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The Awakening:
Rhetoric and the Rise of New Women in the New Northwest, 1868-1912

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ABSTRACT

The Awakening:
Rhetoric and the Rise of New Women in the New Northwest, 1868-1912

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This study examines rhetorical practices through which disenfranchised women developed tenable political identities and integrated themselves into the public realm in the Pacific Northwest between 1868 and 1912. Through close analysis of rhetorical activities in which thousands of women participated—including club discourse, public commemoration, legal advocacy, petition work, and publication—it illuminates how these activities reconciled femininity and political involvement in an era and place that categorically denied women the right to self-government. Specifically, this dissertation argues that collective rhetorical practices made available rather than merely expressed new identities and skills among women in Oregon and Washington. As they engaged in symbolic action, together, women bridged the divide between their conventional roles in the private realm and leadership in public life, thereby changing themselves and their communities. In addition to expanding interdisciplinary understanding of woman's rights and suffrage activism in the nineteenth- and twentieth-century United States, this study provides insight into modes of communication that construct public identities, cultivate new ways of thinking and acting politically, and create grounds for public reform.

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To my family

and

"To the first woman who realized that half of the human race were not getting a square deal, and who had the courage to voice a protest; and also to the long line of women from that day unto this, who saw clearly, thought strongly, and braved misrepresentation, ridicule, calamity and social ostracism, to bring about that millennial day when humanity shall know the blessedness of dwelling together as equals."

Washington Women's Cook Book

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Chapter 1

The Awakening

Sarah A. Evans arrived in the Pacific Northwest in 1895 and, with her husband and three children, began to build a new life in a new place. Shortly after she settled in Oregon, several thousands of miles away from her natal family and lifelong friends, Evans gathered with neighboring women to form a club dedicated to building local ties, providing cultural edification, discussing issues of common concern, and promoting community welfare. As a charter member of the Woman's Club of Portland, Evans participated in friendly conversations as well as challenging new rhetorical endeavors. She delivered her first public address—a lecture entitled "Mural Decorations of the Boston Public Library"—before the club on 8 December 1898. During the discussion that followed Evans's presentation, club members determined that free public libraries ought to be established in Oregon; a few months later, they asked Evans to chair the new Free Library Committee. In her capacity as chair, Evans worked with other clubwomen to prepare a proposal for the establishment of libraries throughout the state, transform that proposal into a legislative bill and bring it before the Oregon State Assembly, and organize a multifaceted public campaign in support of the bill. On 13 February 1901 the bill became law, and the following day Evans presented it in triumph to the Woman's Club of Portland.[1]

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[1] Woman's Club of Portland Minute Book, December 1895-March 1900, pp. 79-85, box 1, folder 1, in Portland Woman's Club (Or.) Records, Mss 1084, Oregon Historical

Following this successful endeavor—one in which disenfranchised women won a legislative victory and established a significant new state institution—Evans became a part of another public campaign organized by Oregon women. After local author Eva Emery Dye visited the Woman's Club of Portland to discuss Sacagawea's role in the 1805 Lewis and Clark Expedition, Evans joined the Sacajawea Statue Association to help produce a public tribute "to the brave Shoshone woman who made possible the opening and development of beautiful Oregon." As a member of the Statue Association, Evans in 1903 wrote circular letters that solicited financial contributions and volunteer work from women in every town in Oregon in order to create "a beautiful and touching tribute . . . not alone to Sacajawea, but to *womenhood* [*sic*]." As she sent more than 4,000 letters on behalf of the association, Evans took on a public role in the collective effort to raise funds and build networks among women in the Pacific Northwest—and she helped make possible the dedication of *Sacajawea*, the towering bronze icon of women's leadership, by Oregon women at the 1905 World's Fair.[2]

In the early years of the twentieth century, Evans also became involved in efforts by various women's groups to survey and improve conditions for women who worked for wages in Portland. In 1904, as she taught cooking and nutrition classes for working women, Evans learned of filthy conditions in the city's food markets. Subsequently,

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Society, Portland; Wilbur D. Rowe, "The Development of the Oregon State Library and Its Contribution to the Public Schools" (M.A. thesis, University of Oregon, 1939), 22.

[2] Sarah A. Evans, Sacajawea Statue Association Circular Letter, 1903, Lewis and Clark Centennial and American Pacific Exposition and Oriental Fair Records, Mss 1069, box 14, folder 2. Chapter 3, note 2, explains the variant spellings of the name of the Shoshone woman.

Evans campaigned for new sanitary laws and inspections by writing letters, speaking with legislators, mobilizing women's organizations, and organizing boycotts of offending markets. Her efforts earned the attention of Portland mayor Harry Lane, who in 1905 appointed Evans as the first city market inspector in the United States.[3] Although she was not permitted to vote in Oregon, Evans incorporated her voice into the public realm and exerted significant influence upon the laws, culture, and public policy in the Pacific Northwest. And as the first decade of the twentieth century came to a close, Evans used the means of persuasion available to her to advocate equal suffrage, characterizing the vote as "a new tool to work with—a precious opportunity whose possibilities are fathomless as the sea." Evans joined with other women in the Pacific Northwest to produce and distribute more than 180,000 pieces of suffrage literature; to obtain signatures for an initiative petition for an equal suffrage amendment to the Oregon constitution; and to monitor the polls on Election Day in 1912, when male voters affirmed equal suffrage and recognized women as "unrestricted citizens."[4]

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries women throughout the Pacific Northwest—women like Sarah Evans—engaged in collective rhetorical practices that changed their communities and themselves. This study examines the remarkable process through which women who lacked basic political rights came to act as political leaders and integrated their voices and priorities into public life in the Pacific Northwest.

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[3] Gloria E. Meyers, *A Municipal Mother: Portland's Lola Greene Baldwin, America's First Policewoman* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 1995), 3.
[4] *Oregon Federation of Women's Clubs Year Book, 1912-1913*, p. 9, Portland Woman's Club (Or.) Records.

Through close analysis of rhetorical activities in which thousands of women participated between 1868 and 1912, this dissertation illuminates the development of public, political identities among women in Washington and Oregon—a development that women themselves called "the awakening."[5] As it examines a wide range of rhetorical practices, this study engages questions such as these: How did disenfranchised women integrate their voices into public discourse and justify their involvement in public issues? In what significant ways did women's rhetorical activities change over time? To what degree might these variations precipitate or reflect changes in regional culture? To what degree did they signal shifts in attitudes among women themselves?

Through close analysis of myriad rhetorical practices, this study reveals how women reconciled concepts of femininity and citizenship in an era and place that categorically denied women the right of self-government. As disenfranchised women produced resolutions at kitchen tables and presented statues and speeches at the World's Fair, as they brought legislative proposals to the capitol and made arguments at the polls, and as they debated public issues at the clubhouse and engaged in legal advocacy at the courthouse, they cultivated political subjectivities and skills. Ultimately, the practice of rhetoric gave rise to new women—women who understood and asserted themselves as participants in public life—in the New Northwest.

As it reveals how women developed new subjectivities and modes of public participation, this study also illuminates the role that rhetoric played in the rise of new

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[5] See Woman's Club of Portland Minute Book, December 1895-March 1900, p. 1, box 1, folder 1, in Portland Woman's Club (Or.) Records; Eva Emery Dye, "Sacajawea Statue Dedication," p. 4, Eva Emery Dye Papers, Mss 1089, Oregon Historical Society.

politics in the Pacific Northwest. Women in Washington and Oregon won the right to vote in 1910 and 1912—almost a decade before the Nineteenth Amendment enfranchised women throughout the United States—but relatively little is known about the rhetorical practices and political activism that precipitated this achievement. What is known is that suffrage victories in Washington and Oregon, unlike early victories that occurred in a few other western states, were tied to significant changes in public ideas about the role of women in civic life.[6] By examining rhetorical practices through which women identified and asserted themselves as public participants, this study helps to explain the alteration of the public realm in the Pacific Northwest to include women, a transformation that encompassed but was not limited to the integration of women into the electorate. As women redefined their roles through rhetorical practice, they also developed skills, experiences, and networks that were vital for reshaping politics.

This study contributes to several ongoing scholarly conversations in disciplines including rhetoric and history. At a fundamental level, it expands historical understanding of women's activism in the nineteenth- and twentieth-century United States. In current scholarship, the history of northeastern suffragists and the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution too often masquerades as a comprehensive perspective on the national woman's rights movement. It is clear, as historian Jean H. Baker observes, that contemporary scholars have imperfect ideas about women's activism in other regions of the country, local advocacy as it related to state and national

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[6] See, for instance, Holly J. McCammon and Karen E. Campbell, "Winning the Vote in the West: The Political Successes of the Woman's Suffrage Movements, 1866-1919," *Gender and Society* 15.1 (2001): 55-82.

organizations, and the conditions in which women in the West achieved the franchise prior to the national amendment.[7] Thus, in order to develop a more nuanced understanding of the long struggle for woman's rights in the United States, studies of women in history must be expanded to attend to more than a singular community of suffragists or a single culminating achievement. Scholarship on woman's rights must become a study of complex and overlapping modes of public engagement that empowered women at different times, amid different cultural contexts, throughout the country.

The nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Pacific Northwest is a particularly good area of study for those who seek to extend understanding of women's rhetorical practices and social change in U.S. history. The Pacific Northwest, defined in this study as Washington and Oregon, was a cohesive region united by characteristics including migration patterns, cultural myths, geographic features, economic conditions, and political interests. Both states originated from Oregon Territory and drew large numbers of Anglo-American colonists from the Middle West via the Oregon Trail. As Anglo-Americans established communities in this region, they also established cultural myths that set Oregon and Washington apart from neighboring states such as California and Idaho. Moreover, geographic features fostered connections between Oregon and Washington. For example, features such as the Columbia River and deep water ports on the shores of the Pacific Ocean were cause for significant economic and political

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[7] See Jean H. Baker, ed., *Votes for Women: The Struggle for Suffrage Revisited* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 3-21.

relationships between Oregon and Washington, as the states banded together to develop and promote their ports and to manage the Columbia River.[8]

In addition to expansive cultural, economic, and geographic connections, the specific issue of woman's rights linked Oregon and Washington. Between 1868 and 1912, woman's rights activists frequently traveled between the two states and exchanged letters with one another, sharing ideas, experiences, and resources.[9] Moreover, women in Oregon and Washington pursued and eventually achieved the right to vote under similar conditions. Although Washington and Oregon achieved woman suffrage well before 1920, it is not the case that the Pacific Northwest had been historically amenable to women's participation in political life. In their founding state constitutions, neither Oregon nor Washington recognized women as citizens with voting or jury rights. Between 1884 and 1910 Oregon's male voters declined five equal suffrage referendums;

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[8] See Jeanne Kay Guelke and David Hornbeck, "The Far West, 1840-1920," in *North America: The Historical Geography of a Changing Continent*, ed. Thomas F. McIlwraith and Edward K. Muller (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001), 267-70; D. W. Meinig, *The Shaping of America,* vol. 3 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988), 70-88; James R. Shortridge, *The Middle West and Its Meaning in American Culture* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1989), 1-5; Richard E. Ross and David Bruner, "The Northwest as a Prehistoric Region," in *Regionalism and the Pacific Northwest*, ed. William G. Robbins, Robert J. Frank, and Richard E. Ross (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 1983), 104-5; David Sarasohn, "Regionalism, Tending toward Sectionalism," in *Regionalism and the Pacific Northwest*, 225.

[9] See Emma Smith DeVoe Collection, Mss 171, Washington State Library, Olympia; Abigail Scott Duniway Collection, Coll. 232B, Special Collections, University of Oregon, Eugene; Eva Emery Dye Papers; G. Thomas Edwards, *Sowing Good Seeds: The Northwest Suffrage Campaigns of Susan B. Anthony* (Portland: Oregon Historical Society Press, 1990); May Arkwright Hutton Correspondence, Mss 174, Washington State Library; May Arkwright Hutton Papers, MsSC 55, Eastern Washington Historical Society, Spokane; Portland Woman's Club (Or.) Records; Willamette Valley Chautauqua Records, B 137, Special Collections, University of Oregon.

during the same period, Washington voters rejected equal suffrage four times, and the Washington Territory Supreme Court overturned legislative efforts to enfranchise women. Unlike Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, and Idaho, the first states and territories to grant women full voting rights, Washington and Oregon did not have clear pragmatic political reasons for giving women the ballot. By contrast, suffrage victories in Wyoming and Utah resulted from practical needs: Wyoming needed to entice women to move to the territory, and Utah needed women voters in order to achieve Mormon political goals. The enfranchisement of women in Colorado and Idaho was largely the product of contentious party politics.

As Rebecca J. Mead suggests, however, in Washington and Oregon the integration of women into public life and the electorate in the early twentieth century appears to have been a product of something other than partisan wrangling or beneficent liberalism.[10] More specifically, sociologists Holly J. McCammon and Karen E. Campbell have claimed a causal link between women's symbolic activities and the expansion of woman's political rights in the Pacific Northwest. Their research indicates that the success of the suffrage movement and changing attitudes about gender roles were due in part to women's rhetorical activities.[11] Thus rhetorical artifacts produced by women in Washington and Oregon offer an excellent site for studying how rhetorical practices engender significant change.

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[10] See Rebecca Mead, "Pioneers at the Polls," in *Votes for Women,* ed. Baker, 90-101.
[11] See McCammon and Campbell, "Winning the Vote in the West"; Holly J. McCammon, "Stirring Up Suffrage Sentiment: The Formation of State Woman Suffrage Organizations, 1866-1914," *Social Forces* 80.2 (2001): 449-80.

Further, primary sources are readily available that detail the rhetorical activities of women and women's organizations in the Pacific Northwest between 1868 (when the first suffrage organization in the region was founded) and 1912 (when Oregon joined Washington in recognizing women as legal voters). The extensive historical materials that can be located in public repositories and private holdings provide the resources necessary to gain insight into women's rhetorical practices, especially as they relate to women's shifting identities and roles. Because women in the nineteenth- and twentieth-century Pacific Northwest created detailed records of their activities and made efforts to preserve those records, scholars in the twenty-first century can study a wealth of archival materials that exist in the Pacific Northwest, and thus contribute to the interdisciplinary tasks of recovering historically marginalized voices and understanding dynamics of U.S. political discourse.

This study of women's rhetorical practices in the Pacific Northwest contributes to scholarship in the discipline of rhetoric in at least three significant ways. First, the project enacts a conceptual move away from leader-centered analysis, to attend to the relationship between individual rhetorical interventions and collective advocacy. This shift is particularly significant in the context of scholarship on woman's rights in the U.S. West, as existing studies focus on the singular voice of Oregon suffragist and newspaper editor Abigail Scott Duniway.[12] Second, this study extends understanding of multiple

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[12] See, for instance, Lauren Kessler, "The Ideas of Woman Suffragists and the Portland *Oregonian*," *Journalism Quarterly* 57.4 (1980): 597-605; Dorothy M. Mansfield, "Abigail S. Duniway: Suffragette with Not-So-Common Sense," *Western Speech* 35.1 (1971): 24-29; Ruth Barnes Moynihan, *Rebel for Rights: Abigail Scott Duniway* (New

modalities and media through which women instantiated public, political identities. That is, in addition to considering public arguments for woman's rights in the Pacific Northwest, it attends to practices that may be understood as rhetorical and political in a broad sense, such as the production of organized efforts to gather signatures for woman suffrage petitions, the enactment of civic improvement initiatives by women's clubs, attempts by women to register and vote, and the creation of public art featuring women. Attention to these kinds of performative enactments of public identities contributes to a more nuanced understanding of the symbolic actions through which political identities emerge, publics are reshaped, and communities are transformed.

Third, this project contributes to the ongoing disciplinary project of theorizing key terms in contemporary rhetorical criticism, such as the concept of a public and the genre of epideictic discourse. As Dilip Gaonkar noted in 2002, the task of elaborating these concepts belongs in large part to rhetorical criticism, as the "interpretive value of a key term in rhetoric becomes apparent only when it is forced to grapple with and to journey through the vicissitudes of a discursive formation."[13] By mapping the emergence of a

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Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1983); Moynihan, "Of Women's Rights and Freedom: Abigail Scott Duniway," in *Women in Pacific Northwest History: An Anthology,* ed. Karen J. Blair (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1988), 9-24; Lee Nash, "Abigail versus Harvey: Sibling Rivalry in the Oregon Campaign for Woman Suffrage," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 98.2 (1997): 134-63; Elinor Richey, "The Unsinkable Abigail," *American Heritage* 26.2 (1975): 72-75, 86-89; Deborah Shein, "Not Just the Vote: Abigail Scott Duniway's Serialized Novels and the Struggle for Women's Rights," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 101 (2000): 302-27; and Jean M. Ward and Elaine A. Maveety, eds., *"Yours for Liberty": Selections from Abigail Scott Duniway's Suffrage Newspaper* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2000).

[13] Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar, "The Forum: Publics and Counterpublics," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 88 (2002): 411.

public amid the historical terrain of woman's rights rhetoric in the Pacific Northwest, this study contributes to the understanding and critical employment of this key term. For example, this analysis extends the work of Maurice Charland—which illustrated the capacity of rhetoric to call publics into being by naming them as such—by revealing how women's rhetorical practices transformed women into members of the public, without necessarily generating explicit labels.[14]

In addition to expanding theories of constitutive rhetoric to account for discursive and nondiscursive practices through which women attained tenable political identities, this project enriches our understanding of the rhetorical dynamics of convention and change. Woman's rights rhetoric in the Pacific Northwest did not characteristically set itself in opposition to existing publics or to the state, or employ discursive practices that were routinely regarded by wider publics with hostility or a sense of indecorousness. Rather, women's rhetorical practices often harnessed existing conventions and values to characterize women as essential, decorous, and productive members of the public realm. For example, through epideictic in praise of Sacagawea, women of the Pacific Northwest reinforced some conventional public precepts but challenged others in order to expand the number and type of people considered members of the community. Women's use of epideictic reveals that commemorative discourse has the capacity to serve more exigent functions than simply celebrating or reinforcing values and identities. Like many of the examples examined in this study, it also illuminates how a form of discourse that does not

[14] Maurice Charland, "Constitutive Rhetoric: The Case of the *Peuple Quebeçois*," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 73.2 (1987): 133-50.

directly address a public issue or policy can promote social, political, or other ideological change.

Literature Review

Although relatively little scholarly work has been done on the specific topic of woman's rights rhetoric in the Pacific Northwest, this project benefits from existing research on the rhetoric of U.S. woman's rights and the history of suffrage activism in the West. Since the publication of "The Rhetoric of Women's Liberation: An Oxymoron" by Karlyn Kohrs Campbell in 1973, rhetorical scholarship in the discipline of communication has recognized woman's rights discourse as a distinctive mode of advocacy that "evinces unique rhetorical qualities that are a fusion of particular substantive and stylistic features."[15] Subsequently, rhetorical scholars have generally examined suffrage discourse by attending closely to extant texts of verbal arguments for women's enfranchisement and the forms of these public appeals. Campbell's chapter "Seeking a Judicial Route to Suffrage: Anthony in Behalf of Herself" from the first volume of *Man Cannot Speak for Her* is an exemplar of this approach.[16] As it uncovers the rhetorical power of a combination of character, context, argument, and forensic style in Susan B. Anthony's 1872-73 speech "Is It a Crime for a U.S. Citizen to Vote?" Campbell's study well illustrates the scholarly practice of revealing the ways that

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[15] Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "The Rhetoric of Women's Liberation: An Oxymoron," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 59 (1973): 75.
[16] Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, *Man Cannot Speak for Her,* 2 vols. (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1989), 1:105-19.

women's rhetoric managed cultural constraints to challenge the public contexts in which they occurred.[17] Amy R. Slagell's more recent essay, "The Rhetorical Structure of Frances E. Willard's Campaign for Woman Suffrage, 1876-1896," evinces a similar approach as it analyzes the arguments for woman suffrage in more than one hundred of Willard's speeches in order to illustrate how her discourse transformed the cultural ideal of true womanhood.[18] Studies of this kind are helpful to this project in two ways. First, they reveal that no matter how conventional its argumentation or how justificatory its form, woman's rights rhetoric cannot be adequately understood through traditional theoretical models that suppress dimensions of gender.[19] Second, they provide rhetorical contexts and conceptual vocabularies that are invaluable for understanding the discursive practices through which activists in the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century United States opened a space for women to act in the public realm.

Whereas attention to the discourse of an individual orator in a narrowly defined rhetorical situation has been a considerable focus of rhetorical criticism generally and feminist criticism particularly, this study also examines nonoratorical forms such as historical novels, legal briefs, legislative resolutions, cookbooks, and letters, as well as nondiscursive forms such as posters, parades, and public art. In this sense, it will participate in the ongoing expansion of the modes and objects of inquiry that characterize

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[17] See also Campbell, "Rhetoric of Women's Liberation," 75.
[18] Amy R. Slagell, "The Rhetorical Structure of Frances E. Willard's Campaign for Woman Suffrage, 1876-1896," *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 4.1 (2001): 1-23.
[19] See Campbell, "Rhetoric of Women's Liberation," 84; and Bonnie J. Dow and Celeste M. Condit, "The State of the Art in Feminist Scholarship in Communication," *Journal of Communication* 55.3 (2005): 448. Both articles suggest that traditional definitions of rhetoric cannot satisfactorily account for feminist rhetoric.

rhetorical study of woman's rights activism. A number of scholars of the rhetoric of U.S. woman's rights have already begun the important and complex task of augmenting traditional conceptions of rhetorical objects to include nonoratorical and nondiscursive forms. For example, the work of Susan Zaeske epitomizes productive recent efforts to analyze nonoratorical forms of women's rhetoric. Zaeske's 2003 book *Signatures of Citizenship: Petitioning, Antislavery, and Women's Political Identity* reveals a process through which northern middle-class white women inserted their opinions into the public realm and developed new political subjectivities.[20] Several recent studies have emphasized the significance of nondiscursive forms of suffrage rhetoric, including Jennifer Borda's 2002 analysis, "The Woman Suffrage Parades of 1910-1913," which attests to the persuasive innovation and formal limitations of public demonstrations.[21] The emerging trend toward consideration of nonoratorical and nondiscursive modes of woman's rights rhetoric appears likely to continue.[22] More important, this form of

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[20] Susan Zaeske, *Signatures of Citizenship: Petitioning, Antislavery, and Women's Political Identity* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003).

[21] Jennifer Borda, "The Woman Suffrage Parades of 1910-1913: Possibilities and Limitations of an Early Feminist Rhetorical Strategy," *Western Journal of Communication* 66 (2002): 25-52.

[22] Other examples of recent efforts to expand scholarship on women's rhetoric in history by accounting for nonoratorical and/or nondiscursive forms of rhetoric include Donna M. Kowal, "One Cause, Two Paths: Militant vs. Adjustive Strategies in the British and American Woman's Suffrage Movements," *Communication Quarterly* 48 (2000): 240-55; E. Michelle Ramsey, "Inventing Citizens during World War I: Suffrage Cartoons in *The Woman Citizen*," *Western Journal of Communication* 64 (2000): 113-47; Wendy B. Sharer, *Vote and Voice: Women's Organizations and Political Literacy* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2004); Catherine H. Palczewski, "The Male Madonna and the Feminine Uncle Sam: Visual Argument, Icons, and Ideographs in 1909 Anti-Woman Suffrage Postcards," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 91.4 (November 2005): 365-94; Alisse Portnoy, *Their Right to Speak: Women's Activism in the Indian and Slave*

scholarship has contributed significantly to the development of conceptual tools for examining collective rhetorical practices and for attending to the rhetorical processes through which political subjectivities and norms are created and altered. In addition to drawing on the innovations of these recent works, this study extends their efforts by simultaneously examining multiple rhetorical practices in order to illuminate the dynamics of various modes of symbolic action and to offer a more robust understanding of the overlapping and complex activities that constituted women's public activism.

Toward this end, this study also draws upon rhetorical and historical scholarship on woman suffrage in the U.S. West. In the discipline of rhetoric, two articles speak directly to this topic. Both examine public speeches by suffragist leaders. The earlier of these is Dorothy M. Mansfield's 1971 essay, "Abigail S. Duniway: Suffragette with Not-So-Common Sense," which posits Duniway as the singular leader of the Pacific Northwest suffrage movement and analyzes her speeches to conclude, "Not all women who demanded their rights were, or have been, unreasonable separatists."[23] More recently, Sara Hayden's 1999 article, "Negotiating Femininity and Power in the Early

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Debates (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005); Sheryl Humer, "Discursive Identity Formation of Suffrage Women: Reframing the 'Cult of True Womanhood' through Song," *Western Journal of Communication* 70.3 (July 2006): 234-60; Belinda Stillion Southard, "Militancy, Power, and Identity: The Silent Sentinels as Women Fighting for Political Voice," *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 10.3 (Fall 2007): 399-417; Angela G. Ray, "The Rhetorical Ritual of Citizenship: Women's Voting as Public Performance," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 93.1 (February 2007): 1-26. Promising forthcoming work by leading scholars in the area of women's rhetoric will attend to nonoratorical and nondiscursive modes of suffrage rhetoric; see, for instance, Bonnie J. Dow, *Wise Women: Cartoons of the Woman Suffrage Movement* (Athens, GA: Hill Street Press, forthcoming).

[23] Mansfield, "Abigail Scott Duniway."

Twentieth Century West: Domestic Ideology and Feminine Style in Jeannette Rankin's Suffrage Rhetoric," illuminates the manner in which Montana's leading suffragist appealed to domestic ideology as a rhetorical resource to persuade a more powerful male audience.[24] Both essays provide useful contextual information about the lived experiences of women and regional culture in the nineteenth-century U.S. West, as that information relates to the rhetorical practices enacted by leading suffragists in Oregon and Montana. In this way, both studies provide a helpful starting point, and Hayden's work especially offers a model for productive contemporary scholarship in the area of western woman suffrage rhetoric. Just as important, these article-length studies—which are, at the time of this writing, the only two pieces of published rhetorical scholarship on the subject of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century women's political discourse in the U.S. West—demonstrate that there remains much to be done to create a rich disciplinary understanding of this topic.[25]

From the discipline of history, a number of studies situate woman suffrage activism in the Pacific Northwest as a significant phenomenon in U.S. history and provide detailed accounts of the context of the regional suffrage movement. These studies range from broad accounts of suffrage activism in the West to scholarship focused on the lives of individual suffragists. For example, G. Thomas Edwards's book, *Sowing Good*

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[24] See Sara Hayden, "Negotiating Femininity and Power in the Early Twentieth Century West: Domestic Ideology and Feminine Style in Jeannette Rankin's Suffrage Rhetoric," *Communication Studies* 50.2 (1999): 83-102.

[25] A version of chapter 3 of this dissertation is scheduled to appear in the *Western Journal of Communication* in 2009 as Cindy Koenig Richards, "Inventing Sacagawea: Public Women and the Transformative Potential of Epideictic Rhetoric."

Seeds: The Northwest Suffrage Campaigns of Susan B. Anthony (1990), explicates the historical conditions and events of the thousand-mile effort by Anthony and Duniway to establish suffrage clubs in Oregon and Washington. The 2004 book *How the Vote Was Won: Woman Suffrage in the Western United States, 1861-1914*, by Rebecca J. Mead, includes a chapter that explains how suffrage activism in the Pacific Northwest evinced historical characteristics different from activism in other western states.[26] Finally, Sherri Bartlett Browne's excellent 2004 biography, *Eva Emery Dye: Romance with the West,* traces Dye's personal history from her formative years in Illinois to her literary achievements as a public historian of Old Oregon and her affiliation with the suffrage cause. Although none of these studies provide rhetorical analysis of practices through which many women engaged public life and political reform, they do point to significant persuasive texts and performances and help to situate these rhetorical interventions within the historical context of the U.S. West.

Organization of the Study

Secondary literature provides a foundation and context for this study, but the analysis itself draws significantly on primary sources. To understand how women engaged rhetoric to create tenable public identities in the Pacific Northwest, I conducted in-depth research in public archives and collected 787 primary artifacts of women's rhetorical practices. These materials include public speeches, petitions, correspondence, organization records, art, and publications that were produced by Washington and

[26] Mead, *How the Vote Was Won,* 97-118.

Oregon women between 1868 and 1912. After cataloging every document I recovered, I examined each artifact closely and analyzed its contents. Specifically, I worked to identify how women's collective rhetorical activities made meaning about women's experiences in the Pacific Northwest and how they shaped women's public identities and actions. My close reading was guided by questions such as these: What meaning do these texts give to femininity and citizenship—how do they define, perform, or contest these concepts? How do women justify their participation in public discourse? Do their arguments appeal to or challenge particular public values? In what significant ways do women's rhetorical activities change over time?

Close examination of rhetorical artifacts offered significant insight into the processes by which women in the Pacific Northwest cultivated political subjectivities and integrated their voices and priorities into the public realm. Thus, this dissertation explicates how a range of rhetorical activities altered women's ideas about their roles, engendered new forms of action, and led to collective demands for equal rights. It is important to note, however, that this study does not endeavor primarily to explain why women achieved the vote in the Pacific Northwest.[27] Nor does it, for instance, take up Herbert Simons's challenge to trace the "functional requirements" of a social movement

[27] Although my findings may enrich or contribute to plausible theories of how and why women in the Pacific Northwest achieved suffrage—and did so before most women throughout the United States—this is not my primary purpose. Others are engaged in the work of theorizing causal relationships between activism in the U.S. West and the approval of suffrage in states including but not limited to Oregon and Washington. See, for instance, McCammon and Campbell, "Winning the Vote in the West."

and to evaluate suffrage advocacy as leader-centered activism.[28] Rather, the four substantive chapters of the dissertation explore how women cultivated a sense of public identity and authority, a vision for participation in the civic realm, and skills for negotiating competing expectations for feminine behavior and political leadership—a rhetorical challenge that existed for women before and beyond the ballot. The dissertation proceeds chronologically and by topic, so that the manuscript as a whole provides a sense of how women's rhetorical practices in the Northwest developed over time, while each chapter provides insight into a particular set of symbolic activities.

Chapter 2, "'Flint on the Steel': Women's Clubs, Rhetorical Practice, and Political Identity," explains how the rhetorical activities of women's clubs played a key role in the development of women's political identities and skills between 1895 and 1905. By examining records, publications, and public campaigns produced by women's clubs, I trace the process by which clubwomen became assertive advocates for a variety of civic initiatives. In an era and place in which it was profoundly difficult for many women to speak publicly, clubs offered settings where women could and did study issues, engage in discussion and formal debate, and present their ideas to receptive audiences. In these female-governed spaces, women practiced literacy, democracy, and politics; they developed attitudes, objectives, and skills that prepared them to participate in the civic realm. When clubwomen set out to enact minor civic initiatives—such as the preservation of trees in downtown Portland and the construction of public libraries—they were

[28] See Herbert Simons, "Requirements, Problems, and Strategies: A Theory of Persuasion for Social Movements," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 56 (1970): 1-11.

radicalized by their experiences with the political establishment and subsequently mobilized to champion equal rights.

Chapter 3, "Inventing Sacagawea: Public Women and the Transformative Power of Epideictic Rhetoric," illuminates women's efforts between 1900 and 1905 to commemorate Sacagawea as a leading participant in the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Women's rhetorical activities culminated in the dedication of a bronze statue honoring Sacagawea at the 1905 World's Fair in Portland, Oregon, an epideictic event that simultaneously articulated, enacted, and venerated a central public identity for women in the Pacific Northwest. Although the disenfranchised white women who produced the commemoration conformed to some expectations for contemporaneous epideictic discourse by reflecting some imperialist and gender norms, their rhetoric challenged other racist and sexist aspects of the predominant culture by praising a historical American Indian woman as a model leader and by creating opportunities for twentieth-century white women to enact leadership. As a whole, women's historical research, interpretive activities, and commemorative acts asserted a new place for women in public life.

The fourth chapter, entitled "'To Make the Laws that Govern Her': The Miscarriage of Gender Justice and Women's Strategic Adaptation," traces the innovative ways in which women in Washington and Oregon engaged the law between 1868 and 1908. The majority of this chapter focuses on three rhetorical activities: women's attempts to assert that they were enfranchised by existing laws; their efforts to alter and enforce labor laws and to improve conditions for working women; and courtroom arguments regarding the constitutionality of laws that offered special protection for

women workers. This analysis reveals that the practices through which disenfranchised women in the Pacific Northwest engaged the law extended women's participation and influence in the public realm, sustained activism in the face of defeat, developed powerful new coalitions, and produced important arguments for equal rights.

Finally, chapter 5, "'Nourished and Equipped for the Duties of Life': The *Washington Women's Cook Book* and Women's Public Identity," reveals how a politically themed cookbook published by the Washington Equal Suffrage Association in 1909 bridged the divide between women's private lives and public politics. The text, production, and circulation of the *Washington Women's Cook Book* reconciled women's traditional roles with new forms of action. As women created this collection of recipes, tips for fishing and mountain climbing, and political essays—and as they went door-to-door to distribute it to people throughout Washington—they used their existing forms of knowledge and networks to create opportunities to act publicly, to promote their expertise and ideas, and to speak about equal rights in every corner of the state. Thus the text of the *Cook Book* and the acts of its creation and circulation contributed to the development of a new political subjectivity among Washington women, as well as significant visibility for the woman's rights movement.

Ultimately, this dissertation illuminates how thousands of women like Sarah Evans used the relatively narrow resources and opportunities that were available to them—what Aristotle characterized as the available means of persuasion—to develop new political identities and modes of political participation. Although each chapter of the dissertation focuses on a different time period and set of rhetorical practices, together

they reveal how women altered assumptions about their role in civic life and engaged the cause of equal rights. As a whole, analysis of women's collective rhetorical practices in the Pacific Northwest offers new insight into timeless questions and concepts in rhetoric, and expands understanding of the ways humans can and do use symbols, particularly to change themselves and their communities.

Chapter 2

"Flint on the Steel":

Women's Clubs, Rhetorical Practice, and Political Identity

Abigail H. Stuart traveled more than one hundred miles to speak at the Portland, Oregon, home of Mrs. W. W. Spaulding on 19 December 1895. As local women settled into the parlor, Stuart opened the meeting with a simple question: "Who are the women of club work?" Drawing on her experience as president of the Woman's Club of Olympia, Washington, Stuart suggested that those who belonged to clubs in the Pacific Northwest were "women who have awakened to a clear and defined sense of personal duty, eager to work for the general good. It is not the sentimental dreamers, with aimless, misty conceptions of life; but it is the clever writers, practical mothers and housekeepers, self-supporting businesswomen . . . willing and anxious to use all for progress and advancement."[1] Women's clubs, Stuart advised, strengthened home ties and domestic life by teaching women to think independently, to judge with tolerance, to be willing to hear all sides, to disagree without friction, and to think and speak well. "The subjects

[1] Woman's Club of Portland Minute Book, December 1895-March 1900, p. 1, box 1, folder 1, in Portland Woman's Club (Or.) Records, Mss 1084, Oregon Historical Society, Portland (hereafter cited as WCP Minute Book). Abigail H. Stuart was elected the first president of the Olympia Woman's Club; Stuart also founded one of the first equal suffrage societies in Washington Territory and was known as a leading suffragist in the region. See Sandra Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood: Cultural Politics in the Pacific Northwest, 1840-1920* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), 59, 134-35.

presented at club meetings give valuable matter for thought," she concluded, "and the contact of other minds filled with thoughts on the same subject acts as flint on the steel."[2]

Stuart's remarks to the audience that gathered to consider the organization of a women's club in Portland produced more than matter for thought: before the meeting concluded, the women present voted to form a new club, elected temporary officers, and enrolled 78 charter members.[3] What took place in the Spaulding parlor was far from unprecedented in the late nineteenth century. More than 800,000 American women belonged to clubs in 1895; that number was growing rapidly as clubwomen in the Pacific Northwest and throughout the United States visited other women, promoted club participation, and led the development of new clubs.[4]

As club members, women gathered in homes and hotels to enjoy refreshments and conversation, to discuss issues such as the proper education of children and the moral standards of the community, to initiate charitable endeavors, and to pursue cultural activities such as the study of literature and art. Women's organizations characterized by these kinds of activities existed throughout the United States in the nineteenth century, but they were especially important in the Pacific Northwest, where many women arrived

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[2] WCP Minute Book, December 1895-March 1900, p. 1.
[3] See WCP Minute Book, December 1895-March 1900, p. 3; *History of the Portland Woman's Club* (Portland, OR: Works Progress Administration, 1941), 1; Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood*, 191. According to the WCP Minute Book, five temporary club officers were elected on 19 December 1895: Mrs. C. L. Pittock as president, Mrs. Caroline Dunlap as vice president, Mrs. Julia B. Comstock as recording secretary, Mrs. Frances M. Harvey as governing secretary, and Mrs. H. R. Cox as treasurer.
[4] See WCP Minute Book, December 1895-March 1900, p. 1; Karen J. Blair, *Clubwoman as Feminist* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1980), 61; Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood*, 49.

without extended families and close friends but with the responsibility to make new homes and communities in a strange territory. Beginning in the 1830s, when Narcissa Whitman and other missionary wives formed the Columbia Maternal Association near what is now Walla Walla, Washington, clubs provided a place for women to develop networks, share burdens, and nurture roots in the New Northwest.[5]

As women sought cultural continuity and connections with other women in the face of the challenges of frontier life, they also sought to improve themselves and their communities.[6] Such goals could be understood by clubwomen and others as commensurate with nineteenth-century norms of femininity. Popular ideals asserted that a woman's role was to train children, sanctify the home, foster the collective good, and provide moral guidance.[7] Although such responsibilities were rooted in the home, they also provided a rationale for women to organize and to engage the world outside the home. Of the nineteenth-century club movement, historian Karen J. Blair observes, "Woman's responsibility to set and maintain moral standards for her loved ones provided a loophole whereby she not only could but had to leave the home and exert influence."[8] This was particularly true in the West, where it was expected that women would bring

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[5] The Columbia Maternal Association met at the Waiilatpu Mission, located eight miles from what is now Walla Walla, Washington. See Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood*, 28-36.

[6] See Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood*, 11.

[7] These ideals were characteristic of the antebellum era norm of "true womanhood," described in Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860," *American Quarterly* 18.2 (Summer 1966): 151-74. As Nan Johnson argues, such ideals persisted even after the Civil War; Johnson, *Gender and Rhetorical Space in American Life, 1866-1910* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2002), 6.

[8] Blair, *Clubwoman as Feminist*, 7.

order to new communities that lacked social institutions and stable populations.[9] In their endeavor to fulfill their domestic responsibilities in an unsettled land, many women found it fitting to participate in the opportunities for self-improvement, discourse, and philanthropy that clubs provided. Such clubs also offered social connections and opportunities for friendship to women who were far from their natal families. Women who participated in club life in the Pacific Northwest were many, and they were ethnically and economically diverse. In Oregon and Washington, members of women's clubs included Anglo-Americans and African Americans, wealthy wives and unmarried laundresses, and city residents and rural missionaries.[10]

Although the expressed purposes of club work were to "make better wives and mothers" and "to lift homes to higher levels," the achievements of organized womanhood in the Pacific Northwest were different and greater than the shaping of women to fit a domestic ideal.[11] The founding of women's organizations was the beginning of a powerful movement in the Pacific Northwest, one that changed women and their communities. Club activities developed new and broader roles for women in Oregon and Washington, bridging the divide between so-called separate spheres and transforming women from individuals ensconced in the private realm to influential participants in civic life. Central to the development and performance of a new political subjectivity for women were the rhetorical practices that characterized club life. In an era and place in

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[9] Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood*, 32.
[10] See Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood*.
[11] WCP Minute Book, December 1895-March 1900, p. 1; Annual Announcements, box 12, folder 1, Portland Woman's Club (Or.) Records.

which it was profoundly difficult for women to speak publicly—whether to address a gathering or to campaign for civic change—clubs offered safe settings where women could and did study issues, engage in discussion and formal debate, and present their ideas to receptive audiences.[12] In these female-governed spaces, women practiced literacy, democracy, and politics; they developed attitudes, objectives, and skills that prepared them to participate in the public realm. As clubwomen learned to speak out at meetings, to debate and resolve contentious issues, and to organize their collective resources, they began to realize women's potential for shaping communities through public action.

In relatively short order, women put to work the abilities that they developed in clubs to meet perceived community needs. Although clubs reflected some dominant conceptions of gender roles, they effectively extended woman's domain, making her responsible not only for the home but also for the cultural, educational, and moral development of her community. "In virtually every large and small knot of humanity throughout the Pacific Northwest," historian Sandra Haarsager notes, "women banded together for some lofty and often personal purpose and left something behind that did not exist before, in a collection of books in a library, a row of trees, a lecture series held, scholarships awarded, or wage and hour laws passed."[13] The fact that women achieved these things without the political and economic power that men in their communities possessed speaks to the ingenuity and skill with which clubwomen engaged in a public

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[12] Regarding norms that excluded women from public participation in the nineteenth-century Pacific Northwest, see Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood*, 58.
[13] Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood*, 338-39**.**

struggle for the allocation of resources to support their ideas. It also suggests that club life had a remarkable influence on the women who were members, empowering them in a fundamental way. Club activities encouraged and challenged women to be and to do more than many believed that they could.[14]

This chapter traces how specific rhetorical practices that characterized women's clubs in the Pacific Northwest produced a new subjectivity for disenfranchised women and brought their influence to bear on the public realm. By examining several forms of symbolic action that were central to club life, I illuminate the process through which women moved from timid conversation to the articulation of assertive stances on public issues. First, I consider clubwomen's use of parliamentary practices to govern their meetings. Through the extensive study and practice of forms of parliamentary procedure, women acquired expertise in a type of deliberative democracy that characterized the activities of the political establishment. A second rhetorical practice that was central to club activities was the oral presentation of essays authored by clubwomen about cultural subjects, regional history, and civic issues. In addition to cultivating research and speaking skills, this rhetorical practice developed a sense of authority among clubwomen and produced alternative visions of women's role in the Pacific Northwest. Such presentations—and club discussions about them—often served as a catalyst for clubwomen's political advocacy. This third rhetorical practice was manifest in formal memorials, resolutions, legislative bills, protests, and election campaigns. As I examine these forms of civic discourse, I trace how clubwomen asserted that their issues were

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[14] Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood*, 331.

public priorities, involved themselves in politics, and exerted influence on civic life in the Pacific Northwest.

This examination of the rhetorical practices of women's clubs centers on the activities and records of the Woman's Club of Portland. Although archival sources indicate that parliamentary procedure, oral presentations, and formal political statements were activities common among many women's organizations in the Pacific Northwest, the most detailed accounts of these practices exist in the extensive records produced by and about the Woman's Club of Portland. The thoroughness and consistency with which members of this club recorded their activities make possible the close analysis of women's use of parliamentary procedure, presentations, and political speech. The richness of these historical records, now housed at the Oregon Historical Society, is the first reason that I selected the Woman's Club of Portland as the case for this study. Additional characteristics of the Woman's Club of Portland make it a prototype for analysis. From its inception, this organization exhibited deep ties to other women's clubs in Oregon and Washington, sharing leaders, practices, goals, and strategies.

Although it appears that the membership of the Woman's Club of Portland—like the female population of the Pacific Northwest—was primarily white and Protestant, the club exhibited significant connections with African American women's clubs and American Indian women's groups. Similarly, the primarily middle-class women of the club also formed links with working women's clubs. Between 1897 and 1912 the club participated in social events, philanthropic work, educational initiatives, boycotts, legal cases, and political campaigns with minority women's organizations and working

women's organizations such as the Women's Co-Op, the Portland Consumers' League, and the Portland Working Woman's Club. Moreover, the Woman's Club of Portland passed a resolution opposing any restriction of the right of African American women to enter the national General Federation of Women's Clubs, and it took steps—such as voting down proposed increases in membership dues—to remain accessible to women who had limited economic resources.[15] The club's engagement with other women's organizations only increased as its power did, and in 1899 it led the formation of the Oregon Federation of Women's Clubs. In addition to displaying significant ties to clubs throughout Oregon and Washington, the Woman's Club of Portland provides a case study that spans the most significant era of club activity in the region. The Woman's Club was established just as the club movement escalated in the Pacific Northwest, and it developed into one of the largest and most influential women's organizations in the region. Members of the Woman's Club of Portland generated additional clubs, organizations, and social movements in the Pacific Northwest and beyond.

In short, the Woman's Club of Portland exhibited strong ties to the larger club movement in the Pacific Northwest. It shared important characteristics, practices, issues, members, and challenges with other women's organizations in Oregon and Washington. Moreover, the Woman's Club and its members were strongly connected to other organizations and activities analyzed in this dissertation—from the Sacajawea Statue

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[15] In 1889, for example, the Woman's Club defeated an amendment that would have increased club membership fees from $2.50 to $5.00. Instead, to cover costs, the membership voted to raise annual club dues by 25 cents (WCP Minute Book, December 1895-March 1900, p. 113).

Association to legal advocacy on behalf of working women, and from the Washington Equal Suffrage Association to the Oregon State Equal Suffrage Association. As such, the Woman's Club of Portland offers a useful case study as an important component of women's campaign for equal rights. Yet at the end of the nineteenth century, the Woman's Club of Portland was but one fledgling group of local women who gathered in a parlor, endeavoring to become better mothers and citizens. How did this collective develop its members into skilled political speakers and campaigners? The analysis that follows illuminates this process by examining the rhetorical practices of the Woman's Club. Tracing the chronological evolution of the club members' discursive activities provides insight into how women came to perform as civic leaders, able to alter the public realm and their place within it.

Parliamentary Procedure, Democratic Performance, and Women's Identity

The second official meeting of the Woman's Club of Portland was called to order in room 321 of the Portland Hotel at two o'clock in the afternoon on 14 January 1896. Just a few minutes later, club members voted to adjourn the meeting temporarily and to relocate to the hotel lobby, as their room was "altogether too small to accommodate the 100 more ladies who were crowding into it."[16] After the group settled into the large lobby, it turned to the business of the day: reading and approving the minutes of the first club meeting, enrolling new members, debating and voting on a club constitution, appointing a committee to select a name for the club, and voting to meet again. This

[16] WCP Minute Book, December 1895-March 1900, p. 4.

meeting, like every other official gathering of the Woman's Club, was governed by parliamentary procedure, a deliberative method designed to aid groups in the efficient and democratic conduct of business. As I read club record books, minutes, and histories, I was struck by the prominence of this form of discourse. The Woman's Club of Portland employed parliamentary procedure for the election of members, delegates, committee members, and officers, as well as for the management of club activities and initiatives. In fact, this form of communication was used to decide virtually every matter that came before the club. In the club's early years, these matters included questions such as whether members should sign their own or their husbands' given names in the record book; the choice of location, time, and subjects for club meetings; the selection of the Oregon grape as the club flower; the price of membership dues; the allotment of club funds; the formation of committees and departments; the acceptance of invitations to collaborate with other women's organizations; the granting of permission to publish papers that were presented by club members at meetings; the creation of memorials to the state legislature; the organization of a state federation of women's clubs; and the generation of protests to the U.S. Congress.[17]

Parliamentary procedure was not only a form of discourse that clubwomen used to manage activities; it was also a subject that they actively studied, practiced, and discussed. Club records note that women frequently devoted afternoons to parliamentary drills, established a department for the study of "Expression and Parliamentary Law," and

[17] WCP Minute Book, December 1895-March 1900; WCP Minute Book, April 1900-December 1902; WCP Minute Book, January 1903-May 1905.

organized discussions on the topic "The Science of Government as Applied to Parliamentary Law."[18] Such engagement with parliamentary law and procedure was characteristic of most women's clubs in the Pacific Northwest. The founders of the Olympia Woman's Club in Washington, for example, perceived the practice to be so important that before initiating any club meetings, they copied fifteen pages on parliamentary procedure from the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*—by hand—to use for guidance.[19] Similarly, African American clubwomen in the Pacific Northwest spent large amounts of time studying and practicing the rules of parliamentary procedure. Women's clubs throughout the region had parliamentary drill as a regular feature of their meetings, and they often appointed parliamentary critics and official parliamentarians to keep the rules straight.[20]

The Woman's Club of Portland employed *Robert's Rules of Order*, which was first codified in 1876 and was touted as "The Standard Parliamentary Authority" in the 1890s.[21] *Robert's Rules* well suited the members and goals of women's clubs, as it

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[18] WCP Minute Book, December 1895-March 1900, pp. 42, 82.
[19] Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood*, 134-35.
[20] Regarding African American women's clubs and parliamentary procedure, see Lynda F. Dickson, "Toward a Broader Angle of Vision in Uncovering Women's History: Black Women's Clubs Revisited," *Frontiers* 9.2 (1987): 67. On the importance of parliamentary procedure to the Olympia Woman's Club and the common practice of appointing parliamentarians, see Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood*, 134-35.
[21] Don H. Doyle, "Rules of Order: Henry Martyn Robert and the Popularization of American Parliamentary Law," *American Quarterly* 32.1 (Spring 1980): 15; "Advertisements and Reviews," box 6, in Henry Martyn Robert Papers, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington, DC. As organizations adopted *Robert's Rules,* their names were listed in advertisements to demonstrate the book's broad appeal. In addition to women's clubs, organizations that adopted *Robert's Rules* included the Woman's Christian Temperance Union and the National Association of Colored Women.

instructed leaders "on how to run the meeting, but also gave the least experienced member on the floor the skills necessary to participate fully in that meeting."[22] The *Rules* provided procedures for conducting meetings in a way that enabled all members to be heard yet retained the right of the majority to decide questions.[23] In addition to providing clubwomen—many of whom were inexperienced in public forums—with guidelines for appropriate conduct, the study and practice of parliamentary procedure contributed to the development of women's political identity and to their effective participation in public advocacy. Clubwomen's use of parliamentary procedure developed their speaking abilities, enhanced their cooperation and collective power, trained them in democratic action and promoted faith in the democratic process, and challenged popular perceptions of women.

It was anything but easy for women in the Pacific Northwest at the turn of the twentieth century to speak out in public gatherings, even gatherings that consisted entirely of women. "It is hard to imagine how difficult it was for women to step forward to take up causes or speak publicly on issues," Haarsager observed of the Northwest of the 1890s. "One reason for the club movement's success," she proposed, "was that clubs offered safe settings, not only a haven for women to study and deliberate issues of public importance, but also a safe 'platform' from which to speak to an understanding and

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[22] Doyle, "Rules of Order," 18.
[23] Henry M. Robert, *Robert's Rules of Order* (Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1915), 178-202. See also Joseph T. Robert, *A Parliamentary Syllabus* (Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1897), 5-6.

supportive audience."[24] Building on Haarsager's scholarship, I suggest that clubs were an important site to foster women's development as public speakers, not simply because they offered an opportunity to speak to audiences that were generally all-female, but also because they provided members with clear and realizable guidelines for discursive participation in a group. By teaching and practicing parliamentary procedure, clubs offered women an opportunity to learn to speak "properly" in a public forum and provided a structure in which women could voice opinions—even contrary opinions—without violating norms of decorum. The practice of parliamentary procedure enabled women to maintain a sense of propriety as they developed a sense of agency.

As clubwomen practiced parliamentary procedure, speech rather than silence became the norm for women's behavior in the quasi-public forum of the club.[25] In order to carry out *Robert's Rules*, members of the Woman's Club had to speak at each meeting, even if it was simply to voice a vote of yea or nay. Beyond describing the practice of voting vocally, *Robert's Rules* provided instructions that made it feasible for club members to participate in forms of discourse that ranged from reading aloud to extemporaneous debate. Members could and did engage in a variety of speech acts as parliamentarians: voting, sharing club minutes, presenting information, making motions,

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[24] Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood*, 58.

[25] The Woman's Club resembles the kind of proto-public described by Rosa Eberly in that it was a forum in which private people connected through discursive exchange and shared interests, and it featured the rhetorical activities of nonexpert citizen critics. However, inasmuch as Eberly describes a proto-public as a literary public sphere located in a classroom environment, her term does not fully account for the activities of the Woman's Club, which extended beyond literary interpretation and occurred outside of a school setting. See Eberly, *Citizen Critics*: *Literary Public Spheres* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 2.

and contributing to debate about an issue before the group. In an organization governed by parliamentary procedure, women could progress through various kinds of speech acts at their own pace or comfort level, while maintaining an equal vote in club business. Moreover, they had the opportunity to observe other women engaged in forms of public discourse.

Robert's Rules also provided training in democratic action and cultivated faith in the democratic process.[26] Conducted according to the norms of parliamentary procedure, club meetings reflected what Robert W. English defines as "the five steps of democratic action."[27] Club members would vote to assemble, determining the time, location, and subject matter for the meeting; at the meeting, a member or members would present an idea to the group for consideration; the idea would be discussed by the group; the group would make motions and then vote on a response to the idea; and members would be appointed to carry out the decision. Working according to this pattern offered training in democratic action as it encouraged women to speak, debate, vote, and enact the will of the majority. It cultivated faith in a democratic process as it gave every woman a voice and vote in matters of collective concern.[28]

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[26] See Robert W. English, "Meaning and Importance of Parliamentary Procedure," *Today's Speech* 11.1 (February 1963): 18.
[27] See Robert W. English, "Five Basic Steps of Democratic Action," *Today's Speech* 9.4 (November 1961): 17.
[28] To some degree, this democratic character of the Woman's Club of Portland contrasted with the structure of other women's organizations in the Pacific Northwest, such as the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, which was dominated by the national leadership of Frances Willard, and early suffrage clubs that were largely controlled by Abigail Scott Duniway.

The minutes of a March 1896 club meeting offer insight into the regular operations of the organization and the manner in which club activities cultivated women's familiarity with and faith in democratic processes. The meeting began with the reading of meeting minutes and the admission of new members, and then it turned to performances by club members. This portion of the program featured a presentation entitled "Dante—Sketch of His Life and Review of Some of His Best Works" by Mrs. M. E. Young, an instrumental solo by Mrs. W. E. Thomas, a reading of the Henry Wadsworth Longfellow poem "Divinia Commedia" by Miss Mary A. Rockey, and a vocal performance of a song entitled "Dawn" by Mrs. J. Cader Powell. These cultural activities were followed by a formal presentation on the practical question of the day entitled "Some Defects in Our Educational System," by Mrs. R. H. Miller. After Miller's lecture, the club engaged in a discussion of "the inferiority of public schools to the training and fitting of youth for the battle of life." At the conclusion of the lengthy discussion, a member moved that the club send a letter to the *Oregonian,* the most prominent daily newspaper in Portland, requesting that the newspaper publish the text of Miller's presentation on the issue. The motion carried, and a committee was appointed to send a letter on behalf of the club to the *Oregonian*.[29]

As they addressed issues that ranged from Dante to the educational system, clubwomen performed as democratic citizens, researching problems, making public

[29] WCP Minute Book, December 1895-March 1900, pp. 13-14. As time passed, club members responded to the ideas that were presented with more assertive forms of action. By the early 1900s, they were memorializing Congress and the state legislature, raising funds, opening schools, endorsing candidates for office, and organizing their own solutions to community problems.

presentations, debating the merits of issues, voting on courses of action, and electing representatives to lead initiatives and act on behalf of the group. In the club forum, women voted, and their votes were the force that authorized and compelled collective action. Clubwomen discovered that democracy could work for them—that democracy could be something other than the model that dominated U.S. politics, the model that promised a government of, by, and for the people yet denied the franchise to more than half of the adult population.

Communicating and working according to norms of parliamentary procedure was a practice whereby clubwomen could register differing views and disagreement, while also preserving relationships, impelling decisions and progress, securing the majority will, and practicing democracy. As women of differing backgrounds, ideas, and visions tried to work together in the club setting, *Robert's Rules* provided a discursive structure that was useful for navigating contentious moments and new relationships. When the Woman's Club of Portland elected its executive officers for 1896, for instance, Mrs. J. C. Card and Abigail Scott Duniway were nominated for the club presidency. After contentious remarks by both candidates, Card defeated Duniway by a vote of 27 to 9. Card's victory was remarkable, given Duniway's prominence as a leading pioneer, author, publisher, organizer, and activist. Equally remarkable is the grace with which Duniway accepted the will of the club: although she was nationally known for her aggressive and relentless pursuit of political goals and personal power, she immediately and unequivocally endorsed the majority view of the Woman's Club. Records note that "on the motion of Mrs. Duniway, Mrs. Card was declared unanimously elected—a neat

speech from the newly elected president was well received."[30] The practice of parliamentary procedure provided a framework in which Woman's Club members cultivated their abilities to work through differences for the collective good. It gave every woman an equal voice and vote in matters of collective concern, protecting the group from being dominated by a singular person or a leading minority.[31]

The use of *Robert's Rules* also fostered a sense of authority among clubwomen in the Pacific Northwest, many of whom saw parliamentary procedure as "the language of democracy and power, spoken by men."[32] As members of the Woman's Club pursued "parliamentary usage with a view of having a more accurate knowledge of one's rights upon the floor and one's duty in the chair of an assembly," they demonstrated that the mode of deliberative exchange that governed political arenas such as the state legislature and the U.S. Congress was one that could be learned, applied, and mastered by women.[33] Knowledge of and skill in parliamentary tactics supplied women with a sense of accomplishment and a realization that they were qualified not only to participate in deliberation but also to provide democratic leadership. They described this communication practice not as a source of rules for rules' sake, but as a dynamic resource that could and ought to be used to secure the collective good.

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[30] WCP Minute Book, December 1895-March 1900, pp. 6-7.
[31] See Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood*, 15.
[32] Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood*, 138.
[33] *Club Life*, October 1902, 3. See also Elisabeth S. Clemens, "Organizational Repertoires and Institutional Change: Women's Groups and the Transformation of U.S. Politics, 1890-1920," *American Journal of Sociology* 98.4 (January 1993): 769.

In her 1897 address as club president, Mrs. J. C. Card theorized that "the reference to parliamentary law leads to the suggestion that there is always danger in a deliberative body of making parliamentary rules into some sort of fetish. Lawyers are not the only people who lose sight of the merits of a cause in the technicalities of its management. Witness the way in which 'the rules' have tied half the business of our Congress hand and foot."[34] This passage made several remarkable assertions: First, as it warned of dangers that existed for practitioners of parliamentary procedure, it categorized its audience of clubwomen alongside members of the bar and of Congress. Second, it implied that even women who lacked legal training had the authority to advise lawyers and congressmen, as well as the sagacity and skill to avoid the deliberative dangers that ensnared powerful men. As women acquired understanding of parliamentary techniques and skill in the use of parliamentary tactics, they came to believe that they could behave as democratic citizens as well as—if not better—than men. Moreover, they performed as able communicators who were qualified to participate in public deliberation.

Clubwomen's expertise in parliamentary procedure also created opportunities for them in the public realm. The Woman's Club of Portland taught and demonstrated *Robert's Rules* to mixed audiences at chautauquas, fairs, and other large gatherings throughout the region. As clubwomen led men and women in parliamentary exercises, mock debates, and real debates from public stages, they performed as public authorities. In this sense, expertise in procedure occasionally served as a surrogate for political

[34] Mrs. J. C. Card, "President's Address," *First Annual Report*, 1897, p. 7, Portland Woman's Club (Or.) Records.

power, connoting women's authority and providing a means to assert women's qualifications for political participation.[35]

Finally, as it cultivated public speaking skills, cooperation, democratic faith and participation, and authority, the use of parliamentary procedure by the Woman's Club of Portland challenged popular perceptions of women. Clubwomen consciously worked to "supplant a popular image of chatty, illogical matrons with that of businesslike volunteer reformers," and their ordered discursive practice contributed to this end. It demonstrated that "women were capable of being independent citizens rather than subject to undue direction by priests, husbands, or other authorities," and that women themselves could act authoritatively, rationally, and skillfully in public deliberations.[36] As they made disciplined and innovative use of *Robert's Rules* in local parlor meetings and in national conventions, women displayed qualities associated with skillful participation in public deliberation and prepared to engage the political establishment to secure what they perceived as the public interest. By 1916 women were so well known for their use of parliamentary procedure that Henry M. Robert, the author of *Robert's Rules*, declared, "In this country, a knowledge of parliamentary law [is] an essential part of the education of every manly man, and now this is equally true of every woman who wishes to live up to her responsibilities."[37]

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[35] Portland Woman's Club (Or.) Records; Willamette Valley Chautauqua Records, B 137, Special Collections, University of Oregon, Eugene; Eva Emery Dye Papers, Mss 1089, Oregon Historical Society (hereafter cited as EED Papers).
[36] Clemens, "Organizational Repertoires," 69.
[37] Henry M. Robert, "Lecture on Parliamentary Law," Cincinnati, 1916 or 1917, pp. 1-2, Henry Martyn Robert Papers; Doyle, "Rules of Order," 18.

Parliamentary procedure, then, was not merely a rule system or a rote practice in which clubwomen engaged. It was an important communication tool for women's group decision making, empowerment, and political development. As they used *Robert's Rules*, members of the Woman's Club of Portland created a female-governed space in which they considered public issues, began to address the public outside the club with a collective voice, and realized the power of organized womanhood. In conjunction with parliamentary procedure, a number of rhetorical activities fostered a new political subjectivity among women and empowered them to participate in the public realm. The remainder of this chapter analyzes these forms of discourse—including women's presentations at club meetings and their political advocacy—in order to illuminate clubwomen's increasing engagement with civic issues.

Club Presentations, Rhetorical Evolution, and Public Action

While parliamentary procedure provided a framework for raising and responding to club matters and practical questions, presentations by and to club members grounded club activities, giving the organization purpose and focus. Regular meetings of the Woman's Club of Portland usually consisted of a call to order, the reading of minutes from the previous meeting, the admission of new members, and reports from standing committees; a presentation on a cultural subject, such as literature, music, or the visual arts; a musical performance or poetry reading; a presentation on a practical question selected in advance by the club; group discussion of the practical question; and, finally, motions and votes in response to the practical question. By 1902 presentations on cultural

issues were often omitted from club meetings, and members focused their attention on practical questions and activities. The analysis that follows examines presentations that were delivered by members of the Woman's Club between 1896 and 1912 and the symbolic actions in which the club engaged in response.

In order to fulfill their goals for self-improvement, women recognized that "they had to force themselves, however painful, to learn to speak publicly," and they discovered that an effective way to combat timidity and inexperience regarding public speaking was to hold topical sessions in which women could draw on their personal experiences, as well as in-depth research, to produce presentations and participate in discussions.[38] For the Woman's Club of Portland, these activities progressed from discussions of fine arts to engagement with civic issues. This pattern was common among women's organizations throughout the United States. Blair observes that in women's clubs across the country, "again and again, the topics dealt not only with the arts, but with women's place in the arts and, finally, women's place in society."[39] Clubwomen in the Pacific Northwest generally began by studying literature and art with one another, becoming adept critics as they analyzed works and artists and growing in confidence through these presentations and discussions. Next, they often considered how great works, artists, and writers related to current events and to their own situations, and they sponsored cultural initiatives such as lecture series, plays, musical performances, and the production of public art. For women's clubs in the Pacific Northwest, another common

[38] Blair, *Clubwoman as Feminist*, 67.
[39] Blair, *Clubwoman as Feminist*, 69.

progression was to study women of the past, which led to discussions of women in the present. As clubs studied women's roles, Haarsager notes, they usually moved from study to action on social, political, and legal problems of the day affecting women.[40] This pattern—moving from discussion of the arts to debate about civic life and women's role in it—was typical of women's clubs from the East to the West, but the evolution occurred more rapidly in women's clubs of the Pacific Northwest than it did elsewhere. Owing to the absence of social services and institutions in some areas of the region, many women's clubs of the Northwest became involved in public issues more speedily than did comparable clubs in the East.[41] Records of the Woman's Club of Portland demonstrate that over just a few years, a marked evolution occurred in the kinds of topics that clubwomen studied and the forms of discursive action that they used to respond to these topics.

Between 1897 and 1899, the activities of the Woman's Club of Portland shifted in two important ways: the topics of study progressed from purely cultural to patently civic issues, and the club's responses to presentations and discussions progressed from simple votes of thanks to multifaceted political campaigns. Although this change was not a completely linear development, a general shift is clear. Members of the Woman's Club of Portland began by delivering presentations such as "Greek Art" and "Women of

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[40] Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood*, 152.

[41] Haarsager suggests that as "the community problems in the Pacific Northwest differed from the problems women faced elsewhere," clubwomen in the region engaged in "a more intense and material kind of club activism, with more practical and visible results" (27-28). Regarding the cultural and political activities of women's clubs in the East, see Blair, *Clubwoman as Feminist*.

Shakespeare" and responded to these presentations by offering formal thanks to speakers. But in less than eighteen months, the same clubwomen were involved in research, analysis, and discussion of topics including public education and women wageworkers in Oregon. Moreover, as women turned their attention from cultural considerations to civic issues, they engaged in new forms of rhetorical action in response to club presentations.

The remainder of this section examines the first half of this trend—that is, women's consideration of issues that were primarily cultural, and the kinds of rhetoric that they produced in response to club presentations and discussions. The next section analyzes the changes that occurred in women's rhetorical production as they focused on civic institutions, women's history, and women's roles in civic life. Although archives contain few complete texts of papers that were delivered at Woman's Club meetings, club minutes and local newspapers recorded the titles and authors of many presentations, printed excerpts of presentations and discussions, and detailed club actions in response. My analysis of the presentations, discussions, and actions produced by the club—as well as general trends in the kinds of subjects that the members addressed—suggests that the practice of preparing, delivering, debating, and responding to presentations not only allowed women to develop public speaking and other discursive skills, but it also imparted connections between women's personal experiences and public issues and impelled the club's involvement in public affairs.

In short, the discursive practice of formulating and responding to cultural and civic issues shaped the mission of the club as well as the identity of its members. Club meetings and presentations established an interpretive community in which women

developed and articulated a vision of western life that differed from predominant narratives, narratives that left women out altogether or characterized them as helpless individuals.[42] The collective rhetorical practices of clubwomen not only generated an alternative perspective on women in the history of the Pacific Northwest, but they also provided an impetus for public action, in order to bring the world as it was in line with the world as women believed it ought to be.

Many of the first papers that were presented to the Woman's Club by its members were informative and analytic essays about the fine arts. At two of the first regular meetings of the club, the featured presentations were entitled "Greek Art" and "Comparative Study of Art."[43] Presentations on the arts were generally accompanied by three activities: artistic performances produced by other club members, discussion of the subject of the presentation by the entire club, and a vote regarding action to be taken in light of the essay. On 9 April 1897, for instance, the program for the afternoon featured a presentation entitled "American Composers and Their Music," which was preceded by a vocal solo and followed by a club discussion of the cultural influence of American composers. At the conclusion of the meeting, members voted to extend formal thanks to the presenter.[44] Such programs offered cultural edification and entertainment in equal measure; they provided women with opportunities to increase their knowledge about cultural matters and to display their performance abilities. The club's initial focus on fine arts aligned with popular perceptions of femininity. That is, it engaged women in the

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[42] See Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood*, 157.
[43] WCP Minute Book, December 1895-March 1900, pp. 39-43.
[44] WCP Minute Book, December 1895-March 1900, pp. 42-43.

study of a subject that emphasized beauty and that was not overtly political or controversial.

Although the connection between women and the fine arts was not new, the practice of presenting essays and engaging in extemporaneous debate before a large group provided women with a new set of experiences and skills.[45] First, as authors and presenters of essays, women were challenged to develop their abilities in research, analysis, argumentation, critical writing, and speaking from a manuscript. Blair correctly observes that "clubwomen needed more than confidence in order to present papers." They needed research and writing skills to prepare the papers that they would read, and they acquired these abilities through the act of doing. Clubs selected and assigned paper topics and presentation dates far in advance, and women painstakingly prepared their essays, scouring one another's homes for books and sharing drafts with each other. "Never before," confessed one presenter, "had I spent so much labor in the preparation of anything."[46]

The papers that women wrote and presented did not simply offer summary information about the subject in question, but they also advanced specific theses or analytic claims. This kind of work challenged women to become authorities on subjects, to act as leaders and teachers before a group. Producing analytic essays also challenged

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[45] At the end of the nineteenth century, the kinds of artistic performances in which clubwomen engaged were more familiar to and characteristic of women than oratorical performance or other forms of public expression. Yet to play before a large group was indeed a public act, one that allowed women to demonstrate their expertise and skill to audiences. In this sense, artistic performance provided an opportunity for public action to women who were not yet willing or prepared to lecture publicly.

[46] Blair, *Clubwoman as Feminist*, 68.

women to take important intellectual and discursive risks in a public forum, specifically to advance claims that could be controversial and to build arguments based on evidence. As women engaged the challenge of speaking before a group, it was significant that they did so in a female-governed space. For an audience in the Woman's Club, in contrast to many mixed-sex public audiences, the act of a woman's presenting was not viewed as scandalous, and this fact made it possible for club presentations to be judged by their quality rather than dismissed outright because of the sex of their authors.

Second, the group discussions that followed each presentation provided women with opportunities to voice questions and concerns, articulate counterarguments, and engage in extemporaneous speech acts in a public forum. Minutes suggest that such discussions were abbreviated in the early years of the Woman's Club, as women offered polite thanks rather than extended comments in response to the presentations that they heard. But in time, the discussion of presentations and special topics became a vibrant feature of club life. To some clubwomen, this transformation was nearly miraculous. As she spoke in 1901 of the group's achievements, club president Viola Coe said:

> Such a thing as a discussion of the papers by the general membership of the club was absolutely unheard of, and indeed no one could have expected that without the interposition of a miracle, the frightened and unready women of that time, who, clinging to a chair for support, and with eyes chained to the manuscript, uttered in husky tones their halting thoughts, could ever be transformed into the really skilled debators [*sic*] that some have become. In fact the transformation has been brought about by a miracle, the miracle of . . . persistent practice.[47]

[47] Viola Coe, "President's Annual Address," 1901, Portland Woman's Club (Or.) Records. This passage in Coe's speech appears to paraphrase Julia Green Ferguson, *Club History* (Buffalo, NY: Press of Peter, Paul and Brother, 1890), 4.

In a few short years, through presentations and discussion in the club forum, women learned that silence was not necessarily a virtue. Rather than feeling intimidated by a large group or impolite for asking questions, women found it acceptable and productive to speak out and to engage others in deliberation.[48] The communicative framework that governed these discussions—parliamentary procedure—gave women tools with which to become confident and able participants. Yet it was the substance of the presentations themselves that provided clubwomen with subject matter and purpose for deliberation and for further action.

Deliberations generally concluded with another form of discursive practice: a vote for action. Early on, members frequently moved and voted that formal thanks be extended to the day's presenter on behalf of the Woman's Club. But members quickly progressed to more public forms of action. They voted to publish papers in periodicals edited by club members, such as the *Pacific Empire*, and then to pursue the publication of clubwomen's papers in the major Portland newspaper, the *Oregonian*. In addition to cultivating a practice of responding to the papers that were presented with symbolic forms of action, these votes began to integrate clubwomen's voices into the broader public realm. The publication of women's papers in regional periodicals—and especially in the *Oregonian*—brought attention to the activities of the Woman's Club, put women's knowledge and ideas on public display, and demonstrated their ability to conduct research and to articulate cogent arguments. Clubwomen's cooperation with the *Oregonian* grew with time; by 1889, the newspaper reported on every meeting of the

[48] Blair, *Clubwoman as Feminist*, 71.

Woman's Club and published essays and announcements authored by clubwomen on a regular basis. In sum, club discourse about the fine arts cultivated important rhetorical skills among members and led them to obtain a new, more public forum for the expression of their knowledge and ideas.

For the Woman's Club of Portland, engagement with the fine arts led to specific consideration of women in the arts. This progression was typical of many women's clubs throughout the region and the United States at the turn of the century. "Although clubwomen felt that art enhanced everyone's life," Blair observed, they were particularly "anxious to determine the impact that culture had on their sex."[49] The study of women in the arts—that is, analysis of characterizations of women in canonical works of art and by famous male artists, as well as examination of the work of female artists—provided a way for women to consider their own place in society. Moreover, it contributed to women's awareness of fissures between cultural norms of femininity and women's lived experiences, needs, and hopes. Members of the Woman's Club gave papers entitled "Women of Shakespeare" and "Woman in Music," as well as papers on the work of Denver sculptor Alice Cooper and the historical fiction of Oregon author Eva Emery Dye. Following presentations like these, clubwomen debated questions such as "Has literature been elevated by the writings of women?" and "Is the woman given to us by women composers more true to life than the woman drawn by men?"[50] In addition to offering entertainment and cultural edification, meetings that focused on the subject of

[49] Blair, *Clubwoman as Feminist*, 28.
[50] WCP Minute Book, December 1895-March 1900, pp. 52-55.

women and the arts provided women with an opportunity to voice their own perceptions of women's character, abilities, and potential. Moreover, they provided opportunities for members to learn about women who were engaged in cultural production.

As they had done in response to earlier studies of art, clubwomen responded to the presentation "Women of Shakespeare" with a vote of thanks, and they voted to request that the *Oregonian* publish "Woman in Music." Soon, however, women pursued new kinds of actions in response to club members' presentations and discussions. In 1899 the club established an Art Department, which aimed to establish an art school in Portland. The Woman's Club also promoted interest in and access to the arts in their community by bringing artwork and artists to Portland for exhibitions, concerts, and lectures. These actions created opportunities for training, performance, and income for women and men alike: the club featured the work of both female and male artists and opened classes to individuals of both sexes. Such activities also served as a source of funding for the club, placed clubwomen in a position of leadership in the community, and increased the prominence of the Woman's Club.

In the late 1890s club meetings turned from the study of women in the arts to a broader range of cultural topics, topics that interested club members but still were not traditionally the domain of men and were not generally controversial. These subjects encompassed children's literature, home architecture, and flowers. In keeping with club routines, members first engaged these topics through individual presentations, then participated in group discussion about the subject, and eventually produced collective responses to the question at hand. One of the most detailed and useful examples of this

pattern is the club's consideration of native flowers. On 11 November 1898 this topic was introduced to the club through a presentation entitled "The Evolution of the Flower," which was followed by a lecture, "Native Plants of the Pacific Northwest." Before the meeting concluded, the club members discussed the question "What shall our state flower be?" Grace Ross moved that "the Oregon Grape be the Club Flower," and the motion prevailed. At the next regular meeting of the club, on 23 December, a motion carried "that the Board of Directors prepair [*sic*] a Memorial, asking the Legislature to make the 'Oregon Grape' the state flower of Oregon."[51]

For clubwomen, this memorial—which was delivered to the Oregon state legislature in early 1899—represented a significant step into the realm of political discourse and action. In addition to being one of the earliest instances in which women of Oregon formally addressed a legislative body in the state, it was an instance in which they did so with a collective voice. The memorial to the legislature was submitted in conjunction with what was perhaps the first public, political campaign organized by the club membership. As one committee of clubwomen prepared the memorial, another committee held a contest, soliciting poems on the Oregon grape. After reading and debating the merits of poems contributed by clubwomen and the general public, the committee selected six poems as "the best of those contributed," and the club membership "moved and carried that these six poems . . . be submitted to the *Oregonian* for publication." After a group of clubwomen lobbied editors of the *Oregonian*, the poems appeared in the newspaper alongside an article that discussed club efforts to have

[51] WCP Minute Book, December 1895-March 1900, pp. 80-86.

the Oregon grape named the state flower. Yet another committee of clubwomen traveled to Salem to lobby legislators in the state capitol. The small campaign achieved what male committees had failed to do for nine years, despite extensive effort: Concurrent Resolution Number Four of the Oregon Legislative Assembly passed on 30-31 January 1899, adopting as the state flower *berberis aqifolium*, a low-growing plant featuring pinnated, waxy green leaves and bearing dainty yellow flowers and edible dark blue berries, and commonly known as Oregon grape.[52] Perhaps more important, the experience acquainted women with their collective power, familiarized them with a new form of public discourse and the political system, and contributed to their realization that they were "women, whose cultural interests are social as well as individual."[53]

Following the success of their first campaign, club members increasingly became engaged with social reform issues. In the forum of the Woman's Club—and having gained substantial skills for public engagement and experience in the political realm—women began to suggest that in order to fulfill their domestic responsibilities, it was

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[52] A committee comprised of male members of the Oregon Horticultural Society and the Oregon Historical Society had been engaged in public debate about the selection of a state flower since 1890. They failed to establish consensus or to advance a bill on the subject to the state legislature. Among the flowers considered by this committee were the bearded gaillardia, the Washington lily, the wake-robin, the madrone, and the Oregon grape. On 18 July 1892 a committee that consisted of male members of the Oregon Historical Society voted to petition the Oregon legislature to advocate the adoption of the Oregon grape as the Oregon state flower. Despite the petition by these men of the Oregon Historical Society, the Oregon legislature did not act on the issue until 1899, when the Woman's Club of Portland "rallied the support of women across the state" and achieved the adoption of the Oregon grape as the state flower. See *Oregon Blue Book* (Salem, OR: Secretary of State, 2007); *West's Oregon Revised Statutes Annotated* (New York: Thomson West, 2003), Title 16, Chapter 186; "Oregon State Flower," *Portland Oregonian*, 20 July 1892, 2.

[53] *History of the Portland Woman's Club*, 2.

necessary for them to address social needs that existed beyond their parlors, kitchens, and gardens. Particularly in the Pacific Northwest, where communities lacked many institutions and services that were common in the East, clubwomen began to investigate and to seek to address public needs, rather than focusing only on literature and culture. The philosophy with which women justified greater involvement in civic life became known as municipal housekeeping; this view fundamentally redefined women's sphere to include public issues that might influence family life, from education to labor laws.[54] A member of the Woman's Club would distill this perspective in a 1906 speech, saying:

> With enlarging liberties of this 20th century, home's not a mere box of a house to wash and iron and cook in, home is where ever our children go, into the school, the street, the shop, the factory. As the railroad and telegraphy have facilitated intercourse with our neighbors so the removal of spinning and weaving and soap boiling to factories has enlarged our kitchens. We must have a mode of speaking to those departments of our homes and in a voice that can be heard.[55]

Seven years prior to this assertive claim about a place for women in the public realm, however, the Woman's Club had yet to engage in symbolic action that directly addressed social needs or to campaign for social reform. The remainder of this chapter traces the rhetorical practices through which clubwomen changed their relationship to the civic realm and influenced public policy and political culture in the Pacific Northwest.

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[54] Regarding municipal housekeeping and women's clubs, see Blair, *Clubwoman as Feminist*, 98.

[55] Eva Emery Dye, [Woman's suffrage] (1906), p. 1, box 10, folder 4, EED Papers.

Making Club Interests Public Issues

Following their successful campaign to name a state flower, members of the Woman's Club of Portland engaged civic issues that were larger in scope, such as the creation of new public institutions. Women's involvement with civic issues and "practical questions" began in the same way as their cultural activities: with informative presentations at club meetings. More specifically, the transition from culture to reform occurred as women discussed something that was both a cultural center and a public institution. Immediately after its state flower campaign, the club took up the subject of libraries. On 9 December 1898 Sarah A. Evans presented to the club a lecture entitled "Mural Decorations of the Boston Public Library," and Mrs. E. W. Bingham gave "an account of visits made by herself to Public Institutions of this kind, in Boston, Philadelphia, Washington & other cities." After lengthy discussion of the subject, the club determined "that the city of Portland should no longer remain the only city of any note, in the Union, without this modern Institution, and moved, 'That this Woman's Club of more than 100 members, unite in strong and systematic effort to form a Free Library.'" The motion carried, and after further discussion it was moved and carried "that a large committee be appointed by the Chair, to take action with view to establishing a Public Library."[56]

Evans was appointed chair of the club's Free Library Committee, which organized a multifaceted public campaign for the establishment of free public libraries

[56] WCP Minute Book, December 1895-March 1900, pp. 79-80.

not only in Portland but throughout the state of Oregon.[57] The committee began by researching and drafting a proposal for a free public library in Portland but "learned that there was nothing on the statute books of Oregon which would permit incorporated cities to tax themselves for library."[58] Consequently, the club produced a legislative proposal, with the assistance of several lawyers and Oregon state representative George H. Hill. Hill introduced the bill to the 1899 Oregon Legislative Assembly, but it was not given a hearing.[59] The Woman's Club was informed that "a law such as they required could not be framed for a single town, and that Portland alone had made the demand."[60] In response, members of the Woman's Club issued a call for a convention to organize a state federation of women's clubs. On 24 October 1899 the Woman's Club of Portland met with sixteen clubs from around the state, and the Oregon State Federation of Women's

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[57] On 11 November 1899 "Mrs. Rockwell, President, announced her Committee to proceed in the matter of 'Free Library,' the Committee appointed, stands as follows: Mrs. S.A. Evans, Mrs. J.C. Cardd, Mrs. A.S. Duniway, Mrs. H.L. Pittock, Mrs. L.C. LaBarre, Mrs. A.H. Brapear, Mrs. B.S. Pague, Mrs. F. Eggert, Mrs. R. Miller, Mrs. Geo. C. Flanders, Mrs. W.J. Lehigh, Mrs. Dr. Thompson, Mrs. E.W. Bingham, Mrs. Julia Marquam, Mrs. L.W. Sitton, Mrs. G.T. Myers, Mrs. C.P. Holly, Mrs. M.C. Pherkelson, Mrs. H.E. Heppner, Mrss. M.A. Dallow, Mrs. B.H. Myers, Mrs. J.B. Comstock, Mrs. Sol. Hirsch, Mrs. Sen. Smith and Mrs. W.W. Spaulding." WCP Minute Book, December 1895-March 1900, p. 80. Regarding the appointment of Evans as chair of the Library Committee, see *History of the Portland Woman's Club*, 1.

[58] *History of the Portland Woman's Club*, 1.

[59] WCP Minute Book, December 1895-March 1900, p. 104. Minutes of the club's 12 May 1899 meeting note, "Mrs. Holly moved a vote of thanks be extended the lawyers who so ably assisted the Free Library Committee in preparing a Bill to present before the Legislature, including Mr. Geo. H. Hill, who introduced this bill, and that the Sec'y be instructed to convey this action to these gentlemen. Motion carried and Sec'y was so instructed."

[60] *History of the Portland Woman's Club*, 1.

Clubs was formed.[61] Once established, the federation's first order of business was the introduction of a modified bill and "a vigorous drive . . . to reach the legislators in the interests of the bill for the establishment of free public libraries."[62] To organize broad support for public library legislation in Oregon, members of the Oregon State Federation of Women's Clubs raised awareness for the cause in their communities through book drives, social events, and fundraisers. They worked with University of Oregon professor Joseph Schafer to create, publish, and circulate a pamphlet, *Why I Approve of a Free Library,* which contained endorsements from twenty "nationally prominent men." They also sent clubwomen to the state capitol for the duration of the 1901 legislative session, to lobby for passage of the bill.[63]

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[61] WCP Minute Book, December 1895-March 1900, p. 117; *History of the Portland Woman's Club*, 1-2; Jim Scheppke, "The Origins of the Oregon State Library," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 107.1 (Spring 2006): 130-40. The WCP Minute Book notes that a special meeting was called on 19 September 1899 to "consider the feasibility of calling a convention to organize a State Federation. The President stated the benefits the Club would derive from Federation, the broadening influence; strength and inspiration which would come from a club union embracing the bright women of our state which already has 30 clubs; there are 30 states in the Union having State Federation, Washington being the only one on the Pacific Coast, Seattle already has a city Federation so that Washington is much ahead of Oregon in that respect." The *History of the Portland Woman's Club* points to the library campaign as the impetus for this special meeting and for federation, noting that in response to dismissal of their first bill, the committee "was resourceful. The formation of a state federation apparently being the only way to secure the support which Portland women needed in presenting their appeal to the legislative body, the Club determined, through Mrs. Sarah Evans, to call a general convention of Oregon Women's Clubs" (17).

[62] *History of the Portland Woman's Club*, 2.

[63] *History of the Portland Woman's Club*, 2; Scheppke, "Origins of the Oregon State Library," 137; Wilbur D. Rowe, "The Development of the Oregon State Library and Its Contribution to the Public Schools" (M.A. thesis, University of Oregon, 1939), 20-22; Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood*, 162. Scheppke notes, "The Woman's Club of Portland approved a budget of fifty dollars to support Sarah Evans and another

"After the legislators were assured that the library bill had nothing to do with women's suffrage," historian Wilbur D. Rowe writes, "it was passed, February 13, 1901, with only two votes against it. The bill was signed . . . and sent to Mrs. Evans and Mrs. Brayman, who took it to Portland where they presented it, in triumph, at the Woman's Club meeting the following day."[64] On 18 July 1901 the city of Portland used the new state law to approve a property tax equivalent to twenty cents per one thousand dollars of assessed valuation so that a former subscription library could be made free and available to anyone in the city. The tenth of March 1902 marked the opening of the tax-supported Portland Public Library. Shortly thereafter, Mary Frances Isom was made director of the library, and she worked in concert with the Woman's Club of Portland and the Oregon State Federation of Women's Clubs to form one of the first county libraries in the United States, to pass a House bill creating the Oregon Library Commission, and to establish a state library system for Oregon.[65] The state library system made books available to citizens throughout Oregon through established libraries in cities, towns, and county seats and through traveling libraries that reached rural areas. It made books that had been largely out of the grasp of working-class populations available to all, a development that

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Federation member, Mrs. A. H. Brayman of Salem, to lobby for the bill at the state capitol" (137). Other clubwomen joined Evans and Brayman at the capitol, on occasion, to lobby. After the bill was passed, Evans and Brayman presented it to the Woman's Club of Portland—and returned about half of the traveling expenses voted from the treasury for their stay in Salem (Rowe, 22).

[64] Rowe, "Development of the Oregon State Library," 22.

[65] Scheppke, "Origins of the Oregon State Library," 136-38. Isom, a librarian with a degree from Wellesley College who had received library training at the Pratt Institute and worked at the Cleveland Public Library, arrived in Oregon in 1901.

was significant in an era when concepts of literacy and citizenship were closely linked.[66] Whereas many residents had once lacked access to basic information and knowledge, libraries provided opportunities for learning and self-improvement regardless of one's economic or social standing. Moreover, as Haarsager writes, "the physical construct of the public library, with its open-ended access to what was believed to be the best the western tradition had to offer in a setting of order was the standard-bearer in community validation" for many Oregon towns and cities.[67]

For clubwomen, libraries were a tangible and permanent product of their hard work. But beyond being a concrete symbol of women's capacity to alter the political and physical landscape of their communities, and a monument to their organizational experience and achievement, libraries were vibrant public institutions that well served clubwomen and their goals. Libraries provided an ordered public space in which women could gather, converse, and study. They were also public institutions in which women claimed a significant measure of authority. In addition to being created by women, the Portland Public Library was directed by a woman, and it employed women. Thus, the library created economic opportunities for women in the city, and since women determined most of the library collection, it provided them with an arena for cultural influence. In addition, it provided something that would remain important to clubwomen: access to research materials that would prove useful for preparing club presentations,

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[66] See Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood*, 161-66.
[67] Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood*, 162.

understanding community needs, and developing—and advocating—programs to meet some of those needs.

Women reaped substantial benefits from the existence of free public libraries in the state of Oregon, yet they gained nearly as much from their campaign to establish them. The first major political campaign by the Woman's Club of Portland—and the State Federation of Women's Clubs—provided training and success in new modes of political discourse. Women learned how to create and implement a legislative agenda in response to an issue, and they participated in a variety of styles of political discourse in order to achieve passage of their measures. Some of these styles extended women's traditional forms of discourse—such as conducting one-on-one conversations—into the political realm, as clubwomen lobbied individuals regarding the library bill, going door-to-door in their communities to collect books and serving homemade desserts to legislators at the state capitol. Other styles of discourse deviated from women's traditional, personal modes of communication: their legislative bills, political pamphlet, public speeches at city council meetings, and formal addresses to the large membership of the State Federation of Women's Clubs were patently public, political speech acts.

These rhetorical practices constituted a direct campaign, by women, on a political issue. Although the library bills were less controversial than, say, later woman suffrage measures would be, the campaign entailed the controversial question of women's role in the public realm. The library campaign served as a catalyst for the organization of women throughout Oregon, providing important resources and collective power for conducting large-scale campaigns. The passage of the bills and the establishment of tax-funded

public libraries demonstrated to clubwomen and to the general public that women were capable of influencing public priorities and policy, and that women could contribute to politics in the Pacific Northwest. Empowered by the success of their library campaign, members of the Woman's Club would quickly pursue and achieve public funding for an impressive array of civic initiatives, including the preservation of trees in Portland's now-famous park blocks, the construction of public playgrounds, the establishment of schools for girls, the organization of settlement houses, and the employment of market inspectors.

Clubwomen's movement into the civic realm and their efforts to alter public policy did not occur without controversy or resistance. Often, legislators, businessmen, and newspapers shrugged off women's public activities with silence or condescending remarks. Men in power also directly rebuffed Woman's Club initiatives. Yet in the face of public rejection, clubwomen often responded with innovation in order to produce achievements. A series of events in the early twentieth century well illustrates this pattern. In 1903 clubwomen sent a letter to Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition board member Henry E. Reed, proposing to establish a Board of Lady Managers and to construct a Woman's Building for the Exposition. The Exposition board thoroughly rebuffed clubwomen's efforts to participate in the management and construction of the 1905 World's Fair in Portland, suggesting instead that women focus on "beautifying the fair grounds."[68] Although members of the Woman's Club were angered and perhaps hurt

[68] Letter to Henry E. Reed, 10 April 1903, box 1, folder 3, in Lewis and Clark Centennial and American Pacific Exposition and Oriental Fair Records, Mss 1069, Oregon Historical Society, Portland; see also box 16, folders 2-3. A significant and well-publicized feature of the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago had been a Woman's Building,

by this patronizing suggestion, they transformed the response into an opportunity by presenting the Exposition board with a plan for "beautification" that included a bronze statue to be placed at the center of the fair. As chapter 3 details, the production of this statue—*Sacajawea*—was an enormously successful endeavor for clubwomen, one that created a platform for women speakers at the Exposition, popularized a powerful new image of women, developed important fundraising and media networks, and raised large sums of money for the club. In this instance, as in many others, clubwomen took advantage of the narrow opportunities that were available to them to create new openings and resources for women to participate in civic life.

An official history of the Woman's Club of Portland observes that in the first years of the twentieth century, "the Woman's Club by well-directed effort began to assume a place of consequence. Slowly the tide was turning in favor of women taking a more active part in concerns both local and national." Subsequently, a "deep interest [was] taken by club women in questions affecting women's progress and their participation in public affairs."[69] Perhaps because experience made them increasingly cognizant of the particular challenges and tremendous disadvantages faced by women in Oregon, particularly in regard to political action, the Woman's Club of Portland devoted an increasing number of its regular meetings to the study of women in history, especially

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designed by architect Sophie Hayden and filled with the products of women's intellectual, artistic, artisanal, and industrial labor from around the world. The exhibit was organized by a Board of Lady Managers, directed by socialite, philanthropist, and civic activist Bertha Honoré Palmer. See Bertha Honoré Palmer, *Address Delivered by Mrs. Potter Palmer, President of the Board of Lady Managers, on the Occasion of the Opening of the Woman's Building, May 1, 1893* [Chicago, 1893].

[69] *History of the Portland Woman's Club*, 2.

in the history of the Pacific Northwest, and it created a standing department to investigate this subject. From its earliest years, the club had engaged in intermittent study of women in history; between 1896 and 1898 presentations had included "Women of the 19th Century," "True Progress, or Colonial Women," and "A Glance at American Women." But it was after the completion of its first public campaigns that the Woman's Club began to devote significant amounts of time and personal resources to the study of the history of the Pacific Northwest and women's role within it. In 1904 the club declared its theme for the year to be "Where rolls the Oregon" and established an Oregon History Department.[70] Throughout the year, club members researched and delivered presentations such as "Early Explorations of the Pacific Northwest," "Sacajawea," "Old Oregon," and "Overland to Oregon." The latter offered a club member's account of her own experiences on the Oregon Trail.[71] One club member suggested that the women take inspiration from English historian James Anthony Froude, who declared, "History is but the record of individual action," and club presentations generally featured the actions and experiences of individual women in the nineteenth-century Pacific Northwest.[72]

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[70] The phrase "Where rolls the Oregon" originated in the 1817 poem "Thanatopsis" by William Cullen Bryant. Literary historian John William Scholl notes that "'The Oregon' was the name first given to the Columbia river," and he suggests that the reference to the Oregon in Bryant's poem is an allusion "to the world-romance of the nation's voyage into a new region"; Scholl, "On the Two Place-Names in 'Thanatopsis,'" *Modern Language Notes* 28.8 (December 1913): 248-49.

[71] WCP Minute Book, January 1903-May 1905; EED Papers; Georgia Hughes, "Overland to Oregon," Mss 2999, Oregon Historical Society.

[72] Woman's Club of Portland, "Annual Announcement," 1904, p. 13, Portland Woman's Club (Or.) Records.

As women recovered and shared these histories with one another, they developed a perspective on the history of their region that differed from predominant narratives. Most popular accounts of the U.S. West in the early twentieth century were stories of cowboys and Indians and tales of explorers and economic conquest that left women out, or tales of the "Wild West" that relegated women to saloons, silence, and victimhood.[73] In contrast, club members produced a regional history that included women, that recognized and cataloged women's vital contributions to public life. The interpretive community constituted by members of the Woman's Club as they developed methods of historical analysis—and a forum for intellectual exchange that recognized the experiences and achievements of women, past and present—engaged the larger cultural project of defining the West. Through their narratives, club programs, and civic initiatives, clubwomen produced their own vision of the West, one in which "spaces in this land of economic opportunity were home-centered, safe, cultured, even refined."[74]

Between 1904 and 1906 historical study became a major activity for the club. Narratives and programs produced by club members told of women pioneers who traveled the Oregon Trail, who made homes in the Pacific Northwest, who made it possible for Anglo-American families and communities to live and flourish in Oregon, who farmed the land alongside their husbands and fathers, and who provided education and medical care to the populace.[75] Clubwomen did not merely share these histories with one another; they also created opportunities to convey to the larger public the

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[73] See Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood*, 157.
[74] Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood*, 157.
[75] WCP Minute Book, January 1903-May 1905; WCP Minute Book, 1905-1912.

contributions of women to the colonization and development of Oregon. Perhaps the most significant example of this form of public engagement began in 1904, when, following a series of presentations about the Lewis and Clark Expedition and about Sacagawea, club members determined to create a public memorial to Sacagawea in order to honor the leadership of women in the Pacific Northwest. Clubwomen created a new organization—the Sacajawea Statue Association—and donated three hundred dollars in seed money for the project. The public commemoration that emerged from this beginning is studied in detail in chapter 3.[76] For now, it is worth noting that in a few short years, members of the Woman's Club of Portland went from studying art to sponsoring the production of public art commemorating historical women.

As they studied the lives of historical women in the U.S. West, club members also discussed women's role in—as well as their hopes and visions for—contemporary life in Oregon. The earliest of these conversations were directed by Dr. Mary Thompson. In 1902 she presented the club with an analysis entitled "The Laws of Oregon as They Affect Women and Children," and in 1903 Thompson, Duniway, and Grace Ross organized a club program called "Twentieth Century Problems for Women of the Pacific Northwest." In 1904 six club members gave presentations on equal suffrage, and in late 1905 the club devoted an entire meeting to discussion of the suffrage question, allotting five minutes to each woman who wished to speak on the matter, including women who were not members of the club.[77] The Woman's Club would not officially endorse or

[76] Chapter 3, note 2, explains the variant spellings of the name of the Shoshone woman.
[77] WCP Minute Book, 1905-1912, pp. 27-34.

campaign for woman suffrage until 1910, but until then it provided a forum for women to deliberate the issue, to consider the case for suffrage, and to develop arguments regarding their political rights. The Woman's Club also served as a forum in which women developed ideas for civic improvement and initiated campaigns for a wide range of public initiatives. In regular meetings, committees, and departments, members formulated plans for public playgrounds, public schools, markets, and legal reform. By 1909 their achievements included the construction of playgrounds; the establishment of a school for girls; the appointment of a prison matron and the separation of women prisoners from male inmates; speaking positions for women, African Americans, and American Indians at the largest chautauqua in Oregon; the preservation of local forests; the passage of pure food laws; the appointment of one of their own members as Portland's market inspector; the election of Mrs. S. M. Blumauer, who was not a club member, to the city school board; the passage of labor laws designed to protect women and children; and effective enforcement of those laws.[78]

Members advanced further into the public realm as they led civic initiatives, oversaw public institutions, and organized political campaigns. At the same time, the Woman's Club developed departments and programs for the purpose of training women in effective civic participation. Between 1907 and 1912 club members designed and participated in programs such as "Governmental Study," "Good Citizenship," "Women in Civics," "The Child, the Parent and the State," and "Good Government." In most cases,

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[78] Portland Woman's Club (Or.) Records; Willamette Valley Chautauqua Records; EED Papers; *History of the Woman's Club of Portland*.

these programs consisted of women discussing the meaning and practice of good citizenship and government, sharing knowledge and teaching one another how to be most effective in the public realm. In the rare instances that members invited a man to teach women about politics and to work with them to formulate strategies for good government, their choices were strategic and prestigious: Governor Oswald West was received by the club in 1911 to join in the discussion "Our State Institutions."[79] Less than a year later, Governor West received members of the Woman's Club of Portland at the state capitol to celebrate the passage of Oregon's woman suffrage referendum. More than a half-century after Oregon statehood, women of the Pacific Northwest were recognized as voters and officially welcomed into the halls of their government.

Club Discourse, Women's Identity, and Civic Change

Women's clubs were central to the development of political identities and authority for women, as well as the production of social reform and civic achievements in the Pacific Northwest. What seemed at first to be an unremarkable activity—women meeting together to entertain and learn from one another and to improve home life—was in fact a practice that was infused with radical potential and that changed women and their communities. Organizations such as the Woman's Club of Portland altered members' expectations of their social functions and their ability to carry out change. Central to this evolution were the rhetorical practices that constituted club meetings and pursuits, such as running meetings according to parliamentary procedure, presenting

[79] WCP Annual Announcement, 1911-1912, p. 11.

research essays, and making political demands in concentrated campaigns. As club members, women developed new political subjectivities, altered the political landscape of the Pacific Northwest, and challenged popular public conceptions about women and their role in society.

Clubs created forums in which women had a voice and vote in matters of collective concern. As they participated in meetings and activities, members cultivated skills that were essential to participation in the public realm, such as parliamentary techniques, public speaking, research and argumentation, and deep understanding of the legislative process. Instead of public silence, activities such as asking questions, debating issues, and advancing arguments became normal for women in the club forum. As they practiced these discursive activities, women realized that the language of politics and power that had appeared to be the exclusive domain of men was in fact available to women; they found that it could be learned and applied, regardless of sex. Moreover, as they practiced parliamentary procedure, voted, and worked to enact the majority will, women found that democracy could work for them, that it could be something other than a politics of exclusion practiced by men in power. The rhetorical activities of the club cultivated a new vision of government and of the West; they constituted a forum in which members shared evidence of women's historical contributions to regional life, generated histories based on their own experiences in Oregon, and discussed their vision for the future of their community. Clubwomen's histories of and hopes for the West offered a sharp counterpoint to predominant myths. Their discursive exchanges also served as

catalysts for political campaigns, as they established reasons for women to risk impropriety in order to bring their abilities to bear in the public realm.

Club members, through their pursuit of self-improvement, cultural knowledge, and civic change, helped to shape communities in the deserts, farmland, forests, and cities of the Pacific Northwest, influencing its culture and its built environment. They did this "not in the railroads and engines of commerce or capital favored by historians like Bancroft," Haarsager points out, "but in the libraries, schools, sidewalks, parks, programs, institutions, ordinances, and statutes that made the communities more than hospitable; they gave them depth, stability, and order and made more humane treatments of disadvantaged segments of the population mandatory."[80] Women's clubs altered government priorities to include some forms of social welfare—such as educational programs and cultural institutions—as a legitimate function of government.[81] These were significant achievements, particularly for a voluntary organization of disenfranchised women. Yet the needs that women identified in their communities outstripped the capacities of voluntarism, and club members came to realize the importance of further integrating their work with government programs, and the necessity of achieving political rights for women in order to accomplish this integration. Club member Eva Emery Dye voiced this perspective in 1906, asking, "Why should we women waste our precious lives getting up bazarrs [*sic*] for funds to clean up Oregon City, or go running around asking men to do it for us? Life is too short. I haven't time. I'd rather vote and have it done in

[80] Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood*, 338.
[81] Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood*, 227.

the regular way without such a loss of energy. That's what this suffrage means, a voice in matters."[82]

Women became radicalized through their efforts to implement moderate civic reforms, realizing the need for social change, their potential for community influence, and the artificial limitations that the dominant culture imposed on women's public contributions. In 1910 the club determined to campaign for woman suffrage and made this political reform its priority. Although the resources that the Woman's Club subsequently devoted to the suffrage movement were an important factor in women's achievement of the franchise in Oregon in 1912, it may be the case that the club's greatest contributions to the movement for equal rights were those that originated earlier.

From its inception, the club had cultivated women's political skills and consciousness, radicalized moderate individuals, and integrated women into the public realm. As such, the club provided leaders, supporters, and, eventually, evidence for women's political equality. By 1910 many members of the club had been involved in suffrage activism for years, and the Woman's Club had long been a source for leaders of the equal rights movement in the Pacific Northwest. It provided training in campaign organization, access to an extensive network of women and women's organizations in the region, a forum for cultivating women's support for suffrage, and opportunities to establish collegial relationships with powerful men including legislators, businessmen, and newspaper editors. Some of the most effective leaders of the Oregon Equal Suffrage Association first participated in public campaigns as members of the Woman's Club.

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[82] Dye, [Woman's suffrage], p. 3, box 10, folder 4, EED Papers.

Among these were Viola Coe, Sarah A. Evans, and Eve Emery Dye. Other members, such as Abigail Scott Duniway, were among the earliest and most vociferous activists for woman's rights in the Pacific Northwest, and they developed new strategies and important networks through their participation in club life.

In addition to developing women's abilities and networks, the Woman's Club cultivated a public presence and a record of achievement that well served the successful campaign for woman suffrage in the Pacific Northwest. The history and accomplishments of the Woman's Club challenged popular perceptions—and prejudice—that women were not prepared for or capable of effective participation in politics. By 1910 women had made impressive contributions to civic life through club work. They had behaved as talented, equal citizens—carrying out orderly meetings, engaging in rational debate, speaking publicly, lobbying representatives, organizing public programs, and shaping legislative agendas—even working in a sphere that did not recognize them as equal actors. In light of this, it was possible for proponents of woman suffrage to argue that the enfranchisement of women was not a radical political experiment but rather a simple recognition of preexistent facts: that women were already significant participants in political life. Thus, they asserted, women deserved the franchise.

One month before the vote on Washington state suffrage in 1910, a Washington clubwoman published an editorial in the Tacoma paper, responding to claims that women were not interested in being involved in politics. "Many women see the need of the ballot to help them (with the good men's vote) to secure better conditions for the man, woman, child, and the home," she wrote. "We are all in politics! Willy-nilly." Citing a dictionary

definition of politics, she continued, "Politics is the regulation and government of a nation or state, for the preservation of its safety, peace, and prosperity. All our water, our food, our clothing, even the trees we plant in our garden, the house we build, the materials we put into it, the street cars we ride in, the schools our children attend, the detention house we build and the woman in charge, the juvenile court and the judge thereof, the police matron, the humane officer, the pure food inspector, the safeguards that we would place around our children and the home—all these are in politics, and that is why women want to vote."[83] Her words suggest, in distilled form, the degree to which clubs empowered women to impart political desires and demands, to claim a place for themselves in the public realm, and to make a better way of life in the New Northwest.

Women's Clubs of Oregon and Washington, such as the Woman's Club of Portland, gave rise to additional organizations and innovative symbolic activities among women in the Pacific Northwest. In 1903, for example, members of the Woman's Club of Portland joined with other Oregon women to establish a new organization, whose mission was to publicly commemorate a woman in Pacific Northwest history. As women from almost every town in Oregon participated in the Sacajawea Statue Association, they promoted a new conception of women in the history of the Pacific Northwest. Moreover, women performed in ways that challenged traditional gender norms—acting as leaders,

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[83] Cited in Alice M. Biggs, "Women Vote for President and All Other Officers in Wyoming, Utah, Idaho, and Colorado—Why Not Here?" *Bellingham Sunday Herald Suffrage Edition*, 9 October 1910.

lobbyists, public authorities, and orators—as they produced epideictic rhetoric in praise of Sacagawea.

Chapter 3

Inventing Sacagawea:

Public Women and the Transformative Potential of Epideictic Rhetoric

On 6 July 1905 thousands of fairgoers, local and national dignitaries, and members of the press gathered at the center of the Lewis and Clark Centennial and American Pacific Exposition and Oriental Fair in Portland, Oregon, to witness the unveiling of one of the first public statues commemorating a woman in the United States.[1] *Sacajawea*, a towering bronze figure of an American Indian woman pointing westward while carrying a baby on her back, was dedicated by a platform of officials.[2] That the event was the climax of the 1905 World's Fair and of the National American Woman Suffrage Association Convention—and that it occurred at all—was remarkable, given that for the better part of a century Sacagawea had been anything but a significant figure in American public memory.

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[1] In her introductory remarks at the dedication of *Sacajawea*, Susan B. Anthony described the occasion as "the first time in history that a statue has been erected in the memory of a woman who accomplished patriotic deeds." *Oregon Journal,* 6 July 1905, 1; *Portland Telegram,* 6 July 1905, 1; *Portland Oregonian,* 7 July 1905, 1.

[2] On the platform during the dedication were local and national dignitaries, including Portland mayor Harry Lane, Centennial Exposition board member T. J. Bell, former National American Woman Suffrage Association president Susan B. Anthony, Oregon Equal Suffrage Association president Abigail Scott Duniway, and Sacajawea Statue Association president Eva Emery Dye. The spelling "Sacajawea" comes from early edited editions of the Lewis and Clark Expedition journals, and it was the spelling most commonly used at the time of the Centennial Exposition. I utilize this spelling when I refer to the statue entitled *Sacajawea* that was unveiled at the Centennial Exposition and when I quote directly from texts that use this spelling. Today the accepted spelling is "Sacagawea," which is believed to mean "Bird Woman" and is of Hidatsa origin; I use this spelling elsewhere in the chapter.

One hundred years earlier, in 1805, a small expeditionary group departed from Fort Mandan, North Dakota, on a mission to explore and chart the American West. This party of thirty-three people, led by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark and known as the Corps of Discovery, traveled more than 1,800 miles and reached the Pacific coast. Although Sacagawea's presence in the Corps of Discovery was noted in the journals of the trip, the Shoshone woman was largely excluded from public histories of the Lewis and Clark Expedition until 1902.[3] This changed with the publication of *The Conquest: The True Story of Lewis and Clark* by Eva Emery Dye, the bestselling book credited with popularizing the history of the Lewis and Clark Expedition and transforming Sacagawea from a neglected historical footnote to a compelling cultural figure.[4] Following the publication of *The Conquest*, women in the Pacific Northwest organized to create, finance, and submit to the 1905 World's Fair a statue honoring Sacagawea. As disenfranchised women presided over the dedication of the statue, which they described as a symbol of American women's leadership, they themselves moved from the margins of public life to take center stage at a national event. Thus, the dedication of *Sacajawea* not only imparted an image of women in public history but also amplified women's participation in early twentieth-century public culture.

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[3] See Lisa Blee, "Completing Lewis and Clark's Westward March: Exhibiting a History of Empire at the 1905 Portland World's Fair," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 106.2 (Summer 2005): 232-53; Wanda Pillow, "Searching for Sacagawea: Whitened Reproductions and Endarkened Representations," *Hypatia* 22.2 (Spring 2007): 4; Donna J. Kessler, *The Making of Sacagawea* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1996), 65-67.

[4] See Sherri Bartlett Browne, *Eva Emery Dye: Romance with the West* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2004), 72; Kessler, *Making of Sacagawea*, 81.

The 1905 commemoration was, in its style and substance, definitively epideictic. At its most fundamental level, the statue dedication consisted of encomia that praised the contributions of Sacagawea, hailing her as an embodiment of American values and achievement and as an inspiration to civic progress and duty. The ceremony demonstrated classical characteristics of epideictic as it united a community around an image of a model citizen.[5] Yet this event also exemplified features of epideictic that have been little noticed and undertheorized by rhetorical critics: chief among these is the capacity of epideictic to promote alternative public norms, identities, and practices.

Scholars since antiquity have characterized epideictic as a rhetoric of identification and conformity that functions to conserve an existing community, and in contemporary literature the genre is noted for its capacity to reinforce traditional values, sustain orthodoxy, and preserve social order.[6] Although the genre is often understood as one "practiced by those who, in a society, defend the traditional and accepted values, those which are the object of education, not the new and revolutionary values," performances such as the dedication of *Sacajawea* reveal that epideictic can in fact be

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[5] See Gerard A. Hauser, "Aristotle on Epideictic: The Formation of Public Morality," *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 29.1 (Winter 1999): 18-19.

[6] See Celeste Condit, "The Functions of Epideictic: The Boston Massacre Orations as Exemplar," *Communication Quarterly* 33.4 (1985): 291; Bernard K. Duffy, "The Platonic Functions of Epideictic Rhetoric," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 16.2 (1983): 82; Hauser, "Aristotle on Epideictic," 5; James Jasinski, "Epideictic Discourse," in *Sourcebook on Rhetoric,* by James Jasinski (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2001), 210; Jasinski, "Rearticulating History in Epideictic Discourse: Frederick Douglass's 'The Meaning of the Fourth of July to the Negro,'" in *Rhetoric and Political Culture in Nineteenth-Century America*, ed. Thomas W. Benson (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1997), 78; Cynthia Miecznikowski Sheard, "The Public Value of Epideictic Rhetoric," *College English* 58.7 (November 1996): 776; Dale L. Sullivan, "The Ethos of Epideictic Encounter," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 26.2 (1993): 113.

both conservative and revolutionary.[7] Through epideictic in praise of Sacagawea, citizens of the Pacific Northwest reinforced some public precepts but challenged others in order to expand the number and type of people considered members of the community. Although the commemoration of a mythic image of Sacagawea affirmed the dogma of manifest destiny and endorsed some gender norms, it also imparted reason and opportunity for disenfranchised women to envision and assert themselves as members of the public realm.

This use of epideictic to challenge a tradition of exclusion—that is, to call into question the assumption that women had no part in public affairs—suggests that commemorative discourse has the capacity to serve more exigent functions than simply celebrating or reinforcing values and identities.[8] It also offers insight into important questions in rhetorical theory, such as: how can a form of discourse that does not directly address a public issue or policy promote social, political, or other ideological change?[9] How can a rhetorical genre that appears to avoid controversy challenge the status quo, enabling speakers and audiences to embrace an alternative vision of community and gender roles?

In the analysis that follows, I argue that the 1905 commemoration of Sacagawea was a form of epideictic that promoted identification with a new or different vision of community through the veneration of an "invented great." This case study illuminates

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[7] Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969), 51.
[8] See Sheard, "Public Value of Epideictic Rhetoric," 787.
[9] A similar question is posed in Sheard, "Public Value of Epideictic Rhetoric," 779.

how epideictic, through a close relationship to invention, can infuse history and tradition with new meaning. Recently, John M. Murphy noted that commemorative rhetoric "provides extraordinary inventional resources for the definition of a new world or, perhaps more accurately, it offers a little rhetorical engine that can take the old world and make of it a bright and new creation."[10] Epideictic in praise of an invented great exemplifies this transformative potential of the ceremonial genre. By venerating a figure that integrates known history, established beliefs, and imagined possibilities, epideictic can subvert some elements of the existing social order while affirming others. The image of Sacagawea as a leading member of the Corps of Discovery was a rhetorical invention that simultaneously glorified and revised the meaning of pioneer history, offering an alternative vision of the past facts, present characteristics, and future possibilities of women's role in the Pacific Northwest. Moreover, the creation and commemoration of Sacagawea provided reason and opportunity for women to envision and assert themselves as civic leaders.

To illuminate the rhetorical character of the 1905 commemoration and the capacity of epideictic discourse to revise public values and identities, this chapter begins by examining the creation and propagation of Sacagawea, as an invented great, by

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[10] John M. Murphy, "'Our Mission and Our Moment': George W. Bush and September 11th," *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 6.4 (2003): 626. Murphy's analysis of the use of epideictic by George W. Bush to dominate public interpretation of the events of 11 September 2001 well illustrates a relationship between epideictic and social construction. Yet the use of epideictic by a twenty-first-century U.S. president to suppress public debate and dissent offers insights that differ from those we may gain by examining a case in which disenfranchised women used epideictic to challenge norms of the predominant culture.

women in the Pacific Northwest. Next, it analyzes the dedication of *Sacajawea*. I argue that this dedication of an invented great illuminates how epideictic can powerfully promote public identification with alternative norms or values. The 1905 commemoration reflected some desires and traditions of an existing community, yet it revised other public norms as it presented an American Indian woman as an icon of American identity and progress. Although the disenfranchised white women who produced the 1905 commemoration conformed to expectations for epideictic discourse by reflecting some imperialist and gender norms, their rhetoric challenged other racist and sexist aspects of the predominant culture by praising an American Indian woman as an outstanding community member and by creating opportunities for white women to speak and act publicly. The final section of the chapter considers the consequences of this inventive epideictic performance, one that recaptured a historical American Indian woman as a token for twentieth-century Anglo-American politics as it simultaneously articulated, enacted, and venerated a central public identity for women in the Pacific Northwest.

An Invented Great

As a popular figure known primarily though the agency of others who have constructed and maintained her legend, Sacagawea belongs to a company of what historian Nell Irvin Painter describes as "invented greats."[11] Because invented greats

[11] Nell Irvin Painter, *Sojourner Truth: A Life, a Symbol* (New York: Norton, 1997), 285. Other examples of invented greats, Painter suggests, include Jesus, Joan of Arc, Betsy Ross, and Sojourner Truth. Painter observes, "It is no accident that in each case, other people writing well after the fact made up what we see as most meaningful" about these figures (285).

signify and are beloved for what we need them to have done, the creation and propagation of symbols such as Sacagawea reveal much about the dynamics of American public life, as well as the role of rhetoric in cultural construction and change.[12] In its context, the rhetorical invention of Sacagawea as a symbol of American leadership and progress characterized the conquest of the West in a manner that simultaneously affirmed U.S. expansion and asserted a leading role for women in the public realm.

The representation of Sacagawea as a vital member of the Corps of Discovery emerged in *The Conquest,* which Dye published during an era of ambition and uncertainty in the Pacific Northwest. At the dawn of the twentieth century Oregon and Washington were established states, having achieved statehood in 1859 and 1889 respectively, but there remained for Anglo-Americans the tasks of consolidating frontier tradition with national culture, developing a regional identity that appeared consistent with democratic precepts, negotiating the relationship of women and minorities to the public realm, recovering from economic recession, and articulating a collective agenda for the future.[13] By making historical fragments of the Lewis and Clark Expedition into a mythic tradition—and by placing Sacagawea at the center of that tradition—*The Conquest* spoke to these public issues.[14]

The characterization of Sacagawea as an active participant in the Corps of

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[12] See Painter, *Sojourner Truth*, 285-87.
[13] See Kessler, *Making of Sacagawea*, 68; Blee, "Completing Lewis and Clark's Westward March," 232-33; G. Thomas Edwards, *Sowing Good Seeds: The Northwest Suffrage Campaigns of Susan B. Anthony* (Portland: Oregon Historical Society Press, 1990), 169-71.
[14] See Browne, *Eva Emery Dye*, 72.

Discovery helped to frame U.S. expansion into the American West as a story of democratic progress rather than one of brutal conquest, suggesting that Anglo-Americans and American Indians worked together to "civilize" the wilderness and that this mission embraced the equal participation of women. As a whole, the narrative that appeared in *The Conquest* situated the Lewis and Clark Expedition in general and Sacagawea in particular as exemplars of meritorious action. It defined regional and national identity in terms of a journey into a new frontier and offered the story of Lewis, Clark, and Sacagawea as a model for future collective action. *The Conquest* suggested that, like the members of the Corps of Discovery, twentieth-century Americans ought to include women as able participants in public affairs and ought to pursue U.S. interests in remote lands. The account of the Shoshone woman and the Corps of Discovery that emerged in *The Conquest* captured national attention at the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition, where the public dedication of *Sacajawea* drew Americans together in celebration of a "woman who accomplished patriotic deeds."[15]

One hundred years after the Corps of Discovery reached the Pacific, Sacagawea became a central figure in U.S. history and a symbol of American progress. At the 1905 commemoration, Sacagawea was hailed as an icon of civic excellence. As speakers at the statue dedication praised Sacagawea as a key member of the U.S. mission in the West—and a symbol of the patriotic deeds of all American women—they encouraged others to see women's leadership as a historical fact and a traditional practice of western life. In

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[15] *Oregon Journal,* 6 July 1905, 1; *Portland Telegram,* 6 July 1905, 1; *Portland Oregonian,* 7 July 1905, 1.

fact, the endorsement of women's active participation in the public realm was anything but a historical tradition in Oregon, as in most U.S. states. At the time of the *Sacajawea* dedication, women were disenfranchised citizens of all but four states; in Oregon, male voters and legislators resisted equal suffrage despite more than three decades of organized activism for woman's rights in the Pacific Northwest. Although women participated in the U.S. settlement of the Oregon Territory and continued to contribute profoundly to the development of the region, they were excluded from pioneer histories and denied political rights. Until 1902 Sacagawea herself was one of countless women who had lived and died at the margins of public life; despite her participation in the Corps of Discovery, the Shoshone woman was incidental to public accounts of the journey into the West and left little mark upon Anglo-American written accounts of history.

However, through the skilled research and creativity of an individual writing a century after the fact, Sacagawea was transformed from a historical individual about whom little was known into a consequential public figure to whom much is attributed. By recovering and studying records of the Lewis and Clark Expedition and by interviewing American Indian people, Eva Emery Dye uncovered details of Sacagawea's participation in the Corps of Discovery.[16] Subsequently, in *The Conquest*, Dye told the story of the

[16] Speaking about her research for *The Conquest*, Dye recalled that she "hunted up every fact [she] could find about Sacajawea"; quoted in Alfred Powers, *History of Oregon Literature* (Portland, OR: Metropolitan Press, 1935), 71. Dye was known for her extensive use of primary documents and for her ability to derive personalities from the fragmented historical record and to infuse past events with liveliness. Regional historians, who praised her commitment to meticulous research and factually accurate representations of the past, recognized Dye's work as an integral part of the growing movement to historicize the U.S. West, and they invited her to join the board of the

Lewis and Clark Expedition in a manner that emphasized the importance of Sacagawea's guidance, courage, and goodwill to the success of the mission.[17] Because even the most extensive factual understanding of Sacagawea's life could be summarized in less than a page, it is clear that the amount that Dye wrote about the Shoshone woman far exceeded the extent of information that existed about her.[18] In writing her historical novel, Dye

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Oregon Historical Society. See Browne, *Eva Emery Dye*, 77-99; Walt Curtis, *Eva Emery Dye* (Portland: Oregon Cultural Heritage Commission, 1995), 1. In particular, scholars engaged in efforts to recover records of the Lewis and Clark Expedition recognized Dye as a leading public historian of that landmark journey; see Browne, *Eva Emery Dye*, 84. Reuben Gold Thwaites, who at the turn of the twentieth century was commissioned by the American Philosophical Society to edit a new edition of the original Lewis and Clark Expedition journals, relied on Dye for a number of significant sources. While researching *The Conquest* in 1901, Dye discovered the missing journal of Sergeant John Ordaway, a detailed record of the Lewis and Clark Expedition that had been missing since 1814, and she directed Thwaites to its location. Although Thwaites failed to fully credit Dye for her part in the recovery of the journal, in the introduction to his edited collection Thwaites did acknowledge Dye for general contributions. In addition to recovering and studying written records of the expedition that were produced by white male members of the Corps of Discovery, Dye interviewed American Indian people about interactions between tribal members and the Corps. See "Eva Emery Dye Interviews an Old Indian Woman," OrHi 4333, and "Se-Cho-Wa. Mrs. Dye Interviewing Pe-Tom-Ya," OrHi 26557, both in Eva Emery Dye Papers, Mss 1089, Oregon Historical Society, Portland (hereafter cited as EED Papers).

[17] *The Conquest* adopts the chronologies and events of the Lewis and Clark Expedition that appear in the original journals of the trip; however, Dye's historical novel speaks of Sacagawea in a tone that differs notably from the tone of the original journals. Whereas Dye praises Sacagawea as a heroic member of the Corps and calls her an Indian princess, "the men of the Corps of Discovery most often define Sacagawea as a savage squaw"; Kessler, *Making of Sacagawea*, 33. Nevertheless, as Kessler observes, the original journals note many instances in which Sacagawea helped the expedition, and "at times they also seem to question her status as an ignoble savage, allowing enough room for subsequent writers to interpret Sacagawea as the noble Indian princess" (64).

[18] See Gary Moulton, ed., *The Definitive Journals of Lewis and Clark,* 13 vols. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002), 3: 229; Brian Dippie, "Sacagawea Imagery," *Chief Washakie Foundation,* December 2002, http://www.windriverhistory.org/exhibits/sacajawea/sac01.htm, accessed 10 February 2006; Kessler, *Making of Sacagawea*, 31-64.

remained faithful to the known facts of Sacagawea's life but exercised literary license to fill in unrecorded details of Sacagawea's experience, producing a vivid character from fragmented records. "Out of a few dry bones I found in the old tales of the trip," Dye explained, "I created Sacajawea and made her a real living entity."[19]

Dye's *Conquest* portrayed the great Sacagawea as an Indian princess, a devoted mother, and an authoritative leader who was "the heroine of the expedition."[20] Sacagawea played an invaluable part in the Corps of Discovery, *The Conquest* made clear: she identified landmarks,[21] guided the expedition,[22] translated indigenous languages,[23] ensured the safety of men and supplies,[24] and insisted on her right to participate equally in the mission.[25] As Dye's historical novel emphasized that Sacagawea was a skilled, courageous, and assertive member of the Corps of Discovery, it also attributed to Sacagawea qualities that reflected prevailing ideologies of white womanhood. During the arduous journey through the wilderness, for example, the Sacagawea of *The Conquest* performed as a "mother, cook, nurse, seamstress, moral compass, and source of comfort to her son and all men."[26] By depicting Sacagawea's gentility and domesticity, *The Conquest* tempered potentially threatening images of female power and Indian authority.

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[19] Dye quoted in Powers, *History of Oregon Literature*, 93.
[20] Eva Emery Dye, *The Conquest: The True Story of Lewis and Clark* (Chicago: A. C. McClurg, 1902), 290.
[21] Dye, *Conquest*, 215, 224, 290.
[22] Dye, *Conquest,* 283-85.
[23] Dye, *Conquest*, 228, 232.
[24] Dye, *Conquest*, 236-37.
[25] Dye, *Conquest*, 250.
[26] Pillow, "Searching for Sacagawea," 6; see Dye, *Conquest*, 209, 241, 245.

It proposed that an American heroine could lead while retaining qualities of womanhood as conventionally defined in Anglo-American life.[27]

With the publication of Dye's inventive story of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, U.S. readers found a compelling woman at the center of a history of the West, and Sacagawea became an American legend. Immediate public responses to *The Conquest*, together with the enduring cultural fascination with Sacagawea, attest to the significance of this myth. Thousands of readers embraced the first fictional Sacagawea, prompting publishers to offer three printings of *The Conquest* between November 1902 and January 1903 and more than ten North American editions by 1936.[28] Even Dye found remarkable the enthusiasm with which "the world snatched at my heroine."[29]

Some women of the Pacific Northwest responded to *The Conquest* by prevailing upon Dye to preside over an organization whose mission was to finance, commission, and submit to the Lewis and Clark Expedition Centennial Exposition a statue depicting Sacagawea. In 1903 Dye agreed to chair the Sacajawea Statue Association, as well as the Woman's Club of the Lewis and Clark Exposition. For the next two years she worked with both groups to publicly commemorate a woman in pioneer history and to promote the exposition generally. Oregon women of the Sacajawea Statue Association created and distributed publicity packets to hundreds of local and national media outlets; secured write-ups in prominent newspapers and magazines; solicited contributions from women

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[27] See Kessler, *Making of Sacagawea*, 85.
[28] See Kessler, *Making of Sacagawea*, 85; Laura E. Donaldson, "Red Woman, White Dreams: Searching for Sacagawea," *Feminist Studies* 32.3 (Fall 2006): 525.
[29] Dye quoted in Powers, *History of Oregon Literature*, 93.

in every town in Oregon, as well as from businesses, organizations, and male citizens; sponsored plays and pageants; and sold souvenir brooches, buttons, copper spoons, and booklets depicting "The Indian Girl Who Led Them."[30] Through its efforts, the Statue Association garnered national publicity, wide support, and approximately $9,000 for a memorial to Sacagawea.[31]

The Statue Association commissioned Alice Cooper, a female artist from Denver, to create a bronze sculpture of Sacagawea and paid $7,000 for the life-sized work of art.[32] After it secured a place in the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition for Cooper's *Sacajawea*, the Statue Association organized a ceremony to unveil the towering effigy and to venerate the woman it represented. The 6 July event—which included a parade

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[30] See Sacajawea Statue Association Records, EED Papers; Lewis and Clark Centennial and American Pacific Exposition and Oriental Fair Records, 1894-1933, Mss 1069, Oregon Historical Society (hereafter cited as LCC Records); Browne, *Eva Emery Dye*, 104; Amy Jane Maguire, *The Indian Girl Who Led Them, Sacajawea* (Portland, OR: J. K. Gill, 1905). The publicity packet distributed by the Sacajawea Statue Association included a sixteen-page booklet entitled *Dux Femina Facti;* a copy of a *Chicago Inter-Ocean* article entitled "Heroine's Long-Delayed Reward"; a copy of the poem "Sacajawea (The Bird-Woman)" by Bert Huffman; a souvenir pin depicting Sacagawea; and a letter, addressed "To the Literary Editor," that described the mission of the Statue Association. Sarah A. Evans, a member of the Statue Association's executive board, noted that this publicity packet was "sent to about 500 of the prominent newspapers all over the U.S." A similar packet, which included a typewritten letter soliciting women's participation and financial support, was sent to "every town of Oregon." Additionally, the Statue Association mailed the booklet *Dux Femina Facti* and a circular letter inviting women to become members of the Sacajawea Statue Association to more than four thousand addresses.

[31] See LCC Records; Sacajawea Statue Association Records, EED Papers; Portland Woman's Club (Or.) Records, Mss 1084, Oregon Historical Society; Michael Heffernan and Carol Medlicot, "A Feminine Atlas? Sacagawea, the Suffragettes and the Commemorative Landscape in the American West, 1904–1910," *Gender, Place and Culture* 9.2 (2002): 117.

[32] See Heffernan and Medlicot, "Feminine Atlas?" 117.

and speeches of praise—presented in distilled form the image of Sacagawea invented by Dye and revered by the public. Before an audience that the local press described as nothing less than "a multitude," Dye delivered an encomium to Sacagawea and unveiled the statue of a woman, commissioned by women, and produced by women, to thunderous applause and cheers.[33] In many respects, this was an innovative form of public action for U.S. women, who traditionally appeared in but did not administer or speak at major commemorative events.[34] Moreover, the dedication of *Sacajawea* was a rare instance of women's participation in the 1905 Centennial Exposition; other contributions proposed by women, such as the construction of a Woman's Building and the formation of a Woman's Board of Managers, had been rebuffed by the men of the Exposition board.[35]

The invented great that emerged in *The Conquest* captured national attention at the dedication of *Sacajawea*, which drew Americans together in celebration of a "heroine of the great expedition."[36] The remainder of this chapter examines the 1905 commemoration, which played the most significant role in promoting the myth of Sacagawea as a guide for the Corps of Discovery and asserted a place for women in public.[37] I argue that the dedication of *Sacajawea* was an exemplar of epideictic performance and that it illuminates how epideictic—through its relationship to invention—can do more than affirm existing values, prejudices, and practices. The

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[33] *Portland Oregonian*, 7 July 1905, 1.
[34] On U.S. women's participation in nineteenth-century commemorative events, see Mary P. Ryan, *Women in Public: Between Banners and Ballots, 1825–1880* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990).
[35] See LCC Records.
[36] Dye, *Conquest*, 290.
[37] See Donaldson, "Red Woman, White Dreams," 525; Browne, *Eva Emery Dye*, 72.

ceremonial genre can engage speakers and audiences in the process of imagining and actualizing alternative public norms.

The Epideictic Character of the Sacajawea *Statue Dedication*

Epideictic, as categorized by Aristotle in the fourth century B.C.E. and recognized by scholars today, is a form of discourse that articulates praise or blame for a person or action in order to amplify communal values and identity. A number of significant stylistic and substantive features characterize the ceremonial genre. As a demonstrative mode of rhetoric, epideictic often displays—through language, material representations, or both—an individual as an illustration of public virtues.[38] Epideictic rhetoric in its most traditional form is the encomium, and this form of spoken praise has been associated since classical times with the public display and dedication of statues depicting celebrated figures.[39] Through linguistic and material representations, epideictic brings before an audience an image of the fundamental assumptions with which members of a community identify themselves and through which they acquire a sense of agency.[40]

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[38] It is instructive to note that the Greek word *epideictic* may be translated as "fit for display." Thus, epideictic performances that provide both spoken and visual representations appear to engage two powerful, rhetorical modes of "displaying" a praiseworthy or blameworthy object.

[39] Aristotle, *On Rhetoric*, trans. George Kennedy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 85-86.

[40] See Jeffrey Walker, *Rhetoric and Poetics in Antiquity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 9; Ned O'Gorman, "Aristotle's Phantasia in the *Rhetoric:* Lexis, Appearance, and the Epideictic Function of Discourse," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 38.1 (2005): 33; Robert Hariman and John Louis Lucaities, "Public Identity and Collective Memory in U.S. Iconic Photography: The Image of 'Accidental Napalm,'" *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 20.1 (2003): 36; Murphy, "'Our Mission and Our

As a demonstrative form, effective epideictic rhetoric must be not only culturally resonant but also aesthetically appealing.[41] Therefore, many epideictic performances evince a conservative style that draws on customary symbols, topics, and rituals. Substantively, epideictic discourse focuses on the present—that is, the rhetorical task of sustaining a contemporaneous community. However, in order to unify a community in the moment, epideictic speech often praises past actions for the purpose of celebrating timeless virtues and inculcating them as models for the future.[42] Thus, ceremonial performances are generally rooted in accounts of a historical past and implicitly prescribe the virtues, actions, and perspectives that community members should adopt in the present. In sum, a definitively epideictic performance unites and defines a community through an appealing presentation of the public virtues of an individual or deed.

According to this definition, the dedication of the statue of Sacagawea at the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition is an exemplar of epideictic performance. The keynote address by Eva Emery Dye, together with the visual spectacle of the event and words of praise offered by other dignitaries at the dedication, proudly displayed Sacagawea as a symbol of U.S. leadership, progress, and patriotism. At its unveiling, *Sacajawea* was wrapped in an enormous U.S. flag and literally and figuratively was surrounded by icons of American civic identity. The dedication ceremony began with a

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Moment,'" 618; Hauser, "Aristotle on Epideictic," 17-19.

[41] See Angela G. Ray, *The Lyceum and Public Culture in the Nineteenth-Century United States* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2005), 185; Edward Schiappa and David M. Timmerman, "Aristotle's Disciplining of Epideictic," in *The Beginnings of Rhetorical Theory in Classical Greece*, by Edward Schiappa (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999), 185-206; Aristotle, *On Rhetoric*, 78-86.

[42] See Aristotle, *On Rhetoric*, 48; Ray, *Lyceum and Public Culture*, 185.

parade that situated Sacagawea alongside floats depicting Washington crossing the Delaware and the Boston Tea Party.[43] The association of Sacagawea with other famous Americans and deeds enacted a rhetorical mode of positive association noted by Aristotle for its capacity to amplify the praiseworthy character of an individual.[44] The parade placed Sacagawea in the company of great individuals—primarily of the Revolutionary era—who overcame constraints of tradition and performed deeds of daring in order to advance American democracy. More generally, these displays positioned the image of Sacagawea within U.S. tradition, suggesting without subtlety that her virtues were American virtues, enacted for the benefit of and serving as an example for citizens of the United States.

The encomia delivered in honor of Sacagawea similarly emphasized her connection to U.S. progress and her embodiment of American civic virtues. Susan B. Anthony, who delivered opening remarks, described Sacagawea as "one of the greatest American heroines," attending specifically to her bravery and centrality in securing Oregon for the United States.[45] The speech delivered by Exposition board member T. J.

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[43] See *Portland Telegram,* 6 July 1905, 1. The celebration "included a parade from downtown Portland to the dedication site [that] included hundreds of members, bands, and floats showing Sacajawea, the Boston Tea party, and Washington crossing the Delaware." At its unveiling, *Sacajawea* was draped with "a huge American flag," which was eventually "swept aside from the beautiful bronze statue." The front page of the *Oregon Journal* on 6 July 1905 described the parade and dedication ceremony in similar terms and characterized the unveiling of *Sacajawea* as "profoundly patriotic." For other accounts of the event, see *Portland Oregonian*, 7 July 1905, 1; Browne, *Eva Emery Dye*, 100-124; Edwards, *Sowing Good Seeds*, 237-40.

[44] See Aristotle, *On Rhetoric*, 83-84.

[45] *Oregon Journal,* 6 July 1905, 1; *Portland Telegram,* 6 July 1905, 1; *Portland Oregonian,* 7 July 1905, 1. The National American Woman Suffrage Association

Bell directly credited Sacagawea with a leading role in "the formation of a wilderness into a . . . commonwealth of wonderful and great commercial enterprises."[46] Abigail Scott Duniway portrayed *Sacajawea* as "a feminine Atlas, upholding a world whose full significance was yet to be realized [and] keeping watch and ward over the outer gates pointing to the Orient," whose people looked to "men and women of this Pacific coast for the full fruition of freedom."[47] In her keynote address, which immediately preceded the unveiling of the statue, Eva Emery Dye likened the Shoshone woman's deeds to those of the Pilgrims who traversed the Atlantic to set foot on Plymouth Rock, characterizing her as "a reminder and inspiration to duty and to progress."[48]

By associating Sacagawea with traditional U.S. symbols and heroes, and by displaying her—visually and verbally—as a model of civic values such as courage, duty, and progress, the 1905 commemoration offered an epideictic performance that was aesthetically appealing and culturally resonant. As it evoked American identity, called upon a historic past to provide a model for civic action, and emphasized traditional vocabularies and values, the commemoration of Sacagawea evinced a conservative

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(NAWSA) scheduled its 1905 national convention to coincide with the dedication of *Sacajawea* at the Lewis and Clark Expedition Centennial Exposition. Prominent NAWSA officers Susan B. Anthony, Carrie Chapman Catt, and Anna Howard Shaw joined Oregon suffragists Abigail Scott Duniway and Eva Emery Dye on the platform at the dedication ceremony, with Anthony delivering an encomium to Sacagawea and Shaw offering the benediction. In addition, Shaw devoted a significant portion of her "President's Address" at the NAWSA Convention to offering pointed praise for Sacagawea. See Ida Husted Harper, ed., *History of Woman Suffrage,* vol. 5 (New York: National American Woman Suffrage Association, 1922), 117-50.

[46] *Portland Oregonian*, 7 July 1905, 1.

[47] *Oregon Journal*, 6 July 1905, 2.

[48] Eva Emery Dye, "Sacajawea Statue Dedication," EED Papers.

rhetorical style that is most commonly noted for its capacity to sustain community norms. And this epideictic performance did reflect and affirm some conventional beliefs and customs. For instance, by celebrating Sacagawea as a leader in the effort to expand the dominion of the United States, the dedication ceremony sustained the national dogma of manifest destiny. As it characterized Sacagawea as a symbol that "noble Indians" welcomed the U.S. mission to "civilize" the West, the 1905 commemoration reflected the prevailing belief among Anglo-Americans that actions and policies through which they and their forebears colonized the Pacific Northwest were warranted.[49]

Moreover, the rhetoric of the statue dedication appealed to popular ideas regarding future U.S. expansion as it implied that "the nation could draw upon traditions of western empire to justify moving ever westward and into Pacific and Asian markets."[50] Speakers at the 1905 commemoration praised Sacagawea for leading Anglo-Americans to the Pacific and revealing the gates to the Orient. Thus, like other major events and exhibits at the Centennial Exposition, the dedication of *Sacajawea* reflected the fact that the Exposition was designed to depict the Lewis and Clark Expedition as a national journey that not only opened the American West but also laid groundwork for economic expansion into Asia.[51] It characterized Sacagawea in a way that reiterated a standard

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[49] See Kessler, *Making of Sacagawea*, 17, 92; Sherry L. Smith, "Beyond Princess and Squaw: Army Officers' Perceptions of Indian Women," in *The Women's West*, edited by Susan Armitage and Elizabeth Jameson (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), 65.
[50] Blee, **"**Completing Lewis and Clark's Westward March," 232.
[51] See Robert W. Rydell, *All the World's a Fair: Visions of Empire at America's International Expositions, 1876–1916* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 184-207; Blee, "Completing Lewis and Clark's Westward March."

theme of the Exposition—a theme that was developed at length by U.S. vice president Charles Fairbanks in his opening day address and expressed succinctly in the Exposition's official motto: "Westward the Course of Empire Takes Its Way."[52] In sum, the ceremonial aspects of the statue dedication, from the parade to Dye's encomium, established "a sense of communion centered around particular values recognized by the audience," a rhetorical characteristic that Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca deem a marker of compelling epideictic discourse.[53]

Through this sense of communion, the epideictic rhetoric of the statue dedication promoted civic identification and adherence to the values it lauded. Yet even as the 1905 commemoration conserved some existing norms, it subverted and challenged others. The dedication of *Sacajawea* was something more than a customary reinscription of status quo public roles and norms. As it portrayed an American Indian woman as a model of leadership and a symbol of U.S. progress, this epideictic performance substantially altered collective memory, gender norms, and civic identity to assert a place for women in the public realm. The 1905 commemoration of Sacagawea inspired members of the

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[52] See Heffernan and Medlicot, "Feminine Atlas?" 119; Rydell, *All the World's a Fair*, 185-86; Carl Abbott, *The Great Extravaganza: Portland and the Lewis and Clark Exposition* (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1981), 1-6. The entrance to Oregon's present capitol, which was dedicated on 1 October 1938, is flanked by two massive Vermont marble sculptures by Leo Friedlander. *Lewis and Clark*, the sculpture on the east side of the capitol steps, depicts two men on horseback and an American Indian woman on foot, moving toward the West. Below these figures is an inscription that reads, "WESTWARD THE STAR OF EMPIRE TAKES ITS WAY." The presence of this motto at the entrance of the state capitol indicates the enduring significance of the 1905 Lewis and Clark Exposition and its central themes to political practice and cultural identity in Oregon.

[53] Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 51.

audience and the press to characterize the active participation of women in the American civic realm as "profoundly patriotic."[54]

To illuminate how this epideictic performance situated women as public leaders in history, and how it created space for women to participate in civic life, I analyze the keynote address delivered by Eva Emery Dye immediately prior to the unveiling of *Sacajawea*. Close reading of this text—and consideration of the visual qualities of the statue it dedicated—offers insight into rhetoric through which women challenged norms of gender exclusion, the consequences of recapturing an American Indian woman for purposes not her own, and the capacity of epideictic to subvert some traditional prejudices and practices even as it is complicit with others.

Displaying Sacajawea*, Demonstrating Women's Leadership*

In keeping with her literary work, Dye's encomium to Sacagawea represented the Shoshone woman as an image of women's civic leadership and contributions to human progress. "'Dux femina facti,'—'A woman led the deed,'" Dye began, recounting the circumstances in which "Eve tasted of the tree of knowledge, Isabella outfitted Columbus . . . a woman's foot first touched the strand at Plymouth Rock, founding New England, and Pocahontas saved the Virginia colonists."[55] Building on the theme of female leadership in legendary events, Dye assigned specific meaning to the symbolic figure of Sacagawea around which her immediate audience had gathered. Sacagawea, she asserted,

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[54] *Oregon Journal*, 6 July 1905, 1.
[55] Dye, "Sacajawea Statue Dedication," p. 1, EED Papers. The phrase with which Dye began her speech, "Dux femina facti," is a quotation of Virgil's *Aeneid*, book 1, line 364.

"completed the march, guiding Lewis and Clark through the devious mountain ways to the western ocean."[56] This passage in its context implies polysemous meanings for "the march" that Sacagawea is suggested to have completed, as it could refer to the march of the Corps of Discovery, the march of the United States into the American West, the march of women into the history of human events, or the forward march of human progress. This ambiguity amplified the significance and symbolic power of the character of Sacagawea, presenting her as a figure to which publics could attach various meanings while emphasizing, in every interpretation, her leadership. The visual image of the statue similarly emphasized the idea of Sacagawea's leadership or guidance, as it depicted her stepping forward and pointing in the direction of the Pacific with a fully extended right hand (figure 1).

As they displayed a woman who publicly performed civic virtues traditionally associated with men, such as leadership, guidance, and courage, both the statue and the encomium retained and emphasized Sacagawea's femininity. The sculpted face of *Sacajawea* exhibited features that conformed to conventional Anglo-American standards of feminine beauty.[57] The statue offered a regal vision of classical virtue and democracy in the New World. With its flowing robes, anglicized features, and raised arm, *Sacajawea* bore a resemblance to the goddess Columbia and to Lady Liberty.[58] Dye's speech thrice

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[56] Dye, "Sacajawea Statue Dedication," p. 1, EED Papers.
[57] See Pillow, "Searching for Sacagawea," 9; Heffernan and Medlicot, "Feminine Atlas?" 117.
[58] See Rayna Green, "The Pocahontas Perplex: The Image of Indian Women in American Culture," in *Native American Voices: A Reader*, ed. Susan Lobo and Steve Talbot (New York: Longman, 1998), 184; Nancy Jo Fox, *Liberties with Liberty: The Fascinating*

characterized Sacagawea as a "dark haired princess," suggesting that she was not a rugged, masculine individual but rather one who embodied the manner and appearance of an idealized woman.

Figure 1: *Sacajawea* at the Lewis and Clark Expedition Centennial Exposition, 1905, Oregon Historical Society (OrHi 28134)

History of America's Proudest Symbol (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1985), 5; E. McClung Fleming, "From Indian Princess to Greek Goddess: The American Image, 1783-1815," *Winterthur Portfolio* 3 (1967): 37-65.

Moreover, the statue and Dye's address displayed a connection between leadership and motherhood, suggesting that they were compatible roles. As the bronze *Sacajawea* displayed a woman guiding a U.S. mission, it depicted her not alone, but with a baby upon her back. In her encomium, Dye spoke explicitly of motherhood, as she distinguished women as agents vital to community establishment and progress, and as pioneers who pressed forward into unknown realms in order to secure the public good. Sacagawea, she suggested, was a public reminder that

> with women and wagons, Oregon was taken. The Indians expected to see an army with banners when the white man came, but no, the mother and child took Oregon. Trappers had been here, traders and shipmasters had skirted these wilds, but not until mothers came was the true seed of a nation planted. And Sacajawea led them all. This memorial is typical not only of the human appreciation of Sacajawea herself, but of all women, and all mothers, with the infant race in their arms, who still lead on, on.[59]

Here and elsewhere, Dye suggested that even the conventional activities of women who settled in the Pacific Northwest were important forms of civic action and leadership. According to Dye, mothers rather than men planted "the true seed of a nation" in Oregon. Instead of focusing on the extraordinary feats of Sacagawea—such as guiding the Corps of Discovery into the American West—this passage credited motherhood, an ordinary activity that was common to most women, with the achievement of U.S. communities in the Pacific Northwest. Yet even as it acclaimed the contributions of mothers in the Pacific Northwest, Dye's speech retained the possibility of understanding women as leaders regardless of their maternal status. The passage above, for instance, did not substitute the term "mother" for "woman," nor did it specify that motherhood was

[59] Dye, "Sacajawea Statue Dedication," p. 2, EED Papers.

essential to femininity or to women's civic participation. Instead, the final sentence first appreciated "all women," then acknowledged in a separate clause the particular contribution enacted by "all mothers, with the infant race in their arms," and concluded by recognizing both women and mothers as leaders.

Additionally, this passage—like Dye's speech as a whole—suggested that Sacagawea represented not only an individual woman but also the civic leadership enacted by generations of women. Although Dye emphasized the significance of Sacagawea's deeds, she made it clear that the act of memorializing Sacagawea was not merely a tribute to a singular woman. It was rather a public celebration of the countless deeds of American Indian and Anglo-American women that advanced U.S. interests. In Dye's words, "What Sacajawea did, many Indian women did, in succession, becoming the wives of trappers and traders, revealing the secrets of their country [and] opening the way to a higher civilization."[60] In addition to aligning Sacagawea with other American Indian women who married white men and aided the United States, Dye analogized Sacagawea and Anglo-American women. Specifically, her speech compared the deeds of Sacagawea with those of pioneers Narcissa Whitman and Eliza Spaulding: "Two fair-haired Anglo-Saxon women, two brides, took their lives in their hands on their wedding journey to accompany their husbands to this far off Pacific" to establish towns, cities, and states in the Pacific Northwest.[61] Dye's address suggested that four important qualities connected Sacagawea with some American Indian women and with many Anglo-

[60] Dye, "Sacajawea Statue Dedication," p. 1, EED Papers.
[61] Dye, "Sacajawea Statue Dedication," p. 1, EED Papers.

American women: marriage to white men, motherhood, civilizing character, and substantial contributions to the U.S. settlement of the West. Although the 1905 commemoration made possible an analogy between Sacagawea and the lives of other minority women, it most closely associated the great guide with Anglo-American women.

As it portrayed Sacagawea as a symbol for women and their contributions to the United States, Dye's encomium venerated an image of womanhood that combined traditionally masculine civic virtues such as leadership and courage with distinctively feminine features such as beauty and domesticity. As an "invented great," Sacagawea provided a historical image that fused qualities considered virtuous in women and those qualities believed to be necessary for participation in public life. Moreover, the commemoration of a mythic Sacagawea transformed the political meaning of women's domestic activities as it characterized women's maternal role as an important form of participation in U.S. expansion. By providing an image of women and mothers as leading participants in the settlement of the West, epideictic rhetoric in praise of Sacagawea symbolically revised traditional notions of women's sphere, to assert a place for women at the center of the public realm.

Although Dye characterized Sacagawea and her qualities as symbolic of all women, it is important to recognize that the 1905 commemoration also emphasized the "Indian" qualities of this invented great. In the first paragraph of her encomium, Dye

described Sacagawea as "a captive Indian princess of the Shoshones."[62] Later in the address, Sacagawea was similarly characterized as "the dark eyed princess of the native race, the child of the Orient [who] beckoned the white man on, toward her ancient home."[63] Depicting Sacagawea as an "Indian princess" differentiated her from stereotypical images of American Indian women and made analogies between Sacagawea and white women that were viable in a culture that emphasized racial difference.[64] In contrast to the stereotypical "savage Indian" who resisted colonization, Sacagawea was depicted as a noble woman who shared in Anglo-American customs of marriage and domesticity, and who had the sagacity to understand and assist the U.S. mission in the American West.[65] As Wanda Pillow observed, transforming Sacagawea "from a 'savage squaw' into a prototype of the white imaginary *indian* princess" made her a consumable heroine.[66] As it characterized Sacagawea as a native princess, the commemoration implied that Sacagawea represented the highest refinement and virtue of her race and was a figure with whom Anglo-Americans could identify.

The epideictic rhetoric of the 1905 commemoration "whitened" Sacagawea just enough to make tenable its analogy between the woman who led the Corps of Discovery

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[62]Dye, "Sacajawea Statue Dedication," p. 1, EED Papers.
[63] Dye, "Sacajawea Statue Dedication," p. 2, EED Papers.
[64] See Kessler, *Making of Sacagwea*, 23.
[65] See Kessler, *Making of Sacagawea*, 92; Blee, "Completing Lewis and Clark's Westward March," 249.
[66] See Pillow, "In Search of Sacagawea," 8. Pillow explains that she uses the term "squaw" in context and in quotation marks "to highlight the construction of American Indian women, including Sacajawea, not as women, but as racialized, sexualized, inhuman objects. Avoiding this term," she suggests, "would not erase the discursive and pragmatic effects of its usage and there is no other term that captures the misogyny and racism embedded in its historical meaning" (17-18).

and women of Anglo-American descent, but it did not go so far as to make Sacagawea appear to be an equal subject.[67] Inasmuch as she was characterized as a dark-eyed child of the Orient, Sacagawea was "other" than a white woman. By describing her as a juvenile deeply rooted in an ancient and mysterious land, Dye's rhetoric suggested that Sacagawea was somehow more primitive than adult white women. In addition to asserting a racial hierarchy among women, characterizing Sacagawea in this way implied that the virtues apparent in an American Indian woman of the past might be all the more evident in white women of the present. That is, the attribution of "dark," "childlike" qualities to Sacagawea expressed a framework in which she represented not the most outstanding example, but rather a primitive embodiment, of women's public virtue and capacity to contribute to civic life.

In view of this framing of Sacagawea, it is important to recognize several rhetorical implications of a discourse that recaptured a historical American Indian woman and represented her as a token of U.S. progress and twentieth-century politics. By suggesting that Sacagawea and other American Indian women became "the wives of trappers and traders, revealing the secrets of their country and giving over its trade and resources to whites, opening the way to higher civilization," Dye's discourse venerated a Shoshone woman—who was made to represent American Indian women—as both a party to and a beneficiary of the U.S. colonization of the West.[68] Although Dye's rhetoric left open the possibility of understanding Sacagawea as something other than a willing

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[67] Cf. Pillow, "In Search of Sacagawea," 9.
[68] Dye, "Sacajawea Statue Dedication," p. 3, EED Papers.

participant in the colonization of the American West—as the encomium explicitly acknowledged that Sacagawea was a "captive"—it emphasized the Shoshone woman's contributions to the U.S. mission in Oregon as her most significant virtue.

This mythic image of an idealized Indian mother working in partnership with agents of Anglo-American empire is in stark contrast to the reality that the violent conquest of American Indian women characterized the so-called settlement of the Pacific Northwest.[69] It neglects the fact that Sacagawea herself was subject to the violence of white men as she traveled with the Corps of Discovery.[70] Inasmuch as Dye's rhetoric depicted U.S. expansion as a form of progress that was "beckoned" and made possible by American Indian women like Sacagawea, it offered a justification for the expansion of U.S. communities and divested white audiences of responsibility for the plunder of American Indian lives and resources in the Pacific Northwest.

Further, by speaking for Sacagawea and her legacy, Anglo-American members of the Sacajawea Statue Association performed a rhetoric of stewardship: as they emphasized the significance of women in pioneer history and their place in public culture, they also elevated themselves as representatives empowered to speak for all

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[69] See Coll Peter Thrush and Robert Keller, "'I See What I Have Done': The Life and Murder Trial of Xwelas, a S'Kallam Woman," *Western Historical Quarterly* 26.2 (1995): 177; Susan Armitage, "Tied to Other Lives: Women in Pacific Northwest History," in *Women in Pacific Northwest History*, ed. Karen J. Blair (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1998), 11; John Hussey, "The Women of Fort Vancouver," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 92.3 (1991): 265-69; Stephanie Ambrose Tubbs, *The Lewis and Clark Companion: An Encyclopedic Guide to the Voyage of Discovery* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 2003), 267.

[70] See Moulton, *Definitive Journals of Lewis and Clark* 3:260, 5:93; Donaldson, "Red Woman, White Dreams," 529.

women.[71] This rhetorical performance was vested with transformative potential as it demonstrated women's capacity to act authoritatively in the public realm, asserting that it was—and had historically been—the province of all women. However, as it accentuated the public identity and discourse of certain white women, rhetoric in praise of Sacagawea minimized other voices. Specifically, Anglo-American women who venerated Sacagawea at the 1905 commemoration took the liberty of speaking for the history and views of American Indian women generally, subsuming their diverse experiences under a single narrative that endorsed the colonization of the West. The 1905 commemoration is open to critiques, particularly for its failure to include American Indian voices and for its reproduction of some of the racist and imperialist attitudes of the predominant culture in the early twentieth-century Pacific Northwest.

Yet the *Sacajawea* dedication resisted other common forms of stereotyping and segregation. It represented a rare rhetorical performance by Anglo-Americans at the turn of the century that did not ignore American Indian women altogether or make them objects of derision or blame.[72] The 1905 commemoration brought a historic American Indian woman into the public domain and venerated her as a skilled individual and model community member. Moreover, Dye and the Sacajawea Statue Association took the unusual step of welcoming American Indians as participants and honored guests at the

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[71] Susan Zaeske suggests that free white women in the nineteenth-century United States enacted a similar form of "stewardship" when they insisted on speaking for slave women, thus accentuating the dependence of slave women and the contrasting independence of free women; Zaeske, "Signatures of Citizenship: The Rhetoric of Women's Antislavery Petitions," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 88.2 (2002): 161.

[72] See Kessler, *Making of Sacagwea*, 22, 65.

dedication ceremony.[73] Although the 1905 commemoration did not incorporate American Indians as platform speakers, it challenged some exclusionary, racist practices of its day by according members of the Nez Perce and Chemawa tribes a role in the statue dedication and by recognizing a man who was believed to be "the only full blooded Shoshone Indian in Oregon" as the esteemed guest of Dye and the Statue Association.[74]

As a whole, the dedication of *Sacajawea* was a complex rhetorical act that celebrated a Shoshone woman and honored the role of an American Indian in U.S. history while making Sacagawea's history serve political purposes not her own. By representing Sacagawea as an invented great—one whose active participation in the U.S. settlement of the Pacific Northwest made her a model American—the epideictic event recaptured a historic American Indian woman for the purpose of empowering twentieth-century

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[73] The inclusion of American Indians at the 1905 dedication of *Sacajawea* differed from the treatment of American Indians by other early twentieth-century efforts to honor the Shoshone woman, and from other exhibits and events at the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition. When the Federated Women's Clubs of eastern North Dakota, for instance, initiated a campaign in 1905 to erect a statue of Sacagawea, Kessler notes, "natives took no part in the monument drive" (90-91). At the Centennial Exposition, living American Indians were part of a number of exhibits that were intended by Anglo-American organizers to demonstrate that "acculturation uplifted Indians from a hopeless fate" and to emphasize the superiority of U.S. civilization; Blee, "Completing Lewis and Clark's Westward March," 240. On 2 February 1905 Kate C. McBeth, a fairgoer and a Christian missionary to the Nez Perce, sent to Eva Emery Dye a letter that described the Exposition's treatment of American Indians as demeaning for all involved ("Letter to Dye," LCC Records). On 6 February Dye sent a letter to Exposition Executive Board member Henry Goode, reiterating McBeth's concerns and requesting authorization to accord American Indians "a place of honor" at the dedication of *Sacajawea;* Dye, "Letter to Goode, February 6, 1905," Abigail Scott Duniway Papers, Mss 432, Oregon Historical Society, Portland. Later, Dye informed Goode of her intention to bring a Shoshone man to the Exposition as the guest of herself and the Sacajawea Statue Association; Dye, "Letter to Goode, June 30, 1905," Abigail Scott Duniway Papers.

[74] Dye, "Letter to Goode, June 30, 1905," Abigail Scott Duniway Papers.

women, particularly white women. The case of the *Sacajawea* dedication offers an opportunity to observe the capacity of epideictic rhetoric to revise civic identity and to promote a more inclusive public; yet it also displays the negative consequences and limitations of discourse that empowers people of a particular era, race, or class through the capture of histories and voices of others.

As Cynthia Miecznikowski Sheard observes, "Images of the real and the fictive need not be positive for epideictic to accomplish its visionary function."[75] Despite its reproduction of some of the most negative aspects of the dominant culture, the 1905 commemoration did expand membership in the community in significant ways. As it venerated a woman as an icon of civic virtue, the dedication brought women onto the public stage and encouraged audience members to envision women as important members of the civic realm. In the final section of this chapter, I consider how commemoration of an invented great represented a powerful mode of rhetorical creation, one that simultaneously articulated, enacted, and venerated a central public identity for women—particularly white women—in the Pacific Northwest.

The Transformative Dimensions of Epideictic Rhetoric

Fundamentally, the dedication of *Sacajawea* utilized a classical form of epideictic rhetoric and appealed to some traditional values—such as the dogma of manifest destiny and the ideal of traditional womanhood—to promote a strong sense of communal identity among its audience. In some ways, the reproduction of these elements of the dominant

[75] Sheard, "Public Value of Epideictic Rhetoric," 768.

culture made epideictic in praise of Sacagawea compliant with generic form and public expectations; the 1905 commemoration garnered attention and praise as it "created a sense of communion around particular values recognized by the audience."[76] However, rather than fully reinscribing existing political identities, epideictic discourse in praise of Sacagawea substantially revised traditional notions of membership in the public realm by venerating an invented great that symbolized public virtue, portraying an American Indian as a model of leadership and courage and articulating a precedent for women's civic participation.

History, Dye's encomium asserted, illustrated that women went public centuries ago and that their leadership was beneficial and necessary to civic life. This commemoration of an invented great presented women's involvement in the public realm as a historical fact. It pointed to Sacagawea as a hallmark of women's past deeds and venerated her as a model American. Yet the image of Sacagawea as a civic leader was not a presentation of a standard history; it was a rhetorical invention that provided reason and opportunity for women to act publicly. As they commemorated Sacagawea, disenfranchised women asserted themselves as leaders in their community, contributed to the Centennial Exposition, and participated in national discourse. As such, the epideictic rhetoric of the *Sacajawea* dedication demonstrated a capacity to engage speakers and audiences in alternative public relationships and practices.

Together, the cultural figure of Sacagawea and the activities of the Statue Association and the public discourse of Eva Emery Dye challenged traditional notions of

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[76] See Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 51.

woman's sphere, which held that women's agency, responsibilities, and interests were relegated to the home and that their traditional activities neither constituted nor connected to public affairs.[77] Given her prominent role as a suffragist, it may not be surprising that Dye challenged the exclusion of women from history, the public stage, and politics. What is remarkable about Dye's rhetorical performance—that is, her invention and commemoration of Sacagawea—is the manner in which it operated to transform the meaning of women's history and its relationship to civic life. For instance, by distinguishing motherhood as one way—but not the only way—in which women have historically made profound contributions to the civic realm, her discourse validated the traditional experiences and activities of women as publicly valuable while also suggesting that women have since the time of Eve exhibited the ability to lead publicly.

By drawing on history, Dye rhetorically constructed a tenable public identity for woman that emphasized her capacity to lead and the indispensability of her influence upon civic life. Dye's discourse challenged the conventional distinction between private and public realms, to assert that woman was not only part of domestic life but also part of the public and political domains. By figuring the domestic and the political not as separate spheres but as integrated aspects of civic life, Dye's rhetoric recognized the public value of work traditionally performed by women and provided a rationale by which "domestic" women could perceive themselves as citizens with political interests and agency, and men could recognize women's public participation as vital to the

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[77] See Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, *Man Cannot Speak For Her*, 2 vols. (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1989), 1:8-15.

community. The dedication of *Sacajawea* claimed things that were conventionally understood as private—such as motherhood and the experiences of an individual woman—as evidence for women's membership in the public realm.

In addition to articulating a historical precedent for and promoting recognition of women's civic contributions, the 1905 commemoration of Sacagawea provided an opportunity for women in the Pacific Northwest to enact civic leadership. As disenfranchised women in Oregon organized to commemorate Sacagawea, and as they presided over the dedication of the statue representing her, they themselves moved from the margins of public life to take center stage at a national event. The 1905 commemoration not only provided a powerful image of women in Pacific Northwest history; it also engaged women in new and significant forms of public action. Sherri Bartlett Browne recounts:

> The Sacajawea Statue Association began as an effort to memorialize one woman and evolved into an important avenue for training its members in community organizing. Association members learned how to lobby the business community, raise money and promote their ideas, honing their leadership and networking skills. For the executive board in particular, the events of 1905 were the catalyst that brought them fully into the political sphere. The association functioned as a bridge between the private sphere of women's cultural activities and the public politics of suffrage.[78]

In her keynote address at the dedication of *Sacajawea*, Dye herself suggested that the collective efforts of women to erect "the most notable work of art that has been made for this exposition" were an instantiation of the leadership and public contributions

[78] Browne, *Eva Emery Dye*, 114.

symbolized by Sacagawea.[79] Dye's own rhetorical posture and performance asserted women's right to participate in public action and demonstrated women's capability to lead. Before thousands at the World's Fair, Dye performed as an empowered, knowledgeable, and rational public figure as she spoke authoritatively of history to illustrate that woman had a central role in civic life. She performed the role of a leader as she created and asserted literal and figurative spaces for women in public. Dye, as a woman and a citizen, did not ask to be allowed to participate in her community. Rather, by venerating an invented symbol of womanhood as a model of timeless American values, she asserted that women had already earned the right to be recognized as capable citizens and to be included in the political establishment.

Claiming the statue as a representation not only of the historic deeds of women but also of the present capacity of women to lead, Dye unveiled *Sacajawea* with the declaration that "the women of Oregon present this statue as a token that we have awakened. Forever in the City Park, on the trails her people travel no more, let Sacajawea stand, a reminder and inspiration to duty and to progress."[80] This concluding passage reveals, in a distilled form, the rhetorical nuance through which epideictic rhetoric in praise of Sacagawea simultaneously appealed to and revised a communal identity. As a "reminder and inspiration to duty and progress," the dedication of *Sacajawea* called upon the historical past to provide a model of timeless American civic virtues such as duty and progress. As such, it promoted a sense of public unity around values recognized and

[79] Dye, "Sacajawea Statue Dedication," p. 3, EED Papers.
[80] Dye, "Sacajawea Statue Dedication," p. 4, EED Papers.

affirmed by the audience. However, through its veneration of a female invented great, and the articulation of that veneration by women speakers, these recognized values took on new meaning and presented new implications for public action. As a "reminder and inspiration to duty and progress," the commemoration of Sacagawea "reminds" the audience of women's historic civic duties and vital role in community progress, thereby serving as an "inspiration" for the fulfilment of a public duty to recognize women as significant participants in the civic realm, and a reason to see the revision of traditional political identities as progress.

The dedication of *Sacajawea* made use of epideictic to revise collective memory and to transform the image of a model American as it evoked a powerful communal identification. Through appeals to traditional values, it captured attention and achieved ascendancy; through veneration of a woman as an icon of these values, it altered conventional assumptions regarding gender, leadership, and civic life. The remarkable event of the 1905 commemoration of Sacagawea, as an invented great, generated, celebrated, and manifested a vision of women as leaders. Eva Emery Dye's encomium, which claimed Sacagawea as a symbol of American womanhood, was a complex rhetorical performance vested with libratory potential as well as the troubling implications of recapturing a historical American Indian woman as a token for twentieth-century political purposes. Although the consequences of the rhetorical creation and maintenance of Sacagawea as an invented great are problematic as well as positive**,** the 1905 commemoration of her image at the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition reveals the remarkable potential of epideictic rhetoric to redefine traditional values and

reconstitute the membership of a public community.

Although epideictic discourse in praise of Sacagawea captured national attention and drew enthusiastic responses from the press and the public, not all rhetoric produced by women in the Pacific Northwest achieved this kind of success. For example, as women engaged in legal advocacy between 1868 and 1908, public officials and courts rebuffed their arguments. Turning from epideictic discourse produced by women in Oregon to rhetoric of a different genre produced by women in Washington, the next chapter considers how rhetorical efforts that failed in the courts played a significant role in the development of women's political identity as well as the movement for woman's rights.

Chapter 4

"To Make the Laws That Govern Her":

The Miscarriage of Gender Justice and Women's Strategic Adaptation

Women counted a stunning legal defeat among their early experiences as advocates for equal political rights in the Pacific Northwest. Although Washington women achieved suffrage in 1883, the law that secured their right to vote faced a series of legal challenges. In the 1887 case *Harland v. Territory,* the Washington Territory Supreme Court ruled that the law enfranchising women was unconstitutional. The Washington legislature passed another act granting women the right to vote in January 1888, only to see it overturned by the territorial supreme court six months later. In less than two years, the court took from women the right to be tried by a jury of their peers and to make the laws that governed them. These legal decisions altered the political culture of the region as well as the character of women's civic participation. In addition to excluding women from polling places that had once recognized them as equal citizens, legal reversals left few clear political options for the nascent equal suffrage movement in the Pacific Northwest.

Yet even as direct legal efforts and political campaigns for equal suffrage in the Pacific Northwest diminished between 1889 and 1908, women of the region did not

eschew legal advocacy in the wake of monumental defeat.[1] This chapter shows how women's legal rhetoric shifted during this period, and how their strategic adaptations sustained political activism and cultivated new opportunities to promote equal rights. Following *Harland,* woman's rights advocates shifted their focus from suffrage to advocate for labor rights. Among the legal issues that women became involved in following their loss of the ballot were property rights, the minimum wage, the right to contract, and labor regulation. Through their involvement with labor reform, women advocated their own rights together with the rights of all citizens. As they engaged issues that encompassed—but were not exclusive to—their sex, women built coalitions with a wide range of organizations, forming political alliances with groups that included the National Consumers' League, the Grange, unions, and the Populist party. Women's advocacy on behalf of labor issues integrated women with myriad political interests, produced innovative forms of legal rhetoric, and developed women's political subjectivity and skills.

In order to illuminate the consequences of women's legal advocacy, this chapter traces rhetoric through which women in the Pacific Northwest engaged the law from 1868 to 1908. It begins by exploring the earliest era of suffrage activism in the Pacific Northwest, an era that featured legal arguments that the amendments to the U.S. Constitution passed during Reconstruction enfranchised women, the passage of the Franchise Act in Washington in 1883, and equal suffrage defeats in the Supreme Courts

[1] In 1908 the Oregon State Equal Suffrage Association and Washington Equal Suffrage Association launced new campaigns to place woman suffrage on their state ballots and to win voter support for the measures.

of Washington Territory and the United States in the 1870s and 1880s. Next, the chapter considers shifts in women's legal advocacy in the wake of *Harland v. Territory,* up to 1908, when activists refocused their efforts on state ballot measures for equal suffrage. The majority of this analysis of women's legal advocacy focuses on four rhetorical activities: collaboration and debate between women's clubs and working women's organizations, women's research and public reports regarding working conditions in the Pacific Northwest, campaigns for progressive labor laws, and courtroom arguments regarding the constitutionality of laws that offered special protection for women workers.

My analysis of the issues and strategies through which disenfranchised women in the Pacific Northwest engaged the law suggests that their innovative forms of legal advocacy influenced culture, sustained activism in the face of defeat, developed powerful new coalitions, and produced important arguments for equal rights. Their legal advocacy shaped the kinds of issues that were considered in courtrooms, as well as the forms of evidence and arguments that were recognized as valid in the legal realm. It contributed to a culture in which legal advocates, even as they argued opposite sides of an issue, did so from the shared premise that the law ought to serve women as well as men. In the end, women's legal advocacy also demonstrated the profound gender bias of courts and the danger that this bias posed to the privileges and immunities of all citizens. Significant defeats in territorial, state, and federal courts radicalized citizens in Oregon and Washington, as the repeated miscarriage of gender justice reinforced the need for women to participate directly in the political process and contributed to the development of a more robust regional movement for equal suffrage.

The Law, Life-in-Society, and Social Change

Like most studies of U.S. legal rhetoric, this chapter analyzes normative discourse of the law—that is, arguments addressed to or issued from courts in the United States.[2] Yet it also looks beyond normative discourse of the law to consider legal advocacy as it occurred outside the courtroom. In addition to court opinions and legal briefs, public discourse about the law was produced by citizens who had limited legal rights and legal training. Like women elsewhere in the country, myriad disenfranchised women in the Northwest, from prominent clubwomen to wage laborers, generated interpretations of the law and assertive claims for gender justice. Women's public discourse about the law, together with their contributions to formal legal cases, brought new issues before the courts and new forms of public action into being.[3]

Together, these forms of advocacy provide insight into rhetoric through which courts, attorneys, and citizens defined legal rights. Moreover, courtroom arguments and public discourse about woman's rights in the Pacific Northwest offer significant

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[2] Joseph W. Dellapenna and Kathleen Farrell, "Law and the Language of Community: On the Contributions of James Boyd White," *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 21.3 (Summer 1991): 39. Recent examples of rhetorical studies that focus on the normative discourse of the law include Katie L. Gibson, "Judicial Rhetoric and Women's 'Place': The United States Supreme Court's Darwinian Defense of Separate Spheres," *Western Journal of Communication* 71.2 (April 2007): 159-75; Paul Stob, "*Chisholm v. Georgia* and the Question of the Judiciary in the Early Republic," *Argumentation and Advocacy* 42 (2006): 127-42.

[3] Angela G. Ray and Cindy Koenig Richards, "Inventing Citizens, Imagining Gender Justice: The Suffrage Rhetoric of Virginia and Francis Minor," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 93.4 (November 2007): 375-402; Angela G. Ray, "The Rhetorical Ritual of Citizenship: Women's Voting as Public Performance," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 93.1 (February 2007): 1-26.

opportunities to examine the relationship between legal rhetoric and social change. Advocates for woman's rights, for example, utilized the law as written to generate public arguments for the expansion of the voting franchise. In addition to offering rationales for social change that were rooted in standard legal texts, these arguments engendered new forms of action among disenfranchised women, such as assertive attempts to vote. As women engaged the law to advocate social change—as they cited it as a warrant for equal rights, acted on the premise that it enfranchised all citizens, went to court, and advocated for justice beyond the courtroom—their rhetoric manifested connections between legal discourse, civic identity, and public action. Thus, as it attends to women's legal advocacy in the Pacific Northwest, this study takes up John Louis Lucaites's challenge to scholars of rhetoric to "seriously engage the political implications of the relationship between rhetoric and law for *life-in-society*."[4]

When he issued this challenge in 1990, Lucaites observed, "As contemporary rhetoricians we have tended to treat the relationship between rhetoric and the law with a tired nonchalance. We write the occasional article on oral arguments before the Supreme Court or on judicial decision making" but generally fail to "discover the materialized practices of language-in-action which create the conditions for collective experiences of power, legitimacy, and social change."[5] Although many studies of legal rhetoric continue to focus on the normative discourse of the law, a number of recent studies illuminate how

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[4] John Louis Lucaites, "Between Rhetoric and 'The Law': Power, Legitimacy, and Social Change," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 76.4 (November 1990): 445. See also Trevor Parry-Giles, *The Character of Justice* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2006), 5; Ray, "Rhetorical Ritual"; and Ray and Richards, "Inventing Citizens."

[5] Lucaites, "Between Rhetoric," 445-46.

"the rhetorical nature of the law is deeper and richer than simple courtroom speaking."[6] Research by rhetorical scholars is making it clear that legal rhetoric shapes civic identity and conduct, not simply through the official articulation of the rule of law but also through public discourses that interpret, express, and bear on the law. In *Character of Justice*, for instance, Trevor Parry-Giles examines the U.S. Supreme Court confirmation process as a rhetorical one, which has significant implications for U.S. political culture and the meaning of American law.[7]

Moreover, a number of articles on the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century legal rhetoric of woman's rights activists illuminate connections between the law, public discourse, and social change.[8] In one such article, "Inventing Citizens, Imagining Gender Justice: The Suffrage Rhetoric of Virginia and Francis Minor," Angela G. Ray and I analyze the Reconstruction-era development of an innovative legal argument that claimed that the newly amended U.S. Constitution enfranchised women citizens. This interpretation of constitutional law—and the articulation of these interpretations in courtrooms, public arenas, and periodicals—generated new forms of action among disenfranchised women citizens. We argue that, although the 1875 decision of the U.S. Supreme Court in *Minor v. Happersett* failed to recognize women as voters, the Minors'

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[6] Parry-Giles, *Character of Justice,* 2.
[7] Parry-Giles, *Character of Justice,* 13.
[8] See Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, *Man Cannot Speak for Her,* 2 vols. (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1989), 1:105-19; Cindy Koenig Richards, "Susan B. Anthony's 'Is It a Crime for a U.S. Citizen to Vote?'" in *Voices of Democracy*, http://www.voicesofdemocracy.com, forthcoming; Ray, "Rhetorical Ritual"; Ray and Richards, "Inventing Citizens"; Leslie Harris, "The Court, Child Custody, and Social Change: The Rhetorical Role of Precedent in a 19th Century Child Custody Decision," *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 34.1 (Winter 2004): 29-45; and Gibson, "Judicial Rhetoric and Women's 'Place.'"

legal arguments about gender and citizenship invigorated the woman suffrage movement and assisted in "the production of new ways of imagining political selves and performing political identities."[9] Thus, we posit a significant link between legal rhetoric, public action, and social change.

Building on the general commitment to understanding connections between the law and social change—as well as specific research on legal cases—this chapter examines the consequences of women's legal rhetoric for the performance of citizenship and the development of a successful reform movement. Rather than focusing on arguments surrounding a single case, as Ray and I did in our analysis of *Minor v. Happersett,* I attend to a variety of legal cases and modes of legal advocacy that occurred across forty years in the Pacific Northwest. By encompassing a substantial sample, this research illuminates how legal rhetoric, broadly conceived, contributed to the development of women's public identity and political skills. Specifically, legal efforts that failed in the courts successfully engaged women in assertive public action, clarified the political landscape, challenged activists to adapt and innovate strategies for securing citizenship rights, and precipitated the development of new political alliances.

"The Courts Will Declare Such a Law Unconstitutional; What Then?"

One of the earliest examples of women's legal advocacy in Oregon and Washington emerged in the late 1860s. Shortly after the ratification of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution, suffragists in the Pacific Northwest

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[9] Ray and Richards, "Inventing Citizens," 375.

advanced the argument that the newly amended Constitution enfranchised all women citizens together with African American men. Similar arguments were introduced at the Missouri Woman Suffrage Association convention in October 1869, where Virginia and Francis Minor asserted that women had a preexisting legal right to vote, a right that was reinforced by the definition of citizenship in the Fourteenth Amendment. Citing the language of the original U.S. Constitution and the text of the recently adopted Fourteenth Amendment, the Minors claimed that the law as written guaranteed voting rights to federal citizens—that is, to "all persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof." Because women were citizens, the Minors argued, they were also legal voters.[10] Ray and I observe that this argument not only offered a legal foundation for universal suffrage; it also offered a conceptual foundation for assertive political action by women.[11] On the basis of their novel interpretation of the law, the Minors called for women to act as citizen-voters by registering to vote, casting ballots, and asserting that the law protected their right to participate in the franchise. If necessary—that is, if they were not recognized as voters in registry offices or at the polls—Virginia Minor declared that women ought to file lawsuits demanding that the courts "make us in our rights as citizens."[12] Through this assertive form of advocacy, which came to be known as the New Departure, suffragists sought to expand the legal definition and performative parameters of citizenship.

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[10] See "The St. Louis Resolutions," *Revolution*, 28 October 1869, 259; and "St. Louis Convention," *Revolution*, 21 October 1869, 250.
[11] Ray and Richards, "Inventing Citizens," 379-81.
[12] "Mrs. Francis Minor," *Revolution*, 28 October 1869, 258, 259. See also "St. Louis Convention," 250.

The *Revolution*, a weekly newspaper published in New York by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, circulated to readers throughout the nation a series of reports of the Missouri Woman Suffrage Association convention and New Departure arguments. The Minors' rhetoric and legal strategy garnered the attention of women in Washington and Oregon, some of whom went to the polls and demanded to vote. Among them was Mary Olney Brown, who raised strong objections when election officials in White River, Washington Territory, refused to accept her ballot in 1869. Brown recalled the exchange thus:

> Summoning all my strength, I walked up to the desk behind which sat the august officers of election, and presented my vote. When behold! I was pompously met with the assertion, "You are not an American citizen; hence not entitled to vote." The great unabridged dictionary of Noah Webster was opened, and the definition of the word citizen read to me. They all looked to see me vanquished; they thought I would have to retreat before such an overwhelming array of sagacity. The countenances of the judges wore a pleased expression that they had hit on so easy an expedient to put me hors du combat, while the crowd looked astonished that I did not sink out of sight. Waiting a moment, I said, "The definition is correct. A citizen of the United States is a person owing allegiance to the government; but then all persons are not men; and the definition of 'citizeness' is a female citizen. I claim to be an American citizen, and a native-born citizen at that; and I wish to show you from the fourteenth amendment to the constitution of the United States, that women are not only citizens having the constitutional right to vote, but also that our territorial election law gives women the privilege of exercising that right."[13]

Brown's objections drew on New Departure arguments to assert that women were voters. Other women in the Pacific Northwest succeeded in voting after Brown protested her exclusion from the polls. In 1870 a small group of African American and Anglo-

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[13] *History of Woman Suffrage* (hereafter cited as *HWS*), 6 vols., vols. 1-3 ed. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Matilda Joslyn Gage, vol. 4 ed. Susan B. Anthony and Ida Husted Harper, and vols. 5-6 ed. Ida Husted Harper (1881-1922), 3:781.

American women successfully registered and voted in Portland, Oregon.[14] During the same election, a number of women voted in Grand Mound, Washington.[15] However, at least three women who attempted to vote in Olympia, Washington—including Mary Olney Brown—were turned away from the polls in 1870.[16]

Following these attempts by women to vote, the New Departure received additional publicity as Abigail Scott Duniway and Susan B. Anthony canvassed the Pacific Northwest for equal suffrage, covering more than two thousand miles in Oregon and Washington. During this 1871 campaign, Anthony publicly argued that women were enfranchised by recent amendments to the U.S. Constitution and encouraged women to enact their citizenship rights by going to the polls and voting.[17] In addition, Duniway spoke about the New Departure before sessions of the Oregon state legislature and the Washington territorial legislature, and Anthony discussed the constitutionality of women's voting rights with members of the Oregon State Supreme Court. These experiences led Duniway and Anthony to believe that a woman suffrage case might receive a favorable hearing in the courts of the Pacific Northwest.[18]

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[14] *New York Times*, 28 November 1872; Ruth Barnes Moynihan, *Rebel for Rights: Abigail Scott Duniway* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985), 85; Ray, "Rhetorical Ritual," 8, 24.
[15] *HWS* 3:784. Among the women who voted in Grand Mound was Charlotte Olney French, sister of Mary Olney Brown.
[16] *HWS* 3:785.
[17] See G. Thomas Edwards, *Sowing Good Seeds: The Northwest Suffrage Campaigns of Susan B. Anthony* (Portland: Oregon Historical Society Press, 1990).
[18] See Edwards, *Sowing Good Seeds*, esp. 58-61; Moynihan, *Rebel for Rights*, 92-95; *HWS* 3:769, 786.

In Washington, meanwhile, Mary Olney Brown published a series of articles advancing New Departure arguments. Brown queried the public, "What are the requisite qualifications for voters?" Under the Reconstruction Amendments, she responded, the qualification was "not sex, but citizenship. The Constitution of the United States says the voter must be a citizen of the United States, and of the State wherein he resides, at the time he casts his vote. No state can disfranchise any of its citizens, nor deprive them of the exercise of this right, except for certain causes. . . . Sex is no where mentioned as a disqualification for the exercise of the right of franchise."[19] Brown's detailed case for equal suffrage affirmed the rights of women together with those of minority citizens. In an analysis of constitutional law and public opinion, in which she quoted the Fifteenth Amendment, she wrote,

> No one now, however ignorant in other respects, attempts to deny the citizenship of women, white or colored; and as the word citizen does not indicate sex, even those Indian women, whose husbands have severed their tribal relations, and become citizens of the United States, and have taken homesteads, and preemptions, are also citizens, such as are entitled to vote at all elections in the States or Territories, where they reside. . . . "The right of citizens of the United States to vote, shall not be denied by the United States, nor by any state on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude." The race, nor the color, nor the kind of servitude is not specified. The citizen may belong to the Mongolian race, or the Malayan, the African, the Caucasian, or the Indian; just so they are born or naturalized in the United States, and owe allegiance to the Government.[20]

Like the Minor arguments, Brown's discourse "provided a legal foundation for universal suffrage," as it interpreted the Constitution as a document that offered equal protection to

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[19] Mary Olney Brown, "Voters and Virtue," *New Northwest*, 10 March 1875, 1.
[20] Mary Olney Brown, "Letter from Washington Territory," *New Northwest*, 14 November 1873, 2.

all persons born or naturalized in the United States.[21] Brown's legal rhetoric supported a new way of thinking about citizenship rights and encouraged new ways for people to act in their capacity as citizens. That is, if all citizens were guaranteed the privileges and immunities assumed by white male citizens, then all citizens could claim the right to vote.

Owing to regional publicity of New Departure arguments and a number of successful attempts by women to vote in the early 1870s, it seemed possible that women in the Pacific Northwest might soon go to the polls in larger numbers and be acknowledged as legal voters. Some activists expressed hope that, in the event that women were rebuffed from polling places, the Oregon State Supreme Court would hear their case and affirm equal suffrage.[22] However, before the question of whether the U.S. Constitution guaranteed to women the franchise was resolved in the Pacific Northwest, the U.S. Supreme Court decided the woman suffrage issue in 1875, in the *Minor v. Happersett* case. In 1872 Virginia Minor had attempted to register as a voter in her hometown of St. Louis. Local registrar Reese Happersett refused to register Minor "because she was not a 'male' citizen, but a woman." Subsequently, Virginia Minor and her husband, Francis Minor, sued Happersett for denying the elective franchise to her as a citizen of Missouri and of the United States.[23] The case was eventually appealed to the

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[21] Ray and Richards, "Inventing Citizens," 380.
[22] See Edwards, *Sowing Good Seeds*, esp. 58-61; Moynihan, *Rebel for Rights*, 92-95; *HWS* 3:769, 786.
[23] U.S. Supreme Court, *Virginia L. Minor and Francis Minor, Her Husband, Plaintiffs in Error, vs. Reese Happersett,* Transcript of Record, no. 182, filed 16 August 1873, Petition, p. 3. See also Ray and Richards, "Inventing Citizens," 380-81.

U.S. Supreme Court, which acknowledged that women were citizens but denied that citizenship guaranteed the right to the franchise.[24]

Despite this national defeat, suffragists in the Pacific Northwest continued to claim that women were voters under existing law. Their arguments were twofold. First, they asserted that the *Minor* decision contradicted founding U.S. legal principles and that states and territories ought to restore republican government by acknowledging that voting rights were guaranteed to all citizens by the original U.S. Constitution. Mary Olney Brown was a leading proponent of this perspective; she advocated it to public audiences in Oregon and Washington and published a series of newspaper articles in 1878 called "The Equality of Citizenship."[25] Brown's rhetoric extolled the "great democratic principle contained in the Declaration of Independence, that the 'just powers of a government are derived from the consent of the governed.'" This, she argued, "is the principle we should never lose sight of. It is the corner-stone of our glorious Republic;

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[24] *Minor v. Happersett*, 88 U.S. 162 (1874), 170, 171, 176-77; Ray and Richards, "Inventing Citizens," 391-92.

[25] For New Departure arguments articulated by Mary Olney Brown prior to the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Minor v. Happersett,* see, for example, Mary Olney Brown, "Letter from Washington Territory," *New Northwest*, 14 November 1873, 2; Mary Olney Brown, "Washington Territory Correspondence," *New Northwest*, 2 January 1874, 2; Mary Olney Brown, "Voters and Virtue," *New Northwest*, 10 March 1875, 1. For Brown's revised legal arguments that the law enfranchised female citizens following *Minor v. Happersett,* see, for example, Mary Olney Brown, "Letter to Francis Fuller Victor," *New Northwest*, 18 February 1876; Mary Olney Brown, "Equality of Citizenship," *New Northwest*, 20 February 1878; Mary Olney Brown, "Equality of Citizenship, Number Two," *New Northwest*, 8 March 1878; Mary Olney Brown, "Equality of Citizenship, Number Three," *New Northwest*, 15 March 1878; Mary Olney Brown, "Equality of Citizenship, Number Four," *New Northwest*, 22 March 1878; Mary Olney Brown, "Equality of Citizenship, Number Five," *New Northwest*, 29 March 1878; and Mary Olney Brown, "Inherent Rights," *New Northwest*, 1 December 1881, 1.

the foundation on which our government rests. But the power which one-half of our citizens has usurped over the other half, depriving them of the exercise of the right of suffrage, is surely undermining this foundation."[26]

Moreover, Brown asserted that the original U.S. Constitution, interpreted correctly, protected citizens in their right to vote. "From the very nature of our government, and from the original constitution, independent of the amendments, both men and women are alike included in the word citizen," she wrote, citing article 4, which guarantees that "the citizens of each State shall be entitled to all the privileges and immunities of citizens of the several States."[27] As she constructed legal arguments based on the original Constitution—not Reconstruction Amendments—Brown differentiated her case from the Supreme Court's decision in *Minor*. "Had there never been a Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution, woman, equally with man, would be entitled to a voice in the government. In other words, she would have a right to vote."[28]

This argument maintained the possibility that the law could be understood as a validation of women's citizenship rights, even after the *Minor* decision. Perhaps more important, Brown's rhetoric demonstrated a woman's ability to act as a citizen, an interpreter of the law, and a champion of democracy. Rather than requesting a new privilege, Brown asserted that women already possessed the right to vote. She charged

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[26] Brown, "Equality of Citizenship, Number One."
[27] Brown, "Equality of Citizenship, Number Two."
[28] Brown, "Equality of Citizenship, Number Two." This line of argument was not original to Brown; others, such as U.S. senator Charles Sumner, had previously relied on article 4 of the U.S. Constitution to claim that existing law already enfranchised all citizens.

that governments that failed to acknowledge citizens as voters, not women who attempted to vote, were in conflict with democratic principles and law. Although this argument did not lead directly to the enfranchisement of women, it sustained the rationale that equal suffrage was in line with existing law and traditional values.

Second, equal suffragists argued that existing laws of Washington Territory opened the elective franchise to women citizens. The act of Congress that organized the Territory of Washington in 1853—commonly known as the Organic Act—stated explicitly that, at elections subsequent to the first, "all persons should be allowed to vote upon whom the Territorial Legislature might confer the elective franchise." Interpreting this law to mean that women could be enfranchised by a simple act of the territorial legislature, a small group of Washington residents led by Brown and Duniway lobbied legislators to recognize women as legal voters. Although this approach differed from the earlier argument that the U.S. Constitution enfranchised all citizens, it shared the premise that the law as written made it possible to recognize women as voters. On 23 November 1883, the legislature passed "An Act to Amend Section 3050, Chapter 238 of the Code of Washington," which recognized women as voters. Signed into law by territorial governor William A. Newell, this Franchise Act also qualified women to serve as jurors, since another territorial code qualified all electors to sit on grand juries.[29]

The Franchise Act was a major political achievement that was attributed to the tireless efforts of a few activists—such as Duniway, Brown, and State Representative

[29] The Franchise Act also made Washington Territory the first state or territorial government in the United States to enfranchise African American women.

Henry Copley—as there was not an organized equal suffrage movement in Washington Territory at the time of the act's passage.[30] Early historians of the suffrage movement claimed that in the two years that followed the passage of this act, women of Washington "use[d] the franchise with unabated zeal."[31] In a number of instances, official returns showed that a larger proportion of women than men voted in Washington elections.[32] Although histories written by suffragists suggest that "newspapers and public speakers were unanimous in their approval" of women's participation in the franchise, other records reveal that some citizens quickly called into question the constitutionality of the Franchise Act.[33]

Early legal challenges to the Franchise Act disputed the claim that it qualified women to serve as jurors. Some challengers argued, for instance, that women ought to be excluded from grand juries in order to protect "innocent females" from exposure to the sordid details of criminal activities such as rape and incest. Others appealed criminal

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[30] *HWS* 4:967; see also *HWS* 3:776. *History of Woman Suffrage* (3:788) notes that Representative Copley sponsored the bill, which was "supported in speeches by Messrs. Coply, Besserer, Miles, Clark and Stitzel while Messrs. Landrum and Kinid spoke against it. The vote was: Ayes—Besserer, Brooks, Clark. Copley, Foster, Goodell, Hungate, Kuhn, Lloyd, Martin, Miles. Shaw, Stitzel and Speaker Ferguson—14. Noes—Barlow, Brining, Landrum, Ping, Kincaid, Shoudy and Young—7. Absent—Blackwell, Turpin and Warner—3. The bill was favorably reported in the Council, November 15, by Chairman Burk of the Judiciary Committee. No one offered to speak on it. The vote stood: Ayes—Burk, Edmiston, Hale, Harper, Kerr, Power and Smith—7. Noes—Caton, Collins, Houghton, Whitehouse and President Traux—5. Governor W. A. Newell approved the bill [in November] 1883."

[31] *HWS* 4:967.

[32] *HWS* 4:967.

[33] *HWS* 4:967; *Rosencrantz v. Territory of Washington*, 2 Washington Territory 267 (1884); *Schilling v. Territory of Washington*, 2 Washington Territory 283 (1884); *Hayes v. Territory of Washington*, 2 Washington Territory 286 (1884); *Walker v. Territory of Washington*, 2 Washington Territory 286 (1884).

convictions on the grounds that women had participated in rendering the verdict but were not qualified to serve as jurors. In 1884 Mollie Rosencrantz brought one such case before the Supreme Court of Washington Territory, appealing her conviction for "keeping a house of ill fame" on the grounds that a married woman had served on the grand jury that had indicted her. In *Rosencrantz v. Territory of Washington,* the Supreme Court of Washington Territory ruled that the law enfranchising women was valid and that women were therefore eligible to sit on juries. This precedent was followed during the 1880s in *Schilling v. Territory, Hayes v. Territory,* and *Walker v. Territory*.[34]

Subsequently, the territorial legislature passed an additional act intended to strengthen women's right to vote and serve as jurors, which was approved by Governor Watson C. Squire on 29 November 1886. Thus, by this time it appeared that the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of the territorial government were united in supporting women's political participation, even in the face of legal challenges to the Franchise Act. Less than three months later, however, the Supreme Court of Washington Territory made a stunning reversal when it decided *Harland v. Territory*. Overturning a guilty verdict that had been issued by a jury composed of men and women, the court reasoned that a verdict against Jeff J. Harland was invalid because women were not

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[34]*Rosencrantz v. Territory*; *Schilling v. Territory*; *Hayes v. Territory*; *Walker v. Territory*. In the *Rosencrantz* case, Judge Hoyt, writing for himself and Judge Wingard, upheld the conviction on the grounds that the law enfranchising women was valid and that women were therefore eligible to sit on grand juries. Justice Turner dissented from the *Rosencrantz* decision and "was of the opinion that a married woman was not the head of a family, and therefore not within the meaning of the term 'householder,'" and thereby unqualified for jury service. See Burdett A. Rich, ed., *The Lawyer's Report Annotated, Book XXXVII, 1898,* (Rochester, NY: Lawyer's Cooperative Publishing Co., 1905), 214.

legally voters or jurors. With this decision, the Franchise Act was rendered invalid, and the women of Washington were disenfranchised.

Harland had been convicted of fraudulently obtaining $610 from J. C. Livensparger by "unlawfully and feloniously carrying on a swindling game called twenty-one, or top-and-bottom dice."[35] Harland, a resident of Oregon, did not dispute the facts of the "swindling game" but instead argued two points of law. Before the territorial supreme court, the attorney for Harland asserted that the verdict against his client could not be upheld because women were not competent to serve as jurors. Moreover, he claimed, the legislative act that made women voters and jurors was invalid because its official title did not accurately describe the content of the law. In other words, Harland's counsel made the case that women ought not be jurors and proposed that the court void the law that made women voters and jurors—and thus overturn Harland's guilty verdict—on a technicality. In turn, the prosecuting attorney for Washington cited the 1884 decision of the Supreme Court of Washington Territory in *Rosencrantz v. Territory,* which affirmed that "all married women, otherwise qualified, are competent grand jurors."[36] This precedent, the prosecuting attorney argued, endorsed the Franchise Act and validated the verdict against Harland.

But the membership of the court that heard the *Harland* case was different from the one that issued the *Rosencrantz* decision, and the new judges took a new view. In the first paragraph of its majority opinion in *Harland,* the court dismissed the *Rosencrantz*

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[35] *Jeff. J. Harland v. Territory of Washington*, 3 Washington Territory 131 (1887), 131.
[36] *Harland v. Territory*, 133.

precedent, saying that "a question arises in this case which was before the court at its July term, 1884, namely, the question whether married women living with their husbands are competent grand jurors in this territory. The question was then decided in the affirmative, but . . . since that decision there has been a change in the membership of the court, and a majority of the quorum sitting in this case finds itself unable to agree with the views expressed or the conclusions announced in the first decision."[37] Rather than upholding the Franchise Act—as the Supreme Court of Washington Territory had in 1884—the new justices decided that the law conferring the elective franchise upon women was void because its official title, "An Act to Amend Section 3050, Chapter 238 of the Code of Washington," did not adequately describe its content. In addition to exonerating Harland, this ruling rendered void nineteen other territorial laws that had been enacted under the same conditions.[38]

The seven-page majority opinion written by Justice Turner articulated the rationale behind the court's decision in *Harland*. Characterizing jury service as "so onerous and burdensome, and so utterly unsuited to the physical condition of females," the court asserted, "There is but one opinion among the great mass of the people, male

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[37] *Harland v. Territory*, 133.

[38] *Harland v. Territory*, 139. Here, the decision states, "For the reasons hereinbefore stated, I believe the act amending section 3050 to be in conflict with our Organic Act, and void. For the same reasons the act of the legislature approved January 29, 1886, Statutes 1885-86, page 113, is void. For the same reasons the act approved February 3, 1886, Session Laws 1885-86, page 128, is void except in so far as it purports to amend sections 3079 and 3084 of the Code. These sections, relating as they do to the mere minutiae of conducting elections, could not, under the title affixed to that act, be amended so as to confer the elective franchise on any one, nor has any amendment of them been attempted which would have that effect if valid." See also *HWS* 4:968.

and female, and that opinion is firmly and unalterably against" the inclusion of women on juries. The court asked, "Ought this limitation be destroyed by implication derived from a legislative act which confessedly deals with another subject?" The answer was unequivocal: "I think not." The decision asserted that the law that enfranchised women and qualified them for jury service was not enacted "openly and in a guise which is not objectionable, and after a full opportunity [had] been given the people to express their views." Because the law failed to "embrace but one object . . . expressed in the title," the court characterized it as a "measure in disguise" and an unconstitutional "fruit of disobedience to the wise and salutary restraint of the Organic Act." The act amending section 3050 was invalid, the court summarized, and thus "the whole superstructure of the argument by which female jury duty is demonstrated falls to the ground a broken and shapeless mass." "Females," it held, "are not voters in this territory, and not being voters, they are not competent to sit on juries."[39]

In response to the court's reversal, the territorial legislature of 1887-88—which was elected by female and male voters—determined to reinstate equal suffrage. Shortly after the legislature and the governor reenacted a "perfectly worded and titled" version of the Franchise Act, however, the suffrage issue was again brought before the Supreme Court of Washington Territory.[40] The 1888 case centered on Nevada Bloomer, who was denied the right to vote in a regular municipal election in Spokane Falls and subsequently

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[39] *Harland v. Territory*, 134-35, 139. Justice C. J. Greene dissented from the opinion of the majority.

[40] *HWS* 4:967. Governor Eugene Semple signed the revised Franchise Act into law on 18 January 1888.

sued the precinct judges who rejected her ballot.[41] At the time, some suggested that saloon owners and suppliers contrived the case to invalidate equal suffrage, out of fear that women would vote for prohibition. Proponents of this theory pointed out that Bloomer's husband owned a saloon and that John Todd, who rejected Bloomer's ballot and became a defendant in the case, was a beer bottler who supplied the Bloomer saloon.[42] Whether or not the suit was contrived, at issue in the case was section 5 of the Organic Act—the 1853 act of Congress that established the territorial government of Washington—that specified that male inhabitants would be permitted to vote in the first territorial election and that the legislative assembly would decide the qualifications of voters at all subsequent elections.[43] In *Bloomer v. Todd* the court ruled that Congress,

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[41] *Bloomer v. Todd*, 3 Washington Territory 599 (1888).
[42] *HWS* 4:969-70; Mildred Andrews, "Woman Suffrage Crusade, 1848-1920," *Online Encyclopedia of Washington State History,* 26 February 2004, http://www.historylink.org/essays/output.cfm?file_id=5662 (accessed 29 October 2007).
[43] "An Act to Establish the Territorial Government of Washington," approved 2 March 1853, in *Statutes at Large of the United States of America, 1789-1873*, vol. 9 (Boston : C. C. Little and J. Brown, 1854), 172. Section 5 of the act states: "*And be it further enacted,* That every white male inhabitant above the age of twenty-one years, who shall have been a resident of said Territory at the time of the passage of this act, and shall possess the qualifications hereinafter prescribed, shall be entitled to vote at the first election, and shall be eligible to any office within the said Territory; but the qualifications of voters and of holding office at all subsequent elections shall be such as shall be prescribed by the Legislative Assembly: *Provided,* That the right of suffrage and of holding office shall be exercised only by citizens of the United States above the age of twenty-one years, and those above that age who shall have declared on oath their intention to become such, and shall have taken an oath to support the Constitution of the United States and the provisions of this act: *And provided further,* That no officer, soldier, seaman, mariner, or other person in the army or navy of the United States, or attached to troops in the service of the United States, shall be allowed to vote in said Territory, by reason of being on service therein, unless said Territory is, and has been for the period of six months, his permanent domicil [*sic*]: *Provided further,* That no person belonging to the army or navy

when it approved the Organic Act, must have intended to limit the franchise to male citizens and therefore the territorial legislature had no power to enfranchise women.[44] Although suffrage activists raised five thousand dollars to appeal the decision to the U.S. Supreme Court, Bloomer refused to cooperate, and the case effectively ended the possibility that the territorial legislature could reinstate woman suffrage.[45]

In addition to bringing legal decisions against equal suffrage, the *Harland* and *Bloomer* cases closed opportunities to pursue equal suffrage in the legislative branch. Just months after going to the polls as legal voters, women citizens found themselves without the franchise, without legal recourse, and without a clear strategy for securing citizenship rights. Some suffragists attempted to reclaim the franchise through ballot referenda in 1888 and 1889, but male voters rejected these measures by a margin of two to one. Although the early suffrage movement achieved significant political sway in the

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of the United States shall ever be elected to or hold any civil office or appointment in said Territory."

[44] Nineteenth-century judges often engaged in originalism, a form of jurisprudence that sought to discern and validate the original intent of the men who made the laws. See Adam Winkler, ''A Revolution Too Soon: Woman Suffragists and the 'Living Constitution,''' *New York University Law Review* 76 (2001): 1457; H. Jefferson Powell, ''The Original Understanding of Intent,'' *Harvard Law Review* 98 (1995): 885-948; Ray and Richards, "Inventing Citizens," 381. In the *Bloomer v. Todd* decision, the court held that when Congress used the term "citizen" in the Organic Act to describe potential voters, it did not intend to include female citizens. As a basis for this decision, the court explained, "The ordinary use of words at the time when used, and the meaning adopted at that time, is usually the best guide for ascertaining . . . the intent of any written instrument or law at the time it was made that is to govern in enforcing it." This precedent for legal interpretation has continued to be cited in court decisions even into the twenty-first century, such as *Washington State v. Norman,* 145 Wn.2d 578 (2002). Regarding *Bloomer v. Todd,* see also *HWS* 4:968; and T. A. Larson, "The Woman Suffrage Movement in Washington," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 67.2 (April 1976): 49-62.

[45] *Bloomer v. Todd; HWS* 4:969; Andrews, "Woman Suffrage Crusade."

legislative branch inasmuch as it won legislative approval for woman suffrage, the movement appeared to be without the resources, networks, and massive organization needed to win a statewide referendum. Through its reversals of legislative acts and its placing of restrictions on legislative power, the territorial supreme court had removed the clearest and quickest route to equal suffrage in the Pacific Northwest.

A few years earlier, shortly after the 1883 Franchise Act was signed into law, Mary Olney Brown had anticipated that "the courts will declare such a law unconstitutional." She wondered aloud, "What then?" At the time she had argued, "If we cannot get justice in the Courts, nor in Government, let us overthrow them. . . . such is now the necessity which constrains [us] to make this earnest appeal to the friends of Equal Rights to come out from the old political parties and form a new party that shall help us to right our wrongs, peaceably if we can, forcibly if we must."[46] Despite such impassioned pleas for activism, legal defeats left few direct courses of action for securing women's enfranchisement, and the organized movement for equal suffrage in the Pacific Northwest initiated few campaigns to enfranchise women in the decade that followed *Harland v. Territory*.

[46] Mary Olney Brown, "Washington Territory Correspondence," *New Northwest*, 2 January 1874, 2.

Equal Rights Advocacy, Suffrage Defeats, and Strategic Adaptation

Yet instead of responding to the spate of legal defeats with withdrawal or surrender, as political process theorists would expect, woman's rights advocates countered with new tactics designed to maximize limited political opportunities and to overcome opposition.[47] Specifically, they engaged in rhetorical activities aimed at producing political reform for women: they discussed and generated community programs to support working women, researched and reported on working conditions in the Pacific Northwest, campaigned for progressive labor laws, and contributed to courtroom arguments regarding single-sex protective legislation and citizenship rights guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment**.** Woman suffragists had regularly represented the ballot as a mechanism to achieve other ends, not only as a symbol of their own citizenship and status. Absent the ballot—or a clear path to achieve it—they still attempted to make progress and to improve conditions in other areas of civic life.

The forms of labor activism and legal advocacy in which women engaged following the *Harland* and *Bloomer* cases developed women's public identities and the movement for woman's rights in the Pacific Northwest in significant ways. Recent

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[47] Regarding theories of political process, see Peter K. Eisinger, "The Conditions of Protest Behavior in American Cities," *American Political Science Review* 67 (1973): 11-28; Doug McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982); and Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). See also Holly J. McCammon, Soma Chaudhuri, Lyndi Hewitt, Courtney Sanders Muse, Harmony D. Newman, Carrie Lee Smith, and Teresa M. Terrell, "Becoming Full Citizens: The U.S. Women's Jury Rights Campaigns, the Pace of Reform, and Strategic Adaptation," *American Journal of Sociology* 113.4 (January 2008): 1104–47.

research by sociologist Holly J. McCammon and her colleagues demonstrates that in states where women won jury service more rapidly, jury rights proponents responded to legislative defeats by adapting their public arguments and political tactics. As they engaged in strategic adaptation, these activists "created their own political opportunities, not waiting passively for them to occur," and moved beyond significant legislative defeats to achieve rapid victory.[48] McCammon's extensive analysis of primary artifacts of jury rights activism that occurred in fifteen states in the early twentieth century demonstrates a significant causal link between a social movement's rhetorical activities and its achievements; it offers empirical evidence for a connection that is at times assumed by scholars of communication. Moreover, McCammon's analysis of women's responses to legislative defeats of jury rights (in states other than Oregon and Washington) comports with what my research demonstrates in women's rhetorical responses to the legal defeats of equal suffrage in the Pacific Northwest. As women adapted their public activities and political rhetoric following the *Harland* and *Bloomer* decisions, they cultivated new skills, arguments, networks, and opportunities that would be vital to the eventual success of the equal suffrage movement.

Although woman suffrage test cases produced negative precedents in the 1870s and 1880s, they were not a complete loss for proponents of equal rights. Ray and I argue

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[48] McCammon et al., "Becoming Full Citizens," 1138. See also Holly J. McCammon, Courtney Muse Sanders, Harmony D. Newman, and Teresa M. Terrell, "Movement Framing and Discursive Opportunity Structures: The Political Successes of the U.S. Women's Jury Movements," *American Sociological Review* 72 (2007): 725-49. Regarding "strategic adaptation," see Debra C. Minkoff, "Bending with the Wind: Strategic Change and Adaptation by Women's and Racial Minority Organizations," *American Journal of Sociology* 104 (1999): 1666-703.

that even failed test cases can invigorate cultural movements and advocacy for woman's rights. For example, the *Minor* case, we argue, engendered a new, assertive style of public engagement among women.[49] The remainder of this chapter shows how women of the Pacific Northwest engaged in strategic adaptation following the *Harland* and *Bloomer* cases. Rather than continuing to pursue direct legal or legislative recognition of their voting rights—after the courts closed legal and legislative routes to suffrage—women became deeply involved in legal advocacy for labor rights. Their advocacy for labor rights differed from but related to the direct pursuit of equal suffrage. Labor rights was a different issue from suffrage, yet it was an issue closely tied to the question of whether the law—especially the Reconstruction Amendments—protected the privileges and immunities of all U.S. citizens equally.

Moreover, labor advocacy drew new women into reform activities, generated new arguments and performances, and developed new networks, yet it deeply involved women and organizations that were closely linked to the cause of equal suffrage. Women's clubs were an important initial source for labor activism. The first two chapters of this dissertation illuminated how women's club work and cultural activities developed new roles for women in the public realm; the remainder of this chapter demonstrates how women's efforts on behalf of labor rights further expanded women's political activities, community networks, and legal participation.

Women's increasing engagement in labor issues and legal advocacy following the defeat of suffrage laws makes sense in a number of ways. Despite the withdrawal of their

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[49] Ray and Richards, "Inventing Citizens," esp. 393-95.

voting rights, women in the Pacific Northwest experienced victory in other court cases during the territorial era. Between 1850 and 1880 Oregon and Washington established some of the most liberal divorce and child custody laws in the United States, which conferred significant rights upon women. In addition, women won major legal victories in property cases, including the U.S. Supreme Court case *Silver v. Ladd*. In this 1868 case, the Court decided that women were entitled to claim property under the Donation Land Act of 1850 that entitled "male citizens of the United States" who settled in Oregon Territory to 160 acres of land each.[50] Specifically, the court held that male pronouns that appeared in the law "may be taken in a generic sense" to include women.[51] The decision in *Silver v. Ladd* provided additional precedent to support the argument that women were entitled to all the privileges and immunities guaranteed to U.S. citizens by law. In view of these rulings, there was reason to hope that—on issues other than suffrage and jury rights—women in the Pacific Northwest could make important gains for equal rights through legal advocacy and court cases.

Thus, even after the *Harland* and *Bloomer* decisions, it is plausible that women of the Pacific Northwest saw opportunities to shape the laws that governed them. In addition, the judicial reversal of the Franchise Act made it clear that the development of strategies for persuading the courts would be vital to any movement for political equality.

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[50] *Silver v. Ladd*, 74 U.S. 219 (1868), 220.

[51] *Silver v. Ladd*, 219. In her famous 1872 speech, "Is It a Crime for a U.S. Citizen to Vote?" Susan B. Anthony cited *Silver v. Ladd* as a warrant for her claim that laws that used masculine pronouns to describe citizens applied equally to male and female citizens. See Anthony, "Is It a Crime for a U.S. Citizen to Vote?" in *Man Cannot Speak for Her*, vol. 2, edited by Karlyn Kohrs Campbell (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1989), 294-96.

By 1900, women of Oregon and Washington had demonstrated aptitude for working with state legislatures, only to see legislative achievements undercut by court decisions. In an era when women had little formal power in the courts—they did not serve as judges or jurors, they were rarely admitted to the bar or law school, but they were occasionally plaintiffs and often defendants—it was not immediately apparent how women could influence the law. Nonetheless, it appeared that legal questions about the equal contract clause of the U.S. Constitution and labor reform laws offered opportunities to advocate for readings of the law that recognized women as equal citizens and protected the privileges and immunities of all citizens.

Women's increasing engagement with labor issues made sense in another way as well: it emerged amid abysmal labor conditions that affected both sexes. Around the beginning of the twentieth century, as the Pacific Northwest industrialized, female and male workers faced low pay, long hours, and difficult work environments.[52] The fight for subsistence—the struggle to meet basic needs and to acquire basic rights in the workplace—was a more immediate concern for many women than the abstract question of political equality. In large cities and rural areas of the Pacific Northwest, women became involved in labor organizations, but they often found that unions failed to serve them as well as they served men. To fill this gap, women's clubs and working women's organizations began to offer needed services and resources for working women, to survey

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[52] See Sandra Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood: Cultural Politics in the Pacific Northwest, 1840-1912* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), 230-50; Nancy Woloch, *Muller v. Oregon: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 1996), 5; Rebecca J. Mead, *How the Vote Was Won: Woman Suffrage in the Western United States, 1868-1914* (New York: New York University Press, 2004), 99.

women's working conditions, and eventually to engage in legal advocacy for labor rights and protection. These activities expanded women's participation in the political and legal realms, and they involved women of diverse interests, perspectives, and socioeconomic classes. Moreover, they integrated women's political activities and the issue of woman's rights with the labor movement in the Pacific Northwest.

In short, women's engagement in labor advocacy responded to significant social needs as well as to the limited political opportunities that existed in the wake of legal defeats of suffrage. Like the political activities examined in chapters 2 and 3, women's labor reform activism began with club work, and the initial programs organized by clubs to address women's needs led to new forms of political engagement.

Women Work: Labor Issues and Legal Advocacy

At the turn of the twentieth century, the Federated Women's Clubs of Washington and Oregon became increasingly involved in civic issues; clubwomen produced cultural events, promoted public services, and engaged in legislative campaigns. In the early 1900s women's clubs in the Pacific Northwest also aggressively pursued improved working conditions for women and children. Their efforts were part of a larger community effort to change labor conditions and to protect workers amid rapid industrialization. In contrast to labor organizations, however, women's clubs made protections and fair wages for women a priority.

Clubwomen's involvement in labor activism was driven by substantial increases in the numbers of working women and the substandard wages and conditions that

characterized women's employment. From 1890 to 1910 the percentage of married women who worked for wages outside of the home in the Pacific Northwest more than doubled, from 4.7 to 10.7 percent; over the same period the percentage of working single women rose from 40 to 51 percent. Most of these women earned far below "poverty level pay" of $40 per month.[53] In 1903 a survey of working women in Oregon revealed that those who worked in factories were paid least, typically earning $12 to $24 a month, followed by women working in hotels and restaurants ($31.65 per month), telephone operators ($33.07 per month), office help ($35.50 per month), and retail store workers ($39.01 per month). Women who worked as stenographers were paid the most, earning approximately $50 per month.[54]

In addition to earning wages that fell below the level of subsistence, many women faced appalling working conditions. For instance, female laundry workers—who averaged $5.87 per week in pay—were on call at all times and worked long hours in difficult conditions. Laundresses worked at mangles—large machines with revolving heated iron cylinders—at starching tables, and with ironing machines, often standing amid steam and heat for more than ten hours a day.[55] Unionization, the process that improved conditions for millions of workers in low-paying industries and a vital force in the Northwest at the turn of the century, did not significantly improve conditions for women. Many women who worked in factories and laundries were prohibited from joining unions, and those who worked for businesses that permitted unionization typically

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[53] Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood,* 244.
[54] Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood,* 244.
[55] Woloch, *Muller v. Oregon,* 31.

profited less from them than did their male coworkers. In Portland, for instance, all forty-two printing shops in the city recognized the printers' union. Yet unionization did not help women who worked in the printing industry to rise above menial positions and pay; surveys noted that "women working in the shops generally bound pamphlets and books, with a minimum [weekly] wage of $6 for each apprentice, rising to $7 after one year and $8 after two," but "that was much below the subsistence level and also much below wages men received in the plants." As a whole, men's unions were often unreceptive to including women, and some were actively hostile to job opportunities for women, perceiving them as a "threat either to their own jobs or their salary levels."[56]

Because of the conditions faced by women in the workplace at the beginning of the twentieth century, the Federated Women's Clubs of Washington and Oregon initiated a number of services and programs to assist working women. Especially in cities such as Portland, Seattle, and Tacoma, middle-class women's clubs and working women's clubs formed direct alliances to offer classes, boardinghouses, and special programs.[57] These forms of organization and nonprofit service not only assisted working women in the region, but they also served as a foundation for labor activism and legal advocacy. As clubwomen worked together to address the problems of inequality in the workplace, they created programs that provided important support to workers. Yet as they organized programs and services, clubwomen found that volunteer programs could not offer what workers most needed: improved working conditions and better wages. Subsequently,

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[56] Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood,* 245.
[57] Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood,* 230.

alliances of middle-class and working-class clubwomen built on the networks and knowledge developed through service work to begin directly advocating for legal reform to improve labor conditions. At the beginning of the twentieth century, women's organizations and large numbers of individual women in the Pacific Northwest worked to achieve new labor laws, to secure the enforcement of existing labor laws, and to win cases that determined the validity of labor laws. As women of Oregon and Washington engaged in labor activism and legal advocacy, they built political relationships, adapted reform tactics, and innovated legal arguments—and they developed practices and resources that would prove vital in later campaigns for equal suffrage.

In the late 1880s, shortly after the *Harland* and *Bloomer* decisions, women's clubs initiated a number of programs to support women wageworkers. The Portland Women's Union and the Woman's Club of Tacoma, for instance, joined with women's labor organizations to establish classes for working women. The earliest of these educational endeavors was the establishment of the Woman's Evening School by the Portland Women's Union in 1886. The Evening School offered a broad program: on Monday students studied grammar and shorthand; on Tuesday, writing and elocution; on Wednesday, spelling and shorthand; on Thursday, arithmetic and reading; and on Friday, bookkeeping and shorthand. Initially the Evening School enrolled fifteen students, but its numbers grew quickly, and soon young men as well as young women sought admission. In 1888 Superintendent Mary Cook urged officials to incorporate the alternative school within the public school system, arguing, "First, it will give school privileges to many of both sexes, that are under the adult age. Second, it will remove the stigma of charity.

Third, it will foster that feeling of independence of which we Americans are so proud. Fourth, it would insure to the school that regularity of teaching which it needs so much and place it at once upon the basis of the present school system."[58] Board members accepted her rationale, and in 1890 the city of Portland assumed control of the Evening School built by the club.[59] Between 1890 and 1910 similar schools were established elsewhere in Oregon and in Washington, offering working women classes in elocution, parliamentary procedure, and debate as well as instruction in marketable skills such as cooking and stenography.

In addition to evening schools, women's clubs established boardinghouses and places for relaxation and dining, called rest rooms, for working women. During the early years of the twentieth century, the Woman's Club of Tacoma endeavored to create a boardinghouse with a cafeteria especially for working women. In 1904 it established a cafeteria and rest room for clerks that provided food at cost; soon, two hundred women and girls were eating there each day. A similar program was established in Spokane, staffed by club members, to support a Working Women's Guild there. In 1905 the Tacoma club opened the Woman's Inn on Pacific Avenue. There, club members assisted women with employment searches and offered shelter and food. They funded the

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[58] Mary E. Cook, Report to Portland Women's Union Board, 1888, in Portland Women's Union Records, Mss 1443, Oregon Historical Society, Portland. Regarding the Portland Women's Union, see also Gloria E. Myers, *A Municipal Mother: Portland's Lola Greene Baldwin, America's First Policewoman* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 1995), 4; Elizabeth S. Hamilton, "The Portland Women's Union," in *The Souvenir of Western Women*, ed. Mary O. Douthit (Portland, OR: Presses of Anderson and Duniway, 1905), 137. The Portland Women's Union is still in existence today; it is now known as the Portland Women's Foundation.

[59] Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood,* 232.

enterprise through dues, cake sales, card parties, and public fundraising. Within a year, the Inn grew from one room with a cook to three floors and twelve employees.[60] Throughout the Northwest, working women joined with other clubwomen and reformers to form Working Girls' Clubs, which typically offered access to a clubhouse where factory or service workers could read books, talk with one another, and avail themselves of classes in cooking and sewing. Sometimes emphasis on appropriate behavior became a part of the program, with instruction on social norms and advice on personal hygiene and etiquette. In time, however, women like Sophie Reinhardt, the president of the Portland Working Women's Club, called into question such club activities. In 1899 Reinhardt pointed out that young women were participating in the workforce "not because they like it or choose it, but because circumstances force them there," and that they were by necessity more concerned with better paydays than with personal betterment. In addition to self-improvement, she argued, a woman wanted equal pay for equal work and the opportunity to "compete with her brother in the struggle for existence."[61]

As women and women's organizations became increasingly involved with labor issues, voices such as Reinhardt's pressed for additional forms of activism. In addition to or in place of education, personal betterment, and charity, they pointed out the importance of legal reform. Building on networks and knowledge developed through nonprofit service, women in the Pacific Northwest began working together to promote labor legislation. The Federated Women's Clubs of Washington and Oregon allied with

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[60] Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood,* 232.
[61] Sophie Reinhardt, quoted in *Portland Oregonian*, 18 September 1899.

other organizations—including working women's clubs, unions, the Consumers' League, and the Grange—to advocate a spate of new labor laws. Moreover, in Oregon, the Woman's Union and the Working Woman's Club collaborated on legislation and policies, and the Consumers' League of Portland joined with the Portland Woman's Club to gather evidence regarding women's working conditions in order to bolster arguments for proposed labor reforms.[62] The organizations often combined community outreach with legislative agendas; they lobbied local businesses to close early on Saturday and voluntarily to set maximum hour standards, for instance, while also championing legislation that would make such restrictions mandatory throughout the state. These methods involved women in myriad forms of political advocacy. As they collected survey data, activist women discussed working conditions and reform efforts with those who labored in the region. As they formulated policy plans and raised money, women's organizations built networks with each other and with predominantly male political organizations. As they advocated for the passage and enforcement of new labor laws, women worked with the political establishment. Women's advocacy not only contributed to the momentum of the labor movement, but it also furthered women's political networks, experiences, rhetorical innovation, and savvy.

Women's coalitions lobbied for various bills that were passed in Oregon and Washington. These included laws establishing minimum wage levels and maximum working hours, especially for women. For example, Sandra Haarsager observes that "through an alliance with women's clubs and sympathetic legislators, [one] coalition was

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[62] Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood,* 230.

able to achieve legislation limiting work for women in mechanical establishments to ten-hour days and sixty-hour weeks."[63] This 1903 law, which many progressives hailed as a success, was extended to include retail store workers in 1907.[64] The Federated Women's Clubs of Washington collaborated with the Seattle Women's Union Card and Label League and the Seattle Women's Trade Union League to advocate similar protective legislation, such as minimum wage requirements and eight-hour workday limits.[65] In addition to offering protection for women workers, such statutes, reformers hoped, would serve as a starting point for broader laws, laws to "improve the lives of all industrial workers—to limit hours, raise wages, improve factory conditions, and promote occupational safety."[66] To this end, the Washington Federation of Labor and the Grange aligned themselves with women's club coalitions to take through the legislature several important reform measures, including a child labor law and an eight-hour day for employees on publicly funded projects.[67]

Although many hailed these labor reforms as a success, others disputed the constitutionality and virtue of single-sex protective legislation. Reinhardt, for example, pointed out the problem of protectionist philosophy. "We are continually hearing the cry of equal wage for equal work; again and again we are insisting on the fact that woman's work is equal to man's," Reinhardt observed. "Yet here," she wrote, "in the face of all

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[63] Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood,* 230.
[64] Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood,* 247.
[65] Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood,* 230.
[66] Woloch, *Muller v. Oregon,* 5.
[67] Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood,* 242; T. A. Larson, "Idaho's Role in America's Woman Suffrage Crusade," *Idaho Yesterdays* 18 (Spring 1964): 2-15.

this growing agitation, in spite of every attempt toward a proper adjustment of the wage question, woman herself is forcing upon us the tacit admission of her incapability" to make contracts and to compete in the marketplace. "Instead of telling [women] that they are being ill-used," she suggested, "teach them how to deserve better treatment, and they will get it."[68]

It is important to note that individuals on both sides of this public debate—those who championed protective legislation and those who advocated legal equality—advanced arguments that could be characterized as favoring woman's rights. Advocates of protective legislation, such as Florence Kelley and the National Consumers' League, argued that women, as citizens, qualified for governmental protections from abhorrent working conditions and unfair wages. Those who opposed single-sex legislation, such as Reinhardt, argued that women, as citizens, were guaranteed an equal right to contract under the U.S. Constitution. They also asserted that women were equal to the task of competing in an open market. In contrast to much nineteenth-century public discourse about women, the question was not whether women could be citizens, members of the public realm, and participants in the economy. Instead, the question now was what kind of laws would best serve women as citizens, members of the public realm, and participants in the economy. Diverse women championed diverse reforms in the Pacific Northwest by engaging in community organization and outreach, developing political networks, advocating labor reforms, and arguing for citizenship rights. The reforms that

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[68] Sophie Reinhardt, quoted in *Portland Oregonian*, 18 September 1899.

they sought occasionally conflicted—as did the networks and arguments that promoted them—but they shared the radical premise that the law ought to work for women.

The Woman Citizen: Definitions and Disputes in Muller v. Oregon

As proponents and opponents of protective legislation debated whether such laws were in the best interests of female and male citizens, a growing number of business owners attempted to ignore the new labor regulations. Business owners' willful disobedience of labor legislation led to a U.S. Supreme Court case testing the constitutionality of a single-sex protective labor law in Oregon—specifically, the 1903 statute limiting the number of hours that women could work in factories, laundries, and other businesses that used mechanical equipment. On 18 September 1905 Emma Gotcher, a laundry worker and ardent labor activist, brought a complaint against Curt Muller, the owner of the Portland Grand Laundry.[69] Gotcher claimed that on 4 September—which happened to be Labor Day—Grand Laundry owner Muller and overseer Joe Hazelbock required her to work more than ten hours, in violation of the Oregon law. In response to Gotcher's complaint, a local labor commissioner cited Muller for violating Oregon's maximum hour law; the Circuit Court of Multnomah County convicted Muller of a misdemeanor and fined him ten dollars. On the grounds that Oregon's ten-hour law violated the equal right to contract guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, Muller refused to pay the ten-dollar fine and appealed his conviction. After

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[69] Woloch, *Muller v. Oregon,* 21; Robert D. Johnston, *The Radical Middle Class: Populist Democracy and the Question of Capitalism in Progressive Era Portland, Oregon* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 20.

the Oregon State Supreme Court upheld the conviction in 1906, Muller took the case to the U.S. Supreme Court, and laundry owners throughout Portland raised money to pay his legal fees.[70]

As it progressed to the U.S. Supreme Court, *Muller v. Oregon* drew national attention, for it appeared that the case would produce a decision with significant implications for the movement for worker protection as well as for women's citizenship rights.[71] Central to the case was the question: Did the equal right to contract, guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment, apply to women? When the U.S. Supreme Court decided *Lochner v. New York* in 1905, it held that "the Constitution guaranteed workers the right to labor as long as they choose, and the state could not abridge that right without proving that intervention was necessary for the public welfare."[72] But the workers in question in *Lochner* were male bakers, not female laundresses. Thus, it appeared possible that the Court would break from the *Lochner* precedent in *Muller*—that it would recognize sexual difference as a justification for differential citizenship rights and validate Oregon's protective legislation. Alternatively, it appeared possible that the Court would uphold the *Lochner* precedent and decide for Muller, thus recognizing that the privileges and immunities described in the Constitution applied equally to female and male citizens and denying labor reformers the opportunity to secure protective legislation for women workers.

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[70] Woloch, *Muller v. Oregon,* 21; Ronald K. L. Collins and Jennifer Friesen, "Looking Back on *Muller v. Oregon*," *American Bar Association Journal* 69 (March 1983): 294-96; Johnston, *Radical Middle Class,* 24.
[71] Woloch, *Muller v. Oregon,* 22.
[72] Woloch, *Muller v. Oregon,* 19; *Lochner v. New York,* 198 U.S. 45 (1905).

The crux of *Muller v. Oregon,* as heard by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1908, was the question of whether "woman's physical structure and the functions she performs in consequence thereof . . . justify special legislation restricting or qualifying the conditions under which she should be permitted to toil."[73] When *Muller v. Oregon* was heard before the Court, it gave every impression of being a win-win case for woman's rights. On one side, attorneys for Muller argued that "women are entitled to all the privileges and immunities therein provided, and are as competent to contract with reference to their labor as are men."[74] On the other, the lengthy brief for the state of Oregon held that women were entitled to protection from mandatory overtime hours and unhealthy working conditions. As arguments for both the plaintiff and the defendant were premised upon assumptions that women workers had legal rights—although they argued for different kinds of rights—*Muller v. Oregon* brought national prominence to the issue of gender justice and offered the promise of a progressive decision.[75]

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[73] *Muller v. Oregon,* 208 U.S. 412 (1908).
[74] *Muller v. Oregon*, 415.
[75] Frances Olsen notes that it was in the context of *Muller v. Oregon* "that a serious split among women developed on the issue of gender-specific hours legislation"; Olson, "From False Paternalism to False Equality: Judicial Assaults on Feminist Community, Illinois 1869-1895," *Michigan Law Review* 84.7 (June 1986): 1538. Joan G. Zimmerman illustrates the manner in which this split reflected the contrasting feminist ideologies and strategies enacted by Alice Paul and Florence Kelley. Although arguments on behalf of Muller reflected Paul's commitment to full equality for women and men, the Oregon brief–which was authored and published by the National Consumers' League–asserted Kelley's advocacy of protections for woman in the public sphere. See Zimmerman, "The Jurisprudence of Equality: The Women's Minimum Wage, the First Equal Rights Amendment, and *Adkins v. Children's Hospital*, 1905-1923," *Journal of American History* 76.1 (June 1991): 200.

Further, the case involved women and their voices in the legal realm. Women worked to secure the enforcement of the Oregon ten-hour law by surveying labor conditions, raising public awareness of the law, and picketing businesses that violated the law. A woman initiated the case by filing a formal complaint that Muller had violated her legal rights. Women helped to author the innovative legal brief that was filed in the U.S. Supreme Court that argued for protection and endorsed the Oregon ten-hour law. Further, attorneys for Muller used equal rights arguments developed by women during the New Departure to advocate their client's position before the U.S. Supreme Court.

The legal brief filed on Muller's behalf set forth a deductive argument for equal protection under the Fourteenth Amendment. It began with the general premise that "women, within the meaning of both the state and Federal constitutions, are persons and citizens, and as such are entitled to all the privileges and immunities therein provided, and are as competent to contract with reference to their labor as are men." Because the Oregon law placed limits on women's right to contract, the Muller brief argued, it "operates unequally and unjustly, and does not affect equally and impartially all persons similarly situated, and is therefore class legislation." In short, the brief asserted that the Oregon statute was unconstitutional because it "deprives the plaintiff in error and employees of the right to contract and be contracted with . . . in a matter no ways affecting the general welfare, health, and morals of the persons immediately concerned, or of the general public."[76]

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[76] *Muller v. Oregon,* 414-15.

In addition to arguing that the guarantees of the Fourteenth Amendment applied universally to all U.S. citizens, the Muller brief asserted that natural rights warranted equal protection under the law. "Women, equally with men, are endowed with the fundamental and inalienable rights of liberty and property, and these rights cannot be impaired or destroyed by legislative action under the pretense of exercising the police power of the State. Difference in sex alone," the brief concluded, "does not justify the destruction or impairment of these rights."[77] The Muller brief thus combined two powerful arguments for woman's rights. Specifically, it cited the Fourteenth Amendment as a guarantee of the full privileges of citizenship for women, and it invoked a universal natural right to liberty and property.

This interpretation of the Constitution together with a natural rights rationale would seem to make a doubly powerful argument in Muller's favor, as it challenged the state of Oregon to prove the legality and the morality of its limitations upon the right to contract, rather than merely the constitutionality of the local statute. Muller's appeals to legal reasoning, theories of liberal democracy, and the vocabulary of "inalienable rights" in the nation's founding documents supported his central argument. It is important to note that these arguments for equal protection echoed arguments about the Fourteenth Amendment—and natural rights—that were advanced by suffragists in the Pacific Northwest in the 1870s and 1880s. Activists such as Mary Olney Brown and Abigail Scott Duniway asserted that the U.S. Constitution guaranteed all privileges and

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[77] *Muller v. Oregon,* 416.

immunities—including suffrage and the right to contract—equally to all citizens. Although it was a labor case brought by a male appellant, *Muller v. Oregon* brought before the high court arguments that once won, and then lost, the right of suffrage for women citizens in Washington Territory.

However, in one significant way the Muller brief differed from arguments for legal equality and universal citizenship advanced by New Departure activists. Specifically, in addition to constitutional law and natural rights, the Muller brief offered public health and morals as a warrant for its claim. The brief concluded that the Oregon ten-hour "statute is not to be declared a health measure [because] the employments forbidden and restricted are not in fact or declared to be, dangerous to health or morals." Although this point appeared to invoke the *Lochner* precedent, which held that protectionist legislation was valid only when it was necessary for the public welfare, it also opened the door to discussion of public health without offering evidence, scientific or otherwise, to support the claim that state intervention in the interest of the general welfare was unwarranted in this case.[78]

For its part, the state of Oregon used precedent as well as unconventional forms of evidence to support its claim that the ten-hour law was legally valid**.** Two briefs were filed for the state's case: a standard legal brief signed by attorneys for the state of Oregon and attorney Louis Brandeis, and another brief signed by Louis Brandeis and Josephine Goldmark. The first brief cited legal precedent, called arguments for an equal right to contract "gilded sophistry," and asserted that women deserved additional labor protection

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[78] *Muller v. Oregon,* 416.

because they were disadvantaged by their lack of the vote.[79] This brief, like the one filed on behalf of Muller, argued that its position best represented the interests of women and the meaning of the law as written. Like the Muller brief, the official Oregon brief relied primarily upon abstract legal theory, political reasoning, and judicial precedent to make its case. Also like the Muller brief, it invoked the *Lochner* precedent, but in a different way and to a different end. The Oregon argument asserted that the *Lochner* decision meant that protective labor laws were valid unless there was "no fair ground, reasonable in and of itself, to say that there is material danger to the public health (or safety), or to the health (or safety) of the general employees (or to the general welfare), if the hours of work are not curtailed."[80] In contrast to the Muller brief, which asserted that the equal right to contract did not endanger the health of women workers, the Oregon argument offered some evidence to support the claim that public health would be endangered if women's working hours were not restricted. Specifically, the Oregon brief referred to data included in a second legal brief, the brief filed on behalf of the state by Brandeis and Goldmark.

It was this second brief that captured the attention of the Court and the public. The additional brief filed on behalf of Oregon offered a tripartite argument. It opened with

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[79] "Brief for the State of Oregon," in *Landmark Briefs and Arguments of the Supreme Court of the United States*, ed. Phillip B. Kurland and Gerhard Casper (Arlington, VA: University Publications of America, 1975), 16:37-61; Nancy S. Erickson, "Historical Background of 'Protective Labor Legislation': *Muller v. Oregon*," in *Women and the Law,* ed. D. Kelly Weisberg (Cambridge: Schenkman, 1982), 2:160.

[80] *Muller v. Oregon,* 417. Here, the state of Oregon quotes the Court's precedent in *Lochner v. New York* (198 U.S. 45 [1905], 61). However, the text in parentheses was added to the existing precedent by the state of Oregon, ostensibly to expand the legal rationale for curtailing the right to contract.

two pages of legal reasoning, followed by more than one hundred pages of sociological data meant to demonstrate the dangers of long working hours for women and the benefits of reduced hours. The brief characterized the information and running argument regarding public health that appeared in this section as "the facts of common knowledge of which the Court may take judicial knowledge." The "facts" presented by Brandeis and Goldmark included the testimony of physicians and other "experts," data from community and government surveys of labor conditions, and reports from private and public agencies. Whereas, it claimed, long hours caused ailments that ranged from anemia to miscarriage, reduced hours protected women from ill health and resulted in "extraordinary improvement in physique and morals" of the entire community.[81] Offering a final summary of the "facts," the brief concluded, "It cannot be said that the Legislature of Oregon had no reason for believing that the public health, safety, or welfare did not require a legal limitation on women's work in manufacturing."[82] In short, the document—the first Brandeis brief in history—offered evidence from outside the legal realm to argue a legal question.

This novel brief asserted sociological jurisprudence as a viable method for legal decision making, and it brought women's voices and ideas before the U.S. Supreme Court. The document that became known as the first Brandeis brief was coauthored by attorney Louis Brandeis and National Consumers' League officer Josephine Goldmark,

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[81] Louis D. Brandeis and Josephine Goldmark, *Women in Industry* (New York: Arno Press, 1969), 57-58.
[82] Brandeis and Goldmark, *Women in Industry*, 104-12; Woloch, *Muller v. Oregon,* 31.

with substantial contributions by ten women researchers.[83] After the Oregon Consumers' League notified National Consumers' League president Florence Kelley of Muller's appeal in 1907, Kelley and Goldmark determined to hire a male attorney to assist the Oregon case.[84] This course of action was consistent with Kelley's public view that "the main obstacle to worker protection" was the conservative judiciary responsible for the *Lochner* decision. The key question for reformers, Kelley asserted, was "How can the courts be enlightened and instructed concerning conditions as they exist?" Believing that the courts would validate protective legislation if judges understood the conditions in which Americans labored, Kelley sought a new mode of legal advocacy that would make "the gradual, cumulative effect of working conditions and of living conditions . . . obvious to the mind of the judges composing the courts of last resort."[85]

Brandeis was known in legal circles for attacks upon legal formalism and what Kelley described as "outspoken enmity against concentration of wealth in the hands of the few."[86] After interviewing attorney Joseph Cohate at the request of the Oregon

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[83] A Brandeis brief is defined as a special kind of *amicus curiae* brief; specifically, it is a submission by a "friend of the court" that offers sociological data pertinent to a case. The data are, of course, generally one-sided. Among the researchers who assisted Brandeis and Goldmark with the brief were attorney and National Consumers' League officer Florence Kelley and Goldmark's sister Josephine. See Woloch, *Muller v. Oregon,* 28.

[84] Florence Kelley herself was an 1894 graduate of Union College of Law, later Northwestern University School of Law. In addition to working with Jane Addams at Hull House in Chicago and presiding over the National Consumers' League, Kelley traveled throughout the United States (including Oregon and Washington) to participate in labor activism and to collaborate with state chapters such as the Oregon Consumers' League.

[85] Florence Kelley, *Some Ethical Gains in Legislation* (New York: Macmillan, 1905), 155.

[86] Kelley, *Some Ethical Gains,* 133; Woloch, *Muller v. Oregon,* 25-26.

attorney general, Kelley and Goldmark called on Brandeis on 14 November 1907. "The initial meeting," Goldmark recalled, produced "a revolutionary new direction to judicial thinking, indeed the judicial process itself." Brandeis seemed to be an attorney prepared to carry sociological arguments developed by women activists into the courtroom; he appeared to be, in Goldmark's words, "a champion ready to fight her [woman's] battle in the Court."[87] Working together, Brandeis, Goldmark, and the women of the National Consumers' League engaged in a new mode of legal advocacy—and produced a novel legal brief—that aimed to win the courts for labor reform and to secure women's interests in the legal realm.

The Brandeis brief drew on methods and arguments that were characteristic of women reformers in the Pacific Northwest and the National Consumers' League—but not at all characteristic of jurisprudence. Beginning in the late nineteenth century, clubwomen in the Pacific Northwest had surveyed working conditions, collecting data from employees and businesses. Sociological data gathered by women were used as warrants for new labor laws and workers' rights, which played a role in public discourse, legislative politics, and the adoption of protective labor laws in Oregon and Washington. With the Brandeis brief, reformers sought to use survey data and other social scientific evidence as new warrants for legal decision making. The brief called on the high court to consider more than one hundred pages of empirical evidence as corroboration for the legal claim that "there is reasonable ground for holding that to permit women in Oregon

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[87] Josephine Goldmark, *Impatient Crusader: Florence Kelley's Life Story* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1953), 143.

to work . . . more than ten hours in one day is dangerous to the public health, safety, morals and welfare."[88] In an era when precedent and legal theory were considered the only valid rationales for legal argument and court decisions, this innovation was significant. If accepted by the Court, the Brandeis brief had the potential to shape the future of legal argument as well as the outcome of a major U.S. Supreme Court case.

On 24 February 1908 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of Oregon, upholding the constitutionality of the state statute that limited the number of hours per day that a woman could work for pay. Portions of the decision quoted directly from the Brandeis brief, thereby validating not only Oregon's claim but also sociological data as a basis for jurisprudence. The high court ruling validated protectionist laws advanced by some women, such as labor reformers in the Pacific Northwest and members of the National Consumers' League, but it denied appeals for equal, universal citizenship championed by other women activists as well as businessmen such as Curt Muller. The ruling upheld Oregon's ten-hour law and opened the door to additional legislation aimed at protecting women from difficult working conditions, but it denied that the privileges and immunities guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution applied equally to male and female citizens. Women constituted a separate class of citizens, the Court ruled, a class that could be protected but was not equivalent to other groups of citizens under the law.

Following the ruling in *Muller v. Oregon,* some women praised the Court decision as a means to a vital end. Members of the Consumers' League and of a variety of women's clubs in the Pacific Northwest celebrated the validation of a law that was

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[88] *Muller v. Oregon,* 418.

enacted to protect women who labored in difficult—and even dangerous—conditions. The *Oregonian* praised the case as an "epoch in American civilization" for removing "woman from the category of beasts of burden whose labor may be exploited by her industrial masters without restraint." Others characterized the precedent as one that offered promise for the expansion of progressive and protective legislation to improve conditions for all workers. The national publication *Outlook* suggested that the decision "may put heart in those who believe that ultimately we shall make industry for the sake of humanity and not regard humanity as existing for the sake of industry."[89]

At the same time others, including working women in the Pacific Northwest, decried the *Muller* decision and the law it upheld as unjust and detrimental to women. Sophie Reinhardt continued to point out the problem of protectionist philosophies that applied only to women, arguing that such laws and regulations functioned to control working women rather than to address the ills of an economic system that segregated so many women into low-end jobs with little opportunity for advancement, and that they did little to alter a marketplace that exploited both female and male laborers.[90] But more troubling to equal rights activists than the Court's decision to uphold Oregon's single-sex protection law was the language with which the Court justified the ruling. Writing for the majority, Associate Justice David J. Brewer asserted that the state had the power to enforce Oregon's labor law not because it protected the basic rights of citizens but because women's right to contract could be abridged by the state because they were

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[89] Quoted in Johnston, *Radical Middle Class*, 21. See also *Portland Oregonian*, 26 February 1908, 8; and Woloch, *Muller v. Oregon,* vii.
[90] Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood,* 246.

"mothers of the future race." Characterizing women as "wards of the state," the Court articulated its decision in a manner that diminished rather than affirmed women's constitutional rights as citizens. The language of the decision was in stark contrast to the rhetoric of Oregon legislators, woman's rights advocates, and labor activists who achieved the passage of the original law and who characterized protective legislation as recognition of women's citizenship rights. Instead of recognizing women as citizens with legal rights, in *Muller* the Court defined women as unequal citizens and narrowed the privileges and immunities made available to all citizens by the Fourteenth Amendment.

Debate regarding the consequences of *Muller* is ongoing; some see the case as an important victory, others as a major defeat. Scholarship on the *Muller* case generally characterizes the ruling as significant in two ways. First, legal scholars and historians often point to the Court's affirmation of the Brandeis brief, a lengthy collection of social and economic data filed on behalf of the state, as a precedent that validated "sociological jurisprudence," thereby expanding the grounds upon which lawyers plead their cases.[91] Second, many political scientists, historians, and economists view *Muller v. Oregon* as a momentous turning point for progressive reform, as it was the first U.S. Supreme Court

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[91] Historian Joan Hoff-Wilson, for instance, finds that "the much heralded 'Brandeis brief" did set a precedent for the use of economic, sociological, and statistical data in arguing future cases"; Hoff-Wilson, "The Unfinished Revolution: Changing Legal Status of U.S. Women," *Signs* 13 (Autumn 1987): 16. According to Raymond Munts and David C. Rice, *Muller v. Oregon* was "the case in which Louis Brandeis as counsel for the State of Oregon first introduced the 'sociological brief,' [building] his case almost entirely on the testimony of doctors, sociologists, and economists"; Munts and Rice, "Women Workers: Protection or Equality?" *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* 24.1 (October 1970): 3-13.

ruling to affirm the constitutionality of protective labor laws, leading "states to pass a spate of labor legislation of all kinds."[92]

A number of feminist theorists, legal critics, and historians, however, have brought to light other significant implications of *Muller*. They point out that the case "established a new standard for what was fair with regard to women workers," and that the *Muller* precedent remained "the best statement of principle behind standards governing women's employment" into the late twentieth century.[93] Questioning the value of the case as a progressive precedent, Judith A. Baer observes that the *Muller* decision "embedded in constitutional law an axiom of female difference, [treating women] as a class in different ways than men."[94] Because the Court held "the differences between men and women to be permanent rather than temporary and natural rather than political and social," the unanimous opinion in *Muller v. Oregon* opened wide the door to gender bias in protective legislation.[95] Although the Court validated sociological jurisprudence, it dismissed the feminist principles of the Oregon and Muller arguments when it defined

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[92] See, for instance, Alice Kessler-Harris, *In Pursuit of Equity: Women, Men, and the Quest for Economic Citizenship in 20th-Century America* (Cambridge: Oxford University Press, 2001), 32.
[93] Kessler-Harris, *In Pursuit of Equity*, 30; Munts and Rice, "Women Workers," 4.
[94] Judith A. Baer, *The Chains of Protection: The Judicial Response to Protective Labor Legislation* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1978).
[95] Julie Novkov, "Liberty, Protection, and Women's Work: Investigating the Boundaries between Public and Private," *Law and Social Inquiry* 21 (Autumn 1996): 868. See also Hoff-Wilson, "Unfinished Revolution," 20.

women not as full citizens worthy of protection or equality, but rather as "wards of the state."[96]

Although scholarship on *Muller v. Oregon* offers variant views on the legacy of the case—assessing it as an unblemished opinion, a validation of new forms of argument, an affirmation of progressive norms, or an implanting of gender difference in the Constitution—it suggests that discursive constructs in the Court opinion exercised remarkable influence upon American legal, labor, and social norms. The text of the unanimous opinion issued in the *Muller* case powerfully shaped the meaning of citizenship as a legal construct and a public symbol. It also established a specific legal definition of women, one that restricted their citizenship rights but made possible protective legislation. As a whole, the *Muller* case resulted in a decision that was, at best, a pyrrhic victory for the rights of women and workers.

Although the Court decision in *Muller* was anything but a clear triumph for women of the Pacific Northwest, women's participation in legal advocacy for labor rights produced important contributions to the decades-long movement for equal rights. Beyond sociological jurisprudence and landmark court decisions on citizenship rights, women's activism in the wake of *Harland* and *Bloomer* played a significant role in sustaining the movement for equal rights in the Pacific Northwest, developing political networks and coalitions, innovating public and legal arguments, and involving more citizens—especially women citizens of varied socioeconomic status—in the work of social reform.

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[96] Regarding rhetorical characteristics of the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Muller v. Oregon*, see Gibson, "Judicial Rhetoric and Women's 'Place.'"

Although they did not achieve major victories for equality in the courts between 1888 and 1908, women of Oregon and Washington did make strategic adaptations and organizational gains that expanded their public identities and participation, and that would well serve the next phase of equal rights activism. In short, while working for legal victories, women activists became prepared to overcome legal defeat. Continuing efforts to shape the law yielded political clarity, coalitions, arguments, and tactics that would help women to reshape social life.

Defeat in the Courts, Development for the Movement

Legal efforts that failed in the courts contributed to the equal rights movement in the Pacific Northwest in three key ways. First, cases such as *Harland v. Territory* clarified the political landscape, forcing the courts to articulate positions on woman's rights and demonstrating that existing legal and citizenship norms were profoundly gendered.[97] Court decisions about equal suffrage revealed gender biases in the law and political practice, making it clear that women were not recognized as equal citizens. Like *Minor v. Happersett,* legal cases in Oregon and Washington forced "previously hidden assumptions about the separate class called women into the light of jurisprudential day."[98] As women's legal advocacy challenged lawmakers to articulate and justify

[97] Similarly, Ray argues that women's attempts to vote during the Reconstruction era "illuminated the normative practices of citizenship as profoundly gendered"; Ray, "Rhetorical Ritual," 1.

[98] Ray and Richards, "Inventing Citizens," 376. See also Norma Basch, "Reconstitutions: History, Gender, and the Fourteenth Amendment," in *The Constitutional Bases of Political and Social Change in the United States*, ed. Shlomo Slonim (New York:

positions regarding woman's rights, it shifted the issue of gender and citizenship from the realm of unspoken assumption into the domain of public debate. Although rulings against equal suffrage narrowed the political options available to reformers and had profoundly negative consequences, they also yielded opportunities. For example, as legal decisions articulated—rather than assumed or implied—arguments against equal rights, they made counterargument possible. Although the political situation for equal rights activists was dire in the wake of *Harland*—and perhaps *Muller*—it was also more clearly defined.

Second, significant legal defeats challenged women to adapt and innovate strategies for securing citizenship rights. Women responded to this challenge by collaborating with other women and social reformers in the Pacific Northwest, reframing their message, and generating new warrants for equal citizenship. Rather than continuing to focus their appeals on the issue of suffrage, in the late 1880s many woman's rights advocates turned their attention to labor issues. They began by organizing programs to support working women and quickly expanded their efforts on behalf of labor reform to include legal advocacy. Following *Harland v. Territory,* they argued, for example, that the U.S. Constitution guaranteed an equal right to contract to all citizens regardless of sex. Although this argument specified labor rather than suffrage as the matter in question, it echoed earlier legal claims that the U.S. Constitution guaranteed the franchise to all citizens regardless of sex. In other words, although advocates reframed their legal arguments to focus on a different constitutional privilege, their central claim remained the

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Praeger, 1990), 175. The focus is on *Minor* in the work of Basch, as well as Ray and Richards.

same: The law as written applied equally to male and female citizens. Such legal arguments kept the issue of woman's rights before the courts but presented it in favorable new terms. Specifically, they integrated appeals for woman's rights with arguments for labor rights, which was a significant adaptation in an era when labor issues were at the center of public culture and debate in the Pacific Northwest.[99]

While some women activists argued for legal equality, other women reformers championed sex-specific maximum hour regulations that treated women not as equal citizens but as a special class of citizens who, due in part to their disenfranchisement, warranted extra legal protections. Although arguments for equality and arguments for protection often conflicted, both furthered public debate about woman's rights, labor rights, and the relationship between the law and social conditions. As women advocated for labor reforms, they developed diverse visions and arguments for gender justice, and they offered the public, the legislature, and the courts a variety of ways to understand and endorse woman's rights.

In addition to reframing arguments for woman's rights, women innovated warrants for legal arguments. Specifically, when the courts refused to recognize woman's rights on the basis of precedent or legal theory, women gathered social scientific evidence to support legislative and legal arguments for labor rights. Initially, women of the Pacific Northwest conducted community surveys about working conditions and used the resultant data to support public and legislative arguments for labor reform. Later, when

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[99] Regarding the significance of the labor, progressive, and populist movements to the public culture of the Pacific Northwest in the early twentieth century, see Johnston, *Radical Middle Class.*

Muller v. Oregon was placed on the docket of the U.S. Supreme Court, women contributed to the production of what is now commonly known as the Brandeis brief—the first brief in the United States that relied on sociological data as a warrant for a legal decision. Women's innovation of warrants for legal argument capitalized on the social scientific impulse of the era to alter courtroom practices. Moreover, through its reliance on community surveys, this rhetorical innovation drew increasing numbers—and socioeconomic classes—of women into discussions of social conditions and legal rights. In sum, as courts failed to recognize the legality of equal suffrage and the validity of arguments from precedent for woman's rights, advocates generated important new approaches to the question of citizenship rights, approaches that combined women's activism with the rise of social science and labor movements.

As a whole, women's strategic adaptations in the wake of legal defeats such as *Harland v. Territory* contributed significantly to the development of the woman's rights movement in the Pacific Northwest. Instead of responding to a series of defeats with withdrawal or surrender, woman's rights advocates countered with new tactics designed to maximize limited political opportunities and overcome opposition. The forms of legal advocacy in which women engaged following *Harland* sustained the movement for woman's rights in the Pacific Northwest and developed that movement in important ways. As women continued to work together to reform civic practices and legal standards, they cultivated organizational histories and memories. That is, by working continuously over decades, they became deeply knowledgeable about the political culture, the patterns and opportunities of the public realm, and the effectiveness of

various tactics and arguments in Northwest communities. The continuation of women's activism, even in the face of monumental suffrage defeats in the courts, developed women's collective—and individual—abilities to respond meaningfully to political opposition and setbacks, to capitalize on limited opportunities, and to advance arguments that addressed local exigencies. It also demonstrated to the public that women would not easily surrender their claims to natural rights and political equality.

By the time of the *Muller* decision in 1908, women of the Pacific Northwest had demonstrated an expectation that the law should serve their needs and priorities, that it should protect their rights and speak to their experiences. They had applied their skills to achieve substantial legal reforms and to cultivate broad support for woman's rights in the public realm. During the last two decades of the nineteenth century, women's participation in legal advocacy expanded significantly; rather than a few suffragists asserting an equal right to the franchise, hundreds of women—of various classes, ethnicities, and backgrounds—acted to shape the law through public speech acts, protests, legislative campaigns, constitutional arguments, and enforcement efforts. In the wake of what they perceived as a fundamental miscarriage of justice in *Harland* and *Bloomer*, women engaged the law in new ways, building a public presence, political skills, and large coalitions. Given this sustained engagement with the law and acquisition of political will and strength, it is perhaps not surprising that many activists rejected the U.S. Supreme Court's characterization, in the *Muller* decision, of women as "wards of the state." Radicalized by this rhetorical effort by the Court to restrict women's citizenship rights, many of the members of the substantial coalition that women built for labor

reform recognized the necessity of equal political rights—in order to protect the rights of all—and turned their attention to the pursuit of equal suffrage in the Pacific Northwest.

The women and men who constituted this coalition did not agree on every question about woman's rights and labor policy, but they came to believe that the fundamental interests that they shared would be well served by equal suffrage. In the wake of the *Muller* case, clubwomen and working women, suffragists and unionists, and socialists and progressives came together around the issue of women's citizenship rights and contributed to a large campaign for equal suffrage. Led by suffragists who had been campaigning for more than three decades in the Pacific Northwest, the coalition began by circulating a petition that articulated a clear perspective on women and the law. It read, simply and without qualification, "I believe that a woman has an equal right with a man to make the laws that govern her."[100]

Between 1908 and 1912, petition work directly involved hundreds of women throughout the Pacific Northwest in political activism and advanced the cause of equal suffrage. In addition to petitioning, the production and distribution of a politically themed cookbook was a rhetorical activity that functioned to develop women's public identities, integrate their voices into public discourse, and demonstrate that large numbers of women in the Pacific Northwest wanted the vote. As they created and circulated a variety

[100] Washington Equal Suffrage Association, Typed Petition, c. 1908, box 3, folder 6, in Emma Smith DeVoe Collection, Ms 171, Washington State Library, Olympia.

of political texts, women acted in ways that fused norms of femininity and norms of political citizenship.

Chapter 5

"Nourished and Equipped for the Duties of Life":

The *Washington Women's Cook Book* and Women's Public Identity

Give us the vote and we will cook
The better, for a wide outlook.
Washington Women's Cook Book

Then are cookery and rhetoric the same?
Plato, *Gorgias*

In 1908 suffrage organizations in Oregon and Washington launched new campaigns to secure the franchise for women. The Oregon Equal Suffrage Association (OESA) circulated petitions among male voters, gathering signatures to place a suffrage referendum on the state ballot. Meanwhile, the Washington Equal Suffrage Association (WESA) sent women to Olympia for the duration of the 1908 legislative session to lobby for a bill that would put before state voters a constitutional amendment for equal suffrage.[1] As they sought signatures in Oregon streets and endorsements in the

[1] The court decisions in *Harland v. Territory* and *Bloomer v. Todd* meant that Washington state could not secure equal suffrage through a legislative vote, but only through a majority vote of the general population. Thus, Washington suffragists needed first to win the passage of a legislative bill that would put a constitutional amendment on the general election ballot, and then to secure a majority of general election votes for the amendment. The Washington Equal Suffrage Association rented a house in Olympia for the duration of the 1908 legislative session so that WESA president Emma Smith DeVoe and other Washington suffragists could stay in the capital city and lobby legislators to place the suffrage issue on the ballot. See Emma Smith DeVoe, "Letter to Carrie Chapman Catt," 9 January 1909, box 1, folder 15; Cora Smith Eaton, "Letter to Emma Smith DeVoe," 19 January 1909, box 2, folder 3; Washington Equal Suffrage Association, Circular Letter to "Fellow-Suffragists," January 1909, box 1, folder 21, all

Washington capitol, suffragists encountered a recurring argument against their cause. Male voters and male legislators alike asserted that they would not endorse equal suffrage because it was not clear that women of the Pacific Northwest wanted the ballot. Reporting on the legislative status of the suffrage bill, a WESA member wrote, "Of the members not known to be in favor of the bill . . . many claimed they opposed it because women generally do not want the ballot. If we can reach this class of legislators and convince them that they have not known the attitude of women, our success is well nigh assured." Similarly, the Oregon press reported that male citizens who refused to sign suffrage petitions cited women's lack of enthusiasm for the franchise.[2]

One way that suffragists in Oregon responded to this challenge was by reaching out to women through existing networks—clubs, churches, chautauquas, labor organizations, and the Grange—and recruiting them to circulate petitions for the referendum. In addition to accomplishing the necessary task of acquiring thousands of signatures, the deployment of large numbers of women to circulate petitions demonstrated "beyond all doubt that women of the State do want the ballot."[3] Their presence at front doors, in the streets, and at community gatherings throughout Oregon signaled that the campaign for equal rights was the work of many local women rather than the special interest of a small, radical group. In addition to providing visual evidence

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in Emma Smith DeVoe Collection, Mss 171, Washington State Library, Olympia (hereafter cited as ESD Collection).

[2] Washington Equal Suffrage Association, Circular Letter to "Fellow-Suffragists," January 1909, box 1, folder 21, ESD Collection; *Oregon Journal*, 4 March 1908, 1.

[3] *Woman's Journal*, 3 June 1911, quoted in Rebecca J. Mead, *How the Vote Was Won: Woman Suffrage in the Western United States, 1868-1914* (New York: New York University Press, 2004), 120.

that women of Oregon wanted the vote, petitioners verbally advocated equal suffrage. As they canvassed communities, women created opportunities to discuss voting rights. They asked men to endorse petitions and asked women to join the movement, and they deliberated about suffrage with small groups and individuals. These exchanges utilized women's traditional, interpersonal modes of communication to advance the cause of equal rights.

Petition work directly involved large numbers of women in political action. As they circulated suffrage petitions, women throughout Oregon developed and displayed a new subjectivity.[4] They acted in ways that fused norms of femininity and norms of political citizenship. In keeping with conventions of feminine behavior, petitioners asked politely for what they wanted rather than making aggressive demands, and they spoke to individuals rather than from public platforms. At the same time, petitioners participated capably in the political process, made it clear that they desired equal rights, and expanded women's involvement in the public realm. Petitioning was a moderate tactic that encouraged thousands of women to take an active role in the campaign and thousands of men to sign their names to appeals for equal suffrage. In addition, the interpersonal communication that women utilized as petitioners had advantages over other forms of campaign rhetoric. Unlike public speeches and large rallies, petition work by local

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[4] Susan Zaeske's analysis of antebellum women's antislavery petition work illuminates how disenfranchised women developed political subjectivity and renegotiated their civic roles through the rhetorical practice of petitioning; see Zaeske, "Signatures of Citizenship: The Rhetoric of Women's Antislavery Petitions," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 88 (2002): 147-65; and Zaeske, *Signatures of Citizenship: Petitioning, Antislavery, and Women's Political Identity* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003).

women did not attract extensive publicity. Petitioners achieved high visibility and had significant impact in local communities, without the kind of large-scale political spectacle that often provoked negative reactions from well-organized opponents such as the liquor industry.[5]

Like their counterparts in Oregon, Washington suffragists recognized that persuading large numbers of women to join the movement was a key to success. If the central legislative argument against equal suffrage was that women did not want it, then a WESA member pointed out, "Do you suppose for a moment that the bill could fail if fifty thousand women of this state asked for it?"[6] Because Washington suffrage clubs counted no more than 1,700 members in 1908, it was clear that they needed to reach out to other women in order to generate a significant show of support. One way in which WESA did this was through petition work. In 1908 suffragists circulated petitions throughout Washington and submitted the signatures of more than 20,000 women to the legislature.[7]

Yet petitioning was not the principal way that Washington suffragists sought to engender support among women. In contrast to their counterparts in Oregon and elsewhere, the women of WESA accorded minimal value and few resources to petition work. Accurately characterizing petitions as legally insignificant in Washington—a state that did not allow initiatives to be placed on the ballot by direct petition—WESA officers

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[5] See John Putman, "A 'Test of Chiffon Politics': Gender Politics in Seattle, 1897-1917," *Pacific Historical Review* 69.4 (November 2000): 600.
[6] Washington State Equal Suffrage Association, Circular Letter to "Fellow-Suffragists," 19 January 1909, box 1, folder 21, ESD Collection.
[7] May Arkwright Hutton, "Letter to Emma Smith DeVoe," 17 November 1908, box 2, folder 11; Hutton, Circular Letter to "The Labor Unions of Spokane," 18 November 1908, box 2, folder 11, both in ESD Collection.

developed other strategies for engaging women in the movement.[8] Like petitioning, these rhetorical practices relied on local women to recruit new supporters. Also like petitioning, these activities circulated arguments for suffrage without attracting significant publicity, controversy, or opposition. By using women's networks and existing skills, these activities increased women's participation in public discourse and advanced the suffrage cause.

At first glance, many of the activities through which suffragists reached out to Washington women might appear trivial; they could be misinterpreted as mere entertainment for apolitical housewives. WESA sponsored parties, teas, balls, and plays; they coordinated letter-writing circles; they hosted cooking demonstrations; and they

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[8] Although Washington suffragists circulated a number of petitions in 1908, they halted this practice by 1909. Throughout 1908 and 1909, National American Woman Suffrage Association officer Carrie Chapman Catt and Washington Equal Suffrage Association president Emma Smith DeVoe argued whether Washington activists ought to focus on the circulation of petitions. Catt asserted that it was necessary for WESA members to circulate petitions produced by NAWSA, calling for a suffrage amendment to the federal Constitution. In 1908 Catt advised DeVoe to use no fewer than 25,000 Washington women to circulate national petitions. In 1909 NAWSA sent more than 1,400 petitions to WESA, insisting that the state organization circulate them. In turn, DeVoe insisted that circulating petitions for a national amendment did not align with her primary goal: securing votes for women in Washington. Moreover, DeVoe pointed out that petitions were of "no legal significance" in Washington, in contrast to other states including Oregon. After Catt characterized herself as "just as mad as I can get" over DeVoe's resistance to petition work, WESA circulated a small number of national petitions in exchange for various concessions from NAWSA. See Carrie Chapman Catt, "Letter to Emma Smith DeVoe," 12 January 1908, box 1, folder 15; Catt, "Letter to Emma Smith DeVoe," 21 November 1908, box 1, folder 15; Catt, "Letter to Emma Smith DeVoe," 2 December 1908, box 1, folder 15; Catt, "Letter to Emma Smith DeVoe," 21 December 1908, box 1, folder 15; Catt, "Letter to Emma Smith DeVoe," 2 January 1909, box 1, folder 15; Emma Smith DeVoe, "Letter to Carrie Chapman Catt," 9 January 1909, box 1, folder 15; Rachel Foster Avery, "Letter to Emma Smith DeVoe," 3 February 1909, box 1, folder 1; DeVoe, "Letter on Petitions," 18 March 1909, box 1, folder 8; DeVoe, "Letter to Carrie Chapman Catt," box 1, folder 15, all in ESD Collection.

organized women's days at local fairs and, in 1909, at the Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition.[9] Remarkably, WESA's single greatest expenditure during the twenty-month campaign for the constitutional amendment was for the production of a cookbook. WESA spent $1,351.01 to publish 3,000 copies of the *Washington Women's Cook Book* in 1909.[10] Not everyone viewed this as a savvy investment. National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) officer Carrie Chapman Catt chided WESA president Emma Smith DeVoe about the cookbook, characterizing it as far "too domestic" to capture the attention of twentieth-century women.[11]

Domestic as it may have been, the *Washington Women's Cook Book* was no ordinary collection of recipes. The cover of the 256-page volume advertised "Votes for Women" alongside "Good Things to Eat," and its pages contained more than suggested items for menus. In addition to recipes, health and beauty tips, and advice for running a household, the volume featured quotations from eminent Americans in favor of woman's rights, commentaries on political issues such as pure food laws, descriptions of locations around the world in which women voted, and a history of equal suffrage activism in Washington. Hundreds of Washington women contributed to the volume: every essay and most recipes were written and submitted for publication by women who were state

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[9] See Washington State Equal Suffrage Association, Circular Letter to "Suffrage Coworkers," August 1909, box 1, folder 21; Washington State Equal Suffrage Association, Circular Letter to "The Women of Washington," 14 October 1909, box 1, folder 21; J. E. Chilberg, "Letter to Emma Smith DeVoe," 29 May 1909, box 4, folder 1, all in ESD Collection. See also Putman, "Test of Chiffon Politics," 601.

[10] Washington State Equal Suffrage Association Treasurer's Annual Report, 10 January 1911, box 2, folder 4, ESD Collection.

[11] Catt, "Letter to Emma Smith DeVoe," 12 December 1910, box 4, folder 1, ESD Collection.

residents. The few recipes included in the *Cook Book* that were not authored by Washington women were prepared by four male residents of the state who had extensive experience preparing food for ocean voyages and mountain climbs, and who were invited by the compiler to supplement women's contributions to sections of the *Cook Book* entitled "Sailors' Recipes" and "Mountaineers' Chapter."[12] As a whole, the *Cook Book* was a substantial resource on subsistence, household economy, family life, outdoor excursions, culture, and public issues in the Pacific Northwest. The book publicized political views together with pragmatic information and regional norms. As such, it generated interest and participation even from women who did not identify themselves as suffragists.

This chapter illuminates how the *Washington Women's Cook Book* bridged the divide between women's private lives and public politics. Analysis of the production, circulation, and content of the *Cook Book* reveals how the Washington Equal Suffrage Association utilized rhetoric produced by local women in order to draw other local women into the suffrage movement. The *Cook Book* was more than a bounded text; its production and circulation, together with the words it contained, were rhetorically significant. All three aspects of the *Cook Book*—text, production, and circulation—reconciled women's traditional roles with new forms of action. Together, they created

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[12] These four men—Robert Carr, L. A. Nelson, Grant W. Humes, and Will E. Humes—were affiliated with the Mountaineers, an organization that sponsored co-ed climbs of Washington peaks including Mt. Olympus and Mt. Baker. Robert Carr, for example, was the "official chef for The Mountaineers, seasons of 1907 and 1908"; Linda Deziah Jennings, comp., *Washington Women's Cook Book* (Seattle: Washington Equal Suffrage Association, 1909), 129. The "Mountaineers' Chapter" was coedited by Nelson, Carr, and Cora Smith Eaton, M.D., and Carr and Eaton authored substantial portions of the chapter.

opportunities for women of Washington to understand themselves as members of the public realm and to act accordingly. The rhetorical text of the *Cook Book* and the rhetorical acts of its creation and circulation contributed to the development of a new political subjectivity among Washington women—as well as significant visibility for the suffrage movement.

Specifically, this analysis will show that the text of the *Cook Book* characterized Washington women as individuals with domestic responsibilities as well as political interests. Women, the *Cook Book* suggested, were responsible not only for nourishing families but also for improving Pacific Northwest communities. One way for women to fulfill their responsibilities was to master the science of home life; another way, the *Cook Book* made clear, was to take an active role in public life. As a whole, the text offered rationales by which women could connect private activities with public participation and envision themselves as equal citizens.

Similarly, the production of the *Cook Book* bridged domestic experience and political action. The process of generating and gathering written material for the *Cook Book* provided important opportunities for women to produce public texts, to participate in WESA activities, and to expand suffrage networks. Women contributed to the *Cook Book* in a variety of ways: some women wrote single recipes, while others traversed communities to speak with neighbors about contributing to the volume and the cause. Through the myriad roles that Washington women played in the production of the *Cook Book*, they used domestic knowledge to participate in public discourse and political action. Through the production of the *Cook Book*, women moved beyond the practice of

sharing recipes with one another in private kitchens to engage in more public activities such as canvassing precincts, administering a community project, and publishing their writing.

Upon the publication of the *Cook Book,* hundreds of women carried copies door-to-door, organized public cooking demonstrations, and opened booths at local fairs in order to promote the volume and sell copies to local citizens. The publicity, networks, and experiences that women acquired through these activities were as significant as the money that WESA made in sales. As women moved through the public realm to circulate the *Cook Book*, they cultivated experiences and skills associated with political citizenship. To circulate the *Cook Book*, women spoke publicly at fairs and community gatherings. As they went door-to-door to distribute copies of the *Cook Book*, women learned techniques for canvassing and created opportunities to talk with other citizens, to advance their views, and to build networks throughout their communities. That one of their expressed purposes was to sell a cookbook made women's public actions appear less radical as they canvassed the state with suffrage messages and developed skills that would prove useful to their political campaign. It also made it clear that large numbers of women were involved in suffrage activities, without raising widespread alarm.

Like petition work, the production and sale of the *Cook Book* demonstrated that Washington women wanted the right to vote. Through their rhetorical endeavors, women cultivated identities, skills, and networks that were vital elements of political participation. In addition, the *Cook Book* offered opportunities to engage in public discourse and influence that exceeded those that were available to women as petitioners.

To illuminate the remarkable role that the WESA publication played in women's movement into the public realm, this chapter will now turn to close analysis of the text—and then the production and circulation—of the *Washington Women's Cook Book.*

Pots and Politics: The Cook Book *and the Construction of Women Citizens*

"A preface to a compilation of cooking recipes may seem to many to be quite unnecessary," began the *Washington Women's Cook Book,* "but let us look deeper for a moment and we will see that modern cooking represents the evolution of civilized life."[13] The compilation of recipes, household and health advice, outdoor tips, and political ideas that was published by the Washington Equal Suffrage Association in 1909 presented a specific image of women, their activities, and their role in the Pacific Northwest. This section examines the text of the *Cook Book*, attending closely to the ways that the discourse represented its authors and readers. In addition to providing information about food preparation and suffrage arguments, the texts that appeared in the volume offered insight into women's identities and ideals. Specifically, the *Cook Book* depicted its authors and readers in ways that were consistent with domesticity as well as public participation. Beginning with culinary texts and then turning to more overtly political rhetoric that appeared in the *Cook Book,* the following analysis demonstrates how the volume bridged domestic practices and public engagement.

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[13] Jennings, *Washington Women's Cook Book,* 3.

Hardbound in white oilcloth (figure 2), the *Cook Book* was arranged in sections or "departments."[14] Appearing first were sections that described how to prepare various foods. Such departments included "Soups," "Fish and Shell Fish," "Vegetables," "Desserts," "Menus," "Beverages," and "German Cooking." Next were departments that offered instructions for activities beyond everyday cooking. These included "Household Economy and Helpful Hints," "How to Carve," "Hints for Beauty and Hygiene," as well as a "Mountaineers' Chapter." Finally, the *Cook Book* contained sections that combined pragmatic issues and political information, such as "Women's Clubs and Pure Food Committees," "Progress of Women's Suffrage," and "How Washington Women Lost the Ballot." The first page of each department bore its title in bold font, and subsequent pages offered recipes or essays on the subject.

More than half of the volume comprised recipes that were contributed and signed by Washington women. In contrast to the lists of ingredients, measurements, and brief instructions that are common in present-day cookbooks, most recipes that appeared in the *Washington Women's Cook Book* were written in a narrative style. Variations in tone, style, and procedure characterized the texts of the recipes, since they were shaped by different women's voices, preferences, and knowledge. In general, the recipes called for

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[14] Emma Smith DeVoe, Circular Letter to "The Suffragists of Washington," 24 May 1909, box 1, folder 21, ESD Collection. In this letter, DeVoe announced, "Our state association has this year issued a Cook Book of which we are justly proud. It has been carefully compiled, is arranged in departments and is substantially bound in white oil cloth." The use of the term "departments" to describe the organization of the book echoed terminology commonly employed by women's clubs in the Pacific Northwest, which comprised various "departments," or committees that engaged specific issues.

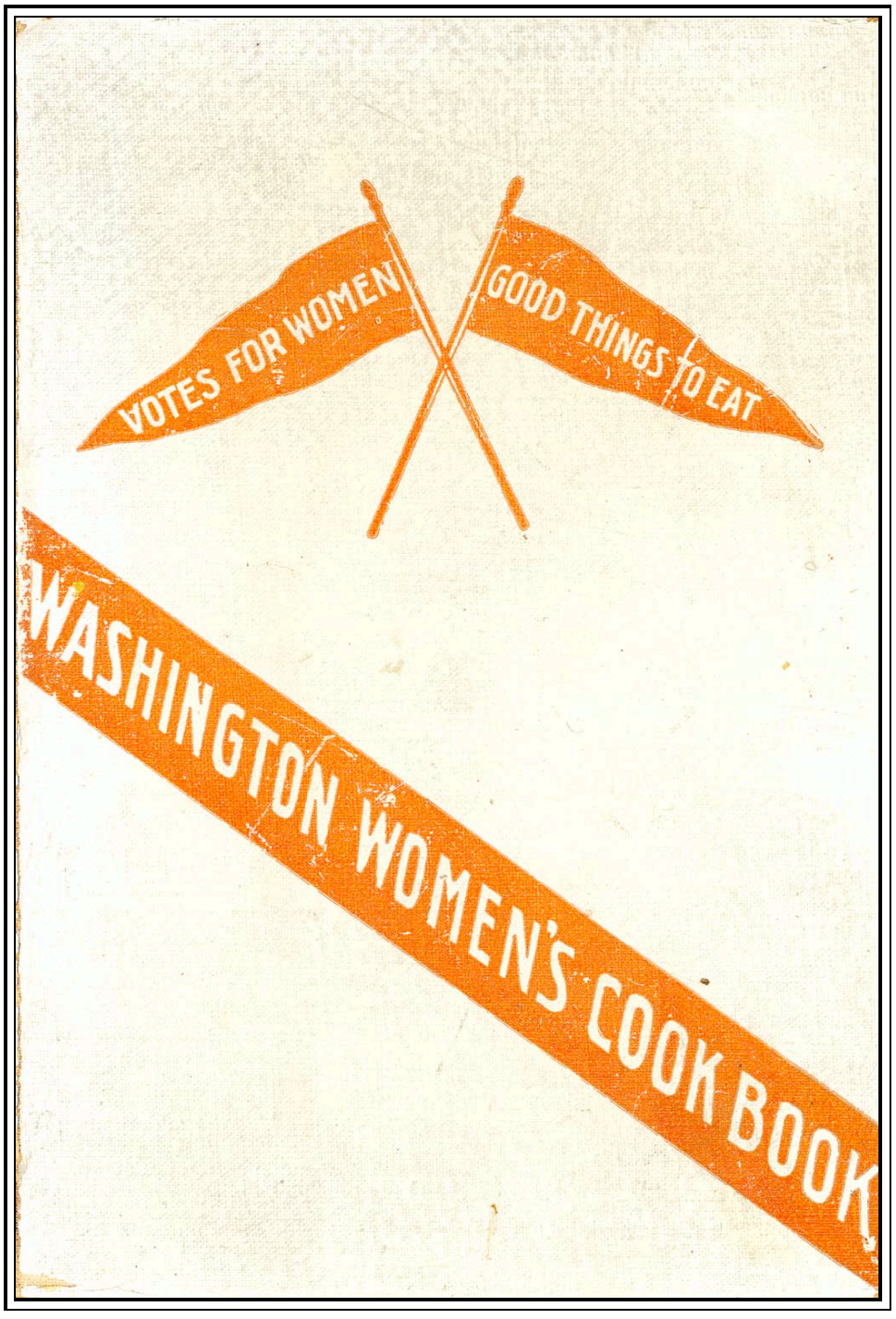

Figure 2: Cover of the *Washington Women's Cook Book*, 1909
Private Collection of the Author

local ingredients and cooking techniques suited to the variety of conditions that existed in the early twentieth-century Pacific Northwest. For example, the *Cook Book* described how to prepare fried smelt, Washington salad, homemade blackberry pies, and camp-cooked venison.[15] It published economical recipes for staples such as bread, as well as directions for creating extravagant sweets. As a whole, the recipes offered something for Washington cooks of various skills and resources. The recipes and menus that appear below, in figure 3, offer a representative sample of the culinary texts that appeared in the *Cook Book*.

Washington or A. Y. P. [Alaska Yukon Pacific] Fruit Salad.

Chop one Yakima apple, one banana, one dozen English walnuts, three long sticks of celery and mix together with a mayonnaise salad dressing. Place on three plates, each garnished with a lettuce leaf, spread over with whipped cream and arrange half slices of one orange around the edges, and three Kennewick strawberries on top the cream. Serve cold.

MRS. NELLIE MITCHELL FICK.[16]

Dutch "Pon-Hoss."

Take four pigs feet and hocks, four pounds lean fresh pork, two pounds calf's liver; boil until meat falls from bones, strain the liquor off the meat, remove all the bones, grind meat through meat grinder, put back into the liquor and season well with salt and black pepper; thicken with cornmeal to the consistency of mush; boil one hour and mold. This is delicious cold for lunch or is excellent fried.

MAY ARKWRIGHT HUTTON,
President Woman Suffrage Club, Spokane, Wash.[17]

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[15] Smelt are small anadromous fish that run in large schools in locations including the Pacific Coast and, during their annual migration, the Columbia River.
[16] Jennings, *Washington Women's Cook Book*, 38.
[17] Jennings, *Washington Women's Cook Book*, 50.

Blackberry Pandowdy.

One quart of blackberries in a buttered pudding dish, one cup flour in another bowl, with one and one-half teaspoons of baking powder, one salt spoon of salt and a tablespoon of butter; rub up fine.

Beat yolks of two eggs with one cup of milk and one tablespoon of sugar, add to flour, stirring to a smooth batter. Beat whites of eggs to a stiff froth and add to batter, then pour the batter over the berries and bake in a moderately quick oven. Serve with hot or cold sauce.

SARAH KENDALL, M.D., Seattle.[18]

To Cook Trout in the Forest.

First catch your trout.

Then with a sharp knife split lengthwise along the spine from the inside, cutting from the front while holding the fish on its back on a log, stump, or piece of bark.

Salt and pepper plentifully the separated halves on their cut sites, allowing them to remain several hours or over night in a covered pan, when they may be well rolled in flour or cornmeal and dropped, salted side down, into a skillet of hot fat (bear's lard if obtainable), and fried over embers left from a fire of fir or hemlock bark, turning the pieces over after a short time. Do not cover the skillet.

Trout under one-half pound in weight may be similarly treated without splitting.

GRANT W. HUMES, Port Angeles, Wash.[19]

Tomato Catsup.

One gallon tomatoes, or four cans, one cup vinegar, four teaspoons salt, four tablespoons sugar, one teaspoon each of allspice, cinnamon and nutmeg, one tablespoon mustard, one half teaspoon cayenne. Cook slowly until consistency of the usual bought catsup. The canned tomatoes are excellent for this purpose.

MISS MARTHA JENNINGS, La Conner.[20]

To Make Fresh Water "Spin Out" When Supply Is Limited.

1. Catch and use all the rain water you can, in rain bags.
2. Boil potatoes in sea water.
3. Mix bread with sea water, as it improves the bread.
4. To soak salt meat or salt fish, put in a bag or rope bucket and hang over the stern of the ship for a while.[21]

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[18] Jennings, *Washington Women's Cook Book*, 68.

[19] Jennings, *Washington Women's Cook Book,* 134.

[20] Jennings, *Washington Women's Cook Book*, 112.

[21] Jennings, *Washington Women's Cook Book*, 142. Robert Carr, the professional chef who edited "Sailors' Recipes" for the *Washington Women's Cook Book,* furnished this recipe. The introduction to "Sailors' Recipes" noted that Carr, who was based in Seattle, "had about five years' experience as cook and steward on board sailing vessels, all over

To Fry Old Fowl That it May Taste Like Spring Cricken. [*sic*]

Dress the fowl and cut up in pieces suitable to fry, then season with pepper and salt and roll in flour and drop in pan of boiling lard, turn until nicely browned; pour off most of the lard and put in sufficient water to cover the pieces; set in the oven and bake till the chicken is tender. This can be done with the oldest and toughest fowl and be as nice as spring chicken.

FANNY LEAKE CUMMINGS, M.D.[22]

A Washington State Dinner.

Table Decorations: Cactus Dahlias.
Olympia Oyster Cocktail.
Cream Yakima Tomato Soup.
Horse Heaven Bread Sticks.
Docewallops Rainbow Trout.
Shoe String White Rose Potatoes.
Vashion Island Broiled Quail on Toast.
Duwamish Valley Celery.
Jefferson County Venison, with Klickitat Chestnut Dressing.
Puyallup Cauliflower, with Drawn Butter Sauce.
Palouse Sweet Potatoes. Kennewick Currant Jelly.
Spokane Whole Wheat Bread.
Snohomish Blackberry Pie, with Whipped Cream.
Wapato Watermelon.
Clark County Nuts. Wenatchee Apples.
Tacoma Cigars. Seattle Black Coffee.

MARGARET W. BAYNE, NELLIE MITCHELL FICK.[23]

Menu for an Informal Summer Luncheon.

Cantaloupe.
Green Corn Soup.
Fried Chicken.
French Peas. New Potatoes Creamed.
Pear Salad, Mayonaise [*sic*] Dressing.
Pineapple Float, Whipped Cream.
Lady Fingers. Coffee.

MRS. ISAAC H. JENNINGS.[24]

Figure 3: Sample Recipes and Menus from the *Washington Women's Cook Book*

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the world, and has had the record of being a most popular cook, one vessel delaying its date of sailing a week in order to get him" (142).

[22] Jennings, *Washington Women's Cook Book*, 164.

[23] Jennings, *Washington Women's Cook Book,* 100.

[24] Jennings, *Washington Women's Cook Book,* 101.

In addition to revealing culinary practices, these *Cook Book* texts offer insight into women's identities and their forays into public discourse in the early twentieth-century Pacific Northwest. The *Cook Book* made local women's voices a part of public discourse: it brought their names and ideas out of the private realm of the home and gave them publicity through publication. Most fundamentally, the menus and recipes asserted that local women possessed expertise that was worthy of publication. They proclaimed that cooking was an enterprise that required understanding and skill. By publishing their recipes, the *Cook Book* implied that local women's culinary work was of public interest. Lest anyone miss that point, the preface to the *Cook Book* made it explicit, explaining that cooking was not a private chore but rather a science that demonstrated women's inventive genius and their ability to improve community life. "The kitchen," it maintained, "is the laboratory in which is compounded the life-sustaining elements by which the members of the family are nourished and equipped for the duties of life. It is the most important department of the home, and the home is the most important factor in the nation."[25] The practices by which women equipped citizens for the duties of life, the *Cook Book* asserted, mattered to the family and to the state.

In addition to representing culinary expertise as something of public significance, the signed recipes and menus that women contributed to the *Cook Book* reveal how women characterized themselves and how they envisioned women's roles in Washington state. The signatures that appear on these culinary texts, for example, are discursive

[25] Jennings, *Washington Women's Cook Book*, 195.

marks of identity that can be read as rhetorical texts.[26] As figure 3 illustrates, contributors to the *Cook Book* signed their preferred names as well as the names of their cities or towns. These signatures identified women as authors—as literate individuals who produced public discourse and who were accountable to others for their words. In an era when concepts of literacy and citizenship were closely linked, women's authorial signatures were evidence of their qualification to generate public discourse and to participate in political activity.[27] By naming the cities and towns in which *Cook Book* contributors resided, signatures also identified women as Washington citizens. This locational information was significant because it situated women in public communities rather than in private homes. It was a linguistic sign that women were members of communities in their own right.[28] Moreover, the inclusion of women's names and towns demonstrated that the suffrage *Cook Book* was the work of women from around Washington, rather than a small or atypical group concentrated in one or two areas of the state.

In addition to showing variations in location, women's signatures suggested that there were important differences among *Cook Book* contributors. Those who contributed to the *Cook Book* did not sign their names uniformly. Some, such as Mrs. Isaac H. Jennings, represented themselves by their marital titles and husbands' names. Others used

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[26] Zaeske, *Signatures of Citizenship,* 392.
[27] See Sandra Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood: Cultural Politics in the Pacific Northwest, 1840-1912* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), 161-66.
[28] That is, it symbolically rejected coverture. In the traditions of British and U.S. law, coverture was the principle whereby married women were considered to be under their husbands' protection or authority, without legal status or rights of their own.

titles that indicated single or professional status, signed their natal and marital family names, or affixed their first and last names without honorifics or professional designations. The signatures of Sarah Kendall, M.D., Miss Martha Jennings, Mrs. Nellie Mitchell Fick, and Hazel Hall showcase a variety of ways that women identified themselves. Like the *Cook Book* as a whole, women's signatures were a mix of conventional and progressive practices. This is notable because women's proper names were a subject of debate among women citizens in the Pacific Northwest during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when they questioned whether and how a woman's signature ought to reveal her marital status.[29] Traditionally, married women used the title "Mrs." together with their husbands' given and family names. Yet some women in the Pacific Northwest resisted this convention, avoiding titles that indicated marital status, using their own given names, and retaining their natal family names. Such choices were more than a matter of personal preference. To challenge the status quo and to insist on being called by one's own name was a rhetorical act that asserted individuality and public identity.[30]

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[29] See Woman's Club of Portland Minute Book, December 1895-March 1900, box 1, folder 1, Portland Woman's Club (Or.) Records, Mss 1084, Oregon Historical Society, Portland. In her 1890 speech "White Life for Two," prominent suffragist and Woman's Christian Temperance Union president Frances E. Willard discussed the issue of women's names. See Willard, "White Life for Two," in *Man Cannot Speak for Her*, vol. 2, edited by Karlyn Kohrs Campbell (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1989), 335-36. The *Washington Women's Cook Book* featured a quotation attributed to Frances E. Willard (Jennings, 47).

[30] Prominent suffragist Lucy Stone kept her maiden name when she married Henry Brown Blackwell on 1 May 1855, thus becoming the first recorded U.S. woman to retain her last name upon marriage. Regarding her choice, Stone explained, "My name is the

That women's names took a variety of forms in the *Cook Book* displayed the fact that Washington women of different statuses and standings—those who were single and those who were married, those who affirmed conventional roles and those who asserted their place in the professions—were participants in suffrage work. After all, each name that appeared in the *Cook Book* was affixed not only to a single recipe but also to the larger project to raise awareness and funds for suffrage. Thus the signatures collectively claimed that women with various experiences and identities, from married homemakers to independent physicians, supported the suffrage movement and had a place in it.

Further, the text of the *Cook Book* projected an image of an ideal reader—what Edwin Black would call a second persona.[31] In addition to cataloging existing practices, the *Cook Book* offered a vision of what Washington women would have Washington women be: skillful homemakers, resourceful individuals, and public participants. Clearly, the *Washington Women's Cook Book,* a volume that primarily comprised domestic instructions and advice, suggested that women ought to be capable homemakers. Yet the *Cook Book* did not constrain women's activities to the home. Its recipes and menus, for instance, depicted women cooking in a variety of contexts and for a variety of purposes. In addition to instructing readers about how to make blackberry desserts in their private kitchens, the book directed them to catch and cook trout in the forest, to organize social luncheons, to prepare fresh water at sea, and to arrange Washington state dinners.

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symbol of my identity which must not be lost." See Una Stannard, *Mrs. Man* (San Francisco: Germainbooks, 1977), 192.

[31] Edwin Black, "The Second Persona," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 56.1 (April 1970): 109-19.

These texts suggested that women were perfectly capable of participating in a variety of domains, from outdoor adventures to political events. The recipes and menus combined a traditionally feminine activity with endeavors that were not considered conventional for women—cooking and climbing, combining pots with politics. The *Cook Book* did not simply suggest that women could participate in activities outside the home; it provided direct instruction for doing so, detailing what supplies to pack for a mountaineering trip and how to prepare a large-scale banquet. Recipes and menus depicted cooking as a bridge to a wider world, suggesting that women could take part in community life without assuming a role that was radically different or entirely unfamiliar. Moreover, by offering information that one could learn in order to thrive outside the home, the *Cook Book* also implied that no innate quality excluded women from the peaks of Mt. Rainier or elsewhere. It asserted that women had the capacity—and every right—to be present and take part in home, outdoor, and civic life.

In addition to conveying pragmatic information, recipes and menus that appeared in the *Cook Book* constituted a foray into public discourse by women of the Pacific Northwest. These texts made culinary activities a public matter, depicting women's work as contributions that sustained and shaped life in Washington. Moreover, the signed recipes and menus displayed women's literacy, public identities, and community membership. They signaled that the suffrage movement was diverse and moderate, constituted by local women who represented themselves in different ways but were united by domestic experience and political will. Finally, in addition to depicting women's existing practices and identities, the culinary texts also imparted a vision of

what Washington women ought to do and be. Recipes and menus that appeared in the *Cook Book* constructed an ideal reader who was skillful in the domestic realm, resourceful in all circumstances, and an active participant in community life. The *Cook Book* presented and promoted a vision of womanhood that combined traditional skills with new pursuits—depicting women as homemakers, community members, and suffragists who could "cook all the better, for a wide outlook."[32]

The Practical Is Political: Linking Domestic Activity and Public Issues

Other texts that women produced for the *Cook Book*, such as advice on home economy and essays on public policy, articulated direct connections between domestic life and public issues. For example, the *Cook Book* featured a four-page essay by Jennie Wilhite Ellis on the subject of pure food, or sanitary meat and produce. "The women, homemakers, and buyers of food," she observed, "realize the importance of [pure food and] it is the women who will create public sentiment and public standards which will require makers and sellers of food to comply with the laws. It is women who will first see the necessity of further regulations to enable them to procure pure, clean food."[33] Beyond asserting that "'pure food' is a subject so within the realm of every woman's activity," the essay detailed actions that women should take to improve the sanitary condition of provisions. First, it called on women to study pure food laws and local conditions. It

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[32] Jennings, *Washington Women's Cook Book*, 1.
[33] Jennings, *Washington Women's Cook Book*, 198. Other examples of this style of writing in the *Cook Book* included an essay by Elizabeth Murray Wardall advocating vegetarianism (152-53).

offered readers starting points for such study, giving them information about the Washington State Chemist, the state Pure Food Commissioner, and relevant laws such as the 1906 federal Pure Food and Drug Act. Second, the essay summoned women to work to improve the condition of milk supplies, public markets, and warehoused provisions. Ellis described specific ways that women could become involved in these causes, directing them to join with "the 105 Women's Clubs in the State of Washington representing membership of nearly 4,000 women" that planned to survey local conditions and "work together to obtain the best conditions which will give pure, clean food and all the blessings which follow in its presence."[34]

Ellis's essay is notable for several reasons. In it, a Washington woman advances a public argument regarding policy and law. The text asserts the authority of Ellis to speak out on a civic matter, identify a priority for public attention, and call for political action. It demonstrates the capacity of a Washington woman to engage in civic discourse and to advocate the public good—that is, to act as a citizen. Also, the essay articulates a direct connection between women's domestic responsibilities and a policy issue. "To procure pure, clean food," it argues, women must survey existing laws and see that they are upheld, create public standards, and promote further regulations. In other words, the essay asserts that it is necessary for women to take action in the public realm in order to meet their responsibilities in the home. From the viewpoint advanced by this essay, women's refraining from public or political action—rather than acting publicly and politically—would be counter to their duty and proper role. The second persona

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[34] Jennings, *Washington Women's Cook Book*, 199, 200-201.

constructed by the essay is a woman who studies law, surveys civic conditions, and engages in public advocacy in order to protect her home and improve her community. The essay made it clear that public advocacy was not a radical enterprise, but rather an activity in which thousands of Washington women were already engaged out of concern for people and conditions in their state.

Essays on issues like pure food were not the only places in which the *Cook Book* linked domestic interests and political ideas. Throughout the volume, editors interspersed recipes and advice on home economy with political quotations by eminent Americans. The placement of these quotations amid domestic advice made it likely that even those who read the *Cook Book* simply for pragmatic information would encounter arguments for woman's rights. It situated political ideas in the context of women's lives and brought before their eyes rationales for woman's rights that did not regularly circulate, for example, in local periodicals.

Between its title and contents, almost every section in the *Cook Book* included an italicized political quotation. For example, between the title "Confectionary" and that department's first recipe—for nut candy—the *Cook Book* printed:

> *"I believe in woman's rights as much as men's, and indeed, a little more."*
>
> *—THEODORE ROOSEVELT.*[35]

The quotations that appeared were between one and three lines in length and were attributed to sources that ranged from U.S. presidents to the national commissioner of

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[35] Jennings, *Washington Women's Cook Book*, 116.

labor, and from the Bible to national suffrage leaders.[36] A few of the quotations were anonymous, such as one on the first page of the "Vegetable" department: "What is politics? Why, it's housekeeping on a big scale. The government is in a muddle, because it has been trying to do the housekeeping without the women."[37] This particular quotation asserted a link between women's private activities and political life, suggesting that they required the same values and skills. All of the quotations that appeared directly below department titles in the *Cook Book* addressed the issue of political rights; some spoke specifically of woman suffrage, while others defined government and citizenship in terms that were favorable to women's participation.

Although many of the quotations appeared to have no direct relationship to the department or recipes with which they appeared, the interplay between other quotations and their discursive surroundings produced humorous or poignant effects. For example, the department of "Canning, Preserves, Pickles, Etc." led with the declaration:

"*Failure is impossible."—SUSAN B. ANTHONY.*[38]

For any cook who had experienced the monumental disaster that is canning gone awry—or anyone who had basic familiarity with the challenge and unpredictability of canning—this quotation offered polysemous meaning. In addition to conveying Anthony's message of encouragement for women in the political arena, the appearance of this quotation in

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[36] Specifically, department title pages featured quotations from Abraham Lincoln, Charles Kingsley, Jane Addams, the Bible, Lucretia Mott, Susan B. Anthony, Theodore Roosevelt, Alice Stone Blackwell, Carroll D. Wright, the *Woman's Journal*, and anonymous sources.

[37] Jennings, *Washington Women's Cook Book*, 41.

[38] Jennings, *Washington Women's Cook Book*, 108.

the canning department offered a lighthearted morale boost to cooks in the kitchen. Another quotation became more forceful for its placement in the department on "German Cooking." In an era and region in which many women of German ethnicity worked for wages yet were mired in poverty, the quotation declared:

> "*The lack of direct political influence constitutes a powerful reason why women's wages have been kept at a minimum."—CARROLL D. WRIGHT, NATIONAL COMMISSIONER OF LABOR.*[39]

Overall, the interspersion of political quotations amid recipes presented to women multiple and meaningful arguments for political equality. The content of some quotations articulated direct connections between women's experiences and politics. And even those quotations that did not explicitly link women's personal activities and political ideas implied a connection between them. That political words appeared alongside culinary texts in the *Washington Women's Cook Book* suggested that cooking narratives and political arguments were equally relevant for women. It asserted that women who read recipes were capable of considering political discourse—and that they ought to do so. Some quotations made a second persona very clear, such as one that appeared in the department of "Household Economy and Helpful Hints": "Resolved, That the women of this country ought to be enlightened in regard to the laws under which they live, that they

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[39] Jennings, *Washington Women's Cook Book*, 170. Regarding the status of German women in Washington and the importance of ethnic working-class women to the equal suffrage campaign, see Anna Howard Shaw, "Letter to Emma Smith DeVoe," 20 December 1907, box 3, folder 12, ESD Collection; Putman, "Test of Chiffon Politics," 602.

may no longer publish their degradation by declaring themselves satisfied with their present position, nor their ignorance, by asserting they have all the rights they want."[40]

A Woman's Place Is at the Polls: Suffrage Essays in the Cook Book

The last three sections of the *Cook Book* offered a history of suffrage around the world, a history of suffrage in Washington state, and a collection of legal opinions on women's rights. "Progress of Woman Suffrage," a three-page essay attributed to A.S.B., gave a "bird's-eye view of the progress of the suffrage movement up to date."[41] Surveying one hundred years of world history, the essay noted the years in which women in countries such as Sweden, New Zealand, England, and Canada and states such as Kansas, Wyoming, New Jersey, Louisiana, Oregon, and Idaho achieved various forms of suffrage—from the right to vote for school board members to the right to elect national representatives. The essay made two things clear. First, it demonstrated that women had been voting, in various ways and in various places, for more than a century. In other words, it offered evidence that the adoption of woman suffrage would not put governments into turmoil. Second, it argued that there was momentum for woman suffrage around the world and especially in the United States, that more women were authorized to vote on more issues with each passing year. In view of these historical facts, the essay suggested, "The friends of equal rights for women will have even a merrier Christmas than usual this year," for "things are manifestedly [*sic*] and visibly

[40] Jennings, *Washington Women's Cook Book*, 164.
[41] Jennings, *Washington Women's Cook Book*, 201.

coming their way."[42] Ultimately, the essay depicted equal suffrage not as a radical challenge to the status quo but as political progress in concert with the tide of history.

Like "Progress of Woman Suffrage," the next essay that appeared in the *Cook Book*—"How Washington Women Lost the Ballot" by Adella M. Parker—asserted precedents for equal voting rights. In contrast to the essay that preceded it, however, Parker's text focused exclusively on the history of woman suffrage in Washington state. The essay also took a different tone: rather than a narrative of progress, it was an argument that corrupt actions had robbed Washington women of the franchise. After noting that Washington women had been enfranchised and "voted so well" from 1884 to 1886, the essay described "how Washington women were [subsequently] tricked out of their political rights."[43] Specifically, Parker detailed the events of *Harland v. Territory of Washington, Bloomer v. Todd,* the state constitutional convention in 1888, and the 1889 election in which Washington men voted down an amendment for woman suffrage. The essay presented thorough and accurate historical information, as well as vehement opinions about political maneuvers that excluded women from the franchise.

The essay as a whole aggressively advanced two claims: first, that Washington women legally obtained the franchise in 1883 and, second, that suffrage opponents acted illegally to strip women of their right to vote. The story of how "Washington women lost the ballot, though men twice voted it to them," Parker argued, was a tale of "how Tacoma's 'boss' gambler attacked the law to get 'his man' out of the 'pen'; how a

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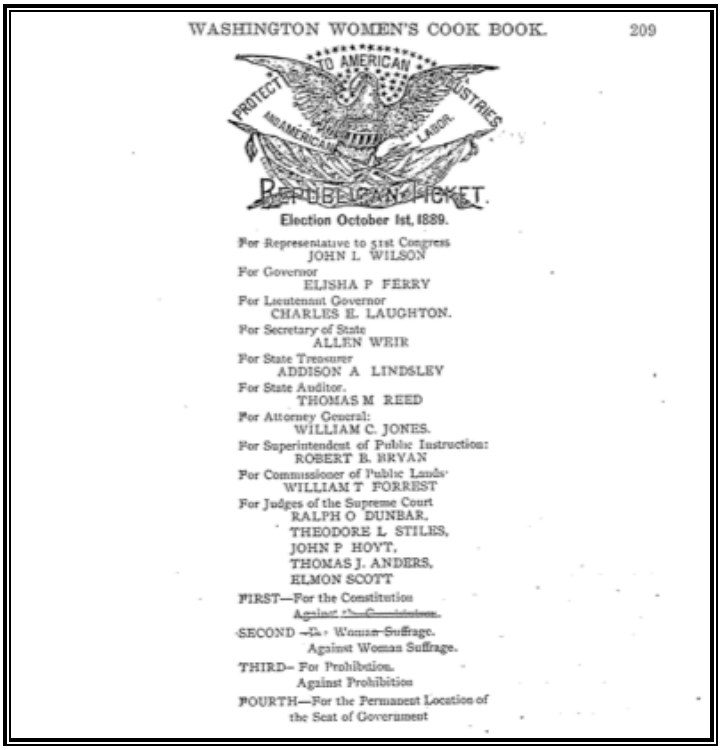
[42] Jennings, *Washington Women's Cook Book*, 201.
[43] Jennings, *Washington Women's Cook Book*, 204.

bartender's wife rushed a case through the courts and refused to let it go higher; how, in '89, the ballots were 'marked' before they came from the press." Parker pointed out the irregularities in *Harland v. Territory* and *Bloomer v. Todd* and explained that woman suffrage was not inserted in the state constitution in 1888, despite the fact that "women were assured that if they would trust the chivalry of the men suffrage would be incorporated into the new constitution." But the essay leveled its strongest accusations against those who prepared ballots for the 1889 election, claiming "that the republicans had printed a ballot marked in advance, voting down the [suffrage] amendments" (see figure 4).[44]



WASHINGTON WOMEN'S COOK BOOK. 209

PROTECT TO AMERICAN INDUSTRIES AND AMERICAN LABOR.

REPUBLICAN TICKET.

Election October 1st, 1889.

For Representative to 51st Congress
JOHN L WILSON
For Governor
ELISHA P FERRY
For Lieutenant Governor
CHARLES E. LAUGHTON.
For Secretary of State
ALLEN WEIR
For State Treasurer
ADDISON A LINDSLEY
For State Auditor.
THOMAS M REED
For Attorney General:
WILLIAM C. JONES.
For Superintendent of Public Instruction:
ROBERT B. BRYAN
For Commissioner of Public Lands
WILLIAM T FORREST
For Judges of the Supreme Court
RALPH O DUNBAR,
THEODORE L STILES,
JOHN P HOYT,
THOMAS J. ANDERS,
ELMON SCOTT
FIRST—For the Constitution
Against ~~The Constitution.~~
SECOND —~~For~~ Woman Suffrage.
Against Woman Suffrage.
THIRD— For Prohibition.
Against Prohibition
FOURTH—For the Permanent Location of the Seat of Government

Figure 4: Reproduction of 1889 Republican ballot, *Washington Women's Cook Book*
Private Collection of the Author

[44] Jennings, *Washington Women's Cook Book*, 208.

"Agents of a large wholesale liquor house," the essay asserted, "had offered to print all the republican ballots for the whole state without cost to the party if allowed the privilege." For this purpose, Parker claimed, they rented the printing office of the *Leader*—a prohibition newspaper in Seattle—and brought in printers from elsewhere, who spent two days printing Republican ballots under lock and key. Afterward, when the *Leader* staff regained possession of the space, a crumpled ballot was discovered behind one of the presses. The *Washington Women's Cook Book* reproduced the "found ballot" at the conclusion of Parker's essay; it bore a printed line through the phrase "For Woman Suffrage."[45] Confronted with this irregular printed ballot three days before the election, Parker recalled, a member of the Republican committee claimed "that only 2,000 or 3,000 of these fraudulent ballots had been printed—'vest pocket' votes for the liquor interests. He finally admitted that there were 60,000 or 70,000, but the press registered 180,000." Subsequently, "the prohibitionists sent out 125 telegrams, 'Watch for fraudulent republican votes,' [and] large numbers of the ballots were returned to headquarters and clean ones demanded or none." Nonetheless, Parker concluded, "thousands of these marked ballots were given out on election day, and, in spite of challenges, thousands were voted and counted. The amendments were lost, but a change of one vote in twelve would have carried them."[46]

Whether or not Parker's account of past election fraud was entirely accurate, the essay advanced a consistent message. The past, it suggested, offered a lesson to women

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[45] Jennings, *Washington Women's Cook Book*, 209.
[46] Jennings, *Washington Women's Cook Book*, 208.

to be politically savvy and self-reliant. Because Washington women could not depend on the courts for justice, on men for chivalry, or on the state for fair and free elections, they themselves would have to secure rights to direct political participation. In Parker's essay, men who twisted the law were not the only citizens to blame for women's loss of the ballot; women themselves, who chose to believe the empty assurances of statesmen rather than actively to assert their rights, played a supporting role. In contrast to women who relied on male justices and on male participants in the constitutional convention to secure their rights, the ideal auditor constructed by Parker's essay was a contemporary woman who recognized the "trickery" and errors of the past and who mustered the political will and skill equal to the difficult task at hand. By working to regain the ballot, the essay implied, women could set things right. They could defeat political corruption and make Washington a state that secured liberty and justice for all its citizens.

The way in which the Parker essay represented politics and called upon women to engage in political activity is remarkable. Its aggressive, even accusatory, tone was a departure from discursive norms even among ardent suffragists in Washington. Moreover, the essay portrayed politics as a dirty game in which people cheated and schemed to secure special interests, not a sacred undertaking or an extension of the domestic realm. It offered a perspective on the dark side of politics, suggesting that women would have to confront corruption directly in order to secure their right to the ballot. It characterized women's decorum—their collective willingness to rely upon male chivalry—as a contributing factor to the loss of the ballot. Overall, the Parker essay asserted that women could not continue as usual; they could not simply carry their

customary behaviors into the civic realm and expect to achieve political power. In contrast, if women were effectively to challenge those who stole votes and to take back the ballots that belonged to them, Parker insisted, they would have to act anew. Yet even with its radical implications, the Parker essay retained a conservative element. It suggested that women needed to act in new ways and to confront those who stole rights from citizens—in order to return politics to its rightful state. By acting in new ways, women would not create a new political system but rather would make the existing political system right, returning it to the democracy it was meant to be and, the essay claimed, once was: one with liberty and justice for all.

Identity, Argument, and Inconsistency: Rhetorical Appeals in the Cook Book

In addition to circulating culinary information, the text of the *Washington Women's Cook Book* made a variety of rhetorical appeals to its readers. As a whole, it characterized women as individuals with domestic responsibilities and political interests. Signed recipes and menus identified women as literate authors, citizens, and experts. They also displayed differences among women's social statuses and personal identities: contributors to the *Cook Book* represented themselves variously, signing texts in ways that emphasized or concealed marital status and profession. Moreover, the signatures affixed to recipes and menus indicated that women throughout Washington, of diverse experiences and values, were involved in the movement for equal suffrage.

The culinary texts also constructed a second persona that characterized ideal auditors as skillful homemakers, resourceful individuals, and public participants. They

suggested that "true women" contributed to a variety of realms, from the outdoors to politics. Depicting cooking as a link between women's private practices and citizens' public activities, the *Cook Book* implied that women did not have to become something radically different in order to participate in public life. To paraphrase Edwin Black, in the text of the *Cook Book* one can see a model of what the rhetors would have their real readers become. "What the critic can find projected by the discourse," Black suggested, "is the image of a man [*sic*], and though that man may never find actual embodiment, it is still a man that the image is of."[47] Although Black argued that identification of the second persona made possible moral judgments about a discourse, I want to suggest that the analysis of the second persona constructed by the *Cook Book* lends itself not to judicial criticism but to understanding rhetorical processes by which new identities can emerge from existing practices or roles. It illuminates one way in which disenfranchised women asserted a place for themselves in public life and directed others to do the same. The *Cook Book* not only represented feminine involvement in Northwest communities as an ideal; it also offered instructions for women as to how to participate in Washington life—that is, it provided recipes for assuming the role of the ideal auditor.

Essays that appeared in the *Cook Book* played a significant part in delineating for women why they should and how they could take part in the public realm; these essays advanced arguments that civic issues were women's issues (and vice versa) and recommended specific forms of action. Some essays, like Ellis's discourse on pure food, offered a clear link between women's activities in the home and public policy. Ellis

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[47] Black, "Second Persona," 113.

depicted politics as a natural extension of women's activities in the home and directed readers to become involved in pure food advocacy in order to secure the welfare of their families and communities. This essay offered an argument from expediency; that is, it reasoned that the inclusion of women and their special knowledge in politics would benefit the state of Washington, improving conditions for all.[48]

Other essays, such as Parker's account in "How Washington Women Lost the Ballot," took a much more aggressive tone and suggested that women needed to act differently than they had in the past in order to recapture political rights. It directed women to challenge the status quo in order to protect their self-interest and to secure liberty and justice. In contrast to Ellis's text, Parker's essay advanced an argument from justice for women's political participation.[49] It asserted that women had an equal claim to political participation, not because women were specially equipped to improve the community but because they were legal voters and citizens with the natural right to self-government.

If the essays on pure food and suffrage history represented contrasting arguments for women's rights—that is, arguments from expediency and justice—then the quotations that appeared in the *Cook Book* offered almost every perspective in between. The passages featured at the beginning of each section of the book articulated various and conflicting rationales for political participation. They suggested, for instance, that women

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[48] Regarding suffrage arguments from expediency, see Aileen Kraditor, *The Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement, 1890-1920* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965), 49-55.

[49] Regarding suffrage arguments from justice, see Kraditor, *Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement,* 49-55.

ought to vote because it was a form of housekeeping, because it was utterly unlike housekeeping, to attain economic power, to keep business in check, to protect the interests of others, to secure their own interests, to enact democracy, to exact revenge, because failure was impossible, and because government would fail without them.

Although some might consider all of this inconsistency an indication of the inferior rhetorical quality of the *Cook Book*, it is better understood as a key component of the text's rhetorical power. Rather than making a single argument about women and public life, the *Cook Book* advanced a plurality of viewpoints, united only by their commitment to improving women's life in Washington. This strategy of argument by residues enabled the *Cook Book* to feature the voices of many Washington women and to reach many Washington women. As historian John Putman observes, "Ideological inconsistency was one of the strengths of the movement. Both Seattle suffragists and state leaders recognized that victory depended on convincing a diverse population [and that] no single argument or idea could sway all voters to break with tradition and grant women the right to vote."[50] As a whole, the *Cook Book* offered myriad rationales by which women could connect private activities with public participation and envision themselves as equal citizens. Its ideological inconsistency—perhaps better understood as discursive diversity—equipped the text to appeal to manifold readers.

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[50] Putman, "Test of Chiffon Politics," 598.

Out of the Kitchen, into the Streets: The Production and Circulation of the Cook Book

The *Cook Book* began as an idea, one that the Washington Equal Suffrage Association pursued for the expressed purposes of involving women in suffrage activity and raising $1,500 to support campaign costs.[51] Beginning in 1908 suffragists endeavored to collect recipes from women throughout Washington, publish them in a volume that included political information, and ultimately distribute 3,000 copies. At the time, there was at least one precedent for such a publication: the *Woman Suffrage Cook Book*, which was edited and published by Boston suffragist Hattie A. Burr in 1886. The list of women who contributed to the *Woman Suffrage Cook Book* read like a who's who of suffrage leaders; its recipes were signed by Frances Willard, Lucy Stone, Mary A. Livermore, Abigail Scott Duniway, Julia Ward Howe, Rev. Annie H. Shaw, Mrs. Matilda Joslyn Gage, Clara Bewick Colby, Mrs. Martha B. Waite, Mrs. Elizabeth Stanton, and Alice Stone Blackwell.[52] Although the *Washington Women's Cook Book* was similar to the *Woman Suffrage Cook Book* in some significant ways—both offered substantial collections of recipes, and both featured the opinions of various prominent Americans on the issue of woman suffrage—the books differed in their manner of production and fundraising.[53] Whereas the *Woman Suffrage Cook Book* relied on leading suffragists to

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[51] Emma Smith DeVoe, "Letter to Carrie Chapman Catt," 9 January 1909, box 1, folder 15, ESD Collection.

[52] Hattie A. Burr, ed., *The Woman Suffrage Cook Book* (Boston: Mrs. Hattie A. Burr, 1886), iv-vii. The Reverend Dr. Anna Howard Shaw signed the *Woman Suffrage Cook Book* as Annie H. Shaw.

[53] Burr, *Woman Suffrage Cook Book*, 144. In contrast to the *Washington Women's Cook Book*, the *Woman Suffrage Cook Book* placed political quotations in a separate chapter at the end of the volume, rather than interspersing the quotations throughout the book.

author its contents and garnered funds by featuring advertisements in its pages, the *Washington Women's Cook Book* solicited contributions from local women who were unaffiliated with suffrage organizations and generated funds through sales of the volume.

The fact that WESA did not rely primarily on suffrage leaders to author the *Washington Women's Cook Book* is important. The WESA volume was one in which ordinary local women, rather than exceptional leaders, offered instruction and communicated publicly. WESA's insistence on soliciting contributions from around the state created opportunities to participate in public discourse for women who were not accustomed to doing so. The production of the *Cook Book* added to the public realm the voices of women who had limited opportunities to address large audiences. By publishing culinary texts, hundreds of individual women bridged the private and public realms: they used their domestic expertise to speak authoritatively, to address citizens across the state, and to contribute to a political organization. The production of the *Cook Book* prompted Washington women to use what they already knew as resources to perform in new and different ways.

The new modes of performance generated by the production of the *Cook Book* were not limited to publication. WESA solicited written contributions from local women by organizing recipe contests and by sending women door-to-door to invite peers to write for the *Cook Book*. These efforts required women speak with citizens in their communities, canvass the state for WESA, and organize and participate in public events. The production of the *Cook Book* provided women with an uncontroversial reason—the collection of recipes—to reach out to women whom they did not know, to develop public

networks, and to participate in suffrage activity. Like petition work, women's efforts to gather contributions to the *Cook Book* moved them out of the kitchen and into the streets, increasing their public visibility and familiarizing them with local citizens and precincts. And, although the collection of recipes seemed less of a departure from women's conventional activities than the circulation of political petitions, in some ways it was a more remarkable shift. Rather than soliciting men's signatures or support, participants in the production of the *Cook Book* relied on the expertise and voices of women to advance their political cause.

In 1909 WESA published 3,000 copies of the *Washington Women's Cook Book,* which included contributions signed by more than 100 women in the state. Subsequently, WESA officer Cora Smith Eaton King reported, "Many a worker started out into the field with these cook books under her arm."[54] Women went door-to-door in communities throughout Washington, sharing the *Cook Book* with citizens and offering it for sale. They also opened booths at fairs and chautauquas around Washington to promote the volume. WESA records show that women sold 1,107 copies of the *Cook Book* (for $1.00 each) and gave away another 1,893 volumes.[55] Rather than generating funds for the

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[54] Cora Smith Eaton King, "Draft: Washington State Chapter for *History of Woman Suffrage, Volume 5,*" ca. 1921, p. 7, box 5, folder 29, ESD Collection.
[55] Washington Equal Suffrage Association Treasurer's Report, 10 January 1911, box 2, folder 4; King, "Draft," p. 7, box 5, folder 29; Carrie Chapman Catt, "Letter to Emma Smith DeVoe," 31 December 1910, box 4, folder 1, all in ESD Collection.

WESA campaign, then, the *Washington Women's Cook Book* resulted in a net loss of $333.31.[56]

Although it did not make money for WESA, the *Cook Book* played a role in other gains that were significant for the suffrage campaign and for the women of Washington. Specifically, women's efforts to sell and share the *Cook Book* cultivated among them skills and networks that were vital for political participation. Traversing communities with the *Cook Book*, women found audiences, circulated their political ideas together with domestic advice, and became more familiar with the views of their neighbors. In order to circulate the *Cook Book*, women went door-to-door to talk with other individual citizens and to fairs and events to speak to crowds.

To a greater degree than its production, the promotion of the finished *Cook Book* precipitated women's physical presence into public arenas and onto public platforms. For example, to draw attention to the *Cook Book*, women's clubs "gave public programs and 'pure food' and 'model menus' were discussed."[57] As participants in these programs, local women performed as authorities before public crowds; they appeared onstage to demonstrate expertise in domestic matters such as menu planning and to advance arguments about public policy issues such as pure food legislation. These performances reinforced some gender norms—such as the idea that cooking was women's work—but

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[56] This net loss was covered by "special donations." See Washington Equal Suffrage Association Treasurer's Report, 10 January 1911, box 2, folder 4, ESD Collection. Prior to 1910, Cora Smith Eaton King used the names Cora Smith and Cora Smith Eaton.
[57] King, "Draft," p. 7, box 5, folder 29, ESD Collection.

challenged others as they situated women as public speakers, community experts, and politically active citizens.

While many women took part in public events, many more participated in the organized effort to canvass Washington communities and to present the *Cook Book* to as many individuals as possible. This enterprise involved hundreds of Washington women in direct political action, for the *Cook Book* was not a conventional collection of recipes but a volume that contained political messages and was produced by a political organization, for the purposes of raising political awareness and funds. As they attended gatherings and knocked on doors with cookbooks under their arms, women created opportunities to speak with others about the publication and about the suffrage cause. They developed a public presence in Washington, one that was associated with the suffrage movement and that signaled that women throughout the state wanted the vote. In addition to selling some copies of the *Cook Book* and giving away many more, women made connections with people in their communities, providing local women and men with names and faces to associate with the suffrage cause and generating personal contacts among supporters of the movement.

In addition to making public opportunities and creating public impressions of suffragism, the circulation of the *Cook Book* reached women and men in their homes. When women bought the *Cook Book,* they acquired an opportunity to consider suffrage arguments as well as recipes. In homes, the *Cook Book* served as a resource for culinary work and as food for thought; it offered women what they needed in order to bring new meals—and apt arguments for equal rights—to the dinner table. The *Cook Book* was a

production through which women taught women and articulated collective interests, some of which were conventional (such as cooking) and others that were anything but (such as political action).

As a whole, the production and circulation of the *Cook Book* was a rhetorical activity that involved Washington women in the creation and dissemination of pragmatic information and suffrage arguments. As they generated and promoted the WESA publication, women around the state utilized their existing knowledge and practices to participate in public discourse, to draw other women into the suffrage movement, and to contribute to the cause of equal rights. The circulation of the *Cook Book* was a moderate tactic that encouraged—and provided opportunities for—women in Washington to take an active role in the campaign for suffrage.

Cookery, Rhetoric, and a Winning Campaign

The text of the *Cook Book* offered a variety of rationales that connected women's experiences to the public realm. Similarly, the production and circulation of the *Cook Book* bridged women's private practices with public action. Ultimately, the *Cook Book* affected the political campaign for suffrage as well as women's activities in the state of Washington. As they generated and distributed the *Cook Book*, women used what they knew to participate in public discourse, and that process had significant implications for women's public identity, political ideas, and involvement in suffrage activities. By expanding women's experience and skill as rhetors, the *Cook Book* helped to make possible a new kind of suffrage campaign in Washington—one that relied primarily on

women to persuade the electorate to approve equal suffrage. In addition to demonstrating that women of Washington wanted the vote, the rhetoric of the *Cook Book* prepared them to achieve it.

Letters written by WESA president Emma Smith DeVoe offer some insight into the transformation that occurred among Washington women during the production and promotion of the *Cook Book*, and the impact of that transformation on campaign strategy. In January 1909 DeVoe remarked to NAWSA officer Carrie Chapman Catt, "You say, 'I know you have but a handful of workers in Washington.' Right you are. I have a splendid [group] of young, beautiful, educated women, but they have had no experience whatever in [suffrage] work."[58] The letter went on to explain that WESA planned to put these women to work editing and selling a cookbook to raise money for the campaign. Later that year, following the publication of the *Washington Women's Cook Book,* DeVoe remarked on the shift in women's political involvement and abilities. "I am glad to say our suffrage association was never so strong," she observed, "or so well equipped for good, practical work as it is today." Consequently, DeVoe told Washington suffragists, "a great opportunity is now open to us, for we are entering upon what is said to be the most thoroughly planned, and I trust will be the best executed campaign that has ever been inaugurated in this state."[59]

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[58] Emma Smith DeVoe, "Letter to Carrie Chapman Catt," 9 January 1909, box 1, folder 15, ESD Collection.
[59] Emma Smith DeVoe, Circular Letter to "Suffrage Coworkers," 17 August 1909, box 1, folder 21, ESD Collection.

The plan of the campaign, as DeVoe explained it, was to have women canvass every precinct in Washington. This "Herculean task," she stated, was possible because "we have many willing workers in every county and precinct in the state."[60] Although DeVoe's statements do not make an explicit connection between the *Cook Book* and the significant shift in suffrage workers—in their numbers, their presence in every part of the state, and their preparation for campaign work—they reveal that during the months that WESA focused on producing and circulating the *Cook Book,* an important transformation occurred. Moreover, these changes led the WESA leadership to run a campaign that relied on women to canvass every community in the state for suffrage. There appears to be a correlation, at least, between the achievements of women who worked on the *Cook Book* and the subsequent development of a campaign designed to capitalize on women's canvassing abilities and a large number of workers throughout the state.

A few years later, Cora Smith Eaton King recalled that, in contrast to earlier suffrage campaigns in Washington, "the outstanding feature of the [1909] campaign adopted by the State Equal Suffrage Association, through the leadership of its president, Mrs. Emma Smith DeVoe, was the absence of all spectacular methods and the emphasis placed upon personal, intensive work on the part of the wives, mothers, and sisters of the men who were to decide the issue at the polls. Big demonstrations, parades, and large meetings of all kinds were avoided." Just as they had covered every precinct in the Washington to circulate the *Cook Book*, so Washington women canvassed each county to

[60] Emma Smith DeVoe, Circular Letter to "Suffrage Coworkers," 17 August 1909, box 1, folder 21, ESD Collection.

seek votes for woman suffrage. "Every woman," a worker recalled, "personally solicited her neighbor, her doctor, her grocer, her laundrywagon driver, the postman, and even the man who collected the garbage. It was essentially a womanly campaign, emphasizing the home interests and engaging the cooperation of homemakers. The result was that our real strength was never revealed to the enemy. The opposition was not antagonized and did not awake until election day, when it was too late."[61]

On Election Day in 1910, the women of Washington achieved the franchise for the second time, and this time it would be theirs to keep. The "womanly campaign," which emphasized "the home interests" and engaged "the cooperation of homemakers," broke a lengthy hiatus in state suffrage victories in the United States and enfranchised tens of thousands of Washington citizens. Two years later, with a campaign that bore many similarities to the Washington effort, Oregon women also won the right to vote. These monumental victories reshaped the political culture of the Pacific Northwest, yet they should not overshadow the significance of the rhetorical efforts that preceded them. Through discursive activities that bridged private life and public action—that fused rhetoric and cookery—women in the Pacific Northwest achieved more than a place at the polls. They acquired something that they would need beyond the ballot: a sense of who they were and who they wanted to be in the civic realm, and skills for negotiating competing expectations for feminine behavior and political leadership.

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[61] King, "Draft," 7, box 5, folder 29, ESD Collection.

Chapter 6

Rhetoric and the Rise of New Women

On 8 November 1910 women gathered at polling places around Washington state. Although they were not permitted to register or vote, some women entered the polls to serve as official observers and to ensure a fair electoral process. Outside the polls others posted signs promoting woman suffrage and encouraged male voters to support Amendment 6.[1] Women "started out early in the morning and worked until the polls closed at night," suffragist Bernice Sapp recalled of Election Day.[2] After visiting four different wards and putting up posters and signs on the morning of 8 November, she said,

> We went to Tumwater and saw that Methodist women were giving a dinner for the men, so we gave them some literature to put around at the places, and then tacked some up on all the telephones and trees all the way from there to the post office. A lot of men were standing in front of a grocery store so we talked politics to them, and then came back to town. On the way back down town, we stopped off at the 5th ward, and put up some stuff. . . . every little bit helps. We women here are outwardly calm and are looking the men straight in the eye without flinching.[3]

Men who entered the polls in Washington on 8 November ratified the state constitutional amendment that recognized women as legal voters. The landslide victory—won by a margin of 52,299 to 29,676 votes—ended a fourteen-year hiatus in state

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[1] Washington State Woman Suffrage Association, "Location Women's Vote Posters Placed," November 1909, box 4, folder 23, in Emma Smith DeVoe Collection, Mss 171, Washington State Library, Olympia (hereafter cited as ESD Collection). This WESA document records the locations at which 173 suffrage posters were placed during the first week of November 1909.

[2] Bernice Sapp, "Letter to Emma Smith DeVoe," 10 November 1910, box 4, folder 23, ESD Collection.

[3] Sapp, "Letter to Emma Smith DeVoe," 10 November 1910, box 4, folder 23, ESD Collection. Tumwater, Washington, is located a few miles south of Olympia.

suffrage victories in the United States.[4] By granting women full suffrage, Washington doubled its voting population and changed the face of politics in the Pacific Northwest. Upon learning that the ballot was theirs, Washington women were exultant. "Even the women who [took] no part in the campaign and were very much disinterested are jubilant over the fact that we have won," reported Sapp from Olympia. Writing on 10 November, she continued, "I met a girl in the post office this noon and asked her how it felt to be a voter. . . . she said that it felt might[y] good. That she felt more like a human being . . . and I guess that is the way most of the women feel about it."[5]

Members of the Seattle chapter of the Washington Equal Suffrage Association gathered one week later to celebrate their new rights and to discuss the future. One of their first orders of business was the approval of a resolution, which recognized "the women of the State of Washington who have successfully striven for the privileges of citizenship which were conferred upon them Nov. 8th" and expressed appreciation to citizens who helped make success possible, such as "the voters, who, by their act at the polls sealed their approval of the amendment to the State Constitution and signified to the world their confidence in the women of Washington, and their willingness to share with them the dignity, honor, and responsibility of the Electorate."[6] After attendees offered toasts on "The Responsibility of Citizenship" and "True Democracy," WESA president

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[4] Utah and Idaho granted full voting rights to women in 1896, fourteen years prior to the (second and final) enfranchisement of women citizens in Washington state.
[5] Sapp, "Letter to Emma Smith DeVoe," 10 November 1910, box 4, folder 23, ESD Collection.
[6] Emma Smith DeVoe, "Resolution," 17 November 1910, box 2, folder 6, ESD Collection.

Emma Smith DeVoe concluded the evening—and the campaign—with a speech entitled, "What Next?"[7]

What came next for women of the Pacific Northwest was another suffrage victory. Two years later, on 5 November 1912, Oregon women spent Election Day distributing handbills and speaking with male voters about Measure 1, a constitutional amendment that had been placed on the state ballot by initiative petition. Male voters approved the measure by a narrow margin that same day, thereby conferring full voting rights upon female citizens of Oregon.[8] With the passage of the Oregon measure, the Pacific Northwest became a singular region—a place united not only by the geography of the Cascade mountain range and the Columbia River but also by the politics of self-government for women and men.

As they gathered to celebrate the achievement of woman suffrage, members of the Woman's Club of Portland characterized the early years of the twentieth century as "an epoch making period . . . that brought into our lives the responsibilities of State through the privileges of unrestricted citizenship."[9] Like their counterparts in Washington, the women of Oregon attained suffrage and then were quick to focus on the future—that is, on what was next for them as citizens and how best to participate in the electorate. Speaking to new voters in June 1913, Portland Woman's Club president Elisabeth Eggert proclaimed, "May we prove ourselves more and more worthy of . . . public esteem, which

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[7] WESA Minutes, 17 November 1910, box 2, folder 6, ESD Collection.
[8] Male voters in Oregon approved woman suffrage by a margin of 61,265 to 57,104 votes.
[9] Elisabeth Eggert, "Annual Report," 27 June 1913, p. 7, box 5, folder 1, in Portland Woman's Club (Or.) Records, Mss 1084, Oregon Historical Society, Portland.

we will assuredly do if we dedicate ourselves 'To the highest welfare of our homes, our schools, our city, our country, and the world . . . pledging ourselves that nothing human shall be foreign to our sympathy or our helpfulness.'"[10]

Among the first to seek the help of women voters in the Pacific Northwest were disenfranchised women elsewhere in the United States. In the months that followed their enfranchisement, suffrage leaders in Washington and Oregon received queries from around the nation about "the methods used by the women of the Golden West to secure such a great victory."[11] As they offered advice and support to suffragists in other states, Pacific Northwest women continued their own advance into the political realm and their efforts to improve local communities. Within a year of each suffrage victory—first in Washington, then in Oregon—newly enfranchised women formed voter education organizations, were elected to offices, and achieved the passage of a spate of pure food and labor laws. In short, they showed themselves to be proficient members of the electorate. Such achievements led a California activist to observe that the good work of women voters in the Northwest "is attracting world wide attention and will help the cause of woman suffrage everywhere."[12]

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[10] Eggert, "Annual Report," 27 June 1913, p. 7, box 5, folder 1, in Portland Woman's Club (Or.) Records. Eggert also concluded her 1908 annual report with this passage; see Elisabeth Eggert, "Annual Report," 1908, box 5, folder 1, Portland Woman's Club (Or.) Records.

[11] Emma Smith DeVoe, "Letter to Mrs. W. T. Anderson," November 1910, box 1, folder 20, ESD Collection. See also Harriot Stanton Blatch, "Letter to Emma Smith DeVoe," 9 December 1910, box 4, folder 2, ESD Collection.

[12] Elizabeth Lowe Watson, "Letter to Emma Smith DeVoe," 16 March 1911, box 1, folder 6, ESD Collection.

Important as equal suffrage victories in the Pacific Northwest were, these particular political achievements should not overshadow the significance of the extensive efforts and advances that preceded them. Through discursive activities that bridged private life and public action, women in the Pacific Northwest achieved more than a place at the polls. Between 1868 and 1912 the rhetorical practices of disenfranchised women in Oregon and Washington gave rise to a new public, stimulated political advocacy, and reshaped regional culture. Women's symbolic actions cultivated what they would need beyond the ballot: a sense of public identity and authority, a vision for participation in the civic realm, and skills for negotiating competing expectations for feminine behavior and political leadership. Close examination of women's rhetorical practices offers insight into how individuals who lacked basic political rights came to act as political leaders, and how they integrated their voices and priorities into public life in the Pacific Northwest. Moreover, the collective efforts of women in Oregon and Washington illuminate dynamics of rhetoric, identity, and social change.

Many Women, Myriad Rhetorical Practices

Women in Oregon and Washington engaged in a great array of rhetorical practices as they cultivated new subjectivities and reshaped cultural norms in the Pacific Northwest. Rather than focusing on a single kind of symbolic activity or on the voice of a singular individual, this study traces myriad practices of many women. In this sense, it represents a shift from leader-centered studies of U.S. public address. The rhetorical acts

examined in this dissertation range from essays produced in kitchens to public statues and speeches presented at the World's Fair, from conversations in capitol lobbies to arguments made at the polls, and from debates within the clubhouse to legal advocacy at the courthouse. Although they differed in production, medium, genre, and content, these practices were united by a function: the reshaping of women's identities and activities in the Pacific Northwest. All of these rhetorical efforts balanced traditional norms and new ideals, thereby making tenable links between women's conventional activities and their unrealized potential for civic leadership. The practice of rhetoric gave rise to new women—women who asserted themselves as participants in public life—in the New Northwest.

By analyzing the practices through which women in the Pacific Northwest integrated themselves into the public realm, this dissertation makes several contributions to interdisciplinary inquiry. Most fundamentally, it recovers and illuminates significant historical artifacts of women's rhetoric between 1868 and 1912. By doing so, this project addresses historian Jean H. Baker's call for scholars to look beyond the community of woman's rights activists in the northeastern United States and the achievement of the Nineteenth Amendment, to understand complex and overlapping modes of engagement through which women asserted themselves as public participants throughout the United States.[13] It also extends historical research by G. Thomas Edwards and Rebecca J. Mead, by looking beyond the campaign efforts of a few prominent suffrage leaders in Oregon

[13] See Jean H. Baker, ed., *Votes for Women: The Struggle for Suffrage Revisited* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 3-21.

and Washington to illuminate the significance of rhetorical activities that involved thousands of women in the region.[14] In addition to contributing to historical inquiry, this analysis of the rhetorical activities through which women in the Pacific Northwest changed themselves and their communities builds on research by sociologist Holly J. McCammon and Karen E. Campbell that shows a causal link between women's discursive activities and the achievement of suffrage in the Pacific Northwest. McCammon and Campbell's work demonstrates that the success of the equal suffrage movements in Washington and Oregon resulted in part from shifts in women's rhetorical activities, changing attitudes about gender roles, and the emergence of a variety of forms of collective action.[15] In turn, this study demonstrates *how* large numbers of women cultivated unconventional rhetorical practices, developed new identities, and involved themselves in public activism in the Pacific Northwest. Whereas McCammon's work makes empirical connections that rhetorical critics too often assume or avoid, this dissertation illuminates a significant aspect of social change that other perspectives

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[14] G. Thomas Edwards, *Sowing Good Seeds: The Suffrage Campaigns of Susan B. Anthony* (Portland: Oregon Historical Society Press, 1990); Rebecca J. Mead, *How the Vote Was Won: Woman Suffrage in the Western United States, 1868-1914* (New York: New York University Press, 2004).

[15] Holly J. McCammon and Karen E. Campbell, "Winning the Vote in the West: The Political Successes of the Woman's Suffrage Movements, 1866-1919," *Gender and Society* 15.1 (2001): 55-82; Holly J. McCammon, "Stirring Up Suffrage Sentiment: The Formation of State Woman Suffrage Organizations, 1866-1914," *Social Forces* 80.2 (2001): 449-80.

miss.[16] Specifically, this project reveals how women used rhetoric to create bridges from existing gender norms to new forms of action.

In the nineteenth century, women's clubs in the Pacific Northwest organized to "make better wives and mothers" and to "lift homes to higher levels."[17] The avowed purpose of these clubs conformed to traditional expectations that women would serve their families and communities. But the achievements of organized womanhood in the Pacific Northwest were different and greater than the shaping of women to fit a domestic ideal. Club activities drew upon members' existing knowledge and practices in order to develop new and broader roles for women in Oregon and Washington. Even as club discourse explored relatively uncontroversial topics such as art history, community beautification, and state libraries, it involved women in important new forms of action. In clubs, for example, women presented essays to large audiences, gaining confidence and experience as orators. They practiced parliamentary procedure, becoming skilled practitioners of "the language of power and democracy, spoken by men."[18] Clubwomen in the Pacific Northwest also researched community problems, initiated solutions, and advocated legislation. Through the rhetorical activities that were central to club life, women developed public priorities, acquired skills for advocating those priorities, and

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[16] As David Zarefsky observes, "By studying important historical events from a rhetorical perspective, one can see significant aspects about those events that other perspectives miss"; Zarefsky, "Four Senses of Rhetorical History," in *Doing Rhetorical History: Concepts and Cases*, edited by Kathleen J. Turner (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1998), 30.

[17] Woman's Club of Portland Minute Book, December 1895-March 1900, p. 1, and Annual Announcements, box 12, folder 1, both in Portland Woman's Club (Or.) Records.

[18] Sandra Haarsager, *Organized Womanhood: Cultural Politics in the Pacific Northwest, 1840-1920* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), 138.

cultivated the collective will to achieve them. Taking advantage of the narrow rhetorical resources and opportunities that were available to them, clubwomen changed their communities and themselves.

The historical past was one rhetorical resource that women utilized in order to posit a tenable new vision of gender roles in the Pacific Northwest. In 1902 Oregonian Eva Emery Dye published a bestselling historical novel that depicted Sacagawea as a leading participant in the 1805-1806 Lewis and Clark Expedition. Shortly thereafter, women in Oregon organized to produce a public statue and event honoring Sacagawea. In some ways, their epideictic performance at the 1905 World's Fair seemed to venerate tradition, affirming the dogma of manifest destiny as well as some gender norms. Thus epideictic rhetoric in praise of Sacagawea drew community members together around common values, norms, and history. Yet the commemoration was not a straightforward reinscription of the status quo; it also challenged conventional assumptions by venerating women as leaders in the U.S. effort to establish communities in the Pacific Northwest. By imparting a new image of women in public history, the commemoration offered precedent and praise for women's participation in civic life. The epideictic event also served as an important opportunity for women to enact participation, by speaking out from a national stage.

The law was another resource that women drew upon to integrate their voices into public life and to reshape culture. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, women of the Pacific Northwest drew on legal texts to assert that woman's rights aligned with the law and traditional democratic principles. They cited territorial, state, and federal

constitutions as authorizations for equal suffrage, and they went to the polls and demanded to vote. They instigated and participated in court cases that claimed that existing law recognized women jurors and voters and protected women workers. Women also acted to enforce existing law, surveying working conditions and organizing boycotts of businesses that violated labor regulations. Through their attempts to vote, contributions to court cases, and efforts to enforce statutes, women took on new roles in Oregon and Washington, acting as public authorities capable of interpreting and upholding the law. Yet because women based their appeals and actions on traditional legal texts and principles, they situated themselves as citizens who acted to conserve the law, rather than individuals who sought to overturn the status quo. Women's legal advocacy thus evinced connections between tradition and innovation, as well as between the law and social life.

Women's traditional domestic expertise also served as a rhetorical resource for their movement into the public realm. Through the creation and circulation of the *Washington Women's Cook Book* in 1909, women asserted that conventionally feminine practices were publicly valuable. The text depicted cooking as a form of expertise and action that sustained life in the Pacific Northwest. The production and circulation of the *Cook Book* provided opportunities for women who were unaccustomed to participation in political campaigns to contribute to a reform initiative, to speak with others about political claims, and to gain experience as organizers, authors, and canvassers. Moreover, the *Cook Book* integrated women's voices into public discourse as it published their culinary knowledge, cultural standards, policy recommendations, and suffrage arguments.

The creation, content, and circulation of the *Cook Book* bridged women's conventional activities and political involvement.

As they participated in myriad rhetorical practices—from club debates to cookbook production—women in the Pacific Northwest cultivated new subjectivities and skills. Using women's existing interests and experiences as a foundation, these practices built connections between women's individual experiences and their collective ambitions, between private lives and public issues. As women engaged in collective rhetorical action, they gave voice to shared concerns and new ideas and advocated new priorities and solutions for their communities. Together, these practices led disenfranchised citizens to describe themselves as "all in politics!"[19]

The manner in which women's rhetorical practices functioned to cultivate new political subjectivities is the central focus of this dissertation. Yet it is important to note that women's activities had implications beyond the cultivation of new identities; they also contributed to the development of equal suffrage organizations and campaigns, and they altered civic life in the Pacific Northwest. As women participated in increasingly public rhetorical practices, they cultivated skills and awareness that were vital to effective suffrage activism. Clubs, commemorative activities, legal efforts, petitioning, and cookbook publication involved thousands of women throughout the Pacific Northwest in public advocacy and organized campaigns. Even campaigns that were not initiated by suffrage organizations—such as those to create state libraries, to honor Sacagawea, and to

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[19] Alice M. Biggs, "Women Vote for President and All Other Officers in Wyoming, Utah, Idaho, and Colorado—Why Not Here?" *Bellingham Sunday Herald Suffrage Edition*, 9 October 1910.

enforce labor regulations—cultivated among women skills in planning, fundraising, lobbying, and canvassing that proved vital to suffrage victories in Oregon and Washington.

Most fundamentally, the collective rhetorical activities examined in this study cultivated women's identification with politics as well as their rhetorical ability to address public, political issues. Moreover, these rhetorical practices built influential networks—among women and between women, legislators, businessmen, and other reformers—throughout the Pacific Northwest. As women became more integrated into public life and political activities, it became possible to argue that equal suffrage was not a radical change but rather a pragmatic adjustment that would make it more feasible for women to carry out tasks in which they were already engaged. As Eva Emery Dye put it in 1906, "Why should we women waste our precious lives getting up bazarrs [*sic*] for funds to clean up Oregon City, or go running around asking men to do it for us? Life is too short. I haven't time. I'd rather vote and have it done in the regular way without such a loss of energy."[20] Although this study does not focus on the campaign strategies of equal suffrage organizations in Oregon and Washington, I anticipate that further investigation will uncover strong ties between the collective practices examined in this dissertation and the rhetorical activities that were characteristic of the Equal Suffrage Associations in the two states.

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[20] Eva Emery Dye, [Woman's suffrage] (1906), p. 3, box 10, folder 4, in Eva Emery Dye Papers, Mss 1089, Oregon Historical Society.

In addition to cultivating new subjectivities and resources for suffrage, the rhetorical activities of disenfranchised women in the Pacific Northwest had a significant impact on the region. Between 1868 and 1912 women's symbolic practices shaped their communities in tangible ways. For example, after researching and discussing the presence of libraries in other states, clubwomen determined to take action to establish free libraries throughout Oregon. The libraries that were consequently built in Oregon towns and cities were concrete symbols of women's capacity to alter the political and physical landscape of their communities. Women who participated in legal advocacy also visibly affected their communities and the law itself. Their efforts to enforce labor regulations and contributions to the first Brandeis brief, for example, changed material experiences of women workers, the regional economy, and U.S. Supreme Court jurisprudence. Disenfranchised women also shaped Oregon and Washington in ways that were intangible but enduring by valorizing women's cultural contributions. Epideictic rhetoric in praise of Sacagawea, for instance, characterized Pacific Northwest communities as ones established by strong women who braved the wilderness to "take Oregon" for the United States. Moreover, rhetorical productions such as the *Washington Women's Cook Book* emphasized that women sustained communities in the Northwest by, for instance, developing new culinary traditions that made the most of the resources at hand. Overall, connections between women's rhetorical practices and public life were twofold: through symbolic action, women both engaged existing public practices, structures, and issues, and altered those practices, institutions, and issues.

Studied together, artifacts of women's collective rhetoric offer a broad picture of symbolic action and social change, a picture that is greater than the sum of its parts. Viewed in isolation, a single artifact such as the *Washington Women's Cook Book* might seem an ephemeral act, but viewed together with artifacts of women's club discourse, epideictic performances, and legal advocacy, it illuminates the rise of new women in the New Northwest. Together, the rhetorical practices examined in this study offer insight into the complex and overlapping activities through which disenfranchised U.S. citizens cultivated public, political identities and change. In addition, analysis of these discursive sites of change has significant implications for the study of rhetoric. Specifically, it contributes to an emerging turn toward a new method of rhetorical criticism, and advances alternative criteria for selecting objects for rhetorical study.

Women's Rhetoric in History and Process-Oriented Criticism

As this dissertation participates in ongoing efforts to recover and study women's rhetoric in history—and thereby to expand understanding of rhetorical practice—it also contributes to a significant shift in the kinds of objects studied and methods employed by rhetorical critics. Following the publication of "The Rhetoric of Women's Liberation: An Oxymoron" by Karlyn Kohrs Campbell in 1973, the study of discourse produced by U.S. women emerged as a significant area of scholarship.[21] Over the past thirty-five years,

[21] Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "The Rhetoric of Women's Liberation: An Oxymoron," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 59 (1973): 74-86. Scholarship on U.S. women's rhetoric in the field of rhetorical studies preceding Campbell's contributions includes Lillian O'Connor, *Pioneer Women Orators: Rhetoric in the Ante-Bellum Reform Movement*

research in rhetorical studies has done much, as Andrea A. Lunsford notes, "at last" to "give voice to women lost to us; by examining in close detail their speech and writing; and by acknowledging and exploring the ways in which they have been too often dismissed and silenced."[22] Specifically, rhetorical critics have recovered and analyzed an array of speeches produced by women, thereby exploring how women public speakers created credibility for themselves, uncovering historical arguments and controversies, and illuminating discursive dynamics of gender.[23] In some ways, scholarship on women's

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(New York: Columbia University Press, 1954); Doris G. Yoakum, "Women's Introduction to the American Platform," in *A History and Criticism of American Public Address,* vol. 1, edited by William Norwood Brigance (New York: Russell and Russell, 1960), 153-92; and Wil Linkugel, "The Woman Suffrage Argument of Anna Howard Shaw," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 49 (1963): 165-74.

[22] Andrea A. Lunsford, ed., *Reclaiming Rhetorica: Women in the Rhetorical Tradition* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1995), 6.

[23] Examples of this scholarship include Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "Stanton's 'The Solitude of Self': A Rationale for Feminism," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 66 (1980): 304-12; A. Cheree Carlson, "Defining Womanhood: Lucretia Coffin Mott and the Transformation of Femininity," *Western Journal of Communication* 58 (1994): 85-97; Campbell, "Gender and Genre: Loci of Invention and Contradiction in the Earliest Speeches by U.S. Women," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 81 (1995): 479-95; Carla Peterson, "*Doers of the Word": African-American Women Speakers and Writers in the North, 1830-1880* (New York: Oxford, 1995); Jacqueline Jones Royster, "To Call a Thing by Its True Name: The Rhetoric of Ida B. Wells," in *Reclaiming Rhetorica: Women in the Rhetorical Tradition,* 167-84; Campbell, "Pluralism in Rhetorical Criticism: The Case of Lucretia Coffin Mott's 'Discourse on Woman,'" *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 25 (1995): 1-10; Catherine A. Brekus, *Strangers and Pilgrims: Female Preaching in America, 1740-1845* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998); Barbara Mae Gayle and Cindy L. Griffin, "Mary Ashton Rice Livermore's Relational Feminist Discourse: A Rhetorically Successful Feminist Model," *Women's Studies in Communication* 21 (1998): 55-76; Shirley Wilson Logan, "*We Are Coming": The Persuasive Discourse of Nineteenth-Century Black Women* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999); Stephen Howard Browne, *Angelina Grimké: Rhetoric, Identity, and the Radical Imagination* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1999); Diane Helene Miller, "From One Voice a Chorus: Elizabeth Cady Stanton's 1860 Address to the New York State Legislature," *Women's Studies in Communication* 22 (1999): 152-89; Sara Hayden, "Negotiating

rhetoric has reflected existing disciplinary commitments as it has focused on outstanding speeches; in other ways, it has challenged disciplinary conventions by incorporating new voices into the canon, illuminating alternative models of eloquence, and identifying additional means of persuasion. Even as initial recoveries and analyses of women's discourse made significant contributions to rhetorical understanding, some scholars emphasized that it was imperative that rhetorical studies examine more than "great" speeches by individual women. For example, in 1992 Barbara Biesecker called on colleagues to investigate women's collective symbolic activities, lest, by valorizing the exceptional speech acts of a few public women, rhetorical critics perpetuate the fiction that "most women simply do not have what it takes to play the public, rhetorical game."[24]

In recent years, new methods and objects of analysis have emerged as commitments to and intellectual foundations for studies of women's rhetoric in U.S. history have expanded. Notably, several book-length studies of women's rhetoric exhibit a turn from leader-centered analysis to a focus on the collective rhetoric of women. In *Signatures of Citizenship: Petitioning, Antislavery, and Women's Political Identity,* Susan

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Femininity and Power in the Early Twentieth Century West: Domestic Ideology and Feminine Style in Jeannette Rankin's Suffrage Rhetoric," *Communication Studies* 50.2 (1999): 83-103; Amy R. Slagell, "The Rhetorical Structure of Frances E. Willard's Campaign for Woman Suffrage, 1876-1896," *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 4.1 (2001): 1-23; Shawn J. Parry-Giles and Diane M. Blair, "The Rise of the Rhetorical First Lady: Politics, Gender Ideology, and Women's Voice, 1789-2002," *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 5 (2002): 565-600; Chanta M. Haywood, *Prophesying Daughters: Black Women Preachers and the Word, 1823-1913* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2003); Angela G. Ray, "What Hath She Wrought?: Woman's Rights and the Nineteenth-Century Lyceum," *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 9 (2006): 183-213.

[24] Barbara Biesecker, "Coming to Terms with Recent Attempts to Write Women into the History of Rhetoric," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 25.2 (1992): 142.

Zaeske examines antislavery petitions produced by women working together in antebellum America. Similarly, Alisse Portnoy's recent book, *Their Right to Speak: Women's Activism in the Indian and Slave Debates,* considers how and why groups of women in the nineteenth-century United States created antiremoval and antislavery petition campaigns. Wendy B. Sharer explores the collective literary practices of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and the League of Women Voters in *Vote and Voice: Women's Organizations and Political Literacy, 1915-1930*.[25] As Robin E. Jensen observes, these projects stand out not only because they focus on women's collective rhetoric rather than individual speech texts but also because they focus more on rhetoric as process than on rhetoric as product.[26] In other words, these studies devote as much or more critical attention to the collective rhetorical activities through which women generated petitions or publications as they do to the petitions or publications themselves. This innovative approach reveals how women created subjectivities—as well as opportunities, networks, and limitations—in the course of creating rhetoric.

This dissertation participates in the process-oriented critical turn as it examines myriad rhetorical activities through which women in the Pacific Northwest created

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[25] Susan Zaeske, *Signatures of Citizenship: Petitioning, Antislavery, and Women's Political Identity* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Alisse Portnoy, *Their Right to Speak: Women's Activism in the Indian and Slave Debates* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005); Wendy B. Sharer, *Vote and Voice: Women's Organizations and Political Literacy, 1915-1930* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2004).

[26] Robin E. Jensen, "Women's Rhetoric in History: A Process-Oriented Turn and Continued Recovery," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 94.1 (February 2008): 101.

political subjectivities and integrated their voices into public discourse. Like recent research by Zaeske, Portnoy, and Sharer, this project focuses on how rhetorical action made available—rather than merely expressed—new identities. Although it demonstrates that the collective rhetorical practices of women in the Pacific Northwest had important implications for civic life, this study foregrounds the value of those practices for rhetors themselves rather than for the public at large. By emphasizing the critical value of rhetorical practices that cultivated new identities, regardless of the effect of the resultant rhetorical products, this study advances revised criteria for establishing appropriate artifacts of study. Ultimately, process-oriented criticism offers a useful new framework for understanding rhetorical practices that played a meaningful role in dynamic and ongoing processes of social construction and change but that may not have achieved public ascendancy.

This analysis of myriad collective rhetorical practices in which women participated in the Pacific Northwest also extends process-oriented criticism beyond the models provided by other rhetorical critics. Most significantly, it advances process-oriented criticism beyond its initial focus on a few types of discursive action. Whereas Zaeske and Portnoy focus on the single rhetorical activity of petitioning and Sharer attends specifically to women's political literacy (that is, information access and use), this study analyzes the constitutive dimensions of myriad rhetorical practices. The forms of collective discourse examined in this project span all three of the conventional Aristotelian genres of rhetoric—deliberative, epideictic, and forensic. Moreover, this study explores the processes through which women produced a staggering array of

rhetorical products—from visual images like *Sacajawea* to public speeches, from cookbooks to labor surveys, and from club resolutions to legal briefs. By attending to multiple modalities and media, this study demonstrates that process-oriented criticism is an apt method of analysis for gaining insight into the many practices through which rhetors construct, maintain, and alter public identities. Specifically, this project illuminates how women in the Pacific Northwest reconciled two fundamental, conflicting concepts—femininity and citizenship—in order to understand themselves in new ways and to act accordingly.

Reconciling Double Consciousness through Rhetoric

What rhetorical circumstances and activities made it possible for a new subjectivity to emerge among women in the Pacific Northwest? Central to the rise of public women in Oregon and Washington was the rhetorical task of reconciling competing expectations for feminine behavior and political participation. After all, existing gender norms specified that woman's place was in the home, whereas the public, political world that lay beyond the front door was a man's domain. Moreover, a "true woman" was expected to be domestic, pure, pious, and submissive; she was to be ensconced within family life, without reason or need to assert individuality, to pursue self-interests, or to enact leadership beyond the home.[27] Such expectations contrasted

[27] On "true womanhood," see Barbara Welter, *Dimity Convictions: The American Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1976), 21; Nancy Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood: "Woman's Sphere" in New England, 1780-1835* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1977), 146-48; Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, *Man Cannot Speak*

with the qualities and activities that were expected of political participants or citizens: assertive speech in public forums, drawing attention to one's views, and initiating action. Thus, as Campbell observes, for much of U.S. history, femininity and participatory citizenship were mutually exclusive, as "no 'true woman' could be a public persuader."[28] Conflicting concepts of "woman" and "citizen" meant that an individual could act in ways that were commensurate with femininity or political participation, but not both at the same time.

Thus, to the degree that an individual understood herself as a woman and as a citizen, she was subject to the turmoil of double consciousness: attempting to live according to two warring ideals and assessing her own virtue by incompatible criteria.[29] In order to develop tenable political identities and to integrate their voices into public life, women in the Pacific Northwest had to find ways to reconcile these conflicting expectations. They had to discover how to act simultaneously as women and as citizens, and thus reconcile the two unreconciled strivings.[30]

This dissertation demonstrates that women reconciled the problems of double consciousness through collective rhetorical practice. Rather than simply arguing for new

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for Her, 2 vols. (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1989), 1:10. Although historians developed this concept to apply to expectations of gender during the antebellum era, Nan Johnson has demonstrated the persistence of the ideal well after the Civil War; see Johnson, *Gender and Rhetorical Space in American Life, 1866–1910* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2002), 6.

[28] Campbell, *Man Cannot Speak for Her* 1:10.

[29] The term "double consciousness" originated with W. E. B. DuBois, who used it in the early twentieth century to describe the experience of African Americans. See W. E. B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York: Bantam Books, 1989), 3.

[30] DuBois uses the phrase "unreconciled strivings" in his discussion of double consciousness; see DuBois, *Souls of Black Folk*, 3.

standards of judgment, women acted symbolically in ways that blended conflicting concepts, such as woman and citizen, private and public, tradition and change. Consider, for example, how women justified their assumption of public platforms in the Pacific Northwest. When they addressed an audience of thousands at the 1905 World's Fair, women venerated a historical figure, praising a communal past and affirming some existing gender norms and political dogmas. In other words, as they engaged in a form of discourse that was unconventional for women—formally addressing a large public audience—the content of their rhetoric conveyed messages that could be understood as commensurate with expectations that women should act as conservers of tradition. Conversely, when women circulated controversial political views and advocated unconventional policies, they often relied upon modes of address that were deemed to be appropriate for women. For example, when clubwomen advocated a legislative bill to establish state libraries, they utilized interpersonal forms of communication: they spoke to individual lawmakers while serving them desserts.

In some cases women in the Pacific Northwest used uncontroversial communication styles to communicate controversial content; in others they paired assertive forms of rhetoric with messages that invoked tradition. In most cases, women in the Pacific Northwest engaged in forms of rhetorical action that blended the conventional and the controversial. In short, rhetoric was a transformative process through which disenfranchised individuals in the Pacific Northwest reconciled gendered expectations and civic participation. Changes in women and their communities occurred through rhetorical practices that bridged contrasting categories, creating common ground between

femininity and politics, public and private realms, individuals and collectives, the existing and the imagined.

Ultimately, through collective rhetorical practice, women in Oregon and Washington not only produced arguments for woman's rights; they also developed political subjectivities and skills for negotiating competing expectations for feminine behavior and public participation. By debating, writing, creating images, and speaking together, as Abigail Stuart explained, women in Washington "awakened to a clear and defined sense of personal duty, eager to work for the general good . . . willing and anxious to use all for progress and advancement."[31] Similarly, women in Oregon described their production of an epideictic event as a "token that we have awakened [and] a reminder and inspiration to duty and to progress."[32] Although much progress remains to be made on the path to equality in the United States, the rhetorical history of women in the Pacific Northwest offers a reminder that there is much that we can learn from our collective past, and it serves an inspiration to those who would engage rhetoric to transform the future.

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[31] Woman's Club of Portland Minute Book, December 1895-March 1900, p. 1, box 1, folder 1, in Portland Woman's Club (Or.) Records.
[32] Eva Emery Dye, "Sacajawea Statue Dedication," p. 4, Eva Emery Dye Papers.

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