

Gilded Suffragists

author: Johanna Neuman

2026-06

Synopsis

authori¼š	Johanna Neuman
readByi¼š	C.S.E. Cooney
inLanguagei¼š	english

In the early 20th century over 200 of New York's most glamorous socialites joined the suffrage movement. Their names - Astor, Belmont, Rockefeller, Tiffany, Vanderbilt, Whitney, and the like - carried enormous public value. These women were the media darlings of their day because of the extravagance of their costume balls and the opulence of the French couture clothes, and they leveraged their social celebrity for political power, turning women's right to vote into a fashionable cause.

Although they were dismissed by critics as bored socialites "trying on suffrage as they might the latest couture designs from Paris", these gilded suffragists were at the epicenter of the great reforms known collectively as the Progressive Era. From championing education for women, to pursuing careers, and advocating for the end of marriage, these women were engaged with the swirl of change that swept through the streets of New York City.

Johanna Neuman restores these women to their rightful place in the story of women's suffrage. Understanding the need for popular approval for any social change, these socialites used their wealth, power, social connections, and style to excite mainstream interest and to diffuse resistance to the cause.

Reader's comments

comment 1:

â€"â€" ()