The dissertation of Mary K. Haman was reviewed and approved* by the following:

J. Michael Hogan
Professor of Communication Arts and Sciences
Dissertation Advisor
Chair of Committee

Stephen H. Browne
Professor of Communication Arts and Sciences

Daniel L. Letwin
Associate Professor of History

Thomas W. Benson
Professor of Communication Arts and Sciences and Edwin Erle Sparks
Professor of Rhetoric
Head of the Department of Communication Arts and Sciences

*Signatures are on file in the Graduate School
ABSTRACT

This study explores the ways in which female reformers during the Progressive Era (1900-1917) employed radical, even confrontational tactics, to call attention to their various causes, to force their issues onto the public agenda, and to put pressure on authority or "establishment" figures to respond to their demands. The project consists of a series of case studies of four well-known reformers, all of whom challenged prevailing norms of acceptable public behavior: labor leader Mary Harris "Mother" Jones, prohibitionist Carry A. Nation, suffragist Alice Paul, and anarchist Emma Goldman. I label these activists the "wild women" of the Progressive Era not only because they violated prevailing conventions of civil or polite speech, but also because they adopted unconventional social movement strategies for creating public spectacles, engaging in civil disobedience, and building public sympathy for their causes. Research on these reformers contributes not only to scholarly understanding of these women and their era, but also to larger theoretical conversations about the rhetoric of agitation, visual spectacle, martyrdom, and other topics in the literature on the rhetoric of social movements.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES ................................................................................................................. vi

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ................................................................................................. vii

Chapter 1  INTRODUCTION .................................................................................. 1

Women in the Progressive Era ....................................................................................... 6
Agitation as Rhetorical Strategy ....................................................................................... 10
Radical Rhetoric and Women in the Progressive Era ..................................................... 17
Endnotes .......................................................................................................................... 26

Chapter 2  MOTHER JONES AND "WORKING CLASS" SPEECH .................. 31

Mother Jones's Activism ............................................................................................... 32
West Virginia Mining and the Conflict of 1912 ................................................................ 37
Jones's August 15 Speech ............................................................................................... 42
  Jones's Radical Style ..................................................................................................... 43
  Jones's Outsider Advocacy ............................................................................................ 46
  Working-Class Identity ............................................................................................... 47
  Jones's Appeal to a Higher Power ............................................................................... 49
  Jones's Optimistic Vision of the Future ....................................................................... 51
The Legacy of Mother Jones ......................................................................................... 53
Endnotes .......................................................................................................................... 58

Chapter 3  CARRY A. NATION AND THE RHETORICAL JUSTIFICATION
  FOR VIOLENCE ................................................................................................. 65

Portraits of Carry Nation .............................................................................................. 68
Nation's Memoir as Rhetorical Apologia ...................................................................... 77
  Nation as Victim ....................................................................................................... 78
  Nation as Mother Figure ........................................................................................... 80
  Nation as a Tool of the Lord .................................................................................... 82
Nation's Memoir as Autobiographical Manifesto .......................................................... 85
The Legacy of Carry Nation .......................................................................................... 89
Endnotes .......................................................................................................................... 92

Chapter 4  ALICE PAUL AND THE RHETORIC OF SPECTACLE AND
  MARTYRDOM .................................................................................................. 100

Alice Paul and the Rise of the Militant Suffrage Movement ....................................... 104
The Rhetoric of Spectacle: The Suffrage Parade of 1913 ............................................. 109
  The Parade as Working-Class Strategy ..................................................................... 115
  The Irony of the Suffrage Parade ............................................................................ 117
The Rhetoric of Martyrdom: The Pickets and Hunger Strikes of 1917 .................. 119
The Strategy of the Picketing Campaign ...................................................... 126
The Legacy of Alice Paul ...................................................................................... 129
Endnotes ................................................................................................................. 135

Chapter 5  EMMA GOLDMAN AND THE RHETORIC OF HUMAN LIBERATION ...................................................................................................... 142
Emma Goldman and the Making of an Anarchist Agitator ...................... 145
Goldman's "Address to the Jury" and the Rhetoric of Martyrdom ............. 156
Goldman's Vision of Human Liberation ......................................................... 160
The Legacy of Emma Goldman ............................................................................. 170
Endnotes ................................................................................................................. 177

Chapter 6  CONCLUSION .......................................................................................... 189
The Rhetorical Legacy of the "Wild Women" of the Progressive Era .......... 196
Endnotes ................................................................................................................. 204

BIBLIOGRAPHY ........................................................................................................ 207
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Jones poses for a portrait in 1902 wearing a modest black dress that was typical of her attire.................................................................36

Figure 2: Yale students took of prank photograph of Nation in which she appeared to be joining them for cigars and drinks..........................71

Figure 3: A cartoon in Life magazine portrays Nation with a man's head and woman's body..............................................................73

Figure 4: A cartoonist draws Nation as a cyclone in a "climax" of a suppressed sex drive or a menopausal rage..................................................74

Figure 5: Marchers process on foot and on horseback during the March 3, 1913 parade.............................................................................111

Figure 6: Spectators flood the streets during the suffrage parade, effectively blocking the road for marchers..................................................112

Figure 7: Paul and NWP members picket the White House..............................................120

Figure 8: Photograph of Goldman after her 1893 arrest in Union Square...............151

Figure 9: Goldman and Berkman appear in court on June 15, 1917..................154
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would not have been able to complete this project without the guidance and support of wonderful teachers, family members, colleagues, and friends. Most notably, I am grateful for my advisor, Dr. J. Michael Hogan. His insightful commentary and careful critiques were invaluable in completing this project. Serving as my teacher, advisor, and mentor, Dr. Hogan played the central role in my graduate education. His scholarship, teaching, and mentoring enlightened, challenged, and inspired me. I will always feel fortunate that I was his student.

I am also thankful for the knowledge, advice, and encouragement I received from my committee members, Dr. Thomas Benson, Dr. Stephen Browne, and Dr. Daniel Letwin. Interacting with these exceptional scholars in their classrooms and in our committee meetings was a genuine privilege that I will forever value.

I would like to thank my parents, George Haman and Mary Adams. Their unwavering love and support saw me through my education and made me believe that I could accomplish my goals. From the day of my birth, my parents saved for my college education. Before I was old enough to go to school, my father taught me to read, and for years to come, my mother spent countless hours helping me with my schoolwork. When I decided to attend graduate school in Texas, my mom drove 1,500 miles to take me to campus, and two years later, my dad helped me drive the 1,500 miles back to Penn State. My parents taught me to value education. This project is dedicated to them.
Thank you also to my loving stepparents, Candyce Haman and Gary Adams, for their warm encouragement, and my inspirational sister, Sarah Schmitz, for her lifetime of friendship and good example. She is the most unpretentiously smart and worldly person I have ever met.

I thank my graduate school colleagues who enriched class discussions, offered guidance, lent a hand, calmed my stress, and often made graduate school downright fun. Finally, I owe special thanks to Andy High and the friends, especially Danya Day, Kristin Herdejurgen, Una Kimokeo-Goes, and Sara Ann Mehlcretter, who helped me through my graduate education and made my life happier. Thank you.
Chapter 1

Introduction

May 1, 1930 was a beautiful day in Silver Springs, Maryland. Bright sunshine lighted the town, making the American flags that lined the streets and the rows of cars upon the roadways glisten. As carloads of well wishers and reporters made their way through town and reached their destination, they found the object of their travels smartly dressed in black silk and reclining in the shade of an apple tree. There, labor leader Mary Harris "Mother" Jones greeted her visitors who had come to town to celebrate her 100th birthday.1 During the day, Jones entertained streams of guests, accepted dozens of telegrams and flowers, and even received a giant birthday cake bearing 100 candles. The excitement did little to weaken Jones's aging spirit. In the midst of the hectic day, she delivered a lively impromptu speech that "sent the near-by circling crows wheeling back to the woods," sprung a sleeping dog to his feet, and caused the crowd to burst into cheers and applause. In the fiery speaking style that had made her famous, Jones celebrated the "power" of American labor and criticized the political passivity of women: "Capitalists sidetrack the women into clubs and make ladies of them. Nobody wants a lady, they want women. Ladies are parlor parasites."2

Jones herself was certainly no "lady," at least as defined in her day. She not only violated prevailing social norms and sidestepped traditional gender roles, but she did so in an aggressive, confrontational fashion that shocked even many of the progressive activists of her time. In the eyes of many, Mother Jones was not just a political woman;
she was a "wild woman" who engaged in shocking political actions and unapologetically defied the rules of proper female behavior. During her career as a union agitator, Jones was an oddity to many people. She was not, however, the only "wild woman" of the Progressive Era.

During the period generally labeled the Progressive Era--1900 to the start of the First World War--women entered the political arena in unprecedented numbers. Women played leading roles in a variety of social reform efforts, including suffrage, temperance, child welfare, and pacifism. They organized meetings, spoke at rallies, petitioned government officials, led marches and demonstrations, and engaged in a variety of tactics that, for the first time in American history, gave them a noticeable presence on the political scene. As historian Nancy Dye has written, the Progressive Era "marks the high-water point of women's engagement in American politics." Lines of separation between the home and public life blurred as women entered the political arena, presumably to protect their homes and families from the dangers of modern society. Presenting themselves as concerned mothers, many women gained entry to positions of leadership and power and achieved political victories for both women's rights and a wide variety of social issues. For women, the Progressive Era was a time of great opportunity.

Most women who engaged in political or social activism during the Progressive Era came from privileged social backgrounds and met Jones's definition of "ladies." Joining women's clubs and civic organizations, their tendency to identify with prevailing social values helped sustain institutionalized patriarchy. These "lady" reformers, such as Jane Addams, Alice Hamilton, and Francis Willard, did much good for society and for women. By staying within the boundaries of acceptable female conduct, they were able
to garner public support for their causes and create a place for women within the political realm. Their lady-like strategies, however, did little to dismantle the institutional structures that rendered women second-class citizens or to create alternative ideas about proper female behavior. As Mother Jones suggested, "ladies" did not challenge the larger system. That task required a different breed of female activist--the sort of activists that I have labeled the "wild women" of the Progressive Era.

The "wild women" of the Progressive Era included not only Mother Jones, but also prohibitionist Carry A. Nation, who vandalized and destroyed barrooms throughout the U.S., suffragist Alice Paul, who organized elaborate parades and pickets in Washington, D.C., and anarchist Emma Goldman, who mocked authority and government leaders and flouted her rebellious beliefs. These women stunned polite society with their ideas, their language, and their methods of protest. They espoused causes that threatened the very foundations of society; they discussed topics and used words that were once thought unspeakable among women. They broke laws, created spectacles, and defied expectations for acceptable female behavior. In an age when women were creating new standards for female political involvement for future generations, these women set important precedents. They taught women creative ways to express themselves publicly, and they educated society about the power of female political and social action. They left a legacy of social activism that lasted well beyond the Progressive Era.

Historians often depict progressivism as a middle-class movement that tacitly supported social hierarchies and maintained the status quo. Historian Michael McGerr called progressivism "the creed of a crusading middle class"--an effort by privileged
members of society to preserve their way of life and protect it for their children. Often carried forward by civil discussions and debates held in schools, churches, settlement houses, and community centers, progressive reform came about peacefully, for the most part, causing many to overlook its more radical side.4 Although advocating major social changes, most reformers worked within the system, using reasoned arguments to promote their causes and abiding by accepted standards of debate and political action. For this reason, the legacy of American progressivism emphasizes polite and reasoned discourse, not strategies of confrontation and spectacle. Yet these, too, were important parts of the legacy of the Progressive Era.

As J. Michael Hogan has written, the reform efforts of the Progressive Era were grounded in an "implicit faith in the power of words to change the world for the better."5 Progressive reform ranged across a wide variety of issues, encompassing causes that often seemed contradictory. Proponents of racial equality clashed with segregationists and promoters of eugenics; advocates of sexual and political freedom challenged supporters of censorship and prohibition; feminists argued with champions of traditional gender roles; capitalists devoted to scientific management debated workers dedicated to industrial democracy--and all under the banner of progressive reform. Reformers' ideas about how best to improve society differed drastically. In spite of their differences, however, most shared a faith in the power of reasoned debate and democratic deliberation. For reformers of all ideological stripes, as Hogan has suggested, the "essence" of progressivism was belief in the ability of democratic deliberation to educate, enlighten, and change the world for the better.6
The "wild women" of the Progressive Era challenged even this most fundamental of progressive ideals. Impatient with the slow processes of democratic deliberation and decision-making, they rejected reasoned argument and polite debate and engaged in a rhetoric of agitation, confrontation, and even violence. In the view of many, these women not only crossed the lines of propriety and decorum, but also violated the most basic conventions of acceptable language and thought. Yet no less than Theodore Roosevelt, William Jennings Bryan, W.E.B. Dubois, or Jane Addams, these "wild women" were conscious rhetorical strategists, experimenting with a variety of means for promoting their causes publicly. They too had faith in the power of rhetoric to affect social change. Giving voice to those they considered silenced, ridiculed, or ignored by the political mainstream, they resorted to confrontational strategies to attract attention to themselves and make their voices heard. Challenging the status quo and patriarchal standards of proper female behavior, they not only promoted their own causes but also challenged traditional gender roles that limited women's ability to participate in public debate.

We need to rethink the role of confrontation in the Progressive Era and expand our understanding of how women broke down the barriers of silence and gained a voice in the American political process. When we look beyond portraits of the Progressive Era as a time of polite democratic deliberation, we see that a significant role was also played by female agitators who refused to play by the rules. These "wild women" may have made some uncomfortable, but they did make a difference, both for their causes and for women in general. By studying the rhetoric of these women, we can expand our
understanding both of the rhetoric of women's rights and of agitation, even confrontation, as a rhetorical strategy.

**Women in the Progressive Era**

Before the Nineteenth Amendment passed in 1920, Americans defined politics as a masculine pursuit and women were both legally and socially discouraged from participation. Women were denied the right to run for office, lobby, or vote, and they were advised against publicly supporting candidates or even openly discussing political issues. Females who wished to speak out politically, therefore, faced significant challenges. They had little access to political forums, and if they tried to enter public discussions they were criticized for violating traditional gender roles. During the Progressive Era, however, society underwent a variety of transformations that created new opportunities for women. During this time, many women found their public voice and seized new opportunities to participate in politics and social reform.

The Progressive Era was characterized by dramatic political and social change. Rapid industrialization and urbanization drove thousands of families from rural areas and small towns to quickly expanding cities. Technological advances allowed scores of unskilled workers to gain employment and enabled unprecedented numbers of immigrants to find work on American shores. Giant corporate monopolies overtook small family businesses, and hourly wages for workers replaced local trading and fixed salaries. These changes reshaped the nature of American society and created new social
problems that threatened the American way of life. At the same time, these transformations created new opportunities for women to participate in politics.

Cities could not cope with the massive influx of new residents. Urban services were stretched to the limit, and with factories pushing for more production and efficiency, workers endured twelve-hour work days to earn wages still too low to support their families. Public health deteriorated as more and more people crammed into dangerous and unsanitary housing. Increasingly, home life revolved around a seemingly endless struggle to pay the rent, find adequate food, stay healthy, and stay alive. With women and even children entering the workforce in an effort to make ends meet, the lines between the home and the workplace became unclear. People began to see the health of the family as inseparably connected to the industrial economy and, ultimately, to politics. With the traditional distinction between the worlds of work and politics blurred and with the domestic sphere expanded by the new industrial economy, women gained entry into public forums as advocates of political and social reform.8

By linking public activism to protection of the home, women were able to legitimize their participation in a variety of progressive reform efforts. Rather than deny the stereotypical character traits and gender roles that were socially ascribed to them, many female reformers embraced them and used them to their advantage. Women argued that their sentimentality, their moral virtue, and their motherly nurturance endowed them with an innate ability to care for the world outside of their homes.9 Members of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), for example, rallied under the slogan "Home Protectors." They maintained that their crusade against alcohol was rooted in their maternal instincts to protect their homes and families.10
suffrage advocates likewise asserted that females' superior moral sense provided them with a unique perspective on political candidates. By providing a ballot to females, they argued, society would elect more leaders with high moral character. Appeals to traditional notions of womanhood permeated the discourse of society's most active and influential female activists. Women used such appeals to champion causes ranging from abolishing sweatshops and child labor to improving sewage disposal systems. To a large extent, their arguments were successful.

Scores of articles and books have documented female reformers' appeals to traditional gender roles and explored the influence of specific activists who used them. Rhetorical critics in particular have documented how female reformers of the Progressive Era used appeals grounded in traditional gender roles to justify social reform. Yet not all the women activists of this period cultivated a "motherly" image or appealed to traditional social values. There was another type of female reformer during this period: women who violated prevailing rules of speech and decorum. These "wild women" of the Progressive Era defied conventional stereotypes and thoroughly rejected prevailing ideas about proper female behavior and civilized public discourse.

The "wild women" of the Progressive Era have not been entirely overlooked by historians and rhetorical critics, but few scholars have fully explored how their strategies helped redefine the gendered conventions of rhetoric itself. Some scholars have even searched for the traditional or conventional gender appeals presumably underlying the radical and sometimes eccentric words and deeds of these activists. Mari Boor Tonn, for example, has argued that "Mother" Jones's appeal was rooted in an image of "militant motherhood" that combined two traditionally maternal values: nurturance and firmness.
Similarly, historian Fran Grace has emphasized how Carry Nation attracted followers by portraying herself as a defender of the home who was committed to protecting her "precious little children." In yet another example, Belinda A. Stillion Southard has argued that Alice Paul and other suffragists appropriated prevailing gender norms and used their "feminine appeal" to capture public attention and build sympathy for their picketing campaign in 1917. And political scientist Penny A. Weiss has even discovered maternal appeals in Emma Goldman's speeches, showing how she integrated concern for children into her political theory.

All of these studies have illuminated ways in which some of the more radical female social activists of the Progressive Era were, in fact, not all that radical. On occasion, each did work to soften her radical ideas to attract more sympathetic press attention or to gain the support of more conservative audiences. Each one of these women did, on some incidents at least, rhetorically project a more traditional or acceptable feminine identity. What made these women unique, however, was not their attempts to "fit in" but rather their use of militant, even confrontational rhetorical strategies. While they occasionally may have appealed to traditional gender norms and social values, they also flagrantly violated prevailing standards of acceptable female behavior and speech. In doing so, they challenged popular beliefs, riled up their supporters, and put the "establishment" on the defensive. They also communicated a sense of urgency, while making more moderate reformers seem more respectable. Like radical social movement leaders throughout history, the "wild women" of the Progressive Era relied upon the shock value of their words and actions to provoke overreactions from authority figures, which in turn helped gain public sympathy for their causes and forced
"establishment" leaders to take action. Beyond the immediate effects of their agitation, the "wild women" of the Progressive Era also inspired later generations of female activists, becoming heroes and role models to second-wave feminists and leaving their mark on the long tradition of radical speech in America.

**Agitation as Rhetorical Strategy**

From Ancient Greece to the present day, rhetorical theorists have distrusted and disparaged radical or confrontational rhetoric. In his treatise *On Rhetoric*, for example, Aristotle emphasized the need for orators to appear likeable, to display goodwill towards the audience, and to follow certain rules of reasoned public discourse. To be persuasive, Aristotle suggested, speakers needed to adapt to their audiences and present themselves in ways that would allow them to appear "prudent and good." These early rules of rhetoric have been passed down through the centuries, and today public speaking textbooks still invoke Aristotle and teach students that their messages will be better received if they appear calm and "reasonable," so listeners will "think well" of them. In recent years, the civility of our public discourse has even become a campaign issue, with politicians of all stripes endorsing more respectful and substantive discourse—at least until they fall behind in their own political races. In theory, at least, civility, decorum, and rationality remain the hallmarks of responsible speech in our representative democracy. We value reasoned argument, and we distinguish between statespersons and demagogues largely on the basis of their commitment to those standards.
Why do we place such value on reason, civility, and decorum? As James Darsey has explained, the explanation may lie in the connections we perceive between the quality of our discourse and the health of society itself. We assume that a society that conducts its business with reason and decorum is itself stable and orderly. When the rules of civil speech break down, it appears that the foundations of society itself are crumbling. Disregard for civility in speech is assumed to signal "the disintegration of society itself," and defiance of the accepted rules of speech is often seen as "a portent of incipient chaos and the abandonment of the rule of order generally."21

Yet as Darsey has argued, this presumed relationship between rhetoric and society does not always hold. Societies marked by polite and controlled speech are not always more civil and orderly themselves, and militant or confrontational rhetoric can be a sign of vibrancy and civic renewal. The "rough-and-tumble" style of labor leader Eugene Debs, for example, resonated across class lines and performed a "leveling move" that helped to democratize public discourse and revitalize civic discussion during the Progressive Era.22 According to Darsey, the rhetoric of agitation can serve useful functions and should be considered an important part of our tradition of democratic deliberation.

In rhetorical studies, interest in the role of militant or even confrontational speech in democratic deliberation dates back to the 1960s, when students of social movements first questioned the assumption that radical or militant rhetoric was invariably destructive or anti-democratic. In 1967, for example, Franklyn S. Haiman posed the question, is the new "rhetoric of the streets" a threat to organized society?23 Haiman's inquiry sparked a long and lively scholarly debate as rhetorical scholars struggled to "draw the line"
between legitimate and illegitimate agitation, between radicalism that was coercive or
destructive and radicalism that renewed and refreshed democratic processes.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, as J. Michael Hogan and Dave Tell have
argued, rhetorical scholars often sympathized with radical activists and worked to revise
rhetorical theories that automatically condemned militant strategies as dangerous,
unethical, or ineffective.24 In 1968, for example, Parke G. Burgess argued that the
militancy of the Black Power movement's rhetoric did not simply promote blind rage, but
rather effectively forced America to confront the betrayal of its own democratic ideals
and reawaken its "moral self."25 That same year, Mary G. McEdwards labeled the
"agitative rhetoric" of Wendell Phillips and Malcolm X a "necessary drivewheel" for long
overdue social reforms.26 And in 1972, Theodore Otto Windt argued that although the
defiant actions and obscenity-filled language of Yippie protestors produced only negative
public reactions, the group's confrontational tactics ultimately enlivened public
discussion and encouraged the public to accept more conservative criticisms of the war.27

In the late 1970s, scholars went still further, arguing that confrontation was the
rhetorical essence of social movement discourse. In 1978, for example, Robert S.
Cathcart identified the "confrontational form" as the definitive feature of social
movements and deemed such confrontation as essential to distinguishing between
dissenters and supporters of the existing social order. Significant social change could
never come from polite rhetoric that abided by the rhetorical conventions of the people in
power, according to Cathcart. For protestors to effectively undermine the legitimacy of
the establishment, they had to symbolically separate themselves from prevailing social
values and call into question the very language the powers-that-be use to sustain their
dominance. Without confrontation, Cathcart concluded, it would be "impossible to know that a radical or true movement exists." A corrupt social order could be fundamentally altered only when protestors employed methods deemed uncivil by the establishment.28

Since these early theoretical reflections on the rhetoric of social movements, scholars have produced literally hundreds of case studies of particular protests, many focusing on militant or confrontational rhetoric.29 From the late 1980s onward, rhetorical scholars also have more fully elaborated on the theoretical character of radical rhetoric and its place in the American rhetorical tradition. The contributions of this work include better understandings of (1) the role of militant and confrontational discourse in democratic practice, (2) the relationship between confrontational rhetoric and identity, and (3) the significance of visual and "body rhetorics" in the rhetoric of social protest.30 Darsey, for example, has traced the American tradition of radical rhetoric back to the prophetic voices of the Old Testament and has argued that this "radical tradition" has served important functions in our deliberative democracy. According to Darsey, "radical engagement" historically has provoked more robust debate, as voices on the fringes of American politics have introduced compelling new visions of social change and helped to "(re)invent those principles that define us as a people." The "goal" of democratic deliberation should not be "a state of restfulness," Darsey concludes, but rather a state of "vigorous opposition" among competing groups.31

The link between rhetoric and collective identity has been a constant theme in the literature on social movements. In 1971, Richard Gregg first elaborated on that link by identifying the "ego function" of rhetoric as an alternative way of making sense of radical or confrontational protest strategies.32 Later rhetorical scholars have followed up on
Gregg's insight by examining the relationship between militant rhetoric and collective identity in a wide variety of social movements. Randall A. Lake, in his 1983 analysis of the rhetoric of the American Indian Movement (AIM), for example, showed how AIM's confrontational protests, while alienating white audiences, empowered Native Americans to view themselves as a collectivity capable of radically altering the status quo.\textsuperscript{33} Maurice Charland's 1987 study of the independence movement in Quebec likewise demonstrated how militant rhetoric served a "constitutive" function by (re)inventing a strong collective identity for the "peuple québécois."\textsuperscript{34} And in 2003, Phaedra C. Pezzullo showed how the Toxic Links Coalition, a group that aimed to raise awareness of the links between industrial pollution and cancer, used confrontational rhetoric not only to create a "potentially persuasive counterdiscourse" to cancer discourses in mainstream media, but also to foster an in-group identity among participants that would motivate them to sustain their efforts.\textsuperscript{35}

In addition to contributing to the literature on rhetoric and identity, Pezzullo's study illustrated the growing interest in visual rhetoric and rhetorics of the body in social movement studies. Using participant observation, Pezzullo considered the ways in which members of the Toxic Links Coalition used their own bodies to block streets, startle onlookers, and ultimately create "an affective and embodied theater for rhetorical engagement."\textsuperscript{36} Other rhetorical scholars also have studied the ways in which social movements have, in the words of Kevin DeLuca, "challenged and changed the meanings of the world not through good reasons but through vulnerable bodies, not through rational arguments but through bodies at risk."\textsuperscript{37} Recent work by Angela Ray, for example, has documented how disenfranchised women who attempted to vote during the
Reconstruction Era performed a confrontational "rhetorical ritual" that revealed "the profoundly gendered nature of cultural assumptions" and forced those in power to publicly justify their definition of "citizen."38 And Victoria Gallagher and Kenneth Zabacki's 2007 analysis of the Life magazine photographs of the 1965 Selma Marches revealed how images of protestors' bodies functioned to "evoke the common humanity of blacks and whites" and effectively revealed the "gap" between the concept of democracy and the practices that were "actually occurring in American streets."39

Thus, rhetorical scholars gradually have broadened their interest in the rhetoric of social movements to include not only radical speech but also visual rhetoric, "body rhetoric," and public spectacle.40 They also have come to appreciate the variety of functions that radical or even confrontational rhetoric might play in the processes of social protest and reform. Most now acknowledge that radical rhetoric has long been part of the American rhetorical tradition, and they have documented a wide variety of functions it has served. In dozens of case studies, rhetorical scholars have shown how militant or confrontational rhetoric has been used to attract attention to problems too long ignored, force neglected issues onto the public agenda, infuse a sense of urgency into stagnant debates, encourage acceptance of more moderate social reforms, and occasionally even force public officials to take action. In short, we now recognize that radical rhetoric is not necessarily subversive or destructive, but rather can revitalize democratic deliberations. It also can empower and give voice to marginalized groups by critiquing the dominant discourses that have excluded them and by providing alternative modes of expression.
Over the course of five decades of movement scholarship, rhetorical scholars have tried to draw the line between radical rhetorics that invigorate deliberation or give voice to the silenced and those that cross into the realm of coercion or violence. In his pioneering work on the "rhetoric of the streets," Haiman held that militant and confrontational rhetoric is not only likely but morally justifiable in a democratic society when the "channels of rational communication" have been closed to groups of people with legitimate grievances. At about the same time, James Andrews argued that militant or confrontational rhetoric may sometimes be justified but that it becomes "coercive" when it offers its audiences no choice between competing ideas or visions. According to Andrews, the rules of civil and respectful speech should never be "discarded for ends that are not obviously and unquestionably just." More recently, Patricia Roberts-Miller has revived the debate over whether we might define "rules" for "good public discourse" without inevitably condemning those who resort to militant or radical strategies. Like Haiman and Andrews, Roberts-Miller sympathized with those who felt compelled to employ uncivil, militant, or even confrontational rhetoric, but at the same time she sought some way to distinguish between legitimate social protest and radical rhetorics that should be condemned as "demagoguery."

Each of the women in this study used rhetorical strategies that many at the time viewed as inappropriate, coercive, or demagogic. By using "improper" language, engaging in violent action, staging shocking spectacles, or discussing taboo topics, Jones, Nation, Paul, and Goldman all defied the rhetorical conventions of their day and crossed the boundaries of what many considered acceptable public discourse. Yet rather than undermining democratic processes, the radical rhetoric of these "wild women" helped
challenge oppressive social norms and open political doors for women. Each activist recognized that the rules for proper or appropriate public speech denied her the ability to engage in political action and voice her concerns. Whether all of these women were justified in their behavior is debatable, but a case can be made that they possessed few other viable alternatives to gain access to the public sphere. With no way to both participate in democratic processes and uphold the rules of "good" public discourse, the "wild women" of the Progressive Era decided to break the rules. In so doing, they called into question the validity of rules for acceptable public speech that render some people unable to speak at all.

**Radical Rhetoric and Women in the Progressive Era**

Although research on the rhetoric of social movements has flourished since the late 1960s, we have comparatively few case studies of radical social movements in the U.S. prior to the 1960s. We have a few studies of the American Revolution and of radical abolitionists and women's rights activists in the nineteenth century. For the most part, however, the canon of American public address before the turbulent 1960s still features "great speakers" who conformed to classical or neo-classical standards of reasoned and decorous speech. The radical and even confrontational advocates who helped shape the American rhetorical tradition of the nineteenth and early twentieth century have been largely overlooked by students of American public address.

The Progressive Era is an especially promising period for the study of radical rhetoric in America. As an age when public deliberation flourished and unprecedented
numbers of Americans gained a public voice, the era generally holds great interest for rhetorical scholars. Yet the fact that it was such a rhetorically vibrant age raises an especially intriguing question: Why, at a time when the doors to political participation were open wider than ever before, did some speakers still resort to radical or even confrontational forms of speech? Why did some people still feel the need to reject the conventions of civil discourse, to stage physical confrontations and spectacles, or to even threaten others with violence?

One possible answer is that the very expansion of democratic deliberation during the Progressive Era made it more difficult than ever for leaders of social movements to gain attention, attract followers, and influence the powers-that-be. With so many voices competing to define the reform agenda of the era, some apparently turned to radical rhetoric to stand out from the crowd, or to attract more attention from political leaders and the press. In the case of the "wild women" of interest in this study, however, there appears to be more to the story. Still constrained by the rhetorical conventions of a patriarchal society, these women shared a determination to break down gender barriers and to rewrite the rules that largely confined women to the domestic sphere. While championing a variety of specific causes, all also aspired to reform society more generally by challenging traditional gender roles and giving women a greater voice in social, political, and even religious affairs. For them, radical rhetoric was necessary not simply to gain public attention; it was part of a broader effort to create a society that allowed women to speak out.

This project seeks to add to the scholarship on women's rhetoric, radical social movements, and the history of American public address by examining four of the most
famous "wild women" of the Progressive Era: Mother Jones, Carry A. Nation, Alice Paul, and Emma Goldman. In studying these women, I seek answers to the following questions: How did the Progressive Era's faith in public discourse play out in the rhetoric of these colorful characters? What sorts of "arguments" did they make and what kinds of ethical and emotional appeals did they use? How did they rhetorically constitute not only their own identities, but also the identities of their supporters and opponents? What issues or experiences inspired and shaped their political crusades, and how did the historical context shape their decisions about rhetorical strategies and tactics? What, in each case, were the reactions to these "wild women," and in the final analysis, what difference did their efforts make? In search of answers to these questions, this study analyzes both the words and the nonverbal or symbolic actions of these four women whose ideas and actions put them so clearly outside of the mainstream.

Each of the women investigated in this study advanced a different cause, but they all spoke on behalf of others who they believed had been victimized or oppressed. Each challenged the rhetorical and political conventions of a patriarchal society, and all were controversial, even vilified, for their efforts. In examining the rhetoric of these women, I also pursue a number of more specific questions about each case: What was each of these women trying to accomplish? Who was she trying to talk to? What about her rhetoric made her seem so radical? Did she engage in rhetoric that should be considered coercive or demagogic? Why did she use such tactics to advance her cause? How did her radicalism work in her particular situation to attract public attention, coalesce supporters and define their identity, or pressure the "establishment" to respond? Finally, how did the rhetoric of each of these women challenge traditional gender roles and advance women's
efforts to participate more fully in public life? In short, what difference did each woman make for her cause or for the cause of women in general?

With these questions in mind, this study begins with a chapter on Mother Jones, the fiery labor activist. Most active from 1904 to 1915, Jones spoke at union meetings, labor rallies, and town hall meetings urging workers to join unions and to resist--violently, if necessary--the oppressive actions of their employers. She also organized marches, strikes, and protests to bring attention to workers' causes. While many women of the time participated in labor organizing, Jones's rhetorical style clearly set her apart. Unlike the typical "lady" reformer, Jones peppered her speeches with crude, impertinent, and even abusive language. She yelled, she cursed, and she derided her listeners, clearly violating both the rules of decorous public speech and the conventional wisdom about how to persuade an audience. Nevertheless, thousands of workers revered her, rallying behind her leadership. Clearly, Jones was a polarizing force; while her supporters idolized her, critics dubbed her "the most dangerous woman in America." But whether they loved or hated her, few could deny that Jones was a masterful rabble-rouser, a labor leader who could, as her admirer Fred Mooney asserted, "permeate a group of strikers with more fight than could any living human being."

I argue that Jones employed a working-class style that helped her win not only acceptance but adoration from her audiences of tough, generally uneducated laboring men. Analyzing transcripts of speeches Jones delivered between 1901 and 1922, and focusing on a speech delivered to West Virginia miners in 1912, I demonstrate that there was more to Jones's rhetoric than her "motherly" persona. Jones's language also created identification between her and the miners in class-based terms, positioned her as a
prophet, and offered an optimistic image of the future. These techniques help to account for her success as an agitator. They helped Jones to attract supporters, enter the political arena, and inspire American laborers of the time.

In chapter three, I investigate the rhetorical strategies of Carry A. Nation, whose activism went beyond aggressive language to violent physical assaults against her "enemy": the bars and saloons that she claimed were undermining the moral foundations of America by serving alcoholic drinks. Between 1900 and 1911, Nation gained notoriety for a series of barroom "smashings," during which she used hatchets, canes, rocks, and even her bare hands to vandalize saloons. Traveling throughout the U.S., Nation was publicly chastised, physically attacked, and put in jail more than thirty times for her destructive acts. In spite of these setbacks, she continued her crusade, displaying a steadfast determination to spread her anti-liquor message. Although opponents labeled her insane, manly, or evil, Nation's crusade attracted much attention and earned her a reputation as one of the most notorious female activists of the time.

I argue that Nation's "smashings" functioned symbolically to attract more attention to the prohibitionist cause. They may have provoked criticism of Nation and the strategy itself, but that only created more opportunities for Nation not only to defend her own personal character and her violent methods of protest, but also to make the case against alcohol. In her 1901 autobiography, The Use and the Need of the Life of Carry A. Nation, the feisty anti-alcohol activist constructed a popular rhetorical apologia that answered public criticism of her actions and defended her "radical" behavior. Yet Nation's memoir was more than an apologia. Offering a new, more aggressive vision for the prohibitionist cause and sounding a call-to-arms for other mothers, The Use and the
Need of the Life of Carry A. Nation ultimately functioned as an autobiographical manifesto. More than a defense of her unconventional methods, Nation's memoir declared war against the liquor industry, demanding on behalf of all mothers that it stop victimizing women and their children. The book argued that women had a duty to move outside of their homes and fiercely advocate a political cause. Acting as a call-to-arms for women, Nation's autobiography ultimately functioned not as a promotion of prohibition or a defense of her tactics, but as an argument for the political empowerment of women.

Chapter four considers another woman who devised shocking, attention-getting strategies to put her cause in the public eye. From 1913 to 1920, suffrage activist Alice Paul transformed the battle to earn women the right to vote by endowing it with "an impatient, militant spirit." Rather than emphasizing compromise and trying to work within "the system," Paul engaged in confrontational behavior and aimed to create dramatic, unconventional spectacles. In 1913, for example, she organized a suffrage parade down Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C. that attracted some eight thousand marchers and dazzled onlookers with its colorful floats and banners, spirited music, elaborate costumes, and white horses. In 1917, Paul began organizing massive pickets outside the gates of the White House, and on Valentine's Day, 1916, she and her supporters mailed over one thousand valentines containing suffrage messages to senators and members of Congress. Through such strategies, Paul brought a sense of drama and spectacle to the suffrage movement and breathed new life into the effort to win the vote for women.
I argue that Paul's tactics created visual spectacles that both challenged traditional notions about how a "lady" should behave and exploited those same notions to build sympathy for the movement. Creating martyrs for the cause, Paul's 1913 suffrage parade down Pennsylvania Avenue and her 1917 picketing campaign at the White House gates challenged gender norms and thereby provoked overreactions, even violence, from the public and the police. Ironically, suffragists then exploited this overreaction by invoking traditional notions about how a "lady" ought to be treated. The power of Paul's activism was thus rooted in a rhetoric of martyrdom. By turning suffragists into sympathetic victims, her tactics challenged dominant beliefs, forged solidarity among supporters, communicated a sense of urgency, generated public sympathy for the cause, and ultimately forced the powers-that-be to grant women the right to vote.

The final case study focuses on anarchist agitator Emma Goldman. Between 1893 and 1919, Goldman toured the U.S. giving lectures promoting her philosophy of anarchism and her controversial ideas about such issues as atheism, birth control, capitalism, "free love," and homosexuality. In these talks, she unabashedly criticized and mocked social and political leaders and brazenly championed her rebellious beliefs. Her speeches drew tens of thousands each year, and her snappy and haughty language and allegedly treasonous and violent ideas landed her in jail and eventually led to her deportation in 1919. In the face of legal censure and often harsh public criticism, Goldman continued to give voice to her unpopular beliefs. Never willing to moderate her claims or to conform to acceptable rules of patriotic decorum, Goldman tested the boundaries of free speech in a manner that earned her a reputation as an American rebel.
I argue that even more than her anarchist views, Goldman's unconventional ideas about religion, morality, gender roles, and personal freedom shocked and offended people, yet they also proved prophetic. Challenging prevailing views of the distinction between "private" and "public" issues, Goldman injected new ideas into the public dialogue that, over time, would redefine the feminist cause. Like the feminist lyceum speakers of the late nineteenth century, Goldman discussed questions of personal morality, gender, and sexuality that people at the time viewed as taboo or unsuitable for public discussion. In so doing, she expanded the boundaries of acceptable public speech and fashioned a wide-ranging critique of the sexual politics of a patriarchal society. Her vision of complete liberation from conventional standards of sexual morality and traditional gender roles did not gain many adherents in her own day, but many of her ideas would one day come to define the ideology of mainstream feminism. In the 1960s and 1970s, Goldman's ideas not only became more accepted, but she became recognized as a prophet, leader, and martyr of the feminist cause.

Taken together, these case studies allow for reflection on the varieties of radicalism among women activists of the Progressive Era. By studying these figures' unconventional words and behaviors, students of rhetoric can learn more about the strategies and tactics of the rhetoric of agitation and how it historically has been employed to advance new ideas or promote the political interests of specific groups. Confrontation and militancy have long been staples of American public address. Although historians generally do not consider the Progressive Era a time of great turmoil and radical change, they do recognize it as a period of vibrant public discussion and significant social reform. By investigating how a handful of women challenged not only
prevailing institutions but also the gendered conventions of civil behavior and language itself, we can learn more about the ways agitation, confrontation, spectacle, and even violence have functioned to call attention to neglected problems, communicate urgency, shatter complacency, and revitalize democratic ideals.
Endnotes

1 In her autobiography, Jones claims to have been born in 1830. See Mary Harris Jones, *The Autobiography of Mother Jones*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr and Company, 1972), 11. However, biographer Dale Fetherling notes that "a UMW Journal profile of April 25, 1901, and a biographical article in the Wilkes-Barre Record for March 30, 1901 give her birth date as 1843." Irish geological records do not provide a conclusive date of her birth. See Dale Fetherling, *Mother Jones the Miners' Angel: A Portrait* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1974), 228n5.

2 "Mother Jones at 100 Years is Still Fiery; Loudly Denounces 'Capitalists' for Talkie," *New York Times*, May 2, 1930, 23.


6 Ibid., xiii.

7 Before the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920, which granted women the right to vote in federal elections, the view that politics was a masculine pursuit was rarely challenged. Thus, while acknowledging that women have yet to receive treatment equal to that of men in the political realm, this study follows the lead of rhetoric scholars such as Sidonie Smith, Julie Watson, and Martha Watson and focuses on the salience of traditional gender roles for women interested in politics before 1920. See Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson, *Before They Could Vote: American Women's Autobiographical Writings 1819-1919* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006); and Martha Watson, *Lives of Their Own: Rhetorical Dimensions in Autobiographies of Women Activists* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1989).


31 Darsey, The Prophetic Tradition, x, 5.


36 Pezzullo, "Resisting 'National Breast Cancer Awareness Month,'" 354-357.


46 Stephen E. Lucas and Martin J. Medhurst's compilation of the "100 most significant American political speeches of the 20th century," for example, contains over forty speeches by mainstream politicians and presidents who subscribe to the conventions of reason and civility. Even most of the protesters on the list such as Carrie Chapman Catt, Cesar Chavez, and Martin Luther King Jr. conform to accepted standards of civil discourse, and King's "I Have a Dream" speech ranks number one. See Stephen E. Lucas and Martin J. Medhurst, "Top 100 Speeches by Rank," American Rhetoric, http://www.americannrhetoric.com/top100speechesall.html.


Chapter 2

Mother Jones and "Working Class" Speech

It is the early 1900s. A tiny, gentle-looking, old woman rises to address a crowd of miners and industrial workers. She looks over the audience with a sweet, grandmotherly gaze, smoothes her modest floor-length dress and begins to speak. Calling her listeners "cowards" and urging them to fight back against the "blood-sucking pirates" who run the mines, her words were anything but matronly. Insulting, indecorous, and violent, Mary Harris ("Mother") Jones was one of the most unlikely yet successful labor agitators in U.S. history. As an elderly woman who never worked in the mines and had no immediate family who did, she clearly was an outsider to the cause. Nevertheless, she became both a beloved and feared champion of the American labor movement.

Even though Jones battled to improve the lives of working people for more than twenty-five years, she was much more than an advocate for the working-class. Above all, she was a rabble-rouser--a flamboyant, confrontational speaker who would say virtually anything to stir up a crowd. In response to a speaker who introduced her as "a great humanitarian," Jones retorted: "Get it straight, I'm not a humanitarian, I'm a hell-raiser." And Jones did indeed "raise hell." She inspired thousands of workers to stand up for their rights, organize against their employers, and fight to improve their working conditions. Workers adored her and called her "Jesus Christ come down on earth," while opponents feared her and called her "the most dangerous woman in America."
Eliciting both strong devotion and intense hatred, Jones was a polarizing force, yet she stood—and continues to stand—as an inspiration to the U.S. labor movement.

This chapter analyzes one of Jones's most famous speeches—an address she delivered at a labor rally on the steps of the West Virginia State Capitol on August 15, 1912. Some scholars attribute Jones's success as an agitator to the motherly persona she constructed in her speeches. An examination of the address, however, reveals that Jones's rhetoric was often anything but "motherly." Speaking in a crass, working-class style, Jones defied the polite, neo-classical rhetorical standards of her day. Engaging in name-calling and polarization, her rhetoric was not civil or decorous, but rather was feisty, offensive, and even threatening to many of her listeners. Mother Jones was an outsider in the communities where she spoke, but she effectively identified with her audiences of working-class men, and she positioned herself as a prophet of the working class with appeals to a higher power. Finally, she offered her audiences of miners an optimistic vision of the future by assuring them of their ultimate triumph. Like most great social movement leaders, she not only articulated the miners' grievances, but also inspired them to fight for a better future. In so doing, she challenged the gender norms of the time and showed how a woman could become an effective leader of working-class men.

**Mother Jones's Activism**

Mary Harris Jones's life was marked by extraordinary suffering. The daughter of poor Irish immigrants, she arrived in the United States in 1835. She was five years old at
the time. Her family became American citizens, but her father's job on a railroad crew forced them to move to Toronto, Ontario in 1838. There she attended public school and graduated from high school at the age of seventeen. After graduation, she taught in Canadian public schools, worked as a dressmaker in Chicago, and eventually resumed teaching in Memphis, Tennessee. While in Memphis, she met an iron molder named George E. Jones. They married in 1861, and within six years they had four healthy children. Then, in 1867, tragedy struck. Yellow fever swept through Memphis and killed her entire family. As she later recounted, "One by one, my four little children sickened and died. I washed their little bodies and got them ready for burial. My husband caught the fever and died. I sat alone through nights of grief. No one came to me." 

Alone, poor, jobless, childless, and widowed, Jones returned to Chicago to take up her old work as a dressmaker. While sewing for Chicago aristocrats, she developed a growing concern for the poor, along with deepening distain for their rich and powerful bosses. As she noted in her autobiography: "Often while sewing for the lords and barons who lived in magnificent houses on the Lake Shore Drive, I would look out of the plate glass windows and see the poor, shivering wretches, jobless and hungry, walking along the frozen lake front. The contrast of their condition with that of the tropical comfort of the people for whom I sewed was painful to me. My employers seemed neither to notice nor to care." A desire to fight social and economic injustice began to stir within her. Then, tragedy struck again. The Great Fire of 1871, which destroyed much of Chicago, left Jones with nothing except the clothes on her back. Her sewing business, her home, and all of her possessions were lost in the flames. Again finding herself alone, poor, and jobless, she took refuge in an old Catholic church. The Knights of Labor held meetings.
in a building nearby, and Jones, in search of social contact, began to attend the 
gatherings. In her autobiography, she recalled, "I became more and more engrossed in 
the labor struggle and I decided to take an active part in the efforts of the working people 
to better the conditions under which they worked and lived. I joined the Knights of 
Labor." With that, Jones's career as one of the nation's most influential labor 
movement activists took root.

Although well-educated for her time, Jones learned the grievances of industrial 
workers and the methods needed to rouse them firsthand. She threw herself entirely into 
the labor cause and traveled throughout the country, observing and talking to workers, 
organizing strikes and marches, and speaking out on behalf of laborers and unions. The 
origins of her moniker "Mother" are not known. A reference to "Mother Jones" 
apparently appeared on June 15, 1897, when the Chicago Evening Journal reported on an 
American Railway Union (ARU) convention that featured a speech by its president, 
Eugene Debs. "When [Debs] finished," the newspaper reported, "white-haired 'Mother' 
Jones, who occupied a prominent position proposed three cheers." One journalist 
asserted that the ARU gave Jones her nickname, but the title was not used universally 
until the turn of the century. In August 1897, for example, the National Labor Tribune 
simply called her "Mrs. Mary Jones of Chicago." Nevertheless, from the early 1900s 
forward, Mary Jones was known as "Mother Jones." By the start of the twentieth-
century, as biographer Elliott Gorn wrote, "everyone from miners to Presidents called her 
Mother." With Jones's new name came a surge of activism that took her across the 
country to Alabama, New York, Pennsylvania, Colorado, and West Virginia. With each 
journey, her reputation grew.
In 1903, Jones led a 300-person march comprised mostly of children from Kensington, Pennsylvania to Theodore Roosevelt's home at Oyster Bay, Long Island—a distance of 125 miles. Meant to draw attention to the plight of child laborers, this demonstration thrust Jones into the national spotlight. The United Mine Workers Journal stated, "The New York press, and indeed the press of the whole country, has given the child labor problem columns where they would not otherwise have devoted lines to this subject." No small part of this attention centered on Jones herself. Her actions and statements came under national scrutiny, and as she later recalled in her autobiography: "Reporters quoted my statement that Philadelphia mansions were built on the broken bones and quivering hearts of children. The Philadelphia papers and the New York papers got into a squabble with each other over the question. The Universities discussed it. Preachers began talking about it." Inspiring both hatred and admiration, Mother Jones had become a well-known figure.

In subsequent years, Jones's fame continued to grow. Between 1904 and 1911, she became an official speaker for the Socialist party, assisted in founding the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), and campaigned to free Mexican revolutionaries jailed in the United States. In 1911, she kicked off her most vigorous efforts on behalf of organized labor. Over the next four years, she took part in a series of strikes and demonstrations that placed her even more in the public eye. The attention she received stemmed in no small part from her fiery speaking ability. Only five feet tall and 100 pounds, Jones was far from a threatening physical presence. Dressing in conservative black dresses and sporting neatly styled white hair and glasses, she looked more like a
demure grandmother than a defiant agitator. When she spoke, however, her feisty spirit came out.

Figure 1: Jones poses for a portrait in 1902 wearing a modest black dress that was typical of her attire.16

Reports of Jones's speeches depict her speaking skills as nothing short of extraordinary. In 1914, writer Lawrence Lynch remarked, "Her eighty or more years have not dimmed her eye, weakened the strength of her personality or tempered the boldness of her language. She is the woman most loved by the miners and most feared by the operators." Lynch claimed that Jones "knows no fear" and "wields a greater power over the miners than does any other agitator."17 Indeed, miners reported that "she could talk blood out of a stone"18 or "permeate a group of strikers with more fight than could
any living human being." Jones's speeches surely do not convey their power. One observer who heard her voice reported that "the intensity of it became something you could almost feel physically." Another witness said that "no matter what impossible ideas she brought up, she made the miners think she and they could do anything." Jones was a masterful speaker. Yet she spoke without scripts or advanced preparation. She was an outsider to the cause, yet she appears to have possessed a greater ability to verbalize workers' grievances and inspire their action than any of the carefully practiced insiders who came before her. Given the turbulent situations in which Jones tended to speak, these remarkable rhetorical skills were all the more impressive.

West Virginia Mining and the Conflict of 1912

Although the Industrial Revolution began well before the end of the nineteenth-century, society was still adjusting to the transformations that it brought about in 1912. The shift from an agrarian to an industrial nation created a variety of social and economic changes. Behind all these changes was the rise of corporate capitalism. By the start of the twentieth-century, small companies increasingly were supplanted by big conglomerates. Virtually all of these businesses needed manpower and coal to fuel their operations. With monopolies driving out competition, scores of workers moved from rural areas into the cities to find work with these new industrial giants. Many others relocated to mining communities beyond the city limits. By 1900, more than half of the country (36 to 40 million men, women, and children) were employed in the industrial workforce. Less than ten percent of these workers were unionized. Factory workers
often toiled long hours in dangerous conditions and received little more than starvation wages. Those who stayed out of the cities and mined the coal faced even worse situations. Crippling work schedules, hazardous conditions, and substandard wages plagued the mineworkers. The American working-class was in decline. The rich were becoming more and more powerful, while the poor were becoming ever more vulnerable.

In the spring of 1912, Mother Jones was traveling throughout the West and the Pacific Northwest organizing railroad employee strikes. One day, she noticed a newspaper story stating that the West Virginia Paint Creek Coal Company had refused to renew a contract with their unionized miners. The miners had gone on strike, and the company had begun to evict mining families from their homes. Jones, who had helped the Paint Creek miners organize in 1904, took a personal interest in the case. As she later recalled, "I cancelled all my speaking dates in California, tied up all my possessions in a black shawl--I travel light--and went immediately to West Virginia." By the time she arrived, the situation had become a crisis.

The West Virginia mining business was booming in 1912. In 1888, the state's annual coal production was 6,000,000 tons; by 1912, that figure had risen to 70,000,000 tons. Demand was soaring, but competition from coal companies in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and especially within West Virginia itself were threatening profits. Mine operators saw union activity as a threat to their ability to compete and increase company revenues. In the case of Paint Creek, the operators' fears were well founded. The Paint Creek Coal Company shared the Kanawha River Valley of West Virginia with the Cabin Creek Coal Company. Only eight miles apart, the two mining operations were in direct competition. However, Cabin Creek miners were non-
unionized and worked for less pay than the unionized workers at Paint Creek. Wages at both companies were meager.\textsuperscript{27}

In 1912, West Virginia miners earned about thirty-eight cents per ton. This rate was roughly two-thirds the amount given to the lowest paid workers in other states. But with a steady flow of farmers, African Americans, and immigrants looking for work, mine operators were able to keep wages low.\textsuperscript{28} Thus, when the Paint Creek contract expired on April 1, 1912, workers demanded pay raises. Claiming that a wage increase would destroy the company's ability to compete with Cabin Creek, the operators refused to modify the old contract, precipitating the strike.\textsuperscript{29} In the wake of this conflict, the unorganized Cabin Creek miners also began making demands, including union recognition and acknowledgement of their rights of free speech and assembly.\textsuperscript{30} Denied these demands, Cabin Creek workers joined the Paint Creek strike. In an effort to regain control, the operators of the Paint Creek and Cabin Creek mines took action.

One of these actions was to evict miners and their families from the company houses. Armed with guns, company guards forcibly removed scores of mining families from their homes. With nowhere else to go, many workers moved to a tent colony set up by the United Mine Workers Union (UMWA) at nearby Holly Grove. Bound together by terrible conditions and shared feelings of animosity towards the operators, the workers developed a sense of solidarity and a bitter willingness to fight. By the end of May, Jones had arrived and violence erupted.

Miners and guards started to attack each other. Guards assaulted and shot miners, and the miners retaliated. For weeks, the Paint Creek and Cabin Creek strike zone grew more and more violent. The Kanawha Valley became a site of absolute carnage. With
more than fifty people killed or injured, the strike would eventually be remembered as "one of the longest and bloodiest labor conflicts in American history." By all accounts, Jones played no small part in the escalation of violence. Throughout the summer, she delivered speeches in open-air meetings that drew thousands of listeners. Transcripts of these messages suggest that she did much to encourage violence by the miners. Although she paid lip service to peaceful protest, her speeches easily might be read as powerful incitements to violence.

In a speech on August 1, 1912, for example, Mother Jones issued one of her typical challenges to the workers: "We are law-abiding citizens, we will destroy no property, we will take no life, but if a fellow comes to my home and outrages my wife, by the Eternal he will pay the penalty. I will send him to his God in the repair shop. (Loud Applause.) The man who doesn't do it hasn't got a drop of revolutionary blood in his veins." Later, she announced, "I am not going to say to you don't molest the operators. It is they who hire the dogs to shoot you. (Applause.) I am not asking you to do it, but if he is going to oppress you, deal with him." While somewhat ambiguous, Jones's words were clearly more of a battle cry than a plea for peace. In fact, on one occasion, she reportedly held up a mine guard's coat that was covered in blood and said, "This is the first time I ever saw a goddamn mine guard's coat decorated to suit me." She then tossed pieces of the coat into the crowd. One observer stated that she urged miners to take violent action and claimed that he heard her say to a group of reluctant men, "Get your guns, you cowardly sons of bitches, and get into the woods." Such reports capture the anger, vituperation, and provocative tone of Jones's speeches. They also demonstrate the volatile climate of the Kanawha Valley.
In the valley, emotions were running high and talk of more violence was common. Then, at the beginning of August, state militia arrived in the strike area to help restore peace by confiscating the weapons of both guards and miners. According to Jones, the militia sided with mine operators. "They suspended every civil right. They became despotic. They arrested scores of miners, tried them in military court, without jury, sentenced them to ten, fifteen years in the Moundsville prison," she recalled.37 Under these horrific conditions, Jones delivered one of her most famous speeches, an address to a large crowd of miners on the steps of the West Virginia State Capitol on August 15, 1912.

In preparation for her speech, Jones "called six trusty American men" and told them to travel up and down the creek and notify all miners that she wanted them to attend a meeting in Charleston, West Virginia at one o'clock on August 15. She prepared a list of demands for West Virginia Governor William E. Glasscock, which she intended to read to him in person. The men were told not to bring any weapons. On the day of the speech, Jones reported that "the camps turned out in full" and that she successfully led the men to the steps of the state capitol building.38 There she demanded that the governor come out to hear her. He refused, but she stayed on the steps and addressed the gathered miners.39

Without the governor present, her supposed target audience was absent. However, with a large crowd of miners in attendance, Jones still pretended to address the governor. In her hour-and-a half speech, Jones demanded that the governor remove the mine guards and warned him that if he did not defend the miners, they would fight for their rights themselves. Speaking to the miners, she vilified various politicians as well as
the mine owners and their guards. She also reminded the miners of all the ways their rights had been ignored or abused. Finally, she inspired them to fight on by assuring them of their ultimate victory. The speech illustrated Mother Jones's unique ethos as a grandmotherly outsider. At the same time, it displayed the confrontational, working-class style that helped make her both a polarizing figure and one of the most influential leaders in the history of the American labor movement.

**Jones's August 15 Speech**

In his classic essay, "Requirements, Problems, and Strategies: A Theory of Persuasion for Social Movements," Herbert Simons distinguished between moderate and militant rhetorical strategies in the leadership of social movements. "If moderates employ rhetoric as an alternative to force," Simon's wrote, "militants use rhetoric as an expression, an instrument, and an act of force." Harassing, disrupting, threatening, and cajoling, militant speech attracts attention and energizes followers who lack political power. Militant speech may be divisive, splitting the movement itself into factions with "seemingly antithetical strategies." Yet for those who embrace the militant strategy, that choice commits them to an all-out fight and signals to the world their determination to prevail.

Rhetorical scholars Robert Scott and Donald Smith have argued that militant strategies are "inherently symbolic." They may polarize audiences, but they also "carry a message" about the dedication of the activists and may help to spread a movement's ideas. Rhetorician Franklyn Haiman has noted that militant speech may sometimes be
seen as the only alternative for social protestors who have been excluded from the 
"channels of rational communication." It also may be an astute strategic choice for 
movement leaders more concerned with the visibility or collective self identity of a 
movement than with negotiating a compromise with outside forces.

    With her insults, ridicule, and even threats of violence, Mother Jones no doubt 
polarized listeners and escalated the labor conflict in West Virginia in 1912. Yet her 
confrontational language also helped attract attention to the miners' plight, and it forged a 
strong bond between herself and her audience of male, working-class miners. Along with 
her appeals to a higher power, Jones's identification with her listeners helped position her 
as a prophet of the working class, and her optimistic vision of the future inspired the 
minors to stand up for themselves. In the early twentieth century, it was still rare for a 
woman to deliver political speeches in public, much less to speak in such a 
confrontational style. To do so was to risk appearing unwomanly, perhaps even crazy. Yet Jones defied those conventions, rejecting the polite speech of the ruling class and 
speaking in a working-class style that was rambling, satirical, and indecorous. Instead of 
conforming to standards of "refinement, elevation, and taste," Mother Jones spoke in the 
"impertinent" style of a disaffected radical.

    Jones's Radical Style

    Jones's speech of August 15, 1912, was typical of her rally addresses. Displaying no clear organization, the speech was delivered in an extemporaneous style, 
with a number of digressions, asides, and personal anecdotes. Her words seemed to flow
off the top of her head, often in reaction to something shouted out by her audience. Recalling an earlier experience in Colorado, for example, she claimed that she never feared the Governor or his militia, even after she was "put out at twelve o'clock at night . . . by seven bayonets" and told "never to come back." Her audience applauded and cried: "Tell them again. Tell them about it." Jones did just that, recalling how she "went back next day" and taught the Governor that "it won't do to tamper with women of the right metal." At another point in the speech, she asked: "Do you find a minister preaching against the guards?" The audience replied, "They are traitors, moral cowards." Jones responded: "He will preach about Jesus, but not about the guards." Like a Southern Baptist preacher, Jones participated in a sort of call-and-response with her audience, in effect involving them in the construction of her speech. Unlike many of the more polished speakers of her day, Jones did not speak from a carefully prepared manuscript. Rather, she fed off the reactions of her listeners.

Far from refined or tasteful, Jones's address was filled with fighting words designed to insult, ridicule, and offend. Foregoing propriety, Jones consistently mocked political, corporate, and even religious leaders. Her speech abounded with name-calling; former president Grover Cleveland became "Old Grover," while Theodore Roosevelt became "Teddy, the monkey-chaser." In Jones's speech, the Governor of Colorado was reduced to "a corporation rat," the hired agents of the mine owners were "blood-hounds," and mine operators were "villains" and "merciless money pirates." She even ridiculed the local preachers: "Let me tell you, them fellows are owned body and soul by the ruling class, and they would rather take a year in hell with Elkins (a former West Virginia Senator who died in 1911) than ninety-nine in heaven." Jones spared no one from
insult, not even the miners themselves. Suggesting that those not committed to the cause were cowards, she shamed them into action: "You ought to be ashamed of yourselves, actually to the Lord you ought, just to see one old woman who is not afraid of all the blood-hounds."56

Rhetoric scholars Charles Stewart, Craig Smith, and Robert Denton have explained that radical movement leaders often use polarizing rhetoric, reducing complex realities into simple "us versus them" dichotomies and suggesting that "there is no middle ground, no neutrals, in the struggle between good and evil."57 This is precisely what Jones did with her ridicule and name-calling. Heaping abuse not only on the mine owners but also politicians and even local religious leaders who supported them, Jones forced all who heard her to choose up sides. In Jones's rhetoric, there was no such thing as neutrality in the conflict between the mine owners and the workers. One either supported the miners or became an enemy of the cause.

In short, Jones spoke in what James Darsey has described as the "rough-and-tumble" style of radical labor leaders like Eugene V. Debs. Like Debs, Jones's rhetorical style was distinguished by "unsparing directness," language "bordering on the prurient," and "unrelenting sarcasm."58 Also like Debs, she used the working-class slang of her audiences to rail against their oppressors, calling her opponents names and polarizing the world into "us" versus "them." Unlike Debs, however, Jones had never worked in the industry she sought to organize, and she had a very different persona--that of an elderly woman, even a grandmotherly figure. Jones clearly was an outsider to the miners' cause, yet that did not seem to hurt her credibility. Indeed, she effectively exploited that outsider status to her rhetorical advantage.
Jones's Outsider Advocacy

Jones's age, sex, and employment history all marked her as an outsider to the labor movement. Unions typically barred female membership, and many coal miners believed that a woman without mining experience possessed no real qualifications to speak for their cause. Jones was well aware of this skepticism. She mentioned it in her speeches ("Now some guy down the road will say, 'What does Mother Jones know about mining, anyway?'"), and she lamented it in her private correspondence. (In a letter to a friend she once wrote: "Those fellows don't want a woman in the field.") Nevertheless, her words seemed to move the miners more profoundly than those of any other speaker of the time. To some, this fact is confounding. As one of her biographers wondered: "What was this charm? Why should an aged but eloquent old woman have a hold on half a million miners? . . . How could she, often without benefit of credentials, move into myriad disputes and not be spurned by the clannish miners?"

Dale Fetherling has answered these questions in straightforward fashion, writing: "It was because she was a woman and because she was so intensely personal in a culture which cherished these qualities." As Fetherling explained, most miners came from matriarchal families. They typically were raised by strong women and were accustomed to taking orders from their mothers and their wives. They expected women to boss them around and chide them when they disobeyed. Such behavior was a sign of love. According to Fetherling, this helps to explain Jones's power as an orator. Like a controlling mother, Jones ordered the miners to behave in particular ways, and she derided them when they failed to live up to her expectations. References to the miners as

---

46
"cowards," "traitors," and not real men pervaded her speeches. Yet she always made clear that her anger grew out of love and a deep concern for her "family" of miners. Calling workers her "boys" and emphasizing that she would fight for them "until [their] chains are broken," Jones cast herself as the matriarch of the miners' "family." In a sense, she reflected her audience's image of the ideal mother.

Rhetoric scholar Mari Boor Tonn has elaborated on Fetherling's ideas. Analyzing Jones's speeches as examples of "militant motherhood," Tonn illuminated Jones's rhetorical commitment to both nurturance and strength. In her study of Jones, Tonn emphasized how Jones's words invoked the maternal values of physical safety, emotional and intellectual growth, and social responsibility. Yet at the same time, Jones challenged the miners to stand up for themselves. Tonn concluded that Jones nurtured miners while simultaneously urging them to "resist domination." Still, many of those miners did not approve of women participating in political causes. Thus, Jones had to do more than establish herself as the matriarch of the miners' "family." She also had to identify herself with the cause of the working class and show why she was uniquely qualified to lead their crusade.

**Working-Class Identity**

Jones did not present herself solely as the miners' "mother." She also identified with the miners themselves, assuming the role of their spokesperson. Shifting her speaking voice from the second or third person to the first, she frequently situated herself within the group of men: "We can't forget that we are men." "In the mines is where our
jobs are. *We are going to get more wages* [emphasis added]. Tonn argued that this use of the first-person plural "we" is characteristic of motherly talk. To encourage proper behavior, she wrote, mothers often address their children as "we" (e.g., "*We are going to eat all of our vegetables*"). In some instances, Jones did use the first person to promote desired behavior from her "boys." Yet more commonly she declared that "*We want the right to organize*" or "*We don't intend to surrender our liberty,*" positioning herself as the voice of the miners themselves.

Jones went to great length to demonstrate her credentials to speak for the miners. She emphasized that she had worked, suffered, eaten, and talked with the miners. She presented herself as one of the men—even to the point of distancing herself from other political crusades led by women. At one point in the speech, for example, she stated:

> I have worked, boys, I have worked with you for years. I have seen the suffering children, and in order to be convinced I went into the mines on the night shift and the day shift and helped the poor wretches to load coal at times. We lay down at noon and we took our lunches, and we talked our wrongs over, we gathered together at night and asked "How will we remedy things?" We organized secretly, and after a while held public meetings. We got our people together in those states. . . . And I am one of those, my friends, I don't care about your woman suffrage and the temperance brigade or any other of your class associations.

Here, Jones's "*we*" was not didactic. She used the language of togetherness to bracket her otherness; she was someone who actually had gone "into the mines on the night shift and the day shift" and loaded coal. In fact, she took on the very belief system
of her miner audience. In saying, "I don't care about your woman suffrage" [emphasis added], she stepped outside of her female identity and depicted women's issues as something that did not interest her. In so doing, she aligned herself with the views of her audience, many of whom opposed women's rights. Thus, Jones constructed herself as something more than a strong-willed mother. She also claimed to speak as a miner. As she put it: "I know what I am talking about. I am not talking haphazard, I have the goods."  

In this sense, "I have the goods" did not mean "I have motherly qualities." It meant, "I have the qualities of a miner." The distinction is important and evident in other aspects of her speech. In particular, Jones's strategy of identifying with her audience complemented her representation of the labor movement as a crusade sanctioned by God.

**Jones's Appeal to a Higher Power**

Jones's audiences were steeped in Christian religion. Miners who lived in mine-operated housing, as in Paint Creek and Cabin Creek, typically worshiped at Christian churches set up by the mine operators. Jones surely was aware of this fact, as her speeches frequently invoked the Christian God. Her address on August 12, 1915 was no exception.

Jones filled her speech with appeals to a higher power and suggested that she and the miners were on a holy crusade. This strategy helped her to move beyond her outsider status and establish her cause as unquestionably righteous. For example, near the start of the speech, she stated, "The labor movement was not originated by man. The labor movement, my friends, was a command from God Almighty." This claim granted her
the right to advocate for the miners' cause in two important ways. First, by stating that she and the miners were carrying out God's will, Jones unified herself and the men. She and the miners together had been chosen to do God's work. They all were joined together by the word of God, and Jones had been chosen to lead them. Second, describing the labor movement as a command from God precluded the argument that Jones was not qualified to lead. Under the authority of the Lord, Jones was not acting out of her own free will. She supported the labor movement because God had commanded her to do so. In this sense, Jones was a prophet of the Lord. Those who questioned her right to lead the crusade questioned the will of God.

Jones's prophetic voice represented an important tradition in American public address and the rhetoric of reform. Darsey has argued that social movement leaders from the American revolutionaries to Robert Welch have employed the prophetic voice to cast their actions as the will of God and to link their crusade to a higher power. This "messenger formula," in which a speaker credits God with his or her words and actions, elevates the ethos of both the speaker and message. As the voice of the Lord, the speaker demands respect and the message requires obedience.

Such prophetic appeals appeared throughout Jones's August 15 address. At one point, she told a story about an African American miner named Sy, who supposedly sensed that God had directed Jones's work in the labor movement:

There was a good old darkey there, and said, "Oh," said Sy, "I done talked to the Lord for a week, and the Lord jest come and whispered in my ear last night, and said, 'Sy, Sy, Sy, I have done had a talk with Mother about that graft. Come down tomorrow night.'" Sy said, "O, Lord Jesus, don't fail to let Mother come," and I
went. He said Jesus didn't lie. Jesus said, "Mother come here for sure, she take
care of that money, and wouldn't let them fellows get it for nothing." At once the
fellows said Amen.\textsuperscript{78}

In this story, God told Sy that He had spoken to Jones and had commanded her to
attend a union meeting and break up illegal money handling practices. The tale offered
testimony in support of Jones's claim that she was acting under the authority of God.
Couching the argument in the voice of another further served to lend it credibility. After
all, \textit{she} was not asserting that God had directed her actions; Sy was making the claim.
The narrative form also made the story memorable and increased its chance of being
passed on to individuals who were not in the audience.\textsuperscript{79} All who accepted the tale could
not easily question her right to lead the movement. Thus, Jones's appeals to a higher
power and use of the prophetic voice helped unify the miners behind her leadership. She
then cemented her leadership position by offering an optimistic and inspirational vision
of the future.

\textit{Jones's Optimistic Vision of the Future}

Building on her appeals to God, Jones presented a decidedly hopeful vision of the
future in her August 15 address. With the Lord on the miners' side, victory was assured.
To make this argument, Jones invoked the Old Testament story of the birth of Jesus:

\textit{This fight that you are in is the great industrial revolution that is permeating the
heart of men over the world. They see behind the clouds the Star that rose in
Bethlehem nineteen hundred years ago, that is bringing the message of a better}
and nobler civilization. We are facing the hour. We are in it, men, the new day, we are here facing that Star that will free men, and give to the nation a nobler, grander, higher, truer, purer, better, manhood. . . . I see that hour. I see the Star breaking your chains; your chains will be broken, men.80

In her prophetic voice, Jones explained that God had raised a star over Jesus to show the world where its savior lay. Now, she asserted, He has raised the same star above the miners. Like Jesus, they had been assigned the task of leading the world to "a better and nobler civilization." And like the Son of God, they could not fail.

This optimistic depiction of the future bolstered Jones's position within the movement. God, she suggested, had blessed her and the miners' efforts. He would guide them to victory, but He expected Jones and the men to work together as a unified group. She told her audience: "Now, my boys, you are mine, we have fought together, we have hungered together, we have marched together, but I can see victory in the heavens for you. I can see the hand above you guiding and inspiring you to move onward and upward. No white flag—we cannot raise it, we must not raise it. We must redeem the world."81 Jones and the miners had "fought," "hungered," and "marched" as one, and God would reward them for their collective efforts. The Lord was behind the struggle, and He supported them not as individuals, but as a group (e.g., "We must redeem the world"). This assertion bound Jones to the miners' cause and strengthened the sense that she was part of their group, not some outsider.

At one point in her speech of August 15, Jones compared the labor movement to the biblical story of the Israelites' flight from Egypt. She said that God had sent a prophet who "organized [the enslaved Israelites] into a union."82 Only after they organized into a
unified whole did the Lord come to the Israelites aid: "They got together and the prophet led them out of the land of bondage and robbery and plunder into the land of freedom."\textsuperscript{83} Jones stated that God has applied the same standards to the labor movement. After telling the story of the Israelites’ escape, she said, "And so it is. That can well be applied to the State of West Virginia."\textsuperscript{84} She then talked about how she organized the Paint Creek miners, thereby casting herself in the role of Moses and the miners in the role of the Israelites. God did not help the Israelites until they accepted the prophet who came to organize them. Thus, Jones suggested that God would not help the miners until they welcomed her—the prophet sent by God to lead them. Such claims not only established Jones’s right to lead the miners, but also presented an optimistic view of the future. The Lord would ensure that the miners would come out on top, at least so long as they welcomed Jones as their prophet and leader. In this sense, Jones’s depiction of the future, combined with her appeal to a higher power and her identification with the miners, all helped her to gain acceptance as a leader, despite her status as an outsider. And Jones’s leadership not only changed the nature of the labor movement in the early twentieth-century, but also left a lasting legacy of radical labor speech.

The Legacy of Mother Jones

After Jones’s speech, she and the miners returned to the strike zone and Governor Glasscock made no public response. As days passed, the situation steadily grew worse. By the end of August, property damage, assaults, and shootings were happening nearly every day.\textsuperscript{85} Miners recruited workers from outside of the Kanawha Valley to fight for
their cause, and mine owners brought in more than one hundred additional guards to battle against them. The strike area was becoming a war zone, and the governor could ignore the situation no longer.86

On September 2, Glasscock declared martial law. Roughly twelve hundred troops descended into the strike zone, began to confiscate weapons, and started to arrest, try, convict, and imprison striking miners. Over the next eleven months, martial law was lifted, then reestablished two more times. Jones spent nearly two months in military confinement, and the U.S. Senate began to investigate the West Virginia conflict. By the end of the ordeal, the UMWA had spent some $602,000 on the strike and approximately 50 people had been killed.87 In the end, however, the miners at Paint Creek and Cabin Creek did win an agreement that improved workers' conditions.

Strikes continued in West Virginia for years to come and laborers continued to suffer from low salaries and terrible working conditions. Yet with her speech on August 15 and other inspirational talks, Mother Jones inspired thousands of people to fight for their rights and convinced them that they had power to change their own situations. Shortly after her August 15 address, *Miners’ Magazine* remarked that "when the history of the labor movement is written and there is recorded the glad tidings of labor's emancipation, the name of 'Mother' Jones will shed a halo of luster upon every chapter."88 The magazine may have overstated her impact, but Mother Jones did change the course of the labor movement in the early twentieth century, particularly in the most depressed and dispirited coal mining regions of the nation. As Gorn explained, "Hundreds of thousands of American workers fought for and received better wages and
working conditions during her years of activism, and they embraced a renewed ideal of
democratic citizenship."89

Today, Mother Jones does not regularly appear in history textbooks or high
school curricula. Nevertheless, she remains an important figure in the history of
American public address. Jones motivated people to join together and battle for a cause
that was larger than themselves. She inspired them to risk their jobs, their possessions,
and their very lives to fight against their oppressors. Fetherling wrote that "Her forte was
knowing how to arouse men to a fighting pitch, how to stir them to a realization of their
plight and their power."90 Jones's "working-class eloquence" may not have been civil or
decorous by the standards of polite speech that prevailed at the time. But it did give hope
to thousands of working-class citizens that their voices would finally be heard. It also
helped to "break the stranglehold" of an "essentially republican" notion of eloquence and
"displace it with a rough-and-tumble, democratic, extemporaneous, middle-class public
speech."91

The issues of social and economic injustice that Mother Jones addressed remain
with us today. Most likely, there will always be people who lack the resources and power
necessary to change their oppressive conditions. Jones's story demonstrates how even an
outsider can become the voice of an oppressed group of people. At the same time, the
rhetoric of Mother Jones raises questions about when "radical," even violent speech,
might be necessary and justified.

Public speaking courses would never teach students to imitate Jones's rambling
and indecorous style. Instead, instructors would teach their pupils to organize speeches
carefully, make reasoned arguments, and show respect for their audience. Certainly
students would never be advised to advocate violence, call opponents names, or crudely mock their listeners. The fiery language of Jones's working-class style would be considered inappropriate in most formal speaking situations.

Yet there are times and situations that seem to invite radical speech. Rhetorical scholars have argued since at least the late 1960s that the "jolting, combative, and passionate" rhetoric of the agitator is sometimes necessary to call attention to social injustices or to motivate the oppressed. As Robert L. Scott and Donald K. Smith contended, "civility and decorum" can sometimes serve as "masks for the preservation of injustice," and under those circumstances the rules of polite or civil discourse may serve only to protect the status quo. Jones employed a radical rhetoric to attract attention to the miners' cause and to motivate them to stand up for their rights. Does that mean that her confrontational style of speech was justified and ethical? That question will continue to be a difficult one for students of rhetoric and social movements.

Rhetoric scholar Franklin S. Haiman has argued that there is an inevitable conflict between the rights of protestors and the rights and safety of other citizens. Generally, Haiman claimed, we should resist efforts to replace "reason and democratic decision-making" with confrontational rhetoric, or what Haiman called "the rhetoric of the streets." Yet rhetorical scholars remain reluctant to draw a clear line between persuasive and coercive rhetoric, nor is there agreement about when confrontational or even violent rhetoric might be justified. Mary "Mother" Jones represents yet another case study that forces scholars to reflect upon the rules of democratic deliberation and when, if ever, protestors might be justified in violating those rules. Clearly, Jones's agitative style proved effective in rallying workers and in making Jones herself a recognized (if
unlikely) leader of the American working class. Yet whether she was justified in urging her followers to violence remains an open question.

Jones's confrontational rhetoric may or may not have been justified, but it clearly was effective at getting attention and rallying workers to fight for their rights. More than that, her words showcased the persuasive appeal of women who behaved outside of traditional roles. Jones was an effective rabble-rouser precisely because she acted in ways that violated societal expectations for proper female behavior. She demonstrated that even the most grandmotherly-looking women could be socially conscious, politically savvy, a talented speaker, a skillful organizer, and a respected leader of the working class. This lesson was especially important for Jones's early twentieth-century listeners, who doubted women's abilities to understand political issues, speak in public, and organize workers. Although Jones never aligned herself with the women's movement, her unlikely success as a labor activist called into question existing beliefs about women and taught people that gender and physical appearance do not determine talents and abilities. Mother Jones, therefore, stands as not only an unlikely advocate for workers' rights, but also--unintentionally, perhaps--a promoter of the rights of women.
Endnotes

1 Mary Harris Jones, "Speech at a Public Meeting on the Steps of the Capitol Charleston, West Virginia," in The Speeches and Writings of Mother Jones, ed. Edward Steel (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1988), 102. Steel wrote that "all the speeches in this collection are or purport to be transcriptions taken by stenographers who were present on the occasions. . . . The coal operators of the Kanawha Valley hired a stenographer to take down Mother Jones's remarks at a series of public meetings in 1912, and the transcriptions were preserved both in manuscript and in public documents" (xiii).


3 See Gorn, Mother Jones, 3.

4 Ibid., 122.


6 See Mary Harris Jones, The Autobiography of Mother Jones, 2nd ed. (Chicago, IL: Charles H. Kerr and Company, 1972). Jones claims to have been born in 1830. However, biographer Dale Fetherling notes that "a UMW Journal profile of April 25, 1901, and a biographical article in the Wilkes-Barre Record for March 30, 1901 give her birth date as 1843." Irish geological records do not provide a conclusive date of her birth. See Fetherling, Mother Jones the Miners' Angel, 228.

7 Biographical information reported here is found consistently in various sources including Fetherling, Mother Jones the Miners' Angel; Gorn, Mother Jones; Jones, Autobiography; Priscilla Long, Mother Jones, Woman Organizer (Cambridge, MA: Red Sun, 1978); and Edward Steel, ed., The Correspondence of Mother Jones (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1985).

8 Jones, Autobiography, 12.

9 Ibid., 13.

10 Ibid., 14.

11 Quoted in Gorn, Mother Jones. For more on how Mary Jones became "Mother Jones," see Gorn, Mother Jones, 57-69.


18 UMW *Journal* September 26, 1912.


24 Information on the context of Jones's address was obtained from Fetherling, *Mother Jones the Miners' Angel*; Gorn, *Mother Jones*; Long, *Mother Jones, Woman Organizer*; and Jones, *Autobiography*.


26 See Fetherling, *Mother Jones the Miners' Angel*, 86.


32 See Gorn, *Mother Jones*; and Fetherling, *Mother Jones the Miners' Angel*.


34 Ibid., 60.


36 Fetherling, *Mother Jones the Miners' Angel*, 87.


38 Ibid., 169.

39 Accounts of Jones's August 15, 1912 speech do not mention her immediate audience. Other than the miners, reports do not acknowledge any other audience members. However, Jones's address indicates that other observers were in the crowd. At one point in the speech, she states, "I want the businessmen to listen" (Jones, "Speech at a Public Meeting," 87).


41 Ibid., 8, 11.


45 James Darsey, "Eugene Debs and American Class," in *Rhetoric and Reform in the Progressive Era*, vol. 6 of *A Rhetorical History of the United States: Significant Moments*
Jones typically delivered her rally speeches extemporaneously and filled them with the personal anecdotes, name calling, religious references, and optimism that appear in her August 15 address. For examples of Jones's speeches, see Steel, The Speeches and Writings of Mother Jones, 3-258.


48 Ibid., 96.

49 Ibid., 96.

50 Ibid., 93.

51 Ibid., 93.

52 Ibid., 93.

53 Ibid., 90, 92.

54 Ibid., 96-97.

55 Ibid., 93.

56 Ibid., 96.


58 Darsey, "Eugene Debs and American Class," 253-256.


63 Ibid., 167. For discussion of the mother-centeredness of miners' families, see pages 167-169.

64 See Steel, *Speeches*, 3-259.

65 Jones, "Speech at a Public Meeting on the Levee" in *Speeches*, ed. Steel, 60.


67 Since Richard Gregg's 1971 essay, "The Ego-Function of the Rhetoric of Protest," scholars of rhetoric have examined the ways in which speakers use identification to garner support from social movement followers. Gregg's essay argued that one of the primary purposes of social movement rhetoric is to create and maintain "egos" or shared identities among movement participants. The rhetoric of protest, Gregg explained, largely functions to allow movement leaders to establish their own identities and at the same time to shape the identities of their followers. Jones's use of the first-person plural served this purpose in that it allowed her to create an identity as one with the miners and to mold miners' identities into righteous victims who were assured success. See Richard Gregg, "The Ego-Function of the Rhetoric of Protest," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 4 (1971): 71-91.


69 Ibid., 98.


72 Ibid., 95.

73 Ibid., 96.

74 See Fetherling, *Mother Jones the Miners' Angel*, 169.

75 See Steel, *Speeches*, 3-259.

76 Jones, "Speech at a Public Meeting," 91.


Information about the events following Jones's speech was obtained from Fetherling, *Mother Jones the Miners' Angel*; Jones, *Autobiography*; Long, *Mother Jones, Woman Organizer*; and Gorn, *Mother Jones*.


Fetherling, *Mother Jones the Miners' Angel*, 211.

Darsey, "Eugene Debs and American Class," 257.


Chapter 3

Carry A. Nation and the Rhetorical Justification for Violence

In 1900, the Carey Hotel Bar was the "finest in Wichita and the finest in the state of Kansas."1 Unlike typical Kansas saloons, this bar was as much an art gallery as it was a drinking establishment. The Kansas Semi-Weekly Capital actually referred to it as a "resort."2 A life-sized portrait of "Cleopatra at the Bath" and décor from the 1893 Chicago World's Fair decorated the walls, and a famous Venetian mirror worth $1,500 covered nearly an entire side of the room. The establishment was by no means a museum. But adorned with expensive artwork and famous relics, the Carey Hotel Bar was a very impressive saloon.3

Among those impressed by the bar was a deeply religious, fifty-four-year-old woman from a small farm in Kentucky: Carrie Amelia Moore Gloyd Nation, who in 1903 legally changed her name to Carry A. Nation because she believed that the Lord had called her to "carry a nation" out of its sinful use of alcohol.4 On December 27, 1900, Nation traveled to Wichita and scouted fourteen different saloons. She planned to return to just one saloon the next day, and she wanted to make the right selection. Once Nation entered the Carey Hotel Bar, the decision was easy. "Being the finest," Nation explained in her autobiography, the Carey Hotel Bar was the obvious choice.5 The following morning, Nation broke into the saloon and used rocks and a cane to smash the Cleopatra painting, wreck the World’s Fair relics, shatter the Venetian mirror, break $25 worth of bottles, and damage as much of the bar as possible.6 This action, which landed her in the
Wichita jail by 8:30 a.m., was neither the first nor the last of the violent and shocking attacks on saloons that, over the next decade, would make Nation one of the most notorious prohibitionists in America.

From 1900 to 1911, Nation performed multiple barroom "smashings," edited two controversial newspapers, delivered dozens of startling anti-liquor addresses, and even performed in vaudeville and off-Broadway shows. Her efforts took her across the United States, where she was horsewhipped, beaten by prostitutes, and jailed more than thirty times. Then she went to Europe, where she was arrested, booed off stages, and pelted with rotten eggs. By her own account, she was a "radical" who intentionally broke laws and violated social conventions in her efforts to spread her prohibitionist message. Nation claimed that God commanded her to destroy saloons, but she also explained that she had "exhausted every ordinary means" to promote prohibition. Nation said that the cause was too urgent for women to "wait for the ballot." To her, violence was the most expedient way to "clean" out the "curse" of alcohol. But whatever the moral justification, her "smashings" clearly brought public awareness to her crusade, allowing her to spread her message and attract more support for the prohibitionist cause.

For decades, scholars regarded Nation as little more than an amusing sidelight to the history of the Progressive Era. No detailed account of Nation's life and activism existed until Fran Grace published a biography of Nation in 2001. Even in her own day many refused to take Nation seriously. The Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) rejected her as a member; feminists disassociated themselves from her cause; and even conservative religious groups denied her membership. Nation seemed too
ridiculous, too fanatical, or simply too crazy to be taken seriously. Thus, she remains something of a historical footnote, an amusing but supposedly insignificant figure.

In her day, however, Nation motivated thousands of people to rally behind the prohibitionist cause, and dozens of other activists participated in her "smashings" or copied her methods. In 1901, she even persuaded the city of Concord, Nebraska to elect a mayor and a city council pledged to securing Nation's services as "our sole adviser in our official duty"; no "ordinance or measure of importance relative to the town's government" was to be passed without first securing Nation's approval.\textsuperscript{12} Swinging hatchets, throwing rocks, and wielding canes, Nation brought national attention to the prohibitionist crusade and "smashed" her way to fame at a time when women were still largely excluded from the political realm. She also stood in stark contrast to the mostly middle-class, well-educated, and respectable "ladies" who typically were involved in the social reform movements of the time. Poor, barely educated, divorced, and bearing personal witness against the evils of alcohol, Nation clearly stood apart from her fellow temperance workers, and her crusade had both positive and negative impacts on the larger movement.

James Darsey has argued that the rhetoric of agitation does more than offend our standards of "civility, diplomacy, compromise, and negotiation." It signals "incipient chaos" in society itself, thus provoking criticism and backlash from the powers-that-be.\textsuperscript{13} Thus, it comes as no surprise that Nation's barroom "smashings" provoked negative responses. People expressed outrage at her confrontational behavior, declaring her a public menace and launching a variety of personal attacks. Nation's militant protest strategy thus demanded a rhetorical response--a defense not only of her cause but of the
strategy itself. In this chapter, I examine how Nation met this need for a rhetorical apologia in her 1901 autobiography, *The Use and the Need of the Life of Carry A. Nation*.

In her autobiography, Nation constructed a self-portrait that answered public criticism of her actions and explained her radical behavior. In exploring how Nation publicly justified her violent behavior, I first examine how her critics portrayed Nation and how that portrayal created the need for Nation to respond. I then offer an interpretation of Nation's autobiography that reveals how she tried to counter her negative public image and to defend her barroom "smashings" by portraying herself as a victim, a mother figure, and a tool of the Lord. In the final section of the chapter, I reflect upon the larger implications of Nation's writing. More than an apologia, Nation's memoir functioned as an "autobiographical manifesto," not only justifying her own actions but articulating a prohibitionist ideology that challenged the whole culture of "intoxicating liquors" and called upon women in particular to join in her militant crusade.14

**Portraits of Carry Nation**

After Nation "smashed" one popular Kansas saloon in 1901, the bar owner's wife, one Mrs. Stillings, punched her in the eye. The next day, the saloon owner hired a band of prostitutes to attack and horsewhip her.15 Three years later, a saloon keeper in Kentucky repeatedly beat Nation over the head with a chair after she had accused him of "drugging and robbing" his patrons.16 And in 1909, a crowd in a London theater hurled vegetables at her and nailed her in the forehead with a rotten egg after she stepped out on stage and introduced herself as a "lover of the home."17
Carry Nation's anti-liquor crusade clearly made many people furious, and this anger was often manifested in violence against Nation herself. Although Nation never directly targeted particular individuals in her attacks on bars and saloons, she vilified saloon keepers rhetorically, sent some illegal liquor sellers to jail, destroyed thousands of dollars of bar owners' property, and effectively shut down a number of saloons, depriving many bar keepers and their families of their livelihood.\(^{18}\) After a 1900 "smashing" in Kiowa, Kansas, for example, a newspaper reported that the property Nation had destroyed "in about ten minutes" would "run excess to $500"--a considerable amount in those days.\(^{19}\) The next day, the *Anaconda Standard* compared Nation's "smashings" to a mob lynching; indeed, Nation's attacks, according to the paper, were even "less justifiable." Lynchings, the paper noted, at least targeted criminals who performed "some specific crime of a horrible nature," while Nation's "smashings" ruined good, upstanding businessmen who had done nothing to warrant such abuse from "intemperate advocates."\(^{20}\)

Many people believed that Nation did much more harm than good, and this belief inspired a variety of public criticisms. At the onset of what Nation termed her "hatchetation" crusade, many journalists and commentators portrayed her unusual or "crazy" behavior as comical. One 1901 New York journalist depicted her "smashings" as a wacky Kansas fad, writing: "A new crusade is born down there every time the wind blows hard enough to make the wheels go around. Today it's hatchets; next week it may be lingerie or lobsters."\(^{21}\) In March of 1901, a Kansas newspaper reported that "knowing persons" outside of the state "do not take Nation seriously" because they considered Kansas "a hive of busy cranks that swarm often."\(^{22}\) One month later, the Entertainment
Committee of a country club in Pennsylvania staged a burlesque parody of Nation that portrayed her and her prohibitionist crusade as "laughable." As one newspaper reported, many people saw Nation as so amusing that "her very presence" seemed to inspire "horseplay."  

In 1902, students at Yale University involved Nation in an elaborate shenanigan. A group of students sent Nation a prank letter begging her to save them from their booze-filled university, which dared to serve "whiskey at every meal in tea cups and champagne sauce three times a day on ham." The letter bore the forged signatures of eight unknowing seniors, who the 1902 Yale Alumni Weekly described as "some of the best known members" of the class--men who loved to socialize and who "would have been surprised" to see their names associated with prohibition. In answer to the men's pleas, Nation visited Yale to question the university president about the cafeteria (which actually did not serve alcohol) and to deliver a speech. During her address, hundreds of students mocked her prohibition crusade by lighting cigarettes when she called smoking an "abomination" and by bursting into drinking songs as she began to rail against the evils of alcohol. Later, the jokesters took a prank photograph that depicted Nation at an alcohol-fueled party. Posing as college reporters, the men invited her into a small room, offered her a non-alcoholic drink, and crowded around her for a picture. When the light was turned off for the photograph to be taken, the students grabbed beer glasses and cigarettes, making Nation appear to be drinking with them. To these tricksters and others, Nation was little more than an amusing eccentric engaged in a ludicrous crusade.
To other observers, Nation's "crazy" behavior was a sign of a deranged mental condition. In 1901, for example, the mayor of Medicine Lodge, Kansas dubbed her "demented," while a Colonel Ben Deering from Nation's hometown claimed that she suffered from hereditary "mental hallucinations." A writer for the Biloxi Herald described her as a "crazy, fanatical woman," while a minister in Atlanta, Georgia dubbed her the "crazy woman of the West" and called for her "permanent incarceration." Many simply could not understand why such a "mad woman" was allowed to travel freely and engage in such actions. One commenter in the Grand Forks Herald asked, "Speaking of Mrs. Nation--are the insane asylums in Kansas all full?" In the nineteenth and early twentieth century, of course, men often suspected women who were outspoken, defiant, politically minded, or uninterested in marriage or motherhood as mentally disturbed or insane. Physicians at the time even "diagnosed" politically outspoken women as
suffering from various mental disorders. Charges that Nation was insane were thus hardly unusual.\textsuperscript{32}

Yet many observers went beyond accusations of insanity and attributed Nation's violent and nontraditional behavior to a dangerous personality disorder. Reporters and even physicians began to describe Nation as "unsexed" or "unwomanly," speculating that her "highest ambition" was to become a man. One commentator even called her a "freak," suggesting that she was perhaps part of a group of "female androids," who were not only "unsightly" but "subnormal beings."\textsuperscript{33} According to these accounts, Nation was not a "real" woman, but a sexually confused and perverted psychotic who posed a serious threat to society. In 1901, a Texas newspaper published a "Counsel to Girls" that used Nation as an example of what happened to women who transgressed "nature's laws" and abandoned their "duty" to remain within the domestic sphere. According to the article, Nation was an "Amazon" with "madness in her brain" and "warfare in her heart."\textsuperscript{34} That same year, an Alabama newspaper teasingly advised husbands of "crop-haired females" like Nation to "lock up all the trousers" in the house, lest their mannish wives steal their clothes.\textsuperscript{35} Some writers compared her temperance crusade to savage Indians "on the warpath," with one reporter describing her as "game as a Sioux Indian."\textsuperscript{36}

Newspaper reports commonly questioned Nation's sexuality by describing her physical appearance in masculine terms. When Nation first appeared in the Empire State, a \textit{New York Times} article described her as a "female Alexander" who was "an exhibition of what may be done by a woman unsexed largely by nature and still more by habit."\textsuperscript{37} The New York \textit{Saturday Globe} reported that Nation was "not a pretty woman," noting that her features did not "conform to any accepted style of beauty."\textsuperscript{38} Although Nation
dressed in long, conservative dresses and stood barely five feet tall, journalists repeatedly depicted her as both masculine and physically imposing. Letters sent directly to Nation also reflected these sorts of criticisms. In 1901, for example, one individual wrote Nation calling her "anything but a refined lady" and suggesting that she "put on pants." 39 That same year, another letter called Nation a giant "savage looking woman" who was "just as fearless as old Quantrill"—the ferocious general of the Kansas-Missouri border wars of the 1850s. 40

Nation's alleged manliness led some critics to diagnose her as sexually repressed or menopausal. Cartoonists represented Nation as a ridiculous-looking half male, half female character and an uncontrolled cyclone in a menopausal rage. 41

Figure 3: A cartoon in Life magazine portrays Nation with a man's head and woman's body. 42
These portraits of Nation persisted for decades. In 1929, a biographer concluded that Nation's "zealous" and "meddlesome" behavior was brought out by "the period of her menopause."³⁴ Thirty years later, writers continued to connect her behavior to "menopausal influences" and even used science to support their claims. In 1959, one reporter wrote that by 1900, "Carry Nation had reached her mid-forties [actually, her mid-fifties], a fact which medical authorities will agree will produce glandular difficulties of the menopause that allow suppressed forces to erupt violently."⁴⁴ Looking back on Nation's crusade, one writer in 1962 argued that "the drive behind her crusade" was
clearly "sexual," concluding that her "suppressed sexual desire was perverted into an itching curiosity about vice, an aggressive prurience which found its outlet in violence, exhibitionism, and self-imposed martyrdom."  

These later reflections point to the persistent influence of early doubts about Nation's sexuality. During Nation's crusade, many people imagined her as masculine or, at best, androgynous, and most attributed both her sexual confusion and her violent behavior to some type of menopausal disorder. This focus on the "sexual" impulse behind Nation's behavior obviously captured the popular imagination, remaining central to interpretations of Nation's crusade for decades to come. Yet they were not the only popular interpretations of Nation's behavior. Observers deployed a wide range of adjectives to describe her crusade, including "cruel," "malicious," and even "evil."  

Reflecting the religious language and imagery in many criticisms of Nation, the New York Times editorialized that her violence should be "condemned by God and by man," for Jesus had died on the cross rather than "raise His hand in anger." Another detractor encouraged her to change her name to "Helen D. Nation" to highlight the "hell and damnation" that her violent actions had let loose upon the country. Still another writer suggested that a "more appropriate" title for the WCTU would be the "Hoodlums' Christian Temperance Union," while an Alabama newspaper worried that Nation's "smashings" might set an "evil example" that would "debauch other women" in Kansas. Even some of Nation's colleagues in the WCTU criticized her for violating the principles of Christian "purity." For many detractors, Nation's behavior violated gendered norms dictated by God, inspiring one woman to call upon Nation to "see the error of [her] ways and go back to what God intended" her to be--"a decent woman, loving Him and doing
right in your own home."\textsuperscript{51} Another person wrote to Nation insisting that she was not only hurting the temperance cause, but also giving religion a bad name: "I cannot quote scripture; I seldom go to church, yet pardon me for saying I feel myself the better Christian. You have made sorrow and death enough and hurt the cause of Temperance and brought religion into ridicule."\textsuperscript{52}

The public depiction of Nation as insane, manly, or even evil demanded a response. With even the famous suffrage activist Susan B. Anthony declaring "the hatchet is the weapon of barbarism,"\textsuperscript{53} Nation clearly faced the need to justify her violent methods. In 1901, she began to respond to her critics publicly in her own newspaper, \textit{Smasher's Mail}. Every issue of the paper included a large section entitled "My Life," in which Nation explained the origins and motivations behind her prohibition crusade. These writings also offered justifications for her violent methods. In 1908, she merged many of these newspaper stories into a full-length autobiography, oddly entitled \textit{The Use and Need of the Life of Carry A. Nation}.\textsuperscript{54} Selling more than 60,000 copies, Nation's autobiography was a commercial success.\textsuperscript{55} Yet more than that, it offered a comprehensive response to critics who thought her crazy, unsexed, or evil. In this sense, Nation's memoir functioned as a rhetorical apologia that defended her violent behavior against public criticism. Yet Nation's text was more than simply an \textit{apologia}. Setting forth a broad agenda for transforming the prohibitionist cause into a militant crusade in defense of mothers and their children, \textit{The Use and Need of the Life of Carry A. Nation} functioned as an "autobiographical manifesto."
Prior to the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920, Americans defined political activity as a masculine pursuit and barred women from most forms of political participation. Lacking the right to vote, lobby, or run for political office, women had little opportunity to take part formally in the political process. Women who advocated political causes often received harsh public criticism for violating proper gender roles. These reformers were labeled unwomanly, dangerous, or even deranged. To remain respectable to the public and to attract supporters to their causes, politically active women thus had to find ways to "affirm their womanliness." Autobiographical literary forms often provided them with one means for doing so.

Faced with the need to justify their political activities, many nineteenth and early twentieth century female activists wrote autobiographies. Emma Goldman, Anna Howard Shaw, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Mary Church Terrell, and Frances Willard all wrote autobiographical accounts of their lives, and each of these women's narratives worked to counter negative public responses to her supposedly "unfeminine" behaviors. Rhetoric scholar Martha Watson has written that, for many of these activists, autobiographies functioned as "extensions" of their "public advocacy." Their life narratives "complemented and supplemented" their political efforts by emphasizing the "importance, value, and significance of their causes." In other words, these female autobiographies were almost always more than simple narratives of the writer's life. They were "creative rhetorical artifacts," in which authors constructed sympathetic self-portraits and advocated their particular social or political cause. The goal was not
necessarily to provide an accurate account of their lives, but rather to endow their life with political meaning by telling a story designed for particular rhetorical purposes.  

For Carry Nation, the autobiographical form provided her with a way "to justify her unconventional actions" and defend her image against public criticism. It was, in that sense, an apologia, much like other apologia written by female activists in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In her autobiography, Nation constructed three distinctively different self-portraits that served to rationalize, even justify her violent "smashings": Nation as victim, Nation as mother figure, and Nation as a tool of the Lord. Each of these personae challenged her negative public image in the popular media and invited readers to view both her and her crusade as not only justified but necessary and even righteous.

**Nation as Victim**

In responding to criticisms that she was insane or that her behavior was irrational, Nation used her autobiography to present herself as a victim whose life was destroyed by alcohol. Such a self-portrait encouraged readers to interpret her violent actions as not only justifiable but as legitimate acts of retribution. This victimage theme emerged most clearly in the tragic narrative of her first marriage. The story went as follows: In the fall of 1865, an out-of-work physician named Charles Gloyd arrived in Nation's hometown promising to establish a school for the local children. He discussed his plans with Nation's father, who was a well-known farmer with seven kids. Nation's father supported Gloyd's idea and invited him to board with the family. While Gloyd lived in the family
home and taught his first school session, he developed a romantic relationship with nineteen-year-old Carry.64 "When I learned that Dr. Gloyd loved me," she wrote, "I began to love him." In 1867, Gloyd and Nation married.

For Nation, the marriage was a "bitter disappointment."65 Gloyd was an alcoholic, unable to refrain from the bottle on even his wedding day. Describing the marriage ceremony, Nation wrote: "When Dr. Gloyd came up to marry me the 21st of November, 1867, I noticed with pain, that his countenance was not as bright, he was changed. The day was one of the gloomiest I ever saw, a mist fell, and not a ray of sunshine. I felt a foreboding on the day I had looked forward to, as being one of the happiest."66 Her feelings of misgiving proved well-founded. Just five days after the wedding, Gloyd drank himself into a stupor and fell asleep on the couple's honeymoon bed. Nation wrote that when she put her face close to his, "the fumes of liquor" hit her and she realized that alcohol was destroying her husband's life. "I was terror stricken," she explained, "and from that time on, I knew why he was so changed. Not one happy moment did I see! I cried most all the time." As weeks wore on, Nation's anguish grew. Gloyd often stayed out all night and went days without seeing his wife. Living under these circumstances, Nation claimed that her world had become "like a place of torture."67

Nation's agony soon worsened. A few weeks after the wedding, she became pregnant, and learning of Gloyd's alcoholism, her parents brought her back into their home. Separated from his wife, Gloyd's alcoholism grew even more serious. Meanwhile, Nation unhappily remained at her parents' house and gave birth to a daughter. Gloyd never got to see his child. He died on March 20, 1896, either from
delirium tremens—a severe form of alcohol withdrawal—or pneumonia exacerbated by heavy drinking. 68

At the age of twenty-two, Nation was thus a widow and a single mother. She blamed her situation on alcohol. "The drink habit destroys in men the appreciation of a home life," she wrote. It "separates man and wife" by calling men to spend more time in bars than in their houses. For Nation, this addictive behavior was what destroyed homes, estranged husbands and wives, and caused men to waste their lives in activities that produce "no good results." According to Nation, liquor wreaked "more depravity on children unborn" than any other social ailment. Thus, alcohol had become Nation's personal enemy, and she vowed an all-out war against it. Looking back on her miserable first marriage, Nation explained, "I now know, that the impulse was born in me then to combat to the death this inhumanity to man." 69 With this story, Nation's violent crusade against alcohol became not only understandable but an attempt to save other women and families from the same cruel fate.

Nation as Mother Figure

Even as she described in detail several of her most outrageous "smashings" (including her attack on the Carry Hotel Bar), Nation presented herself as just an ordinary mother doing her womanly duty of protecting her home and children. Invoking traditional social norms, Nation argued that women naturally felt a deep connection to the home and an intense desire to protect their families from corrupt or dangerous influences. To support this argument, she likened her own behavior to the behavior of female
animals in the wild. "The bear fights for her cubs, never running from them in danger," Nation pointed out. "She puts them behind her and plants herself between them and danger, and until she is wounded, or killed nothing can get her little ones while she lives." Nation described similar behavior in mother hens: "Let her see a dog or a hawk, and she shrieks and fights and flies with a vengeance at these foes." In nature, nothing could prevent females from protecting their children. Nation thus suggested that a woman defending her offspring was not just an important social responsibility but a natural instinct. Just as bears and hens would defend their offspring to the death, God's natural order dictated the same behavior in humans: "God gives these impulses with the pure motherhood."70

Nation's argument about womanly "impulses" countered public portrayals of her as masculine and justified her violation of traditional gender roles. Her "smashings" might have seemed "unwomanly" to some, but they arose out of the most basic, most natural impulses of motherhood, common to all species on earth. Elaborating on her animal metaphors, Nation wrote: "Oh! that mothers had the courage of even hens in the time of dangers to their offspring; but women hide away, and the dogs of vice and the hawks of saloons come to their very door and take their children from their arms to hell, because of cowardice."71 True motherhood demanded Nation's militant tactics. Viewed as acts of motherly protection, Nation's "smashings" became not only rational, but righteous and dictated by nature.

Nation answered criticisms that she destroyed other people's property with another analogy, this one introduced with a rhetorical question: "If a mother should see a gun pointed at her son would she break the law to snatch the gun and smash it?" The
answer, of course, was that she would be perfectly justified in snatching the gun and "smashing" it, even though the gun "was not hers" and "may have been worth a thousand dollars." So it was with the saloon, which was, she pointed out, "worse than the gun which could only destroy the body." The saloon destroyed not only the body but the mind and the soul. A mother would be remiss not to destroy such a threat to her children, even if it meant breaking the law. In short, she had a duty to "smash" saloons, and that duty was rooted in her obligations as a mother.

Further developing these ideas, Nation described the ideal woman: "She is to be the overseer in her house to see that her husband is instructed in good ways" and to ensure "that her son and daughter go in good company." Fulfilling this role sometimes required that women participate in political activity. Nation wrote that a home is not "the walls of a house," but "where our loved ones are." If a mother were to find her son in a saloon, her "place is there." The woman who protected her children no matter what the threat--in or outside the home--was not "unsexed" nor mannish; she was proving her love and dedication as a mother.

**Nation as a Tool of the Lord**

Finally, Nation disputed claims that she was evil or unholy by insisting that God had commanded her to campaign against liquor, even to destroy saloons. As she recounted her life story, she recalled how the Lord had communicated directly with her through visions and dreams. Early in the book, for example, she told a story about attending a Methodist conference and experiencing a holy vision. When the minister
began reading from the Bible, Nation claimed to have seen a halo form around his head, inspiring her to become "wrapt in ecstacy." Having thus received "the gift of the Holy Ghost," she became filled with the spirit of the Lord and a "divine love for the souls of man." Nation also claimed that God's love inspired her "hatchetation:" "I now see what the enlarging of my heart meant. I now know that God was putting the whole world in my heart" in preparation for her prohibitionist crusade. According to Nation, her rejection of traditional gender roles and even her violent actions were not only acceptable in the eyes of the Lord; they were dictated by God.75

By telling such stories, Nation invited readers to interpret her saloon "smashings" as something more than her personal choice; they were God's will. Every time she mentioned one of her barroom attacks, she also wrote of some vision, a dream, or a holy feeling that either directed her to perform the act in the first place or praised her after the fact. "I have had visions and dreams that I know were sent to me by my Heavenly Father to warn or comfort or instruct me," she wrote.76 She even described one day when she was exhausted from her efforts but discovered renewed inspiration in a message from God: "My Savior was my constant companion. I saw no form, heard no word. But His dear face was just behind and looking over my right shoulder. He was a conscious presence and the deep peace was beyond any experience I ever had. . . . While I saw no face, or form, I realized that His was a sweet, smiling, gratified expression, and it told me I was pleasing Him."77 Thus, Nation was not breaking God's laws by challenging authority, traditional gender roles, or the norms of civil behavior. To the contrary, she was "doing the will of Him whom I serve and whose I am."78
To reinforce the holiness of her methods, Nation compared her "smashings" to the biblical story of the prophet Moses. Using Moses to "spread a message" against the worship of false idols, God compelled him to take up "ax or hatchet" against the golden calf, a "malicious property" that led people astray. The golden calf did not belong to Moses, and it was "very valuable." Nevertheless, Moses "smashed it," just as Nation had smashed saloons. At one point in the autobiography, Nation argued that because saloons were so obviously the work of the Devil, any action destructive of saloons must obviously be the work of God. "The devil never destroys his own work," she noted, responding to suggestions that she somehow did the Devil's labor. "If the saloon is of the devil," she concluded, "the power that destroys it" must be "the opposite."79

Nation's autobiography thus crafted an elaborate apologia responding to the various criticisms raised against her prohibitionist crusade. Portraying her actions as personal vindication and an extension of her motherly duties, she insisted that she was neither crazy nor manly, and she even declared that she had a mandate from God for her violent attacks against saloons. Yet Nation did more than just answer her critics in her autobiography. She also made the case for continuing the fight and recruited new followers to the cause. In this sense, her autobiography was more than an apologia; it also was a call-to-action--an ideological manifesto. In the final section of this chapter, I examine how The Use and Need of the Life of Carry A. Nation not justified Nation's actions but provided a rationale and a blueprint for a more militant prohibitionist movement.
Nation's Memoir as Autobiographical Manifesto

*The Use and Need of the Life of Carry A. Nation* was more than a traditional autobiography or an *apologia* for Nation's violent methods. The memoir also articulated a more radical ideology for the prohibitionist movement and made the case that mothers in particular had a moral obligation to fight for the cause, even if that meant using violence. The book put forth a broad political agenda for a more militant prohibitionist movement and sounded a call-to-arms for women reformers. In doing so, Nation's autobiography exhibited many of the qualities of what Sidonie Smith has labeled the "autobiographical manifesto."80

Smith defines an autobiographical manifesto as "purposeful," "bold," and "contentious"—a rhetorical form that challenges traditional social norms, histories, and political practices.81 Generally, the autobiographical manifesto is "in service to an emancipatory politics," as Smith observes.82 Critiquing the status quo and presenting an alternative worldview, the typical autobiographical manifesto troubles the distinction between the public and the private spheres, positions the author as a member of a marginalized group, and speaks to the future by offering a vision of hope and liberation.83 Thus, Elizabeth Cady Stanton's autobiography, *Eighty Years and More*, did more than offer an account of the famous activist's life or justifications for her past actions. As Lisa Hogan has argued, it also "implied a far-reaching political agenda" and imagined "a new social order of complete gender equality."84 As an "ideological manifesto," Stanton's autobiography challenged the status quo and offered an "agenda" for revolutionary change.85
Nation was not the typical "revolutionary." Yet her indictment of the liquor industry and the culture of alcohol consumption likewise had far-reaching implications, and she called for nothing short of all-out war against her "enemy." According to Nation, the liquor industry was responsible for virtually every social problem imaginable, including crime and corruption, physical and mental illness, and domestic violence and divorce. When Nation visited jails and asked inmates why they were there, the answer was always the same: because of an alcohol problem. As the chief cause of criminal behavior and "trouble of all kinds," liquor was responsible for prostitution, assault, murder, and even treason. As Nation dramatically put it, alcohol was the "drink of sorrow and death."  

In Nation's view, alcohol was not only the cause of most social problems in America but also the most serious health threat. It rotted the brain and body, destroyed normal physical "functions," and left "the heart, liver, kidneys, and in fact, the whole body" in a "deranged condition." Doctors who prescribed alcohol for medicinal purposes were engaged in nothing less than "villainy," according to Nation, because their real goal was not to heal but to create patients in need of perpetual care. Citing a "scientific article," Nation argued that alcohol was not a medicine but "simply a poison," and she insisted that all of "the leading physicians of the world" agreed that it was a danger to both individuals and "the community." She even quoted from a speech by Senator J. H. Gallinger (who also happened to be a medical doctor) describing beer as a "deadly but insidious enemy" that dragged the user "to his grave when other men are in their prime of mental and bodily vigor."
For Nation, however, the most disturbing threat posed by liquor was its effects on people's morals and home life. She described alcohol as a "sin" promoted by the Devil to "enslave and kill the soul," and she found proof for that claim in the moral corruption and broken families she saw all about her. "There is nothing which is making so much enmity between the sexes as intoxicating drink," Nation wrote. She labeled alcohol "the cause" of divorce, "broken families," "broken hearted women" and "fatherless children." Pointing to her own experiences with an alcoholic husband, Nation argued that saloons were the direct cause of single motherhood, poverty, and "cold and hungry little children." To her, drinking alcohol meant the "ruin and death" not only of users' body and mind, but also of their sense of moral responsibility and their commitment to family.

Nation thus issued a sweeping indictment of a culture corrupted by "intoxicating drink," and she issued a call-to-arms to all "good" mothers to join in the cause. Indeed, she insisted that they had a moral obligation to do so: "We are all personally responsible for all wrong that we neglect to make right, when it is in our power to do it." Women who failed to participate in the effort became part of the problem. And those who did join in the effort had a duty to use any means necessary to destroy the enemy.

Toward the end of her memoir, Nation offered a more explicitly political rationale for a militant women's crusade against the liquor industry. Citing a statement by a courtroom judge, she explained that women who participated in her "smashings" were not to be viewed as "criminals." Since they were "denied the right to vote or hold office," they had no other recourse; their actions were thus "fully justified," both "morally and legally." Nation even argued that engaging in violent actions might help women to win
the right to vote. "Women will get the ballot in time, but it can be hastened only by women themselves," she wrote.\textsuperscript{98} Nation reasoned that the more militant women became now in the crusade for prohibition, the more likely they would be to win the right to affect change peacefully through the ballot. For Nation, however, the ultimate issue was not the legality of the "smashing" or even women's political rights, but the \textit{natural} right of women to protect their children. Addressing the "dear mothers" who read her book, she concluded: "Why work with might and main to raise children to have them murdered and mangled and sent to hell [?] Let us work might and main to close saloons."\textsuperscript{99} Urging mothers to "rush between" their children and the saloon, Nation exalted mothers to ":[r]ise in protest" against the evils of alcohol and "smash the viper" of the liquor industry "on the head."\textsuperscript{100}

Nation also rationalized the new, more militant approach she advocated with biblical passages. Quoting scripture to justify violence, she wrote that "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the \textit{violent} take it by force." Nation interpreted the Bible as not only justifying but \textit{demanding} radical opposition to social evil, reasoning that "where the evil is aggressive, we must be more so." Destroying saloons was thus not only morally justified; it was dictated by God.\textsuperscript{101}

Finally, Nation argued that only her confrontational, even violent methods could produce real results. With regard to the more moderate WCTU, she wrote: "I love their holy impulses, but I am heart-sick of their conventionality, their red tape. This organization could put out of existence every drinking hell in the United States if they would demand it and use the power they have even without the ballot."\textsuperscript{102} What "power" did they have? The power of confrontation, of course! Reflecting on how she had
attracted attention, created a national political debate over alcohol, and eventually "got hundreds of calls" to perform in theatrical shows, she continued: "That door [to political influence] was never was opened to anyone but me, . . . The hatchet opened it." Quoting from a letter she had received, she told the story of a woman who had experienced a "vision" after asking the Lord to show her "what you want me to do."

According to Nation, God responded by commanding the woman to act: "Spill it out!" Like most autobiographical manifestoes, Nation's memoir concluded with a hopeful vision, primarily in the form of poems and songs imagining her ultimate success. One poem, entitled "That Little Hatchet," closed with an upbeat refrain: "As men, once slaves, their freedom gained / By force, and power at length attained; / So, cultured brains and force combined, / Shall mark the sphere of womankind." Such sentiments undoubtedly did little to soften Nation's public image or answer criticisms of her physical violence. But they did capture the spirit of the bold new movement she envisioned--a movement of mothers aggressively confronting the liquor industry, challenging prevailing conventions of proper female behavior, and rejecting the timid and ineffectual methods of the mainstream prohibitionist movement itself.

**The Legacy of Carry Nation**

In 1901, during a joint session of the two houses of the Kansas state legislature, Carry Nation defended her "smashing" of saloons on the grounds that she had no peaceful political alternative: "A good solid vote is the best thing in the world with which to smash the saloons. But you wouldn't give me the vote, so I had to use a rock!" Lacking
access to political power, Nation used violence to gain publicity and to promote her cause. At one point in her autobiography, she conceded that her "smashings" were a strategic move to publicize her opposition to alcohol and to get people to pay more attention to the prohibitionist movement. She wrote: "The smashing . . . was to arouse the people. If some ordinary means had been used, people would have heard and forgotten, but the 'strange act' demanded an explanation and the people wanted that, and they never will stop talking about this until the question is settled."107

Without the sensationalism of her "hatchetations," Nation's crusade might not have attracted so much attention. No other prohibition advocate attracted more publicity, nor did other advocates provoke such spirited public debate. Yet not all of the attention that Nation garnered helped advance her cause. Her "smashings" demanded explanation and justification, as commentators across the nation speculated about her sanity, sexuality, and religiosity. People needed to make sense of her violent behavior. That curiosity created a ready audience for Nation's newspaper and for her autobiography.

More than simply a life story or even an apologia, Nation's memoir functioned as an autobiographical manifesto, identifying the liquor industry as a mortal threat to America's culture, health, and morality and calling upon all mothers to join in a new, more confrontational prohibitionist crusade. To many of her contemporaries, Nation may have seemed crazy, perverted, or even immoral. Her autobiography, however, reveals that she was a conscious rhetorical strategist who justified her "smashings" on a variety of moral and political grounds, including the fact that women were denied the right to vote. In her memoir, Nation articulated an ideology of militant opposition to alcohol that contributed to the political empowerment of women by encouraging them to step outside
of their homes and aggressively champion a political cause. She also may have hastened passage of the Eighteenth Amendment. In the final analysis, then, the "smashings" of Carry A. Nation not only closed a number of saloons across America; they also helped to open political doors to women and legitimize the mainstream prohibitionist campaign.
Endnotes

1 *Wichita Eagle*, December 27 and 28, 1900.


3 See "Raided a Joint, p. 1; "She Smashed All Fixtures and Ruined 'Cleopatra at the Bath.' Mrs. Carrie Nation of W.C.T.U. Proceeds to Wreck Kansas Saloons and Lands in Jail," *Age-Herald*, December 28, 1900, p. 1. Reports of the cost of the mirror and the "Cleopatra at the Bath" painting vary. For example, the *Idaho Daily Statesman* reported that the mirror was worth $100 (See "Woman Smashes Paintings in a Kansas Saloon," *Idaho Daily Statesman*, December 28, 1900, p.1), while the *Anaconda Standard* estimated its value to be $700. (See "Hurl a Stone at an Art Treasure. President of the W.C.T.U. Takes Exceptions to a Study in the Nude," *Anaconda Standard*, December 28, 1900, p. 1.) The *Dallas Morning News* listed the cost of the painting as $200 (See "Saloon Raided by a Woman," *Dallas Morning News*, December 28, 1900, p. 4).

4 See Fran Grace, *Carry A. Nation: Retelling the Life* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), 2. Modeling historical scholarship on Nation, this project refers to Nation as Carrie before her name change in 1903 and Carry after her name change. For an example, see Michael McGerr, *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America, 1870-1920* (New York: Free Press, 2003), 81-89.

5 Carry A. Nation, *The Use and the Need of the Life of Carry A. Nation* (Topeka, KS: F. M. Steves and Sons, 1904), 144.


7 Nation often referred to her attacks on saloons as "smashings." In her autobiography, she compared her "smashing" of saloons to biblical "smashings" of graven images, statues of idols, and money-changers' tables. The term "smashing" was popularized by the title of her 1901 newspaper, *Smasher's Mail*.

8 For the prostitution beating, see Nation, *The Use and the Need*, 160-162, for jail sentences, see Nation, *The Use and the Need*, 195, 243-244, 269-270, 284, 292-295, 322, and 351, and for the Europe egg throwing, see "Mrs. Nation's Compaign [sic]," *London Times*, January 26, 1909, p. 6.


10 Today, early biographies on Nation are generally viewed as unreliable because they are tainted by male biases. See Grace, *Carry A. Nation*, 1. Examples of such biographies include Herbert Asbury, *Carry Nation* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1929) and Robert

11 Some WCTU members rejected Nation's methods early on. In 1900, the *Kansas Semi-Weekly Capital* reported that WCTU members "do not approve" of Nation's "smashings" and "believe that there are other ways to shut up the saloons." (See "Raided a Joint," p. 1). Other WCTU members, however, posted bail for Nation after her 1900 Wichita "smashing" (See "Out on Bonds Mrs. Nation Declares She Will Continue Smashing Saloons," *Idaho Statesman*, December 30, 1900.) In 1901, many religious leaders began to shun Nation as well, calling her "crazy" and stating "the quicker we get rid of her and her kind, the better . . . ." (See "Preacher's View of Mrs. Carrie Nation, the Saloon Smasher," *Biloxi Daily Herald*, February 13, 1901, p. 1.) Grace wrote that the WCTU rejected Nation because her actions were so radical, that feminists scorned her "because she was intensely religious and lambasted liquor," and that the religious right censured her because she radically challenged the traditional spheres of men and women. See Grace, *Carry A. Nation*, 1.


15 Ibid., 160-162.

16 Ibid., 285-286.

17 "Mrs. Nation's Campaign [sic]." p. 6.

18 In 1900, Nation's "smashings" effectively closed all the saloons in Barber County, Kansas. By 1900, women and men across the country and even in Paris staged copycat "smashings" in their own towns and cities. For documented examples, see Grace, *Carry A. Nation*, 147-148, 159-160.

19 "All Over the State. Interesting Notes Culled from the Kansas Press," *Kansas Semi-Weekly Capital*, June 15, 1900, p. 3.

20 "Clara [sic] the Saloon Smasher," *Anaconda Standard*, December 29, 1900, p. 6. Likening Nation to a lynch was not uncommon. In 1901, a Reverand Morgan from Cleveland, Ohio wrote that Nation "must be placed in the same class with white men who took part in those other outbreaks of lawlessness that resulted in the lynching of colored
Both types of violence, Morgan maintained, "resulted from mobs taking the law into their own hands." Reverand Morgan, Smasher's Mail, April 20, 1901, p. 7.

21 Utica Globe, March 16, 1901.


27 Today, the photograph is displayed at Mory's Club in New Haven, Connecticut. See Grace, Carry A. Nation, 233.

28 Photo taken from Grace, Carry A. Nation, 233.


"Enter Mrs. Nation," p. 6.

A. M. Dickson, "Mrs. Carrie Nation at Atlantic City," *Saturday Globe*, 2 April 1901.

*Smasher's Mail*, April 20, 1901, p. 6.


The Cyclone image was printed in many newspapers. It is reprinted in Grace, *Carry A. Nation*, 7. One famous androgynous image appears in *Life*, 14 March 1901. It is reprinted in Grace, *Carry A. Nation*, 224.

Image taken from Grace, *Carry A. Nation*, 224.

Asbury, *Carry Nation*, 55.


Ibid., 18.

Grace, *Carry A. Nation*, 223, 284.

50 In 1901, the WCTU of Cambridgeport, Massachusetts chastised Nation for violating the principles of Christian "purity" in *Central Farmer and Non-Conformist* (Omaha, Nebraska), February 7, 1901. See Grace, *Carry A. Nation*, 222.


54 Nation first published her autobiography in 1904. She revised the book in 1908. This later version was the most widely circulated account and the focus of this essay.

55 Grace, *Carry A. Nation*, 239.

56 Today, traditional assumptions about proper female behavior continue to affect women's ability to participate in political activism, and many people still view political activity as a masculine pursuit. However, before the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920, which granted women the right to vote in federal elections, this traditional viewpoint was particularly salient. Thus, while acknowledging that women have yet to receive treatment equal to that of men in the political realm, this essay follows the lead of scholars Sidonie Smith, Julie Watson, and Martha Watson and focuses on the importance of autobiographical writing to women before 1920. See Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson, *Before They Could Vote: American Women's Autobiographical Writings 1819-1919* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006); and Martha Watson, *Lives of Their Own: Rhetorical Dimensions in Autobiographies of Women Activists* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1989).

57 Watson, *Lives of Their Own*, 1-3.

58 Since the 1600s, American women have published autobiographical accounts of their lives. Assuming a variety of forms, including diaries, poetry, adventure stories, captivity narratives, and spiritual testimonies, women's autobiographical writings have brought their experiences and ideas into public view. Women's authorship of such texts was publicly acceptable because cultural norms typically marked subjective writing and self confession as feminine. See Smith and Watson, *Before They Could Vote*, 4-5. See also Watson, *Lives of Their Own*, 21-30.

59 For analysis of each of these autobiographies, see Watson, *Lives of Their Own*. Watson argues that "each of the autobiographers in her own way shows what it means to engage in a new mode of womanhood that redefines both the public and private in light of each other," vii. For a discussion of the history of autobiography, see Roy Pascal, *Design and Truth in Autobiography* (New York: Garland, 1985), 21-60.
60 Watson, *Lives of Their Own*, 3.

61 Ibid., 30.

62 Grace, *Carry A. Nation*, 238-239.

63 At this time, Nation's last name was Moore--her maiden name. For clarity, I use the name Nation to refer to her and her father.

64 For clarity, I spell Nation's first name Carry. At this time, her name was written Carrie.


66 Ibid., 62.

67 Ibid., 65-66.


70 Ibid., 201-202.

71 Ibid., 202.

72 Ibid., 228.

73 Ibid., 203.

74 Ibid., 209, 223-225.

75 Ibid., 83-84, 128-129.

76 Ibid., 86.

77 Ibid., 115.

78 Ibid., 186.

79 Ibid., 228, 230-231.

81 Ibid., 157.

82 Ibid., 157.

83 Ibid., 159-163.


85 Ibid., 7, 19-20.

86 Nation, *The Use and the Need*, 126.

87 Ibid., 127, 151. Nation linked alcohol to treason by explaining that "Saloons are unconstitutional" and destructive of civil liberties. See Nation, *The Use and the Need*, 182.

88 Ibid., 131-132.

89 Ibid., 311.

90 Ibid., 302.

91 Ibid., 317.

92 Ibid., 184.

93 Ibid., 190.

94 Ibid., 127.

95 Ibid., 151.

96 Ibid., 264.

97 Ibid., 186.

98 Ibid., 209.

99 Ibid., 203.
100 Ibid., 209, 253, 332.

101 Ibid., 226.

102 Ibid., 232.

103 Ibid., 270.

104 Ibid., 289-291.

105 Ibid., 393.

106 Chicago Tribune, February 8, 1901; The World (New York), February 9, 1901.

107 Nation, The Use and the Need, 229.
Chapter 4

Alice Paul and the Rhetoric of Spectacle and Martyrdom

In late October, 1917, Mrs. Tracie Paul, a housewife from the Quaker community of Moorestown, New Jersey, received a letter from her eldest child. Dated October 22, the correspondence read: "Dear Mother: I have been sentenced today to seven months imprisonment. . . . Please do not worry. It will merely be a delightful rest. With love, Alice."¹

That day, thirty-five-year-old suffrage activist Alice Paul began her seven-month prison sentence for illegal picketing at the White House in Washington, D.C. Her time in prison, however, was anything but restful. While behind bars, Paul composed written statements demanding that she and her fellow inmates be treated as political prisoners and initiated raucous inmate revolts against prison conditions. She also began a twenty-two-day hunger strike that resulted in her transfer to the prison "psychopathic" ward. Paul suffered from sleep deprivation brought on by ruthless prison workers shining a bright light on her face every hour of every night, and she endured three weeks of painful forced feedings three times a day. Through it all, she remained optimistic. Writing to a friend at the start of her hunger strike, she reasoned that her horrible treatment "happened rather well" because it provided great "ammunition against the Administration, and the more harsh and repressive they seem the better." For Paul, enduring painful punishments was part of a strategy for winning public sympathy. When it came to advancing the cause, as she explained to a friend, suffragists could not "afford to miss a trick."²
During her approximately ten years as a suffrage activist, Paul performed many "tricks." In 1913, for example, she organized a suffrage parade down Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C. that attracted thousands of marchers and dazzled onlookers with its colorful floats and banners, spirited music, elaborate costumes, and white horses. During President Woodrow Wilson's 1916 State of the Union Address, Paul's followers (presumably acting under her leadership or at least with her assent) dropped a bright yellow banner from the front row of the balcony that read: "Mr. President, What Will You Do For Woman Suffrage?" And in 1917, she initiated an eighteen-month picketing campaign outside of the White House that forced a standoff with the Wilson administration and ultimately landed her behind bars. Constantly developing new ways to attract attention, rally her supporters, and startle the public, Paul became the most notorious "trickster" of the suffrage crusade.

By 1917, Paul's unconventional tactics had become famous, and many people credited them with pushing the campaign on to victory. On October 25, 1917, the New York Call stated that Paul had "changed the federal suffrage amendment from an academic phrase of hope to an immediate issue in politics." Referring to U.S. intervention in the Mexican Revolution, a January 18, 1917 Boston Journal writer remarked that "If Mr. Wilson had picketed Mexico as well as the suffragists picket the White House, all would be well." A November 14, 1917 editorial in the New York American called Paul and her followers "martyrs" and maintained that the passage of a suffrage amendment would be "the final crown of their magnificent struggle." And on May 17, 1918, an editorial in the New York Telegram asserted that the "militant wing of the Suffragists has performed a big service. But for its enterprise and daring suffrage
would not have had nearly so wide a publicity during the past few years or made nearly so urgent an appeal."³

Historians and rhetorical scholars have found much to praise in Paul, despite her use of what many at the time considered "extreme tactics."⁴ Essayist and literary critic Vivian Gornick, for example, has called Paul "the embodiment of the revolutionary's narrow intensity and burning energy for 'the cause.'" Rhetorician Jennifer L. Borda has described Paul's efforts as an "infusion of spectacle, drama, youth, and energy" and concluded that her tactics "elevated woman suffrage to prominence among the many reform measures" of the time. Historian Christine A. Lunardini has described Paul as "the single truly charismatic figure in the twentieth-century suffrage movement," a figure whose militant leadership served as "the dynamic that propelled American suffragism to its successful end." Historian Aileen Kraditor labeled Paul "the grand strategist of the semimilitant suffragists in the United States" and concluded that Paul's methods "inspired deep devotion and a willingness to work intensely for the cause." Most recently, rhetorician Katherine H. Adams and historian Michael L. Keene have likened Paul to Gandhi and Martin Luther King, crediting her with building "the first successful nonviolent campaign for social change in the United States."⁵

Historians have attributed the success of Paul's activism to its shock value and its emotional appeal, writing that her protests and jail time drew publicity that "stirred vigorous new interest" in the campaign and "created public sympathy" for the cause.⁶ Others have argued that militant protest tactics, such as parades and pickets, helped transform suffrage from a state into a federal issue and infused members with feelings of "pride, solidarity, and power."⁷ Rhetorical scholars have built upon these historical
studies by emphasizing how the spectacle of the suffrage parades worked as a pro-suffrage "argument," creating an image of women unified both by their gender and their political cause. According to Jennifer Borda, for example, parades "clearly signified the women's assertion of political agency" and showcased their desire and ability to actively engage in political action. Katherine E. Kelly comes to similar conclusions in her study of how British suffrage demonstrations functioned as "spectacle" in newspaper stories and photographs. "Suffrage spectacle," Kelly wrote, may not have directly caused political change, but it invited such change "by integrating women into the physical landscape and media representations of the city." For Kelly, the press coverage generated by militant suffragists' actions allowed them to enter "into the visual fabric of the metropolis"--a ploy which worked to legitimize women as a natural part of the London political scene.

This chapter builds upon this burgeoning literature by illuminating how Paul's strategy of militant confrontation and spectacle functioned not only to forge solidarity among suffragists across ethnic and class lines, but also to provoke overreactions by the police and other government officials, thereby inviting public sympathy for the movement. I first discuss Paul's rise to leadership within the suffrage movement. Next, I examine her 1913 suffrage parade and consider how the event functioned as a visual spectacle that provoked overreaction from both bystanders and the police, generating public sympathy for the cause. Finally, I consider Paul's 1917 picketing campaign and explore the ways in which the tactic attracted attention, inspired followers, and won more public support for suffrage by creating martyrs for the cause. By both challenging traditional notions about how a "lady" should behave and exploiting those same
traditional notions, Paul was able to create visual spectacle and portray suffragists as martyrs. This use of visual rhetoric and the rhetoric of martyrdom made Paul's approach effective at attracting attention and winning support for woman's suffrage.

Alice Paul and the Rise of the Militant Suffrage Movement

Alice Paul was born on January 11, 1885 in Moorestown, New Jersey, just nine miles east of Philadelphia. Her father, William, worked as the president of a bank that he helped to found, while her mother, Tracie, took care of the house and cared for Paul and her three younger siblings. The family was well off and well educated. In addition to his banking venture, William owned a working farm, served on the board of directors of several businesses, and invested in multiple real estate projects. Paul’s maternal grandfather was one of the founders of Swarthmore College, which her mother attended before she married. Education and leadership were a large part of the family lineage, and this tradition extended to both men and women. Paul's parents were dedicated to traditional Quaker beliefs, which included a "principle of equality of the sexes," an affirmation that men and women are equal in the eyes of God. Quaker meetings acknowledged women's leadership abilities and encouraged them to participate in social reform. Doing her part, Tracie attended local suffrage meetings and often brought Alice along.

Given this background, Paul seemed destined for academic success. Yet her educational path and her career ambitions took a number of turns. After attending a Quaker high school in her hometown, Paul enrolled at Swarthmore. She majored in
biology because, as she recollected in 1973, it was a subject that she "knew nothing about." Paul, however, felt no real commitment to science. After four years of studying biology, she changed course, and during her senior year she enrolled in classes in politics and economics. She performed so well and enjoyed them so much that, immediately upon graduation in 1905, she abandoned her chosen field and accepted a nomination for a year-long College Settlement Association fellowship at the New York School of Philanthropy. After completing her fellowship year, Paul decided to study sociology. She entered a master's program at the University of Pennsylvania, conducted research on the legal status of women, earned her M.A. in 1907, and began work on a doctoral degree. That year, another fellowship offer sent her studies in yet another direction.

While in the doctoral program at Penn, Paul received an invitation to the Woodbrooke Settlement for Social Work, a Quaker training academy in England. She accepted the offer and supplemented her study with classes at the University of Birmingham and the University of London. Her commitment to social work, however, proved short lived, for soon after her arrival in the fall of 1907, she lost interest in the field. When interviewed about her experience at Woodbrooke, she said, "I knew in a very short time that I was never going to be a social worker." Paul craved work that could bring about social change on a grander scale. She found that work in 1908 when she heard British suffrage activist Christabel Pankhurst speak at the University of Birmingham.

Pankhurst arrived at the university to deliver a speech on woman's suffrage. When she began her talk, listeners in the mostly male audience jeered and yelled,
drowning out her words. The scene erupted into chaos as the crowd shouted Pankhurst off the stage, forcing university officials to call off the event. Shocked by the crowd's behavior and sympathetic to Pankhurst's message, Paul introduced herself to Pankhurst following the speech. This meeting began Paul's involvement with the suffrage movement and transformed her years of disinterested study and changing career plans into the single-minded and unwavering loyalty to the cause of woman suffrage.

Christabel Pankhurst, along with her mother, Emmeline Pankhurst, were leaders and co-founders of England's most radical suffragists, the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU). United under the motto "Deeds not Words," the Pankhursts and their followers abandoned traditional forms of activism, such as writing petitions and participating in club discussions, and instead engaged in militant action, such as destroying property and heckling and spitting at policemen. The group's militant tactics attracted intense media coverage, sometimes landing them on the front pages of major British newspapers. The WSPU's militancy sparked the curiosity and interest of Paul.

Upon completing her year at Woodbrooke, Paul took a job as a social worker in London. She used her case worker position to buy food and pay her bills, but her real concern was the suffrage movement. In the fall of 1908, Paul joined the WSPU and actively participated in their campaign. During her two years in London, she attended WSPU meetings and studied suffrage literature, and she participated in a variety of demonstrations, including parades and pickets. On several occasions, Paul was arrested and jailed for her activism. The difficulties Paul experienced, however, only fueled her devotion to the cause.
Paul returned to the United States in 1910, presumably to complete her Ph.D. program in sociology at Penn. Shortly after returning to the university, however, she became a member of the National American Women's Suffrage Association (NAWSA), and in 1912 (the same year that she finished her Ph.D.) she was appointed chair of NAWSA's five-member Congressional Committee. This committee had the sole purpose of working to secure a constitutional amendment granting women the right to vote. To achieve this end, Paul argued that confrontational tactics might become necessary. She did not advocate that the U.S. movement immediately adopt the militant tactics of the British suffragists, but she did ask U.S. suffragists to consider the conditions under which such tactics might prove necessary. In 1910, she delivered a speech at the NAWSA convention in which she defended the radical action of British suffragists and urged listeners to consider the usefulness of a more confrontational approach. "The magnificently defiant deeds" of the WSPU were successful, Paul said, because they "wakened Great Britain out of her lethargy" and made it "impossible to forget 'votes for women.'" Most members of the NAWSA remained skeptical, fearing that any hint of radicalism would taint the movement and undo the progress already made toward achieving public and legislative support. For most of the NAWSA, patience, politeness, and a positive public image remained the keys to victory. Paul's advocacy of more aggressive, even confrontational tactics seemed premature at best.

This disagreement over strategy eventually drove Paul and her followers out of the NAWSA. As Paul's Congressional Committee attracted more supporters, it also became more differentiated and independent from its mother organization, the NAWSA. In 1913, Paul organized her approximately one thousand followers into the Congressional
Union (CU), a national political organization dedicated to securing the passage of a federal amendment. Paul's CU remained an "affiliate" of the NAWSA, but the two groups took very different approaches to promoting woman's suffrage. Unlike the NAWSA, the CU adopted the British tactic of "punishing the party in power," targeting Congress and the President in its effort to win passage of a federal suffrage amendment. And unlike the NAWSA leadership, the CU was willing to use confrontational tactics to achieve its goal.

Over the next year, the split between the CU and the NAWSA widened, dividing the once united federation into two rival organizations. The NAWSA retained its moderate strategy, while the CU continued to experiment with novel and increasingly confrontational tactics. In 1917, the CU merged with the Women's Party, an organization of suffrage activists from western states. The newly formed outfit, named the National Women's Party (NWP), was led by Paul and her long-time friend, Lucy Burns. Under the leadership of Paul and Burns, the NWP honed its militant strategy, effectively putting the militant wing of the suffrage movement into the public and political spotlight.

Burns described Paul as a skillful organizer with a steadfast determination to finish what she started. "Her great assets," Burns observed, "are the power to make plans on a national scale; and a supplementary power to see that it is done down to the last postage stamp." Once invested in the suffrage campaign, Paul not only displayed exceptional skills as a planner and organizer, but also unwavering determination and loyalty to the movement. When asked about Paul, Maud Younger, a labor leader and fellow suffrage activist, praised not just her "clear, penetrating, analytic mind," but also
her "indomitable will" and her "devotion to the cause." According to Younger, Paul was "absolutely self-sacrificing" in her commitment to the movement.\textsuperscript{15}

Paul's talents as a planner, an organizer, and a strategist, as well as her complete dedication to the suffrage cause, were on display repeatedly between 1912 and 1920. Her inspired leadership of the militant wing of the suffrage movement reenergized the movement and gave it a new sense of urgency. Indeed, some give Paul much of the credit for the ultimate victory of the suffrage campaign in 1921. Paul's leadership of the militant wing of the suffrage campaign invites close scholarly analysis, particularly her strategies for creating public spectacles that forged solidarity among women of all social classes and exploited traditional gender conventions to build sympathy for the movement.

**The Rhetoric of Spectacle: The Suffrage Parade of 1913**

Two months after taking charge of the NAWSA's Congressional Committee, Alice Paul organized her first major public event--a parade down Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C. In 1913, street parades and public demonstrations had already become established techniques of the suffrage campaign. The Progressive Union for Woman Suffrage in New York had held a twenty-five woman march through the streets of Manhattan to Madison Square in 1908, and over the next few years parades, vigils, pickets, and other innovative tactics were employed by suffrage activists across the country. In 1909, the Illinois Equal Suffrage Association sponsored a demonstration at the state capitol in Springfield, with twenty-five women who had traveled by train from Chicago each delivering a three-minute pro-suffrage speech. In 1910, hundreds of New
York women marched to Albany to protest the state legislature's rejection of a suffrage bill. In 1911, local suffrage groups in California staged demonstrations in the streets, traveled door-to-door distributing suffrage literature, and even began performing pro-suffrage skits in rural areas.16

By the time Paul ascended to leadership of the NWP, public displays thus had become common in the suffrage movement. Yet none of these previous efforts equaled the demonstrations organized by Paul in terms of their intensity, their success at attracting attention, or the sheer spectacle of the event. Paul scheduled her first suffrage parade for March 3, 1913, the day preceding Woodrow Wilson's inauguration. She selected this date because she wanted her event to attract as much attention as possible, and she knew that thousands of visitors would be arriving in Washington for the inauguration ceremony. Paul's plan worked. When Wilson arrived at the train station in Washington, he reportedly asked about the small crowd that had greeted him. Everyone in town, he was told, was down on Pennsylvania Avenue, watching a suffrage parade.17 Paul's parade not only upstaged Wilson's arrival, but also the inauguration itself.

No previous suffrage parade had involved so many marchers or created such spectacle with its costumes and pageantry. Ten thousand people, including several groups of male supporters, marched in the parade. Participants were divided into different groups, and each group was instructed to wear matching colors in order to create a rainbow effect. Paul also organized the participation of ten marching bands, twenty-six floats, and six golden chariots. She even arranged for twelve women to ride in the parade on horseback.18 A white horse, its rider also dressed in white, led the parade, and the marchers included a diversity of participants, ranging from women farmers, homemakers,
nurses, college students, lawyers, doctors, and industrial laborers, to PTA members, writers, artists, actresses, and musicians, to a society of Jewish women, a group of Quakers, and even representatives from the National Association of Colored Women. Demonstrating a united front of women across lines of race, class, and religion, Paul intended the march not only to attract attention but also to display the solidarity of women and their shared desire for suffrage. It was to be a legal and peaceful protest, with the floats, banners, and images demonstrating feminist solidarity. Paul even obtained a police permit for the parade so as to avoid confrontation.

As soon as the procession began, however, male hostility and police indifference combined to disrupt Paul's plan. The enormous crowd of spectators surged toward the marchers; men yelled insults, mocked the women, and obstructed their path. The police,
whose numbers could not control the unruly spectators, did little to help. By all accounts, participants in the parade were physically assaulted by onlookers and received practically no protection from the police. Within thirty minutes, Paul's parade had degenerated into a mob scene, with the spectators shoving marchers and pushing them out of their organized groups. The streets swarmed with confusion as the women were roughed up and separated in the crowd. In an interview, participant Suzanne LaFollette described the scene in dramatic terms: "Before the avenue came in sight we realized that our movement was extremely slow; also that the noise from the avenue was deafening--and was not cheering. When at last we entered it the view was appalling. There was no division between the parade and the crowd, and the crowd was a seething mob of men who surged around the struggling marchers, shouting obscenities. There were few police in sight, and those who were in sight were making no effort to control the crowd. It was an obscene spectacle . . . ."21

Figure 6: Spectators flood the streets during the suffrage parade, effectively blocking the road for marchers.22
LaFollette's account was echoed both by other participants and the newspapers. On March 4, 1913, the *New York Times* published an account from marcher Genevieve Stone, who stated that she was heckled and pushed by unruly men while the police ignored her pleas for help. According to Stone, one officer even yelled, "If my wife were where you are, I'd break her head."²³ That same day the *Albuquerque Journal* reported that parade participants battled "a surging mob that completely defied the Washington police, swamped the marchers, and broke their procession into little companies."²⁴ The *Idaho Statesman* noted that "many of the women were in tears under the jibes and insults of those who lined the route" and reported that completion of the parade would have been "impossible" without assistance from the Pennsylvania National Guard, which the Secretary of War eventually called in to control the crowd.²⁵

The hostility of the spectators, the apathy of the police, and the spectacle of the mob scene led to sympathetic coverage of the suffrage cause in newspapers across the country. Congress even established an investigative committee to look into the incident. With Paul and others insisting publicly that the police intentionally had allowed a "mob of hoodlums" to disrupt the parade, the investigation ultimately led to the police chief's dismissal.²⁶

For suffrage activists, the disruption of that first big parade proved the indifference of the government toward the safety and rights of women. The day after the parade, Elizabeth Selden Rogers wrote to Paul asserting that "because we were women, working for freedom, the authorities did not *care* what happened to our Parade."²⁷ The same day, suffragist Harriot Stanton Blatch went public with her complaints, sending a telegram to Wilson himself--and to newspapers throughout the country--accusing the
authorities of indifference toward the rights and safety of the marchers. In her open
telegram, Blatch asked the new president to reflect upon the fact that just one day earlier
women who had been "passing in peaceful procession in their demand for political
freedom" had been left "at the mercy of a howling mob." Blatch emphasized the irony
and hypocrisy of the government refusing to protect the female marchers. "As you ride
today in comfort and safety to the Capitol," she wrote, remember how those women had
been assaulted on the "very streets which are being at this moment efficiently officered
for the protection of men."28

Many Americans apparently shared the suffrage activists' outrage over the
treatment of the marchers. After the story appeared in newspapers, support for a federal
suffrage amendment surged. By July 31, grass-roots suffrage organizations across the
nation had collected more than 200,000 signatures on a suffrage petition to the U.S.
Senate. Contributions to Paul's Congressional Committee also increased, allowing her to
repay the $13,750.00 spent on the parade. Even the federal government seemingly
became more sympathetic to the cause, as evidenced by the appointment of the
congressional committee to investigate the treatment of the marchers.29

Why did Paul's parade and the havoc it unleashed strike such a chord? Parades,
protests, and even mob violence were fairly common in the Progressive Era, as were
stories about questionable police behavior. The timing and location of Paul's parade may
account for the widespread interest in the event. But the fact that it took place on the
streets of Washington, D.C. on the eve of Wilson's inauguration cannot fully explain the
sympathetic reactions of so many observers. Paul's parade actually violated gendered
expectations about how women ought to behave in public, and many Americans might
have been offended by the spectacle of women parading through the streets of Washington, D.C. The behavior of the mob, however, generated widespread sympathy for the marchers. Ironically, a movement that challenged traditional gender conventions benefited from traditional notions about how a "lady" ought to be treated.

The Parade as Working-Class Strategy

A number of historians have shown that the woman suffrage movement was primarily a middle and upper-class concern. Historian Michael McGerr has argued that progressivism in general was "the creed of a crusading middle class," and suffrage in particular appealed to white, privileged women of the middle and upper classes.30 Indeed, as Nancy Cott has written, the "white, Protestant, bourgeois women's tendency" to see the suffrage movement as "their movement" and to "ignore diversity" significantly limited the reach of the movement. Marjorie Spruill Wheeler goes so far as to argue that most suffragists "believed that the working class needed to be protected more than empowered."31

Given this middle-class bias, it hardly comes as a surprise that most U.S. suffragists rejected the more militant, even confrontational strategies of the British suffrage movement. In the early 1900s, demonstrations in the streets were the province of the working class, associated with striking unions and violent workers' riots, like the Thompkins Square Riot in New York City in 1874 or the Lawrence Textile Strike in 1912. In a 1914 public statement, NAWSA representative Irvine Lenroot expressed the feelings of many mainstream suffragists toward the more confrontational style of the
British movement: "To adopt such tactics in this country would destroy in my judgment all that has been accomplished during the last ten years, and so long as it existed there would be no progress whatever made along the lines of securing the ballot for women."³²

Paul defied such attitudes by cultivating working-class support and embracing working-class tactics. One of Paul's first efforts within the CU was to gain the support of organized labor by requesting a letter of approval for woman's suffrage from the president of the American Federation of Labor (AFL), Samuel Gompers. Gompers granted Paul's request, responding that the AFL not only supported woman's suffrage, but was "now including it in its Economic Demands," which was a leaflet that was distributed to thousands of labor unions and working people across the country.³³

Once she obtained Gompers' support, Paul invited other labor unions to participate in her 1913 parade. Many accepted her offer. The final parade outline, which was dated March 3, 1913, called for an entire section devoted to wage-earning women. These marchers were to dress in blue and carry a banner reading "The Toil of Women Helps to Make the Nation Rich." They also marched alongside a float that told the "labor story" by depicting factory women and children toiling in a climate of "greed, tyranny, and indifference." Near the end of the parade, Jewish, Quaker, and African American marchers carried banners that celebrated their racial, ethnic, or religious identities.³⁴ Such displays made minority and working-class women a visible part of the parade and effectively portrayed suffrage as a concern that transcended race and class lines. More than that, it united working women and women of color with middle-class white women in a dramatic visual spectacle that challenged gendered assumptions that distinguished "ladies" from working-class and minority women.
Alice Paul tried to have it both ways. On the one hand, her parade strategy challenged traditional ideas about class and gender. Not only did she embrace working-class women, but the strategy itself (as previously noted) was borrowed from the labor movement. The very idea of women parading down the streets in a political protest challenged traditional notions about how a "lady" should act. On the other hand, the suffragists counted on those same traditional norms and expectations to create sympathy for "ladies" roughed up by an unruly mob. It was, in that sense, a classic social movement maneuver, later employed by anti-war and civil rights activists: provoke the "establishment" into an overreaction, then call attention to the insensitivity, incivility, or brutality evidenced by their behavior.

Paul and her colleagues in the NWP executed the strategy perfectly. Although they publicly expressed surprise and shock over the violence of the mob, they all knew full well that the parade would likely provoke a backlash. When Paul applied for a parade permit, police told her that it was "totally unsuitable for women to be marching down Pennsylvania Avenue," and the Superintendent of Police at the District of Columbia advised her to reschedule the event, warning that the large inaugural crowd was likely to become aggressive. Paul admitted to worrying about "whether the police could handle the crowds," and she requested additional police protection. At the same time, she worked to promote the visibility of the event, recruited more marchers, and arranged for more banners, floats, and music. Paul was not naïve: she knew that the larger and more spectacular the parade, the more likely it was to provoke a violent
reaction. She no doubt genuinely worried about the safety of the marchers. At the same time, she knew that the spectacle of "ladies" being roughed up on the streets of the nation's capital could only bring more attention and sympathy to the cause.

In the aftermath of the spectacle, suffragists rhetorically exploited the overreaction of the mob by publicly telling their stories. Marchers spoke to reporters, wrote to newspapers, and even sent telegrams to the President describing their rough treatment. These accounts played upon traditional notions of gender by portraying the suffragists as respectable ladies who were viciously attacked by "a seething mob of men." For example, in a *New York Times* interview, parade participant Glenna S. Tinnan emphasized women's fragility during the march: "How we ever got through [the crowd], I am sure I don't know, for the crush was complete . . ." Echoing Tinnan's complaints, another marcher noted that one of her fellow suffragists was "struck in the face" while others "were punched black and blue." In a March 6 Senate subcommittee hearing on the parade, suffragist Patricia Street stated that she "saw a man spit a wad of tobacco squarely into the face of one woman marcher" and seventeen-year-old Verna Hertfield testified that men touched her inappropriately and grabbed her ankles as she rode on her float. Such accounts portrayed women as helpless victims who were unable to defend themselves against the aggressive men.

For some, perhaps, the suffragists were mannish and dangerous agitators--not real ladies at all--and they deserved what they got when the mob roughly accosted them. Most Americans, however, seemed genuinely appalled by the violent reaction to the suffrage parade. Not only did the spectacle attract more media attention to the movement, but the violent overreaction of the mob created more sympathy for the
suffrage campaign. Four years later, the movement would win still more public
sympathy by publicizing the plight of jailed martyrs to the cause.

The Rhetoric of Martyrdom: The Pickets and Hunger Strikes of 1917

In the four years following Paul's famous suffrage parade in 1913, the militancy
of her organization's tactics dramatically increased. Now leading the NWP, Paul began
her efforts in 1917 with a picketing campaign outside of the White House gates. Initially,
the pickets were peaceful; NWP members held banners and stood silently outside the
executive mansion. Over the next few months, however, the situation changed
dramatically, steadily growing more confrontational and violent. By the fall, NWP
picketing took "a step up into real militancy" as women arrested on the picket line staged
hunger strikes to dramatize the oppression of women in America.41

On January 8, 1917, President Wilson told a suffrage delegation that he could not
address their demands because his party and the public did not support woman's suffrage.
Upon hearing this, suffragist Harriot Stanton Blatch encouraged activists to continue their
efforts: "It rests with women to go on with their fight. We have got to bring to the
President individually, day by day, week in and week out, the fact that great numbers of
women want to be free!"42 Two days later, twelve members of Paul's NWP staged the
first White House picket. The women launched their campaign with little fanfare,
holding two banners reading "Mr. President What Will You Do for Woman Suffrage?"
and "How Long Must Women Wait for Liberty?" Activists hoped to stage a peaceful yet
persistent demonstration of women's determination to win the vote. In an interview,
suffragist Rebecca Reyher explained Paul's strategy by quoting her favorite analogy: "If a creditor stands before a man's house all day long, demanding payment of his bill, the man must either remove the creditor or pay the bill."43

Figure 7: Paul and NWP members picket the White House.44

During the NWP's twelve months of White House picketing, thousands of women from all social classes participated in the demonstrations. Suffrage leaders, office workers, factory employees, and even wealthy tourists stood on the picket line.45 At first, the picketers gained little attention. They received some mostly neutral coverage in the press, but Wilson remained unmoved, telling an aide that he simply was too busy to meet with suffragists.46 The President did have other issues on his mind. The war between the Allied Powers and the Central Powers in Europe had been raging for more than two years. Although the U.S. was not yet involved in the conflict, talk of U.S. entry into the war became more serious in February, 1915, when Germany instituted a policy of unrestricted submarine warfare against Allied ships in the waters around the British Isles.
In spite of the impending war, the suffragists continued their efforts, sometimes through icy rain and bitter temperatures. Even after the U.S. Congress declared war on April 2, 1917, NWP activists remained focused on the cause, maintaining their daily vigils at the White House gates.

During wartime, the suffragists' picketing, which often included banners mocking the President, struck many as ill-timed, insulting, and unpatriotic. On January 14, 1917, for example, the *Washington Herald* published a poem about the pickets that stated, "But the impudence malfeasant [o]f this innovation recent; It's effrontery is immense." In February 1917, the *New York Tribune* reported that some people were "angry about the suffrage pickets" and viewed the strategy as "silly, offensive, petty and monstrous." Even suffrage supporters wrote Paul and expressed their objections to the strategy. In 1917, Paul sent letters to individuals who backed the cause and asked for donations. A number of these supporters declined to make a contribution and cited the pickets as the reason for their refusal. One such writer explained that Paul's methods were "such as I cannot sympathize with" and stated that the "heckling" and "abusive methods" of the pickets were "sufficient reason for the alienation of sympathy" from the cause and an affront to "all patriotic men and women."  

For those opposing the pickets, the biggest insult came on June 20, 1917, when a group of Russian delegates visited Washington. Days before, Wilson had sent Senator and former Secretary of State Elihu Root to the Russian Republic to deliver a speech persuading the country to stay in the war. In it, he called America a "democracy." Paul jumped on the word, and she and her followers created a giant banner criticizing Root's speech. They carried it to greet the Russian delegates when they arrived at the White
Part of the eighty-one-word sign read: "President Wilson and Envoy Root are deceiving Russia. . . . We women of America tell you that America is not a democracy. Twenty million women are denied the right to vote. . . ." 51

When the delegation arrived, an angry crowd swarmed the picketers and pulled down the banner, ripping it into pieces. The next morning, the "Russian Banner incident" appeared on the front pages of newspapers across the country. 52 The Wilson administration and city authorities were embarrassed and angered by the event, which Edith Bolling Wilson described in her memoirs as so disrespectful that it made her feel "indignant." 53 Soon after, Washington Chief of Police Raymond Pullman called Paul and warned: "You will be arrested if you attempt to picket again." 54

Despite Paul's insistence that the NWP's picketing was legal and constitutionally protected, Pullman proved true to his word. On June 23, two NWP members were arrested for picketing outside of the White House. By June 26, district police had arrested twenty-five other picketers, all of whom were charged with obstruction of traffic and released without bail. This mild show of authority did nothing to deter the pickets, so the police raised the stakes. On June 27, six more women were arrested, and this time they were assessed a twenty-five dollar fine. Refusing to pay, the activists were ordered to spend three days in jail. The cycle of NWP members picketing and being arrested, fined, and sentenced to three-day prison terms continued for several weeks. On July 14, authorities upped the ante again, sentencing sixteen picketers to sixty days in the Occoquan Workhouse in Virginia. After spending three days behind bars, Wilson signed a pardon for their release. Wilson's pardon likely was the result of a warning he received
from friend and political ally, Dudley Field Malone, who warned of a backlash among pro-suffrage voters.\footnote{55}

In any case, the police harassment did little to quell the suffragists' protests. The day following her release, suffragist J.A.H. Hopkins picketed the White House alone with a banner that proclaimed "We do not ask pardon for ourselves, but justice for all American women."\footnote{56} In a statement reported in the \textit{Baltimore Sun}, Paul also made clear that the President's pardons would have little impact on the protestors' tactic: "We're very much obliged to the President for pardoning the pickets but we'll be picketing again next Monday. The President can pardon us again if we're arrested on Monday, and again and again, but . . . picketing will continue and sooner or later he will have to do something about it."\footnote{57}

As the summer progressed, a number of people tried to "do something" about the picketers. The August 25, 1917 issue of the \textit{Suffragist} reported a series of these incidents. The paper noted that on August 14, suffragists saw "eggs and tomatoes thrown at headquarters" and witnessed a "shot fired through" its upper level. While picketing the next day, Paul was "knocked down three times by [a] sailor in uniform" and "dragged the width of the White House sidewalk" in an effort to "tear off her suffrage sash." Several other activists were also "struck and dragged on the sidewalk" and had their banners stolen by men in the crowd. On August 16, picketers' flags and banners were "destroyed by mobs and by police," who allegedly staged an "attack" on the women. As the days went on, suffragists continued to be abused by crowds of men and young boys who yelled insults, ripped their banners, and in some cases, pushed, kicked, or physically dragged the
women away from the gates while they clutched their signs. The police, suffragists maintained, watched the attacks "with no offer of help."  

On August 20, 1917, six picketers were sentenced to sixty days in Occuquan--this time without Presidential pardon. The confrontations continued into the fall, with thirteen more picketers receiving sixty-day jail sentences in September. On October 20, Paul herself was arrested for picketing (technically, for "obstructing traffic"), and two days later she was sentenced to seven months in Occoquan--the harshest sentence yet. Paul and her fellow suffrage activists claimed that they were being jailed for their political views rather than for criminal actions. Demanding treatment as political prisoners, they refused to perform the work assigned to Occoquan inmates. As punishment, they were given spoiled food that made them sick. After being treated in the prison hospital for an illness resulting from the bad food, Paul initiated a hunger strike.  

Suffragist prisoner Rose Winslow's prison notes, which her friends smuggled from jail and printed in the *Suffragist*, made the point of the strike clear: "All the officers here know we are making this hunger strike that women fighting for liberty may be considered political prisoners."  

The strike turned into a painful twenty-two-day ordeal involving tortuous forced feedings and nightly torment in the prison "psychopathic" ward. Sixteen other NWP inmates joined Paul in the strike, turning their already unpleasant prison stay into a brutal and terrifying affair. During the strike, prisoners wrote letters, memos, and reports that they sent or smuggled to friends, family members, fellow suffragists, and the President himself. In these writings, they described their struggle and bitterly complained of their treatment. In letters to NWP headquarters and to her husband, for example, Winslow
explained the dreadfulness of the forcible feedings: "Don't let them tell you we take this well. Miss Paul vomits much. I do, too. . . . It is horrible."  

Other NWP members also complained publicly about their treatment at Occoquan. In a letter to her friend and a report released in the press, for example, Elizabeth McShane described in vivid detail "the most revolting experience possible": the painful forced feedings that suffragists endured three times a day. In a December 1, 1917 *Suffragist* article, Mary A. Nolan painted a horrific picture of Occoquan as she described its living spaces as "filthy" and "brick dungeons." Nolan also complained about the cruel and abusive prison guards who twisted women's arms, "banged" them "down over the arm of an iron bench," and even coolly left beaten, unconscious suffragists for dead. Armed with such stories, NWP organizers exploited the issue on the speaking circuit and in their literature, often directly blaming Wilson for the inhumane treatment. One NWP handbill, for example, asked: "Who appoints the District of Columbia Board of Charities which controls Occuquan and the jail? Woodrow Wilson.--Who appointed the judges who sentenced the suffragists? Woodrow Wilson." These complaints attracted a great deal of attention, built public sympathy for the prisoners, and ultimately forced Wilson to take action.

With the Wilson administration under intense public pressure, the suffragists were released from Occuquan on November 27 and 28, 1917. Demonstrating no fear of being jailed again, NWP members continued to picket the White House, although with less regularity than in the summer and early fall. Organizers at a NWP conference and mass meeting on December 6 passed out special pins to all activists who had been jailed, and the NWP's December newsletter praised "The Militant" and celebrated the nonviolent
resistance of the suffragists jailed at Occuquan. In spite of hardships, the members of Paul's NWP had refused to back down, boasted of their resistance to authority, and pledged to continue the struggle until they achieved their goal.

**The Strategy of the Picketing Campaign**

By putting their bodies on the line during the picketing campaign of 1917, NWP activists focused public attention on questions about how "ladies" ought to behave and how they should be treated. Like Paul's 1913 parade, the 1917 picketing campaign attracted attention because it involved women acting in ways that were inconsistent with traditional gender norms. Many responded to these events, at first, by questioning the suffragists' femininity. Shortly after the pickets began, for example, the conservative suffrage publication, *New American Woman*, angrily denounced the picketers' behavior asking, "Of what combination of gray matter is that which leads gently bred women to violate all conventional rules of polite assemblages? Women of no class nor of any party can ever be excused for thus disporting themselves."\(^{64}\) From the onset, the NWP picketing campaign shocked many Americans by violating social expectations for female behavior.

Throughout the picketing campaign, some reporters continued to suggest that protestors were mannish and not real "ladies." On January 18, 1917, the *Philadelphia Press* remarked that suffrage picketers were "an unusual kind" of woman, and in March, the Kansas City *Star* printed a rumor that Paul had ordered all suffragists to "sacrifice their tresses to the cause of freedom for women" and cut their hair in a masculine style.\(^{65}\)
In Greenville, South Carolina, the News called the picketers a "strong-arm squad" that is "self-constituted to do the rough work and whoop things up." Some newspapers even more directly portrayed the suffragists as manly. Shortly before the pickets began, the December 8, 1917 issue of the Bay City, Michigan Tribune likened suffragists to football players. Opening with a chant used by a Michigan football team, the article stated that this "same yell . . . seems to have been adopted by the equal suffrage women" and concluded that the suffragists were no longer characterized by "docility and lamb-weakness," but were now "more militaristic." Indeed, a number of publications invoked military imagery in reporting on the movement. The May 26, 1917 Washington, D.C. Star, for instance, published an article that described the picketers as "soldiers standing guard on a battle line" who were "besieging Congress" and refusing to "raise the siege" until Congress capitulated.

These male metaphors and images were no accident. NWP activists themselves used military terms to describe their movement, referring to the picketing campaign as a "battle," a "fight," or a "brave stand." When writing to NWP prisoners, one activist claimed that the women arrested on the picket line had "that fine, high light on their faces that I think must kindle in the eyes of soldiers as they go into battle, for a holy cause." Another suffragist wrote Paul a letter that suggested a "perfect military gait" was appropriate for suffrage demonstrations, and the Suffragist itself printed stories that referred to picketers in military terms. In the March 3, 1917 issue, for example, writer Vivian Pierce described suffragists' efforts as a "battle," and in the June 2, 1917 issue, suffragist Helen Hunt likened suffrage activists to soldiers, writing that "like the men of the nation" they are "determined to fight" for democracy. Paul's NWP thus consciously
embraced the military imagery, despite the fact that such manly images appalled some members of the public and the press.

Not surprisingly, women who rejected the conventions of proper female behavior and assumed a militaristic attitude met with a harsh response. As in the aftermath of the suffrage parade of 1913, however, the NWP rhetorically exploited their alleged mistreatment to attract still more attention and build sympathy for their cause. When the picketers first arrived in prison, Paul instructed NWP members to make every effort to obtain and publicize any reports of abuse. Subsequently, suffragists wrote terrifying accounts of their prison terms, and the NWP published those accounts in the *Suffragist* and passed them on to local and national newspapers. NWP members also recounted their prison experiences on the lecture circuit, describing their bodily injuries, sickness, pain, and suffering in vivid detail. These stories of abuse not only captured the attention of the public, but built still more sympathy for the cause. Some people stood firm in their belief that the protestors got what they deserved, but most commentators expressed pity for the suffragists, criticized the government, and concluded that the time had come to grant women the vote.

Although the press and even the NWP itself typically depicted picketers as strong, manly, and even militaristic, stories about the jailed protestors emphasized their gentleness and femininity. When reporting Paul's arrest, for example, the *Suffragist* described her physical stature as "frail," "little," and "delicate." In another article in the *Suffragist*, Mary A. Nolan described Dorothy Day, the Catholic Worker activist who was arrested on the picket line, as "a very slight girl," and explained how suffragists were "lifted up," "shoved," "literally thrown," and left "crying" by male guards, who were
much stronger and more aggressive than the prisoners. Similarly, Rose Winslow's prison notes, which were published in the December 1, 1917 issue of the *Suffragist*, discussed how she "cried like a fool" at her treatment, fainted multiple times, and pitied her fellow suffragist inmates, especially Paul, who she described as "thin as ever, pale and large-eyed."  

As these stories of prison abuse circulated, suffragists became pitiable figures, even martyrs to their cause. In a January 14, 1918 speech to Congress, for example, Congressman John Langley from Kentucky voiced outrage that "cultured, intellectual women" were being "arrested and dragged off to prison because of their method of giving publicity to what they believed to be the truth." These women were "martyrs to the cause," Langley declared, certainly undeserving of such harsh treatment by the U.S. government. Similarly, an article in the *New York American* defended the "sensational" actions of the suffrage picketers, arguing that these women were "martyrs of suffrage" who would "survive to be its heroines, if not its saints." Many ordinary citizens also wrote letters to Paul and her NWP colleagues, thanking them for sacrificing their "personal liberty for political justice for all the women of this country." One letter-writer even placed them among the great martyrs in world history, those "brave leaders who have had courage even unto death."  

**The Legacy of Alice Paul**

In December of 1917, the House Rules Committee announced that the woman's suffrage amendment would be brought to a vote. On January 10, 1918, the House of
Representatives passed the amendment with the support of President Wilson, but the Senate refused to consider it until October. When October came, the Senate failed to pass it. Paul and the NWP continued their activism, encouraging supporters to vote against anti-suffrage senators in the 1918 elections and staging still more dramatic and confrontational protests. On February 9, 1919, for example, one hundred NWP members burned an effigy of Wilson in front of the White House to protest the Sixty-Fifth Congress's refusal to even take a vote on woman's suffrage. On February 16, Paul organized a speaking tour, entitled "The Prison Special," that shocked audiences by featuring twenty-six speakers wearing the prisoner uniforms from Occoquan. On March 10, Prison Special speakers put on an elaborate suffrage pageant at Carnegie Hall that featured women dressed either in black or in colorful clothing to symbolize slavery versus freedom. The event erupted into violence and created a media feeding frenzy after a rowdy crowd attacked the protestors and a group of servicemen had to come to their aid.79

On May 19, 1919, the Sixty-Sixth Congress assembled and again voted on the woman's suffrage amendment. The House passed it for the second time on May 21, by a vote of 304-89. On June 4, the Senate followed suit, passing the amendment by a 56-25 vote. To become law, however, the amendment still needed to be ratified by three quarters of the state legislatures. Paul and her fellow suffragists wrote letters and circulated petitions to get the seven state legislatures already convened to vote on the amendment and to urge all other states to hold special sessions to ratify it. On June 10, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin became the first states to ratify. By March 1920, the amendment needed ratification from only one more state. Tennessee voted to pass the
amendment on August 18, but anti-suffragists filed a lawsuit challenging the vote. Finally, on September 14, 1920, Connecticut became the thirty-sixth state to ratify the amendment, giving it the necessary approval from three-fourths of the states.\textsuperscript{80}

Alice Paul and NWP militancy played an important role in this chain of events. On December 12, 1918, as the amendment awaited final approval in the Senate, the Hartford Post noted: "It was only the clever vision, the intense conviction, and the unhesitating persistence of Miss Paul and the Woman's Party that kept the amendment to the front and carried it to the point where it now stands . . . "\textsuperscript{81} A few months after the final ratification of the amendment, Representative Thaddeus H. Caraway from Arkansas told NWP members that "all this agitation, the lobbying, the persistence never-ceasing, often to us men very irritating like grains of sand in the eyes, has nevertheless hastened your amendment by ten years."\textsuperscript{82} Later, Chief Justice Walter Clark of North Carolina wrote to Paul: "Will you permit me to congratulate you upon the great triumph in which you have been so important a factor? There were politicians, and a large degree of public sentiment, which could only be won by the methods you adopted."\textsuperscript{83} At the time, the NWP's militancy was given much of the credit for passage of the Nineteenth Amendment. The effort was obviously aided by more conservative groups, such as the NAWSA. Yet it seemed clear to most observers at the time that militant action and nonviolent resistance hastened the suffrage victory by creating sympathy for the protestors and putting more pressure on politicians.\textsuperscript{84}

As noted earlier, rhetoric scholars have long acknowledged the value of militancy for groups that lack access to traditional channels of political participation. In recent years, they also have begun to explore the role of spectacle and visual images in the
rhetoric of social movements, noting that such images have served as a "traditional and indispensable means of establishing agency and taking civic action." When mainstream media or the centers of political power ignore the speeches or writings of a protesting group, visual rhetoric—in the form of rallies, marches, posters, parades, pickets, street theater, and even murals or other forms of art—can become effective means for capturing public attention and spreading the group's message.

The study of spectacle and visual imagery has become an integral part of the literature on the rhetoric of social movements. Margaret R. LaWare has shown how "people's murals" in the 1960s and early 1970s functioned to define the "shared cultural roots" of Chicano communities and motivate them to resist assimilation. Christine Harold and Kevin DeLuca have noted how photographs of Emmett Till's tortured corpse inspired African Americans to demand action on civil rights "in ways words simply could not do." Images of violence against nonviolent protestors also helped activist groups like Earth First!, ACT UP, and Queer Nation attract attention and sympathy "not through rational arguments but through [images of] bodies at risk." And reflecting back on an "image event" that helped spark the civil rights movement of the 1960, Davi Johnson has argued that photographs in Life magazine depicting police brutality against peaceful black demonstrators during Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birmingham campaign captured attention and generated sympathy for the cause among white moderates by "making the reality of racism immediately visible."

Like all of these later spectacles or "visual events," Paul's 1913 parade and her picketing campaign of 1917 could not have been fully planned in advance. Paul had no way of predicting exactly how the public or the police would react to her spectacles.
What she could control, however, was the NWP members' response to the violence. Paul and her fellow activists met anger and violence with passive resistance, made all the more compelling by prevailing stereotypes of women as delicate and weak. The NWP's marchers and picketers never fought back against opponents, and they regularly described themselves as "demure," "lovely," and "beautiful" as they publicized accounts of their abuse. Paul clearly hoped to capitalize on the violent reactions of mobs, the police, and the jailers to gain sympathy and create martyrs for the cause. Upon her release from prison, she expressed her hope that, in light of their suffering, the American people would "sympathize, and grant us victory."  

The militancy, the visual rhetoric, and the passive resistance of the NWP protesters all foreshadowed the strategies and tactics of civil rights and anti-war protestors in the 1960s. The NWP pioneered what Herbert W. Simons would later call "body rhetoric," creating visual spectacles "designed to dramatize issues, enlist additional sympathizers, and delegitimize the established order." Those strategies also served to create solidarity among the protestors and communicate a sense of urgency about their demands. In Paul's case, they seemed to successfully create public sympathy for the cause and ultimately forced the powers-that-be to confront and resolve the issue. 

There is, of course, some irony to Paul's victory. Confronting gendered norms and expectations by marching in the street and picketing the White House, her strategy ultimately depended upon those same norms and expectations for its success. Exploiting traditional notions about how a "lady" ought to be treated, the NWP's rhetoric of spectacle and martyrdom may have attracted attention and generated sympathy for the suffrage movement, but it did so by embracing stereotypes of women as delicate and
weak. Perhaps that was a small price to pay for finally prevailing in their nearly seventy-year struggle for the vote.
1 Alice Paul to her mother, Mrs. William Paul, October 22 in Inez Haynes Irwin, *Alice Paul and the National Women's Party* (Fairfax, VA: Denlinger's Publishers, 1921), 251-256.

2 Alice Paul to Dora Lewis, November 1917 in Reel 53, National Woman's Party Papers, Microfilming Corporation of America, Sanford, NC, 1981.


11 For biographical information on Paul, see Ford, *Iron-Jawed Angels*; and Lunardini, *From Equal Suffrage to Equal Rights*.


13 Ibid., 20.

14 "Miss Alice Paul's Address," *Woman's Journal*, May 17, 1910, p. 76.


18 The exact number of marchers is unclear. Historians note that Paul planned to organize ten thousand women (see Ford, *Iron-Jawed Angels*, 48), but other sources reported a turnout of five thousand women (see *Baltimore American*, March 4, 1913). For information about the parade's spectacle, see Adams and Keene, *Alice Paul*, 81-82.


26 "Suffragettes Demand Police Investigation," Dallas Morning News, March 5, 1913, p. 15.

27 Elizabeth Selden Rogers to Alice Paul, March 5, 1913 in "Search and Struggle for Equality and Independence," Suffragists Oral History Project, Amelia Fry and Fern Ingersoll, interviewers (Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 1977), 327.


29 Emma Gillette to Anna Howard Shaw, Joint Inaugural Procession Committee Finance Statement, April 16, 1913, National Woman's Party Papers, Microfilming Corporation of America, Sanford, NC, 1981.


33 Samuel Gompers to Alice Paul, February 1, 1913, National Woman's Party Papers.


“Conversations with Alice Paul,” 76.

Suzanne LaFollette interview, 539.


One example of spectators depicting suffragists as mannish appeared in a February, 1917 *Washington, D.C. Times* article, which reported that a "Viennese lecturer" asserted that "American women are good looking and clever, but not strong physically." The paper then asked: "Has this speaker seen a suffrage parade . . .?" See "Strong Also," *Washington, D.C. Times*. Comments of the Press, *Suffragist*, February 7, 1917, p. 9.


*Suffragist*, January 17, 1917, p. 6.


For discussion of suffragists' famous March 4, 1917, picket in the freezing rain, see Lunardini, *From Equal Suffrage to Equal Rights*, 111-113.

Suffragists' banners regularly displayed quotations from Wilson's speeches that were designed to highlight the irony in his statements promoting democracy abroad by suggesting that he was against democracy for women at home. An example of such a
banner read: "We shall fight for the things which we have always held nearest our hearts-for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own governments.--President Wilson's War Message, April 2, 1917." Anon Y. Mous, "There Are Pickets by the Fence," Washington Herald, Comments of the Press, Suffragist, Jan. 24, 1917, p. 10; Alice Duer Miller, "A Riddle," New York Sunday Tribune, Comments of the Press. Suffragist, Feb. 7, 1917, p. 10.


51 Text of the banner printed in Lunardini, From Equal Suffrage to Equal Rights, 115.

52 For front page coverage, see New York Times, June 21, 1917.


54 Ibid., 92-94; Paul Interview, 214.

55 Dudley's account of his meeting with the President appears in Stevens, Jailed for Freedom, 161-162.

56 See Adams and Keene, Alice Paul, 184.

57 Alice Paul quote in Baltimore Sun, July 20, 1917.


60 Winslow's notes to NWP headquarters and to her husband, quoted in Stevens, Jailed for Freedom, 189-191.

61 Elizabeth McShane to Mary Ingham, November 26, 1917, National Woman's Party Papers.


63 1917 NWP handbill, National Woman's Party Papers.


Letter to Alice Paul, February 23, 1913, National Woman's Party Papers.


See Adams and Keene, *Alice Paul*, 199.


Nolan, "'That Night of Terror,'" p. 7.


*Congressional Record*, 65th Congress, Second Session, January 14, 1918, p. 780.


Helen E. Hall to Alice Paul, June 9, 1917 in Reel 2, National Woman's Party Papers; Irene and Alice Lewisohn to the National Woman's Party, July 20, 1917, National Woman's Party Papers.
For additional details, see Adams and Keene, *Alice Paul*, 235-241.

At the time, there were only forty eight states. For a discussion of these events, see Adams and Keene, *Alice Paul*, 243-245.


Walter Clark to Alice Paul, June 4, 1919, National Woman's Party Papers.


Johnson, "Martin Luther King," 3.


Chapter 5

Emma Goldman and the Rhetoric of Human Liberation

On June 27, 1917, anarchist Emma Goldman celebrated her forty-eighth birthday in the United States District Court in New York. The day marked the opening of a trial in which she and her colleague, friend, and romantic partner, Alexander Berkman, were charged with conspiring to obstruct the military draft. The courtroom was lined with American flags and packed with Goldman's enemies.¹ State and federal officials, court attendants, and reporters filled the room and appeared to Goldman as "a mob of soldiers" poised for battle. In Goldman's recollection, Judge Julius M. Mayer and Assistant United States District Attorney Harold A. Content displayed their prejudice against her. Their hostility, she noted in her autobiography, was like wrinkles on a made-up woman's face--"carefully hidden," but detectable by anyone who was really looking.² Goldman insisted she was innocent, and she referred to the event as a "play about to be staged." She told the court that she regarded the whole trial as a "farce."³ Nevertheless, she later recalled that she "could not have wished for a more appropriate celebration" of her twenty-eight years as an agitator. For Goldman, the trial was an "achievement" that provided a great opportunity to promote her beliefs.⁴

Goldman achieved national notoriety by delivering hundreds of speeches and writing six books and more than a hundred articles on such controversial topics as birth control, the labor movement, "free love," and anarchism.⁵ Some considered Goldman worthy of high praise.⁶ Painter Robert Henri referred to her as "a woman of remarkable
address" with a "convincing presence," and after seeing Goldman speak he claimed that he "never heard so good a lecture." In 1917, a government agent sent to observe Goldman described her as "a remarkable orator" who seemed "tremendously sincere" and who spoke with "conviction." And in 1908, a St. Louis Mirror reporter wrote that Goldman was "eight-thousand years ahead of her time." Looking back on Goldman’s life, journalist Hutchins Hapgood concluded that "there were thousands of men and women all over the country who loved her."

Yet not everyone loved Goldman or her ideas. In her autobiography, Goldman's friend Margaret Anderson wrote that in the early twentieth century, mention of Goldman's name was enough "to produce a shudder" in many Americans. Some viewed her as a frightening "monster." In 1908, the Philadelphia Inquirer called her "a public nuisance" who "should go back to Russia." Later that year, the Portland Oregonian labeled her "one of the most dangerous creatures ever dumped on our shores." In 1909, police chief Henry D. Cowles of New Haven, Connecticut wrote a letter to the U.S. Attorney General describing Goldman as "an undesirable person, and one whom the good and respectable people of this City do not care to have speak on any subject." By 1917, Goldman had pushed many of her opponents to their limits. When she was put on trial for speaking out against the military draft, she knew she faced a hostile courtroom and told a friend that it would be a "miracle" if she were acquitted.

Scholars have acknowledged Goldman's controversial persona and her unpopular ideas. Martha Solomon, for example, has argued that Goldman's anarchist ideology "created an unattractive rhetorical persona" that made her unlikable and unpersuasive to most Americans. According to Solomon, Goldman was "too much the ideologue to be
convincing." Biographer Richard Drinnon wrote that Goldman upset people because her ideas "challenged their social, intellectual, and political convictions." And historian Candace Falk has explained that Goldman scared business and government leaders because her anarchist lectures made "angry charges against the government or against big business." According to these scholars, Goldman's rhetoric was out of touch with prevailing political ideas and delivered in a style that offended most people. As Solomon argued, Goldman's controversial ideas "served well to stimulate thought and provoke reaction," but her words were simply too shocking and radical to make much of a difference. Goldman's "flamboyance and blatant defiance of contemporary codes of behavior repelled some listeners" and ended up attracting audiences who "wanted to be entertained rather than enlightened," according to Solomon. For Solomon and others, Goldman's "true significance" lay not in her persuasiveness, but in her ability to bring "issues and attitudes to the fore which unsettled the public." 

Goldman, however, was much more than an anarchist agitator who shocked and offended people. She was a prophetic precursor to second-wave feminism, an activist who challenged conventional social norms and demanded new roles for women. Goldman's speeches and writings on human liberation not only questioned traditional gender roles but also challenged a broad array of prevailing ideas about both women and men. Addressing social issues that, at the time, many considered inappropriate for public discussion, Goldman challenged the rhetorical boundaries between "public" and "private" issues and critiqued the sexual politics of the early nineteenth century in ways that foreshadowed the rhetoric of sexual liberation in the 1960s. More than just a flamboyant agitator, Goldman was a visionary who imagined a future of complete human
liberation, and she developed a wide-ranging social critique that called into question many of the most basic social values and institutions of her day. In her own era, Goldman may have been viewed as scandalous and out of touch, but she would later be praised as forward thinking and "a source of inspiration" for feminist activists.²²

In the first section of this chapter, I recall the story of Goldman's life, introducing the people and events that shaped her anarchist political views. Next, I revisit the controversy surrounding her anti-draft activities, noting how, in her anti-military activism, she played the martyr, much like Alice Paul after she was jailed for her White House protests. Then, in the final section of the chapter, I turn to Goldman's writings on human liberation, which really set her apart from other reformers in her day and made her seem strange, shocking, and even dangerous to many of her contemporaries. By challenging some of the most basic gendered assumptions of her day, Goldman's views on birth control, "free love," and marriage invited ridicule and scorn from her contemporaries, yet they anticipated many of the central tenets of second-wave feminism in the 1960s and 1970s. Although Goldman distanced herself from the suffrage activists of the time, she ironically would become a hero and an inspiration to later generations of feminists, praised for her pioneering ideas on issues of sexuality, gender roles, and personal freedom.

**Emma Goldman and the Making of an Anarchist Agitator**

Emma Goldman was born on June 27, 1869, in the Russian province of Kovno (today Kaunas, Lithuania).²³ Her father and mother, Abraham and Taube, were Russian
Jews whose marriage, Goldman claimed, was arranged "in the traditional Jewish orthodox fashion, without love." Taube entered the marriage a widow with two young daughters, Lena and Helene. In her autobiography, Goldman described the time she spent living with her family as "ghastly" and filled with verbal and physical abuse from her parents. She focused on her father's cruelty, recalling multiple instances of his mistreatment. She described one day when she brought home a bad grade from school and her father hit her and yelled: "You are my disgrace! You will always be so! You can't be my child!" On another occasion when she disobeyed her father, she recalled him screaming out in anger, "I'll kill her! I will kill that brat! I will teach her to obey!"

A number of scholars have speculated that Goldman's unhappy childhood fueled her ambivalence towards marriage, persuaded her to remain childless, and motivated her desire to work for social justice. Historian Alice Wexler, for example, has argued that Goldman filled her life with "heroes, friends, words, [and] ideals" to help her forget her lonely and miserable childhood.

Goldman's memories of her father's failures also shaped her future views. In describing the "formative influences" on her life in a 1924 interview, Goldman told the story of a town hall meeting in which her father lost his bid for re-election as manager of the local stagecoach. Narrating the event, Goldman said, "On the way out [of the meeting], I asked him why the other man had been chosen." Her father responded, "Because we are Jews, dear child, and the other man gave more vodka." The injustice of this event struck Goldman to the core. She stated that the election taught her to be wary of "putting any trust in politics," thereby setting the stage for the distrust of government that grounded much of her later political activism.
Goldman's childhood education also influenced her political development. When Goldman was eight years old, her father sent her to live with her grandmother in Köningsberg, which was the capital of Prussia and a major Baltic seaport. There, she enrolled in public school, attended classes for approximately four years, and excelled academically. She passed the exam to attend the Gymnasium, or high school, but the school denied her admission because her religion teacher refused to write her a letter of good character. Stating the reason for his decision, the teacher said that Goldman "was a terrible child and would grow into a worse woman," as she "had no respect for elders or for authority."

With her educational aspirations thwarted, Goldman despondently moved with her family to St. Petersburg, where her father was offered a position managing a cousin's dry-goods shop. When the family arrived, the city was in political uproar. A terrorist group associated with the Russian socialist movement had recently assassinated Czar Alexander II, and there was a vigorous public debate about the crime and the repressive policies that supposedly provoked it. Secret reading and discussion groups cropped up throughout the city, and Goldman began to attend. Through these clandestine meetings, she developed sympathies for the people convicted of the assassination and came to regard them as her "heroes." According to Goldman, they were "martyrs" and her "guiding stars."

Within a few years, Goldman began looking for a way to escape her family's home and the limitations of her homeland. In 1885, she found her chance. That year, after intense pleading, Goldman's father allowed her and her sister, Helena, to emigrate to America. There they were to join their sister, Lena, who was married and living in
Rochester, New York. Goldman departed for America with bright hopes, but she found life in Rochester to be a shocking disappointment. She took a factory job that required her to work ten hours a day, and in 1887 she reluctantly married Jacob Kershner, a fellow factory worker. In her autobiography, Goldman described her husband unsympathetically, writing that he was impotent, "jealous," and overly conventional. She described these early years of her adult life as "unbearable."35

On May 4, 1886, the infamous Haymarket Riot in Chicago greatly affected Goldman and gave her life a new sense of purpose.36 After an unknown terrorist (now believed to be a German shoemaker named George Schwab37) threw a bomb into a group of police officers, killing seven officers and wounding many bystanders,38 eight activists were arrested and tried for the crime. Despite weak evidence, all were found guilty. One member of the group was sentenced to fifteen years in prison, and the others were sentenced to death.39 Goldman compared these anarchists to the Russian activists who assassinated Csar Alexander II because she felt that both groups were working to free people from an oppressive government.40 She saw the convicted anarchists as her "comrades" and vowed to continue their work.41 In 1889, she divorced her husband, packed her bags, and moved to New York City to join the anarchist cause.

On her first day in the city, Goldman met Alexander Berkman, who asked her to accompany him to the office of Johann Most, perhaps the most famous anarchist in America.42 Goldman spoke with Most, and he invited her to help with his publication, the Freiheit. At another meeting a week later, Most recognized Goldman's talents and began to train her as a speaker. After a few months of tutoring, Most invited her to join
him on a lecture tour. Although only comfortable lecturing in Yiddish or German, Goldman accepted his offer and began her career as a political activist.

Goldman quickly discovered that she had a great talent for political activism. In her autobiography, she wrote about her natural aptitude for the work, explaining that at one of her first political speeches "words I had never heard myself utter before came pouring forth, faster and faster" almost without effort. In her speeches, Goldman promoted the principles of anarchism, which she defined as "the philosophy of a new social order based on liberty unrestricted by man-made law; the theory that all forms of government rest on violence, and are therefore wrong and harmful as well as unnecessary." She advocated complete personal freedom and rejected any institutions that limited one's self determination, including both the government and the church.

Within four years, Goldman had become well-known for her anarchist lectures. In 1892, she gained notoriety for her open support of Berkman, who had attempted to assassinate Henry Clay Frick, the manager of Andrew Carnegie-owned steel mills in Homestead, Pennsylvania. Frick had refused to negotiate with union leaders in June 1892, firing eight hundred employees and filling their positions with workers from the Pinkerton agency. Discharged employees initiated a watch outside of the mill to prevent Pinkertons from entering, and when the agents arrived on July 6, the situation erupted into violence, leaving sixteen people dead and many others injured. The press blamed Frick for the tragedy and voiced sympathy for the workers. By assassinating Frick, Berkman hoped to inspire workers to rise up against capitalism and support the anarchist cause.
Berkman's plot failed when, on July 23, he entered Frick's office, fired three non-fatal shots, and was subdued by mill employees. Subsequently, the press and even labor leaders roundly condemned his actions, and Berkman was sentenced to twenty-two years in prison. Goldman was implicated in the crime, as she had raised money to buy the revolver and the suit that Berkman wore to gain entrance into Frick's office. Although Goldman was never tried as an accomplice, her open support of Berkman made her widely distrusted. "My name had rarely before been mentioned in the papers," Goldman wrote in her autobiography, "but now it appeared every day in the most sensational stories. The police got busy; a witch hunt for Emma Goldman began."48

The following year, Goldman found herself in legal trouble. In 1893 she was arrested in Union Square in New York after urging a rally of unemployed people to "demonstrate before the palaces of the rich; demand work. If they do not give you work, demand bread. If they deny you both, take bread. It is your sacred right."49 A jury found Goldman guilty of inciting the crowd to riot, and she was sentenced to one year in Blackwell's Island Penitentiary, a New York prison located on what is now Roosevelt Island. Rather than quiet her, the prison sentence afforded her time to study anarchist materials and to improve her fluency in English by reading American novels in the prison library. She also learned nursing skills in the prison sick-ward. Upon her release ten months later, she felt prepared to address audiences in English. She wrote in her autobiography that "The State of New York could have rendered me no greater service than by sending me to Blackwell's Island Penitentiary."50
After she was released from prison, Goldman studied nursing and midwifery in Vienna, Austria and lectured throughout Europe for eighteen months. When she returned to the U.S. in 1896, she worked briefly as a midwife and then began a speaking tour in which she traveled across the country to promote anarchism, atheism, freedom of speech, labor issues, and abolition of the military. Goldman attracted audiences ranging from poor laborers to members of elite social clubs. She often charged admission for her speeches and she used that money to create her own magazine, *Mother Earth*. Beginning in 1906, Goldman used that magazine to promote anarchism and her views on social and political issues.

From the spring of 1908 to the spring of 1917, Goldman's renown grew, and her lectures drew large crowds. A speaking tour in 1910 took her to thirty-seven cities in twenty-five states. Over the course of the tour, she spoke to more than 40,000 people. In 1915, she gave 321 lectures, and in 1917 she delivered an address to a crowd of 8,000 people. In all, Goldman estimated that between 1908 and 1917, she spoke to between
50,000 and 75,000 people a year, making her one of the most popular speakers of the time.\textsuperscript{55} One reason Goldman was able to attract such large audiences was because she varied the sites of her speeches and addressed diverse topics. Goldman spoke at colleges and universities, "labor halls, theaters, private organizations, city halls, YMCAs, hotels, and churches," making her lectures accessible to virtually all social groups. Because she addressed multiple topics that concerned political, social, economic, medical, and even literary issues, she was able to attract audiences ranging from working-class immigrants to highly educated professionals.\textsuperscript{56}

In the spring of 1917, Goldman turned her attention to the issue of America's entrance into World War I. Planning for war, the Wilson administration proposed the Selective Service Act, which would require all twenty-one to thirty-year-old men to register for the armed forces. Upon hearing this news, Goldman and Berkman, who had been released from prison in 1906, started organizing a No-Conscription League.\textsuperscript{57} On March 9, 1917, the two organized a conference in the Mother Earth office to create a manifesto for their league. Soon after, they planned a mass meeting for May 18 at the Harlem River Casino in New York City and assembled a number of speakers to denounce the proposed Selective Service Act. Goldman wrote to a friend and explained that the war propaganda was "getting worse every day," and that she and Berkman felt there was "nothing else for us to do" but to try to resist it.\textsuperscript{58} When the day of the mass meeting arrived, Goldman was delighted to see a crowd of nearly 10,000 people.\textsuperscript{59} In a letter to labor leader Frank Walsh, Goldman called the meeting an "inspirational demonstration" that was "so tremendous in its scope" that it motivated even the most apathetic of citizens to join in the anti-war cause.\textsuperscript{60}
On the same evening as the No-Conscription League meeting, May 18, 1917, President Woodrow Wilson signed the Selective Service Act into law. The Selective Service Act established June 5, 1917 as military registration day. About two weeks later, on April 6, 1917, Congress answered Wilson's call to declare war on Germany, propelling the U.S. into World War I. Public opinion was not yet in favor of U.S. involvement in the war; after all, Wilson won reelection in 1916 on the slogan "He Kept Us Out of War." Thus, the government launched a vigorous effort to build public support for the war, led by the first official government propaganda agency, the Committee on Public Information. Meanwhile, agents from the Justice Department and the intelligence units of the military sought to squelch dissent by attending protest demonstrations and using stenographers to record speeches by anti-war activists. The cover of Goldman's June issue of *Mother Earth* illustrated her opinion of the matter. It pictured a tombstone with the epitaph, "In Memoriam: American Democracy." Inside, Goldman spelled out the platform of the League: "to oppose conscription" and "to sustain those who . . . refuse to be conscripted."

During the first two weeks of June, the federal government cracked down on No-Conscription League activity. On June 1, four men, Morris Becker, Louis Kramer, Joseph Walker, and Louis Sternberg, were arrested and charged with conspiracy after they distributed handbills advertising a No-Conscription League meeting that was scheduled for the eve of the June 5 military registration day. During the June 4 meeting, a group of sailors and soldiers rushed the speaking platform, ending the event and igniting a frenzy that the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and other U.S. newspapers described as a "riot." Ten days later, the League organized another meeting. This time, police
used the meeting "as a trap" and arrested every young man in attendance who failed to produce a draft card. With their No-Conscription League meetings consistently disrupted, Goldman and Berkman decided to halt their anti-draft meetings and to concentrate on spreading their message through written publications.

Goldman and Berkman never got the chance to publish more anti-conscription pieces in *Mother Earth*. On June 15, the two were arrested and charged with conspiring to obstruct the military draft. At the time of the arrest, Goldman was at work in her *Mother Earth* office. Without producing a search warrant, federal Marshal Thomas McCarthy and his cohorts ransacked her office and confiscated many of her writings. This action set the stage for the harsh legal treatment that was to follow. Bail was set at $25,000 each for Goldman and Berkman--an enormous sum at the time--and they were not allowed to use real estate to post bond. To Goldman and Berkman's supporters, the arrest and the conditions for bail constituted a "gross unfairness."

![Figure 9: Goldman and Berkman appear in court on June 15, 1917.](image-url)
The trial of Goldman and Berkman began on June 27, 1917, in the United States District Court of New York. The prosecution's case centered on the allegation that the two had advocated violence to subvert the draft. As evidence, the prosecution submitted a stenographer's transcript of Goldman's speech at the May 18 No-Conscription League meeting. In it, Goldman was recorded as saying "We believe in violence and we will use violence." Goldman fervently denied speaking these words, stating that "no such expression" was voiced "at the meeting of May 18, or at any other meeting." But with no stenographer's transcript of their own, Goldman and Berkman were unable to challenge the prosecution's evidence. Regardless of whether Goldman actually uttered the statement, the defense argued that Goldman and Berkman could not possibly have conspired against the draft bill because the May 18 meeting took place before Wilson signed the Selective Service Act into law. From a legal standpoint, they could not have conspired against a law that did not yet exist.

Despite doubts over the evidence and the timing of the charges, Goldman and Berkman had little hope of acquittal. According to the Goldman, they "knew very well" that the jury "would not render an unbiased verdict." During the proceedings she confided in a letter to a friend that she and Berkman "expected" to be convicted. With so little hope for an acquittal, Goldman and Berkman decided to act as their own lawyers and turn the trial into a political spectacle. Goldman explained this action to a friend, writing that since she had virtually no faith in the court system, "the main thing is the propaganda."

During the trial, Goldman and Berkman called many radical activists as witnesses, using their testimony to spark broader discussions of free speech and
Goldman described the courtroom atmosphere as highly combative, writing in her autobiography that "every day increased the tension in court" and that "the atmosphere grew more antagonistic" each day. On the final day of the trial, July 9, 1917, the courtroom was packed with press and spectators. The prosecutor made his closing remarks and Berkman followed with his last appeal. Finally, Goldman delivered her closing statement, a speech that has gone down in history as one of the "great" courtroom speeches of the twentieth century.

**Goldman's "Address to the Jury" and the Rhetoric of Martyrdom**

In her autobiography, Goldman described the scene at her and Berkman's trial. The U.S. District Court of New York, Goldman wrote, was "crowded" with twelve biased jurors, "a mob of soldiers, State and Federal officials, court attendants . . . and a contingent of reporters." Judge Julius M. Mayer presided over the courtroom and Assistant U.S. District Attorney Harold A. Content led the prosecution. Goldman noted that a small number of her and Berkman's friends were granted admission to the opening of the trial on June 27, but as the trial continued, most supporters "were either kept out or treated roughly" when they gained entrance into the courtroom. On the closing day in court, July 9, the courtroom was more crowded than ever with "invited official guests," dozens of news reporters, and more supporters than usual gaining entrance. In spite of the friends in attendance, Goldman described the courtroom atmosphere as "oozing with prejudice and hate." The hostile environment, however, did little to quell Goldman's desire to defend her actions and make a political statement.
Goldman's one hour "Address to the Jury" worked to refute the prosecution's charges and defend her own unconventional political ideals. Goldman began her address with a depiction of her June 15 arrest. In it, she sarcastically referred to her arresting officers as "heroic warriors" and mockingly celebrated their willingness to "stake their lives" to apprehend such "dangerous disturbers," who were "quietly at work at their desks."87 Continuing with the sarcasm, she said that Marshal McCarthy and the District Attorney would no doubt "earn immortality" for their courageous actions, and she described the officers who ransacked her office without a search warrant as "good American patriots bent on making New York safe for democracy."88 After describing her arrest, Goldman refuted the prosecution's main allegations and evidence, saying that the charges were "an insult to human intelligence."89 She also defended her anarchist views, explaining that new ideas are never accepted by those in power and arguing that America must defend democracy at home by protecting free speech. She concluded by urging the jurors to render a fair judgment and pledged that, regardless of their decision, the anarchist "struggle must go on."90

Like Alice Paul and the suffrage activists jailed for their protests, Goldman presented herself as a martyr who was persecuted simply for standing up for what she believed. From the start of the address, Goldman argued that her arrest was unjust. She claimed that her office was raided without warrant, that the cost of her bail was "ludicrous," and that the prosecution's evidence "utterly failed to prove the charge of conspiracy."91 She also described a number of ways in which the court had mistreated her. For example, Goldman discussed the meaning of "burden of proof" and complained that "the burden of proof has been laid upon us" instead of the prosecution.92 She
declared that she was being punished and "hated" for no reason other than her political beliefs. And she claimed that the government was making scapegoats out of her and Berkman, holding them responsible for "the rising tide of discontent in this country against war." Goldman bolstered this image by likening herself to famous martyrs in history. Although she insisted that she and Berkman had acted within the law, she invoked a number of historical martyrs worthy of praise despite their "lawless" actions. Jesus, she reminded her audience, "was put to death by those who considered his views as being against the law." Similarly, the heroes of the American Revolution, "who fought and bled for your liberties," were "in their time considered as being against the law." Finally, she talked about the leaders of the French Revolution and the assassins of Czar Alexander II, claiming that "not one of them worked within the law." Through these examples, Goldman depicted lawlessness as sometimes necessary to bring about positive change. She concluded: "I could continue to enumerate almost endlessly the hosts of men and women in every land and in every period whose ideas and ideals redeemed the world because they were not within the law.”

Goldman thus equated herself with the great martyrs of history, "like Jesus, Socrates, Galileo, Bruno, John Brown and scores of other"--all of whom acted "out of deep love for humanity." Looking to the future, Goldman predicted that her name would one day assume its rightful place among these great martyrs, prophesying that she would one day be seen as "the hero, the martyr and the saint" of this "new age." To Goldman, acting outside of the law meant acting in the name of humanity and progress. Consistent with her anarchistic philosophy, she argued that the law was "stationary, fixed,
mechanical," and thus impeded progress, which "knows nothing of fixity." Progress, she said, "is ever renewing, ever becoming, ever changing--never is it within the law." By presenting lawless behavior as the very definition of "progress," Goldman portrayed the trial as unjust and invited listeners to see her as a victim.

Goldman's speech linked her to a long tradition of American prophetic rhetoric. As rhetoric scholar James Darsey has written, claims to martyrdom are inherent to the prophetic tradition; indeed, according to Darsey, the "history of prophecy is a history of martyrdom." Demonstrating "helplessness and loss of self," martyrs become prophets when, through their persecution and suffering, they show others the path to righteousness and envision the future. Goldman made no claims to religious inspiration, but by likening herself to Jesus and other famous prophets she implied that her martyrdom was meant to serve some larger prophetic purpose.

As Goldman closed her address, she became even more explicit in her claim to prophetic wisdom. "Whatever your verdict, gentlemen," she told the jurors, it cannot "affect the ever increasing opposition to conscription." The jury's decision would "have no effect" on her or her followers, and no court decision could ever change the ideas of those "to whom human life is sacred." She announced that her cause was an "incessant human struggle" that would continue no matter what. Although Goldman faced a lengthy jail sentence, she remained defiant, confident that justice would ultimately prevail.

Goldman's rhetoric of martyrdom echoed Alice Paul, Eugene Debs, and other "radicals" of the Progressive Era. All claimed that they were persecuted for standing up for justice or for opposing war. But what most obviously set Goldman apart from other
political radicals, including the other "wild women" of the Progressive Era, were her ideas about sexuality, personal freedom, and human liberation. While Goldman's views on these issues did not result in a highly publicized trial, they did get her arrested on occasion and they invited widespread commentary and criticism. In challenging prevailing notions of morality, femininity, and acceptable gender roles, Goldman not only built upon a rich tradition of feminist thought dating back to the first female lyceum speakers, but also anticipated many of the foundational issues of the next generation of feminist activists. In short, Goldman may have distanced herself from the suffrage activists of her own day, but she was nevertheless a feminist visionary who helped blaze a path for later generations of women activists.

**Goldman's Vision of Human Liberation**

Historians and other scholars remember Emma Goldman mostly as a political agitator--an anarchist and anti-militarist whose political ideals challenged the capitalistic and democratic structures of American society. Scholars have characterized her as a political "ideologue," a political "theorist," and "one of the most respected figures in the anarchist movement."106 Goldman's political ideas were also largely responsible for her multiple arrests and criminal convictions, and scholars generally now accept her claims that she was unfairly persecuted. Historian Richard Drinnen, for example, has described Goldman as the victim of "the government's campaign" to squelch political dissent and silence outspoken "alien radicals," while Alice Wexler has traced widespread public distrust of Goldman to the "general hysteria" over the communist threat.107
In recent years, other scholars have begun to reflect upon Goldman's contributions to the history and theory of feminism. In 2007, for example, Penny A. Weiss and Loretta Kensinger edited a collection of fifteen essays on Goldman's contributions to feminist thought. Many of these essays focus on Goldman's anti-government views, illuminating her contributions to economic and political theory. Yet while several of the contributors to this volume mention Goldman's contributions to ongoing conversations about sexuality and gender roles, we still lack detailed analyses of her writings and speeches about birth control, sexual freedom, and related gender issues. In large measure, it was Goldman's views on these supposedly "private" issues that made her so controversial in her own day and helped shape her legacy as an inspiration to second-wave feminists.

Throughout her career, Goldman delivered hundreds of speeches and wrote more than a hundred essays challenging prevailing social norms, traditional ideas about morality, and common assumptions about women. Newspaper reporters and public commentators regularly criticized Goldman not only for her political ideas, but also for promoting what many considered immoral or even scandalous behaviors. In 1903, for example, a Montana newspaper worried that Goldman and other social radicals might influence young and "weak-minded" people to "frown upon decency" and engage in immoral behavior. In 1907, a Pennsylvania news reporter claimed that Goldman and her fellow anarchists were harmful to American society, not only because they had so little respect for the law, but also because "morality" was "meaningless to them." Even writers more sympathetic to Goldman's politics criticized her unconventional ideas about such supposedly "private" issues as birth control and sexuality. One reporter likened
Goldman to Carry Nation and other reformers who had "made a large or small stir in the world" by pushing people out of their "ruts" of traditional thinking. Yet even this writer concluded that, in the final analysis, traditional values and accepted standards of morality were socially useful: "The world needs, most of all . . . people who will stay in the ruts and bring up the children in the good old ways so that when they are old they will be law-abiding and square and decent and helpful men and women."112

Goldman's speeches and essays on birth control, "free love," and female "emancipation" flagrantly rejected traditional ideas about virtue and personal morality. Unapologetic, bold, and aggressive, Goldman's views on "private" morality challenged more than the nation's political structure; in her critics' view, they threatened to undermine the moral foundations of American culture. Candace Falk has suggested that, for many Americans, Goldman's challenge to traditional gender roles may have been more frightening than her critique of industrial capitalism because a social revolution "seemed more imminent, inevitable, and widely accepted" than a political revolution.113

Goldman's case for human liberation involved more than political or institutional reform; it envisioned complete emancipation from the moral codes of established society.

One of Goldman's most controversial "private" concerns was the issue of birth control. While working as a midwife in New York, Goldman witnessed the terrible consequences of unwanted pregnancies. In her autobiography, she wrote about women employing "fantastic methods" in order "to get rid of their expected offspring," including drinking horrible potions, jumping off of objects, and even "using blunt instruments" on themselves.114 Many women begged Goldman to perform an abortion. Goldman wrote that she left such encounters feeling "sick and distressed" and actually "hating" herself
because she "did not know how to help them." In 1900, Goldman attended a conference in Paris where speakers argued for "family limitation" and demonstrated contraceptive methods. Upon returning to the U.S., Goldman began discussing the subject of birth control in her lectures, at first making no mention of contraceptive methods. In her autobiography, Goldman explained that because birth control was "only one aspect" of a larger "social struggle," she "did not care to risk arrest" for discussing it. Then, in 1914, birth control advocates Margaret and William Sanger were indicted for using the U.S. mails to distribute a pamphlet titled "Family Limitation," which contained specific instructions for using various methods of contraception. After learning of their arrest, Goldman decided that she "must either stop lecturing on the subject or do it practical justice."

In 1915, Goldman chose the latter course, making birth control and contraceptive methods a central focus of her lectures. She delivered multiple speeches on the topic in both English and Yiddish, thereby reaching audiences of not only middle-class whites, but also working-class immigrants and minorities. Goldman also began distributing the Sangers' pamphlet and other documents providing specific information on contraceptive techniques and devices. Goldman traveled across the country lecturing on birth control for much of the year. In August, she was arrested in Portland, Oregon for distributing birth control literature. Her conviction in that case was overturned, but in February of 1916 she was arrested in New York for the same offense. This time, she was sentenced to fifteen days in prison.

At her 1916 trial, Goldman made the case for birth control using arguments that she had developed in her lectures and writings on the subject. In particular, she relied on
the arguments in her 1916 *Mother Earth* essay, "The Social Aspects of Birth Control." In this essay, Goldman outlined three main lines of argument in favor of "family limitation." First, she argued for "the scientific aspect"—the "terrible fact" that "incessant breeding" among the "overworked and underfed masses" created "defective, crippled, and unfortunate children."120 This "scientific" argument enabled Goldman to appeal to audiences of "physicians, lawyers, artists," and other highly educated and financially advantaged listeners.121 Second, Goldman argued that women had experienced a "mental awakening" regarding "the crime of bringing hapless children into the world" and had grown weary of "risking [their] health and sacrificing [their] youth in the reproduction of the race."122 In many of her lectures, Goldman emphasized women's health issues and taught specific birth control techniques, never failing to bring up the topic to poor and minority women who "needed that information most."123 Finally, she wrote that "a change in relation of the sexes" had produced "a very considerable minority" of men who now realized that relieving their wives from "the terrible imposition" of motherhood would allow them to be a respected partner rather than a "mere object" or even a "bitter enemy."124

With these arguments, Goldman not only advocated birth control but also promoted unconventional ideas about gender relations. Opponents of birth control often argued that contraception was immoral because it encouraged female promiscuity. Goldman turned this argument on its head, arguing for sexual liberation by pointing out that birth control would "set woman free from the terrible yoke" of unwanted pregnancy and thus give her the "freedom" to be more than a "mere incubator."125 For Goldman, promiscuity was not immoral if it did not produce undesired pregnancy. She argued that
immorality occurred when women were forced into "physical exhaustion" from constant child bearing and the "nervous stress" brought on by raising unwanted children.126 Opposition to birth control was thus not a moral imperative or a defense of motherhood. To the contrary, it only created "unfortunate children" and wasted women's lives in "eternal pregnancies, confinements, and diaper washing."127

Goldman's views about the morality of birth control also challenged prevailing assumptions about a woman's maternal instincts. Describing childbearing as a burden and even a form of "bondage," she characterized belief in the maternal instinct as a "superstition" and argued that laws prohibiting birth control must have been created by "some ignorant bigot" who knew nothing about the true nature of women.128 Goldman's arguments also called into question the idea that men wanted their wives to be homemakers consumed with the responsibilities of raising children. More and more men, she wrote, want to relieve their wives from the "imposition" of motherhood so that they would be free to discuss "the questions which absorb and stir" them, assume an equal position in the social structure, and become their "companion and friend."129 Goldman's writings and lectures on birth control thus advocated much more than contraception; they promoted greater equality between the sexes and the liberation of both women and men across ethnic and class lines.

"Free love" and gender equality were major components of Goldman's vision of human liberation. They complemented her anarchist political views, emerging out of the same concern with psychological and social structures that limited human freedom. While in Vienna in 1896, Goldman attended some of Sigmund Freud's early lectures on psychoanalysis. These lectures, Goldman wrote in her autobiography, made her aware of
"the full significance of sex repression and its effects on human thought and action."

She began reading the work of English "sexual modernists," such as Edward Carpenter and Havelock Ellis, who "celebrated the pleasures of sex apart from procreation" and called for acceptance of sexual expression outside of the heterosexual norm. In the 1890s, she discovered the American "free lovers" and such publications as the weekly newspaper *Lucifer the Lightbearer*. Goldman soon came to regard conventional sexual norms as a major obstacle to human liberation, and as early as 1895 she supplemented her anarchist lectures and writings with discussions of the issue.

Between 1895 and 1917, Goldman delivered hundreds of speeches and wrote dozens of essays arguing for sexual freedom and an end to traditional gender roles. Baring such titles as "Marriage and Love," "Free Love," "Sex Problems," "The New Woman," "Sex, the Great Element of Creative Art," "The Traffic in Women," "Victims of Morality," and "Vice," Goldman's rhetoric on "the sex question" challenged prevailing ideas about morality, femininity, and gender roles by presenting issues of sexuality as the root cause of female oppression. In "Victims of Morality," for example, she called religious prescriptions against allegedly "immoral" sexual behaviors a "whip to keep people in submission" and deny women their most basic rights. She saw "free love"--consensual sex based on love and unrestricted by religious dictates or the laws of the state--as an ultimate source of liberation and even moral improvement. Again turning conventional morality on its head, she even implied that divorce was sometimes the more moral alternative. "It is degrading for man and woman to live together after they no longer love--it is immoral," she concluded.
Goldman's unconventional views about marriage, morality, and female sexuality incited not only public curiosity, but also anger and rebuke. Crowds flocked to hear Goldman speak on these controversial issues, yet reactions to her ideas were often hostile. In 1898, the San Francisco Call voiced the opinion of many Americans when it called Goldman "a despicable creature" who was "unfit to live in a civilized country." In language testifying to the sort of passions her views often provoked, the Call concluded that Goldman deserved to "be hanged by the neck until dead and considerably longer."134

Like her arguments for birth control, Goldman's discussions of sexuality and gender roles challenged traditional ideas about morality and the most basic assumptions about the nature of men and women. Sexual repression, she argued, was harmful to the human spirit. Sex was "the most natural and healthy instinct" people possessed, she insisted, describing it as the most powerful human impulse and the source of "the most intimate, the most intense and sensitive, expressions of our being."135 Because Goldman saw sex as such a central part of the human experience, she described any efforts to repress sexuality as physically and emotionally harmful. She asked: "Can there be anything more outrageous than the idea that a healthy, grown woman, full of life and passion, must deny nature's demand, must subdue her most intense craving, undermine her health and break her spirit" by abstaining "from the depth and glory of the sex experience . . .?"136 For Goldman, sex was a natural part of the human experience and the source of creative expression. She labeled the idea of abstinence until marriage "disastrous" and "paralyzing," and she argued that nothing was "more pathetic, nothing more terrible" than a woman sacrificing her health and happiness to antiquated standards of morality.137
Regarding any form of sexual repression as harmful and dangerous, Goldman regularly insisted that sexual behavior "should by its very nature remain an absolutely private affair." She wrote that sexual desire was "so deeply related" to one's "individual physical and psychic traits" that nobody else should be allowed to regulate it. "Neither the State, the Church, morality, or people should meddle with it," she wrote.\(^{138}\) Drawing the attention and criticism of religious conservatives, Goldman insisted that, by definition, any sex act that an adult engaged in out of his or her own free will should be considered morally acceptable. Homosexuality, masturbation and other behaviors "usually hastily condemned as vice by thoughtless individuals" were, in Goldman's view, private matters that should only "be considered from a scientific viewpoint, and not in a moralizing way."\(^{139}\)

Goldman's discussions of "the sex question" rested upon a larger challenge to conventional gender roles. For Goldman, acceptance of sexual freedom required acceptance of the notion that women were fully human and therefore fully capable of directing their own lives. She asserted that healthy sexual expression between men and women required both parties to maintain an equal relationship: "A true conception of the relation of the sexes will not admit of conqueror and conquered."\(^{140}\) Consequently, Goldman inserted calls for the "emancipation" of women in her speeches and writings on sexuality. "We have not yet outgrown the theologic myth that woman has no soul, that she is a mere appendix to man," Goldman wrote.\(^{141}\) Attempting to expose this "myth," Goldman insisted that married people were "not of one body and one spirit," but rather were "two human beings, of different temperament, feelings, and emotions." Both men and women had a right to live their lives as they chose. In order to achieve "a complete
and true emancipation of women," society would "have to do away with the ridiculous notion" that a woman must be a "slave or subordinate." Women were "human in the truest sense," she concluded, and thus deserved the freedom to "direct" their own "destiny." 

Goldman's rhetoric on sexuality and gender continued a long rhetorical tradition of feminist challenges to conventional ideas about femininity, gender roles, and the institution of marriage begun by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and other female lyceum speakers of the late nineteenth century. No doubt some came to hear Goldman's lectures because she was known as a provocative speaker and her topics were so scandalous. Yet Goldman did not talk about such issues merely to entertain or shock her audiences; she, like Stanton, had a broader, long-range vision of a new social order. Imagining a new era of sexual liberation, Goldman worked to promote new roles for women and to inspire her listeners to reject repressive social norms as well as existing political structures. Taking the long view, she imagined a day--a day that would not come until long after her death--of sexual liberation, easy access to birth control, and complete equality for women. In that sense, Goldman was indeed a radical, yet she also proved prophetic. Many of her ideas would be foundational in the ideology of second-wave feminism, and her vision of human liberation, while still not fully realized, did come to pass.
The Legacy of Emma Goldman

The jury in Goldman's 1917 trial took only thirty-nine minutes to render its verdict. The jurors found Goldman and Berkman guilty and handed them the maximum punishment for their crime: two years in prison and a $10,000 fine. The judge also recommended that immigration authorities consider deporting the two, concluding: "For such people as these, who would destroy our government and nullify its laws, we have no place in our country." Many people were pleased with the verdict and agreed with the judge's recommendation that they should be deported. When the courtroom cleared, the marshal who arrested them addressed reporters and expressed his satisfaction with the outcome. He called Goldman and Berkman "a menace to the peace and safety of the United States," and he said that he believed "that the sooner they are in prison the better it will be for all concerned." On July 15, the New York Times published an editorial that labeled Goldman and Berkman's sentence "a just punishment" and argued that "a civilized Government is bound to punish severely those who obstruct the operation of its laws." And on August 23, 1919, J. Edgar Hoover wrote a memorandum to the Attorney General in which he contended that Goldman and Berkman should be deported because their "return to the community will result in undue harm."

The day after the trial, Goldman was sent to the Missouri State Prison and Berkman went to the Federal Penitentiary at Atlanta. The jail sentence did little to suppress her agitation. On her way to prison, Goldman penned a letter to a friend in which she urged her followers to publish an account of the trial "right away," writing that the transcript of her trial would make "an important historic document." After
spending two weeks behind bars, Goldman was released on bail when Supreme Court Justice Louis D. Brandeis signed an application to appeal the case to the Supreme Court. Goldman quickly commenced a speaking tour and began publishing more anarchist literature. All the while, Goldman, Berkman, and their lawyer, Harry Weinberger, worked to craft their appeal. On January 14, 1918, they lost their case before the Supreme Court, and on February 5, Goldman and Berkman were sent back to prison. Goldman remained in jail until September 27, 1919, when she was released on bail to await a deportation hearing. The hearing took place on October 17, 1919 and ended with a ruling that Goldman and Berkman were to be deported.

On December 3, 1919, Goldman received a telegram from her legal counselor announcing that the Federal Department of Labor had ordered that she and Berkman be deported to Russia. The two were scheduled to arrive at the Ellis Island penitentiary two days later to await transport. Upon arrival, Goldman discovered that more than two hundred other radicals had also been sent to Ellis Island to await deportation. Goldman described their living conditions as "nothing short of frightful," writing that they were housed in cramped quarters, served "abominable" food, and kept in constant suspense because they did not know when they would be sent away. Late at night on December 21, 1919, prison guards woke Goldman and her fellow inmates and announced that the time for their deportation had arrived. Guards ordered the deportees to dress quickly, line up, and march outside to board the S.S. Buford, an aging army transport vessel. At 4:20 a.m., the boat set sail, taking Goldman and 247 others back to Russia.

The story of Emma Goldman did not end aboard the Buford. She went on to deliver political speeches as well as critiques of modern drama throughout Europe,
Canada, and France. In 1933, after repeated appeals to re-enter the U.S., the Roosevelt administration granted Goldman permission to return to the country and complete a ninety-day speaking tour, providing that she lecture only about drama and her newly published autobiography. Goldman agreed to the rule, and on February 1, 1934, she returned to the U.S. and began her tour.

Goldman's U.S. lecture tour received largely favorable press coverage. In March of 1934, for example, the Madison (Wisconsin) *Capital Times* published an editorial observing that a large crowd in that city had been "impressed deeply" by the "intelligence and vitality" of Goldman, while the Chicago *Daily News* reported that Goldman displayed a "fine sense of humor" and made a "keen show of intelligence." Despite such praise, Goldman's tour was poorly managed and failed to make much profit. When her visa expired in May, she had to leave the country. Goldman took residence in Toronto and made a failed application to be readmitted to the U.S. In 1936, the Spanish Civil War started, with Spanish anarchists fighting to overthrow the government. Goldman was thrilled by the events, writing to her niece that the rise of anarchism in Spain had lifted "the crushing weight" of sadness that she had been feeling for months. Later that year, Goldman traveled to Barcelona and began to lecture throughout Europe in support of Spanish anarchists.

In 1939, Goldman returned to Canada, and on February 17, 1940, she had a stroke. The stroke left her paralyzed on her right side and unable to speak. She experienced a second stroke on May 8, and on May 14, 1940 she died. Upon her death, dozens of speeches and publications paid tribute to her legacy. The Chicago *Daily News* recalled her "powerful seductive voice," the *New Republic* praised her "example of
courage," and eulogist Harry Weinberger called her a "tireless, fearless, uncompromising battler for freedom and justice." In a 1940 letter to a friend, a former writer and photographer for Mother Earth, Sadakichi Hartmann, wrote that "Emma Goldman was an exceptional character, a brave woman, a fighter who could deliver a message with flaming enthusiasm and keep it up for many years. Whether her teachings have any economic value, I cannot say, but I know she educated MANY." 

Emma Goldman may not have converted many people to anarchism. Nor did she persuade many people in her own day to embrace her views on birth control, sexual morality, women's emancipation, or human liberation. Nevertheless, her controversial and confrontational rhetorical style forced such issues onto the public agenda, got people talking about them, and eventually helped her ideas become part of "mainstream" feminist thought. Like Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and other pioneering feminist reformers of the late nineteenth century, Goldman articulated a radical and far-reaching critique of patriarchal society that foreshadowed the reform agenda of second-wave feminism.

Ironically, Goldman never considered herself a feminist or part of the women's movement. In interviews, speeches, and writings, she actually criticized the feminist cause, arguing that it was tainted by a "puritanical vision" of gender relations, suffered from "too narrow a scope," and failed to attack the real cause of women's oppression. At the time, feminists--most of whom came from the middle class--focused most of their energies on woman's suffrage. Goldman viewed the suffrage movement as an elitist crusade that aimed to "benefit a handful of propertied ladies, with absolutely no provision for the vast mass of working women." She worried that the votes of dignified "ladies"
would only reinforce existing political structures and help sustain institutionalized patriarchy. Goldman took particular issue with suffragists' arguments that women voters would bring moral purity to politics. To assume that the female voter could "succeed in purifying something which is not susceptible of purification," she wrote, was to "credit her with supernatural powers." Further, because Goldman viewed all forms of government as harmful to the human spirit, the suffrage movement only served to distract attention from the real causes of women's oppression. Goldman wrote that "true emancipation begins neither in the polls nor in the courts. It begins in woman's soul." Suffragists' efforts were thus misguided and doomed to failure, according to Goldman. Not surprisingly, suffrage activists responded in kind, declaring Goldman "an enemy of woman's freedom" and "not one of us."

By the 1960s, as historian Alix Kates Shulman has written, Goldman's writings "had long been out of print" and her life was "all but forgotten." But then, in 1970, her books were reissued in paperback and she was rediscovered by a new generation of admirers. On August 26, a group of feminists calling themselves the Emma Goldman Brigade marched down Fifth Avenue in New York City distributing flyers with quotations from Goldman's speeches and chanting their support for her ideas: "Emma said it in 1910, Now we're going to say it again." Subsequently, historian and playwright Howard Zinn composed a play dramatizing Goldman's life and activism, and Goldman's picture appeared on the cover of the feminist underground newspaper *Rat*. The radical feminist magazine *Off Our Backs* likewise celebrated the memory of Emma Goldman by featuring her picture on its cover. In Iowa City, Iowa, the Emma Goldman Clinic opened, providing women with access to reproductive health care, including
abortions. Suddenly, Emma Goldman had become relevant, an icon of modern progressive thought. Writing in 1972, Shulman proclaimed that Goldman's "vision is current again," as her "witty antics and petulant style," her gestures of "defiance and the ferocious glower," and her "fanatical integrity" had suddenly become "immensely interesting" to a new generation of activists.167

In a little over 60 years, Goldman thus went from an enemy of women's rights to a hero and icon of the feminist cause. With the battle for suffrage won, second-wave feminists pursued a wider agenda of social and political reform. For these activists, Goldman's ideas about morality, women's rights, gender roles, and personal freedom proved inspirational. Later feminists also admired her style. Describing her first encounter with Goldman's work, historian Loretta Kensinger wrote, "Here was a woman who gave voice to my post-hippy-inspired desire for free and open love, a woman who had no illusions that the effort to implement ideology was easy," and a woman who worked "to bring these ideals to life."168 Kensinger, like many feminists of the time, saw Goldman as a visionary whose radical ideas and uncompromising rhetoric articulated the concerns, motivations, and aspirations of a generation of activists yet to be born. No longer an anti-feminist radical who was too confrontational to be convincing, Goldman was resurrected in the 1970s as a prophetic voice of the feminist cause.

In a 1908 interview published in the *Chicago Inter Ocean*, Emma Goldman said that the main goal of her activism was to "break the shackles that make [women] chattels of men." In this interview, Goldman suggested that her chief concern was not anarchism, politics, or economic reform, but the emancipation of women. "My whole life shall be a plea for their freedom," she asserted.169 In retrospect, Goldman's remarks indeed seem
prophetic. Like the other "wild women" of the Progressive Era, she was, in many ways, ahead of her time, and her legacy lives on in our public memories of the struggle for women's rights.
Endnotes

1 Although most of Goldman's friends were denied admittance into the courtroom, a few friends were allowed to enter, and at lunchtime a group of supporters presented Goldman with gifts and a bouquet of red roses. See Emma Goldman, Living My Life (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1931), 615; and Leonard D. Abbott, The Trial and Conviction of Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman (New York: Mother Earth Publishing Association, 1917), 13 in Reel 48, Emma Goldman Papers.

2 Goldman, Living My Life, 614-615.


4 Goldman, Living My Life, 615.


11 Margaret Anderson, My Thirty Years' War (London: Alfred A. Knopf, 1930), 54-55.

12 "Good Riddance to Emma Goldman," Philadelphia Inquirer, March 1, 1908, p. 8.


15 Emma Goldman to Agnes Inglis, May 12, 1917, Reel 10, Emma Goldman Papers.


20 Ibid., 151.

21 Goldman described her vision of anarchism as a philosophy that "stands for the liberation of the human mind" from constricting forces such as religion and "the liberation of the human body" from the limitations of government and social norms. See Goldman, "Anarchism: What it Really Stands For," in *Red Emma Speaks*, ed. Alix Kates Shulman (New York: Random House, 1972), 47-63.


25 Lena was born in 1862 and Helena was born in 1860. After Emma was born, Taube and Abraham had a boy, Louis, who died when he was six. In 1972, Taube gave birth to another boy, Herman, and in 1872 Goldman's youngest brother, Moishe, was born.

Inconsistencies appear in scholars' accounts of the amount of time Goldman spent in school. For example, Wexler claims that she attended classes for six years and Shulman notes that she did so for four years. See Wexler, *Emma Goldman*, 17; and Shulman, *Red Emma*, 5. Given that several scholars (including Wexler and Schulman) state that she arrived in Köningsberg at age eight and departed at age twelve or thirteen, four years seems to be an accurate number.


34 Ibid., 28.

35 Ibid., 18-25.

36 Ibid., 10.

37 The Emma Goldman Papers contain a letter written by Claus Timmerman, the editor of *Der Anarchist*, a militant anarchist journal, to his friend Carl Nold that named Schwab as the Haymarket bomb thrower. See Falk "Let Icons Be Bygons!" 52.


39 Four of the convicted men were hanged on November 11, 1887. One committed suicide in prison, and the others remained in jail until 1893, when Illinois governor John Peter Altgeld granted them a full pardon. For further reading, see Paul Avrich, *The Haymarket Tragedy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984).


46 The judge sentenced Berkman to three consecutive seven-year prison terms for attempted murder and an additional one-year term for carrying a concealed weapon. See Solomon, *Emma Goldman*, 14; and Goldman, *Living My Life*, 106.

47 Before getting money from her sister, Goldman attempted to earn money through prostitution, but after walking up and down the street, she felt unable to carry out her plan. See Goldman, *Living My Life*, 90-95.


49 Ibid., 123.

50 Ibid., 148.


52 Ibid., 162-172.


54 For information on the fundraising nature of Goldman's speaking tours, see Morton, *Emma Goldman*, 49-51. The *Mother Earth* staff was comprised of a group of radical agitators who also wrote essays for the publication and reprinted essays from other writers such as Mary Wollenstonecraft and Peter Kropotkin.

55 See Wexler, *Emma Goldman*, 166.

57 Berkman was released from prison on May 18, 1906. He served thirteen years in the Western Penitentiary and an additional ten months in a workhouse.

58 Emma Goldman to Agnes Inglis, May 12, 1917, Reel 10, Emma Goldman Papers.


60 Emma Goldman to Frank P. Walsh, May 25, 1917, Reel 10, Emma Goldman Papers. Goldman's letter to Walsh as well as the *New York Sun* report that 8,000 people attended the meeting. See "Emma Goldman Lists 5,000 as Against Draft," *New York Sun*, May 30, 1917, in Reel 10, Emma Goldman Papers.

61 Except where otherwise noted, information about the context of Goldman's address was obtained from Morton, Solomon, *Emma Goldman*, and Wexler, *Emma Goldman*.


66 Goldman, *Living My Life*, 602-603. Goldman wrote that Kramer was sentenced to two years in prison and a $10,000 fine, Becker was given one year and eighteen months in prison and "was also condemned to pay a similar fine." Sternberg and Walker were acquitted. See Goldman, *Living My Life*, 603.


69 Ibid., 609.

70 Berkman was arrested in the office of *The Blast*, another radical publication.


For a complete transcript of the trial, see William J. Finerty, stenographer, *United States v. Goldman and Berkman: Stenographer's Minutes*, June 27-July 9, 1917, Reel 58, Emma Goldman Papers. The stenographer's minutes do not include the closing statements of Goldman, Berkman, or the prosecuting attorney.

Emma Goldman, "Address to the Jury," in *Red Emma Speaks*, ed. Alix Kates Shulman (New York: Random House, 1972), 311-327. Historians such as Alice Wexler have noted that statements advocating violence would "have been entirely out of character" for Goldman. See Wexler, *Emma Goldman*, 233. Recently, however, scholars such as Candace Falk have argued that Goldman's political tactics "encompassed both the violent and the peaceful" and have pointed out how some of her words could be read as calls to violence action. See Falk, "Let Icons Be Bygones!" 58-59.


Emma Goldman to Lillian Kisliuk, July 11, 1917, Emma Goldman Papers.

Ibid.

Well-known radical activists including John Reed, Lincoln Steffens, Bolton Hall, and Anna Sloan attended the trial and served as defense witnesses.


Ibid., 619.

Ibid., 620.

Ibid., 621.
87 Goldman, "Address to the Jury," 313.

88 Ibid., 314.

89 Ibid., 315.

90 Ibid., 321-324, 327.

91 Ibid., 314, 316.

92 Ibid., 320.

93 Ibid., 321.

94 Ibid., 323, 325.

95 Ibid., 321.

96 Ibid., 321.

97 Ibid., 321-322.

98 Ibid., 322.

99 Ibid., 323.

100 Ibid., 323.

101 Ibid., 323.


103 Goldman, "Address to the Jury," 325.

104 Ibid., 325-326.

105 Ibid., 327.


108 Weiss and Kensinger, "Digging for Gold(man)," 4.


111 "For Law and Order," *Wilkes-Barre Times*, August 1, 1907, p. 4.


113 Falk, "Let Icons Be Bygons!" 45.


115 Ibid., 186.

116 Ibid., 552-553.

117 In 1914, the 1873 Comstock Law was still in effect. This law made disseminating "obscene, lewd, or lascivious articles" illegal. Information about contraception fell under this category. See Wexler, *Emma Goldman*, 210.


119 See Wexler, *Emma Goldman*, 211.


123 Goldman, Living My Life, 569.
125 Ibid., 140.
126 Ibid., 137.
127 Ibid., 136.
128 Ibid., 138-140.
129 Ibid., 137.
130 Goldman, Living My Life, 155.
134 San Francisco Call, May 22, 1898.
137 Emma Goldman, "Victims of Morality," 129.
139 Emma Goldman, "Vice." This lecture was printed in *Lucifer the Lightbearer*, March 23, 1901.


143 Goldman, "The Tragedy of Woman's Emancipation," 134.


147 Ibid., p. 1.


150 Emma Goldman to Lillian Kisliuk, July 11, 1919, Reel 10, Emma Goldman Papers.


153 Ibid., 713.


156 Goldman was particularly saddened by Berkman's suicide in 1936. Emma Goldman to Stella Cominsky, August 22, 1936, Emma Goldman Papers. Letter quoted in Drinnon, Rebel in Paradise, 301-302.

157 Chicago Daily News, May 14, 1940; New Republic, June 3, 1940, 747; Harry Weinberger, Speech delivered at Emma Goldman's funeral, Chicago, May 17, 1940. Newspapers and speech are printed in Falk, Love, Anarchy, and Emma Goldman, 516-518. The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service allowed Goldman's body to be buried in the United States. She was buried alongside other radicals in the German Waldheim Cemetery in Chicago.


162 Ibid., 211.


164 Goldman, Living My Life, 556-557.


166 Ibid., 4-5.

167 Ibid., 4.


169 "Emma Goldman Clashes with Police on Meeting," Interview in the Chicago Inter Ocean, March 8, 1908. Article printed in Making Speech Free, 1902-1909, vol. 2 of
Chapter 6

Conclusion

In *Rhetoric and Reform in the Progressive Era*, J. Michael Hogan describes the rhetorical history of the Progressive Era as "a remarkable story of public advocacy and democratic deliberation. . . . It is a story of the revival of 'serious speech' and public deliberation in America."¹ In a period of rapid social and political change, a colorful cast of characters put "the great questions of the day" before the public, convinced that "the best hope for democracy" rested upon more vigorous and robust public debate.² From William Jennings Bryan to Theodore Roosevelt, from Jane Addams to Eugene Debs, a diversity of activists crusaded under the banner of progressive reform, and they fundamentally remade the social and political world of the early twentieth century.

The "rhetorical renaissance" of the Progressive Era was defined not by a specific ideological agenda but by the conviction that rhetoric matters. Politically, advocates crusading under the banner of progressive reform had little in common. But they all had faith in the power of rhetoric to change the world for the better. At first glance, the four women investigated in this study--the "wild women" of the Progressive Era--might seem to have rejected that faith. Engaging in militant, confrontational behaviors, they refused to play by the rules of acceptable public speech, and they did not invite polite discussion of the issues they raised. Yet as this study has shown, that does not mean that they were not smart, creative, and conscious rhetorical strategists. Determined to advance their various causes, they used radical tactics to attract attention, inspire and motivate their
followers, and force their issues on the public agenda. They may not have resembled Woodrow Wilson's portrait of the ideal political leader--the "oratorical statesman" committed to reason and dispassionate debate--but they did make important contributions to the American rhetorical tradition.

The American rhetorical tradition is a tradition not just of reasoned or polite speech, but also of radical, even confrontational rhetorical action. Fiery, rabble-rousing language and passionate, uncompromising demands are just as much a part of that tradition as grand, elevated, and decorous speeches on the floor of the U.S. Senate. James Darsey has traced the Western tradition of radical rhetoric to the Old Testament and has argued that such discourse has functioned to enliven public debate and bring new ideas into the public sphere. According to Darsey, militant and confrontational speech also has performed a "leveling move," opening the doors of political participation to the previously excluded.

Still, we remain distrustful of radical rhetoric because, as Darsey explains, we associate reasoned and civil discourse with a stable society. The breakdown of civil discourse seems to signal that society itself has become unhinged. Reason, propriety, politeness, and formality are considered the hallmarks of "good" public speech because they are regarded as signs of a healthy society. In rejecting the norms of reasoned and polite public discourse, of course, the "wild women" of the Progressive Era announced that all was not well in American politics and culture. Stepping outside of their homes to advocate political causes, they dramatically challenged traditional ideas about proper or appropriate female behavior and helped to redefine the gendered norms of rhetorical action.
Each of the "wild women" investigated in this study contributed something unique to the rhetorical legacy of the Progressive Era. Mother Jones inspired miners to fight for their rights with speeches that insulted, cajoled, threatened, and ridiculed. Although Jones had never actually worked in the mines, she rhetorically identified with her predominately male audiences of tough, uneducated minors, and she helped forge them into a powerful, sometime violent collectivity. Her unyielding, aggressive, and even threatening style simultaneously convinced miners that she was "one of them" and a charismatic, prophetic leader on a historic mission to save the working class. Jones's success at organizing laborers and arousing them to action challenged prevailing ideas about the role of women in politics, and her language seemed almost deliberately designed to shock and offend. Much more than just a "motherly" figure, Jones was a masterful rabble-rouser with a "rough-and-tumble" working-class style. She was an outsider whose rhetoric inspired tough working-class men to embrace her as their prophetic and heroic leader.

Carry A. Nation likewise made important contributions to America's rhetorical heritage. Using a confrontational, even violent strategy of symbolic "smashings" to attract attention to her cause, she gained an audience for her more extended discourses on the evils of alcohol and the need for radical action. Nation endured harsh criticism, but that only created more opportunities for her to make the case against alcohol. In speeches and newspaper articles and in her widely read autobiography, The Use and the Need of the Life of Carry A. Nation, Nation did more than explain and justify her methods. More than a rhetorical apologia, Nation's memoir articulated a bold new vision for the prohibitionist movement. It served as a call-to-arms, demanding that all good mothers
join the crusade to protect their families and their children against the evils of alcohol. *The Use and the Need of the Life of Carry A. Nation* served as the autobiographical manifesto of a more aggressive, more confrontational prohibitionist movement, a movement led by mothers determined to protect their homes and their children by any means necessary. In an era when women still could not vote, it also endorsed implicitly the larger crusade to give women a political voice.

Alice Paul shaped the rhetorical legacy of her era and our traditions of protest rhetoric with her public spectacles and the rhetoric of martyrdom. In her 1913 suffrage parade, Paul pioneered the use of dramatic "image events" to unite working and middle-class women in the suffrage cause, creating the appearance of a movement that transcended both class and race.8 Provoking rude and even violent reactions from both onlookers and authorities, Paul's parade also created opportunities for the suffragists to gain public sympathy by exploiting traditional ideas about how "ladies" ought to be treated. Similarly, Paul's White House picketing campaign may have violated prevailing notions of proper female behavior, yet it too created opportunities to win sympathy for the cause by rhetorically exploiting the overreaction of onlookers and authorities. Pioneering a kind of "body rhetoric," Paul and her fellow protestors became victims and martyrs, both on the picket lines and later in jail.9 Roughed up in front of the White House and dragged off to jail, the suffragists' nonviolent resistance symbolized a new level of commitment to the cause and helped build public sympathy for these martyrs. By putting their own bodies on the line, Paul and her colleagues brought a new sense of urgency to the long struggle for woman suffrage and ultimately forced the issue on to the President's political agenda.
Finally, Emma Goldman's radical ideas about government, religion, morality, and gender roles may have shocked people in her own day, but they injected ideas into public discourse that survived and were embraced by a later generation of progressive activists. In the early twentieth century, many people regarded Goldman as offensive, even dangerous, and she clearly was out of touch with the ideas and values of mainstream Americans. Yet like the feminist lyceum speakers of the late nineteenth century, Goldman's social critiques articulated a powerful challenge to the sexual politics of her day and introduced a long-range vision of social change that would be embraced by later generations of feminist reformers. By speaking out on taboo topics such as birth control and sexual liberation, Goldman blurred the boundaries between public and private speech, and she envisioned a world of complete gender equality and personal freedom. Although Goldman disavowed affiliation with the women's movement of her own day, her critique of conventional sexual morality and restrictions on birth control foreshadowed major themes of second-wave feminism in the 1960s and 1970s. As her name, image, and ideas were embraced by these later activists, she came to be remembered as a prophet of modern feminism.

Each of the women studied in this project thus made significant contributions to the American rhetorical tradition. They also all shared a commitment to empowering women in the political sphere. In the very act of speaking out, they challenged prevailing social norms and opened up new spaces for women to participate in politics. In the process, they contributed to the breakdown of patriarchal society and helped redefine the role of women in American culture. The words and behavior of these activists may have violated prevailing standards of acceptable speech; indeed, many found them shocking,
rude, or even obscene. But in defying the rules of civil and decorous speech, they
demonstrated their understanding of the power of rhetoric in defining social and political
realities and helped to undermine discursive conventions that had silenced women for
generations.

Of the four women studied in this project, only Paul considered herself a feminist
or a women's rights activist. Yet all of these women played a role in breaking down
gender barriers that relegated women to the domestic sphere and excluded them from
politics. Jones's success as a labor leader proved the ability of women to lead a
movement of working-class men. Nation's violent attacks on barrooms and saloons
demonstrated the depth of her commitment and dramatized women's demand for a
political voice. The courage and physical sacrifices of Paul and her followers created
martyrs for the suffrage movement and helped propel it to victory. And Goldman's
radical ideas about free love and sexuality began to undermine patriarchal ideas about
morality and the proper role of women. Not all of these women embraced the label
"feminist," but all four were in fact important leaders in the long struggle for women's
rights.

Today we continue to grapple with questions about where to draw the line
between justifiable "agitation" and "demagoguery" or "coercion."10 As J. Michael Hogan
and Dave Tell have explained, rhetorical scholars in the late 1960s and 1970s often
sympathized with the radical activists of that day and looked for ways to justify more
aggressive, confrontational, or militant forms of protest.11 That work brought a better
understanding of the forms and functions of radical rhetoric, including its role in forging
collective identities, focusing attention on neglected issues, and democratizing the
political process. At the same time, however, it has blurred the lines between "good" and "bad" speech in a democracy, between speech that is justifiably angry or militant and speech that is coercive or simply destructive.

For democracy to work, as Patricia Roberts-Miller has argued, we need at least some rules defining "good public discourse," and we need to distinguish between legitimate persuasion in a democracy and propaganda or demagoguery.\textsuperscript{12} This search for rules has inspired a variety of prescriptions for public discourse, ranging from Jürgen Habermas’s conception of the "public sphere" to John Rawls’ idea of "public reason."\textsuperscript{13} Of course, some scholars argue that a "rational political consensus" is not possible "in a pluralistic society," and that any sort of rules make "discursive assimilation a condition for participation in public debate."\textsuperscript{14} Yet while distinguishing between "radical" speech that empowers or liberates and that which threatens or coerces may be difficult, it is necessary to preserve our democratic way of life. The challenge is to articulate rules of democratic discourse that allow for productive deliberations without silencing the already marginalized or always protecting the status quo.\textsuperscript{15}

In their own day, the "wild women" of the Progressive Era were often dismissed as irrational, unreasonable, or even crazy and immoral. On occasion, their rhetoric was even condemned as criminal or against the word of God. Yet it also served to empower other women and, in some cases at least, to inspire positive social change. Clearly, they defied the standards of civil discourse, and occasionally they may have even crossed the line into coercive or violent rhetoric. Yet as Franklyn Haiman observed of the radicals of the 1960s, people tend to resort to militant or confrontational rhetoric only when they are denied access to the "channels of rational communication."\textsuperscript{16} During the Progressive
Era, of course, women were still denied the right to vote, and in many cases they were prevented from speaking in public at all. Given that context, the rhetorical strategies of these "wild women" seem both understandable and justified, and in most cases they also proved effective at advancing their cause.

Whatever one's view on the morality or efficacy of radical rhetoric, it remains an important part of America's long rhetorical tradition. Until quite recently, Mother Jones, Carry Nation, Alice Paul, and Emma Goldman had been almost completely excluded from the canon of "great speakers" in the history of American public address. Yet as their voices have been recovered, we have discovered that they still have much to teach us about the nature, functions, and effects of militant and even confrontational rhetorical strategies. Their rhetorical legacy has proven instructive, not just for modern feminists, but for social activists of all stripes. In short, the "wild women" of the Progressive Era still have some lessons to teach.

The Rhetorical Legacy of the "Wild Women" of the Progressive Era

This study of Jones, Nation, Paul, and Goldman contributes to our understanding of several persistent issues in the literature on the Progressive Era, women's rhetoric, social movements, and agitation as rhetorical strategy. First, it broadens our understanding of the discourse of the Progressive Era and women's rhetoric. Although the "wild women" of the Progressive Era have not been ignored by historians or rhetorical critics, their strategies have sometimes been too narrowly understood. Scholars have discussed how female Progressive Era activists, including radical women reformers,
appealed to traditional gender roles to attract followers and win the support of more conservative audiences. Yet these women reformers also consciously violated gender norms by identifying with male audiences (Jones), engaging in violent acts (Nation), marching and picketing in the streets (Paul), and talking about taboo "private" matters like sex and marriage (Goldman). By highlighting these aspects of women's rhetoric in the Progressive Era, this study complicates our understanding of both progressive reform and women's rhetoric during this time. The Progressive Era was an age not only of robust democratic debate, but also of changing rules of participation in political discussions. By complicating the picture of the rhetorical renaissance that took place during the Progressive Era, this study contributes to a richer understanding of the rhetorical legacy of progressive reform.

The case studies in this dissertation contribute to our understanding of how social movements might use rhetorics of identification, confrontation, prophesy, spectacle, and martyrdom to advance their causes. Each of these "wild women" employed a unique combination of militant or even confrontational tactics in order to perform the usual functions of social movement rhetoric: attracting attention, unifying and solidifying a following, forcing neglected issues onto the public agenda, communicating a sense of urgency, or pressuring the "establishment" to act. Jones, for example, used fiery language and the rhetoric of prophesy to establish a powerful collective identity for her and her followers and inspire them to fight for their rights. Paul created public spectacles that attracted media attention and eventually created martyrs for the cause. Nation used her "smashings" to communicate a sense of urgency and to rally other mothers to her movement. Goldman spoke in a bold and unyielding style that forced
authority figures and others to react. Whether employing the rough language of the working class or fearlessly discussing topics considered taboo in polite society, all of these women creatively used a combination of radical rhetorical strategies to achieve specific goals.

Over the years, the "wild women" of the Progressive Era have been increasingly recognized as important pioneers in the history of social reform in the United States. Mother Jones, for example, has become an icon of various movements for social justice. In 1981, she became the namesake of a national, nonprofit, liberal magazine that boasts an annual circulation of 240,000. The magazine takes pride in its namesake, stating on its Web site that Jones "was a very cool woman who fought for the underdog." At Wheeling Jesuit University in West Virginia, there is even a Mother Jones House--a residence hall for students who want to pursue "systemic social change for peace and economic justice." Residents must pledge to participate in at least ten hours of community service every week. And an elementary school in Adelphi, Maryland bares Jones's name, describing her as "the most beloved and newsworthy woman" in the history of the labor movement. Jones may not be a household name, but her reputation certainly has improved since the day she was condemned as vulgar, vile, and violent. Now, Jones is a symbol of the labor movement, an inspiration to school children and college students, and a motivating force in the movement for economic and social justice.

Public memories of Carry A. Nation likewise have taken on more positive tones in recent years. No longer considered a lunatic, a sexual deviant, or a villain, Nation is today celebrated as a free-spirit who brought excitement to small towns and fought bravely for social reform and women's rights. Honoring Nation's celebrity, the town of
Holly, Michigan holds an annual Carry Nation Festival that pays tribute to Nation for putting their town on the map. The three-day festival features a parade, carnival rides, music from local bands, a beauty pageant, and even a yearly production of the comic play *Carry and Her Hatchet.* Written by local high school history teacher Ardath Reagan, the play tells the story of Nation's 1908 visit to Holly, during which she broke beer bottles in several saloons, delivered a speech, and publicly scolded the state governor. Generating laughs with its drunken barmen who spill drinks on the crowd and flashy bordello girls who dance across the stage, the play presents Nation as an amusing yet determined character who breathed life into the quiet village of Holly. The festival remembers her not as a "crank," a mannish "freak," or a sinner, as many in her own day did, but as a woman who made a real difference.

During the 2000 U.S. Senate race in New York, news outlets invoked memories of Nation in reports on both Hillary Rodham Clinton and Rudolph Guiliani. On March 11, 1999, Intellectualcapital.com noted that Guiliani seemed "to relish his role as the Carrie Nation of the anti-drinking-and-driving movement." Ten days later, the *Washington Post* called Clinton the "Carrie Nation" of the race because she always found ways to "speak out against practices that degrade and humiliate women." Thus, Nation came to symbolize both the movement against drunk driving and contemporary feminism. No longer reviled as a destructive or even a criminal fanatic devoted to the prohibition of alcohol, Nation somehow came to represent social responsibility and modern liberal thought.

Alice Paul has always been recognized as a prominent leader of the more radical faction of the suffrage movement, but in recent years her historical reputation has gained
even more strength. In 1995, the U.S. Postal Service issued an Alice Paul Stamp as part of its Great Americans Stamp Series, which was established "to recognize the accomplishments of men and women, that [sic] forever changed our lives."25 At a ceremony marking the stamp's release, the Postal Service distributed a program that summarized Paul's life and achievements but made no mention of her more confrontational and criminal activities. According to the Postal Service, Alice Paul "founded the National Woman's Party, which worked to gain suffrage through a constitutional amendment, rather than through the slower state by state approach favored by most other suffragists. Her approach proved successful." By this account, of course, Paul's major contribution to the cause revolved around the ends rather than the means of protest; she is credited with a goal that was, in fact, part of Carrie Chaptman Catt's "winning plan."26 As this study has suggested, however, Paul's most significant contribution may have been how she forced the issue on to the agenda of President Wilson through a militant, even confrontational strategy of non-violent resistance.

In 2004, Paul's historical reputation as a martyr was boosted further by an HBO made-for-television movie, Iron Jawed Angels. Depicting Paul's 1913 parade, the White House picketing campaign, and her imprisonment and hunger strikes, the film provided a vivid representation of Paul's assertiveness and her creative use of visual spectacle. Perhaps the most haunting images in the film come when Paul and her fellow suffragists are shown in prison, suffering from physical abuse and brutal forced feedings. These scenes, which depict Paul growing progressively sicker and weaker during her hunger strike, emphasize the intensity of her suffering for the cause. This representation clearly invites sympathy for Paul and her fellow protestors, regardless of what they might have
done to provoke the authority figures. In the film, Paul is depicted not as an aggressive militant or radical, but as a charismatic leader and a sympathetic victim.\textsuperscript{27}

In 2012, the U.S. Mint plans to release a ten dollar gold coin bearing Paul's image as part of its "First Spouse" program. Paul was chosen to represent the administration of President Chester A. Arthur (1881-1885) because he was a widower while in the White House and Paul was born during his presidency.\textsuperscript{28} Remembering Paul in a series honoring presidential spouses seems especially ironic, however, given that she directed her wrath at the White House and First Lady Edith Wilson was among her harshest critics.\textsuperscript{29} Clearly, Paul is \textit{not} being remembered so much for her strategies and tactics as for the end result.

Emma Goldman has received perhaps the most attention from revisionist historians, feminist scholars, and rhetorical critics. Much of her work was reprinted in the 1970s, her speeches and writings have been made available via the University of California's "Emma Goldman Papers Project," and in 2004, PBS aired a television biography. Today, Goldman is probably the most recognizable of the "wild women" discussed in this study. As discussed in chapter five, Goldman's name, image, and ideas have been widely embraced by second-wave feminists, with her words chanted by women's rights marchers in the 1970s, her visage gracing the cover of feminist magazine \textit{Off Our Backs}, and her name representing an Iowa City women's health clinic with the motto "A Feminist Approach to Health Care.\textsuperscript{30} Clearly, Goldman has been appropriated as a feminist icon despite the fact that she distanced herself from the suffragists of her own day. Moreover, this appropriation of Goldman as a symbol of the women's rights movement has dimmed historical memory of the activism that landed her in jail and
ultimately got her deported: her opposition to World War I and the draft and her commitment to anarchism.

Criticized, feared, and reviled in their own day, the "wild women" of the Progressive Era have thus slowly been transformed into more popular, more sympathetic, even likeable figures. All now stand as pioneers in a sweeping historical narrative about the movement for progressive reform. Although publicly denounced as radicals or even immoral in their own day, we now look back on these "wild women" as positive influences in American history and as inspiring role models for today's young women. This shift in public attitudes--this creation of revisionist historical memories--reflects the dramatic changes that have taken place in gendered norms and conventions since the Progressive Era. In a society that is moving toward ending patriarchal and oppressive gender roles, the "wild women" no longer seem so wild. Their behaviors no longer offend our conceptions of proper female behavior, and they violate fewer of our rules for "good" public speech. In the Progressive Era, society still valued old-fashioned eloquence, the well-crafted argument, and rational appeals. Today, we recognize that radical speech also plays an important role in our democratic process, and that the passion and emotion of the activist is an important part of our rhetorical heritage.

The "wild women" of the Progressive Era spoke during a time when women and many other groups were denied access to the channels of rational deliberation. Thus, they resorted to a variety of other means for making their voices heard. They pushed the boundaries of acceptable public speech, especially for women, and in the process they helped change the role of women in America. Their tactics may have been
unconventional, but they made important contributions to the American rhetorical
tradition and to the ongoing struggle for human rights, fairness, equality, and freedom.
Endnotes


2 Ibid., 480.


6 Darsey, *The Prophetic Tradition*, x, 5.

7 Darsey, "Eugene Debs and American Class," 256-257.


13 Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991), 36–43; John Rawls, *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 212-254. Habermas conceptualized the public sphere as the ideal speech situation in which individuals come together to discuss issues concerning the public good using accepted standards of reason and debate. Rawls' notion of public reason expressed the idea that citizens should justify their political decisions using values and standards that could be deemed reasonable and acceptable by all. Rawls argued that people who participate in political decision making possess a "duty of civility" that requires them to justify their ideas with agreed upon "public values" and "public standards" for reasonable arguments.


15 For discussion of these questions, see Hogan and Tell, "Demagoguery and Democratic Deliberation," 479-487.


29 In her autobiography, Edith Wilson criticized the suffragists, stating that their picketing campaign made her feel "indignant" and that she was "blazing with anger" when an acquaintance of her husband, Dudley Field Malone, defended them in their July 1917 trial. Edith Bolling Wilson, *My Memoirs* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1938), 138.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


VITA

MARY K. HAMAN

EDUCATION

Ph.D.: Communication Arts and Sciences, degree expected December 2009
The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania

M.A.: Communication, 2005
Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas

The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania

PUBLICATIONS

Haman, Mary K. "Mother Jones, Speech at a Public Meeting on the Steps of the
Capitol Charleston, West Virginia." Voices of Democracy: The U.S.

Haman, Mary K. and Linda L. Putnam. "In the Gym: Peer Pressure and Emotional
Management Among Co-Workers." In The Emotional Organization:
Passions and Power, ed. Stephen Fineman, 61-73. Malden, MA:

Haman, Mary K. Emotion Work in the Gym: An Analysis of the Relationship
between Emotional Labor and Authenticity. Berlin: VDM Verlag, 2007
(revised version of M.A. thesis).

SELECTED COURSES TAUGHT

Instructor, Department of Communication Arts and Sciences, The Pennsylvania State
University
CAS 100C: Effective Speech, Message Analysis, Spring 2007, Fall 2007.