladylike” behavior, and official reaction to them was severe. To some conservative minds, the very idea of women voting was a threat to social conventions of home and womanhood. The mix of domestic items with scenes of police hauling away protesters conveys this contrast between stereotypes and current events.

Suffragette and  
Police Bobby Figurines  
United Kingdom  
Wood, metal, pigment,  
textile, ceramic  
2017.06.0257



Suffragette Game Piece  
United Kingdom  
Metal, pigment  
2017.06.0247



The scowling inkwell shows a negative stereotype of suffragettes. An old, lumpy, and grumpy woman who wants to participate in politics is the opposite of the demure, attractive, home-focused concept of what women should be. This was a popular item at the time of the Women's National Anti-Suffrage League, founded to oppose support for the suffrage cause.

Inkwell

United Kingdom

Porcelain, pigment

2017.06.0253



Holloway Prison Teacup and Saucer

United Kingdom

Porcelain

2017.06.0241



“Votes for Women” Tea Cozy

United Kingdom

Linen

2017.06.0271



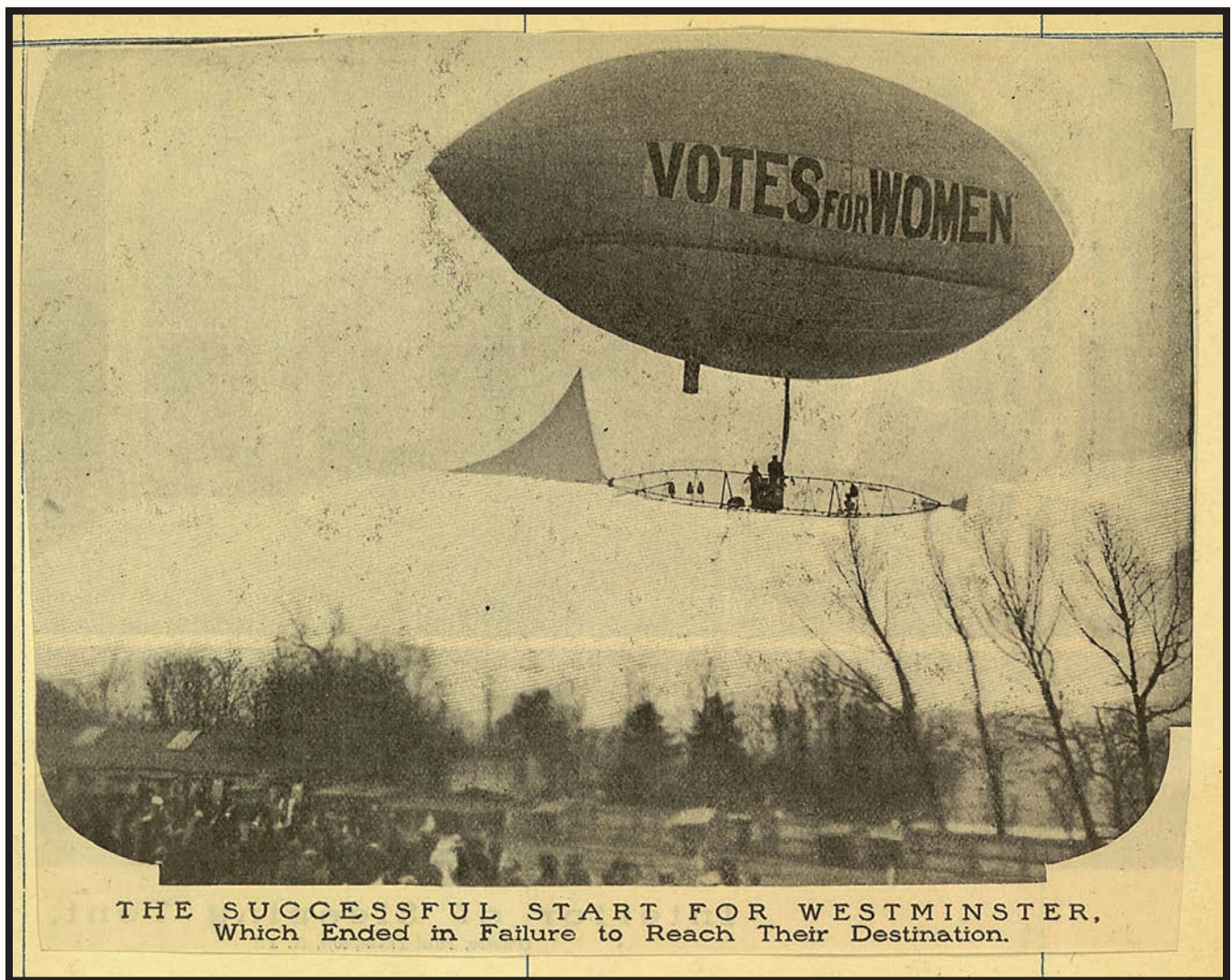
“Votes for Women” Handkerchief

United Kingdom

Silk

2017.06.0254





Mureil Matters distributed Women's Freedom League handbills over London by airship in February 1909. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

The American suffrage movement was heavily underscored by racism and classism. Wealthy and middle-class white women's concerns dominated agendas at the expense of those of other Americans. The Nineteenth Amendment allowed some women to vote but excluded many others based on "moral character," literacy, ability to pay poll taxes, and their husbands' citizenship status.

Visit the exhibits *Rightfully Hers* and *Votes for Women* on our main floor to learn more about American women's suffrage.

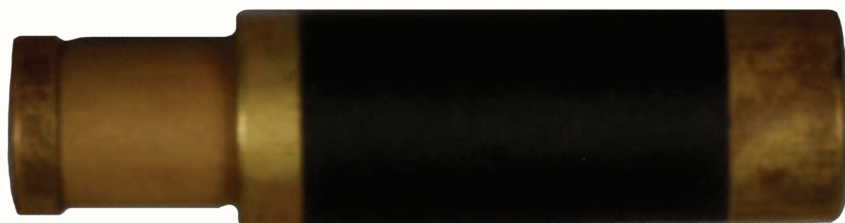
Stanhope viewers hold a tiny photograph and a built-in lens for seeing it. This one is part of a set with portraits of suffrage movement leaders from the US and Britain.

Stanhope Viewer: Susan B. Anthony

United States

Glass, metal

2017.06.0243J



This recording is a short play about a suffragette group meeting on the street and encountering other members of the public. Hear it at the link in the QR code.



Cylinder Record: The Suffragette  
New Jersey, 1908–1910  
Wax cylinder, cardboard container  
2017.06.0259



In the 1850s, concerns about dishonesty in the voting process met an interesting solution: a clear glass ballot box. It was never used widely but became a powerful symbol in editorial cartoons about political participation and transparency.

Glass Ballot Box Campaign Torch  
Illinois, 1880  
Metal, glass  
2017.06.0022







During the first space shuttle flight to dock at the International Space Station, mission specialists Ellen Ochoa, Julie Payette, and Tamara Jernigan hold a suffrage banner from the National Woman's Party used in the 1910s. This Discovery flight lasted from May 27 to June 6, 1999. Courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration.

# Candidates

Those seeking public office are subject to party pressures and the will of their constituents. Often candidates are driven by convictions aimed at improving life in their district, state, or nation. For others it is a grasp at power in some shape or form.

Whatever their motive, candidates are shaped by the rigors of the campaign trail, the dynamics of current events and political debates, and the cultural landscape of the era.

The objects assembled here do not just represent the candidates themselves, but also the idealized figures voters wanted their candidates to truly be. Campaign memorabilia often says more about the era than it does about the candidates themselves.

The balance between relatability and distinctiveness in a politician's public image is a millennia-old struggle. The first Roman emperor, Augustus, refused having temples built to him in Rome while he was alive, even though he was related to the deified Julius Caesar and areas of the empire worshipped him as a god. The senate gave him the title "Revered One," but he referred to himself as "first among equals."

This bust is based on a statue that portrays him as a gifted military leader and a skilled orator, with a body that reflects the classical Greek physical ideal. See a plaster cast of the statue, Augustus Prima Porta, as you enter our Ancient Mediterranean exhibit on the main floor.

Bust of Augustus Caesar

Plaster cast

John Milton Gregory Collection

Transfer from University Library

2017.02.0009



A politician's public image can be a significant factor in how a nation sees itself—and how it is perceived globally. The persona of Barack Obama has resonated with people around the world, as well as at home.

A khanga is multi-use textile from eastern Africa. It usually has text with a message, proverb, or riddle near the border on one side. The Obama campaign slogan “Yes we can” easily translates to this medium.

Khanga

Tanzania, 2008

Lynn and Michael Noel Collection 2014.03.0263



Senator Joe Lieberman was the first Jewish candidate for the executive branch as part of a major party ticket. National conversations around the religious affiliation of candidates often reveal anxieties about immigration, foreign influence, and personal behavior.

Al Gore and Joe Lieberman Yarmulke

United States, 2000

Satin

2017.06.0236





Martin Luther King, Sr., Coretta Scott King, Andrew Young, and other civil rights leaders sing with Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter during a visit to Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta. January 14, 1979. Courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration.

Abraham Lincoln's White House secretary John Hay described this cast of the president's face: "A look as of one on whom sorrow and care had done their worst without victory is on all the features; the whole expression is of unspeakable sadness and all-sufficing strength."

Here in central Illinois, imagery of Lincoln is all around us, even more than 150 years after his death. What meaning does his image hold for you?

Lincoln Life Mask

by Clark Mills

bronze cast

February 1865

2000.03.0001



Abraham Lincoln Portrait Vase  
United States, 1864  
Porcelain, gold, pigment  
2017.06.0075



Ulysses S. Grant Portrait Vase  
United States, 1880  
Glass, paper  
2017.06.0081



James Garfield Cologne Bottle  
United States, 1880  
Glass, paper  
2017.06.0093





Joseph G. Cannon spent much of his life based out of Danville, Illinois. The area elected him to serve in Congress for 46 years, and he was Speaker of the House for 8 years. He became a political celebrity and was chosen for the cover of the first issue of Time magazine. Cannon's influence brought the Veterans Administration hospital to Danville.

Cigar Box: Joseph G. Cannon  
United States, 1903–1911  
Wood, paper, pigment  
2017.06.0046



The USS Maine exploded and sank near Havana in 1898, killing over 250 American sailors. Newspapers sensationalized the event, adding to the national mood for war with Spain, which began 2 months later. The cause of the explosion is still debated, but generally favorable attitudes about the outcome of the war helped re-elect William McKinley as president in 1900.

Bowl: Uncle Sam and the USS Maine

United States, 1898–1900

Glass

2017.06.0034



Chester A. Arthur was president without ever being the official party candidate. He was elected as vice president with James Garfield as president in 1880 and became president when Garfield was assassinated in 1881. But by the next Republican National Convention in 1884, James Blaine was the front-runner. This ashtray listing Arthur a general rather than the commander in chief may speak to his odd position in presidential history.

General Arthur Cigar Ashtray

United States

Ceramic

2017.06.0098



Blaine, in turn, narrowly lost the popular vote to Grover Cleveland, despite hundreds of stump speeches in a campaign filled with personal attacks. The artwork on the cigar box recalls Blaine's service as secretary of state in Benjamin Harrison's cabinet.

James G. Blaine Cigar Box

New Jersey, 1890–1892

Wood, paint

2017.06.0103



Wooden matches at the turn of the 20th century were usually “strike anywhere,” meaning they could ignite easily against most hard surfaces—including accidentally against each other in your pocket. A metal box kept flames from spreading. This small personal use item came in hundreds of shapes, and decorative and promotional pieces were common.

Woodrow Wilson Matchsafe

United States, 1915

Nickel, pigment

2017.06.0192





The emotions of candidates Roosevelt (cowboy hat), Wilson (driving cap), and Taft (top hat) before the 1912 election. By Clifford Kennedy Berryman. November 5, 1912. Courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration.

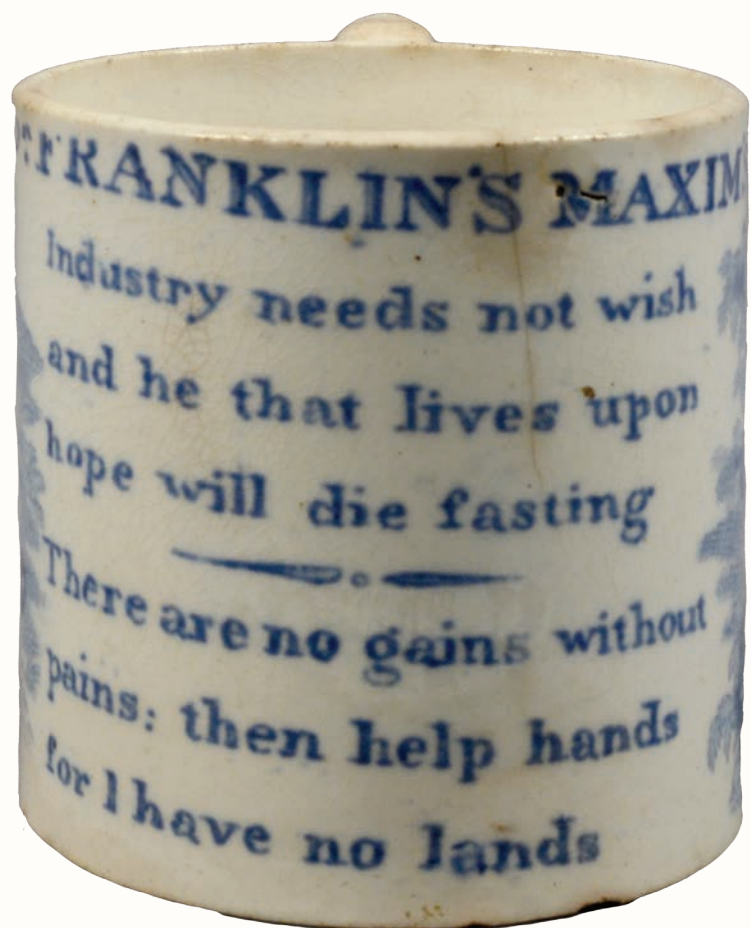
Benjamin Franklin's persona today remains impressive: scientist, diplomat, activist, writer. For the people who made this cup for children 230 years ago, he was considered someone who gave advice worth reading.

Child's Cup with Ben Franklin's Maxims

United Kingdom, 1790

Porcelain, pigment

2017.06.0030



These pieces come from a series of alphabet plates depicting American heroes of the time. Scott was an army general for almost 50 years—and an unsuccessful presidential candidate 4 times.

### General Winfield Scott Children's Plate

United States, 1862–1863

Ceramic, pigment

2017.06.0035



### Abraham Lincoln

### Children's Alphabet Plate

Staffordshire, England, 1862–1863

Ceramic, pigment

2017.06.0073





This commemorative pitcher is full of patriotic symbols, including George Washington, Ben Franklin (seated), and figures representing liberty, wisdom, and justice. After Washington's death in 1799, he was often depicted as a god, so this piece was probably made before that time.

Pitcher

Liverpool, England, 1780s–90s

Creamware, pigment

2017.06.0047



William Jennings Bryan Serving T

United States, 1896

Metal, pigment

2017.06.0158



The exploits of Teddy Roosevelt's Rough Riders, a volunteer cavalry during the Spanish-American War, were widely publicized, drawing on the future president's love of vigorous physical exertion. A harmonica, associated with cowboys and miners, fits this coarse, boisterous image.

Rough Rider Harmonica

United States, 1904

Wood, metal

2017.06.0169



Teddy Roosevelt Serving Tray

United States, 1904

Metal, pigment

2017.06.0163



Teddy Roosevelt's exaggerated persona was established even before he was a presidential candidate and was easy to evoke in physical objects.

Theodore Roosevelt Toby Jug  
United States, 1909  
Ceramic, pigment  
2017.06.0159



Teddy Bear  
Panama Canal Plate United States, 1904–10  
Ceramic, pigment  
2017.06.0168





Roosevelt speaking from the back of a railroad car.  
Published by Underwood & Underwood. May 25, 1907.  
Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

The corrupt New York City Democratic political machine Tammany Hall was the target of Teddy Roosevelt's attentions when he became police commissioner in the late 1890s. In this satirical bank, the seated Tammany figure takes a coin in his hand, puts it in his pocket, and nods his head in appreciation.

Mechanical Bank: Tammany Hall  
Connecticut, 19th c  
Metal, paint  
2017.06.0026



Theodore Roosevelt Coin Bank  
United States, 1904  
Metal  
2017.06.0161



# Campaigns

During campaigns, supporters project their aspirations on those in the running and take up their images and slogans as embodiments of their own ambitions. Voters declare their loyalty with a button, hat, or snuffbox decorated with imagery of their candidates. These items demonstrate support at the polling place and endure through a successful candidate's term in office.

The materials in the gallery brought the campaign into the home and workplace and made it part of people's wardrobe. They are physical attributes of political participation.

By the early 20th century, presidential candidates had to actively campaign to reach voters. Earlier candidates believed campaigning was beneath the dignity of the office and relied on surrogates to give stump speeches across the nation. William McKinley ran a "front porch campaign" in 1896: prospective voters and supporters visited the candidate, who spoke from his home. His

opponent, William Jennings Bryan, traveled to towns big and small via the railroad on whistle stop tours. Later candidates followed suit, and for the first time many voters came face to face with candidates for the presidency.

The 1896 presidential race saw a huge increase in the types of campaign items and memorabilia produced. Some we still use them today, like hats and pins. But others were much less popular and fell out of use, like the soap baby, which some scholars speculate looked too much like a coffin. The William McKinley campaign issues listed on the box refer to the standard of currency, international trade agreements, and a hoped-for economic upturn.

William McKinley Soap Baby and Box  
United States, 1896  
2017.06.0145





This bug represents an issue that was essential to that campaign but most of us know very little about: the metal used as the basis for our monetary system. McKinley and the Republicans wanted to stick to gold. Democratic/Populist William Jennings Bryan favored adding silver to create more currency, which appealed to western mining communities and agricultural workers.

William Jennings Bryan "Silver Bug"

United States, 1896

Metal

2017.06.0157



In 1900, McKinley and running mate Teddy Roosevelt represented two different campaigning styles on the same ticket. McKinley famously did much of his campaigning from his front porch in Ohio, with carefully organized visits by various groups, while Roosevelt traveled widely giving speeches in person.

William McKinley-Theodore Roosevelt Straight Razor  
United States, ca. 1900

Steel, plastic

2017.06.0136



An advertisement on a moving vehicle takes the message to the streets. Campaign signage for vehicles changed with American taste in transportation: items for horses gave way to items for cars beginning in the late 1920s.

Bridle Rosettes:

Grover Cleveland and Adlai E. Stevenson, United States,  
1892

Metal, paper, resin

2017.06.0123A–B



# Alf Landon License Plate Attachments

Iowa, 1936

Steel, tin

2017.06.0215, 0217



# Franklin Delano Roosevelt

License Plate Attachment

United States, 1936

Aluminum, pigment

2017.06.0210



The label on this box implies that visual support of a campaign has moved from the outside of cars (like the license plate decorations nearby) to the inside, maybe in recognition of how much time Americans spend in cars. Goldwater lost to Lyndon B. Johnson in one of the biggest landslides in US presidential history.

Barry Goldwater Doll

New Jersey, 1964

Celluloid, pigment

2017.06.0226



The 1976 presidential election matched incumbent Republican Gerald Ford against 1-time Georgia governor Jimmy Carter. The Watergate scandal was still fresh in people's minds, making this the perfect time for a Democratic candidate who portrayed himself as a folksy, peanut-growing, Washington outsider. This working-man image came to life through campaign paraphernalia blending a peanut and Carter's unforgettable smile.

Jimmy Carter Peanut

Figurine

United States, 1976

Ceramic

2017.06.0229



The 1840 presidential contest between William Henry Harrison and Martin Van Buren was one of America's earliest image-focused campaigns. Harrison's Whig party in particular used everyday objects to get their candidate's image into voters' homes. Harrison's face became very recognizable thanks to household goods.

The log cabin symbolizes an idealized rustic simplicity, part of the Whigs' attempt to paint Van Buren as an urban dandy. The log cabin as a political symbol is still around today. You may have heard of the Log Cabin Republicans, who advocate for LGBTQ rights, or seen it paired with stories of Abraham Lincoln.

William Henry Harrison

Cup, Saucer, and Columbian Star Dish

Staffordshire, England, 1840 Ceramic, pigment

2017.06.0060, 0062



William Henry Harrison Columbian Star

Child's Cup and Saucer

United States, 1841

Ceramic

2017.06.0064





“I Like Ike” may be one of the catchiest political slogans in American history. Watch an ad for Eisenhower’s 1952 campaign on the Inter-Pathé Youtube channel using this QR code. What does it tell you about the issues in the election?

Adlai Stevenson and Dwight D. Eisenhower Cups  
United States, 1956

Paper

2017.06.0219, 220



Some scholars label the 1828 presidential election the nation's most negative, with supporters of John Quincy Adams and Andrew Jackson flinging wild accusations at each other's candidate. Jackson's wife Rachel was also a frequent target, and he blamed his opponents for worsening her heart condition. She died just weeks after her husband was elected.

Andrew Jackson Plate  
United Kingdom, 1824  
Porcelain, pigment  
2017.06.0054



In the 19th century, cartoonist Thomas Nast popularized several political symbols we use today: the Republican elephant, the Democratic donkey, and Uncle Sam. Nast's strong opinions were often visible in his satirical work, and he created complex drawings about the Civil War, Reconstruction, and immigration.

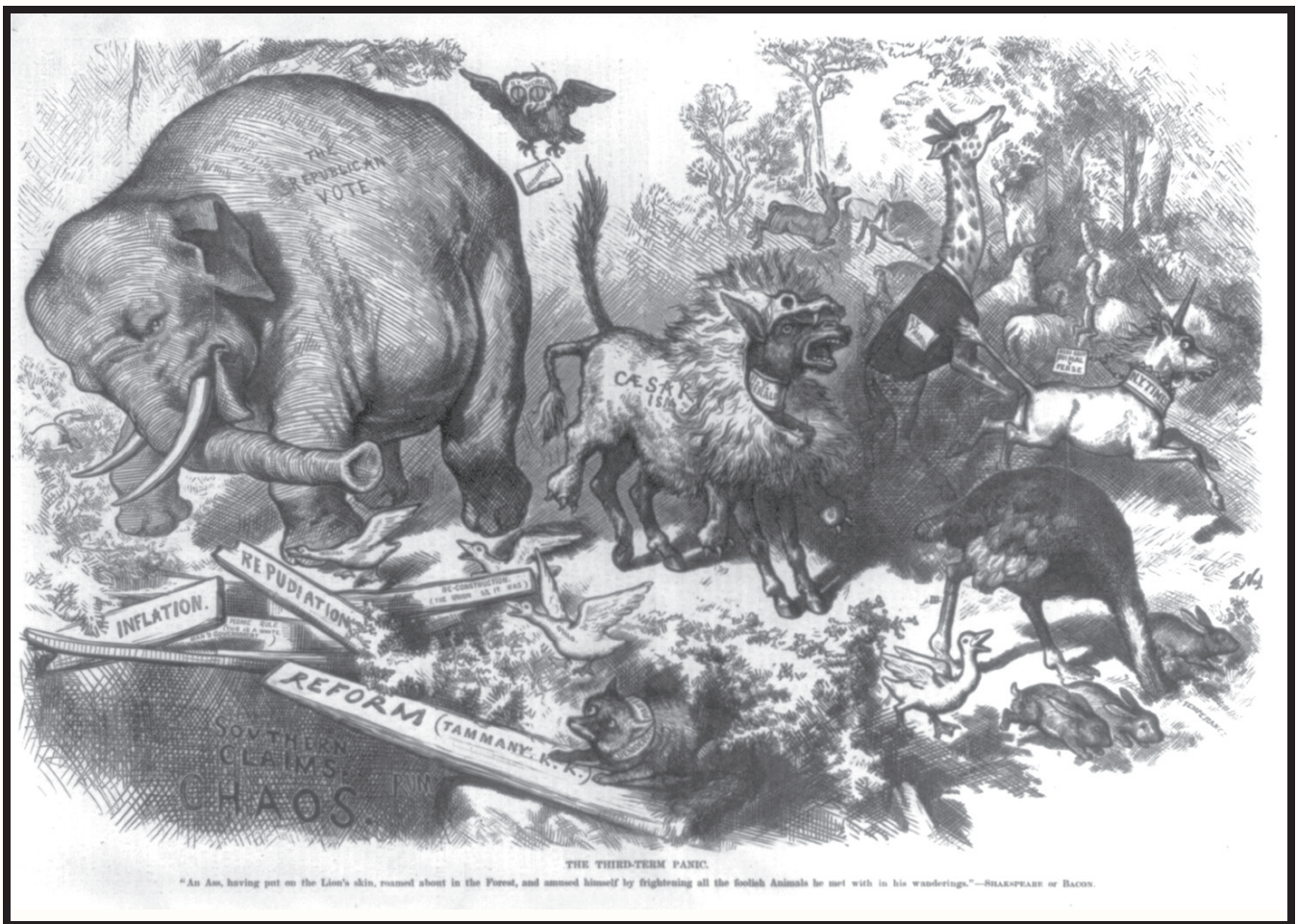
Republican Cookie Cutter

United States, 1970s

Metal

2017.06.0033A





“The Third-term Panic.” By Thomas Nast. Harper’s Weekly, November 7, 1874. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

These little figures are part of the fad of the Billiken, a good luck charm doll. The patent for the Billiken design was issued in early October 1908, and companies raced to create knock-offs like these “Billibois.” The Billiken slightly precedes the Kewpie, which is better known today. A poem on the dolls’ box encouraged the buyer to vote:

“Pick out a smile and try to remember/  
To broaden one grin in bleak November.”

William Jennings Bryan and William Howard Taft

Billibois Figurines

United States, 1908

Terra cotta, paint

2017.06.0180, 0181



Thread boxes were made only for the 1824 and 1828 elections, usually imported from France. At a time women could not vote, items like this may appeal to a family's self- concept of cultured domesticity. Boxes were also made for Adams's main rival, Andrew Jackson, who had a decidedly less refined public image.

### John Quincy Adams Thread Box

France, 1828

Paper, textile

2017.06.0053



Founded soon after the Civil War, the Knights of Labor is the first major union in the US and saw commonalities in the concerns of all producing workers. At their peak enrollment in the 1950s, American unions were a major political force. They have influenced voting on such issues as the length of the work day, child labor, pensions, immigrant rights, health care, and global trade.

### Knights of Labor Commemorative Pilsner Glass

Pennsylvania, 1880s

Glass

2017.06.0042





Detail: “First annual picnic of the Knights of Labor—  
more fun for the spectators than for the performers.”  
By Joseph Ferdinand Keppler. Puck, June 21, 1882.  
Courtesy of the Library of Congress.



Decorating a hat to support a candidate goes back at least as far as the race between Thomas Jefferson and John Adams in 1796, when the political party system was first forming. Delegates at national conventions often embellish their hats with pins, stickers, ribbons, and balloons.

Abraham Lincoln is one of a number of presidential candidates to be associated with a particular type of hat. FDR wore a “lucky” fedora while campaigning, Texan LBJ loved a cowboy hat, and Horace Greeley was symbolized by a broad-brimmed white Quaker-style hat.

Herbert Hoover Hat  
United States, 1928–1932  
Straw  
2017.06.0198



Ronald Reagan and  
George Bush Hat  
United States, 1984  
Polystyrene foam, rubber, paper  
2017.06.0230



Horn canes, popular at the turn of the 20th century, helped supporters make some noise for their candidates in public parades. McKinley's slogan "Patriotism, Protection, Prosperity" is stamped into the side of this example.

Parade Horn Cane  
United States, 1896  
Metal  
2017.06.0126



FDR's campaign in 1932 included the New Deal reforms to aid Americans in the Great Depression.

New Deal Cane  
United States, 1932  
Wood  
2017.06.0214



National health care has been a hot political issue since Teddy Roosevelt included it in his platform in 1912. This stick refers to JFK's attempt to launch health care for seniors in 1962.

Kennedy Hiking Stick

Illinois, 1960

Wood, paint

2017.06.0222



Campaign rallies are a way of demonstrating partisan strength and mobilizing undecided and indifferent voters. The torchlight parade became popular during Lincoln's 1860 campaign. Lanterns and torches came in different sizes and shapes, like stars, rifles, hats, and eagles.

The shape and slogan of this dinner pail torch reference the economic and political prosperity during William McKinley's first term (1897–1901). The slogan emphasizes the fulfillment of his campaign promise and tries to appeal further to working-class voters. Benjamin Harrison used top hat-shaped torchlights during his 1888 campaign. The motif became widely used in subsequent campaigns, as in the lid of the McKinley pail.

McKinley and Roosevelt Campaign Torch

United States, 1900

Metal

2017.06.0021



Eagle Campaign Torch

United States, 1840–1860

Brass, tin

2017.06.0017



Tobacco-related items are personal and also public. Offering a friend a smoke or pinch of snuff is an opportunity to promote a candidate.



Cigar Boxes: Grover Cleveland and Allen Thurman Benjamin Harrison and Levi Morton  
United States, 1888  
Wood, paper, pigment  
2017.06.0106A–B



Michael Dukakis Cigarette Packet  
New York, 1988  
2017.06.0232



## Maintain the Monroe Doctrine Snuffbox

United States, 1856

Paper, pigment, lacquer

2017.06.0036



William Henry Harrison's public image used log cabins to evoke humble, rustic simplicity. In reality, his father owned a plantation and had been the governor of Virginia.

## William Henry Harrison Snuffbox

United States, 1840

Pewter

2017.06.0063



# Protests

Activism imagines futures beyond the politically possible. Beyond calculated campaign drives and mass-produced bumper stickers stand homemade signs, banners, and flyers condemning injustice and demanding better of politicians and society as a whole. Objects taken to the streets or galleries of legislatures embody the power of democracy in action and the unfiltered voices of the nation.



“This was one of my proudest moments in drag. It was the third or fourth day of GEO’s [Graduate Employees’ Organization] strike in 2018, and I wanted to bring out my alter ego to the picket lines. The goal wasn’t to make the picket lines all about me but to lighten the mood, rally the troops, keep things going. Drag is both highly visible and highly political, so I wanted to put together a look that would help GEO stay strong on what I remember being a very soggy day of picketing. The memory of leading a march in drag, bullhorn in hand, carries a feeling that I’ll never forget.”

—John Musser

GEO Strike Look

worn in Urbana, 2018

loan courtesy of John Musser



Elijah Lovejoy was a minister, journalist, and abolitionist. In 1837, he was killed while defending his printing press from a pro-slavery mob in Alton, Illinois. The romanticized—and racist—imagery on this pitcher shows him as a martyr for a noble cause.

Elijah P. Lovejoy Pitcher  
United Kingdom, 1839–1845  
Ceramic  
2017.06.0024



Women's March Pink Pussy Hat  
handmade  
United States, 2017  
Yarn  
Anonymous loan



Protest and mourning for Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire. New York, April 5, 1911. Courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration.



Women protest the draft in World War I. New York City, February 1918. Courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration.



Protest against the Vietnam War draft outside an Induction Center. Oakland, California, May 7, 1968. Courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration.



Men bowing in prayer at an Iran Hostage Crisis student demonstration. Washington, DC, November 30, 1979. Photo by Marion S. Trikosko. Courtesy of the Library of Congress, US News & World Report Magazine Photograph Collection.



Latino students protest in front of the campus administration building at an unidentified event, circa 1980. Courtesy of the University of Illinois Archives, image 0002745. Follow the QR code to learn more about Latino/a student movements on campus.







The Los Angeles March for Immigrant Rights, February 2017. Courtesy of Molly Adams. [creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/)



Protest at Egyptian Embassy. Washington, DC, January 29, 2011. Courtesy of Ted Eytan. [creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/)



Dakota Access Pipeline protest near the White House, February 8, 2017. Courtesy of Victoria Pickering. [creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.0/)



Protester at a Hey Wells Fargo—No DAPL! rally, part of a multi-national movement putting pressure on banks to divest from the Dakota Access Pipeline project. February 3, 2017. Courtesy of Joe Piette. [creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/2.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/2.0/)



Tea Party activists protest taxes. Oceanside, California, April 15, 2009. Courtesy of Bryce Bradford. [creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.0/)



A response to health reform legislation clearing Congress. Vermont, March 22, 2010. Courtesy of Ano Lobb. [creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/)



A Greenpeace protester comments on the slow progress for Endangered Species Act protection for polar bears due to the climate crisis. Washington, DC, January 2008. Courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration.



The March for Our Lives. Washington, DC, March 24, 2018. Courtesy of Ted Eytan. [creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/)





The March for Our Lives, a student-led effort for gun control legislation. San Francisco, March 24, 2018. Courtesy of Roger Jones. [creativecommons.org/publicdomain/zero/1.0/](https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/zero/1.0/)



The Los Angeles March for Immigrant Rights, February 2017. Courtesy of Molly Adams. [creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/)



Tibetan monks protest the Dalai Lama being denied entry to the UN Earth Summit in South Africa in 2002. Courtesy of Knut-Erik Helle. [creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/2.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/2.0/)



In Ice Watch, artist Olafur Eliasson and geologist Minik Rosing place blocks from the Greenland ice shield in public places in major cities. The direct and tangible experience of melting Arctic ice raises awareness of climate crisis. London, England, December 12, 2018. Courtesy of sarflondondunc. [creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.0/)



The People's Forum Against Coca-Cola criticizes the company for depleting and contaminating ground water. Mumbai, India, 2004. Courtesy of Knut-Erik Helle. [creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.0/)



A rally in support of whistleblower Edward Snowden. Hong Kong, June 15, 2013. Courtesy of Voice of America. [creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/)



The umbrella has been a symbol of protest in Hong Kong since 2014. It protects against pepper spray, rubber bullets, and government cameras. Hong Kong, October 20, 2019. Courtesy of Studio Incendo. [creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/)



The yellow vests movement in France, begun in 2018, protests economic injustice to working and middle classes. Paris, France, January 12, 2019. Courtesy of Olivier Ortelpa. [creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/)





In defiance of a ban against protesting, people continue to take to the streets to call for the resignation of then-President Hosni Mubarak. Cairo, Egypt, January 26, 2011. Courtesy of REUTERS/Goran Tomasevic/oxfamnovib. [creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nd/2.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nd/2.0/)

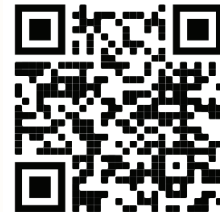
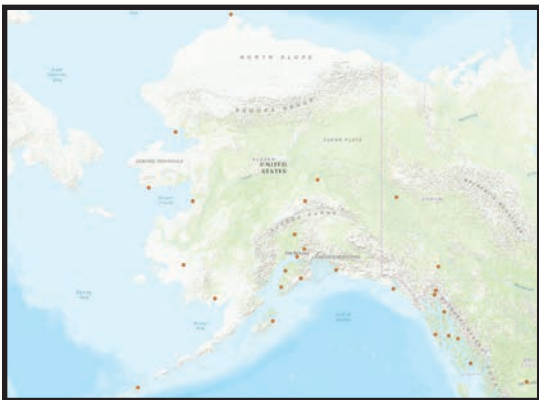
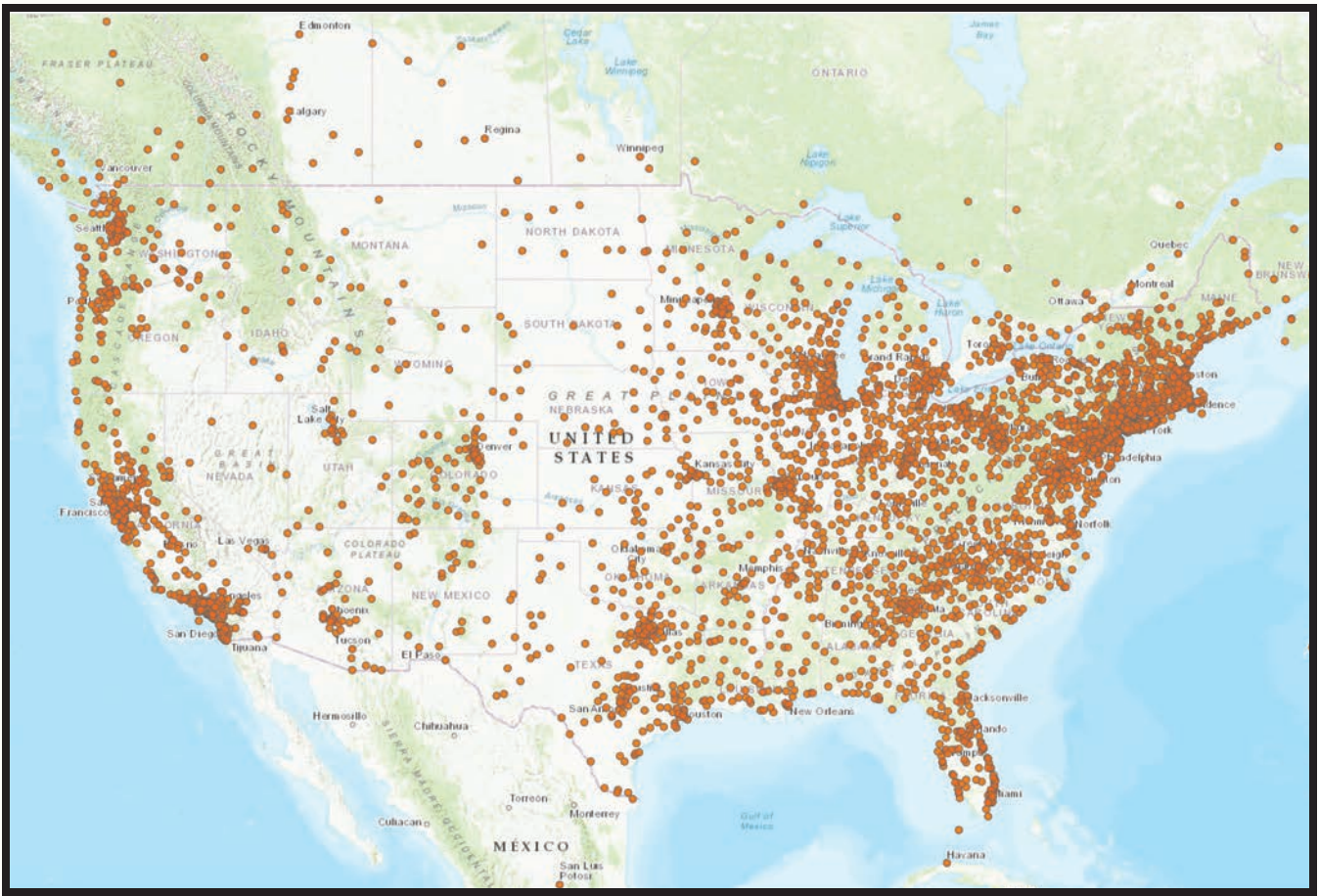


Protest in support of state secularism. Ankara, Turkey, April 14, 2007. Courtesy of Selahattin Sönmez.  
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If you are depicted in a photograph and would like us to obscure distinguishing features or remove the photograph, please contact us at [spurlock-museum@illinois.edu](mailto:spurlock-museum@illinois.edu).



End White Silence event. Urbana, June 19, 2020.  
Courtesy of Kelley Wegeng.



Black Lives Matter protests in the United States May 25–September 3, 2020. Courtesy of Creosotemaps.com. See an updated map using the QR code.



Organizer Drake Materre, a graduating senior in the College of AHS, speaks to protesters outside of the Champaign Police Department. June 1, 2020. Courtesy of Quentin Shaw/The Daily Illini.



Protesters gather outside the Urbana Police Department and hear speeches during the protest against the death of George Floyd. June 1, 2020. Courtesy of Quentin Shaw/The Daily Illini.



Protesters at the intersection of Springfield and Prospect Avenues during the Black Lives Matter march organized by Paign to Peace. Champaign, June 6, 2020. Courtesy of Salem Isaf/The Daily Illini.



University of Illinois athletes lead a Black Lives Matter march through Champaign. August 31, 2020. Courtesy of Farrah Anderson.





Protesters march down Green Street following the death of George Floyd. Champaign, June 1, 2020. Courtesy of Salem Isaf/The Daily Illini.



Protesters march westward on Green Street in Urbana carrying a Black Lives Matter banner. June 1, 2020. Courtesy of Quentin Shaw/The Daily Illini. See The Daily Illini's full image gallery using the QR code.





Black Lives Matter street mural in Frisco, Colorado, painted by local artists and approved by the town council. July 15, 2020. Courtesy of Thomas Elliott.



Protest against the police shooting of Jacob Blake.  
Philadelphia, September 4, 2020. Courtesy of Joe Piette.  
[creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.0/)



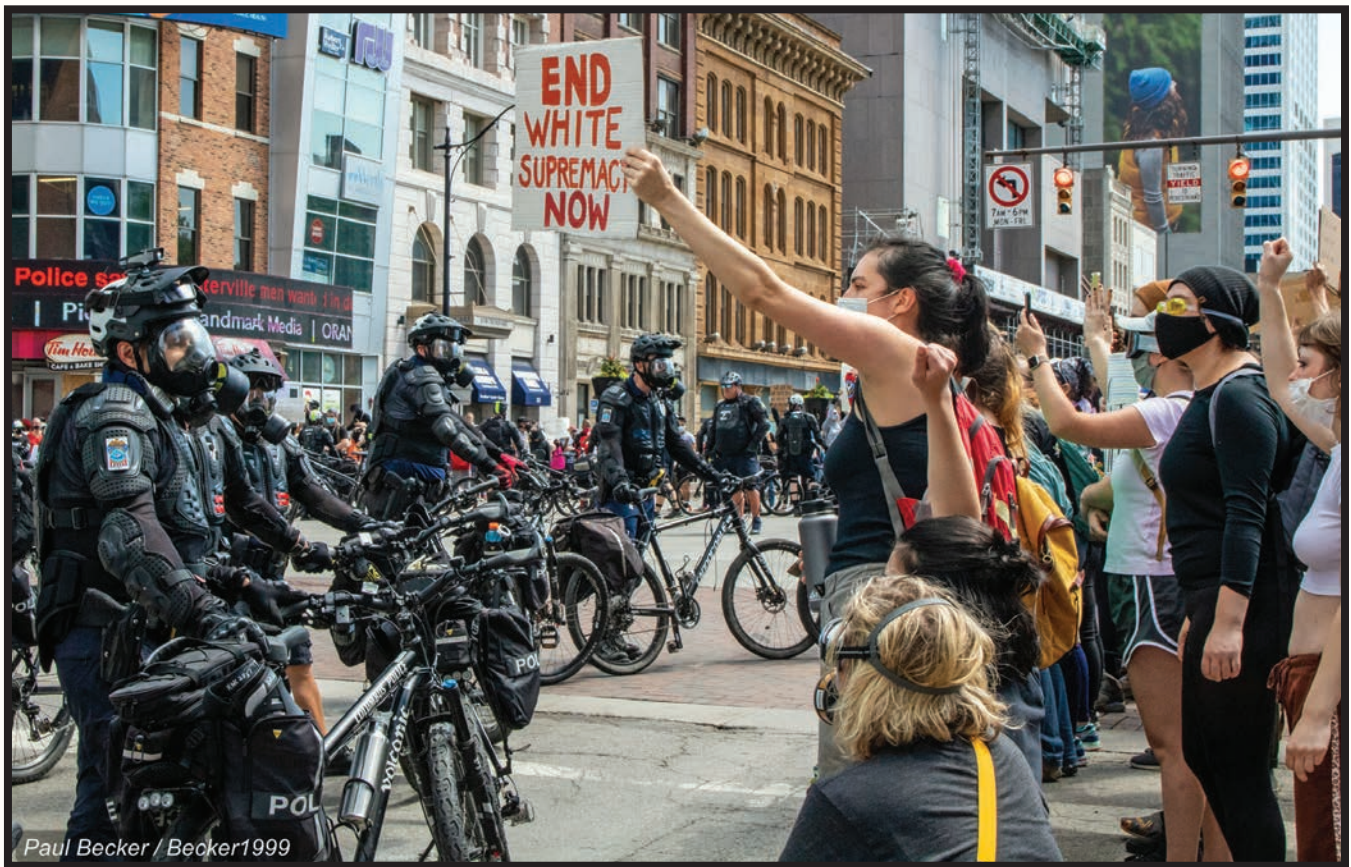
Protest against the police killing of George Floyd. Raleigh, North Carolina, June 2, 2020. Courtesy of James Willamor. [creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0)



Nebraska Army National Guard and marchers during the protests against the police killing of George Floyd. Omaha, Nebraska, June 2, 2020. Courtesy of Sgt. Lisa Crawford.



George Floyd protest. Seoul, South Korea, June 4, 2020. Courtesy of the Office of the US Ambassador to South Korea.



Protest against the police killing of George Floyd.  
Columbus, Ohio, May 30, 2020. Courtesy of  
Becker1999. [creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/deed.  
en](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/deed.en)





End White Silence event. Urbana, June 19, 2020.  
Courtesy of Kelley Wegeng.



Protest against the police killing of George Floyd. Des Moines, Iowa, May 29, 2020. Courtesy of Phil Roeder. [creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/deed.en](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/deed.en)



Protesters at a march organized by Not Another Black Life stand against the epidemic of missing and murdered Indigenous women (#MMIW). Toronto, Canada, May 30, 2020. Courtesy of Jason Hargrove. [creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/)



Protest against the police killing of George Floyd.  
Helsinki, Finland, June 3, 2020. Courtesy of Antti T.  
Nissinen. [creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/deed.en](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/deed.en)



Protest against the police killing of George Floyd.  
London, England, June 3, 2020. Courtesy of Katie  
Crampton. [creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/  
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Protest against the police killing of George Floyd.  
Stockholm, Sweden, June 3, 2020. Courtesy of Frankie  
Fouganthin. [creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/  
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A BLM protester also comments on restrictive European immigration laws. The placard bears the name of a child refugee who died fleeing Turkey in 2018. San Remo, Italy, June 20, 2020. Courtesy of Tommi Boom. [creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/deed.en](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/deed.en)



George Floyd memorial and protest. Tehran, Iran, June 3, 2020. Courtesy of Zoheir Seidanloo/Fars News Agency. [creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/deed.en](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/deed.en)





George Floyd protest. Fukuoka, Japan, June 21, 2020.  
Courtesy of N. Y. [creativecommons.org/publicdomain/zero/1.0/deed.en](https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/zero/1.0/deed.en)



Black Lives Matter protest. Berlin, June 6, 2020.  
Courtesy of Leonhard Lenz. [creativecommons.org/  
publicdomain/zero/1.0/deed.en](https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/zero/1.0/deed.en)



A protester holds the Mohawk Warrior Flag, designed by Louis Karoniaktajeh Hall, at the Justice for Regis/Not Another Black Life rally and march. Toronto, Canada, May 30, 2020. Courtesy of Jason Hargrove. [creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/) Learn about Justice for Regis at the QR code.



# Acknowledgments

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From the donors: "This collection is a gift to the people. It returns to them what they have freely imagined, created, and used to communicate their thoughts. In viewing these media, may the people see themselves and their predecessors."

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