

# Frances Ellen Watkins Harper

## VOCABULARY TERMS

### Ishmael

In the Christian Bible, Ishmael was the first son of Abraham and his wife Sara's servant, Hagar. Upon his birth, God declared that he would "be like a wild donkey. His hand will be against everyone, and everyone's hand will be against him." Ishmael became the founder of the Arab people. When Harper compares herself to Ishmael, she is expressing her feeling that, as a Black woman, the whole world is against her.

### Suffrage

The legal right to vote. For a long time in the United States' history, only certain white men were able to vote. Without the right to vote, people are referred to as "disenfranchised."

### Fifteenth Amendment

The Fifteenth Amendment to the US Constitution, which declares that "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude." It was ratified and became the law of the land in February 1870. Despite the amendment, Black people faced and continue to face barriers to voting.

### Intersectionality

A term "coined in 1989 by professor Kimberlé Crenshaw to describe how race, class, gender, and other individual characteristics "intersect" with one another and overlap." Harper understood this concept long before the phrase was coined, expressing the different levels of oppression she faced as a Black woman, as opposed to many of the white suffragists.

### Apostle Paul

Paul, a biblical figure, spread the word of Christianity during the first century.

### National Association of Colored Women (NACW)

"American organization formed at a convention in Washington, D.C., as the product of the merger in 1896 of the National Federation of Afro-American Women and the National League of Colored Women—organizations that had arisen out of the African American women's club movement. Its founders included Harriet Tubman, Frances E.W. Harper, Ida Bell Wells-Barnett, and Mary Church Terrell, who became the organization's first president."

### "Lifting as we Climb"

"The NACW adopted the motto "Lifting As We Climb," with the intention of demonstrating to "an ignorant and suspicious world that our aims and interests are identical with those of all good aspiring women.""

### Eleventh National Woman's Rights Convention

Held in New York NY on May 1, 1866, the Eleventh National Woman's Rights Convention was where Frances Harper made her speech "We Are All Bound Up Together." At the end of this convention, a major organization, "The American Equal Rights Association" was founded.

### Streetcar

A trolley car commonly used as a method of transportation in cities. Harper, as a Black woman, was required to sit in a different section due to racist policies in place at the time.

### World's Columbian Exhibition

A fair held in 1893 in Chicago, Illinois. The fair was held to commemorate 400 years since Christopher Columbus voyaged to the Americas. One of the exhibitions was the World's Congress of Representative Women.

### Nineteenth Amendment

The nineteenth amendment of the US Constitution, which finally guaranteed all American women the legal right to vote. The amendment states "The right of citizens of the United States shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex."

### Temperance

The movement to ban the sale, production, and consumption of alcohol. This resulted in prohibition in the United States. The movement was led by women, and Frances Harper was an activist in the temperance movement.

### Abolition

The movement to end slavery in the United States. Frances Harper was a strong proponent of abolition.

### Mary Church Terrell

A leading African American suffragist and activist who coined the phrase "Lifting as we Climb" and became the first President of the National Association of Colored Women.

### Complicity

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, complicity means "association or participation in a wrongful act." Frances Harper often warned white women about their complicity in other oppressive systems, such as slavery.

### Class

In the context of oppression and the fight against it, social class usually refers to one's classification based on income and social status

### World's Congress of Representative Women

Women from around the world gathered at the World's Columbian Exposition at the Chicago World's Fair to discuss the pressing issue of women's rights. One hundred- and twenty-six-women's organizations participated in the Congress of Representative Women.

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