

NOVEMBER 6, 1894 - DENVER, COLORADO

COLORFUL
HISTORY
PRESENTS

ELIZABETH ENSLEY

TODAY IS NO ORDINARY DAY.

VOTE HERE

FOR THOUSANDS OF WOMEN
ACROSS COLORADO, IT'S A
CELEBRATION LONG OVERDUE.

MANY HAVE STRUGGLED
WEEKS, MONTHS, EVEN
YEARS TO BECOME
EQUAL CITIZENS.

TODAY, THEY VOTE FOR
THE FIRST TIME IN
STATE ELECTIONS.

TODAY, THEIR VOICES
ARE FINALLY HEARD.

Written By: Adam Kullberg
Art By: Monica Benik

ELIZABETH ENSLEY, 1848 - 1919

BORN IN THE CARIBBEAN,
ENSLEY TRAVELED THE WORLD
BEFORE MOVING TO BOSTON
IN THE 1870S.

THERE, SHE HELPED
ESTABLISH A LIBRARY
AND WORKED AS A TEACHER.

FOR ELIZABETH ENSLEY,
THOUGH, TODAY IS JUST
THE BEGINNING.

AND DESPITE THE
DISCRIMINATION SHE OFTEN
FACED FOR THE COLOR OF
HER SKIN, SHE QUICKLY
BECAME A PROMINENT
MEMBER OF MANY SOCIAL
REFORM GROUPS MEANT TO
HELP WOMEN AND THE POOR.

WOMEN
ARE
CITIZENS
TOO

ENSLEY'S COMMITMENT TO CIVIL RIGHTS LED HER TO DENVER IN THE EARLY 1890S, WHERE SHE JOINED THE COLORADO EQUAL SUFFRAGE ASSOCIATION AS THEIR TREASURER.

CRIPPLE CREEK MINING CAMP, 1893

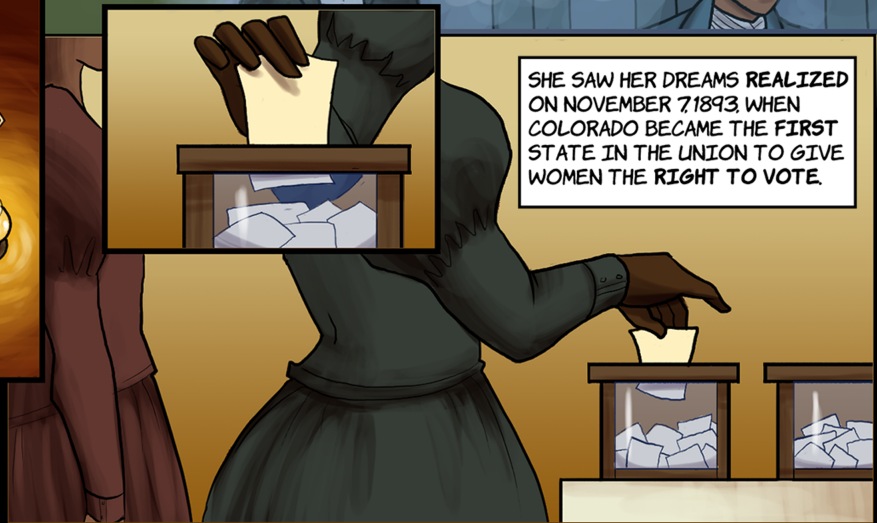
SHE ARRIVED AT A TIME OF ECONOMIC DEPRESSION IN COLORADO, WITH THOUSANDS OF MINERS ON STRIKE, AND MANY MORE FLOODING INTO DENVER IN HOPES OF FINDING WORK.



DESPITE THIS, AND STARTING WITH A SHOESTRING BUDGET OF ONLY \$25, ENSLEY HELPED LAUNCH ONE OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGNS FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN U.S. HISTORY.



SHE SAW HER DREAMS REALIZED ON NOVEMBER 7, 1893, WHEN COLORADO BECAME THE FIRST STATE IN THE UNION TO GIVE WOMEN THE RIGHT TO VOTE.



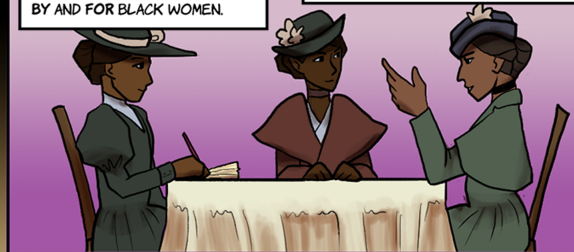
YET, FOR ENSLEY, HAVING THE RIGHT TO VOTE WASN'T ENOUGH.



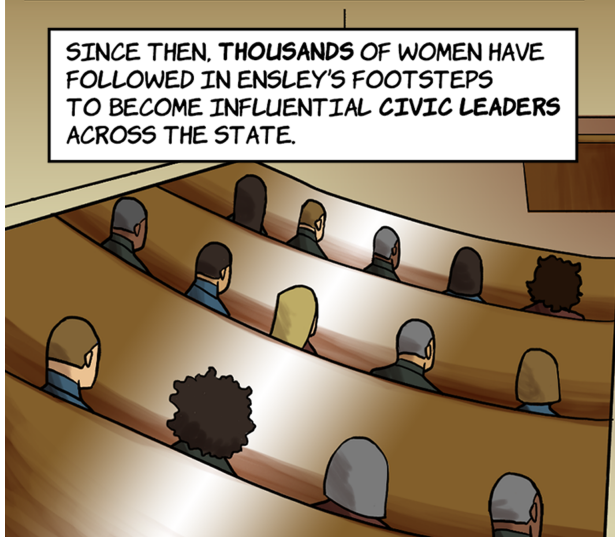
SHE BELIEVED THAT BLACKS AND WOMEN SHOULD NOT ONLY HAVE A SAY IN ELECTIONS, BUT WERE CRITICAL TO IMPROVING LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND A CORRUPT POLITICAL SYSTEM.

TO DO SO, SHE FOUNDED CLUBS FOR WOMEN AND BLACKS ALL THROUGHOUT COLORADO AND WROTE FOR WOMEN'S ERA THE FIRST MAGAZINE CREATED BY AND FOR BLACK WOMEN.

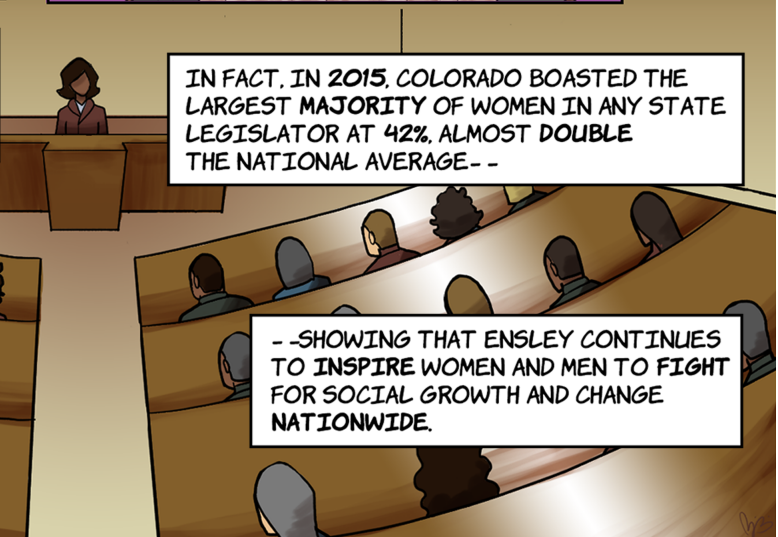
THANKS TO HER EFFORTS, IN 1894 COLORADO BECAME THE FIRST STATE TO ELECT WOMEN TO THE STATE LEGISLATURE IN U.S. HISTORY.



SINCE THEN, THOUSANDS OF WOMEN HAVE FOLLOWED IN ENSLEY'S FOOTSTEPS TO BECOME INFLUENTIAL CIVIC LEADERS ACROSS THE STATE.



IN FACT, IN 2015, COLORADO BOASTED THE LARGEST MAJORITY OF WOMEN IN ANY STATE LEGISLATOR AT 42%, ALMOST DOUBLE THE NATIONAL AVERAGE--



--SHOWING THAT ENSLEY CONTINUES TO INSPIRE WOMEN AND MEN TO FIGHT FOR SOCIAL GROWTH AND CHANGE NATIONWIDE.



Teacher Guide



Elizabeth Ensley

Born 1848 Died 1919

Written by Adam Kullberg **Art** by Monica Benik **Teacher Guide** by Jason Nisavic

Quick Vocab List

Citizen – A person who belongs with a specific country and usually calls it “home.”

Election – When citizens get together and vote for the people that they want to be leaders.

Discrimination – When a person or a group of people hurt or restrict another group of people because they are different.

Prominent – Important and the center of attention.

Civil Rights – Rights that make everyone equal, regardless of gender, skin color, or who they love.

Suffrage – The right to vote.

Economic Depression – A time when it’s hard for people to make money and many people lose their jobs.

Shoestring Budget – When you have almost no money.

Campaign – Trying to convince people to support someone or something.

State Legislature – Group of people who help the Governor run a state by passing laws.

Civic Leaders – People in charge who try hard to care for people and their problems.

Discussion Questions

3rd-5th

- Becoming a citizen is just like belonging to a club. It gives you privileges, but it also gives you responsibilities.
 - One of the privileges we have as citizens is the freedom of speech. What other kinds of privileges do we have as citizens of the United States?
 - One of the responsibilities we have as citizens is that we have to pay some tax money to the government so that the country can keep running (not everybody’s excited about that.) What other sorts of responsibilities do we have as citizens of the United States?
- “Suffrage” means the ability to vote. Before 1893, only men in Colorado (and the whole United States) could vote. Elizabeth Ensley fought very hard so that women could enjoy suffrage.
 - Why do people vote?
 - Why might it be better for EVERYONE now that women can vote just like men can?



Teacher Guide



- For Elizabeth Ensley, it was a great day in 1893 when women won the right to vote in Colorado. However, she believed that women shouldn't just vote for leaders; they should BE the leaders! Read the lower half of page 2, starting with the phrase "Yet, for Ensley..." and read to the bottom of the page.
 - Why might it be better for women (and girls) to have a woman in charge?
 - Why might it be better for EVERYONE (boys AND girls) to have men and women be leaders together?

MS-HS

- Make a list of all the ways that life would have been different for you personally if you lived in the United States in 1894. In what ways was life better back then? In what ways was it worse? (Use the art from the Elizabeth Ensley reading for some clues.)
 - Examine closely how life might be different for students based on gender & ethnicity.
 - What sort of disadvantages would Elizabeth Ensley have had to overcome in order to become a leader?
- Women in Colorado gained the right to vote in 1893, but women in the rest of the country didn't gain that right until the 19th Amendment was ratified in 1920. What factors made it so difficult for women to gain the vote?
- The last lines of the Elizabeth Ensley comic read "...Ensley continues to inspire women and men to fight for social growth and change nationwide." What sort of social change might a modern leader fight for in the country today?

Lesson Ideas

Humanities

- Examine the Voting Rights Amendments (15th, 19th, 24th, 26th.) Create a timeline illustrating the various groups that gained the ability to vote over time.
- Together, create a new Amendment to the constitution that grants voting rights to a new group of people. What group of people might still benefit from gaining the right to vote? Hold debates and see if the class will ratify it.
- Filter through the various petitions for social change that are submitted to the White House (see link listed below.) Using Elizabeth Ensley as inspiration, write a petition in favor Women's Suffrage.

English

- Ponder a new right that people should have (e.g., the right to housing, the right to clean water.) Write a formal letter to your state government, explaining exactly why your right should be adopted into the state constitution.



Teacher Guide



- Have students pair up and write a script for a podcast interview with Elizabeth Ensley. The students can record their conversations. Optionally, a third student can participate as an opponent to women's suffrage and the student playing Ensley can respond to their concerns.

Art

- Create a propaganda poster based on famous propaganda art of the era that aims to draw people's eyes and demand for Women's Suffrage.
- Isolate your students so that they can't observe each other's work if possible. Using abstract form, have students illustrate the emotions that women of Ensley's era might have when denied the right to vote. Then, illustrate how they might have felt after they gained it. Hold a gallery, and see if any differences pop up in the expression between students (e.g., do girls express more intense feelings than the boy artists.)

Comic Analysis

- In the first panel, there are three smaller inset panels. What effect did the artist achieve with these three panels? What initial feelings are we supposed to have about Elizabeth Ensley because of these panels?
- In the second panel (starting with "Elizabeth Ensley, 1848-1919") we see a close-up of Ensley. What can we learn about Ensley just by examining this panel?
- At the top of the second page, a mist covers the Cripple Creek Mining Camp. Using the text box starting with "She arrived at a time..." for insight, why might the artist have chosen to draw the men shrouded in mist?
- This comic is meant to tell the story of a woman and her quest to empower others. Explore the techniques of the artist and identify the different ways that women are made to look powerful.

Additional Resources

Simple Biography of Ensley

http://www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/Kids_Students/Bios/Elizabeth_Ensley.pdf

Biographical Article w/ Audio

<http://www.coloradovirtuallibrary.org/digital-colorado/colorado-histories/boom-years/elizabeth-piper-ensley-activist/>

Petition the White House

<https://petitions.whitehouse.gov/>