

Handout 2: The Women's March & Power to the Polls, January 2018

Throughout 2017, Women's March organizers worked to keep the momentum going and make the movement more inclusive. That momentum was helped along by the powerful #MeToo movement, which caught fire in October 2017, leading millions of women across the world to expose and demand an end to sexual harassment and abuse.

The 2018 Women's March events, which once again drew masses of people into the streets in cities across the U.S. (and beyond), called not only for an end to sexual abuse and violence against women, but also for reproductive rights, LGBTQIA rights, worker's rights, civil rights, disability rights, immigrant rights, and environment justice.

Women of color once again led the way. "This is a movement where we're trying to get people to understand that we must follow women of color, where trans folks and indigenous folks and other marginal people must be at the center," said Women's March co-chair Carmen Perez. "It can be hard for the people used to being in charge to step back."

The events also kicked off the next chapter of organizing, which activists called "Power to the Polls." The aim: to get women and their allies out to vote in the 2018 midterm elections to support progressive candidates running for seats in the U.S. Senate, House of Representatives, and state and local government. (The mid-term elections include primary elections in each state, followed by a national general election on November 6, 2018.)

Women's March organizer Linda Sarsour told Elle: "[We're working](#) on a ten-city tour of voter engagement and registration to bring training, momentum, and capacity building to local communities." The goal, she said, "is to see headlines on November 7 reading ... 'It was women's political strategy that won back the House and the Senate.'" She added: "We are going to the polls to support progressive candidates who uphold our platform and values. Everyone will be held accountable to that progressive platform ... even Democratic women."

For strategic reasons, the main event this year was held in Las Vegas, in the key battleground state of Nevada. The Women's March organization sponsored a "Power to the Polls" rally in Las Vegas on January 21, 2018. Organizers said they aimed to mobilize disenfranchised communities in other battleground states like Nevada. Speakers at the event, including Black Lives Matter co-founder Alicia Garza and Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw (who coined the term "intersectionality"), emphasized the particular struggles of immigrants, members of the LGBTQIA community, and women of color.

"Stand up for me, white women. Come to my aid," Women's March leader Tamika Mallory said in a speech. "You say you want to be my friend? I don't want to hear it from your mouth. I want to see it when you go to the polls at the midterm elections."

And so as people marked the anniversary of the historic Women's March on Washington, intersectional feminism took center stage in events across the country. Women of color took charge and led the way.

Said Sarsour: "We need all tactics, all strategies, all hands on deck. And this is a moment where we have to all come to the place that, unity is not uniformity. But we can all still be aligned by mission, and hopefully we'll meet on the other side where there's justice."