

VOTES FOR WOMEN

LEADING CHANGE THE ALICE PAUL WAY

Who are the most significant change agents in our nation's history? Do you immediately think of Frederick Douglass, Rachel Carson perhaps, or Martin Luther King, Jr.? All great answers. But what about Alice Paul?



More than any other single individual, Alice Paul was responsible for **securing passage of the Nineteenth Amendment** and extending voting rights to women. In 1913, at the age of 28, Paul announced the push for a federal suffrage amendment with a parade of 8,000 women from the U.S. Capitol down Pennsylvania Avenue to the Treasury building. Just four blocks into the march, the women were attacked by bystanders, with one hundred marchers requiring medical attention. While the parade did not go as planned, the spectacle before and during the attacks brought national attention to suffrage, accomplishing Paul's objective and beginning a process that would culminate with the passage of the suffrage amendment just seven years later.

This seminar uses Alice Paul's story, brought to life by contemporary photos as well as video clips from Hollywood movies, to highlight cutting edge theories on leading change and help participants think about navigating the changes they want to lead. We explore a new model on the **roles each change effort must have filled, including the agitator, innovator, and orchestrator**, as well as the all-important concept of how one goes about **increasing the urgency** for change.

Alice Paul's methods were **new, sometimes radical, and nearly always controversial**, but change often requires such leadership. From organizing the first protest marches in D.C. to the first campaign to lobby Congress to picketing the White House, Alice Paul created the blueprint that future rights movements emulated. In October 1917 Paul was arrested for leading the White House picketers, and when she went on a hunger strike she was brutally force-fed by prison authorities. The public backlash to the treatment of Paul and the other jailed suffragists forced President Woodrow Wilson to support a suffrage amendment. Alice Paul was just 35 years old when the amendment was ratified in 1920.

Participants begin by identifying a change movement they are currently working on or would like to tackle. As we unfold the story of Alice Paul and work through the stages of change, we ask participants to reflect upon both the theoretical models and Alice Paul's experience to deepen the discussions of where they are with their change movements and where they go next.

For groups in Washington D.C., it is possible to tour the Sewall-Belmont House, home of the Belmont-Paul Women's Equality National Monument, and see the banners the suffragists carried in 1917 – among many other artifacts – making for an unforgettable experience.

