

## Suffragette – Review

*“I would rather be a rebel than a slave.”*

So says Emmeline Pankhurst during one of the many **rousing speeches** given in *Suffragette*, Sarah Gavron’s powerful depiction of the early 20th century movement. Featuring the acting talent of Carey Mulligan (who plays lead character Maud Watts), Helena Bonham Carter, Anne-Marie Duff, Meryl Streep (as Pankhurst) and scripted by Abi Morgan (*Shame, The Iron Lady*), the film is very much relevant today, in a society where **suppressed** voices - whether they be that of women, immigrants or workers’ unions - still **struggle** to be **heard**.



The narrative finds **fictitious laundress** Watts caught up in a violent suffragette riot, where she recognises one of her **co-workers**, Violet Miller (Duff). This begins a **chain** of events that eventually results in a week-long **imprisonment** for Watts, during which time she meets real-life suffragette Emily Davison.

The brutality - and the abundant sexism and frequent **belittling** - endured by women during this time was **shocking**, and indeed *is* shocking viewed through 21st century **eyes**. That is very much the point,



**however**, and it leads the suffragettes to increasingly **militant** means. The story of Watts and her young family plays out against a much bigger, historical event, one in which **tragedy** became **sadly** frequent. Women’s rights in Britain were finally recognised in 1928.

The suffragette movement is really not that far behind us, and its importance cannot be **understated**. As such, this bold picture is a **welcome, earnest** addition to the more socially-conscious films of recent years.