

Name _____

Date _____

The Fifteenth Amendment, Frederick Douglass and Susan B. Anthony

Before the Civil War, two well-known leaders, Frederick Douglass and Susan B. Anthony worked together to end slavery and guarantee the right to vote to former slaves and women. In the 1860's, Douglass and Anthony had a disagreement that ended their long friendship and work together. Douglass, a former slave and abolitionist, supported the fifteenth amendment, while Anthony, a woman's rights leader, did not.

The Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution

This Amendment was proposed on February 27, 1869. It was ratified (approved) on February 3, 1870. It was a very close vote; many people had worried that it would not pass. At the time this amendment was proposed, only free, white men were considered "citizens" by many states. Those states prevented former slaves (and women) from voting.

Article 15: Amendment to the Constitution

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assemble, (two-thirds of both Houses concurring [agreeing]) that the following article be proposed to the legislature of the several states as an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which, when ratified by three-fourths of said legislatures shall be valid as part of the Constitution, namely:

Article XV. Section 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

Section 2. The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Name _____

Date _____

A Letter from Frederick Douglass

This is a letter from Frederick Douglass to Josephine Sophie White Griffing, an anti-slavery activist and the secretary of the National Women's Suffrage Association. He is responding to her request that he speak at a Washington meeting in support of women's suffrage.

September 27, 1868

My dear Friend:

I am impelled by no lack of generosity in refusing to come to Washington to speak in behalf of woman's suffrage. The right of woman to vote is as sacred in my judgment as that of man, and I am quite willing at any time to hold up both my hands in favor of this right. It does not however follow that I can come to Washington or go elsewhere to deliver lectures upon this special subject. I am now devoting myself to a cause not more sacred, certainly more urgent, because it is life and death to the long-enslaved people of this country; and this is: Negro suffrage. While the Negro is mobbed, beaten, shot, stabbed, hanged, burnt, and is the target of all that is malignant in the North and all that is murderous in the South his claims may be preferred by me without exposing in any wise myself to the imputation of narrowness or meanness towards the cause of woman. As you very well know, woman has a thousand ways to attach herself to the governing power of the land and already exerts an honorable influence on the course of legislation. She is the victim of abuses, to be sure, but it cannot be pretended I think that her cause is as urgent as that of ours. I never suspected you of sympathizing with Miss Anthony and Mrs. Stanton in this course. Their principle is: that no negro shall be enfranchised while woman is not. Now, considering that white men have been enfranchised always, and colored men have not, the conduct of these white women, whose husbands, fathers and brothers are voters, does not seem generous.

Very truly yours,

Fred Douglass

Name _____

Date _____

**Newspaper Report of National Women's Suffrage Association Meeting
on June 23, 1869**

This is an excerpt from a *New York Times* article about a meeting of the National Women's Suffrage Association. Phoebe Cozzens was the first woman lawyer in the United States and the first woman United States Marshal. She received her law degree in 1871. Susan B. Anthony was a well-known activist who traveled around the country to support her cause and she organized the Women's Loyal National League.

New York

June 23, 1869

Miss Phoebe Cozzens, a pretty girl of twenty, delivered an address in opposition to the Fifteenth Amendment. She considered it an insult to the entire mass of women in the United States. It admitted to suffrage negroes, Chinese, Alaskans, and every description of ignorant and imbruted (brutal) male foreigners; while it excluded women from that right. Rhode Island had recently refused to ratify (approve) it, and she trusted that it would not obtain the necessary vote of three-fourths of the State Legislatures, inasmuch as it asserted (said) in spirit that every man, no matter how degraded (low), was the superior of every woman. In regard to the voting of negro men, she said that not only were white women more fitted to vote than they, but negro women as a class likewise. The speaker complained much of the laws in the Southern States, which gave a husband an entire control of his wife's earnings.

Miss Susan B. Anthony complimented Miss Cozzens and spoke to the same effect. No woman there present, could obtain money to leave the City, except that her husband accorded it, and she

Name _____

Date _____

wished to see women all independent and earning their own support. She inferred (reasoned) that all the women in the meeting had come there, doubtless, without the concurrence (agreement) of their husbands, and were a species (type) of runaway slaves. Miss Cozzens observed that she knew of at least twenty women who would go to suffrage meetings and openly advocate (support) the cause, if it were not for the objections of their husbands. Miss Anthony said that objections had often been made to her relative to the religious creeds of certain women who attended. She cared neither for the creeds nor personal relations of those who came, so long as they met upon the basis of female suffrage, they were welcome. At a political meeting of men no foolish objections were made to those who attended, and women should be equally welcoming.