

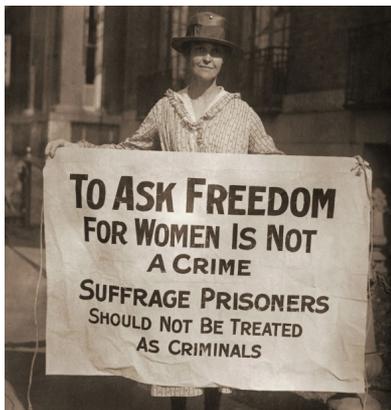
The Main Feature

Season 37 - Issue 12 screening 9.3.17

UK 2015 Cert PG 1hr 46m

Director	Sarah Gavron
Producers	Alison Owen Faye Ward
Writer	Abi Morgan
Music	Alexandre Desplat
Cinematography	Edu Grau
Editor	Barney Pilling

Cast	Carey Mulligan
Maud Watts	Helena Bonham Carter
Edith Ellyn	Meryl Streep
Emmeline Pankhurst	Natalie Press
Emily Davison	Anne-Marie Duff
Violet Miller	Romola Garai
Alice Haughton	Ben Wishaw
Sonny Watts	Brendan Gleeson
Steed	Samuel West
Benedict	Adrian Schiller
David Lloyd George	Morgan Watkins
Walsop	



Suffragettes were members of women's organisations in the late 19th and early 20th centuries who advocated the extension of the right to vote in public elections to women. The term suffragette was associated particularly with activists in the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) led by Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst. Women had been enfranchised in various ways, to a limited extent, in a number of countries, but in 1893 New Zealand was the first self-governing country to grant all women over the age of 21 the right to vote. However, by 1903 women in Britain had still not been enfranchised and Emmeline Pankhurst concluded that the WSPU would have to become radical and militant if it was to be effective. The campaign thereafter became increasingly bitter with property damage and hunger strikes being countered by the authorities with jailing and force feeding.

British suffragettes, including the Pankhursts, were mostly women from upper and middle class backgrounds, frustrated by their social and economic situation. But tonight's film covering the push for women's suffrage in the United Kingdom in 1911-13 is concerned predominantly with the experiences of a fictional working class woman, Maud Watts, played by Carey Mulligan.

In 1912, Maud Watts was a 24-year-old laundress. One day while delivering a package, she is caught up in a suffragette protest, where she recognises one of her colleagues, Violet Miller. Alice Haughton, the wife of an MP, encourages the women from the laundry to give their testimony to parliament in order to secure the right to vote. Maud is the one who testifies.

SUFFRAGETTE WHO WAS FORCIBLY FED 232 TIMES.

RELEASE FROM HOLLOWAY GAOL.

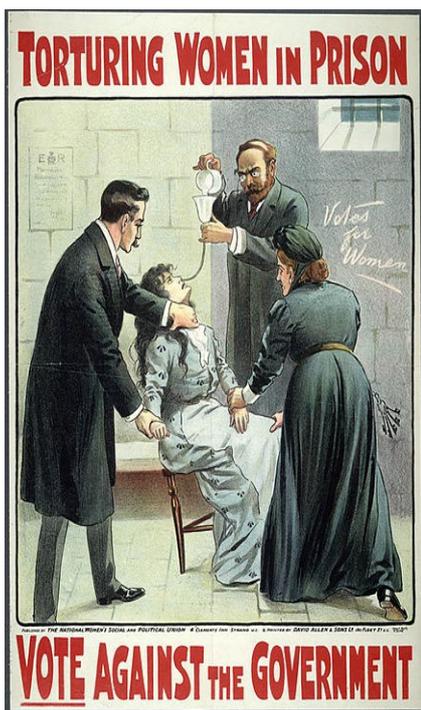
Miss Kitty Marion, who was rearrested early in January under the "Cat and Mouse Act," was released from Holloway yesterday. The Women's Social and Political Union state that Miss Marion is in a terribly weak and emaciated condition, having lost 2st. 8lb. in weight. She has been forcibly fed 232 times, and has been very sick all the time. She states that so great did the repeated physical and mental agony become that she felt she would have to put an end to it by hanging herself. On one occasion she broke the glass protecting the gaslight and set the bedclothes on fire.

The women gathered together learn that their testimony had not been successful in gaining them the vote. Subsequently the police officers began beating them; Maud is caught up in the crowd, arrested and jailed for a week. While in jail she meets Emily Davison, a confidant of Emmeline Pankhurst. Returning home, Maud faces difficulties with her husband and stigma from her neighbours and work colleagues. She promises her husband, Sonny, that she will stay away from the suffragettes. But she does not and attends a secret rally, when she has a brief exchange, which if you blink you might miss, with Emmeline Pankhurst played by Meryl Streep. Prevented by her husband from seeing her son, Maud becomes more and more radical and is involved in the bombing of pillar boxes and the cutting of telegraph wires. She and her comrades are imprisoned again where Maud goes on hunger strike and is subject to brutal force-feeding.

The suffragettes feel that they must do something more drastic in order to gain attention. To this end the women decide to go to the Epsom Derby in 1913 when George V will be in attendance, in order to step in front of the cameras and unfurl their banners. However, on the day, only Maud and Emily Davison are able to make it. When they are barred from the area where King George V is standing, Emily decides that they must carry on anyway. While the race is underway, Emily steps onto the track and Maud witnesses her being trampled to death.



A year later World War 1 began and the WSPU's campaign was suspended. In the changed climate after the war the cause of women's suffrage was finally and easily won. Women in Britain over the age of 30, meeting certain property qualifications, were given the right to vote in 1918, and in 1928 suffrage was extended to all women over the age of 21. Opinion amongst historians today is divided as to whether the militant tactics of the suffragettes helped or hindered their cause.



Filming for Suffragette began in 2014 and it was the first film in history to be shot in the Houses of Parliament. The factory and prison scenes were filmed in Chatham Dockyard. Suffragette received positive reviews and particular praise was directed at the cast and notably Carol Mullen as Maud, Helen Bonham Carter in her role as Edith, a pharmacist in a good marriage, who physically fragile but emotionally indomitable, decides to break the laws that were passed without her consent or vote, and Brendan Gleeson as Inspector Steed who, while he does not think much of women's suffrage is concerned about, and not unsympathetic towards, Maud and her treatment as a working class woman.

Interestingly, Helen Bonham Carter who, in her public utterances has spoken out about injustice and domestic violence towards women, is the granddaughter of Herbert Asquith, Prime Minister from 1908-16, the prime years of the suffrage movement which he opposed. But her part which it is suggested could have been inspired by a true person, is a fictional character like everyone else in the film other than King George V, Lloyd George, Emily Pankhurst and Emily Davison.

A work of fiction based on fact but worth watching. I hope you enjoy it.

Neville Ledson



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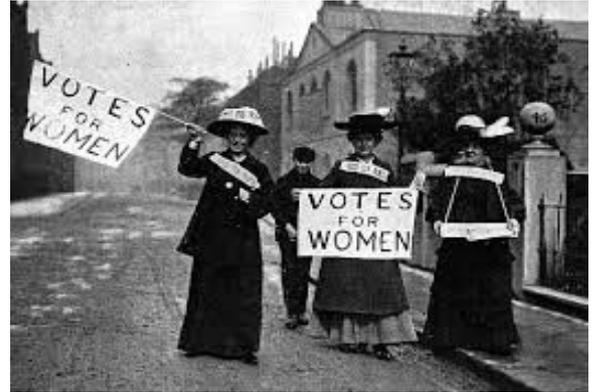
15 Poole Road, Woking
Tel: 01483 596280

Frances Connelly: The British woman who quietly made history voting seven years before it was legal

It was years of suffrage across the globe that led to a select number of British women being granted the right to vote in 1918.

But thanks to a systematic error on the electoral register, it is believed that one woman was able to cast her vote some seven years previously.

In 1911, Frances Connelly was mistakenly added to the electoral role and sent a polling card for a local by-election in Yeoville, Somerset.



The error is thought to have occurred after someone assumed she was a man from the spelling of her name.

Seeing Ms Connelly walk into the polling station, Conservative agent Harold Fletcher debated the matter with WT Snell, barrister of the Western Circuit, it was reported.

The two officials consulted presiding officer WW Henley, who agreed they had no choice but to let her cast her vote.



The rules at the time stated that in order to vote, individuals had to be the person named on the register card and were not allowed to have cast votes previously in the same election – both criteria Ms Connelly met.

A report from a local newspaper dated November 29, 1911 reads: “The election will be remembered for the first time in the history of the constituency a woman claimed and was allowed to exercise the Parliamentary franchise.”

“At the very moment a Suffragist's car was touring Yeovil displaying to an amused crowd the legend 'Mothers want votes', a lady was putting her cross against the name of Mr Aubrey Herbert - at least she is supposed to be on the Unionist side - at the Town Hall.”

“The point was carried, and Mrs Connelly voted. What is more her vote was recorded in the ordinary way - not upon a 'tendered' paper - and was counted with the others.”

While her vote caused shock at the time, Ms Connelly was not the first British woman to carry a polling card.

In 1867, Lily Maxwell voted in a by-election in Manchester where regulations granted the right to all ratepayers, but overlooked the need to exempt women from the rule.

Several female property owners in Manchester followed her lead, but the loophole was plugged in the following year, and women's suffrage declared illegal.

Women were first granted the vote in 1918 - but it was a privilege only given to wealthy, land-owning women over the age of 30. It was not until 1928 that full suffrage was introduced.

Ms Connelly, of Reckleford, Yeovil, died in 1917 at the age of 48 and did not live to see women get the vote.

Comments and reactions to: **Lemon Tree**

Very good – avoided stereotyping on both sides

A very worthwhile and thought provoking film

Well portrayed, educational and realistic film

A worthy effort – must have been difficult to make

Informative but at times too contrived storyline

A superb and moving film but an intractable situation

V good film but ultimately a depressing indictment of human nature.

“Building a wall” where have I heard that before? Sadly, an everlasting conflict.

What a good expose of the situation – America and the UN bear a heavy burden here

A very good film. The lemon grove was a very good way of portraying the Arab Israeli conflict

A beautiful, thoughtful film – the Jewish Voice for Peace film shown at the start, though, jarred with me. As much as I sympathise with JVP, I feel this film oversimplifies the complexities of the history of Israel-Palestine and its current situation. It seemed not to quite hit the right note as a prelude to the nuanced main feature.

Nothing changes

Thought provoking

Heart wrenching

A good story, effectively told

Drastic measures – so avoidable

Score	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	~	~	~	~	1	1	1	16	12	3	~

No of reaction slips received = 34

Average Score = 7.35

Position	Film	Average Score
1 st	Bridge of Spies	8.24
2 nd	Spotlight	8.17
3 rd	Brooklyn	7.85
4 th	Eddie the Eagle	7.79
5 th	The Good Lie	7.5
6 th	Lemon Tree	7.35
7 th	Carol	6.97
8 th	Gunfight at the OK Corral	6.9
9 th	The Big Parade	6.82
10 th	Hector	6.44
11 th	Comme Une Image	5.82

Our next film on 23 March 2017:



MYSTERY ROAD

“A striking and menacing slow-burn thriller set in the Australian outback which blends dry humour with startling social commentary.”

“Mystery Road is a detective story that unspools with languid menace on the widescreen of the Australian Outback.”

“Touched by dry humor and elegant action, this is a marvellous blend of classic detective noir and modern Outback Western.”