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Lena Sweeten
Western Kentucky University

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DEMANDING CITIZENSHIP:
THE U. S. WOMEN'S MOVEMENT, 1848-1930

A Thesis for the
Western Kentucky University
Honors Program

Lena L. Sweeten

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Approved by:

ABSTRACT

The U. S. women's movement began in 1848 with the Seneca Falls Convention for women's rights. As set forth by the convention's "Declaration of Sentiments," the movement was concerned with a broad array of social, religious, cultural and political reforms to bring about gender equality. Following the Civil War, the women's movement took on the semblance of a single-issue movement, as the effort to achieve woman suffrage consumed feminists' resources and energies. The acquisition of suffrage was intended to be the vehicle for women to gain the spectrum of rights initially defined in 1848. Extravagant predictions about the power of suffrage led many women to view the vote as a panacea for the ills of society and women's place in society. When the vote failed to bring about major changes in the lives of most women, the women's movement fragmented and stagnated. The extremely divisive Equal Rights Amendment, introduced in 1922, drove an even deeper wedge among the many branches of American feminism. By 1930, the women's movement was splintered and disorganized, and would remain so until the 1960s. But it had also matured and established itself as a permanent feature of the American political and cultural landscape and the desire for gender equality and social justice continued to be the primary force in the lives of American feminists.

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INTRODUCTION

The 1848 Seneca Falls Convention is regarded as the birthplace of the feminist movement in the United States. Here, men and women activists authored a "Declaration of Sentiments" outlining numerous social, cultural, religious, and political reforms which would insure the equality of women and men. Among these reforms was a call to enfranchise women, beginning an extensive and exhaustive campaign for female suffrage.

Granted, the equality of women and men could be inferred from the Fourteenth Amendment, but most states continued to restrict or to prohibit women's suffrage. A federal suffrage amendment designed to remove the barriers erected by individual states was introduced in Congress in 1878, and remained a controversial issue for the next forty years. Utilizing their severely restricted political influence as effectively as possible, women activists orchestrated a campaign that became the largest popular movement yet seen in the United States. The Nineteenth Amendment, providing men and women with equal voting rights, was ratified on August 26, 1920. It stated that the right of citizens to vote "shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex."¹

Influencing the tactics and duration of the suffrage movement was the distribution of women in all social classes, races, ethnic groups, religions, and subcultures. Women's primary identification tended to come from these groups rather than with other women as a group, and many women's closest social ties were with men, children, and families rather than with other women. This distribution also meant women had divergent interests and goals when they joined the suffrage movement. In particular, women already privileged in class and/or race focused on achieving equality with the men in their own socioeconomic strata, while leaving intact class and

race divisions; women who were oppressed by race and/or class wanted to eliminate all forms of discrimination.² Such divisions often threatened the success of the women's suffrage movement.

The U. S. women's movement also was dominated by middle- and upper-class white women. Women who faced multiple forms of discrimination on the basis of race, class, or religion, as well as sex, were often preoccupied with day-to-day survival, had less access to the resources needed to start movements, and usually had a stronger desire to end class and race discrimination than to work for gender equality. On the other hand, for relatively privileged white women, gender inequality presented a major source of grievance in their lives.³

The suffrage movement bridged the divisions of class and race among women as they worked for the common goal of female enfranchisement. In part, this was because they foresaw a wide range of consequences of enfranchisement, including ending race discrimination, enacting social legislation, and increasing female autonomy.

The length and difficulty of the campaign was caused by more than simple divisions among women activists. Male prejudice against women, fear of change in the status quo of gender relations, and patterns of socialization and cultural beliefs regarding the nature and role of women also were major obstacles.⁴ Women were working from a severely disadvantaged position in the male-dominated American society of the late 1800s and early 1900s. In particular, women enjoyed practically no significant political influence or power, and thus no quick means to persuade the male legislators and politicians who would ultimately enact legislation enfranchising women.⁵

The women's rights movement developed in conjunction with several other socially progressive movements, including abolitionism, temperance, and social feminism. Following the

Civil War, women took increasingly active roles in demanding rights for freed slaves and for all women. The agitation for recognition of women's rights was almost universally ignored as the radical Republicans who dominated the government in the Reconstruction era emphasized the citizenship status of males, both African-American and immigrant. Faced with public apathy and political indifference, women activists began to focus on the right to vote as the means to give women a fuller voice in national affairs, and thus to gain acknowledgment of the other rights they also demanded, such as expanded employment and education opportunities, equitable divorce laws, and property rights.

The suffrage movement is often remembered as the first step in the continuing struggle for women's rights. More than a stepping stone, the suffrage movement is an illustration of the bedrock principles upon which the United States was founded, among them equality, freedom of expression, and individual liberty. Anna Howard Shaw, when president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, made the most eloquent and basic statement regarding the necessity of women's suffrage::

. . . The reason [for granting women the vote] would remain even though all the evils I have named, or could name, should be abolished at once. We and the women who come after us should have our political power to use in any way we think best. We cannot tell what it will be necessary to do; what women will want to do. All we know is that *women must have the power to take part in the government of their country* [my emphasis].⁶

DEMANDING CITIZENSHIP

On July 19, 1848, the feminist movement in the United States formally began with the first women's rights convention in Seneca Falls, New York. The meeting was organized by two major social activists of the nineteenth century, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott. Three hundred people attended the convention "to discuss the social, civil and religious rights of women."⁷ The group also adopted a document called the "Declaration of Sentiments."

Consciously modeled after the Declaration of Independence, the "Declaration" began with the assertion that all women and men are created equal and that they are endowed with inalienable rights, including the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Also stated is that throughout history, men had been guilty of "repeated injuries and usurpations" toward women.⁸ Following was a list of eighteen grievances which combined to create an overwhelming protest against the legal, moral, social, and economic conditions under which women lived in the mid-1800s. The "Declaration" demanded a sea change in the relations between men and women and in society's treatment of women, and ranks as one of the most significant documents in American feminist thought.⁹

Among the features which distinguished the "Declaration of Sentiments" were the rudiments of a women's rights ideology which could be found within the document's language, its focus upon injustice, and its call for action. The "Declaration" described the condition of women in terms of oppression. For example, if she married, a woman could not own property and was considered a nonperson in the eyes of the law; also women in the mid-1800s were often denied access to an education, particularly higher education, solely on the basis of their sex. The

authors of the Declaration believed that such discriminations against women were part of a much larger pattern endorsed by American society and culture.¹⁰

The "Declaration" also focused on the injustice in the treatment of women compared to that of men, by pointing out that any man, regardless of station, enjoyed rights which were denied to all women. Women were expected to live peacefully under a government in which they had no voice, while men demanded the right of political participation, and in fact had made that demand a central tenet in the founding of the United States. Men also endorsed a double-standard regarding sexual morality, for an offense which condemned a woman to social ostracism was viewed with little consequence when committed by a man.¹¹

The authors of the "Declaration of Sentiments" were not content simply to enumerate their grievances; they also called for action. With more accuracy than they may have intended, they acknowledged the difficulty of the task they had set for themselves ("we anticipate no small amount of misconception, misrepresentation, and ridicule"¹²) and pledged to utilize every device to achieve their ends, including petitions, public rallies, tract circulation, lobbying, and direct appeals to the state and national legislatures.

A wide variety of resolutions were endorsed. Among them, the authors desired recognition of a woman's right to seek her own happiness, and the eradication of discriminatory laws which either prohibited women from full participation in society or placed them in a subservient position to men. They demanded that women be recognized as equal to men, and had been created as such. Women were to be educated about the oppressions inherent in their current living conditions so that they could not claim out of ignorance to have all the rights they wanted. The sexual double-standard was to be eliminated, thereby permitting women to move

freely and independently, and engage in behaviors such as public speaking, which had been deemed unsuitable for women. Women also were to be permitted equal participation in economic activities and in social and religious causes, including writing, speaking, and teaching, in public and in private.¹³

Finally, the "Declaration of Sentiments" stated that "it is the duty of the women of this country to secure to themselves their sacred right to the elective franchise."¹⁴ The call for female suffrage was included in spite of the hesitations of Lucretia Mott and Henry Stanton, who feared it would make the convention "look ridiculous." With the support of Frederick Douglass, Elizabeth Cady Stanton carried the suffrage plank--the only one not to receive unanimous approval--by a small majority.¹⁵ From these beginnings the women's suffrage movement would spring and eventually become the largest mass movement yet seen in United States history.

The significance of the "Declaration of Sentiments" was not immediately recognized by contemporaries of the Seneca Falls Convention participants. Indeed, the ridicule heaped upon the convention must have been breathtaking to its participants. For example, one newspaper boldly stated, "A woman is a nobody. A wife is everything. A pretty girl is equal to ten thousand men, and a mother is, next to God, all powerful."¹⁶

Prior to the Civil War, the women's rights movement *per se* remained small, though many women chafed at the limitations imposed upon them. Women reform groups had tried to solve social problems throughout the 1800s in order to improve women's lot, but with only limited success. They had little political influence to effect social change through legislation because they could not own property, could not vote, could not hold office. The vote came to be seen as the way for them to gain this influence.¹⁷

Hundreds of women's rights meetings were held, usually in the Northeast. White, middle- and upper-class women were the only women with the economic means and sufficient social autonomy to participate in such meetings, women who would continue to dominate the leadership goals, needs, and interests of the movement. The needs of other women (Native American, poor, black, immigrant) often remained under represented in the mainstream movement.¹⁸

Most women activists were limited by social mores and law to speaking and to writing. Advocates often had difficulty convincing their audience to take seriously the messages they presented. So much else was going on in the United States, particularly regarding sectional divisions and the abolition movement, that calls for women's rights were often drowned out.¹⁹ The women's movement prior to the Civil War had accomplished little more than changes in some state laws regarding married women's property rights and an increase in the educational opportunities for women. These and other rights were important to women's rights activists, but women's suffrage already was beginning to emerge as a clear, easily understood goal around which support could be mobilized. Enfranchisement also could be related easily to the natural rights doctrine prevalent in the United States since its inception.²⁰

In spite of such difficulties, in the years before the Civil War the necessary components for a broad social movement slowly began to accumulate, as was foreshadowed in the 1848 "Declaration of Sentiments." Individual leaders were identified, each with her own following. New members were being recruited. Hours of discussion and debate began to develop a shared ideology and the rudiments of a broad strategy to accomplish women's rights goals. Finally, women activists began to communicate across long distances to begin coordinating their

strategy.²¹

Other social issues, especially abolitionism and temperance, occupied center stage in the public consciousness until after the Civil War. Women activists were integral to both movements, and often attempted to integrate the cause for women's rights with other movements, though often with little success. However, women's participation in these movements would prove to be invaluable in the advancement of women's rights in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

The abolitionist movement was one of the most important proving grounds for women activists. As women worked to end the institution of slavery in the American South, they gained experience in organizing, campaigning, lobbying, writing and engaging in other activities necessary to propel a political movement. These women also encountered discrimination on the basis of their sex. For example, in 1840, at a world anti-slavery conference held in London attended by anti-slavery groups from the U. S., Britain, and Europe, women delegates were not going to be seated, recognized, allowed on the floor, or permitted to vote. Led by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, most women delegates walked out of the meeting, joined by a number of men. In 1846, the National Anti-Slavery Society split into all male and all female groups, over the proper extent of women's involvement in the abolitionist movement.²² Such discrimination prompted many women to widen their focus from emancipating slaves to guaranteeing equal rights to women and men.

The temperance movement was especially strong in the United States in the 1800s and early 1900s. The goal was to promote abstinence from alcohol through persuasion and legislation. Concern about the abuse of alcohol increased with the growth of cities, the increased concentration of industrial workers in urban areas, and the arrival of new immigrant groups

whose culture accepted casual alcohol consumption. The National Woman's Christian Temperance Union was founded in 1874 in Cleveland, Ohio. Frances Willard held a decades-long tenure (1879-98) as president of the organization, which sought to improve public morals through encouraging abstinence from alcohol and narcotics. The WCTU was affiliated with the Prohibition Party, formed in 1869, which ran several presidential candidates, and the Anti-Saloon League, which became a national organization in 1895.²³ The WCTU owned a newspaper, office buildings and temperance hotels. The WCTU was exclusively made up of white, middle-class women interested in white, middle-class problems.²⁴ From the anti-slavery and temperance movements, a remarkable group of women leaders began to emerge, among them Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Susan B. Anthony, and around them the emerging women's movement began to take shape.

However, before great steps could be taken in the cause for women's rights, the Civil War erupted, temporarily displacing all other concerns in the national consciousness. During the Civil War, most women activists chose to forgo continuing agitation for female enfranchisement so that they could devote themselves to war work. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, through their Women's National Loyal League, gathered 400,000 women's signatures for a petition in favor of the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery.²⁵ Clearly, they had not lost sight of their ultimate objective, as they also could not resist informing their audiences that petitioning was the only means of political expression currently available to women.

Union victory in the Civil War and the adoption of the Thirteenth Amendment achieved the antislavery goal which had brought many women into public life. But with the status of

women's rights now less defined, the drive for equality faltered badly. William Lloyd Garrison, an abolitionist, argued in May 1865 that the National Anti-Slavery Society could disband with the slaves having been emancipated, while Wendell Phillips argued that the Society had plenty of work to do until the freedmen had secured their right to vote and other rights. Most women in the society agreed with Phillips, in part because they wished to link the cause for women's rights and suffrage with the cause for black rights and enfranchisement.²⁶

At the first postwar Women's Rights Convention in New York City in May 1866, Elizabeth Cady Stanton asserted that women should link themselves with blacks and abolitionist men and appeal for universal suffrage on the basis of natural rights. From this was created the American Equal Rights Association, open to men and women, blacks and whites.²⁷ It lobbied and petitioned to delete race and sex discrimination from state constitutions.²⁸ However, while Phillips and other antislavery leaders wanted women's support for black enfranchisement, they were unwilling to link that cause with the drive for women's rights, for the most part because they felt the task of black enfranchisement would be difficult enough without adding the burden of enlarging women's rights as well.²⁹

With a split already forming between male antislavery and women's rights leaders, a series of serious disappointments and losses battered the women's rights movement in the year immediately after the war ended. Shortly after the Thirteenth Amendment ending slavery was ratified in late 1865, the Fourteenth Amendment was passed by Congress, guaranteeing blacks equal protection of their state's laws and also providing for a reduction in a state's representation if the vote was denied to male citizens. "[T]he proposed Fourteenth Amendment referred to voting as a male right. In this form, that Amendment promised to advance the cause of black

suffrage while explicitly repudiating woman suffrage."³⁰ Suffragists, including the American Equal Rights Association, opposed the amendment on the basis that it added the word "male" to the Constitution, which they perceived would deny the equal application of the law and equal acknowledgment of rights for women. The Republicans campaigned in 1866 on a platform that included ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment, and won;³¹ the amendment was ratified in 1868 as it was originally written.

After the Republicans had won the White House, they began to formulate the Fifteenth Amendment, which limited state options for qualifying voters and forbade states to deny the right to vote to U. S. citizens on the basis of race, color, or previous condition of servitude. Women's rights activists lobbied to have the word "sex" included in the amendment, but most Republican leaders did not favor women's suffrage, and those who did feared jeopardizing enfranchisement of black men by endorsing women's suffrage as well.³² The Fifteenth Amendment was ratified in 1870 with the exclusionary language intact.

The loss of the two Amendment battles--introducing the word "male" into the Constitution with the Fourteenth Amendment, and the exclusion of the word "sex" in the Fifteenth Amendment--were most serious to the women's cause. However, other issues began to sow the seeds of division in the women's rights movement, including questions regarding the usage of the funds of the Equal Rights Association, the inclusion of men as allies in light of the defeats recently suffered, and the advocacy of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments despite their failure to include women.³³ Suffrage amendments introduced to the Kansas Constitution in 1867-68 and a Constitutional amendment introduced in Congress failed in 1868, although in 1869 Wyoming granted women the right to vote, and Utah followed suit in 1870.³⁴ Limited

success at the state level, combined with failure at the national level and increasingly bitter divisions between prewar abolitionists and women activists who had worked together for reform, were thus additional factors in a major split which occurred in 1869 in the suffrage movement.

Two rival women's suffrage organizations were created in the split, which lasted until 1890. The National Woman Suffrage Association, founded in 1869 by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, pushed for a federal amendment to grant women the right to vote and excluded men from its membership. The American Woman Suffrage Association was founded by Lucy Stone and Julia Ward Howe, and sought to gain women's suffrage state by state. Theirs was the "less radical" group, and they encouraged men to join.³⁵ The main difference between the two lay in the appropriate strategy to pursue women's suffrage, via a national amendment, or state by state. The two organizations embraced both strategies in principle, but in practice the NWSA experimented with several approaches to national enfranchisement, while the AWSA was inclined to concentrate on the states. The two organizations were soon caught up in competition for the support of local and state suffrage organizations and for the loyalty of individuals supportive of the cause.³⁶

Women activists in both groups realized that to achieve the goal of suffrage required a broad constituency of supporters and effective political strategy. However, women, who would be expected to support their own enfranchisement, had in fact been quite difficult to mobilize; having been successfully socialized to accept the prevailing view of woman's place, they instead often defended the status quo. Because male values shaped American culture and socialization, anything which alienated men was likely to cost women. The "true woman" was pious, submissive, domestic, and antithetical to the activists who were agitating for the vote. Even

women who privately supported these activists feared to do so publicly. Women activists thus had to mobilize women to go against numerous cultural taboos in demanding their right to vote, and then they had to require male politicians to take seriously this newly awakened political constituency.³⁷

Also remaining was the central problem, which was to make the government responsive to the demands of a group almost completely lacking in political power, a group without the primary tenet of a democracy, the ability to threaten legislators with reprisal at the ballot box.³⁸

As the movement to ensure the rights of emancipated slaves waned, the Progressive movement emerged as a vehicle for women's rights. Reformers for temperance, child labor, and suffrage often banded together to work for common goals through women's clubs. The women's club movement had originated in New England in the 1860s, and by 1890 women's clubs had joined together in a national association, the General Federation of Women's Clubs. State federations of women's clubs followed. These clubs often focused on cultural and literary ideas and "municipal housekeeping" as they worked to make cities into community homes. Women's clubs let women participate in civic affairs, organize themselves, and gain experience in public roles.³⁹ Clearly, the success of these clubs emphasized that women's place was no longer *limited* to the home

The success of women's clubs reflected what had become a tradition of voluntarist politics. Also foreshadowed was a broadening of the suffrage movement to include women from many different backgrounds beyond the narrow white middle-class of the nineteenth century,⁴⁰ but the increased viability of women's suffrage did not come easily.

Indicative of the class and race divisions which plagued the U. S. women's movement,

the General Federation of Women's Clubs excluded women of minority ethnic and racial groups. In response, organizations such as the National Association of Colored Women developed. These groups often worked toward the same goals as white women's clubs, such as education, welfare, and philanthropic activities, in addition to a wider scope of activities intended to uplift the community as a whole, such as day care, kindergartens, orphanages, schools, health care, and other services, and attempts to defend minorities of both sexes against racial discrimination.⁴¹

Most black women's clubs were interested in suffrage also, though not always for the same reasons as white women activists. Black women saw suffrage as a women's and as a race issue; for instance, Adella Logan of the Tuskegee Institute said black women needed the vote to get a share of funds for public schools for black children.⁴² The NAACP, the National Federation of Afro-American Women, the New England Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, and the Tuskegee Woman's Club in Alabama, among others, worked for suffrage.⁴³ Suffrage organizations were formed by African-American women in St. Louis, Memphis, Charleston, New Orleans, Boston, Los Angeles, and in diverse states such as Texas, New York, Idaho, and Maryland.⁴⁴

African-American women, like white women, believed that the vote would solve numerous social ills, although their priorities were somewhat different from those of white feminists. African-American women wanted to end sexual exploitation, control prostitution, eliminate barriers to interracial marriage, enact protective legislation for working women, and promote compulsory education. In states which had already granted women the vote, minority women had successfully organized campaigns to elect blacks to public office and had generated support for the nationwide suffrage movement. They also expected to make people listen to

them more.⁴⁵

The white suffragists hesitated to recruit black women and further erode their support within the dominant white mainstream American culture.⁴⁶ "At various points in its history, the woman suffrage movement ignored black women, actively rejected black women, spoke eloquently against slavery, and engaged in explicit and virulent racism."⁴⁷ Prominent suffragists often appealed to racist motivations in pursuing the vote for women. They argued that suffrage would ensure continued political dominance by whites by counterbalancing the votes of immigrants and African-Americans.⁴⁸

In addition to racial divisions, feminist leaders were unable to sort out the differences in interests between the poor, the working-class, and the middle-class.⁴⁹ Professional and wage-earning women were moved to increasing interest in suffrage by increasing state involvement in regulating business.⁵⁰ Their main concerns were wages, working conditions, unionization, and labor legislation. For them, the vote was to be a tool to address these other concerns. Upper-class women tended to see the vote as an end in itself. The divergence of goals for the vote thus made many working-class women more comfortable working for suffrage within their own organizations. Wage-earner suffrage leagues became a popular way for working women to retain their identities as women and as workers.⁵¹

The Women's Trade Union League was probably one of the most effective coalitions of women from varying backgrounds. Upper- and middle-class women felt it offered them the opportunity to address problems ignored by the more conservative women's clubs. Working women needed an organization which responded to their needs as women and as workers; the labor movement was unable to overcome sexism and include working women within its ranks.

The WTUL could respond to multiple needs of women from a variety of backgrounds. Suffrage was one of the common interests which helped make the WTUL a success, but conversely the winning of suffrage ended the most compelling need for unity, and the cross-class coalitions were too fragile to continue.⁵²

Domestic feminism, which grew out of the club movement, was an enlargement of the notions of women's interests, women's sphere, and municipal housekeeping. Domestic, or social, feminists were concerned with the social and economic problems faced by homemakers and working women. Social feminists organized special interest groups that addressed problems specific to working-class women. The goals social feminists pursued drew them into the mainstream of American politics. Although society commonly perceived women in domestic roles, social feminists recognized that millions of women worked and were often exploited, a situation which motivated them to pursue the power to make laws to insure health and safety.⁵³ In their attempts to prod state legislatures to take action, social feminists quickly realized they could be more effective if women had the right to vote.

By the 1910s, even the most conservative elements in the struggle for suffrage were willing to include working-class women in the movement. Their reasons were based more on expediency than on egalitarianism. The situations of working-class women provided a powerful rationale for suffrage, and working-class women were thought to be important in overcoming the resistance of working-class men to woman suffrage. Also, working-class women worked hard for suffrage among populations where middle- and upper-class women had little influence. Many women limited their concern for working-class women to getting them the vote, but not much other sustained activity on their behalf occurred.⁵⁴

Upper-class women became involved in the suffrage struggle only in the last decade of the campaign, demonstrating that the women's movement had become a single-issue campaign for suffrage; no longer a broad challenge to society as a whole, it thus ceased to threaten the status of upper-class women. Also, the lack of the ballot was one issue which affected women of all backgrounds.⁵⁵

". . . [S]uffrage became the symbolic focus of feminism, and as a result the woman's movement for a while took on the semblance of a single issue movement. Organization around a single issue has great advantages: it provides a focus, eliminates argument about priorities, and permits concentration of effort. Defeats and setbacks become an incentive to try harder."⁵⁶

Finally, in 1890, the AWSA and NWSA recombined into the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA). In their efforts to mobilize the public to support suffrage for women, activists developed a wide variety of arguments to illustrate their stance. Among these were gender equality, the unique moral attributes of women, "municipal housekeeping," social reform, and the common interests of women.⁵⁷

The central goal of nineteenth-century feminism was for women to be free and equal to men. Some feminist reformers also stressed the notion of women's virtue, especially as it was evidenced by women's devotion to motherhood. Early arguments by advocates of women's suffrage were thus developed--that women were the same as men, in which case suffrage was "just and right on a universal standard," and also that women's unique attributes, skills, and virtues were needed to improve politics.⁵⁸ The sustained tensions between natural rights and assumptions about the nature of woman provided the basic dynamic for a struggle which would last for over a hundred years.⁵⁹

Changes in the social feminist movement also shaped changes in the quest for suffrage. Into the early 1900s, the rationale for women's suffrage was based on natural rights. Following 1900, emphasis placed upon women's traditional roles in the home demonstrated that they were qualified to extend their experiences into the public sphere and to frame protective legislation.⁶⁰ As society industrialized, traditional duties extended beyond the home to include such duties as municipal sanitation, food inspection, and temperance; women would be better able to carry out these reforms if they could take political action through voting.⁶¹

Another argument used during the suffrage movement was that ideological or partisan advantages would accumulate to one side or another should women be granted the right to vote. The female vote was thought of as desirable--or undesirable--because it would increase the temperance vote or increase the influence of the "better" social classes. It was presumed that upper-class women would vote at higher rates and qualify for the vote more readily than lower-class women.⁶²

NAWSA asserted that woman suffrage would hasten Progressive reforms. The organization also argued that women were natural guardians of society's morals--their opposition to the liquor industry stemmed from their belief that liquor interests, other forms of commercial vice and big business manipulated government and corrupted society. These arguments created two expectations: that women would share common interests which would cause them to vote as a bloc, and that women voters would purge corruption from the political process and make government responsive to the public.⁶³

By using these various arguments ". . . NAWSA . . . consciously cultivated a broader base of support in the twentieth century by developing arguments that spoke to the specific

interests of diverse women as well as their common interests as women. (The major and glaring exception to this pattern involved black women, who were shunned for both tactical and racist reasons.)"⁶⁴

Differences between activists hindered the movement for suffrage throughout its duration. Anna Howard Shaw, who succeeded Carrie Chapman Catt as president of NAWSA, wanted to pursue suffrage state-by-state, while many women activists had decided that a federal approach would be necessary to ensure universal suffrage to all women. Alice Paul, Harriot Stanton Blatch, and Lucy Burns in particular advocated this approach. They and their adherents also advocated much more militant tactics to obtain women's suffrage than was preferred by the NAWSA leadership. They established the Congressional Union, which soon became independent of the National American Woman Suffrage Association because of disagreement over taking the federal approach.⁶⁵ The CU also attempted to punish the party in power for not advancing women's suffrage, including campaigning against anti-suffrage candidates, while NAWSA remained nonpartisan.⁶⁶

In 1915, Catt resumed the presidency of NAWSA from Shaw and reinvigorated the organization. Under her leadership, the group developed an agenda, the "Winning Plan," to target the states most likely to ratify a suffrage amendment and to accomplish that feat by December 1920.⁶⁷ To implement her plan, Catt used an anonymous two-million-dollar donation to print suffrage pamphlets and literature, to send women across the country to speak and establish contact with state organizations, and to plan open air meetings. By the end of World War One, NAWSA was the nation's largest voluntary organization with two million members.⁶⁸

As the momentum toward universal suffrage increased, Catt's arguments for woman

suffrage became very diverse in order to appeal to a wide variety of people. She urged adoption of a suffrage amendment as a measure to hasten victory during World War One, and said that the fight for democracy should begin at home. She also said that enfranchised women would hasten the reform process.⁶⁹

NAWSA was a large, heterogeneous, inclusive organization tolerant of a wide range of perspectives.⁷⁰ It had a "national, bureaucratic, mass membership movement umbrella under which a number of specific campaigns were . . . carried out."⁷¹ At the other end of the spectrum, the Congressional Union was small, homogeneous, and exclusive; it adopted practices used by the militant suffragettes in Great Britain and had a concise agenda.⁷² The militant CU "ran interference" for the more moderate NAWSA, which actually helped accelerate the drive for suffrage.⁷³

In 1914, the CU organized in the nine states which had granted women suffrage and urged women to reject Democratic candidates for their lack of progress on universal women's suffrage. In 1915, the CU began organizing in all 48 states. In 1916, its members, led by Alice Paul, founded the Woman's Party in the suffrage states, which was designed to concentrate the female vote in the Presidential election. The Woman's Party and CU merged in 1917 to form the National Woman's Party.⁷⁴ The National Woman's Party was "a cadre organization with rigid hierarchy, tight discipline, authoritarian leadership, close coordination, and tactical militance."⁷⁵

The National Woman's Party in January 1917 began a series of pickets of the White House. The picketers polarized attitudes on suffrage and earned wide publicity. Also, the government had already been repressing civil liberties because of World War One, and responded by arresting the picketers and sentencing them to prison, where many went on hunger

strikes, gathering even more publicity. Although NAWSA disavowed the pickets, it benefitted from the resultant publicity; also the NWP came to be seen as a radical fringe of a movement whose legitimate leader was the moderate NAWSA.⁷⁶

Alice Paul organized twenty-four-hour pickets of the White House. When the picketers were arrested and jailed, they went on hunger strikes and were force-fed. Though NAWSA was embarrassed by Paul's extremism, she always believed the NWP's militancy forced Wilson finally to call for passage of the "Anthony Amendment." NAWSA also worked against the reelection of four anti-suffrage Senators. The NWP took to the streets in demonstrations. Wilson addressed the Senate personally on the issue.⁷⁷

The CU militancy, NAWSA moderation, the growing number of states allowing women suffrage, and an overall shift in political structures allowed Catt to credibly discuss power politics of the type advocated by the CU several years before. Catt stated that if the Congress failed to submit a suffrage amendment, NAWSA would enter into state Congressional and Senate races to defeat anti-suffrage candidates. Within a month of her declaration, the House of Representatives passed the woman suffrage amendment on January 18, 1918.⁷⁸ By the time the U. S. Senate followed suit in June 1919, a total of 14 states had granted women full suffrage, and 13 others allowed women to vote in presidential elections.⁷⁹ (Daniel, 40)

At the same time, some suffragists, including Laura Clay in Kentucky, Kate M. Gordon in Louisiana and Belle Kearney in Mississippi, worked for state-by-state amendments that would enfranchise only white women. They formed the Southern States Woman Suffrage Conference, and when NAWSA committed itself in 1916 to a federal amendment, this organization campaigned against it.⁸⁰ (When Tennessee was in line to become the necessary thirty-sixth state

to vote for ratification, Catt was in the peculiar position of lobbying for the amendment at the same time Clay and Gordon lobbied against it.⁸¹⁾

The broad-based approach of the 1910s put the suffrage movement in its best position ever to win. The CU continued its practices of punishing the party in power in 1916, which they claimed had defeated twenty-three out of forty-three western Democrats in 1914. But in 1916, Wilson carried ten of the twelve suffrage states, and poll results indicated no anti-Democratic voting bloc existed. The possibility of U. S. involvement in World War One was the main issue of the 1916 election.⁸²

Meanwhile, NAWSA remained opposed to the CU's tactics, as an antagonism to sympathetic Democrats and inapplicable, with its "party in power" logic borrowed from England, to the US electoral system. Instead, NAWSA's strategy was to persuade passage on the basis of principle.⁸³

During World War One, suffragists employed strong rhetoric questioning the fight for democracy abroad when over half of the U. S. population was disenfranchised. Women's contributions to the war efforts also demanded recognition from power holders in the form of suffrage.⁸⁴

Combined with NWP militancy, NAWSA persistence gradually moved President Woodrow Wilson and the Democratic party from mild opposition to neutrality to support for woman suffrage in a somewhat short period of time in 1917 and 1918.⁸⁵ Newspapers also often ran suffrage statements and arguments, and public opinion gradually shifted in favor of women's suffrage.

"Social movements often provoke opposition. Indeed, the emergence of explicit

opposition to a social movement is often the best indicator that the movement is succeeding . . . Although opposition to social movements is fairly common, opposition to women's movements is distinctive because it often consists predominantly of other women."⁸⁶

Antisuffrage activity peaked from 1911 to 1916, with a peak female membership of 350,000 in the national antisuffrage organization. The movement continued to defend separate spheres and sex-based division of labor, likened antifeminism to defense of the home and country, and included such alarmist prophecies as socialist insurgency, race suicide, and the destruction of motherhood, femininity, the home, and the social order if suffrage were made universal.⁸⁷

Antisuffragism did not cause significant changes in the suffrage movement, mostly because the movement had already undergone major ideological changes in which the most radical opinions were modified or eliminated.⁸⁸

A backlash occurred against the increased public debate over the proper role of women. In response, "woman's sphere" and the "cult of domesticity" arose, along with glorification of the role of the mother. Many people saw emancipated women as a threat to social order.⁸⁹

Antisuffragists argued that suffrage for women would not result in sweeping change, bolstering their argument by pointing to states which had already granted female suffrage and had shown little impact by the female vote. Also, many antisuffrage leaders from privileged backgrounds viewed the suffrage struggle as part of a larger class struggle, and they identified more with their social class than with their gender group.⁹⁰

Many women also feared a loss of status by integrating the public and private spheres. Antisuffragists sought to maintain the separate spheres and the concomitant decorum and

modesty of femininity, which would also maintain the social distance believed necessary for men to continue to bestow status privileges upon women.⁹¹

Other antisuffrage opposition was rooted in the belief that suffrage would force more women into the labor force without alleviating their domestic responsibilities. Not only would work and domestic responsibilities be a double burden to women, but competition and antagonism between sexes also would increase. This viewpoint dovetailed with patriarchal and capitalist interest, which exemplified the mutual reinforcement of multiple systems of domination that are based on class, status and gender.⁹²

Groups opposing the suffrage campaign included organized religion, political machines, diverse business interests, Southern Democrat men, and Southern women. The liquor and brewing industry, which associated women's suffrage with temperance, was the best-known large group opposing suffrage. The groups tended to be male-dominated and sometimes colluded with the grass-roots female-dominated anti-suffrage groups. Their opposition contributed to the defeat of suffrage legislation in numerous states, and led most suffragists to decide a federal campaign would be necessary to grant women suffrage. Suffrage and prohibition groups often were neutral in their associations, and prohibition was a major complication in the fight for women's suffrage.⁹³

The Nineteenth Amendment prior to its ratification was regarded by many feminists as the event which would finally grant to women nearly equal rights with men; its ratification was called "the first hour in history" for women.⁹⁴ The U. S. House of Representatives approved the suffrage amendment by exactly two-thirds majority vote, 272-136, in January 1918. The U. S. Senate finally passed the suffrage amendment on June 4, 1919, by a 60-36 margin. Eleven states

passed the amendment quickly, and eleven more followed along. In August 1920, with 35 states in the fold, Tennessee became the needed 36th, and approved ratification by a one-vote margin. On August 26, 1920, the Secretary of State proclaimed the ratification of the 19th Amendment.

Many suffragists had believed the Nineteenth Amendment would be a panacea for women's issues. Believing they had accomplished their goal of equality for women, they looked forward to a period of rest.⁹⁵ However, as described by Buechler, ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment brought unexpected consequences:

Single issue movements by their very nature do not survive success. While the suffrage movement was going full speed ahead, few people had time to ask, what do we do after we win? Perhaps even those who knew better assumed that somehow attaining the long-sought goal would bring in its train fundamental changes in the role and status of women in American life. Victory, then, brought an unforeseen crisis.⁹⁶

Recent scholarship regarding the post-1920 period indicates the women's movement experienced shifting priorities, divisive debates, reduced visibility, and a marked lack of success in campaigns following the ratification of the suffrage amendment. Many see the post-suffrage amendment era as a time of relative decline in women's political mobilization.⁹⁷

The loss of momentum in the broad-based women's movement had several causes. A women's voting block never emerged; women voters broke down along race and class lines just as men did. Feminist groups fragmented to pursue a variety of goals, which sometimes conflicted with one another. The Equal Rights Amendment, pursued by the National Woman's Party, alienated many women's groups after suffrage, particularly unionists and social reformers. Social feminists anticipated enacting social reforms and the entry of women in major positions in

party and government leadership.⁹⁸ NAWSA transformed itself into the nonpartisan League of Women Voters, and devoted itself to studying public issues at the local level while also desiring to articulate a national consensus; concern for the legal status of women and the situations of women workers were only one part of a broad platform of interests.⁹⁹ Female employment, women's education, and the status of women in society changed substantially during the 1920s, but whether this was the result of suffrage or other women's political activity is difficult to ascertain.

The idea that female suffrage would be a panacea for women's ills caused the limits of the power to vote to be overlooked. Black males were almost completely disenfranchised, despite the Fifteenth Amendment, through a variety of structural obstacles such as the white primary, grandfather clauses, poll taxes, and literacy tests. Other ethnic minorities, such as Native Americans, Hispanics, and Asians, were mostly excluded from the political process as well. Recent immigrants from eastern and southern Europe lacked the social or economic standing to be politically active. Many foreign- and native-born women also were inhibited by their belief that politics was "men's business." The location of polls in such places as fire stations and saloons, which were virtually off limits to self-respecting women, also impeded their vote. The Nineteenth Amendment offered the potential of universal gender equality in voting power, as well as a reduction in the difference in political status between men and women. However, its most immediate beneficiaries were white, middle-class women.¹⁰⁰

The political influence women gained through the vote would be indirect. First, the ballot would grant women more influence on male politicians and enable them to lobby more effectively for reforms. Second, the use of the referendum would allow women a role in direct

legislation by petitioning to overrule enacted legislation and to initiate new legislation; this form of direct democracy also meant women could avoid the seamier side of politics. Prohibition was one such legislative cause women hoped to enact through the referendum. In other words, the ballot would allow women to influence or to bypass legislators.¹⁰¹

Through campaigning for the Nineteenth Amendment, many women had gained valuable experience as party workers and some as officeholders, although having large numbers of women in political office was not a goal of most suffrage advocates. The influence of the female vote was for other purposes. Following the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920, very few women's suffrage activists sought elective office.¹⁰²

In the first election after women gained national suffrage, women campaigned for and won offices in 23 of the 48 states. In the states where women were elected, they held a very small proportion of the available offices. In many states, there were no women at all in office. The difference in the number of women officeholders before and after ratification was almost nonexistent.¹⁰³

On why more women did not seek public office, Eleanor Flexner wrote:

No woman suffragists pushed herself aggressively forward as a candidate immediately after passage of the amendment in 1920. . . . The suffragists in 1920 were not only, many of them, *wearied of campaigning*; they were *confused*. . . . planted firmly in the minds of a goodly number of politicians [was] the idea that 'the ladies' were not really interested in politics--as politicians understood the term--but rather in 'reform,' which was quite another matter.¹⁰⁴

During the 1920s, a few thousand women became aldermen of council men, a dozen women became mayors, some served as county school superintendents, county clerks, treasurers,

auditors or recorders. At the state level, 149 women became legislators. Occasionally, a woman was state auditor, treasurer, or secretary of state. Nellie Taylor Ross of Wyoming and Miriam Ferguson of Texas became governors. Although these women were pioneers, they also tended to confirm society's view of women. Ross said that women fulfilled their highest destiny as wives and mothers within the home. Belle Moskowitz, an influential advisor of Al Smith, said women had qualities which were uniquely feminine, but they were not intellectually equal to men.¹⁰⁵ . . . [I]n 1929, only 122 women served in state legislatures, and the number increased to only 140 by 1937."¹⁰⁶

In the federal bureaucracy, women held a small scattering of positions. Grace Abbott administered the Children's Bureau from 1921 to 1934, while Mary Anderson was director of the Women's Bureau from 1920 to 1944. Louise Stanley was head of the Bureau of Home Economics. Mabel Walker Willebrandt became an assistant attorney general.¹⁰⁷

Arguments used to promote women's entry into public office included women's expertise, and their presumed ability to resolve certain issues (which can be turned against women by functioning as an excuse to confine them to a narrow sphere of influence, such as social welfare education and child welfare); the quality of political leadership would improve with the increased competition of both male and female active participation; and the legitimacy of a political system would require that it be representative of all segments of society, including ethnic and gender groups.¹⁰⁸

The Democrat and Republican parties appointed women to their national committees. An equal number of men and women were placed on state committees. During the 1920 conventions, the Republicans also endorsed five League of Women Voters proposals, while the

Democrats endorsed fifteen. Both parties also had women delegates at their conventions.

Republican candidate Warren G. Harding endorsed the goals of equal pay for equal work, an eight-hour workday, maternity and child welfare, and a federal department of social welfare.¹⁰⁹

In the early 1920s, women were still paying their dues in the political structures. Although the push for suffrage had given them experience in organizing, campaigning, and lobbying, few women had experience or status in the all-male political organizations. They had to work their way up through the ranks, gradually building a political following. The League of Women Voters organized classes about the elections process geared toward women voters. Still, in 1928, although many women were activated by prohibition and the Catholicism of the presidential candidate Al Smith, only 56 percent of eligible women voters participated in the election, while 75 percent of men voters did so. Some observers nevertheless asserted that it was the women's vote which gave Hoover his sizable margin of victory over Smith.¹¹⁰

Women's potential power as a political force had been exemplified on occasion during the 1910s. Voting as a bloc, women had defeated Chicago mayor "Big Bill" Thompson in 1915, Massachusetts senator John Weeks, an antisuffragist, in 1918, and a sixteen-year mayoral incumbent in Columbus, Ohio. The political parties therefore began courting women voters after ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment.¹¹¹

An illustration of women's political power early in the 1920s is the passage of the Sheppard-Towner Act, which established public health centers and prenatal clinics, and was initially appropriated \$1.25 million. Passage had come despite congressmen's fear that it would open the way for other demands for federally financed welfare programs.¹¹² The Women's Joint Congressional Committee formed to lobby for legislation regarding child labor, and infant and

maternity care; it was successful at first, but when the female voting bloc failed to appear, the group disintegrated.¹¹³

Female activism also persuaded Congress to rewrite citizenship laws in 1922. The Cable Act legislated that women must secure citizenship independently of their husbands. American women no longer lost their citizenship if they married aliens. On the other hand, foreign-born women no longer automatically received citizenship if their husbands did; they had to qualify on their own.¹¹⁴

In 1924, Congress approved a child-labor amendment. Social feminists had previously lobbied passage of the Keating Owen Act in 1916, but it was struck down by the Supreme Court in 1918, and a similar measure was struck down in 1922. Florence Kelley led activists in the pursuit of a constitutional amendment to outlaw child labor. However, the effort to ratify this amendment demonstrated the limits of women's political power. Because this amendment would have immediate consequences for employers who depended upon cheap child labor, the National Association of Manufacturers, the National Farm Bureau Federation, and the Grange lobbied against the amendment, saying that it was actually part of a Communist plot. The amendment was defeated by early 1925. Its defeat meant that party leaders lost their fear that women voters would act as a bloc.¹¹⁵

"The postsuffrage decade of the 1920s is frequently characterized as a standoff between pure feminist advocates of the ERA and social feminist defenders of protective labor legislation."¹¹⁶ One camp attacked gender categories and called for a uniform standard of wages, and everything else, for the sexes. The other argued for gender-based protective legislation in the interest of working-class women.¹¹⁷ The National Woman's Party argued such protection

could promote discrimination against women workers, while social feminists and various union groups viewed an end to protective legislation as a step backward.¹¹⁸ The pure feminists of the NWP and the social feminists of the other women's organizations disagreed on a fundamental issue: the need to pursue purely feminist goals following the suffrage victory. The NWP believed so; the League of Women's Voters, the US Women's Bureau, the Women's Trade Union League, and the Consumer's League did not.¹¹⁹ The NWP was the only women's group in the 1920s to continue with a purely feminist agenda. Other groups began subordinating women's rights to other causes.¹²⁰ Social feminists established the Women's Bureau, which was to lobby on behalf of working women. It orchestrated the activities of the Women's Trade Union League, the National Consumers' League, the League of Women Voters, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Young Women's Christian Association, the National Parent-Teacher Association, the General Federation of Women's Clubs, the American Association of University Women, and various church and labor organizations that formed the Women's Joint Congressional Committee.¹²¹

Following the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment, Alice Paul of the National Woman's Party insisted that women were still "subordinate to men before the law, in the professions, in the church, in industry, and in the home."¹²² Paul disliked protective legislation on the basis that it implied women were less able than men in taking care of themselves. She wanted "absolute equality for women and rejected all special privileges."¹²³ Differences among women in class, race, and social roles were ignored. Other goals which were proposed as worthy of pursuit, such as disarmament, birth control, or ensuring voting rights for black women, were vetoed by Alice Paul as peripheral to the main issue of legal equality. The NWP advocated an

Equal Rights Amendment that would achieve this goal definitively, and beginning in 1921 made this the new single issue to which it would devote itself.¹²⁴

The original Equal Rights Amendment stated: "Men and women shall have equal rights throughout the United States and every place subject to its jurisdiction." It was first introduced to the judiciary committee of the House and Senate on December 2, 1923.¹²⁵ Following the introduction of the ERA in 1921, women trade unionists and some progressive reformers attacked it as class-biased and suited largely for the experiences of professional women and highly skilled workers.¹²⁶ The rivalry between Alice Paul's militant feminists and the moderate social feminists, which had been productive when both groups wanted the same outcome, now became destructive as women failed to agree on goals and as women in each camp came to think ill of the motives of the other.¹²⁷ The NWP assumed women should have jobs or careers, took an ambivalent stance on marriage and motherhood, and was generally distrustful of men. These stances made it difficult for them to gain support among wives and mothers, as well as workers, in their pursuit of the ERA.¹²⁸

Social feminists opposed the ERA as a threat to the protective legislation that had been enacted. Mary Anderson, head of the Women's Bureau, led the opposition to the ERA. As she explained:

In the first place it was unsound from the legal point of view. There was no definition of 'rights.' There was no definition of 'equality.' If a state law had different standards for men and women, would the amendment mean that the men should have the women's standards, or the women have the men's? No one knew that answer. In the second place it was unnecessary because most of the real discrimination against women were a matter of custom and prejudice and would not be affected by a constitutional amendment. In the third place it was dangerous because it might

upset or nullify all the legal protection for women workers that had been built up through the years, which really put them on a more nearly equal footing with men workers.¹²⁹

The argument that the ERA would effectively repeal all protective legislation was used again and again in the debate regarding its merits. Social feminists felt working-class women were especially subject to exploitation by employers. Working-class women had limited education and skills but often had to work and, thus, often had to take whatever employment was available. Protective legislation ensured their health and safety.¹³⁰

In favor of protective legislation were arguments that women workers were not working only for pin money, but contributed to the support of themselves, their husbands, children, and other dependents just as men did. The Women's Bureau asserted that harsh working conditions were more harmful to women than to men because women also were burdened with housework and child care, which men workers typically did not have to face. Their conclusion was that women needed protective legislation; because such legislation varied so widely between states, in order to make it sex-neutral, a substantial number of each state's laws would have to be revised.¹³¹

Alice Paul rebutted that protective legislation should apply to all workers to improve industrial working conditions. She also pointed out the sex discrimination in state laws.¹³² Burnita Shelton Matthews conducted a state-by-state survey for the National Woman's Party to assess the status of women in America, confirming Paul's assertions. The vote by itself had done little to improve the lot of women. Instead, the attitude of society toward women needed to be changed.¹³³

Social feminists put top priority on the regulation of wages and hours. By 1920, twelve states had passed minimum-wage laws, but the minimums were set industry by industry, and occupation by occupation. There were no statewide minimums. Regulation of working hours was generally done throughout the country, but with variations. The average restriction was eight to ten hours per day, and fifty-four to fifty-six hours per week. Domestic workers and farm laborers were not covered by any legislation, while being the most subject to exploitation.¹³⁴

In California, an 8-hour work day, 48-hour work week was the standard. Twelve states specified that women could work no more than five or six hours straight without a break or meal. Twelve states specified that women could work no more than six days straight without a day of rest. Thirteen states prohibited night work by women; some states banned night work in only some occupations, such as Ohio's ban on women working as ticket-takers at night. The home sweatshop was regulated or prohibited in twelve states. Ten states banned home sweatshops altogether, though again with exceptions in the areas most subject to exploitation: clothing, trimmings and tobacco; and also exempted members of the immediate family. Protective laws regarding cleanliness, adequate lighting and ventilation also were passed.¹³⁵

Until the 1908 *Muller* Supreme Court decision, social feminists found it difficult to devise protective legislation which did not violate constitutional protections of property and contractual rights. In the *Muller* case, the Supreme Court ruled that because of women's physical inferiority, they were at a disadvantage in their effort to make a living. Also, the Court found that healthy mothers were essential to healthy offspring. This ruling made it possible to justify protective laws for women in the work force that were not permitted for working men.

Following the decision, state legislatures, at the behest of constant lobbying by social feminists,

enacted legislation for working women regarding wages and hours, a day of rest, night work, meal and rest periods, sweatshops, and mothers' pensions. The states also attempted to ban child labor.¹³⁶

Alice Paul felt the ERA would foster sex-neutral legislation. The *Lochner v. New York* decision had ruled out protective legislation for men in 1905, and the *Adkins* decision did the same for women in 1923, thus indicating that the Supreme Court doubted the constitutionality of any protective legislation.¹³⁷

Adkins v. Children's Hospital was a Supreme Court decision that in 1923 put a strong check on protective legislation. A new conservative majority ruled that Washington D. C.'s minimum wage law was unconstitutional. Justice George Sutherland stated that the Nineteenth Amendment had put an end to the need for protective legislation for women on the basis that equality at the polls also meant equality at work. Minimum wage laws in Arkansas, Kansas, and Wisconsin were struck down following the *Adkins* decision, and were not enforced in other states. Florence Kelley denounced the decision as guaranteeing "the inalienable right of women to starve." Harmony in the women's movement was permanently ended by the National Woman's Party filing a brief to the Supreme Court in favor of invalidating the D. C. minimum wage law.¹³⁸

Aside from the bickering among feminists throughout the 1920s, several other factors influenced the degree and direction of change in women's economic status. One root of the disagreements among feminists regarding female labor was that feminist thought regarding female employment had varied historically in the United States. Although the Seneca Falls "Declaration of Sentiments" had called for a removal of barriers to female employment, and

Elizabeth Cady Stanton hoped to achieve broader employment opportunities for women, most suffragists were not concerned with enlarging women's economic role outside the home. To many social feminists, including Jane Addams, Mary Anderson, and Julia Lathrop, career and marriage were mutually exclusive. They wanted to protect working-class women from exploitation, but were not concerned with increasing employment opportunities for middle-class women. Charlotte Gilman asserted that housekeeping duties needed to be restructured to allow women the same employment opportunities as men, but she was ignored by feminists on both sides of the issue.¹³⁹

Another factor strongly opposing the employment of women was that urban middle-class men were able to support their wives completely. It was feared that if middle-class women worked, they would lose their femininity and also be demoralized by their constant exposure to men. Also, middle-class men felt wives and daughters working would question their ability to provide for their families, though they might not object to their wives taking white collar jobs, which could be seen as prestigious. However, the combination of outside work, housework, and child care convinced many women that it was not worth the effort for a woman whose husband could support her. Working-class men moving up the social ladder were usually pleased at being able to withdraw their wives from the necessity of work, viewing this as a status symbol. The vast majority of adult women were married; social attitudes toward married women working therefore were substantial influences in controlling the number of women entering the work force.¹⁴⁰

Modernization of households through electrification offered a small segment of the female population a greater range of choice in how to spend their time, as the demands of

housework were lessened. These choices included increased leisure activity, such as getting involved in clubs, joining the labor market, or pursuing a higher standard of homemaking. For most middle-class couples, the idea of a wife working was viewed with disdain. Therefore, most women could choose between greater leisure or a higher standard of homemaking and child care. Older women in particular were more likely to choose some combination of increased leisure activity and a higher level of homemaking, while younger women were often more tempted to combine homemaking with the labor market.¹⁴¹ "Social attitudes toward the responsibility of the father-husband for the support of his family also affected the decision of wives in choosing among homemaking, leisure, and work."¹⁴²

Men derived psychic rewards in their ability to keep their women out of the labor force. As such, women who worked did so with a different perspective from that of men. There were still several groups of women who did work. Prior to 1920, a woman who wished to pursue a long-term professional career almost certainly had to forgo marriage. Adult single women, divorcees, and widows were expected to attempt to support themselves rather than remain on the public dole. Women in working-class families and non-white women worked out of economic necessity, for themselves and their families.¹⁴³

World War One was a catalyst for many women workers, brining them out of their homes and into the labor force in record numbers. By July 1917, 1,300,000 men had been drafted, opening up job opportunities for women. In the fall of 1917, the US employment service launched a campaign to recruit women for war industry jobs. About 14,000 women took war jobs. By early 1918, women's labor was seen as a national necessity. They worked in heavy industry, such as steel mills, and in armament factories, loading and unloading equipment,

painting tanks, and welding machinery. So many women worked in industry that the new federal Women's Bureau was established, headed by Mary Anderson. President Woodrow Wilson charged the National War Labor Board to pay attention to issues concerning women workers, especially pay. In 1918, women got one-third to two-thirds the wages of men.¹⁴⁴ Other forms of discrimination against women also continued.¹⁴⁵

For cultural and economic reasons, male workers were not receptive to female co-workers. Women, they argued, should either stay in female occupations or stay home. They feared female labor would depress wages for all. Men staged protests and strikes, barred women from unions, and introduced protective legislation. When women complained about such discrimination, their grievances were trivialized or denied; or they were declared unfit for the strain of their jobs.¹⁴⁶

Some industries were more accepting of women. Wells Fargo, for example, praised women as good messengers. They were also widely accepted in agriculture, partly because of the labor shortage. Thirty-four women's colleges offered training in agriculture. Women agricultural workers formed various organizations, such as Garden Clubs of America. Recruits in the American Woman's Land Army were guaranteed a minimum wage and training in exchange for at least two months' service in all manner of agricultural work. About 15,000 women took part.¹⁴⁷

Acceptance of women workers did not include women of color or ethnicity. Native American women were confined to the reservations, and Mexican-Americans were exploited as farm workers. Asians on the West Coast were limited to low-paying jobs, and black women did agricultural work in the South and domestic labor in the North and South. The Atlanta Colored

Women's War Council set up leagues to teach black women to help the war effort by preserving food, banning liquor, and organizing entertainment for black soldiers. Menial, dirty, heavy jobs were done by black women and poor immigrant women.¹⁴⁸

World War One had only a limited effect on the supply or demand for female labor. While some shifts in labor occurred, the wartime demand was not sustained. When the war ended, women workers were phased out of heavy industry, although they remained in tobacco, food processing, leather, and clerical services. They lost jobs in the steel and auto industries.¹⁴⁹ Returning veterans reclaimed their old jobs, and traditional cliches regarding women's proper place forced women out of new-found positions in the labor force. The World War One experience confirmed to the public that women could serve as an adequate reserve of labor supply to fill in for men during emergencies; in times of peace, women were expected to remain confined to a much more limited range of employments.¹⁵⁰

Overall, the changes in the number of women working during the 1920s were modest. However, there was also an overall decline in reliance on child-labor and a growing acceptance of employment of adult women and married women of all age groups. Declining birth rates and modernized households offered more women the opportunity to choose employment outside the home.¹⁵¹

During the 1920s, the number of teenage women in the work force decreased by 5.6 percent. This decline was offset by the increase of women in their early 40s who continued working, an increase of 2.3 percent. Of the 2.28 million women who entered the work force during the twenties, 1.15 million (50.4%) were married. Fewer than 30,000 married women had entered the work force during the 1910s.¹⁵²

A third factor which influenced women's economic status was the exact nature and extent of women's entry into the labor force. Over 7.1 million workers entered the labor force in the 1920s, nearly 2.2 million of which were women. In 1930, 23.8% of women were employed, up from 21.7% in 1920. In all, during the 1920s, 10,500,000 women were in the labor force, approximately one in four adult women. The increase in labor rates indicated a growing acceptance of female employment. Structural changes in the American economy allowed for the entry of more women into the work force. The agriculture and manufacturing sectors, which employed primarily men, had tended to decline during the 1920s. Manufacturing declined despite the development of assembly-line car production and an increased demand for mass-produced consumer goods, for technological advances, new tools, and new production techniques that eliminated many jobs. Meanwhile, jobs in the trade and service industries expanded considerably; these white-collar jobs attracted many women workers, including middle-class women.¹⁵³

In 1920, there were 8,500,000 women employed; 43.4 percent, or 3,714,000, were in "female" occupations. By the end of the decade, the concentration of women workers in "female" jobs had increased 49.4 percent. Five hundred thousand jobs, about one third of the overall increase in the female labor force, was the result of increased demand for "female" labor.¹⁵⁴

In 1920, there were twenty "female" occupations. In 1930, there were twenty-five. Most women were concentrated in domestic service, teaching, stenography, and laundry. The increase of women in "female" occupations was the result of increased demands in these jobs, and in the trained-nurse occupation. Other "female" occupations declined, including boardinghouse keeper,

launderer, untrained nurse, and blue collar positions in textiles and clothing production. In short, the increase was in jobs that called for education, literacy, and skilled training, while the decline was in jobs calling for traditional homemaking skills.¹⁵⁵

In white-collar work, only in sales did women's share of the job market decrease, with a loss of about 68,000 jobs. Increases in the professional and managerial occupations was 22,000 jobs for each. Among clerical workers, who tended to be women with high school diplomas, the increased exceeded 177,000 jobs. As in blue-collar jobs, demand for women workers varied from occupation to occupation. Demand increased, for instance, in the occupations of architect and lawyer, but decreased in the occupations of dentist and physician. The increases in jobs for women workers was in service-producing rather than goods-producing jobs.¹⁵⁶

Women continued to have difficulty combining professional careers with marriage. In 1920, 75 percent of women professionals were single. Furthermore, while 86 percent of "highly gifted" men found successful careers, 61 percent of gifted females became full-time homemakers.¹⁵⁷

The total labor force increased by 17.5% during the 1920s. Just to maintain the females' constant share of the labor market, 1,400,000 female workers were added. An additional 710,000 women workers were an expansion. Thus, two-thirds of the increased in female workers was a reflection of overall population growth, while one-third was the result of growing acceptability of paid employment for women.¹⁵⁸

Approximately 2,150,000 women entered the work force during the 1920s. However, this did not mean that many women were able to earn economic independence; it appears that most women were stuck in menial "women's work," low-paying, low-status clerical jobs and a

limited entry into the professions. They were always paid less than men. Contemporary analysis of the 1920s generally concludes that the decade was one of unfulfilled promise regarding the potential advancement of women as a whole.¹⁵⁹

Specific qualities in laborers also accounted for the continuing sexual division of labor. In white-collar jobs, cheapness combined with a fairly high level of education or skilled training were factors in the demand for women workers, such as clerical workers, librarians, nurses, elementary teachers, and social workers. Demand also was guided by traits that employers believed were related to sex and found desirable for certain jobs. For instance, women were initially hired to work in textile mills and clothing factories because of their familiarity with spinning, weaving and sewing; but women also were attributed with manual dexterity and patience, both of which made them suitable for the work. "Male" attributes, such as physical strength, high motivation, career continuity, and geographic mobility were not qualities that employers believed women possessed. Jobs which were labeled as "female" were always considered to be "female." In the 1920s, demand for female employees placed a premium on education, either a high school diploma or a bachelor's degree. These genteel jobs conformed with stereotypical views of the feminine character, while they did not require demanding work or a long-term commitment to a career.¹⁶⁰

The demand for women workers varied from occupation to occupation. In crafts, nonfarm labor, private household work, and farm labor, because women did not maintain a constant share of the jobs, there was a "loss" of women workers. The number of women in service work in private homes increased, but women's overall share of the occupation declined. Only in the farming and service industries did women end the 1920s with a larger share of the

job market than they had at the beginning of the decade. At the same time, total employment in the farmer and farm laborer occupations was decreasing, with women losing 17,500 jobs as farmers and 119,000 jobs as farm laborers. In the end, the most jobs were lost in the farm labor category, small changes were made in the occupations of farmer, craftsperson, and nonfarm labor, and large increases came in the service categories.¹⁶¹

The proportion of single women aged 20 to 24 increased slightly during the 1920s, while in every other age group under 55, the proportion of single women declined. In the general population, the number of married women increased 1 percent. In 1920, there were 8,350,000 women in the labor force, and 5.5 million women aged 20 and over. Employers felt pressured to employ the maximum number of single women possible, before turning to married women. During the 1920s, the number of married women working passed 3,000,000, increasing over 1,000,000; the proportion of married women in the labor force increased from 22.8 percent to 28.5 percent.¹⁶²

Socially condoned discrimination against married and older working women helped dampen the economic activity of those women. Many states during the 1920s excluded married women from public employment, especially from teaching in public schools. Marriage was believed to make women less eligible than single women or all men, which would make them be more difficult to supervise and also have less professional commitment. By 1930, many school boards refused to hire married women, and would require a woman teacher to resign if she did marry. Private employers varied, but also were usually hostile to married and older working women. Women who were over 40, both married and single, were discriminated against because they were believed to be less physically able and more unreliable, inefficient, and "neurotic."

Younger women were thought to be more easily trained, more mentally alert, more attractive, more willing to work for less money, and more accepting of company policy.¹⁶³

Structural changes in the economy contributed to a shift in emphasis on women workers in manual labor and housekeeping to industries that required literacy and intellect. This is not to say that women workers switched from low-skill blue-collar jobs to white-collar jobs. Instead, older women in blue-collar jobs kept their jobs or dropped out of the labor force, while younger women with higher education took the jobs in the expanding white-collar occupations. Women still were not sought out for professional and managerial positions, nor were they encouraged to seek jobs that required a lengthy commitment. Finally, more lenient attitudes toward married women working, the expansion of jobs believed suitable for middle-class women, and the declining proportion of young single women combined to pressure employers to submerge their reluctance to employ older and married women.¹⁶⁴

The propriety of work for women depended upon their age, marital status, race and social class. Women, however, were still ranked by their family affiliation, while men were ranked by the work they did. The more prestigious the work of the husband or father, the more status his wife and daughters had. Teaching was a respectable job for white, middle-class, unmarried women. Manual or domestic labor was taboo. Because teaching required special training, the woman's father and family were confirmed in their middle-class status.¹⁶⁵

Part-time sales jobs offered married women a good occupation, since it contributed a second income to the household while also allowing adequate time for homemaking. There was also some upward mobility in sales, to head of stock, assistant buyer, or buyer. Many single women would prefer office work, which paid better than sales, and offered contacts with men

(including the possibility of marrying the boss), though there was not much upward mobility.¹⁶⁶

"Women, however, did not operate in a single, homogeneous labor market. Age, marital status, and race, as well as social status and education, functioned as critical factors in defining relatively separate, segmented labor markets."¹⁶⁷ It was more socially acceptable for single women to work. Farm families also accepted the necessity of daughters working on the farm. Among African-Americans, daughters were often pressured to contribute to the family's support, though their range of employment options was quite restricted. White working-class families accepted that wives and daughters must work out of economic necessity. The less educated were able to do factory work. Those with at least some high school education could choose sales and clerical work. The working conditions of women had improved since the 1900s, and also unlike the 1900s, during the 1920s, most young women had at least some experience in the work force before they married.¹⁶⁸

Younger women were more often employed as receptionists, while older women worked as office managers. Single women might sell girls' dresses, while married women might sell women's coats. In southern cities, black women dominated the occupation of domestic servant, while in northern cities, this job was dominated by daughters of immigrants. White girls with some high school education worked as sales girls, typists, and telephone operators; those with diplomas were nurses and teachers. Immigrants and their daughters were a large percentage of the needle trades. White women did not work with black women, and rarely worked with immigrant women. Women, regardless of race or class, never worked alongside men.¹⁶⁹

Female employment throughout the first decades of the twentieth century was governed by more than mere economic demand. Cultural expectations, social norms, race, ethnicity, and

class were also major influences upon the number of women who worked outside the home, the length of time they worked outside the home, and the type of work they performed.

Employment did not automatically allow women liberation. For white middle-class women, a career might have been an alternative to marriage; or a job provided an opportunity for independence from parents prior to marriage. However, for African-American women and immigrants, paid employment was often a necessity. In this situation, working women were reinforcing their traditional roles as caretakers of the family, not carving out a new measure of independence and liberation.¹⁷⁰

Hispanic American, Asian American and American Indian women commonly worked because of economic necessity. The values of their respective cultures restricted their work to within the family group.¹⁷¹ "The economic status of women in the various ethnic groups was affected by the value systems of their respective groups."¹⁷² A woman of any ethnic group was allowed to work in family businesses, as need required and under the direction of her father or husband. Irish American, German American, and Polish American women were permitted to work as domestics and, except for German Americans, in factories, since these forms of work had been considered acceptable in their European cultures. Italian American women were usually restricted to work within the home, or only under the supervision of a male family member, because of the value attached to female purity.¹⁷³

In the 1920s, 300,000 African-Americans migrated from the South to the Northeast, especially Harlem. Another 350,000 African-Americans moved to the Midwest, including Chicago, Detroit and Cleveland.¹⁷⁴ African-American males were severely limited in their ability to support their families. In rural areas, most were confined to jobs as farm laborers,

sharecroppers, or cash tenants. In urban areas, they were restricted to unskilled and service work. A very small percentage of black males worked as artisans, or held middle-class jobs such as teacher, postman, merchant, or professional. Black women therefore grew up expecting to contribute to the economic support of their families. Racism barred black women from virtually all but two jobs: field laborers in rural areas and house servants in urban areas. Despite the strenuousness of field labor, the work enable black women to divide time between the fields and the home to best meet their family needs; the work also kept black women from being exposed to white supervisors. Black women at every age had the highest rate of employment in the labor force of all American women.¹⁷⁵

The number of African-American women working in the 1920s increased by 289,000, or by 20 percent. Fewer teenage girls worked, while more older women worked. Without exception, in each age group more African-American women worked than native-born white women. Single African-American women were slightly more likely than single white women to work. Married African-American women were three times more likely than white married women to work. The shift from rural to urban, from farm labor to domestic day service, allowed African-American women more flexibility in their work arrangements. The rural to urban shift also offered African-American children greater access to education, which allowed later generations the ability to compete for blue-collar and some white-collar occupations.¹⁷⁶

Unemployment was a constant threat to the well-being of African-American families. Wives worked as domestics, husbands as unskilled factory labor and maintenance men. As domestic work shifted from live-in to day work, it sometimes allowed the women to adjust their work loads to their family needs, or at least to combine the job with homemaking. Marriage and

motherhood usually came early, and first children often were born out of wedlock. The families were often supported by siblings and grandparents. Most parents had not finished high school, and as a result neither did most of their children. Limitations on economic and social mobility led adults to engage in drinking, gambling, and other escapist behaviors, and children to join neighborhood gangs.¹⁷⁷

Black women suffered higher rates of unemployment and were hardest hit by the Depression. Even domestic jobs decreased. They also were barred from clerical, sales, and factory jobs. They usually were excluded from relief and welfare programs.¹⁷⁸

Female employment also was influenced by changes in the educational system. Equal access to education had been a major quest for feminists since the time of Mary Wollstonecraft for education was the principal means of social mobility.¹⁷⁹

The success of the public schools in reaching most of the white American youth obscured the fact that minorities were too often excluded. The status of education for African-Americans in the South in the twenties was very poor. Alabama and South Carolina did not have one state-supported, four-year high school for blacks. In 15 Southern states, less than ten percent of African-American youths of high school age were enrolled. The segregated schools for African-American children were generally inferior to the schools for white children. In the South, schools for African-Americans were often only one room, and the teacher was poorly trained, poorly paid, and frequently responsible for janitorial and administrative duties as well. In the North, the schools for African-American children were often those that had been abandoned by whites who moved to more up-to-date schools in newer neighborhoods or the suburbs though they were superior to those in the South.¹⁸⁰

The sex-role stereotyping pervasive in education limited young women's perceptions of their abilities and options. Although elementary curricula were ostensibly gender neutral, young boys and girls had already been thoroughly socialized regarding proper sex-role behavior by their families, churches, and communities before beginning schools. The schools tended to reinforce this socialization--girls were involved in art projects while boys built things; at recess girls' play was more sedate, while boys played ball and soccer. Teachers treated boys and girls very differently, tolerating aggression in boys, giving them more instruction in math and more encouragement to try new things, while girls were encouraged to conform, be neat, and be obedient. Teaching materials also emphasized the different roles acceptable for boys and girls. The sex-role differentiation was more explicit at the junior and senior high school levels. Physical education classes were separated by gender, and girls and boys were encouraged to take altogether different classes, with girls in cooking and sewing and boys in shop classes.¹⁸¹

In secondary schools, there was a revolution in education. Previously, high schools had been for the most part college preparatory institutions for a select group of middle-class whites. The Smith-Hughes Act changed high school curricula. Rural schools began agricultural and home economics programs. Town and city high schools started vocational training programs for boys and commercial programs for girls. Regardless of their educational focus, most students shared a common teaching staff and some courses, since most high schools were comprehensive.¹⁸²

Broader curricula helped democratize white high schools, with white middle-class female students being prepared for white-collar employment. African-Americans, Native Americans, and Hispanics were not so lucky. Although increasing educational opportunities for African

Americans was often mentioned, Native Americans and Hispanics were rarely considered. Despite this, by the mid-twenties, about half of all American teenagers were in school, and the percentage was rising; American women had broader educational opportunities than anywhere else in the world.¹⁸³

High schools also provided social mobility. High school diplomas gave access to white-collar employment. Working-class parents regarded the diploma as a gateway for their children to move up in the world. Possessing a high school diploma in the 1920s marked the individual as having better-than-average intelligence, a degree of literacy, and self-discipline.¹⁸⁴

High schools did not prepare boys and girls equally for college. Boys were encouraged to take three years of math, chemistry, and physics. Girls were encouraged to take business math rather than algebra and general science instead of chemistry or physics.¹⁸⁵ High school diplomas offered males access to white-collar jobs, middle-class status, admission to college, and an even wider range of career options and higher social status. High school diplomas offered girls a more restricted range of white-collar employment, including sales, office, and clerical work. Additional schooling allowed women to become nurses or teachers. For the most part, the status women had was derived from their husbands--their diploma's value lay more in the enhancement of their ability to marry an upwardly mobile males.¹⁸⁶

While the number of women in college, graduate, and professional schools steadily increased, women still faced more difficulty than men in obtaining an education after high school. At the same time, college degrees were becoming increasingly important to gaining access to white-collar jobs that were more than just routine.¹⁸⁷ Women had more difficulty gaining admission to college than did men. Some colleges limited female enrollment to forty

percent of the total student population "in order to reduce competition among women students for male escorts." Coed colleges commonly required women applicants to meet a higher admission standard than men applicants. Financial aid was not as easy to obtain for female students. Family attitudes and institutional values thus often combined to keep women from going to college, or to obtain a degree if they did go.¹⁸⁸

In college, women were concentrated in teacher programs and liberal arts programs. Men were in the applied sciences, business, engineering and agriculture. Men dominated law and medical schools also. Discrimination against women students and difference in training and social values affected women's education, as well as to what use they put their education.¹⁸⁹

In 1920, women numbered 282,943 enrollments, and men number 314,938 enrollments. The number of women college students increased seventy percent; the number of men college students increased ninety-eight percent during the 1920s. Although women more frequently dropped out than men, this disparity decreased during the 1920s. In 1920, the number of women completing degrees was 17 per 1,000 twenty-year-olds; in 1930, there were 45 per 1,000 twenty-year-olds. In 1920 and 1930, men and women earned master's degrees at nearly the same rate, but women did not earn doctorates at the same rate as men. However, in 1900, for every 1,000 women who had baccalaureate degrees, 7.7 earned doctorates. In 1920, the rate rose to 9.4 per 1,000 and in 1930 rose to 21.2 per 1,000. This increase is particularly remarkable given the lack of financial aid available to women students and the restrictive admission requirements of graduate and professional schools (for instance, medical schools commonly limited female enrollment to five percent of an entering class).¹⁹⁰

Women's access to education was influenced by social attitudes toward women's proper

roles. In 1920, two doctrines defined the place of women in American society. One was the "two spheres" doctrine, which granted men supremacy in the public world while granting women supremacy in the home. Its antithesis was the doctrine of feminism. Feminists had not formed a single cohesive group in 1920; the Seneca Falls Declaration remained the most embracing statement of feminist goals. Feminists' quest to find places for women beyond the bounds of the home placed them at odds with society's conception of the family. These conflicting doctrines also provided an example of the conflicting views society had of women: while women were highly valued and honored for their roles as mothers and homemakers, their judgements and wishes were expected to be subservient to men's.¹⁹¹

The allocation of sex roles and responsibilities in American society did not change substantially in the two decades after suffrage. . . . While there were an increasing number of women wage earners, they were largely in low-paid, low-status jobs. The number of professional women increased, but largely in 'women's fields,' such as teaching and social work. The number of working wives increased, but household responsibilities continued to be seen as women's responsibility. There were individual feminists, numbers of whom continued to be sensitive to discrimination in the law and in attitudes, but they had no large following. Meantime, public opinion polls testified to the pervasiveness of traditional attitudes.¹⁹²

Legal restrictions continued to inhibit women's acquisition of full autonomy. Restrictions on married women's property rights were mostly removed by 1900, but women were still discriminated against in terms of grounds for divorce, and women were not accorded the same status of joint guardian of their children with equal powers, rights, and duties as children's fathers in eight states as late as 1930. Many states also did not recognize the right of women to serve on juries or to hold public office.¹⁹³

In the face of these restrictions, the image of women in the 1920s changed dramatically, as women were no longer idealized as wives and mothers and increasingly were portrayed as sex objects. In the 1920s, youth, beauty, and thinness were the female ideal. Advertisements also established the idea that women could and should use cosmetics to make themselves attractive for men. Mary Pickford, Lillian Gish, and Clara Bow were ideal female movie stars--girl next door, chorus girl, flapper images. Elizabeth Arden and Charles Revlon became big successes in cosmetics. By 1925, about \$141 million was spent annually on cosmetics. Advertisers told married women to stay home and be consumers.¹⁹⁴

The flapper (a term which actually predated the 1920s) was the epitome of the "revolution in manners and morals" of the early twenties. Lillian Hellman, a distinguished playwright, said of the flapper: "[she] smoked, drank, worked and played side by side with men. She became preoccupied with sex--shocking and simultaneously unshockable. She danced close, became freer with her favors, kept her own latchkey, wore scantier attire which emphasized her boyish athletic form, just as she used makeup and bobbed and dyed her hair."¹⁹⁵

For the most part, the flapper was seen as a temporary phenomenon, a rebellion by young upper-middle-class women against tradition, but upon maturity, these young women would fall back into the roles of marriage and motherhood that had been an integral part of their upbringing. The distinctions between male and female roles remained bedrock in American culture.¹⁹⁶

The "New Woman" was part of the bohemian and literary rebel sets of Greenwich Village, while the flapper was more identified with the urban middle class across America. The social changes in the twenties represented by these two types of women meant more permissive sexuality in combination with diminished femininity.¹⁹⁷

Interestingly, the excesses of the flapper irked both traditionalists and social feminists such as Jane Addams and Charlotte Perkins Gilman.¹⁹⁸ Various indictments of the flapper by social feminists included that she was self-centered and hedonistic. She was indifferent to suffrage and believed politics was a dirty business. Her indifference to politics caused the end of social legislation, the failure of women to vote as a bloc, the League of Women Voters to enroll only ten percent of NAWSA's membership, and the loss of vigor in the WTUL and the National Consumers' League. Addams said the disintegration of the women's movement was "associated in some way with the breaking down of sex taboos and with the establishment of new standards of marriage."¹⁹⁹

Although the flapper became a part of the public imagination, most women did not model themselves after her. The flapper was predominantly a representative of a rebellion by upper-class sons and daughters against social norms. Most of the changes in women's appearance were necessitated by work. That hairstyles and clothing became more functional as a result also happened to fall into line with the longstanding feminist demand that women's clothing allow more physical freedom.²⁰⁰

Other indications of the changing portrayal of women into sex objects were the establishment of the Miss America Pageant and the rise of the female athlete. In 1922, the first Miss America contest was staged. While Miss America broadened the public presence of young women, it also reinforced public characterizations of young women's sexual character rather than their intellectual or moral attributes. Miss America gave women a new image to emulate and again restricted their range of activities. The woman athlete also seized the public imagination of the 1920s, although female athletes were pressured to confine their activities to intramural

competition, since it would not be acceptable for young women to travel about the country or to be exposed to discourteous spectators as men athletes were. One female athlete, Gertrude Ederle, shattered the notion of female inferiority in athletics when she swam the English Channel in August 1926 in record-breaking time, a feat which supposedly helped revise ideas of women's abilities as athletes.²⁰¹

The emergence of the female athlete and of Miss America represented the new dichotomy with which women were faced. For instance, while the bathing suit finally offered to women the ability to participate in the physical exercise of swimming, it also could become a means to attract men and make women into sex objects²⁰².

Sexuality became dominant in American culture in other ways as well. Sigmund Freud's theories became popularized in the 1920s, especially the notion that sexual release was healthy for both sexes. Magazines in particular embraced this idea; one-fourth of academic journals and two-fifths of popular magazines endorsed the doctrine. Movies also publicized the new sexual permissiveness, and often presented women as sex symbols. Mary Pickford and Theda Bara were two of the many actresses who set the standard of sexual attractiveness and behavior. The seductress, the flirt, the temptress, the sex tease, the femme fatale, and the virginal child-woman were all representations of women offered up to the silver screen, and none were remotely feminist--all these women lived for only one thing: a man.²⁰³

While by the end of his career Freud would become convinced that women were intellectually less able than men and that "anatomy was destiny," in 1920 his message was more liberating. In his work, he established a causal relationship between sexuality and mental health, and pushed for public discussion of sexuality. In the popular mind, his message was reduced to

the belief that sex was at the root of everything and the major force which moved humanity; therefore, the first requirement of mental health was to be uninhibited in one's sex life.²⁰⁴

The birth control movement also helped spur interest in human sexuality. Emma Goldman, Eugene Debs, and Elizabeth Gurley Flynn were among the first advocates of birth control. The national Birth Control League, led by Mary Ware Dennett, worked to repeal laws that banned the dissemination of contraceptive information and devices. Margaret Sanger was the most visible advocate of birth control.²⁰⁵ Between 1900 and 1920, the child per woman ratio dropped 10 percent. During the 1920s, it dropped another 16.5 percent.²⁰⁶

As has been illustrated, women's status in the 1920s changed in many important ways, but in numerous other ways remained the same. The causes of these changes, or lack thereof, are difficult to determine. Commonly, the suffrage movement, or more accurately, the failure of the suffrage movement, to deliver on its promises has been blamed.

By the end of the 1920s, antisuffragists were calling the Nineteenth Amendment a failure, while supporters apologized for the modesty of women's achievements during that decade. Carrie Chapman Catt lamented the old prejudices which limited women's freedom of action within political parties. Charlotte Perkins Gilman agreed, saying that women were limited to the fringes of routine political activity. Later historians would call the era "The Hope Deferred," "The Great Withdrawal," and the "the failure of feminism." These assessments overlook the difficulty older women had overcoming years of conditioning that women had no business in politics. Also, many states, while recognizing the right of women to vote, did not recognize the right of women to hold public office. An Arkansas court held that women could not be elected to public office, while Georgia amended its constitution to bar women from elective office. The

Oklahoma constitution also barred women from major public offices until 1942. While a Michigan court stated that the Nineteenth Amendment also meant women could hold public office, a New Hampshire court asserted that the amendment applied only to voting. Although women did make gains during the 1920s, they paled in comparison to the extravagant expectations that had accompanied ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment.²⁰⁷

"To argue that suffrage failed because women have not voted as a bloc is curious, since most political issues do not divide on sex lines."²⁰⁸ Suffrage has helped women improve their status in a number of ways. Women have moved into the political parties and into local, state and national offices. Though women are not yet as politically effective as they should be, given their numbers, the situation has substantially improved since suffrage.²⁰⁹

Another argument is that after the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment, feminism as a social movement died, and young women had little feminist ambition while older women became disillusioned with the political process in which they had fought to be included.²¹⁰

To argue that the ballot did not materially help women is uninformed. The suffrage movement accomplished many of its goals, especially increasing women's political participation, broadening the legislative agenda to include many of the social reforms women activists had tirelessly advocated, and developing a wider range of women's organizations with diverse agendas. At the same time, the post-suffrage decade saw a number of serious setbacks and disappointments, most clearly exemplified by the bitter debate over the Equal Rights Amendment. Though by 1930, the women's movement was splintered and disorganized, and would remain so until the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s, likewise it had matured and established itself as a permanent feature of the American political and cultural landscape.

The movement had achieved at least tacit support of the dominant white middle class, providing an important foundation for the resurgence of feminism in the late 1950s with the publication of Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*. Equal pay bills, the prohibition of sex discrimination in the 1964 Civil Rights Act, affirmative action, and the creation of commissions on the status of women by three presidents [as of 1975] and numerous state governors are all a result, at least partially, of the political power women gained with the right to vote.²¹¹ Despite lasting racial and class divisions, the suffrage movement also established enduring testimony to the belief that the women's movement and its feminist philosophy could make important differences to the lives of all women.

APPENDIX A

WOMEN'S RIGHTS ADVOCATES

Lucretia Mott (1793-1880), a Quaker, began preaching in 1818. When the Society of Friends split in 1827, Mott affiliated herself with the liberal faction, led by Elias Hicks. Hicks and other abolitionists influenced Mott to become involved in the antislavery movement. She attended the founding convention of the American Anti-Slavery Society in 1833, and in 1837 helped establish the American Anti-Slavery Convention of American Women. Mott was among the female delegates rejected at an antislavery conference in London, solely on the basis of sex, after which she gave more attention to women's rights issues. Along with Elizabeth Cady Stanton, she helped organize the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848, and participated in the founding of the American Equal Rights Association in 1866.²¹² Prior to the Civil War, Mott's home was on the Underground Railroad. She married and had six children, which she balanced with traveling and lecturing on women's rights and abolition. Her husband, James Mott, chaired the Seneca Falls Convention. Her belief in justice and equality for all was based in her religion.²¹³

Susan Brownell Anthony (1820-1906), like most women's rights activists of her era, was active in the temperance and abolitionist movements. She advocated temperance through the Daughters of Slavery and the abolition of slavery as a member of the American Anti-Slavery Society. However, her commitment to these causes was undercut by the sex discrimination she encountered. Anthony's friendship with the feminist Elizabeth Cady Stanton influenced her to turn her attention to working for women's rights. She helped found the American Equal Rights Association and devoted the remainder of her life to the suffrage cause. She also helped

establish the National Woman Suffrage Association in 1869, and in 1872 she was arrested for attempting to vote on the basis that the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendment applied to citizens of both sexes. From 1892 to 1900 Anthony was president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association.²¹⁴ Anthony was a Quaker teacher, and also managed her family's farm. She never married, which left her free to devote her time to traveling and public speaking.²¹⁵

Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815-1902) also was an abolitionist and temperance reformer. She often appeared before state legislatures to argue for extensions of women's property rights.²¹⁶ With Lucretia Mott, she organized the Seneca Falls Convention (July 19-20, 1848), which is generally recognized as the birthplace of the American women's rights movement. Stanton's association with Anthony began in 1851, and they spent the rest of their lives working for women's rights. Stanton was the first president of the National Woman Suffrage Association (1869-90) and the National American Woman Suffrage Association (1890-92). She was also co-editor of the feminist journal *Revolution* from 1868 to 1870. In addition to suffrage, Stanton advocated more liberal divorce laws, coeducation, married women's property rights, and less restrictive clothing for women.²¹⁷ She had wanted to print a "Woman's Bible," which would focus on stories dealing with women and would eliminate exclusionary language, as well as demonstrate religion's role in oppressing women. This radical idea eroded her support.²¹⁸ Stanton had several children, and did not have as much time to devote to women's rights as she would have liked. She concentrated her efforts on suffrage after the 1840s and 1850s. She was a candidate for Congress in 1866. She believed equality lay in political participation. Stanton detested the idea of "woman's sphere." She also campaigned for abolition, temperance, education, and property rights for women. She had to rely on other women to help her carry out

her message because her father and husband often attempted to block her efforts.²¹⁹/6/93.

Lucy Stone (1818-1893) lectured throughout the country on women's rights. She was a major organizer of the first national convention in 1850.²²⁰ Stone was one of the leading reformers and advocates of women's rights in the United States in the nineteenth century. She was known especially for her persuasive oratorical skills. She began her public career shortly after graduating from Oberlin College in 1847. Stone also is distinguished by her marriage to the progressive Henry Blackwell, who encouraged her efforts in the antislavery and women's rights movements, and also accepted that she did not take his name. Their daughter, Alice Stone Blackwell, was a noted feminist as well. Along with Julia Ward Howe, Lucy Stone founded the American Woman Suffrage Association in 1869. She established the association's *Woman's Journal* in 1870, which was published regularly for fifty years.²²¹

Carrie Chapman Catt (1859-1947) began working for suffrage in 1887 when she joined the Iowa women's suffrage movement. She was president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (1900-04, 1915-47) and of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance (1904-23). Catt was instrumental in shifting the movement's emphasis from propaganda to political action.²²²

Alice Paul (1885-1977) was a more militant activist than many other women leaders of the early twentieth century. She worked with the women suffragettes in England while completing her graduate education. Upon returning to the United States, Paul's militant tactics led to her dismissal from the gradualist National American Woman Suffrage Association. In 1913, she formed the Congressional Union (later part of the National Woman's Party) as a mechanism for direct action such as protest marches in order to focus attention on women's

suffrage. Following ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment, Paul immediately began working for full political equality for women, primarily through another constitutional amendment, the Equal Rights Amendment, which she authored and submitted to Congress in 1923.²²³ She organized twenty-four hour pickets of the White House in 1918. When the picketers were arrested and jailed, they went on hunger strikes in protest because they were treated as political prisoners. Though NAWSA was embarrassed by Paul's extremism, she always believed the NWP's militancy forced President Wilson finally to call for passage of the suffrage amendment.²²⁴

Charlotte Perkins Gilman's major contribution to feminist thought was to propose a separation of women's roles as wife and mother from their roles as housekeeper and child keeper, with these latter duties to be performed largely by paid professionals. This would free wives to have careers and also marriage, which would place women on more equal footing with their husbands. Gilman remained the leading intellectual of the feminist movement for over two decades, although her work was often overshadowed by the reforms of the social feminist and suffrage movements.²²⁵ She defined women's issues in economic terms, rather than suffrage. *Women and Economics* (1898) addressed the economic bondage of women to men, since the economic well-being of women depended almost entirely upon their husbands, and not so much on their labor which they performed, particularly the domestic work to which they were largely confined. These restricted roles for women would also cost society in the future, since their economic activity was so limited. Gilman's opinion of marriage, sex and motherhood was more conventional, in that wifehood and motherhood was "the normal status of women," and sex was intended only for procreation.²²⁶ Economic emancipation of women would require changes of

social structures; Perkins wanted communal kitchens and day care centers as services for professional women. She was widely read and a leading intellectual of her day, but she was seen as far too radical; although her ideas were hotly debated, they were never implemented.²²⁷

Victoria Claflin Woodhall (1838-1927) was the first woman stockbroker in 1870. In 1872, she became the first woman to run for President. She argued that women were enfranchised by the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments. Woodhall also was an advocate of free love and said motherhood should be voluntary. She suffered political and social ridicule for her belief, and was labeled radical and wanton. She was a supporter of the National Woman's Suffrage Association, and made numerous speeches in favor of suffrage. She and her sister also advocated the suffrage platform in their privately owned newspaper. She was a close friend of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who often defended Woodhall's beliefs and right to expression. Stanton said women should stop crucifying one another and let men do the crucifying if it must be done. Eventually, Woodhall moved to England and left behind the American political scene.²²⁸

Laura Clay and Madeleine Breckinridge were major activists for women's rights in Kentucky. Both were from prominent upper class families. Breckinridge took over Kentucky suffrage movement after Clay. Breckinridge was a children's advocate, started vocational schools and the park system in Lexington, and pushed suffrage through the Kentucky legislature.²²⁹

Harriot Stanton Blatch (1856-1940) was the daughter of Elizabeth Cady Stanton. She lived in England for twenty years, and like Paul she was influenced by the militant suffragettes. She returned to the United States in 1907, and founded the Equality League of Self-Supporting Women (later named the Women's Political Union), which began the drive for suffrage in New

York State. The group later shifted to a focus on a federal suffrage amendment, and joined the National Woman's Party.²³⁰ She created a new definition of "women's work," which emphasized the diversity of the work performed by women, and also the interconnectedness of this work. Blatch founded the Equality League of Self-Supporting Women in 1907, a cross-class, militant organization.²³¹

Mary Church Terrell and Ida Wells Barnett were participants in the organizational meeting the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1908; Terrell became a member of the executive committee. Both women had been active in the 1890s in campaigns against lynching. The National Association of Colored Women was organized in 1896 to facilitate this campaign.²³² Racism barred black women from participating in mainstream suffrage associations, so black women formed their own, such as the Tuskegee Woman's Club in Alabama. Black women saw suffrage as a women's and as a race issue, believing the vote could be used to uplift the race as a whole.²³³

Ida Wells Barnett was from Memphis, Tennessee. She was a reporter for a newspaper and organized a national anti-lynching crusade. She also made speeches about sexual abuse of black women by white men, and said black women should fight against the abuses of the black race. Her speeches led to the Women's Loyal Union in New York, which was soon followed by the Women's New Era Club, founded by Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin. Ruffin also was an active speaker; her message was that black women should organize and make the most of their opportunities.²³⁴

Other major African-American women activists include Victoria Earle Matthews, who led the White Rose Working Girl's Home, Susan McKinney, the leading black woman medical

doctor, and Margaret Murray Washington, wife of Booker T. Washington and also a prominent educator.²³⁵

Margaret Sanger (1883-1966) worked for improved birth control. While working as a nurse in New York City, she witnessed firsthand the deaths of women from self-induced abortions, which prompted her to become an advocate for birth control and sex education.²³⁶ She worked in Europe and England with the latest methods, but was blocked from distributing contraceptive devices in the United States by state and federal legislation. She established a newspaper called *Woman Rebel*. She set up the first birth control clinic in the U. S. in 1916, for which she was arrested and sent to a work house. Her sister went on a hunger strike in protest, which gained publicity and public interest in the issue of birth control. Doctors were soon allowed to distribute some birth control information. Sanger wrote a pamphlet called *Family Limitation*, sixteen pages of the latest birth control information.²³⁷ In 1914 she founded the National Birth Control League, and was the first president of the International Planned Parenthood Federation in 1953.²³⁸

Frances Willard (1839-98) founded the National Women's Christian Temperance Union in 1874. A noted lecturer and organizer, she served as its president from 1879 to 1898. In 1891 she was also elected president of the World WCTU. Willard's reform interests also included improving industrial working conditions and women's suffrage.²³⁹ Willard was interested in suffrage primarily because she believed that temperance could be achieved only when women had political influence.²⁴⁰

Anna Howard Shaw (1847-1919) was a leader of both the temperance and women's suffrage movements. She was a pioneer in her own right, having earned degrees in theology and

medicine, and becoming in 1880 the first woman ordained by the Methodist Church. She left the ministry in 1885 however to devote her time to the suffrage movement. From 1888 to 1892, she was the national superintendent of the Franchise Department for the WCTU, and from 1904 to 1915, she was the president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association.²⁴¹

Sarah Ida Fowler Morgan of South Carolina made speeches in the 1870s about women's rights. She wrote articles, but signed them "Mr. Fowler." She also supported equality and employment for women and said marriage should not be a necessity for women.²⁴²

Amelia Bloomer, a delegate at the Seneca Falls Convention and a temperance reformer, also was an advocate for dress reform for women. She sought to eliminate corsets and stays and to develop clothing which permitted women freedom of movement. Her "bloomers" outfit was offensive to most people when first introduced. She also edited a small newspaper.²⁴³

Belle Kerney supported women's suffrage and after the Nineteenth Amendment was passed, she became the first woman senator in the Mississippi state legislature.²⁴⁴

Emma Goldman, an immigrant from Russia, crossed the country lecturing on women's rights and the value of anarchism. Kate Richards O'Hare was also a Socialist and feminist; she supported women's suffrage and maternity benefits for working women, and was particularly prominent in the Midwest.²⁴⁵

Jesse Daniel Ames established the Association of Southern Women for the Prevention of Lynching. She dismissed the argument that lynching was for the protection of white women and said women should not let themselves be used as cloaks for lynching.²⁴⁶

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The full text of the following documents and addresses is provided hereafter.

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"DECLARATION OF SENTIMENTS"

The "Declaration of Sentiments," drawn up at the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention, established the framework for the development of a feminist ideology in the United States.

Declaration of Sentiments*

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one portion of the family of man to assume among the people of the earth a position different from that which they have hitherto occupied, but one to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes that impel them to such a course.

We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights governments are instituted, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of those who suffer from it to refuse allegiance to it, and to insist upon the institution of a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they were accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their duty to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of the women under this government, and such is now the necessity which constrains them to demand the equal station to which they are entitled.

This history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has never permitted her to exercise her inalienable right to the elective franchise.

He has compelled her to submit to laws, in the formation of which she had no voice.

He has withheld from her rights which are given to the most ignorant and degraded men--both natives and foreigners.

Having deprived her of this first right of a citizen, the elective franchise, thereby leaving her without representation in the halls of legislation, he has oppressed her on all sides.

*Susan B. Anthony et al., *History of Woman Suffrage* (Rochester: Susan B. Anthony, 1887), vol. I, pp. 70-71.

[Reproduced from *One Half the People: The Fight for Woman Suffrage*, Anne F. Scott and Andrew M. Scott. (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1975), 56-59.]

He has made her, if married, in the eye of the law, civilly dead.

He has taken from her all right in property, even to the wages she earns.

He has made her, morally, an irresponsible being, as she can commit many crimes with impunity, provided they be done in the presence of her husband. In the covenant of marriage, she is compelled to promise obedience to her husband, he becoming, to all intents and purposes, her master--the law giving him power to deprive her of her liberty, and to administer chastisement.

He has so framed the laws of divorce, as to what shall be the proper causes, and in cases of separation, to whom the guardianship of the children shall be given, as to be wholly regardless of the happiness of women--the law, in all cases, going upon the false supposition of the supremacy of man, and giving all power into his hands.

After depriving her of all rights as a married woman, if single, and the owner of property, he has taxed her to support a government which recognizes her only when her property can be made profitable to it.

He has monopolized nearly all the profitable employments, and from those she is permitted to follow, she receives but a scanty remuneration. He closes against her all the avenues to wealth and distinction which he considers most honorable to himself. As a teacher of theology, medicine, or law, she is not known.

He has denied her the facilities for obtaining a thorough education, all colleges being closed against her.

He allows her in Church, as well as State, but a subordinate position, claiming Apostolic authority for her exclusion from the ministry, and, with some exceptions, from any public participation in the affairs of the Church.

He has created a false public sentiment by giving to the world a different code of morals for men and women, by which moral delinquencies which exclude women from society, are not only tolerated, but deemed of little account in man.

He has usurped the prerogative of Jehovah himself, claiming it as his right to assign for her a sphere of action, when that belongs to her conscience and to her God.

He has endeavored, in every way that he could, to destroy her confidence in her own powers, to lessen her self-respect, and to make her willing to lead a dependent and abject life.

Now, in view of this entire disfranchisement of one-half the people of this country, their social and religious degradation--in view of the unjust laws above mentioned, and because women do feel themselves aggrieved, oppressed, and fraudulently deprived of their most sacred rights, we insist that they have immediate admission to all the rights and privileges which belong to them as citizens of the United States.

In entering upon the great work before us, we anticipate no small amount of misconception, misrepresentation, and ridicule; but we shall use every instrumentality within our power to effect our object. We shall employ agents, circulate tracts, petition the State and National legislatures, and endeavor to enlist the pulpit and the press in our behalf. We hope this Convention will be followed by a series of Conventions embracing every part of the country.

Resolutions: Whereas, The great precept of nature is conceded to be, that "man shall pursue his own true and substantial happiness." Blackstone in his Commentaries remarks, that this law of Nature being coeval with mankind, and dictated by God himself, is of course superior

in obligation to any other. It is binding over all the globe, in all countries and at all times; no human laws are of any validity if contrary to this, and such of them as are valid, derive all their force, and all their validity, and all their authority, mediately and immediately, from this original; therefore,

Resolved, That such laws as conflict, in any way, with the true and substantial happiness of woman, are contrary to the great precept of nature and of no validity, for this is "superior in obligation to any other."

Resolved, That all laws which prevent woman from occupying such a station in society as her conscience shall dictate, or which place her in a position inferior to that of man, are contrary to the great precept of nature, and therefore of no force or authority.

Resolved, That woman is man's equal--was intended to be so by the Creator, and the highest good of the race demands that she should be recognized as such.

Resolved, That the women of this country ought to be enlightened in regard to the laws under which they live, that they may no longer publish their degradation by declaring themselves satisfied with the present position, nor their ignorance, by asserting that they have all the rights they want.

Resolved, That inasmuch as man, while claiming for himself intellectual superiority, does accord to woman moral superiority, it is pre-eminently his duty to encourage her to speak and teach, as she has an opportunity, in all religious assemblies.

Resolved, That the same amount of virtue, delicacy, and refinement of behavior that is required of woman in the social state, should also be required of man, and the same transgression should be visited with equal severity on both man and woman.

Resolved, That the objection of indelicacy and impropriety, which is so often brought against woman when she addresses a public audience, comes with a very ill-grace from those who encourage, by their attendance, her appearance on the stage, in the concert, or in feats of the circus.

Resolved, That woman has too long rested satisfied in the circumscribed limits which corrupt customs and a perverted application of the Scriptures have marked out for her, and that it is time she should move in the enlarged sphere which her great Creator has assigned her.

Resolved, That it is the duty of the women of this country to secure to themselves their sacred right to the elective franchise.

Resolved, That the equality of human rights results necessarily from the fact of the identity of the race in capabilities and responsibilities.

Resolved, therefore, That, being invested by the Creator with the same capabilities, and the same consciousness of responsibility for their exercise, it is demonstrably the right and duty of woman, equally with man, to promote every righteous cause by every righteous means; and especially in regard to the great subjects of morals and religion, it is self-evidently her right to participate with her brother in teaching them, both in private and in public, by writing and by speaking, by any instrumentalities proper to be used, and in any assemblies proper to be held; and this being a self-evident truth growing out of the divinely implanted principles of human nature, any custom or authority adverse to it, whether modern or wearing the hoary sanction of antiquity, is to be regarded as a self-evident falsehood, and at war with mankind.

Resolved, That the speedy success of our cause depends upon the zealous and untiring

efforts of both men and women, for the overthrow of the monopoly of the pulpit, and for the securing to woman an equal participation with men in the various trades, professions, and commerce.

AND AIN'T I A WOMAN?

Sojourner Truth, a freed slave, traveled the country as a religious missionary. Prior to the Civil War, she worked in the abolitionist cause and also was deeply interested in the burgeoning women's movement. She was the only woman of color to attend the first National Woman's Rights Convention in Worcester, Massachusetts in 1850. The next year, at the Ohio Women's Rights Convention, other participants objected to her presence, for fear that the women's movement would come to be seen as inextricable from the abolitionist cause. Following her riveting speech, however, the convention participants were brought to their feet in applause.

"And Ain't I a Woman?"*

Well, children, where there is so much racket there must be something out of kilter. I think that 'twixt the Negroes of the South and women at the North, all talking about rights, the white men will be in a fix pretty soon. But what's all this here talking about?

That man over there says that women need to be helped into carriages, and lifted over ditches, and to have the best place everywhere. Nobody ever helps me into carriages, or over mud-puddles, or gives me any best place! And ain't I a woman? Look at me! Look at my arm. I have ploughed and planted, and gathered into barns, and no man could head me! And ain't I a woman? I could work as much and eat as much as a man--when I could get it--and bear the lash as well! And ain't I a woman? I have borne thirteen children, and seen them most all sold off to slavery, and when I cried out with my mother's grief, none by Jesus heard me! And ain't I a woman?

Then they talk about this thing in the head; what's this they call it? [Intellect, someone whispers.] That's it, honey. What's that got to do with women's rights or Negro's rights? If my cup won't hold but a pint, yours holds a quart, wouldn't you be mean not to let me have my little half-measure full?

Than that little man in black there, he says women can't have as much rights as men, 'cause Christ wasn't a woman! Where did you Christ come from? Where did you Christ come from? From God and a woman! Man had nothing to do with Him.

If the first woman God ever made was strong enough to turn the world upside down all alone, these women together ought to be able to turn it back, and get it right side up again! And now they is asking to do it, the men better let them.

Obliged to you for hearing me, and now old Sojourner ain't go nothing more to say.

*[Reproduced from *The American Reader: Words That Moved a Nation*, Diane Ravitch, ed. New York: Harper Perennial, 1990.]

A DISAPPOINTED WOMAN

This speech was delivered extemporaneously by Lucy Stone in October, 1855, at a national women's rights convention in Cincinnati, Ohio. Emphasized is the difficulty women activists had in convincing the general public to take seriously their claims to political and social rights.

"A Disappointed Woman"*

The last speaker alluded to this movement as being that of a few disappointed women. From the first years to which my memory stretches, I have been a disappointed woman. When, with my brothers, I reached forth after the scores of knowledge, I was reprov'd with "It isn't fit for you; it doesn't belong to women." Then there was but one college in the world where women were admitted, and that was in Brazil. I would have found my way there, but by the time I was prepared to go, one was opened in the young State of Ohio--the first in the United States where women and Negroes could enjoy opportunities with white men. I was disappointed when I came to seek a profession worthy of an immortal being--every employment was closed to me, except those of the teacher, the seamstress, and the housekeeper. In education, in marriage, in religion, in everything, disappointment is the lot of woman. It shall be the business of my life to deepen this disappointment in every woman's heart until she bows down to it no longer. I wish that women, instead of being walking show-cases, instead of begging of their fathers and brothers the latest and gayest new bonnet, would ask of them their rights.

The question of Woman's Rights is a practical one. The notion has prevailed that it was only an ephemeral idea; that it was but women claiming the right to smoke cigars in the streets, and to frequent bar-rooms. Others have supposed it a question of comparative intellect; others still, of sphere. Too much has already been said and written about woman's sphere. Trace all the doctrines to their source and they will be found to have no basis except in the usages and prejudices of the age. This is seen in the fact that what is tolerated in woman in one country is not tolerated in another. In this country women may hold prayer-meetings, etc., but in Mohammedan countries it is written upon their mosques, "Women and dogs, and other impure animals, are not permitted to enter." Wendell Phillips says, "The best and greatest thing one is capable of doing, that is his sphere." I have confidence in the Father to believe that when He gives us the capacity to do anything He does not make a blunder. Leave women, then, to find their sphere. And do not tell us before we are born even, that our province is to cook dinners, darn stockings, and sew on buttons. . . .

*Reproduced from *The American Reader: Words That Moved a Nation*, Janet Ravitch, ed. (New York: Harper Perennial, 1990), 95.

CONGRESSIONAL MEMORIAL AND ADDRESS OF VICTORIA C. WOODHULL

On December 19, 1870, Victoria C. Woodhull submitted a memorial to the House and Senate in which she argued that women were citizens, and as such were protected from disfranchisement by the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments. Her memorial was referred to the House Judiciary Committee and three weeks later she offered an address, which may have been written by Congressman Benjamin F. Butler, an able lawyer and a suffragist. An argument built upon the same principle by Francis Minor of St. Louis, Missouri became the basis for the Supreme Court decision *Minor v. Happerset*. This interpretation of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments was widely favored by the National Woman Suffrage Association as it would expeditiously grant the vote to women. Congress, however, took little action following Woodhull's appeal, and in 1875 the U. S. Supreme Court ruled that the argument was invalid.

The Memorial of Victoria C. Woodhull*

To the Honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States in Congress assembled, respectfully showeth:

That she was born in the State of Ohio, and is above the age of twenty-one years; that she has resided in the State of New York during the past three years; that she is still a resident thereof, and that she is a citizen of the United States, as declared by the XIV. Article of the Amendments to the Constitution of the United States.

That since the adoption of XV. Article of the Amendments to the Constitution, neither the State of New York nor any other State, nor any Territory, has passed any law to abridge the right of any citizen of the United States to vote, as established by said article, neither on account of sex or otherwise. That, nevertheless, the right to vote is denied to women citizens of the United States by the operation of Election Laws in the several States and Territories, which laws were enacted prior to the adoption of the said XV. Article, and which are inconsistent with the Constitution as amended, and, therefore, are void and of no effect; but which, being still enforced by the said States and Territories, render the Constitution inoperative as regards the right of women citizens to vote:

And where, Article VI., Section 2, declares "That this Constitution and the laws of the United States which shall be made in pursuance thereof, and all treaties made, or which shall be made, under the authority of the United States, shall be the supreme law of the land; and all judges in every State shall be bound thereby, anything in the Constitution and laws of any State to the contrary, notwithstanding."

And whereas, no distinction between citizens is made in the Constitution of the United States on account of sex; but the XV. Article of Amendments to it provides that "No State shall

*From: Susan B. Anthony et al., *History of Woman Suffrage* (Rochester: Susan B. Anthony, 1881), vol. II, pp. 443-48. [Reproduced from *One Half the People: The Fight for Woman Suffrage*, Anne F. Scott and Andrew M. Scott. (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1975), 75-80.]

make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges and immunities of citizens of the United States, nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

And where, Congress has power to make laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution all powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States; and to make or alter all regulations in relation to holding elections for senators or representatives, and especially to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of the said XIV. Article:

And whereas, the continuance of the enforcement of said local election laws, denying and abridging the right of citizens to vote on account of sex, is a grievance to your memorialist and to various other persons, citizens of the United States.

Therefore, you memorialist would most respectfully petition your honorable bodies to make such laws as in the wisdom of Congress shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the right vested by the Constitution in the citizens of the United States to vote, without regard to sex.

And your memorialist will ever pray.

New York City, Dec. 19, 1870.

VICTORIA C. WOODHULL

Address of Victoria C. Woodhull January 11, 1871.

To the Honorable the Judiciary Committee of the House of Representatives of the Congress of the United States:

Having most respectfully memorialized Congress for the passage of such laws as in its wisdom shall seem necessary and proper to carry into effect the rights vested by the Constitution of the United States in the citizens to vote, without regard to sex, I beg leave to submit to your honorable body the following in favor of my prayer in said memorial which has been referred to your Committee.

The public law of the world is founded upon the conceded fact that sovereignty can not be forfeited or renounced. The sovereign power of this country is perpetually in the politically organized people of the United States, and can neither be relinquished nor abandoned by any portion of them. The people in this republic who confer sovereignty are its citizens: in a monarchy the people are the subjects of sovereignty. All citizens of a republic by rightful act or implication confer sovereign power. All people of a monarchy are subjects who exist under its supreme shield and enjoy its immunities. The subject of a monarch takes municipal immunities from the sovereign as a gracious favor; but the woman citizen of this country has the inalienable "sovereign" right of self-government in her own proper person. Those who look upon woman's status by the dim light of the common law, which unfolded itself under the feudal and military institutions that establish right upon physical power, can not find any analogy in the status of the woman citizen of this country, where the broad sunshine of our Constitution has enfranchised all.

As sovereignty can not be forfeited, relinquished, or abandoned, those from whom it flows--the citizens--are equal in conferring the power, and should be equal in the enjoyment of its benefits and in the exercise of its rights and privileges. One portion of citizens have no power

to deprive another portion of rights and privilege such as are possessed and exercised by themselves. The male citizen has no more right to deprive the female citizen of the free, public, political, expression of opinion than the female citizen has to deprive the male citizen thereof.

The sovereign will of the people is expressed in our written Constitution, which is the supreme law of the land. The Constitution makes no distinction of sex. The Constitution defines a woman born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, to be a citizen. It recognized the right of citizens to vote. It declares that the right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of "race, color, or previous condition of servitude."

Women, white and black, belong to races, although to different races. A race of people comprises all the people, male and female. The right to vote can not be denied on account of race. All people included in the term race have the right to vote, unless otherwise prohibited. Women of all races are white, black, or some intermediate color. Color comprises all people, of all races and both sexes. The right to vote can not be denied on account of color. All people included in the term color have the right to vote unless otherwise prohibited.

With the right to vote sex has nothing to do. Race and color include all people of both sexes. All people of both sexes have the right to vote, unless prohibited by special limiting terms less comprehensive than race or color. No such limited terms exist in the Constitution. Women, white and black, have from time immemorial groaned under what is properly termed in the Constitution "previous condition of servitude." Women are the equals of men before the law, and are equal in all their rights as citizens. Women are debarred from voting in some parts of the United States, although they are allowed to exercise that right elsewhere. Women were formerly permitted to vote in places where they are no debarred therefrom. The naturalization laws of the United States expressly provide for the naturalization of women. But the right to vote has only lately been definitely declared by the Constitution to be inalienable, under three distinct conditions--in all of which woman is clearly embraced.

The citizen who is taxed should also have a voice in the subject matter of taxation. "No taxation without representation" is a right which was fundamentally established at the very birth of our country's independence; and by what ethics does any free government impose taxes on women without giving them a voice upon the subject or a participation in the public declaration as to how and by whom these taxes shall be applied for common public use? Women are free to own and to control property, separate and free from males, and they are held responsible in their own proper persons, in every particular, as well as men, in and out of court. Women have the same inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness that men have. Why have they not this right politically, as well as men?

Women constitute a majority of the people of this country--they hold vast portions of the nation's wealth and pay a proportionate share of the taxes. They are intrusted with the most vital responsibilities of society; they bear, rear, and educate men; they often hold the accumulated fortunes of a man's life for the safety of the family and as guardians of the infants, and yet they are debarred from uttering any opinion by public vote, as to the management of public servants of these interests; they are the secret counselors, the best advisers, the most devoted aids in the most trying periods of men's lives, and yet men shrink from trusting them in the common questions of ordinary politics. Men trust women in the market, in the shop, on the highway and

railroad, and in all other public places and assemblies, but when they propose to carry a slip of paper with a name upon it to the polls, they fear them. Nevertheless, as citizens, women have the right to vote; they are part and parcel of that great element in which the sovereign power of the land had birth; and it is by usurpation only that men debar them from this right. The American nation, in its march onward and upward, can not publicly choke the intellectual and political activity of half its citizens by narrow statutes. The will of the entire people is the true basis of republican government, and a free expression of that will by the public vote of all citizens, without distinctions of race, color, occupation, or sex, is the only means by which that will can be ascertained. As the world has advanced into civilization and culture; as mind has risen in its dominion over matter; as the principle of justice and moral right has gained sway, and merely physical organized power has yielded thereto; as the might of right has supplanted the right of might, so have the rights of women become more fully recognized, and that recognition is the result of the development of the minds of men, which through the ages she has polished, and thereby heightened the lustre of civilization.

It was reserved for our great country to recognize by constitutional enactment that political equality of all citizens which religion, affection, and common sense should have long since accorded; it was reserved for America to sweep away the mist of prejudice and ignorance, and that chivalric condescension of a darker age, for in the language of Holy Writ, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand, let us therefore cast off the work of darkness and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk honestly as in the day." It may be argued against the proposition that there still remains upon the statute books of some States the word "male" to an exclusion; but as the Constitution, in its paramount character, can only be read by the light of the established principle, *ita lex Scripta est*, and as the subject of sex is not mentioned, and the Constitution is not limited either in terms or by necessary implication in the general rights of citizens to vote, this right can not be limited on account of anything in the spirit of inferior or previous enactments upon a subject which is not mentioned in the supreme law. A different construction would destroy a vested right in a portion of the citizens, and this no legislature has a right to do without compensation, and nothing can compensate a citizen for the loss of his or her suffrage--its value is equal to the value of life. Neither can it be presumed that women are to be kept from the polls as a mere police regulation; it is to be hoped, at least, that police regulations in their case need not be very active. The effect of the amendments to the Constitution must be to annul the power over this subject in the States, whether past, present, or future, which is contrary to the amendments. The amendments would even arrest the action of the Supreme Court in cases pending before it prior to their adoption, and operate as an absolute prohibition to the exercise of any other jurisdiction than merely to dismiss the suit. 3 Dall., 382; 6 Wheaton, 405; 9 ib., 868; 3d Circ. Pa., 1832.

And if the restrictions contained in the Constitution as to color, race or servitude, were designed to limit the State governments in reference to their own citizens, and were intended to operate also as restrictions on the federal power, and to prevent interference with the rights of the State and its citizens, how, then, can the State restrict citizens of the United States in the exercise of rights not mentioned in any restrictive clause in reference to actions of the part of those citizens having reference solely to the necessary functions of the General Government, such as the election of representatives and senators to Congress, whose election the Constitution

expressly gives Congress the power to regulate? S.C., 1847: Fox vs. Ohio, 5 Howard, 410.

Your memorialist complains of the existence of State laws, and prays Congress, by appropriate legislation, to declare them, as they are, annulled, and to give vitality to the Constitution under its power to make and later the regulations of the States contravening the same.

It may be urged in opposition that the courts have power, and should declare upon this subject. The Supreme Court has the power, and it would be its duty so to declare the law: but the court will not do so unless a determination of such point as shall arise make it necessary to the determination of a controversy, and hence a case must be presented in which there can be no rational doubt. All this would subject the aggrieved parties to much dilatory, expensive and needless litigation, which your memorialist prays your honorable body to dispense with by appropriate legislation, as there can be no purpose in special arguments "*ad inconvenienti*," enlarging or contracting the import of the language of the Constitution.

Therefore, Believing firmly in the right of citizens to freely approach those in whose hands their destiny is placed under the Providence of God, your memorialist has frankly, but humbly, appealed to you, and prays that the wisdom of Congress may be moved to action in this matter for the benefit and the increased happiness of our beloved country.

MINOR V. HAPPERSET

In 1875, the Supreme Court considered the lawsuit of Francis and Virginia L. Minor, who argued that women were enfranchised by the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. The Court determined that suffrage was not coextensive with citizenship and that the political rights of women could be decided by individual states.

*Minor v. Happerset**

The CHIEF JUSTICE delivered the opinion of the court.

The question is presented in this case, whether, since the adoption of the fourteenth amendment, a woman, who is a citizen of the United States and of the State of Missouri, is a voter in that State, notwithstanding the provision of the constitution and laws of the State, which confine the right of suffrage to men alone. We might, perhaps, decide the case upon other grounds, but this question is fairly made. From the opinion we find that it was the only one decided in the court below, and it is the only one which has been argued here. The case was undoubtedly brought to this court for the sole purpose of having that questions decided by us, and in view of the evident propriety there is of having it settled, so far as it can be by such a decision, we have concluded to waive all other considerations and proceed at once to its determination.

It is contended that the provisions of the constitution and laws of the State of Missouri which confine the right of suffrage and registration therefor to men, are in violation of the Constitution of the United States, and therefore void. The argument is, that as a woman, born or naturalized in the United States and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, is a citizen of the United States and of the State in which she resides, she has the right of suffrage as one of the privileges and immunities of her citizenship, which the State cannot by its laws or constitution abridge.

There is no doubt that women may be citizens. They are persons, and by the fourteenth amendment "all persons born or naturalized in the United States and subject to the jurisdiction thereof" are expressly declared to be "citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside." But, in our opinion, it did not need this amendment to give them that position. Before its adoption the Constitution of the United States did not in terms prescribe who should be citizens of the United States or of the several States, yet there were necessarily such citizens without such provision. There cannot be a nation without a people. The very idea of a political community, such as a nation is, implies an association of persons for the promotion of their general welfare. Each one of the persons associated becomes a member of the nation formed by the association. He owes it allegiance and is entitled to its protection. Allegiance and protection are, in this connection, reciprocal obligations. The one is a compensation for the other; allegiance for protection and protection for allegiance.

*From: *Minor v. Happerset*, [U. S. Reports], 21 Wallace 162 (1875).

[Reproduced from *One Half the People: The Fight for Woman Suffrage*, Anne F. Scott and Andrew M. Scott. (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1975), 75-80.]

For convenience it has been found necessary to give a name to the membership. The object is to designate by a title the person and the relation he bears to the nation. For this purpose the words "subject," "inhabitant," and "citizen" have been used, and the choice between them is sometimes made to depend upon the form of the government. Citizen is now more commonly employed, however, and as it has been considered better suited to the description of one living under a republican government, it was adopted by nearly all of the States upon their separation from Great Britain, and was afterwards adopted in the Articles of Confederation and in the Constitution of the United States. When used in this sense it is understood as conveying the idea of membership of a nation, and nothing more.

To determine, then, who were citizens of the United States before the adoption of the amendment it is necessary to ascertain what persons originally associated themselves together to form the nation, and what were afterwards admitted to membership.

Looking at the Constitution itself we find that it was ordained and established by "the people of the United States," and then going further back, we find that these were the people of the several States that had before dissolved the political bands which connected them with Great Britain, and assumed a separate and equal station among the powers of the earth, and that had by Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union, in which they took the name of "the United States of America," entered into a firm league of friendship with each other for their common defence, the security of their liberties and their mutual and general welfare, binding themselves to assist each other against all force offered to or attack made upon them, or any of them, on account of religion, sovereignty, trade, or any other pretence whatever.

Whoever, then, was one of the people of either of these States when the Constitution of the United States was adopted, became *ipso facto* a citizen--a member of the nation created by its adoption. He was one of the persons associating together to form the nation, and was, consequently, one of its original citizens. As to this there has never been a doubt. Disputes have arisen as to whether or not certain persons or certain classes of persons were part of the people at the time, but never as to their citizenship if they were.

Additions might always be made to the citizenship of the United States in two ways: first, by birth, and second, by naturalization. This is apparent from the Constitution itself, for it provides that "no person except a natural-born citizen, or a citizen of the United States at the time of the adoption of the Constitution, shall be eligible to the office of President," and that Congress shall have power "to establish a uniform rule of naturalization." Thus new citizens may be born or they may be created by naturalization.

The Constitution does not, in words, say who shall be natural-born citizens. Resort must be had elsewhere to ascertain that. At common-law, with the nomenclature of which the framers of the Constitution were familiar, it was never doubted that all children born in a country of parents who were its citizens became themselves, upon their birth, citizens also. These were natives, or natural-born citizens, as distinguished from aliens or foreigners. Some authorities go further and include as citizens children born within the jurisdiction without reference to the citizenship of their parents. As to this class there have been doubts, but never as to the first. For the purposes of this case it is not necessary to solve these doubts. It is sufficient for everything we have now to consider that all children born of citizen parents within the jurisdiction are themselves citizens. The words "all children" are certainly as comprehensive, when used in this

connection, as "all persons," and if females are included in the last they must be in the first. That they are included in the last is not denied. In fact the whole argument of the plaintiffs proceeds upon that idea.

Under the power to adopt a uniform system of naturalization Congress, as early as 1790, provided "that any alien, being a free white person," might be admitted as a citizen of the United States, and that the children of such persons so naturalized, dwelling within the United States, being under twenty-one years of age at the time of such naturalization, should also be considered citizens of the United States, and that the children of citizens of the United States that might be born beyond the sea, or out of the limits of the United States, should be considered as natural-born citizens. These provisions thus enacted have, in substance, been retained in all the naturalization laws adopted since. In 1855, however, the last provision was somewhat extended, and all persons theretofore born or thereafter to be born out of the limits of the jurisdiction of the United States, whose father were or should be at the time of their birth, citizens of the United States, were declared to be citizens also.

As early as 1804 it was enacted by Congress that when any alien who had declared his intention to become a citizen in the manner provided by law died before he was actually naturalized, his widow and children should be considered as citizens of the United States, and entitled to all rights and privileges as such upon taking the necessary oath and in 1855 it was further provided that any woman who might lawfully be naturalized under the existing laws, married, or who should be married to a citizen of the United States, should be deemed and taken to be a citizen.

From this it is apparent that from the commencement of the legislation upon this subject alien women and alien minors could be made citizens by naturalization, and we think it will not be contended that this would have been done if it had not been supposed that native women and native minors were already citizens by birth.

But if more is necessary to show that women have always been considered as citizens the same as men, abundant proof is to be found in the legislative and judicial history of the country. Thus, by the Constitution, the judicial power of the United States is made to extend to controversies between citizens of different States. Under this it has been uniformly held that the citizenship necessary to give the courts of the United States jurisdiction of a cause must be affirmatively shown on the record. Its existence as a fact may be put in issue and tried. If found not to exist the case must be dismissed. Notwithstanding this the records of the courts are full of cases in which the jurisdiction depends upon the citizenship of women, and not one can be found, we think, in which objection was made on that account. Certainly none can be found in which it has been held that women could not sue or be sued in the courts of the United States. Again, at the time of the adoption of the Constitution, in many of the States (and in some probably now) aliens could not inherit or transmit inheritance. There are a multitude of cases to be found in which the question has been presented whether a woman was or was not an alien, and as such capable or incapable of inheritance, but in no one has it been insisted that she was not a citizen because she was a woman. On the contrary, her right to citizenship has been in all cases assumed. The only question has been whether, in the particular case under consideration, she had availed herself of the right.

In the legislative department of the government similar proof will be found. Thus, in the

pre-emption laws, a widow, "being a citizen of the United States," is allowed to make settlement on the public lands and purchase upon the terms specified, and women, "being citizens of the United States," are permitted to avail themselves of the benefit of the homestead law.

Other proof of like character might be found, but certainly more cannot be necessary to establish the fact that sex has never been made one of the elements of citizenship in the United States. In this respect men have never had an advantage over women. The same laws precisely apply to both. The fourteenth amendment did not affect the citizenship of women any more than it did of men. In this particular, therefore, the rights of Mrs. Minor do not depend upon the amendment. She has always been a citizen from her birth, and entitled to all the privileges and immunities of citizenship. The amendment prohibited the State, of which she is a citizen, from abridging any of her privileges and immunities as a citizen of the United States; but it did not confer citizenship on her. That she had before its adoption.

If the right of suffrage is one of the necessary privileges of a citizen of the United States, then the constitution and laws of Missouri confining it to men are in violation of the Constitution of the United States, as amended, and consequently void. The direct question is, therefore, presented whether all citizens are necessarily voters.

The Constitution does not define the privileges and immunities of citizens. For that definition we must look elsewhere. In this case we need not determine what they are, but only whether suffrage is necessarily one of them.

It certainly is nowhere made so in express terms. The United States has no voters in the States of its own creation. The elective officers of the United States are all elected directly or indirectly by State voters. The members of the House of Representatives are to be chosen by the people of the States, and the electors in each State must have the qualifications requisite for electors of the most numerous branch of the State legislature. Senators are to be chosen by the legislatures of the States, and necessarily the members of the legislature required to make the choice are elected by the voters of the State. Each State must appoint in such manner, as the legislature thereof may direct, the electors to elect the President and Vice-President. The times, places, and manner of holding elections for Senators and Representatives are to be prescribed in each State by the legislature thereof; but Congress may at any time, by law, make or alter such regulations, except as to the place of choosing Senators. It is not necessary to inquire whether this power of supervision thus given to Congress is sufficient to authorize any interference with the State laws prescribing the qualifications of voters, for no such interference has ever been attempted. The power of the State in this particular is certainly supreme until Congress acts.

The amendment did not add to the privileges and immunities of a citizen. It simply furnished an additional guaranty for the protection of such as he already had. No new voters were necessarily made by it. Indirectly it may have had that effect, because it may have increased the number of citizens entitled to suffrage under the constitution and laws of the States, but it operates for this purpose, if at all, through the States and the State laws, and not directly upon the citizen.

It is clear, therefore, we think, that the Constitution has not added the right of suffrage to the privileges and immunities of citizenship as they existed at the time it was adopted. This makes it proper to inquire whether suffrage was coextensive with the citizenship of the States at the time of its adoption. If it was, then it may with force be argued that suffrage was one of the

rights which belonged to citizenship, and in the enjoyment of which every citizen must be protected. But if it was not, the contrary may with propriety be assumed.

When the Federal Constitution was adopted, all the States, with the exception of Rhode Island and Connecticut, had constitutions of their own. These two continued to act under their charters from the Crown. Upon an examination of those constitutions we find that in no State were all citizens permitted to vote. Each State determined for itself who should have that power.

....

In this condition of the law in respect to suffrage in the several States it cannot for a moment be doubted that if it had been intended to make all citizens of the United States voters, the framers of the Constitution would not have left it to implication. So important a change in the condition of citizenship as it actually existed, if intended, would have been expressly declared.

But if further proof is necessary to show that no such change was intended, it can easily be found both in and out of the Constitution. By Article 4, Section 2, it is provided that "the citizens of each State shall be entitled to all the privileges and immunities of citizens in the several States." If suffrage is necessarily a part of citizenship, then the citizens of each State must be entitled to vote in the several States precisely as their citizens are. This is more than asserting that they may change their residence and become citizens of the State and thus be voters. It goes to the extent of insisting that while retaining their original citizenship they may vote in any State. This, we think, has never been claimed. And again, by the very terms of the amendment we have been considering (the fourteenth), "Representatives shall be apportioned among the several States according to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each State, excluding Indians not taxed. But when the right to vote at any election for the choice of electors for President and Vice-President of the United States, representatives in Congress, the executive and judicial officers of a State, or the members of the legislature thereof, is denied to any of the male inhabitants of such State, being twenty-one years of age and citizens of the United States, or in any way abridged, except for participation in the rebellion, or other crimes, the basis of representation therein shall be reduced in the proportion which the number of such male citizens shall bear to the whole number of male citizens twenty-one years of age in such State." Why this, if it was not in the power of the legislature to deny the right of suffrage to some male inhabitants? And if suffrage was necessarily one of the absolute rights of citizenship, why confine the operation of the limitation to male inhabitants? Women and children are, as we have seen, "person." They are counted in the enumeration upon which the apportionment is to be made, but if they were necessarily voters because of their citizenship unless clearly excluded, why inflict the penalty for the exclusion of males alone? Clearly, no such form of words would have been selected to express the idea here indicated if suffrage was the absolute right of all citizens.

And still again, after the adoption of the fourteenth amendment, it was deemed necessary to adopt a fifteenth, as follows: "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States, or by any State, on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude." The fourteenth amendment had already provided that no State should make or enforce any law which should abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States. If suffrage was one of these privileges or immunities, why amend the

Constitution to prevent is being denied on account of race, & c.? Nothing is more evident than that the greater must include the less, and if all were already protected why go through with the form of amending the Constitution to protect a part?

It is true that the United States guarantees to every State a republican form of government. It is also true that no State can pass a bill of attainder, and that no person can be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law. All these several provisions of the Constitution must be construed in connection with the other parts of the instrument, and in the light of the surrounding circumstances.

The guaranty is of a republican form of government. No particular government is designated as republican, neither is the exact form to be guaranteed, in any manner especially designated. Here, as in other parts of the instrument, we are compelled to resort elsewhere to ascertain what was intended.

The guaranty necessarily implies a duty on the part of the States themselves to provide such a government. All the States had governments when the Constitution was adopted. In all the people participated to some extent, through their representatives elected in the manner specially provided. These governments the Constitution did not change. They were accepted precisely as they were, and it is, therefore, to be presumed that they were such as it was the duty of the States to provide. Thus we have unmistakable evidence of what was republican in form, within the meaning of that term as employed in the Constitution.

As has been seen, all the citizens of the States were not invested with the right of suffrage. In all, save perhaps New Jersey, this right was only bestowed upon men and not upon all of them. Under these circumstances it is certainly now too late to contend that a government is not republican, within the meaning of this guaranty in the Constitution, because women are not made voters.

The same may be said of the other provisions just quoted. Women were excluded from suffrage in nearly all the States by the express provision of their constitutions and laws. If that had been equivalent to a bill of attainder, certainly its abrogation would not have been left to implication. Nothing less than express language would have been employed to effect so radical a change. So also of the amendment which declares that no person shall be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law, adopted as it was as early as 1791. If suffrage was intended to be included within its obligations, language better adapted to express that intent would most certainly have been employed. The right of suffrage, when granted, will be protected. He who has it can only be deprived of it by due process of law, but in order to claim protection he must first show that he has the right.

But we have already sufficiently considered the proof found upon the inside of the Constitution. That upon the outside is equally effective.

The Constitution was submitted to the States for adoption in 1787, and was ratified by nine States in 1788, and finally by the thirteen original States in 1790. Vermont was the first new State admitted to the Union, and it came in under a constitution which conferred the right of suffrage only upon men of the full age of twenty-one years, having resided in the State for the space of one whole year before the election, and who were of quiet and peaceable behavior. This was in 1791. The next year, 1792, Kentucky followed with a constitution confining the right of suffrage to free male citizens of the age of twenty-one years who had resided in the State two

years or in the county in which they offered to vote one year next before the election. Then followed Tennessee, in 1796, with others of freemen of the age of twenty-one years and upwards, possessing a freehold in the county wherein they may vote, and being inhabitants of the State or freemen being inhabitants of any one county in the State six months immediately preceding the day of election. But we need not particularize further. No new State has ever been admitted to the Union which has conferred the right of suffrage upon women, and this has never been considered a valid objection to her admission. On the contrary, as is claimed in the argument, the right of suffrage was withdrawn from women as early as 1807 in the State of New Jersey, without any attempt to obtain the interference of the United States to prevent it. Since then the governments of the insurgent States have been reorganized under a requirement that before their representatives could be admitted to seats in Congress they must have adopted new constitutions, republican in form. In no one of these constitutions was suffrage conferred upon women, and yet the States have all been restored to their original position as States in the Union.

Besides this, citizenship has not in all cases been made a condition precedent to the enjoyment of the right of suffrage. Thus, in Missouri, persons of foreign birth, who have declared their intention to become citizens of the United States, may under certain circumstances vote. The same provision is to be found in the constitutions of Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kansas, Minnesota, and Texas.

Certainly, if the courts can consider any question settled, this is one. For nearly ninety years the people have acted upon the idea that the Constitution, when it conferred citizenship, did not necessarily confer the right of suffrage. If uniform practice long continued can settle the construction of so important an instrument as the Constitution of the United States confessedly is, most certainly it has been done here. Our province is to decide what the law is, not to declare what it should be.

We have given this case the careful consideration its importance demands. If the law is wrong, it ought to be changed; but the power for that is not with us. The arguments addressed to us bearing upon such a view of the subject may perhaps be sufficient to induce those having the power, to make the alteration, but they ought not to be permitted to influence our judgment in determining the present rights of the parties now litigating before us. No argument as to woman's need of suffrage can be considered. We can only act upon her rights as they exist. It is not for us to look at the hardship of withholding. Our duty is at an end if we find it is within the power of a State to withhold.

Being unanimously of the opinion that the Constitution of the United States does not confer the right of suffrage upon any one, and that the constitutions and laws of the several States which commit that important trust to men alone are not necessarily void, we

AFFIRM THE JUDGMENT.

THE POLITICS OF WOMAN SUFFRAGE

In 1872, at the first woman suffrage convention held in Washington, Stanton discussed the rationale for a woman suffrage amendment, and went on to analyze the politics of getting such an amendment. Her speech also ushered in the darkest period in the history of the women's suffrage movement. Casting aside previous alliances with anti-slavery and black civil rights leaders, white women suffragists abandoned their arguments for female enfranchisement on the basis of universal rights. More concerned with preserving their own status in the racial and social hierarchy, they began using racist, nativist appeals to persuade white male legislators of the necessity to enfranchise women

"The Politics of Woman Suffrage"*

Those who represent what is called "the Woman's Rights Movement," have argued their right to political equality from every standpoint of justice, religion, and logic, for the last twenty years. They have quoted the Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, the Bible, the opinions of great men and women in all ages; they have plead the theory of our government; suffrage a natural, inalienable right; shown from the lessons of history, that one class can not legislate for another; that disfranchised classes must ever be neglected and degraded; and that all privileges are but mockery to the citizen, until he has a voice in the making and administering of law. Such arguments have been made over and over in conventions and before the legislatures of several States. Judges, lawyers, priests, and politicians have said again and again, that our logic was unanswerable, and although much nonsense has emanated from the male tongue and pen on this subject, no man has yet made a fair, argument on the other side. Knowing that we hold the Gibraltar rock of reason on this question, they resort to ridicule and petty objections. Compelled to follow our assailants, wherever they go, and fight them with their own weapons; when cornered with wit and sarcasm, some cry out, you have no logic on your platform, forgetting that we have no use for logic until they give us logicians at whom to hurl it, and if, for the pure love of it, we now and then rehearse the logic that is like a, b, c, to all of us, others cry out--the same old speeches we have heard these twenty years. It would be safe to say a hundred years, for they are the same our fathers used when battling old King George and the British Parliament for their right to representation, and a voice in the laws by which they were governed. There are no new arguments to be made on human rights, our work to-day is to apply to ourselves those so familiar to all; to teach man that woman is not an anomalous being, outside all laws and constitutions, but one whose rights are to be established by the same process of reason as that by which he demands his own.

*From: Susan B. Anthony et al., *History of Woman Suffrage* (Rochester: Susan B. Anthony, 1869), vol. II, pp. 348-55.

[Reproduced from *One Half the People: The Fight for Woman Suffrage*, Anne F. Scott and Andrew M. Scott. (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1975), 56-59.]

When our Fathers made out their famous bill of impeachment against England, they specified eighteen grievances. When the women of this country surveyed the situation in their first convention, they found they had precisely that number, and quite similar in character; and reading over the old revolutionary arguments of Jefferson, Patrick Henry, Otis, and Adams, they found they applied remarkable well to their case. The same arguments made in this country for extending suffrage from time to time, to white men, native born citizens, without property and education, and to foreigners; the same used by John Bright in England, to extend it to a million new voters, and the same used by the great Republican party to enfranchise a million black men in the South, all these arguments we have to-day to offer for woman, and one, in addition, stronger than all besides, the difference in man and woman. Because man and woman are the complement of one another, we need woman's thought in national affairs to make a safe and stable government.

The Republican party to-day congratulates itself on having carried the Fifteenth Amendment of the Constitution, thus securing "manhood suffrage" and establishing an aristocracy of sex on this continent. As several bills to secure Woman's Suffrage in the District and the Territories have been already presented in both houses of Congress, and as by Mr. Julian's bill, the question of so amending the Constitution as to extend suffrage to all the women of the country has been presented to the nation for consideration, it is not only the right but the duty of every thoughtful woman to express her opinion on a Sixteenth Amendment. While I hail the late discussion in Congress and the various bills presented as so many signs of progress, I am especially gratified with those of Messrs. Julian and Pomeroy, which forbid any State to deny the right of suffrage to any of its citizens on account of sex or color.

This fundamental principle of our government--the equality of all the citizens of the republic--should be incorporated in the Federal Constitution, there to remain forever. To leave this question to the States and partial acts of Congress, is to defer indefinitely its settlement, for what is done by this Congress may be repealed by the next; and politics in the several States differ so widely, that no harmonious action on any question can ever be secured, except as a strict party measure. Hence, we appeal to the party now in power, everywhere, to end this protracted debate on suffrage, and declare it the inalienable right of every citizen who is amenable to the laws of the land, who pays taxes and the penalty of crime. We have a splendid theory of a genuine republic, why not realize it and make our government homogeneous, from Main to California. The Republican party has the power to do this, and now is its only opportunity. Woman's Suffrage, in 1872, may be as good a card for the Republicans as Gen. Grant was in the last election. It is said that the Republican party made him President, not because they thought him the most desirable man in the nation for that office, but they were afraid the Democrats would take him if they did not. We would suggest, there may be the same danger of Democrats taking up Woman Suffrage if they do not. God, in his providence, may have purified that party in the furnace of affliction. They have had the opportunity, safe from the turmoil of political life and the temptations of office, to study and apply the divine principles of justice and equality to life; for minorities are always in a position to carry principles to their logical results, while majorities are governed only by votes. You see my faith in Democrats is based on sound philosophy. In the next Congress, the Democratic party will gain thirty-four new members, hence the Republicans have had their last chance to do justice to woman. It will be no

enviable record for the Fortieth Congress that in the darkest days of the republic it placed our free institutions in the care and keeping of every type of manhood, ignoring womanhood, all the elevating and purifying influences of the most virtuous and human half of the American people....

I urge a speedy adoption of a Sixteenth Amendment for the following reasons:

1. A government, based on the principle of caste and class, can not stand. The aristocratic idea, in any form, is opposed to the genius of our free institutions, to our own declaration of rights, and to the civilization of the age. All artificial distinctions, whether of family, blood, wealth, color, or sex, are equally oppressive to the subject classes, and equally destructive to national life and prosperity. Governments based on every form of aristocracy, on every degree and variety of inequality, have been tried in despotisms, monarchies, and republics, and all alike have perished. . . . Thus far, all nations have been built on caste and failed. Why, in this hour of reconstruction, with the experience of generations before us, make another experiment in the same direction? If serfdom, peasantry, and slavery have shattered kingdoms, deluged continents with blood, scattered republics like dust before the wind, and rent our own Union asunder, what kind of a government, think you, American statesmen, you can build, with the mothers of the race crouching at your feet, while iron-heeled peasants, serfs, and slaves, exalted by your hands, tread our inalienable rights into the dust? While all men, everywhere, are rejoicing in new-found liberties, shall woman alone be denied the rights, privileges, and immunities of citizenship? While in England men are coming up from the coal mines of Cornwall, from the factories of Birmingham and Manchester, demanding the suffrage; while in frigid Russia the 22,000,000 newly-emancipated serfs are already claiming a voice in the government; while here, in our own land, slaves, but just rejoicing in the proclamation of emancipation, ignorant alike of its power and significance, have the ballot unasked, unsought, already laid at their feet--think you the daughters of Adams, Jefferson, and Patrick Henry, in whose veins flows the blood of two Revolutions, will forever linger round the camp-fires of an old barbarism, with no longings to join this grand army of freedom in its onward march to roll back the golden gates of a higher and better civilization? Of all kinds of aristocracy, that of sex is the most odious and unnatural; invading, as it does, our homes, desecrating our family altars, dividing those whom God has joined together, exalting the son above the mother who bore him, and subjugating, everywhere, moral power to brute force. Such a government would not be worth the blood and treasure so freely poured out in its long struggles for freedom. . . .

2. I urge a Sixteenth Amendment, because "manhood suffrage" or a man's government, is civil, religious, and social disorganization. The male element is a destructive force, stern, selfish, aggrandizing, loving war, violence, conquest, acquisition, breeding in the materials and moral world alike discord, disorder, disease, and death. See what a record of blood and cruelty the pages of history reveal! Through what slavery, slaughter, and sacrifice, through what inquisitions and imprisonments, pains and persecutions, black codes and gloomy creeds, the soul of humanity has struggled for the centuries, while mercy has veiled her face and all hearts have been dead alike to love and hope! The male element has held high carnival thus far, it has fairly run riot from the beginning, overpowering the feminine element everywhere, crushing out all the diviner qualities in human nature, until we know but little of true manhood and womanhood, of the latter comparatively nothing, for it has scarce been recognized as a power until within the last

century. Society is but the reflection of man himself, untempered by woman's thought, the hard iron rule we feel alike in the church, the state, and the home. No one need wonder at the disorganization, at the fragmentary condition of everything, when we remember that man, who represents but half a complete being, with but half an idea on every subject, has undertaken the absolute control of all sublunary matters.

People object to the demands of those whom they choose to call the strong-minded, because they say, "the right of suffrage will make the women masculine." That is just the difficulty in which we are involved to-day. Though disfranchised we have few women in the best sense, we have simply so many reflections, varieties, and dilutions of the masculine gender. The strong, natural characteristics of womanhood are repressed and ignored in dependence, for so long as man feeds woman she will try to please the giver and adapt herself to his condition. To keep a foothold in society woman must be as near like man as possible, reflect his ideas, opinions, virtues, motives, prejudices, and vices. She must respect his statutes, though they strip her of every inalienable right, and conflict with that higher law written by the finger of God on her own soul. She must believe his theology, though it pave the highways of hell with the skulls of new-born infants, and make God a monster of vengeance and hypocrisy. She must look at everything from its dollar and cent point of view, or she is a mere romancer. She must accept things as they are and make the best of them. To mourn over the miseries of others, the poverty of the poor, their hardships in jails, prisons, asylums, the horrors of war, cruelty, and brutality in every form, all this would be mere sentimentalizing. To protest against the intrigue, bribery, and corruption of public life, to desire that her sons might follow some business that did not involve lying, cheating, and a hard, grinding selfishness, would be arrant nonsense. In this way man has been moulding woman to his ideas by direct and positive influences, while she, if not a negation, has used indirect means to control him, and in most cases developed the very characteristics both in him and herself that needed repression. And now man himself stands appalled at the results of his own excesses, and mourns in bitterness that falsehood, selfishness and violence are the law of life. The need of this hour is not territory, gold mines, railroads, or specie payments, but a new evangel of womanhood, to exalt purity, virtue, morality, true religion, to lift man up into the higher realms of thought and action.

We ask woman's enfranchisement, as the first step toward the recognition of that essential element in government that can only secure the health, strength, and prosperity will help to usher in a new day of peace and perfection for the race. In speaking of the masculine element, I do not wish to be understood to say that all men are hard, selfish, and brutal, for many of the most beautiful spirits the world has known have been clothed with manhood; but I refer to those characteristics, though often marked in woman, that distinguish what is called the stronger sex. For example, the love of acquisition and conquest, the very pioneers of civilization, when expended on the earth, the sea, the elements, the riches and forces of nature, are powers of destruction when used to subjugate one man to another or to sacrifice nations to ambition. Here that great conservator of woman's love, if permitted to assert itself, as it naturally would in freedom against oppression, violence, and war, would hold all these destructive forces in check, for woman knows the cost of life better than man does, and not with her consent would one drop of blood ever be shed, one life sacrificed in vain. With violence and disturbance in the natural world, we see a constant effort to maintain an equilibrium of forces. Nature, like a loving

mother, is every trying to keep land and sea, mountain and valley, each in its place, to hush the angry winds and waves, balance the extremes of heat and cold, of rain and drought, that peace, harmony, and beauty may reign supreme. There is a striking analogy between matter and mind, and the present disorganization of society warns us, that in the dethronement of woman we have let loose the elements of violence and ruin that she only has the power to curb. If the civilization of the age calls for an extension of the suffrage, surely a government of the most virtuous, educated men and women would better represent the whole, and protect the interests of all than could the representation of either sex alone. But government gains no new element of strength in admitting all men to the ballot-box, for we have too much of the man-power there already. We see this in every department of legislation, and it is a common remark, that unless some new virtue is infused into our public life the nation is doomed to destruction. Will the foreign element, the dregs of China, Germany, England, Ireland, and Africa supply this needed force, or the noble types of American womanhood who have taught our presidents, senators, and congressmen the rudiments of all they know?

3. I urge a Sixteenth Amendment because, when "manhood suffrage" is established from Maine to California, woman has reached the lowest depths of political degradation. So long as there is a disfranchised class in this country, and that class its women, a man's government is worse than a white man's government with suffrage limited by property and educational qualifications, because in proportion as you multiply the rulers, the condition of the politically ostracised is more hopeless and degraded. John Stuart Mill, in his work on "Liberty," shows that the conditions of one disfranchised man in a nation is worse than when the whole nation is under one man, because in the latter case, if the one man is despotic, the nation can easily throw him off, but what can one man do with a nation of tyrants over him? If American women find it hard to bear the oppressions of their own Saxon fathers, the best orders of manhood, what may they not be called on to endure when all the lower orders of foreigners now crowding our shores legislate for them and their daughters. Think of Patrick and Sambo and Hans and Yung Tung, who do not know the difference between a monarchy and a republic, who can not read the Declaration of Independence of Webster's spelling-book, making laws for Lucretia Mott, Ernestine L. Rose, and Anna E. Dickinson. Think of jurors and jailers drawn from these ranks to watch and try young girls for the crime of infanticide, to decide the moral code by which the mothers of this Republic shall be governed? This manhood suffrage is an appalling question, and it would be well for thinking women, who seem to consider it so magnanimous to hold their own claims in abeyance until all men are crowned with citizenship, to remember that the most ignorant men are ever the most hostile to the equality of women, as they have known them only in slavery and degradation.

Go to our courts of justice, our jails and prisons; go into the world of work; into the trades and professions; into the temples of science and learning, and see what is meted out everywhere to women--to those who have no advocates in our courts, no representatives in the councils of the nation. Shall we prolong and perpetuate such injustice, and by increasing this power risk worse oppressions for ourselves and daughters? It is an open, deliberate insult to American womanhood to be cast down under the iron-heeled peasantry of the Old World and the slaves of the New, as we shall be in the practical working of the Fifteenth Amendment, and the only atonement the Republican party can make is now to complete its work, by enfranchising the

women of the nation. I have not forgotten their action four years ago, when Article XIV., Sec. 2, was amended* by invidiously introducing the word "male" into the Federal Constitution, where it had never been before, thus counting out of the basis of representation all men not permitted to vote, thereby making it the interest of every State to enfranchise its male citizens, and virtually declaring it no crime to disfranchise its women. As political sagacity moved our rulers thus to guard the interests of the negro for party purposes, common justice might have compelled them to show like respect for their own mothers, by counting woman too out of the basis of representation, that she might no longer swell the numbers to legislate adversely to her interests. And this desecration of the last will and testament of the fathers, this retrogressive legislation for woman, was in the face of the earnest protests of thousands of the best educated, most refined and cultivated women of the North.

Now, when the attention of the whole world is turned to this question of suffrage, and women themselves are throwing off the lethargy of ages, and in England, France, Germany, Switzerland, and Russia are holding their conventions, and their rulers are everywhere giving them a respectful hearing, shall American statesmen, claiming to be liberal, so amend their constitutions as to make their wives and mothers the political inferiors of unlettered and unwashed ditch-diggers, boot-blacks, butchers, and barbers, fresh from the slave plantations of the South, and the effete civilizations of the Old World? While poets and philosophers, statesmen and men of science are all alike pointing to woman as the new hope for the redemption of the race, shall the freest Government on the earth be the first to establish an aristocracy based on sex alone? to exalt ignorance above education, vice above virtue, brutality and barbarism above refinement and religion? Not since God first called light out of darkness and order out of chaos, was there ever made so base a proposition as "manhood suffrage" in this American Republic, after all the discussions we have had on human rights in the last century. On all the blackest pages of history there is no record of an act like this, in any nation, where native born citizens, having the same religion, speaking the same language, equal to their rulers in wealth, family, and education, have been politically ostracised by their own countrymen, outlawed with savages, and subjected to the government of outside barbarians. Remember the Fifteenth Amendment takes in a larger population than the 2,000,000 black men on the Southern plantation. It takes in all the foreigners daily landing in our eastern cities, the Chinese crowding our western shores, the inhabitants of Alaska, and all those western isles that will soon be ours. American statesmen may flatter themselves that by superior intelligence and political sagacity the higher orders of men will always govern, but when the ignorant foreign vote already holds the balance of power in all the large cities by sheer force of numbers, it is simply a question of impulse or passion, bribery or fraud, how our elections will be carried. When the highest offices in the gift of the people are bought and sold in Wall Street, it is a mere chance who will be our rulers. Whither is a nation tending when brains count for less than bullion, and clowns make laws for queens? It is a startling assertion, but nevertheless true, that in none of the nations of modern Europe are the higher classes of women politically so degraded as are the women of this Republic to-day. In the Old World, where the government is the aristocracy, where it is considered a mark of nobility to share its offices and powers, women of rank have certain hereditary rights which raise them above a majority of the men, certain honors and privileges not granted to serfs and peasants. There women are queens, hold subordinate offices, and vote on

many questions. In our Southern States even, before the war, women were not degraded below the working population. They were not humiliated in seeing their coachmen, gardeners, and waiters go to the polls to legislate for them, but here, in this boasted Northern civilization, women of wealth and education, who pay taxes and obey the laws, who in morals and intellect are the peers of their proudest rulers, are thrust outside the pale of political consideration with minors, paupers, lunatics, traitors, idiots, with those guilty of bribery, larceny, and infamous crimes.

Would those gentlemen who are on all sides telling the women of the nation not to press their claims until the negro is safe beyond peradventure, be willing themselves to stand aside and trust all their interest to hands like these? The educated women of this nation feel as much interest in republican institutions, the preservation of the country, the good of the race, their own elevation and success, as any man possibly can, and we have the same distrust in man's power to legislate for us, that he has in woman's power to legislate wisely for herself.

4. I would press a Sixteenth Amendment, because the history of American statesmanship does not inspire me with confidence in man's capacity to govern the nation alone, with justice and mercy. I have come to this conclusion, not only from my own observation, but from what our rulers say of themselves. Honorable Senators have risen in their places again and again, and told the people of the wastefulness and corruption of the present administration. Others have set forth, with equal clearness, the ignorance of our rulers on the question of finance. . . .

WOMEN'S DECLARATION OF RIGHTS

The centennial celebration of 1876 was planned without reference to women, and no place for their participation had been provided on the program. Susan Anthony and Elizabeth Stanton wrote the "Women's Declaration of Rights," in protest, which they planned to present, invited or not. This document restated many of the arguments used by suffragists since the inception of the movement. Although it displays evidence of classist and racist justifications for female suffrage, these tendencies are not to the virulent degree displayed in other presentations of the time, such as Stanton's "The Politics of Woman Suffrage."

"Women's Declaration of Rights"*

While the nation is buoyant with patriotism, and all hearts are attuned to praise, it is with sorrow we come to strike the one discordant note, on this one-hundredth anniversary of our country's birth. When subjects of kings, emperors, and czars, from the old world join in our national jubilee, shall the women of the republic refuse to lay their hands with benedictions on the nation's head? Surveying America's exposition, surpassing in magnificence those of London, Paris, and Vienna, shall we not rejoice at the success of the youngest rival among the nations of the earth? May not our hearts, in unison with all, swell with pride at our great achievements as a people; our free speech, free press, free schools, free church, and the rapid progress we have made in material wealth, trade, commerce and the inventive arts? And we do rejoice in the success, thus far, of our experiment in self-government. Our faith is firm and unwavering in the broad principles of human rights proclaimed in 1776, not only as abstract truths, but as the corner stones of a republic. Yet we cannot forget, even in this glad hour, that while all men of every race, and clime, and condition, have been invested with the full rights of citizenship under our hospitable flag, all women still suffer the degradation of disfranchisement.

The history of our country the past hundred years has been a series of assumptions and usurpations of power over woman, in direct opposition to the principles of just government, acknowledged by the United States as its foundation, which are:

First--The natural rights of each individual.

Second--The equality of those rights.

Third--That rights not delegated are retained by the individual.

Fourth--That no person can exercise the rights of others without delegated authority.

Fifth--That the non-use of rights does not destroy them.

And for the violation of these fundamental principles of our government, we arraign our rulers on this Fourth day of July, 1876,--and these are our articles of impeachment.

*From Susan B. Anthony et al., *History of Woman Suffrage* (Rochester: Susan B. Anthony, 1881), vol. III, pp. 31-35.

[Reproduced from *One Half the People: The Fight for Woman Suffrage*, Anne F. Scott and Andrew M. Scott. (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1975), 90-95.]

Bills of attainder have been passed by the introduction of the word "male" into all the State constitutions, denying to women the right of suffrage, and thereby making sex a crime--an exercise of power clearly forbidden in article I, sections 9, 10, of the United States constitution.

The writ of habeas corpus, the only protection against *lettres de cachet* and all forms of unjust imprisonment, which the constitution declares shall not be suspended, except when in cases of

rebellion or invasion the public safety demands it," is help inoperative in every State of the Union, in case of a married woman against her husband--the marital rights of the husband being in all cases primary, and the rights of the wife secondary.

The right of trial by a jury of one's peers was so jealously guarded that States refused to ratify the original constitution until it was guaranteed by the sixth amendment. And yet the women of this nation have never been allowed a jury of their peers--being tried in all cases by men, native and foreign, educated and ignorant, virtuous and vicious. Young girls have been arraigned in our courts for the crime of infanticide; tried, convicted, hanged--victims, perchance, of judge, jurors, advocates--while no woman's voice could be heard in their defense. And not only are women denied a jury of their peers, but in some cases, jury trial altogether. During the war, a woman was tried and hanged by military law, in defiance of the fifth amendment, which specifically declares: "No person shall be held to answer for a capital or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a grand jury, except in cases . . . of persons in actual service in time of war." During the last presidential campaign, a woman, arrested for voting, was denied the protection of a jury, tried, convicted, and sentenced to a fine and costs of prosecution, by the absolute power of a judge of the Supreme Court of the United States.

Taxation without representation, the immediate cause of the rebellion of the colonies against Great Britain, is one of the grievous wrongs the women of this country have suffered during the century. Deploring war, with all the demoralization that follows in its train, we have been taxed to support standing armies, with their waste of life and wealth. Believing in temperance, we have been taxed to support the vice, crime and pauperism of the liquor traffic. While we suffer its wrongs and abuses infinitely more than man, we have no power to protect our sons against this giant evil. During the temperance crusade, mothers were arrested, fined, imprisoned, for even praying and singing in the streets, while men blockade the sidewalks with impunity, even on Sunday, with their military parades and political processions. Believing in honesty, we are taxed to support the very legislators and judges who make laws, and render decisions adverse to woman. And for refusing to pay such unjust taxation, the houses, lands, bonds, and stock of women have been seized and sold within the present year, thus proving Lord Coke's assertion, that "The very act of taxing a man's property without his consent is, in effect, disfranchising him of every civil right."

Unequal codes for men and women. Held by law a perpetual minor, deemed incapable of self-protection, even in the industries of the world, woman is denied equality of rights. The fact of sex, not the quantity or quality of work, in most cases, decides the pay and position; and because of this injustice thousands of fatherless girls are compelled to choose between a life of shame and starvation. Laws catering to man's vices have created two codes of morals in which penalties are graded according to the political status of the offender. Under such laws, women are fined and imprisoned if found alone in the streets, or in public places of resort, at certain

hours. Under the pretense of regulating public morals, police officers seizing the occupants of disreputable houses, march the women in platoons to prison, while the men, partners in their guilt, go free. While making a show of virtue in forbidding the importation of Chinese women on the Pacific coast for immoral purposes, our rulers, in many States, and even under the shadow of the national capitol, are now proposing to legalize the sale of American womanhood for the same vile purposes.

Special legislation for woman has placed us in a most anomalous position. Women invested with the rights of citizens in one section--voters, jurors, office-holders--crossing an imaginary line, are subjects in the next. In some States, a married woman may hold property and transact business in her own name; in others, her earning belong to her husband. In some States, a woman may testify against her husband, sue and be sued in the courts; in others, she has no redress in case of damage to person, property, or character. In case of divorce on account of adultery in the husband, the innocent wife is held to possess no right to children or property, unless by special decree of the court. But in no State of the Union has the wife the right to her own person, or to any part of the joint earnings of the co-partnership during the life of her husband. In some States women may enter the law schools and practice in the courts; in others they are forbidden. In some universities girls enjoy equal educational advantages with boys, while many of the proudest institutions in the land deny them admittance, though the sons of China, Japan and Africa are welcomed there. But the privileges already granted in the several States are by no means secure. The right of suffrage once exercised by women in certain States and territories has been denied by subsequent legislation. A bill is now pending in congress to disfranchise the women of Utah, thus interfering to deprive United States citizens of the same rights which the Supreme Court has declared the national government powerless to protect anywhere. Laws passed after years of untiring effort, guaranteeing married women certain rights of property, and mothers the custody of their children, have been repealed in States where we supposed all was safe. Thus have our most sacred rights been made the football of legislative caprice, proving that a power which grants as a privilege what by nature is a right, may withhold the same as a penalty when deeming it necessary for its own perpetuation.

Representation of women has had no place in the nation's thought. Since the incorporation of the thirteen original States, twenty-four have been admitted to the Union, not one of which has recognized woman's right of self-government. On this birthday of our national liberties, July Fourth, 1876, Colorado, like all her elder sisters, comes into the Union with the invidious word "male" in her constitution.

Universal manhood suffrage, by establishing an aristocracy of sex, imposes upon the women of this nation a more absolute and cruel despotism than monarchy; in that, woman finds a political master in her father, husband, brother, son. The aristocracies of the old world are based upon birth, wealth, refinement, education, nobility, brave deeds of chivalry; in this nation, on sex alone; exalting brute force above moral power, vice above virtue, ignorance above education, and the son above the mother who bore him.

The judiciary above the nation has proved itself but the echo of the party in power, by upholding and enforcing laws that are opposed to the spirit and letter of the constitution. When the slave power was dominant, the Supreme Court decided that a black man was not a citizen, because he had not the right to vote; and when the constitution was so amended as to make all

persons citizens, the same high tribunal decided that a woman, though a citizen, had not the right to vote. Such vacillating interpretations of constitutional law unsettle our faith in judicial authority, and undermine the liberties of the whole people.

These articles of impeachment against our rulers we now submit to the impartial judgment of the people. To all these wrongs and oppressions woman has not submitted in silence and resignation. From the beginning of the century, when Abigail Adams, the wife of one president and mother of another, said: "We will not hold ourselves bound to obey laws in which we have no voice or representations," until now, woman's discontent has been steadily increasing, culminating nearly thirty years ago in a simultaneous movement among the women of the nation, demanding the right of suffrage. In making our just demands, a higher motive than the pride of sex inspires us; we feel that national safety and stability depend on the complete recognition of the broad principles of the government. Woman's degraded, helpless position is the weak point in our institutions to-day; a disturbing force everywhere, severing family ties, filling our asylums with the deaf, the dumb, the blind; our prisons with criminals, our cities with drunkenness and prostitution; our homes with disease and death. It was the boast of the founders of the republic, that the rights for which they contended were the rights of human nature. If these rights are ignored in the case of one-half the people, the nation is surely preparing for its downfall. Governments try themselves. The recognition of a governing and governed class is incompatible with the first principles of freedom. Woman has not been a heedless spectator of the events of this century, nor a dull listener to the grand arguments for the equal rights of humanity. From the earliest history of our country woman has shown equal devotion with man to the cause of freedom, and has stood firmly by his side in its defense. Together, they have made this country what it is. Woman's wealth, thought and labor have cemented the stones of every monument man has reared to liberty.

And now, at the close of a hundred years, as the hour-hand of the great clock that marks the centuries points to 1876, we declare our faith in the principles of self-government; our full equality with man in natural rights; that woman was made first for her own happiness, with the absolute right to herself--to all the opportunities and advantages life affords for her complete development; and we deny that dogma of the centuries, incorporated in the codes of all nations--that woman was made for man--her best interests, in all cases, to be sacrificed to his will. We ask of our rulers, at this hour, no special favors, no special privileges, no special legislation. We ask justice, we ask equality, we ask that all the civil and political rights that belong to citizens of the United States, be guaranteed to us and our daughters forever.

The declaration was warmly applauded at many points, and after scattering another large number of printed copies, the delegation hastened to the convention of the National Association.

WOMEN IN THE HOME

After 1900 suffragists increasingly reached out in search of support from people who had not hitherto showed much interest in the movement. The increasing involvement of domestic feminists in the suffrage movement led to the development of arguments for female suffrage based upon women's love of home and children. Susan W. Fitzgerald developed this appeal, which urged that women be given the means to control the environment for which they were naturally responsible.

"Women In The Home"*
By SUSAN W. FITZGERALD

We are forever being told that the place of woman is in the HOME. Well, so be it. But what do we expect of her in the home? Merely to stay in the home is not enough. She is a failure unless she does certain things for the home. She must make the home minister, as far as her means allow, to the health and welfare, moral as well as physical, of her family, and especially of her children. She, more than anyone else, is held responsible for what they become.

SHE is responsible for the cleanliness of her house.

SHE is responsible for the wholesomeness of the food.

SHE is responsible for the children's health.

SHE, above all, is responsible for their morals, for their sense of truth, of honesty and of decency, for what they turn out to be.

How Far Can the Mother Control These Things? She can clean her own rooms, BUT if the neighbors are allowed to live in filth, she cannot keep her rooms from being filled with bad airs and smells, or from being infested by vermin.

She can cook her food well, BUT if dealers are permitted to sell poor food, unclean milk or stale eggs, she cannot make the food wholesome for her children.

She can care for her own plumbing and her refuse, BUT if the plumbing in the rest of the house is unsanitary, if garbage accumulates and the halls and stairs are left dirty, she cannot protect her children from the sickness and infection that these conditions bring.

She can take every care to avoid fire, BUT if the house has been badly built, if the fire-escapes are insufficient or not fire-proof, she cannot guard her children from the horrors of being maimed or killed by fire.

She can open her windows to give her children the air that we are told is so necessary,

BUT if the air is laden with infection, with tuberculosis and other contagious diseases, she cannot protect her children from these dangers.

*From: *Political Equality*, a leaflet published by the National American Woman Suffrage Association.

[Reproduced from *One Half the People: The Fight for Woman Suffrage*, Anne F. Scott and Andrew M. Scott. (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1975), 114-115.]

ALONE, she CANNOT make these things right. WHO or WHAT can?

THE CITY can do it, the CITY GOVERNMENT that is elected BY THE PEOPLE, to take care of the interests of THE PEOPLE.

And who decides what the city government shall do?

FIRST, the officials of that government; and,

SECOND, those who elect them.

DO THE WOMEN ELECT THEM? NO, the men do. So it is the MEN and NOT THE WOMEN that are really responsible for the unclean houses, unwholesome food, bad plumbing, danger of fire, risk of tuberculosis and other diseases, immoral influences of the street. In fact, MEN are responsible for the conditions under which the children live, but we hold WOMEN responsible for the results of those conditions. If we hold women responsible for the results, must we not, in simple justice, let them have something to say as to what these conditions shall be? There is one simple way of doing this. Give them the same means that men have, LET THEM VOTE.

Women are by nature and training housekeepers, Let them have a hand in the city's housekeeping, even if they introduce an occasional house-cleaning.

PREJUDICE AGAINST WOMEN

Carrie Chapman Catt served as president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association for over a decade. She delivered this speech as her presidential address in February, 1902. This speech reflects the increasing modernization of the ideology of the suffragists, as Catt develops an analysis of the roots of sex discrimination in society.

"Prejudice Against Women"*

. . . The question of woman suffrage is a very simple one. The plea is dignified, calm and logical. Yet, great as is the victory over conservatism which is represented in the accomplishment of man suffrage, infinitely greater will be the attainment of woman suffrage. Man suffrage exists through the surrender of many a stronghold of ancient thought, deemed impregnable, yet these obstacles were the veriest Don Quixote windmills compared with the opposition which has stood arrayed against woman suffrage.

Woman suffrage must meet precisely the same objections which have been urged against man suffrage, but in addition, it must combat sex-prejudice, the oldest, the most unreasoning, the most stubborn of all human idiosyncrasies. What *is* prejudice? An opinion, which is not based upon reason; a judgment, without having heard the argument; a feeling, without being able to trace from whence it came. And sex-prejudice is a pre-judgment against the rights, liberties and opportunities of women. A belief, without proof, in the incapacity of women to do that which they have never done. Sex-prejudice has been the chief hindrance in the rapid advance of the woman's rights movement to its present status, and it is still a stupendous obstacle to be overcome.

In the United States, at least, we need no longer argue woman's intellectual, moral and physical qualification for the ballot with the intelligent. The Reason of the best of our citizens has long been convinced. The justice of the argument has been admitted, but sex-prejudice is far from conquered.

When a great church official exclaims petulantly, that if women are no more modest in their demands men may be obliged to take to drowning female infants again; when a renowned United States Senator declares no human being can find an answer to the arguments for woman suffrage, but with all the force of his position and influence he will oppose it, when a popular woman novelist speaks of the advocates of the movement as the "shrieking sisterhood;" when a prominent politician says "to argue against woman suffrage is to repudiate the Declaration of Independence," yet he hopes it may never come, the question flies entirely outside the domain of reason, and retreats within the realm of sex-prejudice, where neither logic nor common sense can dislodge it. . . .

*From *The American Reader: Words That Moved a Nation*, Diane Ravitch, ed. (New York: Harper Perennial, 1990), 214-215.

Four chief causes led to the subjection of women, each the logical deduction from the theory that men were the units of the race--obedience, ignorance, the denial of personal liberty, and the denial of right to property and wages. These forces united in cultivating a spirit of egotism and tyranny in men and weak dependence in women. . . . In fastening these disabilities upon women, the world acted logically when reasoning from the premise that man is the race and woman his dependent. The perpetual tutelage and subjection robbed women of all freedom of thought and action, and all incentive for growth, and they logically became the inane weaklings the world would have them, and their condition strengthened the universal belief in their incapacity. This world taught women nothing skillful and then said her work was valueless. It permitted her no opinions and said she did not know how to think. It forbade her to speak in public, and said the sex had no orators. It denied her the schools, and said the sex had no genius. It robbed her of every vestige of responsibility, and then called her weak. It taught her that every pleasure must come as a favor from men, and when to gain it she decked herself in paint and fine feathers, as she had been taught to do, it called her vain.

This was the woman enshrined in literature. She was immortalized in song and story. Chivalry paid her fantastic compliments. As Diderot said: "when woman is the theme, the pen must be dipped in the rainbow, and the pages must be dried with a butterfly's wing." Surrounded by a halo of this kind of mysticism woman was encouraged to believe herself adored. This woman who was pretty, coquettish, affectionate, obedient, self effacive [*sic*], now gentle and meek, now furious and emotional, always ignorant, weak and silly, became the ideal woman of the world.

When at last the New Woman came, bearing the torch of truth, and with calm dignity asked a share in the world's education, opportunities and duties, it is no wonder these untrained weaklings should have shrunk away in horror. . . . Nor was it any wonder that man should arise to defend the woman of the past, whom he had learned to love and cherish. Her very weakness and dependence were dear to him and he loved to think of her as the tender clinging vine, while he was the strong and sturdy oak. He had worshiped her ideal through the age of chivalry as though she were a goddess, but he had governed her as though she were an idiot. Without the slightest comprehension of the inconsistency of his position, he believed this relation to be in accordance with God's command. . . .

The whole aim of the woman movement has been to destroy the idea that obedience is necessary to women; to train women to such self-respect that they would not grant obedience and to train men to such comprehension of equity they would not exact it. . . . As John Stuart Mill said in speaking of the conditions which preceded the enfranchisement of men: "The noble has been gradually going down on the social ladder and the commoner has been gradually going up. Every half century has brought them nearer to each other;" so we may say, for power in the world has been going down the ladder and woman has been climbing up. Every opposition to the enfranchisement of women is the last defense of the old theory that obedience is necessary for women, because man alone is the creator of the race.

The whole effort of the woman movement has been to destroy obedience of woman in the home. That end has been very generally attained, and the average civilized woman enjoys the right of individual liberty in the home of her father, her husband, her son. The individual woman no longer obeys the individual man. She enjoys self-government in the home and in society.

The question now is, shall all women as a body obey all men as a body? Shall the women who enjoys the right of self-government in every other department of life be permitted the right self-government in the State? It is no more right for all men to govern all women than it was for one man to govern one woman. It is no more right for men to govern women than it was for one man to govern other men. . . .

HOLDING THE PARTY IN POWER RESPONSIBLE

A major point of difference between NAWSA and the Woman's Party was their perception of the American political system. While NAWSA chose to remain nonpartisan in an effort to gain as much support as possible in Congress for suffrage, regardless of members' party affiliation, the Woman's Party sought to adapt the British suffragette tactic of punishing the party in power for failure to take action. In August 1916 the press chairman of the Woman's Party, in a letter to *The Outlook*, explained why the Woman's Party proposed to oppose all Democrats in the coming presidential election.

"Holding the Party in Power Responsible"*

To the Editor of *The Outlook*: Dear Sir--Will you permit me to say, in answer to your editorials in *The Outlook* of July 19 on "The Women Voters" and "The Issues as Women See Them," that the vote of the Woman's Party must be reckoned with because a small number of votes constitute the balance of power in each of the twelve suffrage States? The Woman's Party is already completely organized in all of these States, and it has an issue which makes an especial appeal to women.

Of course the entire vote of the four million women qualified to vote for President will not be cast solidly for any one candidate. It is absurd to expect that it will be. It is quite possible, as you estimate, that not more than two million or two million five hundred thousand will actually avail themselves of their opportunity to vote. Fortunately, however, for the hopes of the Woman's Party, neither four million nor even two million votes are necessary to make effective the demand for an amendment to the Constitution enfranchising women.

The suffrage States are close and doubtful territory. During the last five Presidential campaigns an average change of only nine per cent of the vote would have altered the result in every election. . .

In 1912 the result in Idaho was determined by 556 votes; in Wyoming, by 376; in California, by 88. In Nevada Senator Newlands was elected to the Senate by 38 votes and Senator Pittman by 88.

It is obvious that the dependence of the Woman's Party need not be in numbers, although, before its campaign has fairly begun, it has tens of thousands of members. Standing apart from and outside of the two great parties, the Woman's Party can hold the balance of power in the States whence come ninety-one electoral votes. The strength of the Woman's Party is not in numbers, but in strategic position.

The Woman's Party is completely organized in each of the twelve suffrage States. It is, in fact, the third party, having possessed itself of the place left vacant by the Progressive Party,

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but with this advantage--that the Woman's Party vote is concentrated, instead of scattered over the whole United States. The Woman's Party was launched in Chicago, June 5, 6, and 7, at a convention of voting women called by Miss Alice Paul, National Chairman of the Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage. It is made up of voting women pledged to put "suffrage first" in the fall campaign. Upon coming into being the party, under the leadership of Miss Anne Martin, Chairman of the National Committee, took possession of the State organizations perfected during the last three years in the twelve States by the Congressional Union. Since June 7 organization has gone rapidly forward, until now committees have been formed and are at work in almost every county. It is expected that the organization of every county will be complete by August 10, when the first conference to determine election policies convenes in Colorado Springs.

No one who went West in the Suffrage Special can doubt that the Woman's Party has an issue which makes a special appeal to women. Although it is quite true that women, like men, are interested in the European war, our Mexican policy, prohibition, and international questions, yet it is also true that the National Woman Suffrage amendment, usually known as the Susan B. Anthony Amendment, can be made a paramount issue with thousands and thousands of Western women. The reasons why Western women can be so interested are plain. It is only by a Federal amendment that the inter-State and National discrimination against their own political rights can be removed, that Eastern women can be enfranchised, and that Western women can use their political power to bestow the gift of freedom upon others.

Western women want the Susan B. Anthony Amendment because they resent conditions which disfranchise them if they move East to live. They resent laws which take from them their citizenship if they marry aliens. Great hardship is wrought by such laws. In the State of Washington, for instance, an American woman was denied a mother's pension because her husband, who had deserted her and neither seen her nor supported her for years, had become a Canadian. In Illinois an American woman applying for a pension for the blind was refused because she was married to a foreigner. American women lawyers who marry foreigners can no longer practice in our courts. Western women wish to safeguard their citizenship and their political freedom as men's are safeguarded.

Western women desire more influence in shaping National policies. This they cannot possess until all American women count politically. But American women cannot be enfranchised within any reasonable length of time except by an amendment to the Constitution of the United States. Amending State Constitutions is slow, burdensome, and in many States hopeless, because of the difficulties to amendment inherent in the Constitutions of the States.

A State constitutional amendment must usually be passed by a two-thirds vote of the State Legislature, and then submitted to a referendum of the male voters of the State. In New Mexico the proposed amendment must receive a three-fourths vote of the entire Legislature, a three-fourths vote of the entire electorate, and a two-thirds vote of all those voting in each county. In New Hampshire an amendment must be submitted by a constitutional convention, which can be called only once in seven years, and the process of calling it is excessively difficult. The proposed amendment requires for ratification two-thirds of the votes of all electors voting. Indiana requires a majority of the votes of all the qualified electors of the State. It has never been possible to amend the Constitution of Indiana.

Seven States fix a term of years after an amendment has failed of adoption before it can

be resubmitted. Four States restrict the number of amendment to be submitted at any election. Eleven States require for the approval of an amendment a majority of all the votes cast at an election, not a majority of the votes cast for or against the particular amendment. In two States the final approval of an amendment is left with the legislators even after the electors have approved of it. These are only a few of the difficulties in the way of amending State Constitutions. Moreover, State work is like trying to progress over shifting sand. An advance once made cannot be held. When a State referendum fails, work must start again from the very beginning.

On the other hand, in work for a Federal amendment every step forward is a permanent gain. A Federal amendment once passed by a two-thirds vote of Congress is passed forever, and needs for ratification only a majority vote of three-fourths of the State Legislatures. Once ratified by a State Legislature, the amendment cannot be brought up again; but, if rejected by the State Legislature, it can be immediately reconsidered.

The Federal method is not only easier, it is also fair. A Federal amendment does not infringe on the rights of a State. Such rights cannot be abridged by using a method prescribed by the Constitution and agreed to by the States. A Federal amendment simply applies the principle of majority rule, and objections to it lie equally against our whole system of government. A Federal woman suffrage amendment does not complicate the race problem. There are six million more white than colored women living south of Mason and Dixon's line, and two million more white women than Negro men, women, and children combined.

Nor is the Federal method alarmingly novel. The States have never had exclusive control of suffrage. The original Constitution laid down specifications as to who should vote for members of the Senate and who should vote for members of the House of Representatives. The Fifteenth Amendment declared that United States Senators should be elected by the people. Moreover, the Federal Government alters the electorate through its control of naturalization laws. The United States permits foreigners to become citizens. Under the Fifteenth Amendment, it forbids the disfranchisement of these citizens simply because they are foreigners.

Men may regard with complacency the difficulties of the State-by-State road to enfranchisement, toward which women are blandly waved. But women will not accept this impossible way for their sisters when they have a right to proceed in an easier and better way according to established forms of law. Western women thrill to the thought that they have the power to open to their sisters this way to freedom. They realize that their power can be made effective only in pressure upon the National Government. It is a pregnant fact, and very characteristic of the psychology of women, that work for the freedom of women appeals to thousands of women who did not work for their own enfranchisement. And hundreds of women have contributed to the war chest of the Woman's Party who did not contribute to their own State suffrage campaign.

Why should it be called revenge for women who desire the political freedom of others to vote against a party openly unfriendly to the only method by which Nation-wide suffrage for women can be gained? It is no more revenge to vote in the interests of the freedom of *other women* than to vote in the interests of peace and preparedness . . . And why should suffrage as an all-absorbing issue be side-tracked by the women of the West for "Americanism"? There never was a greater opportunity to make "suffrage first" the paramount issue. Both great parties are

vociferous in claiming the issue of peace and preparedness. President Wilson, who stands for peace, also toured the country in the interests of military preparedness. The Republican party stands for peace, according to the testimony of Governor Glynn. In his keynote speech at the Democratic Convention Governor Glynn, amid shouts of applause and cries for more, recited the many occasions on which under international provocation leaders of the Republican party had in the past written notes! Certainly the Republican party claims preparedness too. Witness the cartoons of Colonel Roosevelt weeping for his stolen issue and not to be comforted.

In this connection, I must confess that I do not know just precisely what Americanism means. But if it means, as I believe it does, the dedication of all that is best in our beloved country to making this Nation, not only strong and peaceful, but also *just*, then surely there is no reason why Western women should not vote as women in woman's cause of freedom.

ABBY SCOTT BAKER,
Press Chairman Woman's Party.

National Headquarters,
Washington, D. C.

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