

1. During Alice's time, what was the life and mentality of an average woman? Why were many women themselves against having the right to vote?

I prefer the word "typical." This woman would certainly have been what we today would call a homemaker, ministering to the need of a husband and children. My grandmother, for example, born the same year as Alice Paul [1885], was from rural Pennsylvania. She aspired to be a nurse, and over her father's objections she traveled to Philadelphia for her studies. Although she graduated, she married my grandfather, a newly minted doctor, and never worked, instead raising four children. A woman who did not marry would have drawn sympathy. That said, a handful of women were entering the professions, as physicians (often homeopathic) and lawyers. They were, of course, teachers. It was common for a single woman in need of income to run a boardinghouse. As to the mentality, it is now widely recognized that many women were treated for "nerves," which we recognize today as depression. Doctors had a variety of unorthodox treatments for this condition. But possibly adding meaning to their routine lives may have been the best cure of all. Knowing this, you will now understand that women homemakers found it necessary to defend their life styles by opposing suffrage. Their arguments were various and I will attach some in the literature. Most popular was that politics was a man's business, the responsibility of the head of the household. It would distract women from their essential roles. Moreover, the wife would only vote like her husband, thus duplicating his vote.

2. What were some events that were going on during the same period, such as World War I, that largely helped or hurt the suffrage movement?

President Woodrow Wilson was the chief target of Alice Paul and her supporters because he so adamantly opposed a federal suffrage amendment. He campaigned for reelection in 1916 on the slogan, "He kept out of war." When he reversed his position in 1917 and called for a war resolution, he used language that inadvertently handed the suffragists a weapon. His call to "make the world safe for democracy," allowed them to point out that America was not a democracy because 20,000,000 American women couldn't vote. This evidence of his hypocrisy was featured on the banners the White House pickets carried. (On the down side, the pickets were accused of disloyalty for picketing a sitting president in time of war.) In

addition, women were needed on the home front to fill in for male workers who had joined the military. They worked in the transportation systems (railroads), in agriculture, and in factories, including munitions plants and hospitals. Nurses also served overseas in the war. When the war ended, women's service to the country was a power argument for suffrage.

3. In your opinion, what is the most effective way that Alice Paul campaigned for the right to vote? In other words, what do you think is smartest or the most persuasive thing she did?

She was a brilliant tactician. In view of the attention given the White House picketing, the lobbying campaign mounted by her organization is often overlooked. In targeting members of congress, they virtually invented modern lobbying. Thanks to assiduous research both in the field and in the Capitol itself, Alice knew the background and vulnerabilities of each representative and senator and how to play them. This was crucial when the amendment came up for a vote.

4. To what extent were Alice's methods of protesting unconventional for her time period?

It is enough to say that her volunteers were the first people ever to picket the White House. Women workers had manned picket lines during the strike. But in this case "conventional" women were behaving most unconventionally. They went onto hold other demonstrations, at one point burning Woodrow Wilson's words because he did not follow through with action.

5. Out of all of the groups who were against Alice, such as the Democrats, the National American Woman Suffrage Association, and powerful liquor companies, who was the hardest to overcome and why?

By far the politicians. Alice wisely chose not to engage with NAWSA; she thought women should not fight each other. She really had no means to counter the liquor lobby, other than an alliance with the temperance movement; its weapon was cash. But Democrats were vulnerable to political pressure, and that she knew how to apply it.

6. On the other hand, out of all the successful women who supported Alice, whose support was the most valuable and why?

Without a doubt, the wealthy Alva Belmont made all the difference. She essentially bankrolled Alice's Congressional Union and popularized suffrage among her well-to-do friends. She added not only money but respectability to the movement. She was immensely popular, too, with the public.