

Impact Statement

Brynn Fuqua, Grade 12.

Just Us, 2019.

Digital art, 8 x 5 Inches.

North Gwinnett High School, Suwanee, GA

Unsung Hero: Lilla Day Monroe

I believe that everyone should be equal, regardless of gender, color, shape, political views, or even personality. There shouldn't be controversy over a woman voting versus a man, and the fact that it was an issue is confusing.

I found out about Lilla Day Monroe through online research. I learned she was a lawyer and then a president of many Women's Suffrage communities in the 1900s. Then I saw that she was from Kansas. I was born in Topeka, Kansas. I thought it would be interesting to learn about a woman that was from Kansas and helped so many women get rights equal to everyone. After all that, I was really interested in learning more about her and honoring her through art.

ON the Kansas Historical Society website, I was able to read and learn about what she did for so many people. Monroe became a lawyer despite being a woman. She was also an active supporter of women's suffrage, being a member of the Kansas State Suffrage Association and serving as its president for several years. She helped women in Kansas to get their own voice in the world. Monroe was a journalist who established and edited *The Club Woman* and *The Kansas Woman's Journal*. As editor of *The Kansas Woman's Journal*, Monroe gathered stories of pioneer life from Kansas women. She organized these into a collection and published many of them in the journal. If it weren't for her and others like her, where would we be in the fight for rights for women?

I chose the path I took on this artwork for its symbolism. I tried to incorporate her involvement in the women's rights movement. The transparent fist in the background is called the raised fist or the clenched fist. It is a symbol of solidarity and support. It is also used as a salute to express unity, strength, defiance, or resistance. I believe it is a good representation for the women's rights movement and what it meant to people like Lilla Day Monroe. I included the ever so subtle sunflower as well to represent her Kansas background and home.

Anyone can make a difference in their community if they try hard enough. Monroe went from a store clerk to a lawyer to a women's rights activist to a journalist to help create a way for women in Kansas and beyond to have their own voice in the world.

I plan on learning from this and grow with what I learned from Lilla Day Monroe. I'm going to accept everyone as who they are and never judge them if they are different than me. No one is perfect, but everyone deserves the right to speak their mind and be who they are on the inside and out. I am also going to help other people learn these lessons. I've seen so many people be rude to others because they are different. Others need to learn that we are all equal no matter what we look like or who we choose to be.