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POLITICAL LIFE: “SHALL I FOLD SOME MORE LEAFLETS?”

“San Francisco Waterloo of Suffragettes,” read the headline in the October 11, 1911, *Oakland Tribune*; the article detailing a narrow loss for woman suffrage in California continued onto the next page with the headline, “All Amendments but One Carried in State: Woman Suffrage Is Defeated by a Small Majority.” Failure was nothing new to suffragists. They had failed, already, far more times than they had succeeded. They had been pushing for the vote since the Seneca Falls convention of 1848. California women had fought tenaciously for suffrage bills and referenda against the intransigence of legislators and governors, and their first referendum campaign in 1896 had resulted in a stinging defeat. The deflated suffragists sitting in one California home, after accepting what looked like yet another loss, simply began planning the next campaign. The seven-year-old daughter of one of them had already internalized the persistence necessary for the struggle. She “touched her mother’s arm to attract her attention and said, ‘Shall I fold some more leaflets?’” But this time, it was not a defeat. Within a few days, it was clear that women in California had indeed won the vote, marking the first victory in a diverse, well-populated state with large cities. It was one sharp hairpin turn toward success in a long journey that still had many, many miles left in it. But if there was one thing that the child’s question exemplified, it was that women reformers in the Progressive Era were persistent.¹

They were also brave. It took courage, for most middle-class women, to step beyond the boundaries of domesticity and privacy and into a public world of strife, opposition, and ridicule. Reputation and respectability were everything to such women, and the step into public political activity could be like one into the dark, with only the unknown, and perhaps a precipice, on the other side. For nonwhite, immigrant, and working-class women, however, the threat was graver and the courage more profound, for taking a stand against lynching or exploitative wages or war could invite physical violence, jail time, deportation, or even death. Admittedly, for some activists, there was little to no risk; these were women who fought for the status quo or even something more conservative, and in validating power they gained its applause. But most women who favored things as they were kept their heads down. Those who spoke out usually wanted change, and the thought of change could inspire fear and backlash.

Women who entered the political battleground in this era were creative and flexible. They embraced new technologies, tested and questioned their own methods, tried out new rhetoric. They lobbied, advertised, staged demonstrations and protests, wrote letters, recorded and published data, sent heart-wrenching letters to newspaper editors, testified before Congress, drew cartoons, wrote songs, and, eventually, voted and ran for office. They were diverse, with different goals and priorities, and sometimes they had trouble holding coalitions together. One feature that most of them shared was that dogged optimism expressed by that little girl with her leaflets: they *could* make the world better, they *would* make the world better, and it *was* true what suffragist Susan B. Anthony had taken as her motto—"Failure Is Impossible."

1890

By 1890, women had made some progress from the days of the early Republic, when "coverture," the legal doctrine that presumed a wife was fully subsumed in her husband's identity, had been the norm. Some states had passed laws protecting the property of married women or liberalized access to divorce, and some professions such as medicine and law had reluctantly granted a few women entrance. But on most fronts, women suffered from legal disabilities. Marital rape was permissible, and domestic violence was tolerated so long as it was not excessive. In no state were women permitted to sit on juries. Despite agitation for the vote since the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention, no existing state had ever extended the suffrage

to women, though the territories of Wyoming and Utah had made the experiment, only to have Utah women's voting rights stripped away by the courts in 1887. Women could not serve in any branch of the armed services, and in fact their exclusion from this fundamental duty of citizenship was routinely dredged up as an excuse to deny them many of citizenship's rights.²

The Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution had introduced the word "male" with regard to voting, just after the Civil War, and the Fifteenth Amendment guaranteeing the vote regardless of previous slave status had done nothing to alter that. The issue of whether to support the Fifteenth without language including women had split the suffrage movement into two different camps. Women (and male suffragists) who supported the Fifteenth, arguing that it was best to secure black men's voting rights and then campaign for women's, joined the American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA). Those who actively opposed any amendment excluding women—including diehard former abolitionists like Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony—formed the National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA). The movement would remain split for two decades, and tempers ran hot on both sides, with old alliances fracturing and some NWSA campaigners



Woman suffragists protesting at the White House, 1917. Employing a picket line, a tactic borrowed from the labor movement, was considered a radical departure at the time and attracted deep hostility once the U.S. entered World War I. (Library of Congress)

deploying racist or nativist rhetoric in the service of their cause. A brief flurry of protest voting during the 1872 and 1874 elections, in which hundreds of women tried to go to the polls despite the fear of being turned away, did not succeed in establishing a precedent.³

The U.S. Supreme Court had delivered more bad news. In *Bradwell v. Illinois* (1873), it had ruled that states could prevent women from the practice of law on the basis of their sex. In *Minor v. Happersett* (1875), a case emerging from the 1872 voting protests, it declared that the Fourteenth Amendment did not offer women equal access to the “privileges or immunities of citizens” because not all citizens were entitled to vote. In *Strauder v. West Virginia* (1879), it confirmed that women could be constitutionally excluded from juries. In 1893 it reaffirmed *Bradwell* after Belva Ann Lockwood, the first certified lawyer to argue a case before the Court, was denied admission to the bar of Virginia on the grounds of her sex.

If women were denied the right to a vote in order to make their political opinions felt, that left them with the means of protest guaranteed under the First Amendment: petition, speech, the press, and assembly. Even these methods, to many women, seemed unladylike. Women in 1890 were thoroughly inculcated in middle-class standards of morality and decorum, even if their own class or race status denied them its benefits, such as male assistance and politeness. They knew what was owed to a lady, and they did their best to demand that type of treatment. In return, they knew that the price of chivalry—or the hope of chivalry—was a theater of helplessness, virtue, and deference to male power. Most never even questioned the mores that divided ladies from women outside men’s protection, and this internalized censorship was especially powerful in the South, where the protection of white women was the linchpin of a re-established white supremacy after Reconstruction. If white women did not need white men’s protection, then there was no rationale for the campaign of racial terror waged through lynching, rape, and intimidation in black communities. Many women, therefore, were reluctant or even terrified to use speech, let alone petition or assembly, in pursuit of equal rights.

Yet the “cult of domesticity” that made women the monarchs of their insulated, polite parlors created an unintended license to speak out on matters connected to that sphere—in short, to matters of home, children, and the family. Before long, it became clear that one could not protect children without protecting milk supplies and reducing crime; even a mother wholly selfish for her own brood wanted them protected from adulterated food, tuberculosis epidemics, drunken

and abusive fathers, and congenital syphilis. But many women had genuine, heartfelt (if sometimes blinkered and patronizing) interest in the welfare of other women, and other women's children. Through clubs, settlement houses, and reform organizations, they extended the reach of "civic housekeeping" or "municipal housekeeping" until it became indistinguishable from a role in public policy. Where was one to draw the line between public and private? At campaigns for drinking fountains, pure milk, playgrounds, and free public kindergartens? At campaigns against drunkenness, sexual abuse of children, sexually transmitted disease, or prostitution? Almost any issue, it seemed, could be cast as relevant to a mother or a potential mother, and motherhood was the one piece of ground that a Progressive-Era woman felt fully confident in defending.

Carrie Chapman Catt (1859–1947) said as much in 1907. The making of laws might seem remote to most women, she acknowledged, but

Law not infrequently controls what the occupants of the home shall both eat and wear. The children are vaccinated *by law*, quarantined *by law*, educated from particular school books and particular methods *by law*. The health of the family is preserved *by law*. . . . Law determines the disposal of ashes, garbage and litter from the house. Indeed, there is no end to the connections of the home and government. If the "Queen of the Home" is to be taxed upon nearly all she eats, wears or uses, in order to maintain a government; and if this government is to regulate her water supply, her gas supply, her health, her conduct, her comfort; . . . does it not follow by all the logic of common sense, and all the sentiment of justice, that she should act as one of the rulers of our land?⁴

Catt was, by 1907, the head of a united suffrage movement, for in 1890 two important events had revitalized the long journey toward the vote. First, Wyoming had entered the Union as a state, leaving behind its territorial status but not its commitment to women's equality, though there was pressure to quietly disenfranchise women as part of the statehood process. Second, the NWSA and AWSA had finally put the bitterness of the Fifteenth Amendment controversy behind them enough to unite as a single organization, the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), with the formidable (if elderly) Elizabeth Cady Stanton at its head. It may have felt to the women of 1890, as it did to those in the first wave of exhilaration after the Civil War, as if victory were right around the corner. Then again, some may have known that there would be a lot more leaflets to fold.

TEMPERANCE WORK, SETTLEMENTS, AND WOMEN'S CLUBS

Most women in 1890 were not seeking the vote or even a public-policy voice of any kind. They had been extremely well socialized to avoid political controversy. However, their interests as women drew them to the cause of temperance. Saloons and taverns were male enclaves, into which respectable, middle-class women dared not go. Most of what went on there was a mystery, with one exception; women knew that their husbands spent money there that could be better spent on family welfare. Some women did not mind. In fact, in some tenements sending down to the local saloon for a pail full of beer was simply routine urban hospitality. But in middle-class homes, especially those of Protestant, native-born women and evangelical men concerned about an influx of Irish and German Catholic immigrants, alcohol consumption became a popular concern. Bound up with worries about domestic violence and family integrity, temperance—originally the promotion of moderate consumption, but eventually encompassing a prohibition on hard liquor at least—was the most popular cause of its day. The Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), founded in 1874, had more than ten times as many members as NAWSA in 1892. By 1900, it had 176,000, representing every state and territory in the United States. By 1915, it claimed members in every county.⁵

Frances Willard (1839–1898), the longtime president of the WCTU, was one of the best-known and most-admired women in the United States. Willard's influence bled over into a host of causes that she also espoused. Following her motto, "Do Everything," WCTU members not only encouraged abstinence pledges, worked to ban alcohol sales on Sundays, installed public water fountains to prevent thirsty men from needing to enter saloons, and fought against unlabeled patent medicines (which were often heavily spiked with hard liquor), but also embraced prison reform and an eight-hour day for workers, opposed prostitution and child labor, established homes for unwed mothers, and worked to raise the age of consent for girls. It also ran publications, temperance hotels, and other enterprises, providing opportunities for female leadership and practical business training. WCTU organizing also gave women experience in multiple modes of swaying opinion and promoting legislation. They held student essay contests on temperance. From 1900, Georgia WCTU women showed up at the capital whenever a prohibition bill advanced, wearing and giving out

white ribbons as a symbol of their cause. Contrary to the popular perception, the radical, saloon-smashing campaign of the hatchet-wielding Carry Nation (1846–1911) remained a minority strategy against what Nation called “saloonacy.”⁶

Even women who would have shuddered to think of asking for the vote felt justified in belonging to the WCTU. True, the WCTU officially endorsed suffrage for most of the 1880s and 1890s, and Willard urged suffrage on the grounds that it could be used for “Home Protection,” but local groups had some latitude to adopt their own platforms and policies, so long as they concentrated somehow on temperance work. The Georgia WCTU, for example, encountered stern resistance from ministers over suffrage and, to the frustration of pro-suffrage temperance women like Mary McLendon (1840–1921), never gave its official backing to the vote for women. Yet participation in this organization, because of its broad-based platform of family-centered reforms, normalized the idea of forming opinions on public policy, if only within the context of protecting the sacred harbor of the home. It trained women in key skills such as organizing, speaking, lobbying, and investigating social ills. Furthermore, as historian Glenna Matthews explains, it “forced Americans to examine their assumptions about appropriate female behavior, given the fact that militants were often the wives of leading citizens in their respective communities.” The WCTU also built a nationwide, grassroots network of passionate adherents who could be called upon to take action over their dinner tables, during election seasons and legislative sessions, and at church on Sundays. Willard did her best to be inclusive, though it was difficult in a society riven by segregation, nativism, and anti-Catholicism. Though dominated by Protestants, her WCTU maintained ties to the growing Catholic temperance movement, and it officially welcomed black members, though it allowed states to set their own membership policies, and women of color in the South were usually shunted into separate “Number 2” chapters, if they were allowed to join at all.⁷

In 1890, another important institution, the women’s club, was also taking shape. The first such clubs are generally considered to be Sorosis, formed in 1868 by journalist Jane Croly (1829–1901) in New York, and the New England Women’s Club, founded by Caroline Severance (1820–1914) in Boston in the same year. Other clubs followed in cities and large towns, usually dedicated, initially, to cultural pursuits and self-improvement. The members tended to be the middle-class wives of businessmen, politicians, and

professional men, admitted on the approval of current members; they formed committees around mutual interests such as the arts, literature, philosophy, science, and domestic life. Some encouraged the development of public speaking through the writing and delivering of papers on various subjects. Eventually, however, it became clear that some members had other interests, such as education, temperance, suffrage, or child welfare, and in places where women had no votes—which was almost everywhere—talk could easily turn to the question of how to effect change without direct political clout. Tentatively at first, then zealously, many of these clubs organized explicitly political committees. (It should be noted that some clubs did not evolve into policy areas and remained as restricted-admission “literary clubs,” but most embraced some sort of civic action and became open-membership “departmental clubs.”)⁸

Once the door was open, however, all sorts of issues drew the attention of clubwomen. Typically, an issue would be raised by a member or a guest speaker. Research and discussion would follow within a relevant committee and then perhaps be brought to the group as a whole. If enough members approved of action, the women would organize a campaign using a variety of tactics: printing informative literature to be distributed in the community, drafting and circulating a petition to the appropriate government body, or securing press coverage. As women’s political sophistication evolved, so did their assertiveness. They mobilized male family members to vote on issues, visited politicians’ offices to lobby directly, conducted on-site inspections of factories and tenements, wrote and published reports, and channeled funds toward other reform-minded organizations.⁹ When all else failed, they raised money and simply enacted whatever goal they had in mind. A favorite maneuver was to build and operate a public playground, then encourage the municipal government to assume responsibility for it.

By 1890, there were enough women’s clubs around the nation that Jane Croly, founder of Sorosis, could call for an umbrella organization. Accordingly, several leading clubwomen came together to found the General Federation of Women’s Clubs (GFWC). Clubs organized to serve specific demographic groups rapidly followed suit. Hannah Greenbaum Solomon (1858–1942) established the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) in New York City in 1893, and in the same year Alice Timmons Toomy (d. 1906) founded the Catholic Women’s National League of America. In 1896, following upon journalist Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin’s (1842–1924) call to

black women to defend Ida B. Wells from a racist reporter's attack, the members of the Colored Women's League and the National Federation of Afro-American Women merged as the National Association of Colored Women (NACW), adopting the motto, "Lifting as We Climb," and electing Mary Church Terrell as their first president. Club membership expanded rapidly. Within two years, the GFWC had 20,000 members, and membership grew to at least one million, and perhaps as many as two million, by the mid-1910s. By 1896, the NCJW had a presence in fifty U.S. cities, and the NACW grew from twenty-five to eighty-five clubs between 1896 and 1899, rising to a membership of 50,000 by 1915.¹⁰

Most of their agenda, which varied from club to club, could be rationalized on the grounds of women's "natural" interest in family and child welfare. In Montana, for example, the Butte Housewives' League fought high food prices in the wake of World War I, organizing boycotts and outing those guilty of dumping food to drive up prices. The Women's Club of Denver founded a Traveling Library project in 1896, holding donation drives and then lending out boxes of books to remote parts of the state for the benefit of rural readers. Los Angeles women, led by Katherine Edson (1870–1933), launched a pure-milk campaign and conducted their own monthly inspections of dairies for signs of bovine tuberculosis. Baltimore NACW women raised funds to send city children on vacations to the countryside, hoping to give them a vision of healthful living and fresh air. Kindergartens, orphanages, libraries, parks, playgrounds, and scholarships and schools were favorite causes. By about 1905, the term "municipal housekeeping" had come into use to describe the rationale for women's entry into public matters, but women were quick to reassure men that club-sponsored reforms were in no way a challenge to patriarchy; "it is not as the rivals of men but as their loyal assistants," insisted Rose C. Swart of Oshkosh, Wisconsin, in 1897, "that we should undertake the public service."¹¹

However, it proved to be a short leap from municipal housekeeping to a wider platform and to what Robert L. Griswold has characterized as "an implicit and sometimes explicit critique of a social order dominated by men." Attempts to help delinquent youth led to advocacy for separate juvenile court and detention systems. Concern for infant health and maternal mortality led to campaigns for state-supported visiting nurses. Care for working women led many women's clubs to call for maximum hours, minimum wages, factory inspection, equal pay for women, and bans on child labor.

A generic reverence for nature and fresh air went hand-in-hand with a growing understanding of germ theory and disease, and clubwomen began to push not only for city beautification but also for better garbage disposal, the eradication of flies, street paving, and bans on public spitting.¹²

Eventually, club women embraced goals that seemingly had little to do with homes and families; they worked to curb cruelty to animals, for example, and to establish national parks and monuments. Dr. Mary Elizabeth Bates (1861–1954) worked to establish twenty-three drinking fountains for people and forty-two water troughs for animals in Denver, Harriet Vaille (1880–1962) brought a delegation of Arapaho Indians to the proposed Rocky Mountain National Park to inform officials of the indigenous names for the features of its landscape, and Virginia McClurg (1857–1931) and Lucy Peabody (1864?–1934) mobilized women to secure national park status for Mesa Verde's historic cliff dwellings. Mary Ann Dyer Goodnight (1839–1926) raised orphaned bison calves and helped to save the species from extinction. Harriet Hemenway (1858–1960) revived an older idea and founded the Audubon Society; she also led a campaign to end the use of elaborate feather decorations on ladies' hats. The GFWC campaigns to preserve forest lands from New Jersey to California. Conservation causes appealed to many Progressives, not just women, because nature seemed to offer an antidote to industrialization, urbanization, and the faster pace of modern life.¹³

Unexpectedly, perhaps, woman suffrage proved to be the most difficult issues for women's clubs to embrace, despite the fact that there was often a great deal of overlap between the club and suffrage movements. Many clubs in the South never endorsed suffrage at all, and the GFWC did not give its official approval until 1914. The most difficult issue for the club movement as a whole, however, was that of race. Some clubs founded by white women admitted African Americans, but it was far more common to see segregated clubs or chapters. Reluctance on the part of white women in the North to alienate their Southern sisters led to tacit acceptance of segregation and generally timid positions taken on issues such as lynching—if, indeed, clubs took positions on this issue at all. The NACW was not so passive; while it shared much of the educational and reform agenda of the GFWC, its platform was much more outspoken about race. It recognized that, first of all, it needed to combat the pernicious stereotypes of black women as immoral, dirty, and lazy, so the NACW went out of its way to promote respectability, cleanliness, and industry in the hope of proving by example

that black women were upstanding citizens. Its motto "Lifting as We Climb" was aspirational but also judgmental; like their white middle-class peers, black middle-class women presumed that their poorer sisters needed and wanted instruction in middle-class morality, housekeeping skills, and aesthetics. Mary Church Terrell expressed the predominant view in 1900: "Whether we will or not, the world will always judge the womanhood of the race. Even though we wish to shun them, and hold ourselves entirely aloof from them, we cannot escape the consequences of their acts. So, that, if the call of duty were disregarded altogether, policy and self-preservation would demand that we go down among the lowly, the illiterate, and even the victims to whom we are bound by ties of race and sex, and put forth every possible effort to uplift and reclaim them." Accordingly, the NACW undertook to teach "Social Purity" to black youth, insist that newspapers use honorifics such as "Miss" and "Mr." when citing the names of African Americans, promote temperance, and establish charities.¹⁴

Beyond promoting mere respectability, however, the NACW worked for concrete legislation to protect all members of the African American community; its members worked to end segregation on rail cars, turn Frederick Douglass's house into a museum, end the convict lease system, call attention to the crime of lynching, and support the work of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). At the biennial convention in 1914, "Mr. H. H. Boyd of Nashville presented 'The Colored Doll,' and made a strong plea for the encouragement of instilling Race Pride in the youth of the race. Miss Anna Jones, Kansas City, Missouri, spoke on the 'Negro in Literature,' and suggested that the N.A.C.W. offer a prize of \$100.00 for the best literary production among our women at the next Biennial." At the 1918 convention, the Great Migration was noticed in "a touching appeal to the delegates of the South for counsel and advice as to the best means of helping the new-comers to the Northland."¹⁵

Other identity-based clubs promoted issues of special interest to their members. The women of the NCJW embraced a standard reform agenda but also addressed issues of direct concern to their own communities, such as anti-Semitism, the needs of Jewish immigrants, and establishing Jewish study groups and Sabbath schools. Like African American women, they worried that the poorest among them would drag down the reputation of the whole group, and like black women they faced increasing segregation, as elite resorts, schools, and clubs closed their doors to Jews. Chinese

women in San Francisco also established their own club, *Jeleab*, in 1913 when white clubs refused to admit them. Three years later they established a Chinese American chapter of the YWCA. Political activity was especially difficult for Chinese American women, because they had a long tradition of remaining secluded indoors, but after the 1911 republican revolution in China, they imitated radical women there by unbinding their feet, bobbing their hair, and attending political meetings. Native American women's clubs studied tribal history, indigenous languages, and the biographies of famous Indians. Korean women in California banded together to form a Patriotic Society opposed to Japanese occupation of Korea; they manufactured soy sauce and bean paste so that they could effectively boycott Japanese-made products. There were even identity clubs for conservative white women. The Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), Society of Colonial Dames, and United Daughters of the Confederacy also arose during the Progressive Era to promote their distinct ideas of national identity and American history in a time of immigration and change.¹⁶

Reform-minded women also joined or helped to establish organizations that were open to both men and women. Ida B. Wells-Barnett, Jane Addams, Mary Church Terrell, Harriot Stanton Blatch (1856–1940), Florence Kelley, Lillian Wald, and Mary White Ovington were among those who helped to found the NAACP, and Zitkala Ša (Gertrude Simmons Bonnin) was among the “red progressives” of the Society of American Indians (SAI).¹⁷

For some middle-class women, it was settlement-house work that brought them into the realm of reform. From the founding of New York's University Settlement in 1886, these all-purpose community centers grew rapidly in number and mandate. The most famous was Hull House, founded in 1889 in Chicago by Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr, but by 1910 there were more than 400 across the nation. Settlement work, even more so than club work, brought middle-class women into proximity with the problems of the working class, and the social workers who lived at the settlements were gradually drawn into political action on behalf of the communities they served. Their main work—kindergartens, continuing-education and citizenship classes, cooking demonstrations, children's theater productions, and municipal kitchens—remained safely within the realm of civic “housekeeping,” but they also advocated on behalf of legislation, conducted investigations into social conditions, and even took government posts or led outside reform groups in order to enact their agendas. Katherine Bement Davis (1860–1935) became

New York City's commissioner of corrections; Julia Lathrop went on to lead the federal Children's Bureau; Florence Kelley headed the National Consumers' League, which worked to improve conditions for workers, and she and Lillian Wald founded the National Child Labor Committee in 1904. Jane Addams, for a time, became a Chicago garbage inspector.¹⁸

SUFFRAGE

Many women only realized how badly they needed the right to vote by taking on one of the many causes listed earlier. They met with elected officials who were unresponsive to their concerns, or who expressed sympathy but then voted the opposite way. For example, the failure of a Prohibition referendum in Alabama in 1909 led to an increase in support for suffrage. But suffrage, despite being cast as part of the same "Home Protection" agenda that animated many other campaigns, proved much more difficult to attain. The arguments of those who opposed woman suffrage, or "antis," varied, but one typical line of attack centered on the same rhetoric of domesticity deployed by "municipal housekeeping" proponents. Women, they argued, were different from men—naturally retiring and virtuous, not suited for the hurly burly of politics, liable to be polluted and lose their claim on chivalry by delving into unsavory topics, and perhaps not intellectually or psychologically equipped to grapple with complex and weighty issues. Another common argument was that women were adequately represented already by the votes of their fathers, husbands, and sons, who loved them and had their best interests at heart. Antis could also point out, with plenty of proof at hand, that many women either did not care about the vote or actively did not want it. Some, including most Catholic clergymen at the turn of the century, believed that women's subordination was divinely ordained and that political equality would subvert God's purpose.¹⁹

The South proved especially reluctant to grant women the vote. Elna C. Green has argued that the suffrage fight was long hampered there because it took longer for the South to develop "a critical mass of industrial and urban problems around which reform-minded Southern women could organize, and . . . urban centers with sufficient numbers of middle-class women willing to join reform movements." It was also harder for white and black women to form coalitions in the South, not least because some white Southern suffragists like Kate Gordon were openly and unashamedly

racist. While some Southern suffragists (and even some northern sympathizers) argued that giving white women the vote would help to drown out the “illiterate” (i.e., black) vote, many Democrats were unwilling to take the risk. Introducing women voters into their effectively one-party system might provide an opportunity for power to slip into the hands of Republicans, a third party such as the Populists, or an anti-Democratic coalition. They felt comfortable with the status quo, in which the black male vote was effectively suppressed through literacy tests, poll taxes, grandfather clauses, and “white primaries,” where white voters selected the candidates, effectively deciding the contest in advance under single-party rule. White primaries, and an 1898 Supreme Court ruling allowing literacy tests, robbed white women of the argument that their votes were needed to forestall “negro rule,” but nothing countered white supremacists’ fears of doing anything to “revitalize the fifteenth amendment, and . . . bring the Negroes back into politics.” In addition, a strong states’ rights tradition led some who favored suffrage to oppose a national amendment as an example of federal overreach. They supported the idea of enfranchisement only at the state level and actively worked against passage and ratification of what became the Nineteenth Amendment. Southern “antis” associated themselves with Confederate and maternal imagery and accused suffragists of being failed women; in the words of one Texas minister, “the leaders of the Suffragette movement, as a rule, are divorced women, women who prefer pug dogs to children, and supernumerary spinsters, bankrupt in sentiment and possessors of worthless assets of faded charm, who, failing to capture a man, propose to remedy this misfortune by turning [into] men themselves.” Another, from Nashville, warned of dire consequences if women got the vote: it would “unlock the gates of hell and turn the demons loose upon the human family.”²⁰

If the South proved particularly intransigent, the West proved remarkably receptive. All of the first victories occurred there. Wyoming Territory enfranchised women in 1869 and Utah Territory in 1870; Utah’s statute was overruled by Congress in 1887, but when both territories entered the Union as states, Wyoming in 1890 and Utah in 1896, they granted women the right to vote. In the meantime, Colorado (1893) and Idaho (1896) had also granted woman suffrage. A long drought followed—sometimes called “the doldrums,” when nothing seemed to work to push suffrage measures through statehouses or ballot measures. (In 1900, the Wisconsin Woman Suffrage Association (WWSA) treasurer complained

that paid membership was down to just seventy-five, and in 1909 the WWSA had only eighty-eight dollars in operating funds.) But when the doldrums were ended at last by some long-awaited suffrage victories, they came from the West. Washington women won the vote in 1910, followed rapidly by California (1911), Oregon (1912), Kansas (1912), and Arizona (1912, with 68 percent of male voters approving). Not until 1913 did a state east of the Mississippi River grant women the vote, and that was Illinois, which permitted them the vote in presidential elections only. Nonetheless, this gave women a say, in total, in how eighty-four electoral votes would be cast, and the more political clout they wielded on a national level, the more the non-suffrage states had to pay attention to them.²¹

Historians have suggested a number of reasons for the early victories in the West, including the freewheeling governance or partial sovereignty of territories, respect for women's work on farms, a higher-than-average proportion of tax-paying professional women and widows in the West, a greater use of "expediency" arguments (claims grounded in gendered difference and maternalism) than of "rights" arguments (claims grounded in natural equality), and the electoral uncertainty created by the temporary rise of viable third parties such as the Populist Party or the Progressive Party. Suffragists at the time were more likely to blame those they saw as their traditional enemies: Catholics, working-class men, or the "liquor interest," a catch-all term that included saloon owners, brewers, distillers, and men hostile to the Prohibition legislation that many (both in and out of the suffrage movement) presumed would follow on the heels of female enfranchisement. These explanations, however, did little to explain the western victories and repeated eastern defeats, since there were obviously Catholics, working men, and saloons in both places. Moreover, there is some evidence that undermines the suffragists' own explanations; as Elna C. Green notes, "All nine southern states that rejected the Anthony Amendment [the 19th Amendment] had voted *for* the Prohibition amendment." She argues that railroads, political machines, textile mill owners, and entrenched elites were more powerful opponents of suffrage, at least in the South, because they feared women voters would back labor and clean-government reforms. Susan E. Marshall supports the point about entrenched elites, but focuses on the northern antis, who were closely tied to powerful men "and, like many men of their class, regarded a mass electorate as a threat." They also, Marshall asserts, worried that suffrage "would legitimate women's employment and further the expansion of the social

welfare state, supplanting the authority of the society volunteer with a cadre of female professionals bearing college credentials, relevant work experience, and liberal political agendas."²²

Frequently, suffragists blamed each other for failures to push an act through a legislature or to secure enough votes on a referendum. National NAWSA organizers blamed state organizers for not accepting their experienced advice; state organizers replied that a big NAWSA campaign with name-brand speakers awoke only the opposition. Late in the fight, the upstart Congressional Union (CU), later the National Woman's Party (NWP), accused the NAWSA old guards like Catt and Anna Howard Shaw (1847–1919) of timidity and stagnation, while pacifist women assailed Catt for supporting the war effort during World War I; Catt thought the NWP's radical tactics, like picketing the White House during wartime, were counterproductive and that pacifists were missing the perfect opportunity to show the nation how essential women could be to the public good. Some worried that the close overlap between temperance and suffrage was frightening away male voters and fueling the dreaded Liquor Interest, and they pushed away the WCTU in public even as they privately drew upon the organization's grassroots network. Meanwhile, some suffragists continued to antagonize potential supporters by decrying the injustice of extending the vote to black, immigrant, or uneducated men while denying it to virtuous, educated, presumably more deserving white women.²³

However, the end of the "doldrums" in 1910 occasioned a different type of debate that continued throughout the remainder of the suffrage fight, was taken up again by historians in the 1950s, and has been enthusiastically pursued since the second wave of the feminist movement energized the study of women's history. The essence of the debate is this: to what can the suffrage victories be attributed? For they continued after Illinois: full suffrage in Montana and Nevada in 1914; full suffrage in New York, primary voting in Arkansas, and presidential suffrage in Nebraska, Rhode Island, Michigan, and North Dakota (plus Indiana, clouded by a subsequent court decision) in 1917; full suffrage in Michigan, South Dakota, and Oklahoma, and primary suffrage in Texas, in 1918; and presidential suffrage in nine more states in 1919 to 1920. Women had also won the right to vote in school-board elections, and even to run for school-board posts, in many states that did not otherwise accord them the right to vote. Even in the South, some places allowed women to vote if they were taxpayers, or allowed women to vote in citywide elections. The wrangling over which

tactics, preconditions, initiatives, or responses won the day is too complex to summarize concisely here, but historians do agree that women proved willing to embrace almost any medium or method that they thought would work. While the diversity of the suffrage camp had often proved its undoing, splintering organizations and undermining the cause, in the closing years it proved a source of strength, enabling various parts of the coalition to work in different ways to broaden the base of legislative and male voter support.²⁴

Suffrage action took many forms. The average suffragist was most likely to be working to persuade the voting public, using one or more overlapping types of communication, moving in roughly concentric circles from the suffragist outward. In the smallest circle, women educated and trained fellow suffragists, in person, at meetings, and through printed works. They also sought to persuade family, friends, and acquaintances to join the suffrage cause. Texas women held “suffrage schools” to train activists and orators; California clubwomen held teas. Widening their reach, women printed leaflets and gave speeches directed at the general public in their communities rather than at their local base or personal circle. They might approach prestigious women in local society and try to induce them to lend their reputations to the cause. They knocked on doors—California suffragist Katherine Edson attested to how nerve-wracking it could be when a novice to political action first “approach[ed] a strange door, push[ed] a strange button, and demand[ed] of a woman never seen before how her husband is going to vote.”²⁵

Emboldened, some women went beyond one-on-one contact with strangers to confront groups and institutions. They contacted editors in search of favorable publicity and merchants in favor of space for suffrage displays in store windows. They held fundraising benefits, distributed leaflets or gave speeches on street corners, drove out to farming communities to find new recruits, sang suffrage songs in public parks where speechmaking was forbidden, and gave out “Votes for Women” doughnuts. Especially after 1910, suffragists staged attention-getting public spectacles such as stereopticon presentations, balloon ascents, advertisements and even billboards, automobile and rail tours, booths at state fairs, leaflet drops from airplanes, and the planting of suffrage flags on mountain summits. One California journalist noted that during the successful 1911 campaign for suffrage in that state, “Patsy and Dooley, two Scotch terriers belonging to Mrs. Maude McVicar of Eagle Rock, have been decorated with the suffrage colors. They met every Eagle

Rock car yesterday wearing their yokes of yellow and requesting the motormen and conductors to vote for the amendment. Ponto, a poodle belonging to Miss Marie Lumley of Pine Hurst Terrace, Hollywood, has been decorated in the same manner, and Fritz, the little rat terrier belonging to Miss Olive Hunt of Edendale, has likewise been labeled." Appearances by celebrity guests might serve as the culmination of a statewide campaign; San Francisco's college suffrage league wound up that same 1911 referendum fight with a public address by English suffragette Sylvia Pankhurst, a massive final rally in San Francisco's largest auditorium, and an open-air rendition of the national anthem by opera diva Lillian Nordica (1857–1914). Nordica waved a suffrage flag and implored western men to "set the example to their brothers in the east" before singing "America" and "The Star Spangled Banner."²⁶

Beginning in 1908, some states held suffrage parades as a rebuke to those who claimed that very few women actually wanted the vote. The first took place in Oakland, California, in August, as an unsuccessful bid to induce state Republicans to endorse suffrage in their party platform. The second took place in Iowa two months later. Such demonstrations shocked the public at first; though parades by labor were common, the sight of middle-class women displaying themselves in a public political show seemed like a violation of the natural order. But parades caught on. Harriot Stanton Blatch's Women's Political Union organized the first really big one in 1910, and on March 3, 1913, Alice Paul's CU staged a parade of about five thousand women for the day before Woodrow Wilson's first inauguration as president. According to Doris Stevens (1888–1963), a CU member, the president arrived in Washington, D.C.'s Union Station and was surprised to find no crowds waiting to greet him. "Where are the people?" she said that he asked. "On the Avenue watching the suffragists parade," was the reply. That parade ended in disorder as initially polite watchers assailed the women, but others followed.²⁷

All of these persuasive tactics were accompanied by increasingly savvy leveraging of political strategies, including direct lobbying, testimony before legislatures, and the exploitation of familial political connections, petition drives, poll monitoring, and analyses of failed campaigns. Suffragists made use of male allies to gain access to platforms that might otherwise have eluded them, and they moved over time from a strict nonpartisan stance to the active pursuit of endorsements from any party that would support their cause—Republican, Democratic, Populist, Progressive, Nationalist,

Socialist. By 1912, they had the vote in enough western states to form a small but visible voting bloc, and presidential candidates found themselves having to consider, at least a little, how to win the “woman’s vote.” They also learned to punish parties that made promises but did not deliver; Populist women in Kansas helped orchestrate the defeat of Senator John J. Ingalls, and the CU/NWP targeted Wilson’s Democrats in a move that some saw as brilliantly radical and others (including Catt) thought needlessly antagonistic and counterproductive. One powerful political weapon wielded by the opposition, the threat of women’s vote ensuring Prohibition, was rendered moot by the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment in 1919.²⁸

Like their tactics, women’s arguments for suffrage evolved and multiplied. They never fully abandoned the essential justice or “rights” argument derived from Enlightenment notions of fundamental equality, such as the “taxation without representation is tyranny” argument. For example, a Texas leaflet published during the final push for the Nineteenth Amendment asked, “Who Represents Her?”

IF a woman steals from her employer, does her father, husband, brother or son serve out her term in prison?

IF a woman kills somebody, what man represents her in the prisoner’s dock during her trial? What man represents her in the electric chair, if she is convicted?

IF a widow or an unmarried woman fails to pay her taxes, is the property of a male relative or of the man next door sold to satisfy the debt to the State? . . .

WHY is it that the only place in the world where a man wants to represent woman is at the ballot box?

However, in addition to “justice” arguments like this one, suffragists also continued to deploy language that made it very clear that they believed in hierarchies of Americans, and that the injustice they decried was the disfranchisement of white, privileged women. California labor organizer Maud Younger (1870–1936) complained at being, as a woman, lumped in with “Mongolians, Indians, idiots, insane, [and] criminals,” and Mississippi’s Belle Kearney (1863–1939) urged the elevation of “educated women” to cancel out the votes of “all the illiterate voters, white and black, native and foreign.”²⁹

Suffragists also constructed new arguments to woo various types of voters. Many arguments were framed as responses to common charges from “antis.” Suffragists, especially in the South, responded

to claims that they were selfish and unmaternal by dressing femininely and raising funds through domestically focused efforts like bake sales and the publication of cookbooks. When one politician exhumed the old stereotype of the suffragette as an angry spinster, defining her as “*a woman who wants to raise Hell, but no children,*” one replied that, no, “*a suffragette is a woman who wants to raise children, but not in hell!*” (emphasis in original) Across the country, many suffragists also leveraged their claim to men’s emotions and sense of chivalry by reminding voters of the needs of their wives, daughters, and especially mothers. Many, including educator John Dewey and author Max Eastman, joined men’s suffrage leagues. One Washington senator, George U. Piper, normally supported the liquor interest but parted company with it on the question of woman suffrage because of his reverence for his dead mother. (Some newspapers mocked men who supported suffrage as a “henpecked bunch” or “bachelors” whose “confidence is in inverse ratio with knowledge,” but men often remained staunch allies in the suffrage fight.)³⁰

Suffragists also embraced “expediency” or “maternal house-keeping” arguments that claimed reform goals could be better accomplished with the help of women’s votes, because of women’s special roles as mothers and higher natural levels of purity and virtue. Women would destroy corrupt political machines, break up trusts, ensure lasting peace, and end “white slavery” because they were simply better than men. Some in the suffrage movement deployed these arguments, or patiently watched others use them, without really believing that women’s virtue would heal the world; Mississippi’s Nellie Nugent Somerville (1863–1952), for example, thought that women were no more inherently virtuous than men. Women were political animals and rational actors as much as any other constituency, and they would act in what they believed was their own self-interest.³¹

Part of the suffragist mission was to convince a broad-based coalition of women that voting was in *their* interest and, through them, to convince the male voters around them that women’s voting was in their interest as well. Accordingly, suffragists learned to form coalitions—however fragile they might be—with other communities that stood to benefit from women’s voting, and when they could not authentically speak to those communities, they recruited representatives who could. They reached out to Italian immigrants through meetings in Italian, appealed to Irish immigrants to support “Home Rule for Women,” printed leaflets in multiple languages, cultivated Christianized Chinese merchants to reach out

to their associates in San Francisco's Chinatown, and enlisted Latinas like Maria López to address Spanish-speaking communities in southern California. Liberal priests like Palo Alto, California's Joseph Gleason sometimes endorsed suffrage, but even the more lukewarm ruling from church officials that woman suffrage was a matter of personal conscience opened up new avenues for recruitment. Rural voters were wooed with the promise of women's vote counteracting the corrupt influence of the cities; pacifists afraid of an American entry into World War I were told that women would vote against war. In Texas, a pamphlet entitled "Why Women Want to Vote" appealed to a variety of constituencies:

- WORKING WOMEN need the ballot to regulate conditions under which they work.
- HOUSEKEEPERS need the ballot to regulate the sanitary conditions under which they and their families must live.
- MOTHERS need the ballot to regulate the moral conditions under which their children must be brought up.
- TEACHERS need the ballot to secure just wages and to influence the management of the public schools.
- BUSINESS WOMEN need the ballot to secure for themselves a fair opportunity in their business.
- TAX PAYING WOMEN need the ballot to protect their property.
- ALL WOMEN need the ballot because they are concerned equally with men in good and bad government; and equally responsible for civic righteousness.
- ALL MEN need women's help to build a better and juster government and WOMEN need MEN to help them secure their right to fulfill their civic duties.

Most of all, suffragists courted the immense working class by marching and sponsoring floats in Labor Day parades, and supporting labor's demand for an eight-hour day. Working women themselves needed no convincing, recognizing the vote as a key tool in securing reforms they desired.³²

Sometimes, suffragists paid their debts. California's newly enfranchised women successfully lobbied their state legislature for an eight-hour bill, rewarding the loyalty of the state's labor organizations. But some debts they had never even promised to pay. Mormon and Gentile women in Utah and Arizona had difficulty working together because of the latter's history of attacks on polygamy and on Mormonism in general; NAWSA, which considered plural marriage the worst sort of oppression, took almost no notice of Utah

women's enfranchisement in the 1881 and 1886 volumes of its *History of Woman Suffrage*. Likewise, as they had done in the WCTU and the club movement, white women—even those with relatively tolerant views on race—proved unwilling to fracture national solidarity with other white women to secure the prime goals of women of color. NAWSA, determined to have a presence in every state, held national conventions in the South—in Atlanta in 1895, New Orleans in 1903, and Baltimore in 1906—and elided or caved to segregationist demands at every turn. In New Orleans, the national leadership endorsed segregated state chapters and a states' rights approach, if that was what locals wanted. In 1899, NAWSA tabled an anti-segregation resolution as being outside the group's mandate.³³

Black women, accordingly, worked mostly on their own for suffrage, wary (like Native American and Mexican American women) of white women's motives and loyalties. In the South, they tended to work quietly for fear of lynching, though a few women like teacher and clubwoman Adella Hunt Logan (1863–1915) and clubwoman and journalist Margaret Murray Washington (c. 1865–1925) were brave enough to speak their support in public. Even in the North, open suffragists like journalist Ida B. Wells-Barnett and poet Alice Dunbar Nelson (1875–1935) had some allies but also had to battle the fears and prejudices of accommodationist white women (Green, 26; Weatherford, 174–75). Alice Paul, leader of the most radical wing of the movement, the NWP, sidestepped the issue of race by insisting that her group had “only one object . . . the passage of an amendment to the Nat'l Constitution removing the sex qualification from the franchise regulations. . . . All that our amendment would do would be to see that the franchise conditions for every state were the same for women as for men.” That is, black women in the South could be barred from the polls by the same means as black men and the NWP would make no protest. Yet women like Sarah Garnet (1831–1911), founder of Brooklyn's Equal Suffrage Club, and Elizabeth L. Davis (1855–1944), founder of the Phyllis Wheatley Club in Chicago, worked diligently for the vote with their own agenda of advancing their race and with an awareness of the limitations that discrimination imposed upon them.³⁴

WAR

The outbreak of war in Europe in 1914 created both crises and opportunities for women who wanted the vote. On the one hand, the prospect of women voting was alluring to those who saw

mothers as reliable votes against conscription and war. On the other hand, some—like former president Theodore Roosevelt—saw this pacifism as un-American. Once the United States entered the war in 1917, the intensity increased on all sides. Pacifists, socialists, and anarchists came under attack from government and society alike; Emma Goldman was only one of those deprived of citizenship and deported in the First Red Scare, a purge of supposed enemies within. For feminists, many of whom were also pacifists, the war demanded hard choices. Charlotte Perkins Gilman and Carrie Chapman Catt chose to support the war, despite having helped to found the Women's Peace Party in 1915. Catt, for one, reasoned that if women's rights activists threw their full support behind the nation's war effort, it would be nearly impossible for the nation's legislative bodies to refuse them the vote. Feminist and disability-rights advocate Helen Keller (1880–1968), sociologist Emily Greene Balch (1867–1961), and anarchist Emma Goldman chose to oppose it. Some women, particularly in the radical left, voiced their opposition in terms of class oppression or imperialism. Those who tended to justify women's involvement in the public sphere on maternal-housekeeping grounds, on the other hand, framed their objections in terms of women's roles as mothers and as the virtuous and compassionate sex. Opposition to the war was serious business in the sort of military fever that gripped the nation, where the Espionage Act (1917) and Sedition Act (1918) criminalized many types of political speech. Private citizens also engaged in propaganda efforts, spied on their neighbors, and ostracized or condemned those who did not support the war.³⁵ In this climate, pacifist feminists knew that they risked arousing patriotic ire against the women's rights cause in general; if women were naturally pacifists, then how could they be counted upon in wartime? How could they be full citizens?

One of the most principled, yet nuanced, stands came from Jeannette Rankin (R-Montana), who had become the first woman elected to Congress in 1916, when the full horrors of the Great War were well known. Elected on a platform of keeping the nation out of war, she voted against U.S. entry in 1917 even though she suspected there would be a political price to pay. After Congress as a whole voted in favor of war, she urged women to support the national effort, promoted Liberty Bonds, acceded to a widening of the war to include Austria-Hungary since it merely acknowledged hostilities that were already ongoing. She also attempted to use her position in Congress to look out for the interests of families and children, urging a crackdown on predatory food pricing and

continued funding for education, working to safeguard women in industry, and cosponsoring bills to grant married women citizenship in their own right and to provide women with contraceptive, pregnancy, and child-care education. However, she also voted against the Espionage Act, and her constituents, fired with newly aroused zeal for the fight and upset that she had stuck to her principles in the initial war vote, turned her out of office anyway in 1918. (She would go on to a peace-platform reelection in 1940, casting the only vote against entry into World War II, and be voted out again in 1942 in a backlash similar to that of 1918.)³⁶

Most women, unlike Rankin, were caught up in nation's exuberance for war. Encouraged by the leaders of NAWSA and the GFWC, who had signaled their members' willingness to help even before the United States entered the war, they eagerly embraced war work of all kinds. Thousands joined the Army and Navy Nurse Corps, founded as permanent institutions in 1901 and 1908, respectively. Still more served as Red Cross nurses or in all-female medical groups like the Women's Overseas Hospitals (WOH) and the American Women's Hospitals (AWH). African American women were initially barred from service as nurses in the American Red Cross but were finally accepted in July 1918 due to the Spanish Influenza pandemic and the desperate need for medical personnel it created. Toward the end of the year a handful of black nurses were accepted into the Army Nurse Corps, but only after the armistice; nonetheless, black women saw their nursing service as an opportunity to make themselves visible as citizens to white America. Women also served domestically and overseas as physicians. Dr. Mary Crawford (1884–1972) volunteered abroad as early as 1914, and Dr. Mary Fitzbutler Waring (c. 1870–1958) worked with the War Camp Community Service (WCCS) and for the National Nurse Training Service. Dr. Augusta Williams escaped the fate of many female physicians overseas, who were assigned to nursing duty, and worked mostly as an anesthetist. Both doctors and nurses encountered demeaning treatment and sexual harassment in the field, and they were denied military rank during the war and veterans' benefits afterward.³⁷

Like doctors and nurses, women employed by the army were technically civilian "contract workers" and received no military rank or benefits. They mostly filled clerical roles to free up men for fighting, and 377 served as bilingual telephone operators or "Hello Girls," 223 of them overseas and some quite close to the front lines with gas masks at the ready. Hello Girls wore blue serge uniforms with long skirts, high-buttoned boots, and the insignia of the U.S. Army Signal

Corps. The most demanding posts called for forty-eight-hour shifts broken up every six hours by a short sleep and could involve coordinating barrages and infantry advances. They were often sworn in like conventional soldiers and subject to military-style discipline, yet the "Hello Girls" were denied benefits after the war and were not recognized as true veterans until 1979, when they were awarded honorable discharges. The U.S. Navy, on the other hand, began admitting women as official yeomen (or, as they were often called by the public, "yeomanettes"), with equal rank, pay, and benefits, in March 1917. The U.S. Marines opened their ranks to women in August 1918, and by war's end some 11,000 women had joined the U.S. Navy and another 300 the U.S. Marines.³⁸

Thanks to the developments of the Progressive Era in women's education and advancement in the professions, women also had other talents to supply to the fight. Sculptor Anna Coleman Ladd (1878–1939) made prostheses for injured servicemen. Gertrude Atherton (1857–1948), Eunice Tietjens (1884–1944), Rheta Childe Dorr (1868–1948), and Madeleine Z. Doty (1877–1963), among others, worked in Europe as war correspondents, though they were often asked to cover "women's" angles on war such as "what became of all the socks knitted by women" for the Red Cross. Others worked overseas as dentists, bacteriologists, interpreters, librarians, accountants, and even architects.³⁹

Such tasks were largely confined to middle- and upper-class women. It was largely these types of women as well, especially teachers and college students, who staffed the 15,000-strong Women's Land Army (WLA). This force of "farmerettes," established as a volunteer group in December 1917 after the government rejected it as a federally run program, sent women out in units to provide agricultural labor to farm women deprived of their male helpers by the war. Working eight-hour days at a male agricultural laborer's wage (about fifteen dollars a month), they lived in female-only dormitories and did their own cooking to relieve farm wives of the need to feed them. As historian Lynn Dumenil suggests, this work was a patriotic and temporary exercise for most of the WLA farmerettes; most had other jobs or middle-class comforts to return to when the war was over.⁴⁰

But working-class women, too, expanded the definition of women's sphere for the duration of the war. They were already in the labor force, but the flooding of men to military service left all sorts of jobs unoccupied that had previously been deemed too "skilled," arduous, or "industrial" for women. Women went to work on railroads; in shipyards; and in aircraft, munitions, and auto-parts

plants. They worked as welders, tool sharpeners, and drill-press operators. They wore pants or overalls—a visible sign of their labor that attracted much comment and controversy—and experienced frequent harassment from men who refused to work with them, tried to watch them change, or ridiculed them. Nonetheless, women expressed exhilaration at meeting unexpected challenges; as one munitions worker near Chicago proudly remarked, “Oh, I guess I can manage till the boy gets back” from the war.⁴¹

African Americans of both sexes, meanwhile, were streaming northward to take factory jobs long closed to them, in a massive internal movement of people known as the Great Migration. Women, in particular, were drawn into this phenomenon by state “work or fight” laws that sometimes drafted them into domestic service whether they wanted to work or not. In Chicago, they were sometimes met by volunteers from the Phyllis Wheatley Club, which offered help finding housing, health care, and schooling. Once arrived in cities like Chicago, St. Louis, New York, and Pittsburgh, black women were still most likely to find work as domestic servants, but they did sometimes find better-paid factory work in the meatpacking, munitions, glass, cigar, and garment industries. They still faced segregated workplaces, lunchrooms, and toilet facilities, but, like white women, they greeted their new opportunities with enthusiasm.⁴²

Women workers of all kinds often faced attempts to pay them less, or treat them worse, than their male predecessors. Mary Anderson and Mary van Kleeck (1883–1972) of the Women’s Division of Ordnance Department and, later, the Woman in Industry Service of the Department of Labor worked to set and maintain standards for women workers. Anderson listed them in her autobiography:

An eight-hour day and a forty-eight-hour week; Saturday half-holiday; one day of rest in seven; three quarters of an hour for a meal; rest periods; no night work; equal pay for men and women; a minimum wage rate to cover the cost of living for dependents and not merely for the individual; safe and sanitary working conditions; prohibition of women’s employment in occupations especially hazardous to them, such as certain processes in the lead industries; prohibition of industrial homework; participation of workers in enforcement of standards and establishing good working conditions; establishment of personnel departments and appointment of women to supervisory positions.

These were ambitious goals, and they were not always met. Factory superintendents persisted in paying women less on principle, since

they said their male workers would rebel if women made the same wages. Furthermore, after the war both black and white women were usually ousted from their nontraditional jobs and force back into work segregated by race and gender.⁴³

Those women who did not enter the paid labor force often contributed to the war effort through club work. Even before U.S. entry into the war, many clubs were already engaged in war relief of one kind or another. Afterward, they simply expanded or redirected their efforts. The Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs took in home-canned food from its member organizations and distributed the goods to military hospitals. NACW president Mary B. Talbert, speaking in 1918, urged women "to do their best in food production and conservation, realizing that the bulk of conserving lies in the kitchens where a million of our women are called to duty." In January 1917, the government created the quasi-military National League for Women's Services (NLWS) to coordinate some club efforts and offer training in skills like automobile operation, map reading, and home economics. Even the Camp Fire Girls got in on the action, raising livestock, tending gardens, selling Liberty Bonds, and making "comfort kits" for servicemen overseas. Food conservation was considered especially important, particularly after a grain shortage and consequent spike in food prices in 1916. Meat, coal, wheat, and sugar were in short supply, and as the guardians of the household pantry, women were urged to observe Wheatless Mondays and Meatless Tuesdays. Women of all races and ethnicities joined the Red Cross, knitting such a huge number of socks and mufflers that eventually they were implored to stop. They ran canteens to provide servicemen with entertainment, sandwiches, and coffee; volunteered for the YWCA and the Salvation Army, sometimes overseas; rolled bandages; and bought and sold Liberty Bonds to help finance the war. Black and white women alike pointed to their war work as evidence of full citizenship and equal sacrifice, and, whether picketing the White House for suffrage or protesting segregation and lynching, they demanded that the United States live up to President Wilson's brave words about making the world safe for democracy.⁴⁴

THE FINAL PUSH—AND THE FINAL PUSHBACK

As Carrie Chapman Catt had hoped, women's war work made it more difficult for the nation to reject this demand. But, whatever influence was most critical in securing the Nineteenth Amendment,

the very existence of women themselves in civic work had gradually eroded the visceral horror of thinking about women in public life. Many people had seen women lead commissions, speak before city councils or Congress, visit tenements as social workers, treat the sick as doctors, intervene in the court system as probation officers or lawyers, speak out for immigrants, campaign for food safety, or lead relief efforts. A generation of young male voters had seen their mothers engage in these efforts with passion, dedication, and effectiveness. It was difficult, in these circumstances, to deny the evidence of one's senses and argue that participation in the public square inherently cheapened and coarsened women. On the contrary, there was evidence everywhere—and not just in the states where voting was already legal, and where the polls, reportedly, were sober and demure places with women in attendance—that women could engage with political issues and seem every bit as deferential, gentle, and “womanly” as ever.⁴⁵ Women in the public sphere went from being freaks to curiosities to jokes to incongruities to fairly normal, without most people's noticing the change, because for the most part they conformed to gender norms in every other way. The war merely confirmed and accelerated this trend.

As war loomed and as the NWP unfurled its protest banners in front of the White House, Catt unveiled what she called her “Winning Plan”—working both sides of the congressional aisles, the state houses, and Congress simultaneously. Meanwhile, the anti-suffrage movement, which had been somewhat moribund, limped back to life in a last-minute attempt to sway public opinion. They dredged up the old arguments—that voting was unwomanly, that women didn't want the vote, that equality would mean women would be forced to participate in other aspects of citizenship such as jury service, and, in the South, that women's voting would lead to “Negro rule.” In the era of the Russian Revolution, they also attempted to tie feminism to socialism and Bolshevism. But the “antis” suffered from class- and gender-based norms of propriety that deprived them of the full panoply of public tactics employed by suffragists; they lacked funding; and they were often annoyed by men's interference in or oversight of their activities, even as they nominally welcomed male supremacy. When President Wilson finally gave the Nineteenth Amendment his endorsement on September 30, 1918, and Congress passed it in 1919, the antis moved to a frantic state-by-state effort to block ratification. On August 18, 1920, however, Tennessee ratified the amendment, surmounting the required threshold and granting woman suffrage nationwide.⁴⁶

What followed proved anticlimactic. Politicians had expected women to vote in solidarity and passed the maternal-health Sheppard-Towner Act (1921) largely as a concession to women's interests. Women, however, reverted to tribal loyalties once suffrage had been achieved. Though they founded the League of Women Voters as a nonpartisan organization, they largely ended up voting along class, religious, racial, ethnic, and regional lines like their husbands, fathers, brothers, and sons. Fragile coalitions splintered, as their less-privileged members had largely suspected they would. Some who had been resolutely opposed to woman suffrage, such as many Catholic clergy, now urged the women in their communities to vote in order to save themselves from the policies of noxious "others."⁴⁷

WOMEN IN POLITICS

Women began running for office as soon as they were permitted to do so in their states, though they usually confined themselves to "civic housekeeping" roles such as school-board member, state superintendent of education, and county clerk. However, they also held less gendered roles. Colorado, in 1894, was the first to elect women (three of them) to a state legislature, and other western states soon followed suit. Ora Matthews and Lucretia Roberts of Arizona served in law enforcement, Matthews as deputy sheriff of Maricopa County and Roberts as constable of Canille. Rebecca Latimer Felton (1835–1930) became the first woman senator in 1922 when she was appointed to a vacant seat for one day by the governor of Georgia. Several served as convention delegates; Wyoming Republicans sent a woman to their national convention in 1892, and Utah Democrats did likewise four years later. Many were also appointed to bureaucratic posts. Frances A. Kellor (1873–1952) served as an immigration commissioner in New York, and Kate Barnard (1875–1930) investigated prison conditions on behalf of the state of Oklahoma. Sharlot Hall (1870–1943) was named territorial historian by Arizona's governor in 1909, meeting with virulent opposition from other men in government on account of her sex. Katherine Edson served on the Los Angeles County Medical Milk Commission and the Bureau of Labor Statistics for Southern California. The highest-ranking bureaucratic woman in the Progressive Era was the Children's Bureau's Julia Lathrop, whose post was lofty enough to require Senate confirmation. Women also continued to lobby their legislatures and Congress, especially on topics

that seemed in keeping with womanly interests: bans on child labor, mothers' pensions for poor women, protective legislation for women workers, and similar causes. In their citizenship, as in their agitation for the vote, they continued to be persistent, courageous, and adaptable.⁴⁸

Primary Source Documents

1. FRANCES WILLARD, *ADDRESS BEFORE THE SECOND BIENNIAL CONVENTION OF THE WORLD'S WOMAN'S TEMPERANCE UNION (1893)*

In this speech, WCTU head Frances Willard linked her broad-based program of female empowerment to the "White Ribbon" campaign for temperance.

Some bright women who have opposed the "Do-Everything Policy" used as their favourite illustration a flowing river, and expatiated on the ruin that would follow if that river (which represents their do-one-thing policy) were diverted into many channels, but it should be remembered that the most useful of all rivers is the Nile, and that the agricultural economy of Egypt consists in the effort to spread its waters upon as many fields as possible. It is not for the river's sake that it flows through the country but for the fertility it can bring upon adjoining fields, and this is pre-eminently true of the Temperance Reform. . . .

Let us not be disconcerted, but stand bravely by that blessed trinity of movements, Prohibition, Woman's Liberation and Labour's uplift.

Everything is not in the Temperance Reform, but the Temperance Reform should be in everything. . . .

The three requisites for success are ability, availability, and responsibility. The first is native, the second acquired, the last conferred. In every White Ribboner, whose work is worth the name, these three must meet, and the greatest outcome of the crusade in its original and organic form was that it gave to women of ability the schooling in which they acquired availability, and helped them to the positions in which, through responsibility, they grew from what they were to what they had the power to be. . . .

It is quite likely that in the long, slow, and often weary march of these 20 years since the Crusade impulse came to us from heaven, we have not seen as much accomplished on the specific lines where we have wrought as we had hoped; but we must all remember how

little it is possible for us to realize the outcome of our work. I do not know how it may be with other speakers and writers in the cause of temperance, woman, and labor, but for myself I seldom hear that anything has come of what I have tried to do. Yet now and then in ways most unexpected I have learnt of changes in the lives of individuals and even of communities, that have astounded me as results of my poor labors, and I conclude from this that if we were but to know all the good that is developed or conserved by our united and systematic efforts, we should indeed take heart of hope.

Source: Frances Willard. *Address Before the Second Biennial Convention of the World's Woman's Temperance Union*. Chicago: Women's Temperance Publishing Association, 1893, 2–6.

2. L. FRANK BAUM, *THE LAND OF OZ* (1904)

Baum followed up his successful Wizard of Oz with a gender-bending sequel in which a boy, Tip, becomes acquainted with a young woman named General Jinjur who invades the Emerald City at the head of an army of "girls" armed with knitting needles and their knowledge that chivalrous men will not harm a female. Tip, at the novel's end, turns out to be a girl himself—the true ruler of Oz, Princess Ozma, hidden in male form for her own protection. Yet this potentially feminist plot twist is complicated by the portrayal of Jinjur. In the first passage, Jinjur is planning her takeover; in the second, her brief reign of Oz comes to an end.

"Well!" declared Tip, drawing a long breath, "this is certainly a surprising thing! May I ask why you wish to conquer His Majesty the Scarecrow?"

"Because the Emerald City has been ruled by men long enough, for one reason," said the girl. "Moreover, the City glitters with beautiful gems, which might far better be used for rings, bracelets and necklaces; and there is enough money in the King's treasury to buy every girl in our Army a dozen new gowns. So we intend to conquer the City and run the government to suit ourselves." . . .

General Jinjur immediately mounted the stump of a tree and addressed her army.

"Friends, fellow-citizens, and girls!" she said; "we are about to begin our great Revolt against the men of Oz! We march to conquer the Emerald City—to dethrone the Scarecrow King—to acquire thousands of gorgeous gems—to rifle the royal treasury and to obtain power over our former oppressors!"

“Hurrah!” said those who had listened; but Tip thought most of the army was too much engaged in chattering to pay attention to the words of the General. . . .

. . . When her soldiers, who spent most of their time making fudge in the palace kitchens, counseled Jinjur to resist, she listened to their foolish prattle and sent a sharp defiance to Glinda the Good and the Princess Ozma. The result was a declaration of war, and the very next day Glinda marched upon the Emerald City. . . .

Now, at a word from the Princess, the queer Thing they had called the Gump flopped its palm-leaf wings and rose into the air, carrying the party of adventurers high above the walls. They hovered over the palace, and soon perceived Jinjur reclining in a hammock in the courtyard, where she was comfortably reading a novel with a green cover and eating green chocolates, confident that the walls would protect her from her enemies. Obeying a quick command, the Gump alighted safely in this very courtyard, and before Jinjur had time to do more than scream, the Captain and three soldiers leaped out and made the former Queen a prisoner, locking strong chains upon both her wrists. . . .

At once the men of the Emerald City cast off their aprons. And it is said that the women were so tired of eating of their husbands’ cooking that they all hailed the conquest of Jinjur with joy. Certain it is that, rushing one and all to the kitchens of their houses, the good wives prepared so delicious a feast for the weary men that harmony was immediately restored in every family. . . .

Meantime the Army of Revolt was disbanded and the girls sent home to their mothers.

Source: L. Frank Baum. *The Land of Oz*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1904, 78–81, 265–70.

3. JANE ADDAMS, “THE MODERN CITY AND THE MUNICIPAL FRANCHISE FOR WOMEN” (1906)

In this address to the 1906 NAWSA convention, Addams, the cofounder of Hull House, laid out a defense of municipal or civic housekeeping as a natural function for women.

Affairs for the most part are going badly in these great new centres, in which the quickly-congregated population has not yet learned to arrange its affairs satisfactorily. Unsanitary housing, poisonous

sewage, contaminated water, infant mortality, the spread of contagion, adulterated food, impure milk, smoke-laden air, ill-ventilated factories, dangerous occupations, juvenile crime, unwholesome crowding, prostitution and drunkenness are the enemies which the modern cities must face and overcome, would they survive. Logically their electorate should be made up of those who in the past have at least attempted to care for children, to clean houses, to prepare foods, to isolate the family from moral dangers; those who have traditionally taken care of that side of life which inevitably becomes the subject of municipal consideration and control as soon as the population is congested. To test the elector's fitness to deal with this situation by his ability to bear arms is absurd. These problems must be solved, if they are solved at all, not from the military point of view, not even from the industrial point of view, but from a third, which is rapidly developing in all the great cities of the world—the human-welfare point of view. . . .

City housekeeping has failed partly because women, the traditional housekeepers, have not been consulted as to its multiform activities. The men have been carelessly indifferent to much of this civic housekeeping, as they have always been indifferent to the details of a household. . . . The very multifariousness and complexity of a city government demand the help of minds accustomed to detail and variety of work, to a sense of obligation for the health and welfare of young children and to a responsibility for the cleanliness and comfort of other people. Because all these things have traditionally been in the hands of women, if they take no part in them now they are not only missing the education which the natural participation in civic life would bring to them but they are losing what they have always had.

Source: Jane Addams. "The Modern City and the Municipal Franchise for Women" (1906), in *History of Woman Suffrage*. Edited by Ida Husted Harper. Vol. 5. New York: National American Woman Suffrage Association, 1922, 178–79.

4. M., "WOMEN DO NOT WANT THE VOTE DESPITE CRY OF SUFFRAGISTS" (1912)

The National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage, founded in the Northeast in 1911, published the first issue of its journal, the Woman's Protest, in 1912. Never as influential as NAWSA, the "anti" groups nonetheless voiced widely held views that suffragists had to confront and refute in order to be successful.

This call for suffrage comes from a mere handful of women. Are they calling with the consent of the great body of their sisters? Does the call meet with the approval of the women as a whole? This is a most important phase of this question, for voting is a heavy duty—a task that men find onerous when they give the necessary time to the study and exercise of political rights—and it is neither fair, nor right, nor just to impose such a duty upon women, unless they should ask for it almost unanimously.

. . . Suffrage is not a natural right, but a responsibility imposed by government. And in this connection two important things should be considered. First, if the majority of women want the ballot; second, if rule by men and women would be better than rule by men. It will require no argument to force the conclusion that rule by men would certainly be better than would be rule by men and this little group of clamoring women who are now marching over the land—paid agents, most of them—yelling “Votes for women.”

This wail of unrest does not come from the homes which shelter the great mass of contented women. . . .

. . . If women will be content to have the men exercise the prerogatives of government and will devote themselves to the home and the strengthening of fireside ties, then they will better benefit the family, nurture the sons and serve the state. Industrially, women to-day can enter all the trades and professions with no other handicap than her sex limitations. The ballot cannot aid her in this respect.

To place women on a suffrage equality with men would mean that she would have to surrender much more than she would gain. All women would lose these special privileges and but few would gain anything of which she would make use.

Source: M. “Women Do Not Want the Vote Despite Cry of Suffragists.” *The Woman’s Protest* 1, no. 1 (May 1912), 7.

5. EMMA GOLDMAN, “WOMAN SUFFRAGE” (1917)

Goldman, an anarchist and birth-control advocate, stood at the radical edge of politics, in synch neither with the middle class nor with suffragists, as this excerpt from one of her many essays, originally published in 1911, makes clear.

Our modern fetich is universal suffrage. . . . Woe to the heretic who dare question that divinity!

Woman, even more than man, is a fetich worshipper, and though her idols may change, she is ever on her knees, ever holding up her hands, ever blind to the fact that her god has feet of clay. . . .

Religion, especially the Christian religion, has condemned woman to the life of an inferior, a slave. It has thwarted her nature and fettered her soul, yet the Christian religion has no greater supporter, none more devout, than woman. . . . The most ardent church-workers, the most tireless missionaries the world over, are women, always sacrificing on the altar of the gods that have chained her spirit and enslaved her body.

The insatiable monster, war, robs woman of all that is dear and precious to her. It exacts her brothers, lovers, sons, and in return gives her a life of loneliness and despair. Yet the greatest supporter and worshiper of war is woman. She it is who instills the love of conquest and power into her children; she it is who whispers the glories of war into the ears of her little ones, and who rocks her baby to sleep with the tunes of trumpets and the noise of guns. It is woman, too, who crowns the victor on his return from the battlefield. Yes, it is woman who pays the highest price to that insatiable monster, war.

Then there is the home. What a terrible fetich it is! How it saps the very life-energy of woman—this modern prison with golden bars. . . . Yet woman clings tenaciously to the home, to the power that holds her in bondage.

It may be said that because woman recognizes the awful toll she is made to pay to the Church, State, and the home, she wants suffrage to set herself free. That may be true of the few; the majority of suffragists repudiate utterly such blasphemy. On the contrary, they insist always that it is woman suffrage which will make her a better Christian and homekeeper, a staunch citizen of the State. Thus suffrage is only a means of strengthening the omnipotence of the very gods that woman has served from time immemorial. . . .

Needless to say, I am not opposed to woman suffrage on the conventional ground that she is not equal to it. I see neither physical, psychological, nor mental reasons why women should not have the equal right to vote with man. But that cannot possibly blind me to the absurd notion that woman will accomplish that wherein man has failed. If she would not make things worse, she certainly could not make them better. To assume, therefore, that she would succeed in purifying something which is not susceptible of purification, is to credit her with supernatural powers. . . .

The misfortune of woman is not that she is unable to do the work of a man, but that she is wasting her life-force to do so. . . . Her development, her freedom, her independence must come from and through herself. First, by asserting herself as a personality, and not as a sex commodity. Second, by refusing the right of anyone over her body; by refusing to bear children, unless she wants them; by refusing to be a servant to God, the State, society, the husband, the family, etc.; by making her life simpler, but deeper and richer. That is, by trying to learn the meaning and substance of life in all its complexities, by freeing herself from the fear of public opinion and public condemnation. Only that, and not the ballot, will set woman free, will make her a force hitherto unknown in the world, a force for real love, for peace, for harmony; a force of divine fire, of life giving; a creator of free men and women.

Source: Emma Goldman. "Woman Suffrage," in *Anarchism and Other Essays*, 3rd rev. ed. New York: Mother Earth, 1917, 201–4, 216–17.

6. MARGARET MURRAY WASHINGTON, "CLUB WORK AMONG NEGRO WOMEN" (1920)

The wife of Tuskegee Institute founder and head Booker T. Washington, Margaret Murray Washington was an educator in her own right, the leader of one of the two groups that merged as the NACW in 1896, and the NACW president from 1914 to 1918.

Suffrage.—Colored women, quite as much as colored men, realize that if there is ever to be equal justice and fair play in the protection in the courts everywhere for all races, then there must be an equal chance for all women as well as men to express their preference through their votes. There are certain things so sure to come our way that time in arguing them is not well spent. It is simply the cause of right which in the end always conquers, no matter how fierce the opposition. Personally, woman suffrage has never kept me awake at night, but I am sure before this country is able to take its place amongst the great democratic nations of the earth it has got to come to the place where it is willing to trust its citizens, black as well as white, women as well as men, to be loyal to their Government, to be willing to leave the carrying out of governmental offices to the intelligent part of the citizenship. Our Department of Suffrage conducts training classes in the Constitution of the country,

and has given time to the study of all governmental affairs, so that women may be prepared to handle the vote intelligently and wisely when it comes to them. Thousands of our women vote in the Northern States where they live, and in no instance have they shown any disposition to assume control of affairs, nor have they presumed anything more than a desire to be counted as a citizen of a country where they are giving the best of themselves in building better homes, better schools, better churches, and finally better citizenship.

Source: Margaret Murray Washington. "Club Work Among Negro Women," in *Progress of a Race*. Edited by J. L. Nichols and William Croghan. Naperville, IL: J. L. Nichols, 1920, 193–95.

7. DORIS STEVENS, *JAILED FOR FREEDOM* (1920)

Stevens, a member of Alice Paul's National Woman's Party (NWP), wrote a book-length account of the group's daring tactics, including a suffrage parade on the day before Woodrow Wilson's first inauguration, picketing the White House (a first in American protest history), and the jailing, hunger strikes, and force-feeding of the picketers. In the excerpt that follows, she explains how the fairly bemused or even sympathetic attitudes of bystanders changed once the United States had entered World War I.

. . . The President had drafted the young men of America in their millions to die on foreign soil for foreign democracy. He had issued a special appeal to women to give their work, their treasure and their sons to this enterprise. At the same time his now gigantic figure stood obstinately across the path to our main objective. It was our daily task to keep vividly in his mind that objective. It was our responsibility to compel decisive action from him. . . .

We did not regard Mr. Wilson as our President. We felt that he had neither political nor moral claim to our allegiance. War had been made without our consent. The war would be finished and very likely a bad peace would be written without our consent. . . . Here we were, a band of women fighting with banners, in the midst of a world armed to the teeth. And so it was not very difficult to understand how high spirited women grew more resentful, unwilling to be a party to the President's hypocrisy, the hypocrisy so eager to sacrifice life without stint to the vague hope of liberty abroad, while refusing to assist in the peaceful legislative steps which would lead to self-government in our own country. . . .

The truth was not pleasant but it had to be told. We submitted to the world, through the picket line, this question:

KAISER WILSON

**HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN HOW YOU SYMPATHIZED WITH
THE POOR GERMANS BECAUSE THEY WERE NOT
SELF-GOVERNED?**

**20,000,000 AMERICAN WOMEN ARE NOT SELF-GOVERNED.
TAKE THE BEAM OUT OF YOUR OWN EYE.**

We did not expect public sympathy at this point. . . .

Nor was it to be expected that eager young boys, all agog to fight Germans, would be averse to attacking women in the meantime. They were out to fight and such was the public hysteria that it did not exactly matter whom they fought.

And so those excited boys of the Army and Navy attacked the women and the banner. The banner was destroyed. Another was brought up to take its place. This one met the same fate. Meanwhile a crowd was assembling in front of the White House either to watch or to assist in the attacks. At the very moment when one banner was being snatched away and destroyed, President and Mrs. Wilson passed through the gates on their way to a military review at Fort Myer. The President saw American women being attacked, while the police refused them protection.

Not a move was made by the police to control the growing crowd. Such inaction is always a signal for more violence on the part of rowdies. As the throng moved to and fro between the White House and our Headquarters immediately opposite, so many banners were destroyed that finally Miss Lucy Burns, Miss Virginia Arnold and Miss Elizabeth Stuyvesant took those remaining to the second and third floor balconies of our building and hung them out. At this point there was not a picket left on the street. The crowd was clearly obstructing the traffic, but no attempt was made to move them back or to protect the women, some of whom were attacked by sailors on their own doorsteps. The two police officers present watched without interference while three sailors brought a ladder from the Belasco Theater in the same block, leaned it against the side of the Cameron House, the Headquarters, climbed up to the second floor balcony, mounted the iron railing and tore down all banners and the American flag. One sailor administered a severe blow in the face with his clenched fist upon Miss Georgina Sturgis of Washington.

"Why did you do that?" she demanded.

The man halted for a brief instant in obvious amazement and said, "I don't know." And with a violent wrench he tore the banner from her hands and ran down the ladder. . . .

The climax came when in the late afternoon a bullet was fired through one of the heavy glass windows of the second floor, embedding itself in the ceiling. . . . No attempt was ever made to find the man who had drawn the revolver.

Meanwhile eggs and tomatoes were hurled at our fresh banners flying from the flag poles on the building.

Finally police reserves were summoned and in less than five minutes the crowd was pushed back and the street cleared. Thinking now that they could rely on the protection of the police, the women started with their banners for the White House. But the police looked on while all the banners were destroyed, a few paces from Headquarters. More banners went out,—purple, white and gold ones. They, too, were destroyed before they reached the White House. . . .

On August 15th [the next day] the pickets again attempted to take their posts on the line.

On this day one lettered banner and fifty purple, white and gold flags were destroyed by a mob led by sailors in uniform. Alice Paul was knocked down three times by a sailor in uniform and dragged the width of the White House sidewalk in his frenzied attempt to tear off her suffrage sash.

Miss Katharine Morey of Boston was also knocked to the pavement by a sailor, who took her flag and then darted off into the crowd. Miss Elizabeth Stuyvesant was struck by a soldier in uniform and her blouse torn from her body. Miss Maud Jamison of Virginia was knocked down and dragged along the sidewalk. Miss Beulah Amidon of North Dakota was knocked down by a sailor. . . .

The Administration, in its desperation, ordered the police to lawlessness. On August 16th, fifty policemen led the mob in attacking the women. Hands were bruised and arms twisted by police officers and plainclothes men. Two civilians who tried to rescue the women from the attacks of the police were arrested. The police fell upon these young women with more brutality even than the mobs they had before encouraged. Twenty-five lettered banners and 123 Party flags were destroyed by mobs and police on this afternoon. . . .

Finding that riots and mob attacks had not terrorized the pickets, the Administration decided again to arrest the women in the hope of ending the agitation. . . .

And so on the third day of the riotous attacks, when it was clear that the pickets would persist, the Chief of Police called at headquarters to announce to Miss Paul that "orders have been changed and henceforth women carrying banners will be arrested." . . .

At four o'clock the threatened arrests took place. The women arrested were Miss Lavinia Dock of Pennsylvania, Miss Edna Dixon of Washington, D. C., a young public school teacher; Miss Natalie Gray of Colorado, Mrs. Win. Upton Watson and Miss Lucy Ewing of Chicago, and Miss Catherine Flanagan of Connecticut.

Exactly forty minutes were allowed for the trial of these six women. One police officer testified that they were "obstructing traffic." . . .

And so this little handful of women, practically all of them tiny and frail of physique, began the cruel sentence of 30 days in the workhouse, while their cowardly assailants were not even reprimanded. . . .

Senator Myers of Montana, an influential member of the Democratic majority, introduced into the Senate a few days later a resolution making it illegal to picket the White House.

Source: Doris Stevens. *Jailed for Freedom*. New York: Boni and Liveright, 1920, 122–31.