

When American revolutionaries waged a war for independence they took a leap of faith that sent ripple effects across generations. They embraced a radical idea of establishing a government that entrusted the power of the nation not in a monarchy, but in its citizens. That great leap sparked questions that continue to impact Americans:

- Who has the right to vote?
- What are the freedoms and responsibilities of citizens
- Whose voices will be heard?
- How do you participate as a citizen?

*Voices and Votes: Democracy in America* will be a springboard for discussions about those very questions and how they are reflected in local stories.

*Voices and Votes* is based on a major exhibition currently on display at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History called *American Democracy: A Great Leap of Faith*. Content development for *Voices and Votes* was led by Harry Rubenstein, Curator Emeritus in the Division of Political History at the National Museum of American History. *Voices and Votes* has many dynamic features: historical and contemporary photos; educational and archival video; engaging multimedia interactives with short games and additional footage, photos, and information; and historical objects like campaign souvenirs, voter memorabilia, and protest material.

Our democracy demands action, reaction, vision, and revision as we continue to question how to form "a more perfect union." From the revolution and suffrage, to civil rights and casting ballots, everyone in every community is part of this ever-evolving story – the story of democracy in America.