

“IRON JAWED ANGELS”

Iron Jawed Angels is a 2004 film about the American women's suffrage movement during the 1910s. It was filmed in Virginia, produced by HBO Films, and released in 2004.

The film follows political activists Alice Paul and Lucy Burns as they use peaceful and effective strategies, tactics, and dialogues to revolutionize the American feminist movement to grant women the right to vote.

The film begins as Alice Paul (Hilary Swank) and Lucy Burns (Frances O'Connor) return to the United States from England where they have been actively involved in the suffrage movement. As the duo becomes more active within the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), they begin to realize that their ideas were much too radical for the established activists, particularly Carrie Chapman Catt (Anjelica Huston). Both women eventually leave NAWSA and create the National Woman's Party (NWP), a much more radical organization dedicated to the fight for women's rights.

Over time, tension between the NWP and NAWSA grows as NAWSA leaders criticize NWP tactics such as direct protesting of a wartime President and picketing directly outside the White House with their “Silent Sentinels”. The media dubs these women 'Iron Jawed Angels'. Relations between the American government and the NWP protesters also intensify, as many women are arrested for their actions, though the official charge is "obstructing traffic." They are sent to Occoquan Workhouse for 60-day term jail sentence where they suffer poor conditions. During this time, Paul and other women undergo a hunger strike during which prison authorities force feed them milk and raw eggs through a tube. News of their treatment leaks to the media through the husband of one of the imprisoned women who had been able to lobby for a visit (the suffragists are depicted as otherwise unable to see visitors or lawyers). Pressure is put on President Wilson as NAWSA seizes the opportunity to lobby tirelessly for the nineteenth amendment to the Constitution.

Alice Paul, Lucy Burns and all of the other women are eventually pardoned by President Wilson. The Supreme Court rules that their arrests were, in fact, unconstitutional.

Directions: Answer the following questions and be sure to include details from the film.

1) What was the women's suffrage movement?

The women's suffrage movement refers to a time period when a group of women fought for their right to vote and be represented in their country's government/democracy

2) Explain why the men on the street attacked the women that were participating in the parade.

Most men did not think women should be given the right to vote in the late 19th and early 20th century

3) When the women were picketing the White House what do you think caused the citizens, mainly men, to act the way they did? Explain.

They held opposing viewpoints on the subject and they did not think it was respectful to protest a U.S. President, particularly when our country was involved in a war.

4) What is your opinion of the method used to remove the women from the picket line? Explain.

Answers will vary, the method used was a forceful one (they physically removed the women).

5) Explain why men were opposed to creating an amendment that would allow women to vote.

Most men thought that the proper place of the woman was at home, taking care of the house and children.

6) “Oranges in women is often mistaken for insanity.” Explain the meaning of this statement.

Quote was referring to the mental state of Alice Paul, she continues her protest in prison and goes on a hunger strike (fighting for her right to vote/representation in government). Compare what Alice Paul is doing to one of America’s founding figures: Henry Adams “give me liberty or give me death”, he was viewed as an American hero and Paul is being viewed as crazy or insane.

7) What do you think finally pushed Woodrow Wilson to support an amendment giving the women the right to vote? Explain why you believe he gave in.

Information about how Alice Paul was being treated was leaked to press, public opinion changes and now supports giving women the right to vote.

8) Describe what happened on August 18, 1920 and explain why it was such a significant event.

To ratify a constitutional amendment a supermajority of the states have to approve of it, in 1920 enough states finally support and approve the suffrage amendment.

9) How would you characterize Alice Paul and Lucy Burns...as heroes, as patriots? Explain.

Answers will vary, students opinion, provide supporting evidence/reasoning.

10) What contributions did each woman make to the suffrage movement and to American democracy?

Alice Paul, Lucy Burns, & Carrie Catt all worked to make American democracy more democratic (incorporating more of the country’s citizens into the democratic form of government).

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Over time, tension between the NWP and NAWSA grows as NAWSA leaders criticize NWP tactics such as direct protesting of a wartime President and picketing directly outside the White House with their “Silent Sentinels”. The media dubs these women 'Iron Jawed Angels'. Relations between the American government and the NWP protesters also intensify, as many women are arrested for their actions, though the official charge is "obstructing traffic." They are sent to Occoquan Workhouse for 60-day term jail sentence where they suffer poor conditions. During this time, Paul and other women undergo a hunger strike during which prison authorities force feed them milk and raw eggs through a tube. News of their treatment leaks to the media through the husband of one of the imprisoned women who had been able to lobby for a visit (the suffragists are depicted as otherwise unable to see visitors or lawyers). Pressure is put on President Wilson as NAWSA seizes the opportunity to lobby tirelessly for the nineteenth amendment to the Constitution.

Alice Paul, Lucy Burns and all of the other women are eventually pardoned by President Wilson. The Supreme Court rules that their arrests were, in fact, unconstitutional.

Directions: Answer the following questions and be sure to include details from the film.

1) What was the women's suffrage movement?

The women's suffrage movement refers to a time period when a group of women fought for their right to _____ and be represented in their country's government/democracy

- A) drive
- B) vote
- C) work

2) Explain why the men on the street attacked the women that were participating in the parade.

Most men did not think women should be given the right to vote in the _____.

- A) late 19th and early 20th century
- B) late 20th century

3) When the women were picketing the White House what do you think caused the citizens, mainly men, to act the way they did? Explain.

They held opposing viewpoints on the subject and they did not think it was respectful to protest a U.S. President, particularly when our country was involved in a _____.

- A) peace rally
- B) war

4) What was the method used to remove the women from the picket line?

- A) verbal requests
- B) a forceful one (they physically removed the women).

5) Explain why men were opposed to creating an amendment that would allow women to vote.

Most men thought that the proper place of the woman was at home, taking care of the house and children.

- A) True
- B) False

6) “Oranges in women is often mistaken for insanity.” Explain the meaning of this statement.

Quote was referring to the _____ state of Alice Paul, she continues her protest in prison and goes on a hunger strike (fighting for her right to vote/representation in government). Compare what Alice Paul is doing to one of America’s founding figures: Henry Adams “give me liberty or give me death”, he was viewed as an American hero and Paul is being viewed as crazy or insane.

- A) physical
- B) mental



8) Describe what happened on August 18, 1920 and explain why it was such a significant event.

To ratify a constitutional amendment a supermajority of the states have to approve of it, in _____ enough states finally support and approve the suffrage amendment.

- A) 1920
- B) 1914
- C) 1912



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The film begins as Alice Paul (Hilary Swank) and Lucy Burns (Frances O'Connor) return to the United States from England where they have been actively involved in the suffrage movement. As the duo becomes more active within the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), they begin to realize that their ideas were much too radical for the established activists, particularly Carrie Chapman Catt (Anjelica Huston). Both women eventually leave NAWSA and create the National Woman's Party (NWP), a much more radical organization dedicated to the fight for women's rights.

Over time, tension between the NWP and NAWSA grows as NAWSA leaders criticize NWP tactics such as direct protesting of a wartime President and picketing directly outside the White House with their Silent Sentinels. The media dubs these women 'Iron Jawed Angels'. Relations between the American government and the NWP protesters also intensify, as many women are arrested for their actions, though the official charge is "obstructing traffic." They are sent to Occoquan Workhouse for 60-day terms where they suffer poor conditions. During this time, Paul and other women undergo a hunger strike during which prison authorities force feed them milk and raw eggs through a tube. News of their treatment leaks to the media through the husband of one of the imprisoned women who had been able to lobby for a visit (the suffragists are depicted as otherwise unable to see visitors or lawyers). Pressure is put on President Wilson as NAWSA seizes the opportunity to lobby tirelessly for the nineteenth amendment to the Constitution.

Paul, Burns and all of the other women are eventually pardoned by President Wilson. The Supreme Court rules that their arrests were, in fact, unconstitutional.

Directions: Answer the following questions and be sure to include details from the film.

1) **What** was the women's suffrage movement?

The woman's suffrage movement was...

2) **Explain why** the men on the street attacked the women that were participating in the parade.

The men on the street attacked the woman because...

3) **When** the women were picketing the White House what do you think caused the citizens, mainly men, to act the way they did? **Explain.**

I think the citizens acted that way because...

4) **What is your opinion** of the method used to remove the women from the picket line? **Explain.**
I think the method was...

5) **Explain why** men were opposed to creating an amendment that would allow women to vote.
Men were opposed to creating an amendment that would allow women to vote because...

6) "Oranges in women is often mistaken for insanity." **Explain the meaning** of this statement.
This statement means...

7) **What do you think** finally pushed Woodrow Wilson to support an amendment giving the women the right to vote? **Explain** why you believe he gave in.
I think...

Because...

8) **Describe** what happened on August 18, 1920 and **explain why** it was such a significant event.
On August 18, 1920...

This is a significant event because...

9) **How** would you characterize Alice Paul and Lucy Burns...as heroes, as patriots? **Explain.**
Alice Paul and Lucy Burns were _____ because...

10) **What** contributions did each woman make to the suffrage movement and to American democracy?
Alice Paul, Lucy Burns and Carrie Call all worked to...

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- 4) What is your opinion of the method used to remove the women from the picket line? Explain.
- 5) Explain why men were opposed to creating an amendment that would allow women to vote.
- 6) “Oranges in women is often mistaken for insanity.” Explain the meaning of this statement.
- 7) What do you think finally pushed Woodrow Wilson to support an amendment giving the women the right to vote? Explain why you believe he gave in.
- 8) Describe what happened on August 18, 1920 and explain why it was such a significant event.
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Directions: Are each of the answers correct? YES or NO

1) What was the women's suffrage movement?

The women's suffrage movement refers to a time period when a group of women fought for their right to vote and be represented in their country's government/democracy

YES

NO

2) Explain why the men on the street attacked the women that were participating in the parade.

Most men did not think women should be given the right to vote in the late 18th and early 19th century

YES

NO

3) When the women were picketing the White House what do you think caused the citizens, mainly men, to act the way they did? Explain.

They held opposing viewpoints on the subject and they did not think it was respectful to protest a U.S. President, particularly when our country was involved in a war.

YES

NO

Yes No Strategy

5) Explain why men were opposed to creating an amendment that would allow women to vote.

Most men thought that the proper place of the woman was at home, taking care of the house and children.

YES

NO

6) “Oranges in women is often mistaken for insanity.” Explain the meaning of this statement.

Quote was referring to the mental state of Alice Paul, she continues her protest in prison and goes on a hunger strike (fighting for her right to vote/representation in government). Compare what Alice Paul is doing to one of America’s founding figures: Henry Adams “give me liberty or give me death”, he was viewed as an American hero and Paul is being viewed as crazy or insane.

YES

NO

7) What do you think finally pushed Woodrow Wilson to support an amendment giving the women the right to vote? Explain why you believe he gave in.

Information about how Alice Paul was being treated was leaked to press, public opinion changes and now supports giving women the right to vote.

YES

NO

8) Describe what happened on August 18, 1920 and explain why it was such a significant event.

To ratify a constitutional amendment a supermajority of the states have to approve of it, in 1902 enough states finally support and approve the suffrage amendment.

YES

NO

10) What contributions did each woman make to the suffrage movement and to American democracy?

Alice Paul, Lucy Burns, & Carrie Catt all worked to make American democracy more democratic (incorporating more of the country’s citizens into the democratic form of government).

YES

NO