

**Voting Rights and Disenfranchised Individuals, 1792-1920**

Barriers that affected voting rights: language, race, sex, land ownership, and local law.

**Indians**

Although Indians fought with the English against the French and owned land in America, they could not be citizens and could not vote in the United States. An interesting thing to note is that Englishmen who settled in the colonies customarily thought of citizenship as a birthright to anyone born in a country and thought of property ownership as a requirement for the right to vote. Indians were granted voting rights in 1870 (15th Amendment).

**Slaves**

Slaves were not allowed to vote.

**Free Blacks**

Free blacks owned property and fought in the Revolutionary and 1812 wars with white colonists, however they were not allowed to vote because they were black. African Americans were granted voting rights in 1870 (15th Amendment).

**African Americans**

There was a literacy requirement to vote in many states, and there were poll taxes in the other states. In many cases, these barriers prohibited African Americans from voting even after the 15th Amendment was passed.

**Small Farmers in North Carolina**

Farmers who had 50 acres or more could vote in elections for both the lower and upper house of the state legislature. Farmers with fewer than 50 acres could vote in elections for the lower house.

**White Males in Vermont**

When Vermont became a state in 1792, all white males continued to share the privilege to vote — as they had when Vermont separated from New Hampshire and New York.

**Women**

Most local laws did not allow women the right to vote. Women were granted voting rights in 1920 (19th Amendment).

**Landowners in Massachusetts**

In order to vote in Massachusetts, a man needed to own at least 50 acres of land. If a man owned less than 50 acres, he was considered a citizen but could not vote.