

# HIST390 Project Storyboard

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## Subject:

Victoria Woodhull for President: the life and legacy of the first women to run for president of the United States of America.

## Menu:

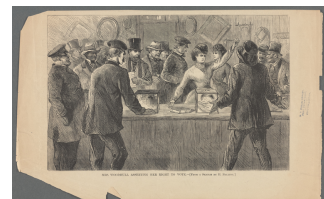
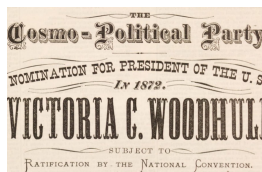
- Home Page (Introduction)
- Early Years
- “Mrs Satan” and the Free Love Movement
- The Claflin Sisters: “Bewitching Brokers and Queens of Finance”
- Woodhull and Claflin’s Weekly
- An Unsung Hero to Women’s Suffrage
- The First Female Presidential Candidate
- Life Post-Legacy
- Resources

## Header:

*Title: Victoria Woodhull- the life and legacy of the first women to run for president of the United States*

*Menu button*

*Rolling image gallery? One fixed headshot image?*



## Page 1: Home (Introduction)

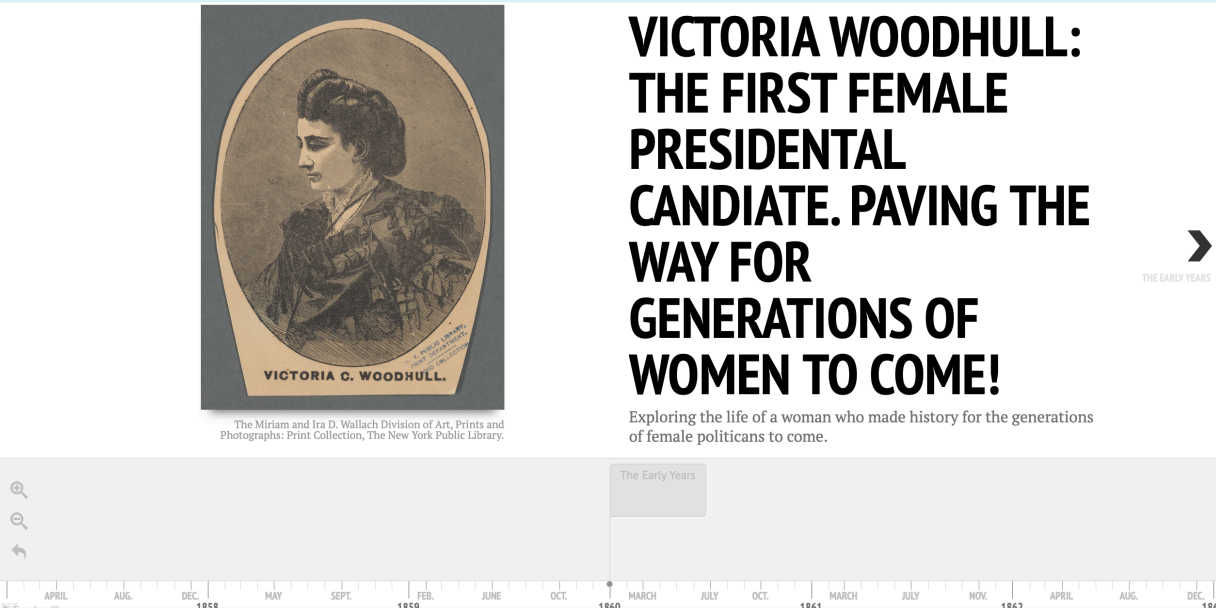
### Introductory script:

Victoria Claflin Woodhull was a woman of many talents and one of the 19th century's most colorful characters.

She was a women's rights and suffrage advocate, a popular public speaker, a newspaper publisher who introduced American audiences to the works of Karl Marx, the first woman to operate a Wall Street brokerage firm, and the first female presidential candidate in 1872.

### Knightlab Timeline:

**Preview Embed**



**VICTORIA WOODHULL:  
THE FIRST FEMALE  
PRESIDENTIAL  
CANDIDATE. PAVING THE  
WAY FOR  
GENERATIONS OF  
WOMEN TO COME!**

Exploring the life of a woman who made history for the generations of female politicians to come.

The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs: Print Collection, The New York Public Library.

The Early Years

APRIL AUG. DEC. 1858 MAY SEPT. FEB. JUNE OCT. 1860 MARCH JULY OCT. 1861 MARCH JULY NOV. 1862 APRIL AUG. DEC. 1863

(Embed link)

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## Page 2: Early Years

*“Brief History of Woodhull” script:*



Victoria Woodhull was born on September 23rd, 1838 into poverty-stricken in rural Homer, Ohio. Her mother was illiterate and her father was a petty criminal. She was one of ten children and did not start elementary school until she was eight years old— in addition, she only attended school, on-and-off, for three years before dropping out at age eleven.

She married Dr. Canning Woodhull, 28-year-old, when she was only 15 and gave birth to a mentally handicapped son in 1854. Dr. Canning Woodhull turned out to be a hopeless drunk that spent all his free time in brothels and taverns. His freewheeling ways forced Woodhull to have to work outside the home — which was outside the norm for the time.

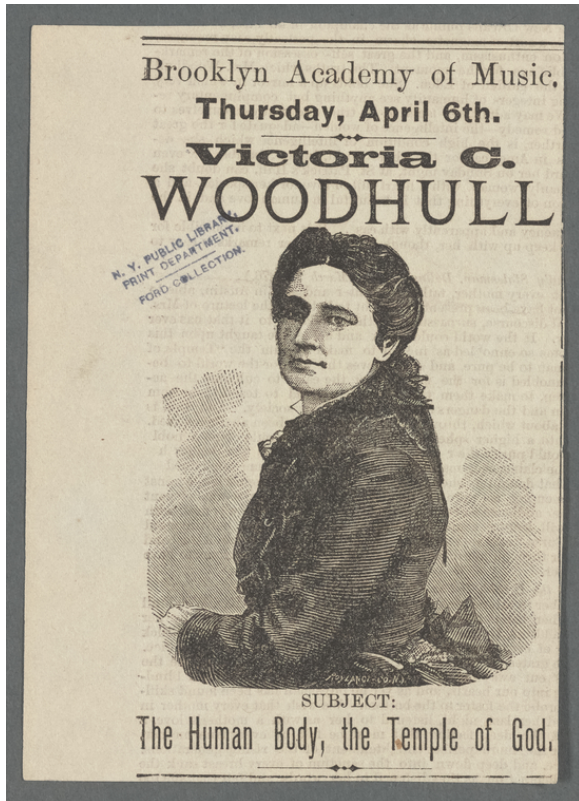
Woodhull held a number of jobs over the next several years— including work as a cigar store clerk, seamstress, stage actress, and spiritual medium. Her varied resume early in life foreshadowed the storied career as a leader in the women’s right’s movement to come.

She later divorced Canning Woodhull and embarked on her journey associating with the Free Love Movement.

(Image: Victoria Clafin Woodhull in the 1860s.  
Harvard Art Museum/Fogg Museum, Historical Photographs and Special Visual Collections Department, Fine Arts Library)

### Page 3: “Mrs Satan” and the Free Love Movement

*“Leading by example: Woodhull’s involvement in the Free Love movement” script:*



After divorcing Dr. Canning Woodhull, Victoria Woodhull became heavily involved in the Free Love movement.

Leading by her own example of divorcing her abusive husband, Woodhull’s association with the Free Love movement sought to erase the stigma of divorce and make it easier for women to escape abusive marriages.

As a lecturer, Woodhull often spoke about sex and advocated for a women’s right to control their own bodies.

She once proclaimed “I want the love of you all, promiscuously,”

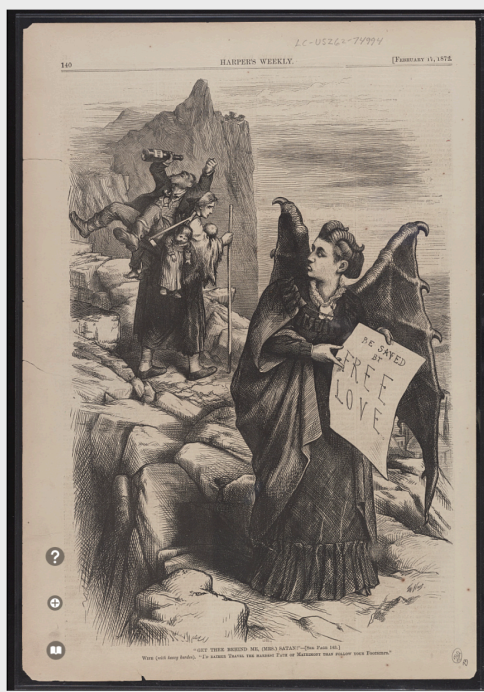
“It makes no difference who or what you are, old or young, black or white, pagan, Jew, or Christian, I want to love you all and be loved by you all, and I mean to have your love.”

She was a living example of the Free Love movement’s principles— at one point, Woodhull lived with her ex-husband, her current husband, and her lover all in the same apartment.

Her ambitious beliefs within the free love movement also contributed to the advocacy for women’s equal rights to men. She is quoted for writing:

“Let women issue a declaration of independence sexually, and absolutely refuse to cohabit with men until they are acknowledged as equals in everything, and the victory would be won in a single week,”.

Thinglink: Mrs Satan Image



Naturally, her promotion of Free Love was often criticized— as is evident in this 1872 newspaper clipping cartoon by Thomas Nast.

Pictured is Woodhull, bastardized to resemble a female Satan, carrying a “ *Be Saved by Free Love*” sign. She looks back on a woman literally carrying her drunkard husband on her back with her child on her breast. The text below reads *Wife (with heavy burden): I would rather travel the hardest path of matrimony than follow in your footsteps.*

(Embed link)

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<iframe width="814" height="1156" data-original-width="814" data-original-height="1156" src="https://www.thinglink.com/card/1423189360387293186" type="text/html" frameborder="0" webkitallowfullscreen mozallowfullscreen allowfullscreen scrolling="no"></iframe><script async src="//cdn.thinglink.me/jse/responsive.js"></script>
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## Page 4: The Claflin Sisters: “Bewitching Brokers and Queens of Finance”

“The Claflin Sisters: Women of many firsts” script:



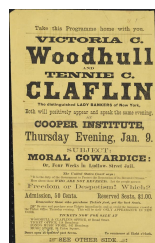
Victoria Woodhull later resettled in New York and remarried to Civil War veteran Colonel James Blood, a St. Louis native who commanded the Sixth Missouri Volunteers during the Civil War.

Victoria and her sister Tennessee “Tennie” Claflin continued to work as healers during their time in New York, and were later introduced to Cornelius Vanderbilt, the railroad tycoon. The Claflin sisters capitalized on this relationship to build a fortune acting on stock tips from Vanderbilt during the gold panic. Within six weeks, the sisters had netted approximately \$700,000— a major feat today, let alone in the late 1860s. ([History.com](#))

These funds allowed them to open a brokerage firm, “Woodhull, Claflin, & Co.”, in February of 1870. The Claflin sisters were the first women to own and operate a brokerage firm on Wallstreet.

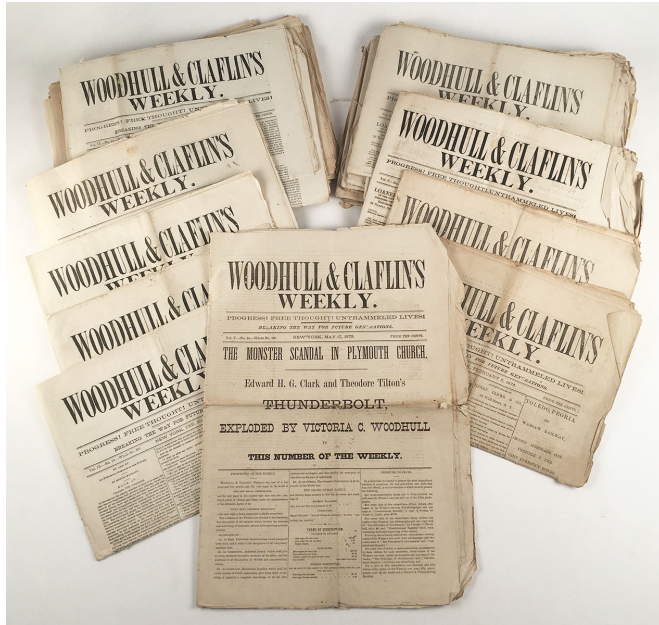
Woodhull’s sights were later set on greater ambitions, using the brokerage firm as a platform to advocate for women’s rights, laborers, and the poor.

Image Gallery:



## Page 5: Woodhull and Claflin's Weekly and Other Newsworthy Moments.

“Printing away the world’s problems” script



The funds from their brokerage firm allowed the Claflin sisters, Victoria and Tennie to begin publishing their own newspaper—**“Woodhull and Claflin’s Weekly”**.

The paper promoted the Free Love movement, women’s suffrage and political reform.

The paper made history in December 1871 by publishing the first English- language account of

**Karl Marx’s “The Communist Manifesto”**. (NPS)

In addition to this larger fame, the paper came into infamy after publishing an account of an affair between one of Woodhull’s greatest critics, **Henry Ward Beecher**, the brother of “*Uncle Tom’s Cabin*” author Harriet Beecher Stowe and one of the most famous religious leaders in the country, and

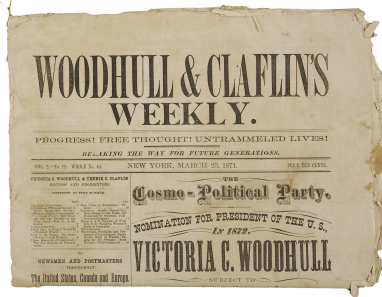
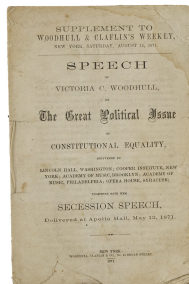
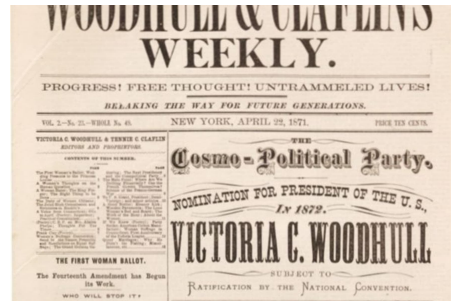




one of his female parishioners, **Elizabeth Tilton**. ([history.com](http://history.com)) A quote from Woodhull in the *Weekly* read: “I am not charging him with immorality — I applaud his enlightened views. **I am charging him with hypocrisy.**” (*Politico*)

This was a result of Beecher’s vast criticism of Woodhull — the sisters considered him an adulterous hypocrite and exposed him via their paper. The story created a number of powerful enemies for Woodhull, and led to Victoria and Tennie’s arrest on November 2nd, 1872 for **sending obscene materials through the mail**. The sisters **spent about a month in jail**.

*Image Gallery:*



Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com

## Page 6: An Unsung Hero to Women's Suffrage

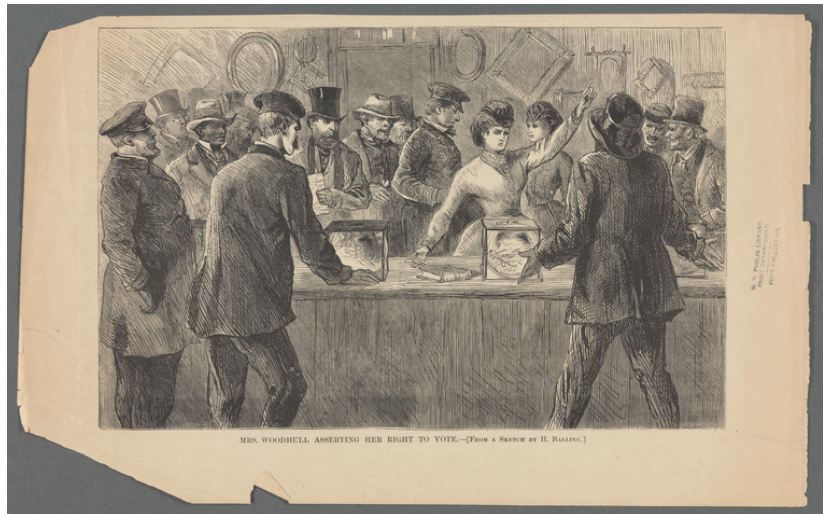


In January 1871, The National Women's Suffrage Association convention was held in Washington, D.C.

Victoria Woodhull had been planning to attend, and was communicating with Massachusetts

congressman Benjamin Butler about the Sixteenth Amendment, which would've granted female suffrage. As one of the amendment's few supporters, Butler offered Woodhull the change to address the House Judiciary Committee.

Woodhull became the **first woman to directly address a congressional committee on January 11th, 1871.** She argued that the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments

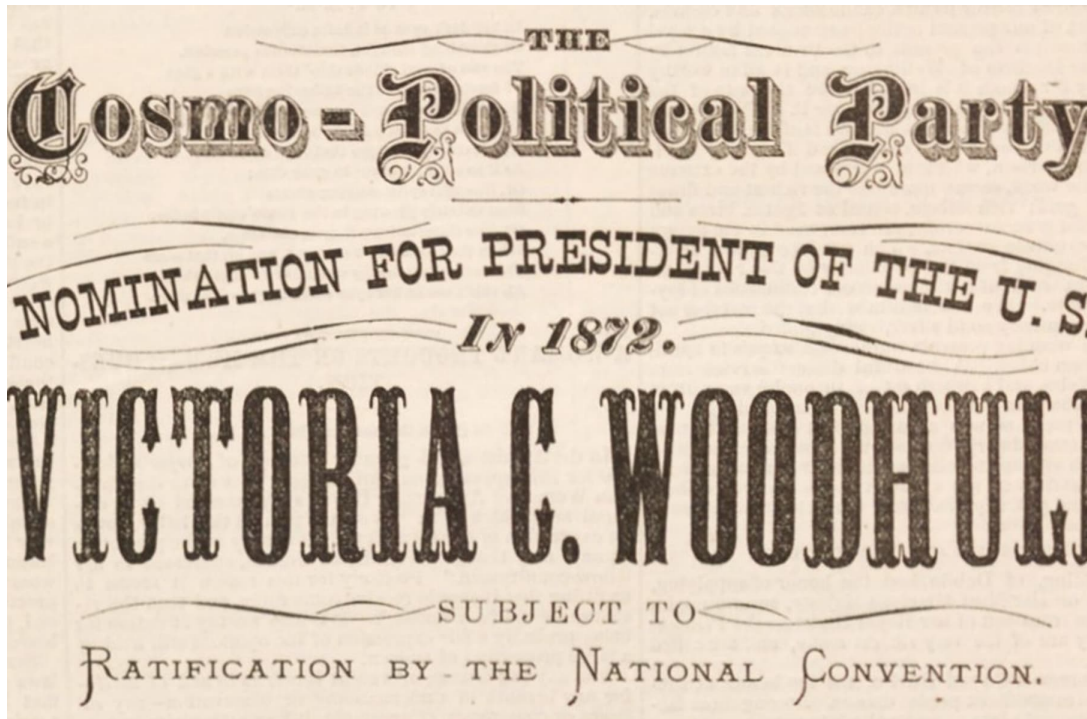


already gave women the right to vote, and Congress should immediately take another vote on the proposed Sixteenth Amendment to fully guarantee women's voting rights. Although this wasn't successful, she impressed major suffrage leaders



Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton with her passion and was propelled into a leadership position within the movement.

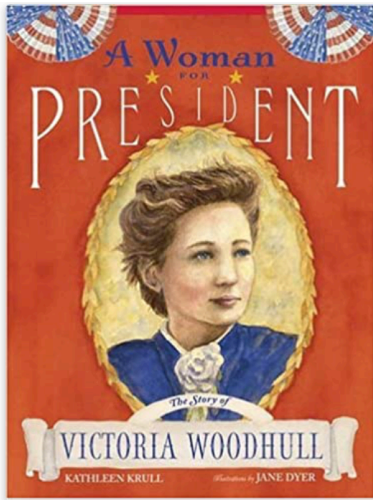
## Page 7: Her Greatest Legacy: The First Female Presidential Candidate



The height of Victoria Woodhull's fame came when she was nominated for President of the United States. In the 1872 against Ulysses. S. Grant (R) and Horace Greely (LR) , Woodhull was nominated to run for the Equal Rights Party— despite not having yet reached the Constitutionally mandated age of 35 to serve as President.

Woodhull nominated famous abolitionist, Frederick Douglass as her running mate— he never accepted the nomination and didn't even acknowledged her campaign, vocalizing his support of Grant instead.  
(NPS)

Woodhull's **platforms** included universal gender and racial equality, women's suffrage, regulation of monopolies, nationalization of railroads, an eight-hour workday, direct taxation, abolition of the death penalty and welfare for the poor. Woodhull, of course, lost the election.



Her name did appear on ballots in some states, though the exact number of votes in her favor was never actually counted.

Outside of being a woman, a number of other dramas plagued the integrity of Woodhull's campaign.

Embarrassing details of her private life emerged as a result of a lawsuit that Woodhull's mother brought against her second husband and Woodhull actually spent Election Day in jail as a result of her published account of Henry Beecher's affair in the Claffin sister's paper, *Woodhull & Claffin's Weekly*.



## Page 8 Life Post-Legacy (Conclusion)



In 1876, Woodhull and Claflin's Weekly was forced to fold. Left with no money, Victoria Woodhull and her sister Tennessee Claflin moved to England in 1877 after Vanderbilt died.

The sisters reinvented themselves as aristocrats and patrons of the arts after remarrying into wealthy families. Woodhull's third husband, **John Biddulph Martin**, was an Oxford-educated wealthy banker. She spent the latter half of her life running a newspaper and preserving her marital estate. Woodhull was interested in automobiles and became the first woman to own a car in England.

She spent her later years donating money

and services to townspeople around the estate and volunteering with the Red Cross during World War I. (Politico) She founded an agricultural school that was moderately successful and **even traveled back to the United States in 1892 to run for U.S. President again.**



History has excluded Woodhull's efforts from common narrative primarily due to the backlash and harsh criticism she received from notable individuals. Harriet Beecher Stowe of "*Uncle Tom's Cabin*" was a very harsh critic of Woodhull after the Beecher-Tilton scandal— labeling her an **"impudent witch" and a "vile jailbird."** Similarly, leaders of the women's suffrage movement like Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton turned against Woodhull after her presidential run, shaming her for her political ambition and "love of the limelight" (*History.com*).



Wednesday, April 28, 2021



Woodhull was no longer invited to speak at suffrage conventions and Susan B. Anthony went as far as to tell British suffrage leaders not to meet with her and is quoted referring to the Claflin sisters as “regarded as lewd and indecent.” To top it off, Anthony, Stanton, and Maltilda Joslyn Gage completely left Victoria Woodhull out of the comprehensive history of the women’s suffrage movement published in the 1880s.

Victoria Woodhull’s efforts to become the first female president may not have been a success, and her reputation may have been slandered by uptight suffragists and afraid hypocritical socialites alike all of the truth Woodhull was so ready, willing, and able to tell anyone who would listen. Victoria Woodhull had a massive impact on a number of key issues the majority of our American society does not even think twice about today. She fought to change the landscape in which women were seen politically, culturally, socially, economically, within their home lives with their spouses, amongst business partners, and simply as a valuable member of society as a whole. If not for the contributions of Victoria Woodhull, the arduous path to women’s suffrage could’ve taken much, much longer.

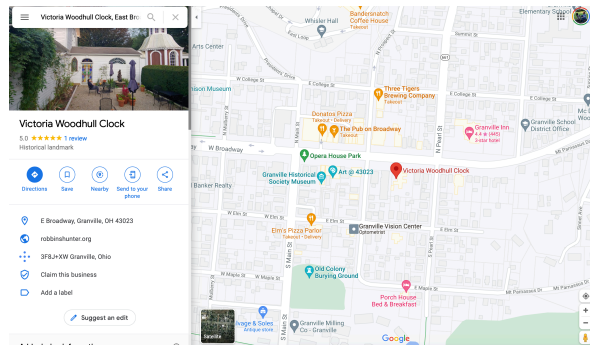
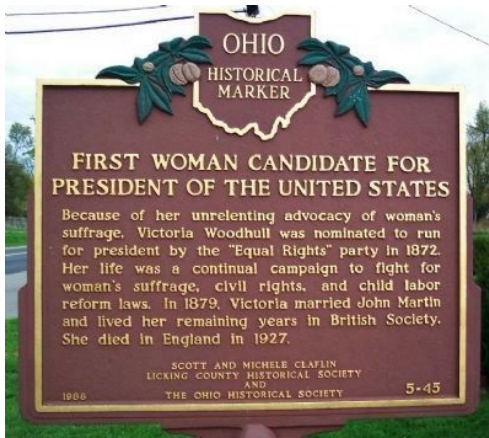
Happily, before she died on June 9th, 1927 at the age of 88, Woodhull was able to see women gain the right to vote in the United States and Great Britain.



Wednesday, April 28, 2021

**Interested in learning more about Victoria Woodhull?**

**Consider visiting one of her monument locations around the world!**



Insert *Google Maps* with significant Woodhull spots:

- Teweskesbury grave site
- ohio historical market
- Woodhull clock tower
- place of birth?
- place of death?

**Where we are today:**

Hillary Clinton running for present

Kamala Harris

All the women who ran to be the democratic candidate in 2020.

If Victoria Woodhull was a man this would've never been the case— we would all know a man's name and how he helped in history. Women are treated poorly and often forgotten history for being controversial.

## Page 9: Resources

*Zotero Screen shot linked using Thinglink*

Title	Creator	
▶ Brooklyn Academy of Music. Thursda...		○
▶ Ellen Fitzpatrick, The Highest Glass C...		
▶ "Get thee behind me, (Mrs.) Satan!" / ...		
▶ "Get thee behind me, (Mrs.) Satan!" / ...		
▶ https://wrlc-gm.primo.exlibrisgroup...		○
▶ Image 35 of The Golden age tracts ...		○
▶ Image 37 of The Golden age tracts ...		○
▶ Image 38 of The Golden age tracts ...		○
▶ Image 62 of The Golden age tracts ...		○
▶ Mrs. Woodhull asserting her right to v...		○
▶ Nineteenth Century Collections Onlin...		
▶ Press Portrayals of Women Politicians,...	Finneman	○
▶ Testimony in the great Beecher-Tilto...		
▶ The Advocate and news. [volume] (To...	Humanities	○
▶ The Bluffton news. [volume] (Bluffton,...	Humanities	○
▶ The First Woman To Run For Presiden...		○
▶ The Lexington advertiser. [volume] (L...	Humanities	○
▶ The Origin, Tendencies and Principles...	Martin and Woo...	
▶ The Woman Who Ran for President: T...	Fowler	
▶ The woman who ran for president: th...	Underhill	
▶ Victoria Claflin Woodhull, 1838-1927...		○
▶ Victoria Woodhull		○
▶ Washington, D.C. The Judiciary Com...		○