

SOUTHERN PROMISE AND NECESSITY: TEXAS, REGIONAL IDENTITY, AND THE
NATIONAL WOMAN SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT, 1868-1920

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This study offers a concentrated view of how a national movement developed networks from the grassroots up and how regional identity can influence national campaign strategies by examining the roles Texas and Texans played in the woman suffrage movement in the United States. The interest that multiple generations of national woman suffrage leaders showed in Texas, from Reconstruction through the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment, provides new insights into the reciprocal nature of national movements. Increasingly, from 1868 to 1920, a bilateral flow of resources existed between national women's rights leaders and woman suffrage activists in Texas.

Additionally, this study nationalizes the woman suffrage movement earlier than previously thought. Cross-regional woman suffrage activity has been marginalized by the belief that campaigning in the South did not exist or had not connected with the national associations until the 1890s. This closer examination provides a different view. Early woman's rights leaders aimed at a nationwide movement from the beginning. This national goal included the South, and woman suffrage interest soon spread to the region. One of the major factors in this relationship was that the primarily northeastern-based national leadership desperately needed southern support to aid in their larger goals.

Texas' ability to conform and make the congruity politically successful eventually helped the state become one of NAWSA's few southern stars. National leaders believed the state was of strategic importance because Texas activists continuously told them so by emphasizing their promotion of women's rights. Tremendously adding credibility to these claims was the sheer

number of times Texas legislators introduced woman suffrage resolutions over the course of more than fifty years. This happened during at least thirteen sessions of the Texas legislature, including two of the three post-Civil War constitutional conventions. This larger pattern of interdependency often culminated in both sides—the Texas and national organizations—believing that the other was necessary for successful campaigning at the state, regional, and national levels.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AWSA	American Woman Suffrage Association
CAH	Center for American History, University of Texas, Austin, Texas
ECS-SBA	Elizabeth Cady Stanton-Susan Brownell Anthony Papers
ESA	Equal Suffrage Association
GFWC	General Federation of Women's Clubs
<i>HTO</i>	<i>Handbook of Texas Online</i>
<i>HWS</i>	<i>History of Woman Suffrage</i>
LWV	League of Women Voters
NWSA	National Woman Suffrage Association
NAWSA	National American Woman Suffrage Association
NWP	National Woman's Party
SAEFS	San Antonio Equal Franchise Society
SSWSC	Southern States Woman Suffrage Conference
TERA	Texas Equal Rights Association
TFWC	Texas Federation of Women's Clubs
TFWLC	Texas Federation of Women's Literary Clubs
TWSA	Texas Woman Suffrage Association
TESA	Texas Equal Suffrage Association
TSHA	Texas State Historical Association
WSA	Woman Suffrage Association
WCTU	Woman's Christian Temperance Union
UDC	United Daughters of the Confederacy

INTRODUCTION

National women's rights leaders identified an interest in the South early during the development of the woman suffrage movement in the United States. In 1855, only seven years after the first Seneca Falls Convention, Martha Coffin Wright, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan Brownell Anthony, Lucy Stone, and others stood on the streets of Saratoga Springs, New York, selling suffrage literature; they tried specifically to reach vacationing southerners. What had begun as a localized northeastern campaign for women's rights was already being identified by its leaders as one that would need to have a national, and thus multi-regional, following if it was to be successful.¹

Texans, like many southerners, read about woman suffrage and privately discussed the topic long before they publicly supported the cause or organized on its behalf. Texas newspapers often ran pieces discussing woman suffrage and universal suffrage work in other states, thus residents were exposed to the reform as early as 1865—if not before. Decades later, when southern states began organizing woman suffrage associations, people publicly admitted to holding private conversations and showing interest well before the movement took shape in the region.²

¹ Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Matilda Joslyn Gage, eds. *History of Woman Suffrage, 1848-1861*, vol. 1. 2nd ed. (Rochester: Mann, 1889) [Hereafter cited as *HWS I*], 623-626.

² For examples of newspaper articles in Texas that discuss woman suffrage in 1865 see *Galveston Daily News*, July 29, 1865, October 14, 1865. Additionally, Elizabeth Cady Stanton credited a woman named Mary Cole [Mrs. M. C.] Walling for giving a speech in the United States Senate chambers on universal suffrage in 1866. Stanton said Walling was from Texas. She did deliver this speech, but the universal suffrage topic was on universal manhood suffrage—her speech was about enfranchising African American men. This does show the connection between a Texas woman and multiple types of suffrage advocacy very early during Reconstruction, though. Called by Horace Greeley “the greatest female speaker of the age,” Walling received permission from the Thirty-Ninth Congress of the United States specifically to give a lecture on the “condition of the South.” Walling was the last person ever permitted to use the Senate chambers to deliver a public speech. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Matilda Joslyn Gage, eds. *History of Woman Suffrage, 1831-1876*, vol. 2 (Rochester, New York: Mann, 1881) [Hereafter cited as *HWS II*], 327; M. C. Walling, *Important Speech of Mrs. M. C. Walling, On Reconstruction and Universal Suffrage, Delivered in the U. S. Senate May 10, 1866* (n.p, n.d), E151 .R35 v.18:5, Ramsey Pamphlet Collection (Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul, Minnesota) (second footnote quotation); *New York Times*, April 11, 1866; Frances E. Willard and Mary A. Livermore, eds. *A Woman of the Century: Fourteen*

Elizabeth Cady Stanton witnessed one of these declarations during a speaking tour in Texas from late 1875 to early 1876. During the tour, she had a conversation with a southern woman who told her that when the suffrage convention was held in Saratoga Springs in 1855, she was living in Georgia. When a friend of hers returned home after vacationing in Saratoga Springs, the friend brought with her pamphlets that suffragists (including Stanton) sold on the street. Stanton wrote in *The History of Woman Suffrage* that the activists hoped to infiltrate the South using these “tracts to sow the seed of rebellion all through the southern states.” According to the southern woman’s story, the plan for disseminating information throughout the South worked. Once the woman’s friend returned home, “quite a circle of ladies” studied the pamphlets with great interest and questions about the way the suffragists dressed and their mannerisms. While this story does suggest a fascination by a group of young southern women with northeastern suffragists because the activists seemed exotic, it shows early exposure to the subject and a positive attraction. Historian Sally McMillen argues that it was likely that most people who learned of the early women’s rights conventions saw the activity as radical, and thus these young southern women’s curiosity was not necessarily tied to their regional identity but instead to nineteenth-century gender norms. Furthermore, this early exposure to woman suffrage must have had some influence on the southern woman because she sought out Stanton two decades later to express how early in her life she had been interested in the cause.³

In the decades between the early women’s rights conventions and the addition of the Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution in 1920—which made it illegal to deny

Hundred-Seventy Biographical Sketches Accompanied by Portraits of Leading American Women in All Walks of Life (Buffalo, New York: Moulton, 1893), (first footnote quotation)749.

³ *HWS I*, pp. 623-626 (quotations); Sally G. McMillen, *Seneca Falls and the Origins of the Women’s Rights Movement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 65. It is unclear when this woman came to Texas from Georgia, but by 1875 she was in Texas and met Stanton. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Matilda Joslyn Gage, eds. *The History of Woman Suffrage: 1876-1885*, vol. 3 (Rochester: Susan B. Anthony, 1886) [Hereafter cited as *HWS III*], 396.

a citizen the right to vote based on sex—at some points national suffragists’ expressed interest in the South became an obsession. For example, in 1895 Carrie Chapman Catt, the chairperson for the organizational committee of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), was so focused on southern work that she offended the national organization’s president, Susan B. Anthony. Anthony later complained that Catt had not shown up to a meeting, and then, when she did arrive later in the day, “her head was too full of southern campaign and political study work to see into the Jubilee of our four score leader [Stanton].” Catt was not alone; at times national suffrage leaders, including Anna Howard Shaw, Henry Blackwell, and even Anthony, displayed an intense focus on woman suffrage work in the South to the detriment of other issues.⁴

Because many of the early activists first came together as abolitionists, from the movement’s beginning they viewed the South as a breeding ground for patriarchal brutality that needed to be surmounted and forever changed. The nation’s married women and slaves, it was argued, were both mistreated and disfranchised by similar legal realities. The best way to end to women’s disfranchisement nationwide was somehow to transcend the divisions created by regional identity. The efforts to do so became one of the central sources of debate throughout the entire votes for women movement. While at different times national leaders changed their beliefs of whether to focus on gaining votes for women on a state-by-state basis or through a federal constitutional amendment campaign, most recognized the need for support from southern states.⁵

⁴ Susan B. Anthony to “Darling Rachel” [Rachel Foster Avery], March 15, 1895, Anthony (Susan B.)-Avery (Rachel Foster) Papers (quotation), Department of Rare Books, Special Collections and Preservation, Rush Rhees Library, University of Rochester, Rochester, New York [Hereafter referred to as Anthony-Avery Papers].

⁵ *HWS* I, 89, 599; McMillen, *Seneca Falls*, 65.

Through the examination of the roles Texas and Texans played in the woman suffrage movement in the United States, this study offers a concentrated view of how a national movement developed networks from the grassroots up and how regional identity can influence national campaign strategies. Studying the interest that multiple generations of national woman suffrage leaders showed in Texas, from Reconstruction through the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment, brings new insights to the reciprocal nature of national movements. Increasingly, from 1868 to 1920, there existed a bilateral flow of resources between national women's rights leaders and woman suffrage activists in Texas. At times, for example, during Reconstruction, pro-suffrage Texans supplied information to national networks through limited correspondence on the details of woman suffrage in the state, and national leaders toured the state attempting to educate southern communities on the benefits of women's enfranchisement.

In the last three decades of the nineteenth century, the national suffrage associations encouraged affiliated woman suffragists to organize networks of support and to travel educating the public. The national associations served local activists through a variety of methods, including periodic financial support, as sources of pamphlets and other campaign information, and as a communication hub—especially through the weekly woman suffrage newspaper *The Woman's Journal*. In return, Texas suffragists supplied northeastern leaders with advice and information on southern culture in relation to gender norms, including that related to woman suffrage campaigning in the region. They supplied articles for publication in national women's news outlets, sold subscriptions, and served as contacts for regional sales—for example—of *The Woman's Journal*. By the 1890s, enough organized suffrage sentiment existed in the state that the recently unified NAWSA facilitated the formation of a state woman suffrage association and

secured its affiliation to the national organization—thus adding to its national ranks and providing an outlet for national messages and campaigning.

Actually, NAWSA executives were involved in the organization of all three affiliated Texas state associations, the Texas Equal Rights Association (TERA) in 1893, the Texas Woman Suffrage Association (TWSA) in 1903, and the reorganization of the TWSA in 1913, which was renamed in 1916 as the Texas Equal Suffrage Association (TESA). Furthermore, NAWSA leaders handpicked all three inaugural Texas association presidents prior to their “election” by state delegates—Rebecca Henry Hayes in 1893, Annette Finnigan in 1903, and Eleanor Brackenridge in 1913. The extent to which the national associations, especially NAWSA, at times involved themselves in the state by directing affiliated activity shows how much control national leaders continuously wanted to have in local matters. While at times, some Texas suffragists rejected such national involvement, most believed in the benefits of being part of the larger reform network and aimed to occupy a relatively large portion of national leaders’ attention.

Texas’ ability to conform and make the congruity politically successful helped make the state one of NAWSA’s few southern stars. From the advent of woman suffrage advocacy in the Lone Star State, suffragists described Texas as one of the few in the South with the promise to support the enfranchisement of women. Some called it the “most promising.” National leaders, especially those connected with NAWSA, believed the state was of strategic importance because Texas activists continuously told them so by emphasizing their promoting woman’s rights. Tremendously adding credibility to these claims was the sheer number of times Texas legislators introduced woman suffrage resolutions over the course of more than fifty years (see Table 1. 1). This happened during at least thirteen sessions of the Texas legislature, including two of the

three post-Civil War constitutional conventions. This larger pattern of interdependency often culminated in both sides—the Texas and national organizations—believing that the other was necessary for successful campaigning at the state, regional, and national levels.

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Year	Woman Suffrage Resolution
1868	Reconstruction Constitutional Convention
1870	Resolution for Full Woman Suffrage State Amendment
1873	Resolution for Full Woman Suffrage State Amendment
1875	“Redeemer” Constitutional Convention
1895	Resolution for Full Woman Suffrage State Amendment
1907	Resolution for Full Woman Suffrage State Amendment
1911	Resolution for Full Woman Suffrage State Amendment
1913	Resolution for Full Woman Suffrage State Amendment
1915	Resolution for Full Woman Suffrage State Amendment
1917	Resolutions for Primary Woman Suffrage by Legislative Vote & Full Woman Suffrage State Amendment
1918	Resolution for Primary Woman Suffrage by Legislative Vote, Successful
1919	Resolution for Full Woman Suffrage State Amendment
1919	Full Woman Suffrage Federal Amendment, Successful

Source: Texas House, Senate, and Constitutional Convention Journals, 1868-1920

In the years immediately following Reconstruction and continuing through 1920, the give and take of the bilateral flow of regional and national influence encompassed the negative as well as the positive. The need for support from the South was one of the reasons claimed by white national woman suffrage organizational leaders for restricting the involvement of African Americans in affiliated activities. The thought was that southern audiences would not support woman suffrage if it meant also enfranchising the region’s black women. While suffragists argued that the segregation of national suffrage activities, especially after 1890, was aimed at increasing the movement’s following in the South, organizational leaders from the North were also sources of racist sentiment. Starting during Reconstruction, if not before, national leaders such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton publicly expressed racist anger at the enfranchisement of African American men before the nation’s women. The racist activities of national leaders continued

into the twentieth century, as Jim Crow segregation penetrated every corner of the U. S. including NAWSA membership requirements. Similar patterns can be found with respect to ethnocentric segregation, and national leaders, including Anthony, vocalized these sentiments. Nationwide, suffragists in states with high immigrant populations made nativist arguments about the enfranchisement of foreign-born women. While a large portion of southern suffrage leaders—including many in Texas—engaged in xenophobic and negrophobic demagoguery, woman suffragists from all sides of the movement perpetuated the use of racial and ethnic stereotypes and discrimination as part of the woman suffrage campaign.⁶

The racism and ethnocentrism practiced by white United States citizens widely affected the opportunity racially and ethnically underrepresented Americans had to participate in the woman suffrage movement. Some whites employed violence in their efforts to maintain the disfranchisement of minority groups. The action of publicly organizing to demand African American and/or Mexican American women's suffrage threatened to endanger the women, their families, and/or their communities. Therefore, as historians Rosalyn Terborg-Penn and Glenda

⁶ For an example of the Nativist rhetoric, specifically anti-Mexican American, practiced by NAWSA leaders like Susan B. Anthony, see Mari Jo Buhle and Paul Buhle, eds. *The Concise History of Woman Suffrage: Selections from History of Woman Suffrage, Edited by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Matilda Joslyn Gage, and the National American Woman Suffrage Association* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2005), 331-332. Historian Aileen Kraditor claims that southern and northern suffragists and anti-suffragists were driven by what each group believed was the best way to disfranchise southern blacks, and immigrants. Kraditor concludes that woman suffrage was just another means of gaining white supremacy. Aileen S. Kraditor, *Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement, 1890-1920* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965). More than twenty years later, historian Suzanne Lebsack sought to re-evaluate Kraditor's theory. Lebsack states that Kraditor based her conclusions on the assertions of the national woman suffrage leaders, and by taking a closer look at state and local suffrage campaigning, racist rhetoric is present but usually supplied by the anti-suffragists. In Virginia, Lebsack found that while woman suffrage advocates were usually white, this was because black women's presence in the votes-for-women campaign could only hurt the cause by making the patriarchal political structure all the more nervous. Furthermore, while white suffragists did use the argument that woman suffrage would not damage the white political supremacy in the state, Lebsack says that this was usually in response to anti-suffragist claims that black women would outnumber white women at the polls. Suzanne Lebsack, "Woman Suffrage and White Supremacy: A Virginia Case Study," in *Visible Women: New Essays on American Activism*, ed. Nancy Hewitt and Suzanne Lebsack (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 62-100.

Gilmore found, some African Americans hesitated to participate in woman suffrage activism for fear that it would endanger themselves and their communities.⁷

The educational, economic, and social segregation practiced as part of the Jim Crow era also reduced the overall number of African American and Mexican American communities from which participation in the votes for women movement would most likely come. The majority of woman suffrage activists in the state were consistently middle-class and educated, and much more likely to engage in woman suffrage campaigning if they lived in urban areas—regardless of race, ethnicity, or gender. Historians have found that the existence of established African American or Mexican American urban middle-class communities in Texas was limited until the 1920s and later—after the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment, which accounts for fewer instances of woman suffrage activism by black or Hispanic Texans.⁸

⁷ Rosalyn Terborg-Penn, *African American Women in the Struggle for the Vote, 1850-1920* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 117, 118-120; Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 211-215. There is an extensive amount of literature examining racial and ethnic segregation in the U. S., the South, and in Texas. For examples see, C. Vann Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow* Commemorative Edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1955, 2001); C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1955, 1971); Leon Litwack, *Trouble in Mind: Black Southerners in the Age of Jim Crow* (New York: Random House, 1998); Julian Samora and Patricia Vandel Simon, *A History of the Mexican-American People* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1977); Darlene Clark Hine, *Black Victory: The Rise and Fall of the White Primary in Texas* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2003); David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001); Arnoldo De Leon, *They Called Them Greasers: Anglo Attitudes Toward Mexicans in Texas* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983); Jane Dailey, Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, and Bryant Simon, eds., *Jumpin' Jim Crow: Southern Politics from Civil War to Civil Rights* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Alwyn Barr, *Reconstruction to Reform: Texas Politics, 1876-1906* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1971); Ariela J. Gross, "Texas Mexicans and the Politics of Whiteness," *Law and History Review* 21:1 (Spring 2003): 195-205.

⁸ For the discussion of racial and/or ethnic segregation of education and its influence, see Guadalupe San Miguel Jr., *Brown, Not White: School Integration and the Chicano Movement in Houston* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2001); Amilcar Shabazz, *Advancing Democracy: African Americans and the Struggle for Access and Equity in Higher Education in Texas* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004). For the discussion of African American and Mexican American urban middle-class communities in Texas, see Michael Phillips, *White Metropolis: Race, Ethnicity, and Religion in Dallas, 1841-2001* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006); Richard A. García, *Rise of the Mexican American Middle Class: San Antonio, 1929-1941* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1991). For additional examples of the discussion of woman suffrage as an urban-based movement, see Alexander Keyssar, *The Right to Vote: The Contest History of Democracy in the United States* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 194; and Elizabeth Hayes Turner, *Women, Culture, and Community: Religion and Reform in Galveston, 1880-1920* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 278-280; Jean E. Friedman, *The Enclosed Garden: Women and Community in the Evangelical South, 1830-1900* (Chapel Hill: University of North

Finally, it is important to note the effect the state association's discriminatory practices had on the cultural memory of the woman suffrage movement. Women's historians often rely heavily on organizational and association records because they can provide the understanding of a larger group in one place, usually have a structure to them upheld over time, and sometimes are all that are publicly accessible through archival holdings. Yet, there are limits to using these group records that might not always be evident to the researcher. In Texas, the racial and ethnic segregation, and at times demagoguery, practiced by the national and state associations removed the ability for African American and Mexican American women to participate in the larger women's rights groups and decreased the likelihood of their inclusion in the movement's history.⁹

While it is relatively difficult for historians to obtain a clear understanding of the extent to which racially and ethnically underrepresented Americans participated in the woman suffrage movement, this study shows that suffragists working with the segregated state and national groups were not the only ones working for women's enfranchisement. During the twentieth century, African American women worked for suffrage and organized voter education programs.

Carolina Press, 1985). Kevin C. Motl's dissertation, "A Time for Reform: The Woman Suffrage Campaign in Rural Texas, 1914-1919," (Ph.D. diss., Texas A&M University, 2006), is a survey of nine rural counties in Texas. The study discusses why suffrage workers in rural areas in the state were not successful and not very often connected to state organizing efforts. The author argues that localized suffrage workers in rural areas did exist in Texas, but affiliations with the larger woman suffrage movement stemmed from middle-class urban reformers. Very similar to a previous master's thesis study by Jennifer Baugh Hancock, "Society Suffragists: Women's Struggle for the Ballot in Rural East Texas," (master's thesis, Stephen F. Austin State University, 1999), Motl added to Hancock's findings with information from nine other counties that spread more widely across Texas.

⁹ Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham argues that, "To be black and female carries the dual burden of racial and sexual oppression." Often, minority women are victims of both the male-defined historical timeline and the predominantly Caucasian women's historical timeline. Therefore, this "double-edged sword" cuts them out of the picture. This examination of woman suffrage activities in Texas supports these findings and expands the argument to include Mexican American women. Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, "Beyond the South of Silence: Afro-American Women in History" *Gender & History* 1 (1989): 50-67, 52 (footnote quotation). For a similar discussion of the relationship between women's history and Mexican American women, see Antonia I. Castañeda, "Gender, Race, and Culture: Spanish-Mexican Women in the Historiography of Frontier California," *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 11:1 (1990): 8-20; Antonia I. Castañeda, "Women of Color and the Rewriting of Western History: The Discourse, Politics and Decolonization of History," *Pacific Historical Review* 61:4 (November 1992): 501-533.

Support for the movement also existed within the Mexican American community in Texas, and some key leaders were public advocates for the cause. The evidence suggests that most suffrage workers were women, but some were men, thus the term “suffragist” defined anyone working for woman suffrage regardless of gender. This study aims at an even wider interpretation of Texas woman suffrage, therefore “suffragist” is considered an all-inclusive term for those active in woman suffrage work for themselves or others—including ad hoc groups and individuals without any affiliation—crossing all demographics, including race, ethnicity, age, social or economic class, and gender.¹⁰

A number of groundbreaking studies, to which this author expresses enormous gratitude, have broadly explained the suffrage movement through national or regional contributory histories or examined a portion of the work for women’s enfranchisement with other themes. These extremely influential works were essential in the development of the research contained in this dissertation. This study attempts to add to the current historiography and argues that a more focused approach is necessary to understand fully the complexities of national campaigning. For example, it is generally accepted that woman suffrage organizing in the South occurred in the 1890s when the NAWSA, the only national organization at the time, began to make a concentrated effort to form state associations across the region. This decade did beckon forth a wave of state NAWSA affiliate organizations in the South, including one in Texas in 1893, but as this study shows a stream of woman suffrage activism began in the region at least three decades prior. Furthermore, there was consistent knowledge, interest, and involvement by the national suffrage associations in these reform activities in Texas. Thus, while the efforts of

¹⁰ The American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA) and the National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA) from 1869 to 1890 were the national suffrage organizations that unified in 1890 as NAWSA and subsequently became the largest suffrage organization in the U. S. The Southern States Woman Suffrage Conference (SSWSC) and the National Woman’s Party formed in 1913, and all three competing organizations controlled much of the national campaigns for woman suffrage through 1920.

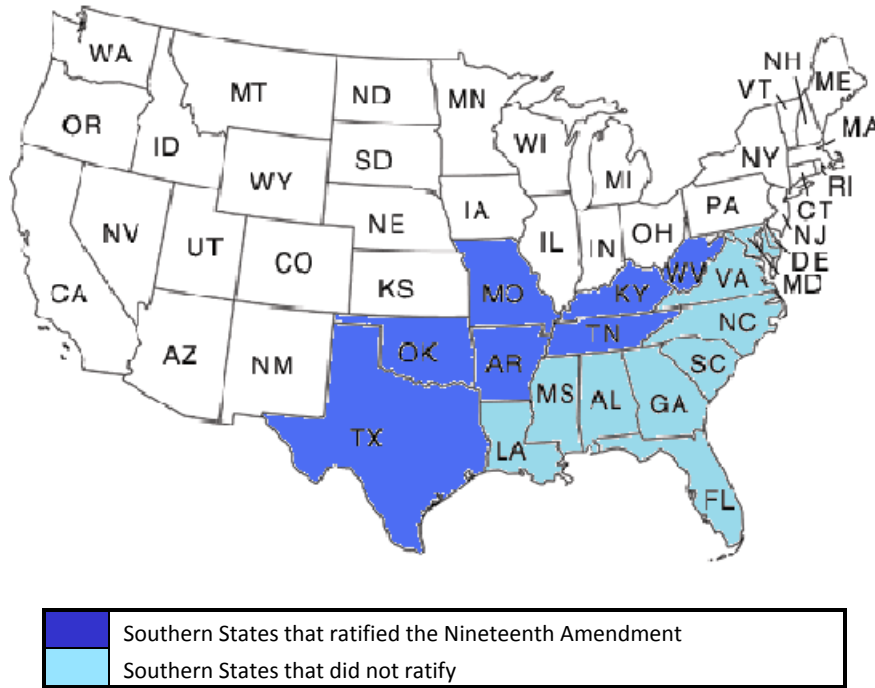
Kentuckian Laura Clay and other NAWSA Southern Committee supporters were active agents involved in the creation of southern state suffrage associations affiliated with the national organization, they were not the first to approach the subject. A number of the national leaders saw the merit of southern work because many had been interested and active in communicating with suffragists in the region for decades. A closer look at woman suffrage activism outside the corridors of organizational work, traditionally studied by historians, shows a variety of political campaigning, educational efforts, and communication techniques employed by reformers starting in Texas during the last third of the nineteenth century.¹¹

¹¹ For studies focusing on national woman suffrage organizing in the U. S., Eleanor Flexner, *Century of Struggle: The Woman's Rights Movement in the United States* (New York: Atheneum Press, 1970); Anne Firor Scott, *Natural Allies: Women's Association in American History* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993); Ellen Carol DuBois, *Feminism and Suffrage: The Emergence of an Independent Women's Movement in America, 1848-1869* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1978); Ellen Carol DuBois, *Woman Suffrage and Women's Rights* (New York: New York University Press, 1998); McMillen, *Seneca Falls*; Terborg-Penn, *African American Women*; Sara Hunter Graham, *Woman Suffrage and the New Democracy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996); Marjorie Spruill Wheeler, ed. *One Woman, One Vote: Rediscovering the Woman Suffrage Movement* (Troutdale, Oregon: NewSage Press, 1995); Jean H. Baker, ed. *Votes for Women: The Struggle for Suffrage Revisited* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Anne Firor Scott, *Making the Invisible Woman Visible* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984); Nancy F. Cott, "What in a Name? The Limits of 'Social Feminism;' or, Expanding the Vocabulary of Women's History," *The Journal of American History* 76 (December 1989): 809-829; Gerda Learner, "Placing Women in History: Definitions and Challenges," *Feminist Studies* 3 (Fall 1975), 5-14; Lois W. Banner, "On Writing Women's History," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 2 (Autumn 1971): 347-358. For studies focusing on woman suffrage organizing in the South, see Anne Firor Scott, *The Southern Lady: From Pedestal to Politics 1830-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970); Marjorie Spruill Wheeler, *New Women of the New South: The Leaders of the Woman Suffrage Movement in the Southern States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Elna C. Green's *Southern Strategies: Southern Women and the Woman Suffrage Question* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997); Marjorie Spruill Wheeler, ed. *Votes For Women: The Woman Suffrage Movement in Tennessee, the South, and the Nation* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1995); Paul E. Fuller, *Laura Clay and the Women's Rights Movement* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1975); Lebsack, "Woman Suffrage and White Supremacy." For studies that incorporate the discussion of Texas woman suffrage, see Turner, *Women, Culture, and Community*; Judith N. McArthur and Harold L. Smith's *Minnie Fisher Cunningham: A Suffragist's Life in Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, *Revolt Against Chivalry: Jessie Daniel Ames and the Women's Campaign Against Lynching* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979); Judith N. McArthur, *Creating the New Woman: The Rise of Southern Women's Progressive Culture in Texas, 1893-1918* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998); Elizabeth York Enstam, *Women and the Creation of Urban Life: Dallas Texas, 1843-1920* (College Station, Texas: Texas A&M University Press, 1998); A. Elizabeth Taylor, "The Woman Suffrage Movement in Texas," *The Journal of Southern History* 17 (May 1951): 194-215; Elizabeth York Enstam, "The Dallas Equal Suffrage Association, Political Style, and Popular Culture: Grassroots Strategies of the Woman Suffrage Movement, 1913-1919," *The Journal of Southern History* 68 (November 2002): 817-849; Janelle D. Scott, "Local Leadership in the Woman Suffrage Movement: Houston's Campaign for the Vote, 1917-1918," *Houston Review* 12 (1990): 3-22; Betty T. Chapman, "From the Parlor to the Public: New Roles for Women in Houston,

Events involving Texas also lend a better understanding of NAWSA's southern campaigning in the final years of the woman suffrage battles. Many southern suffragists, and connectedly women's historians, believed that once NAWSA president Carrie Chapman Catt unveiled her "Winning Plan" in 1916, a multilevel campaign aimed at winning a federal constitutional amendment, the national association started to ignore the South. Examination of the efforts in some southern states, including Texas, from 1916 to 1920 provides a different view. Southern states were part of the plan. Woman suffragists, aided by NAWSA funds and organizers, won a woman suffrage voter referendum in Oklahoma in 1918, and four other southern states—Arkansas, Texas, Missouri, and Tennessee—waged successful partial woman suffrage campaigns as part of the Winning Plan.

1885-1918," *The Houston Review: History and Culture of the Gulf Coast* 15 (1993): 31-44; Larry J. Wygant, "'A Municipal Broom': The Woman Suffrage Campaign in Galveston, Texas," *The Houston Review: History and Culture of the Gulf Coast* 6 (1984): 117-134. Woman suffragist activists were the first to chronicle the movement for posterity. For examples of published first-hand accounts and primary sources, *HWS I*; *HWS II*; *HWS III*]; Susan B. Anthony and Ida Husted Harper, eds. *The History of Woman Suffrage, 1883-1900*, vol. 4 (Indianapolis, Indiana: Hollenbeck Press, 1902) [Hereafter referred to as *HWS IV*]; Ida Husted Harper, ed. *History of Woman Suffrage, 1900-1920*, vol. 5 (New York: J. J. Little & Ives, 1922) [Hereafter cited as *HWS V*]; Ida Husted Harper, ed. *History of Woman Suffrage, 1900-1920*, vol. 6 (New York: J. J. Little & Ives, 1922) [Hereafter cited as *HWS VI*]; Carrie Chapman Catt and Nettie Rogers Shuler, *Woman Suffrage and Politics: The Inner Story of the Suffrage Movement* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1926); Maud Wood Park, *Front Door Lobby*, ed. Edna Lamprey Stantial (Boston: Beacon Press, 1960); *The Selected Papers of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony*, vol. 1, *In the School of Anti-Slavery, 1840-1866*, ed. Ann D. Gordon (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1997); *The Selected Papers of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony*, vol. 2, *Against an Aristocracy of Sex, 1866 to 1873*, ed. Ann D. Gordon (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2000); *The Selected Papers of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony*, vol. 3, *National Protection for National Citizens, 1873 to 1880*, ed. Ann D. Gordon (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2006); *The Selected Papers of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony*, vol. 4, *When Clowns Make Laws for Queens, 1880 to 1887*, ed. Ann D. Gordon (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2006); *The Selected Papers of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony*, vol. 5, *Their Place Inside the Body-Politic, 1887 to 1895*, ed. Ann D. Gordon (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2009); Jane Y. McCallum, *A Texas Suffragist: Diaries and Writings of Jane Y. McCallum*, ed. Janet G. Humphrey (Austin Texas: E. C. Temple, 1988); Anne F. Scott and Andrew M. Scott, *One Half the People: The Fight for Woman Suffrage* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1975); Ruthe Winegarten and Judith N. McArthur, eds. *Citizens at Last: The Woman Suffrage Movement in Texas* (Lufkin, Texas: Ellen C. Temple Publishing, 1987).

Hki wtg'300'Vj g'P qv'Uq'Uqrk' 'Uqwj "



Source: Map structure provided by U. S. Department of Agriculture, The Census of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service, available from http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/1997/Commodity_Rankings/index.asp (accessed December 17, 2009).

Furthermore, these states when added to Kentucky and West Virginia comprised the seven southern states among the thirty-six needed (thirty-eight were received in total) to ratify the Nineteenth Amendment (see Figure 1.1. and Table 5.1.). NAWSA's federal amendment campaigning in the South strategically relied heavily on Texas, especially after the state's suffragists won the primary vote for women in 1918 and became the first southern state to ratify the Nineteenth Amendment in 1919. Texas association leaders became central to the lobbying of southern legislators, and the success of the Texas suffrage movement also became a model for other southern states as they sought strategies for persuading their own legislators to support a federal amendment to increase the electorate.¹²

¹² When discussing southern states that ratified the Nineteenth Amendment, historians often state that four—Texas, Arkansas, Kentucky, and Tennessee—were the only ones that successfully did so. This brings to question the definition of “southern,” a debate central to the region’s historiography. If the definition of “southern”

Finally, through the examination of southern woman suffrage activities in Texas—a state whose residents consistently were involved in the larger movement for more than five decades—and by extending the scope of research to include women’s political activities inside and outside suffrage organizations, patterns connected to women’s political party affiliations emerge. As this study shows, women often came to the woman suffrage campaign already identifying with a political party. Through much of the period, Texans were involved in woman suffrage activities within the dominant party in the state, which was—as in the rest of the South—the Democratic Party. However, the Democratic, Republican, and People’s parties at different times all had women involved in the movement defining themselves as supporters of each. These activists showed a certain level of political interest and knowledge prior to their affiliation with the votes for women movement. They had enough understanding of the political structures in the state, region, and nation to conceptualize their own ideological placement in the voting community structures and to connect with other politically like-minded individuals. Before winning the

is limited to the former eleven members of the Confederate States of America (CSA), which would only include Texas, Arkansas, and Tennessee in the woman suffrage ratification. It is the purpose of this study to examine woman suffrage activities in connection to the regional identity of the historical players and through the lens of inclusivity. Therefore, the most inclusive definition of “southern” has been applied. If a state was a member of the CSA, it is considered southern—Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia. Since slavery was at the center of debates regarding political-regional identity, the definition of southern extends to those that were slave states at the start of the Civil War, which adds Kentucky, Missouri, Delaware, Maryland, and Oklahoma to the above list. While Oklahoma was a territory during the Civil War, and admitted as a state in 1907, it was designated as open to slavery by the Missouri Compromise in 1820 and held that status at the time of the war. For discussion of slavery in Oklahoma, see Daniel F. Littlefield, *Africans and Seminoles: From Removal to Emancipation* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1977). Additionally Oklahoma is defined as southern by C. Vann Woodward in *Origins of the New South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1951), 497. Finally, if woman suffragists in a state identified their state, and by connection its legislators and constituents as southern, then the state is considered southern in this study—which adds West Virginia and reinforces the argument for Maryland. Graham, *Woman Suffrage*, 200. Additionally, while West Virginia broke from Virginia over the issue of secession and was subsequently admitted to the Union as an independent state in 1863, it was admitted as a slave state. Thus, in total, this study considers seventeen states to have been those that can be considered regionally identified as part of the South during the votes for women movement. For a systematic listing of southern regional identity in connection with woman suffrage statistics, see Table 5.1.; and Elizabeth Hayes Turner, *Women and Gender in the New South, 1865-1945* (Wheeling, Illinois: Harlan Davidson, 2009), 127.

franchise, these women knew the issues, chose their political affiliations, and prepared for the chance to exercise their votes.

Historians mark the beginning of the United States woman's rights movement, and more specifically the notion of woman suffrage, at a two-day convention in Seneca Falls, New York, on July 19-20, 1848. The exclusion of women from an international anti-slavery convention in London in 1840 precipitated the first Seneca Falls convention; among those refused were Lucretia Coffin Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. These two women, along with Mott's sister Martha Coffin Wright, and friends and fellow anti-slavery advocates Jane C. Hunt and Mary Ann M'Clintock, organized this first women's rights convention in 1848, at which more than 300 men and women participated.¹³

Women's rights activists organized another convention in Rochester, New York, that same year and yet another in Salem, Ohio, in early 1850. The spread of woman suffrage sentiment drove leaders to solidify its presence by holding a national convention, and the National Woman's Rights Convention, held in Worcester, Massachusetts, in October 1850 was the point at which Lucy Stone entered the movement. The following year, in 1851, Stanton and Susan B. Anthony met and the latter joined the ranks of women's rights activists. During the next decade, annual conventions were held in a number of cities, including New York City and Syracuse, New York, Cincinnati and Cleveland, Ohio, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Worcester, Massachusetts.¹⁴

By the late 1850s, woman suffragists began actively discussing their desire to spread increased information about the reform movement to the South. They desired a multiregional presence that would constitute a true national movement, but much of the activity was still

¹³ McMillen, *Seneca Falls*, 71-81.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 71-81, 97-98. 104-110.

limited to the regional birthplace of women's rights organizing activity—the Northeast. While loosely constructed networks defined the majority of activism during this early period, in 1852 the Ohio Woman's Rights Convention, held in Akron, was considered the first state organization connected to the larger national movement. However, by and large those involved in the national movement contested organizing state affiliates. It appears this type of activity did not become part of the movement until the years following the split of national woman's rights activists into the National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA) and the American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA) in 1869.¹⁵

In between, the years of the American Civil War marked a break in woman suffrage work as the movement's leaders actively engaged in war work. Following the surrender of the Confederacy to the United States in April 1865, the horrors of war gave way to the politics of Reconstruction. During this era, in the decade following the Civil War, the first known public woman suffrage events in Texas occurred.¹⁶

Following the Confederate defeat, and as part of the application of Reconstruction in the South, Texas held its first of three constitutional conventions during the period between 1866 and 1875. At the second constitutional convention, held in 1868 and 1869, woman suffrage was first debated publicly by Texans with a vested interest in its outcome. Following the unsuccessful attempt of a small group of constitutional convention delegates to enfranchise Texas women, national woman suffrage leaders immediately took excited notice that "Texas has been reached." This marked the beginning of a relationship between the Lone Star State and the national woman suffrage movement that lasted more than five decades. During this time, Texas had consistent woman suffrage activity from early Reconstruction through ratification of the

¹⁵ McMillen, *Seneca Falls*, 104-110, 112-113.

¹⁶ McMillen, *Seneca Falls*, 149-184.

Nineteenth Amendment to the U. S. Constitution. Sometimes it was more of a trickle, and at points a flood, but from 1868 to 1920 Texans worked outright to gain votes for women.¹⁷

¹⁷ *The Revolution*, August 20, 1868 (quotation). For a good history of the State of Texas, see Randolph B. Campbell, *Gone to Texas: A History of the Lone Star State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).

CHAPTER 1

THE POLITICS OF PATRIARCHY: RECONSTRUCTION IN TEXAS, 1865-1876

It was not until the era of Reconstruction, in Texas from 1865 to 1876, that Texans publicly advocated woman suffrage by attempting to gain votes for women. Unlike later decades, during the ten years following the Civil War, much of the woman suffrage debate in Texas was directed by men. During two of the three state Reconstruction constitutional conventions (the 1868-1869 and 1875 conventions), delegates argued on its behalf and suggested the state allow women to vote. Continuously through this decade, members of the state's legislative community supported and often fought for granting women the right to vote.

In the few instances when women participated in woman suffrage activity in the state during this era, the agents were northern women who represented the northeastern-based national associations. National women's rights leaders Mary E. Walker and Elizabeth Cady Stanton visited Texas on lecture tours and added Texas to the list of states involved in the formation of national suffrage organizations. Not until the state's "Redeemer" Constitutional Convention in 1875 did a Texas woman lobby inside the state for the enfranchisement of Texas women. For the most part, the work of Reconstruction—as an extension of the war—was male space, and the politics of patriarchy drove much of the reform during this era.

Before the American Civil War was officially over, the attempt to negotiate national reconciliation began. The war's causes had roots older than the nation itself, and the brutal and expensive war had cost the country dearly. The debates over the morality of slavery were often at the base of most other issues related to the start of the war, but no side had a universally definitive purpose or unified front. Some of the states that remained with the Union continued to fight for the right of their white citizens to maintain slave labor, while some anti-secessionist

southerners took up arms and fought for the Confederate States of America (CSA). It is generally accepted that white Texans, who voted to secede from the Union and join the Confederacy, were pro-slavery. Yet, like many individuals in the North and the South, many factors divided Texans when it came to the issues connected with the Civil War. Just as there was debate over the exact causes of the Civil War, there were volatile arguments over the meaning of Confederate defeat, including if the Union should allow the former Confederate states to return as an equal part of the nation. They asked what should be required of Confederate supporters in response to the war and its causes, and who should be allowed to decide and oversee these issues.

While relatively very little fighting had reached Texas, the realities of war and the Confederacy's subsequent defeat created an enormous amount of disorder in the Lone Star State. As in the rest of the South, political, social, and economic elites that had dominated antebellum Texas were members of the planter class. This group, and many less-wealthy members of the predominantly agrarian Texas economic structure, relied on slave labor. The Civil War brought emancipation, marked especially in Texas by "Juneteenth" when on June 19, 1865, Major General Gordon Granger, Union commander of Texas, read from a balcony in Galveston General Orders No. 3 proclaiming that Texas slaves were free. The state then entered into a period of cultural reorganization that threatened the old order. As Texans tried to reconcile themselves to the enormous changes in their midst, members of the federal government worked to find solutions to a nation fractured by ideological differences and weakened by war. Demands made by government officials and private citizens of both the victorious North and the defeated South varied, and not all Reconstruction reform proved lasting.¹

¹ *Galveston Daily News*, June 21, 1865.

Some of the most permanent effects of the period came with the three U. S. constitutional amendments. The Thirteenth Amendment made slavery illegal throughout the entire U. S., and thus began the process of removing African Americans from the social and political extension of white slaveholding households. Creating separate private spaces for the nation's black inhabitants started to bestow patriarchal control over African American society to black men. The Fourteenth Amendment furthered the process of reducing the racialization of patriarchy by legally defining citizenship as determined by the federal government not the states, but also defined men as the dominant group in society by tying the expectation of voting rights to being a male citizen twenty-one years of age or older. Potentially, access to citizenship could not be limited based on race though in practice it would continue to be for decades. The Fifteenth Amendment established that voting rights could not be abridged based on race, but did not address sex. This last amendment strengthened the provisions made to provide a voice through which black men could publicly speak, as heads of African American households and society. As the division of U. S. patriarchy was redefined, some reformers questioned the need for cultural male dominance at all, and women's rights activists argued for the extension of federal efforts to enfranchise the nation's women.²

² Eric Foner, *Reconstruction, 1863-1877* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988), 82-88, 258 (quotation), 253-261, 364, 504, 529-530, 533; Jacqueline Jones, *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow: Black Women, Work and the Family, from Slavery to the Present* (New York: Basic Books 1985), 58-59, 62-68. The phrase "furthered the process of reducing the racialization of patriarchy" is used here to mean the expansion of patriarchal control over society during Reconstruction from a racially segregated ideal that took into account the belief that African American slaves—both men and women—were under the control of white men. They were considered an extension of the white household—not as part of the family, but instead as part of the group for which white male heads of household claimed to speak with their vote. This portion of the study argues that patriarchy in the U. S. was expanded during Reconstruction to recognize and subsequently provide the vote to black men—thus making them the designated patriarchs of African American society. While it was not a total deracialization, because not all whites accepted African American men's civil rights or patriarchal designation and because black society was often considered by the dominant power structure as subordinate to white society, there did exist the expansion of patriarchy to black men in the U. S. during Reconstruction. It is important to express that the discussion of the lasting influence of Reconstruction in this chapter is not the attempt to argue that black civil rights were upheld without limitation during or after this period. On the contrary, white racial dominance through violence, various types of segregation, and legal loopholes, enormously diminished the ability of African Americans to utilize rights

Texans began actively working on behalf of woman suffrage during the 1868 Texas Constitutional Convention. Following passage of the First Reconstruction Act in 1867 by the Republican-controlled United States Congress, all former Confederate states, except Tennessee, were required to elect new delegates and rewrite their state constitutions. Texas, like most of the others, had not satisfactorily completed the federal requirements to return with full rights following the Civil War. Texans held an election from February 10 to February 14, 1868, over whether to call a state constitutional convention, and if passed, to elect delegates. The call for a convention passed; voters in Texas elected delegates, and the Reconstruction Convention of the State of Texas consequently convened in Austin on June 1, 1868.³

One of the main purposes of the 1868 constitutional convention was to discuss redefining enfranchisement for inclusivity, which as outlined by the First Reconstruction Act, meant removing race as a voting requirement. In part, this was designed to redirect political control to those who supported the Republican view of enfranchisement and to remove the old antebellum governmental structures from power. With that broadly in mind, it should not have been a surprise when some of the delegates at the convention favored granting Texas women the right to vote. Women were among the disfranchised and thus had certainly not been directly involved in antebellum governmental power. Yet, the federal government pushed for racial enfranchisement

won during Reconstruction for at least the following century. See Laura F. Edwards, *Gendered Strife and Confusion: The Political Culture of Reconstruction* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997); and Nancy Bercaw, *Gendered Freedoms: Race, Rights, and the Politics of Household in the Delta, 1861–1875* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003).

³ *Journal of the Reconstruction Convention, Which Met at Austin, Texas, June 1, A. D., 1868*, vol. 1 (Austin: Tracy, Siemering & Co., 1870) [hereafter referred to as Reconstruction Convention Journal 1868], p. 3; Betty Jeffus Sandlin, “The Texas Constitutional Convention of 1868-1869” (Ph.D. diss., Texas Tech University, 1970), 1-40. Also, see Carl H. Moneyhon, *Republicanism in Reconstruction Texas* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1980); Carl H. Moneyhon, *Texas After the Civil War: The Struggle for Reconstruction* (College Station: Texas A&M Press, 2004).

via congressional acts and later constitutional amendments while women's voting was seen as a state issue that state legislatures should decide.⁴

That a southern state—Texas—chose to address this on its own as early as 1868 is surprising. At the time, no other state allowed women to vote, even though it had been two decades since the Seneca Falls Declaration had requested such. Additionally, those delegates who added women to the debate over voting rights probably shocked the assembly, as did the fact that the issue continued through both sessions of the convention and was one of the central debates inside the state affairs and political and legislative committees. When the new constitution was finished, women were still left disfranchised, but the entire episode sparked an interest in woman suffrage in the state. It also helped key national suffrage leaders take notice of Texas as potential fertile ground for the movement.⁵

The first month of the convention got off to a slow start, and it took two sessions over a calendar year to produce a workable state constitution. During that year, woman suffrage was a topic that did not simply fade away. On July 8, 1868, Titus H. Mundine of Burleson County proposed this constitutional addition to the convention floor:

Every person, without distinction of sex, who shall have arrived at the age of twenty-one years, and who shall be a citizen of the United States; or is, at the time of the adoption of this constitution by the Congress of the United States, a citizen of the State of Texas, and shall have resided in this State one year next preceding

⁴ For further discussions of Reconstruction in Texas, see Randolph B. Campbell, *Grass-Roots Reconstruction in Texas, 1865-1880* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1997); Sandlin, "The Texas Constitutional Convention;" Moneyhon, *Republicanism in Reconstruction Texas*; Moneyhon, *Texas After the Civil War*; Christopher B. Bean, "A Stranger Amongst Strangers: An Analysis of the Freedmen's Bureau Subassistant Commissioners in Texas, 1865-1868" (Ph.D. diss., University of North Texas, 2008); Flexner, *Century of Struggle*, 136-143.

⁵ Flexner, *Century of Struggle*, 152; *Handbook of Texas Online* [hereafter cited as *HTO*], s. v. "Titus H. Mundine," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/MM/fmuvf.html> (accessed September 8, 2008); *HWS III*, pp. 801-803. The State of New Jersey, for example, briefly allowed women to vote during the decade following its creation, but by the early nineteenth century throughout the nation state constitutions defined eligible voters as male. In a few circumstances for limited periods, in Kentucky for example "propertied widows and unmarried women [voted] in school elections," limited woman suffrage existed. Keyssar, *The Right to Vote*, 141 (footnote quotation).

an election, and the last six months within the district, county, city or town in which he or she offers to vote (Indians not taxed excepted), shall be deemed a qualified elector. And should such qualified elector happen to be in another county, situated in the district in which he or she resides at the time of an election, he or she shall be permitted to vote for any district officer; provided, that the qualified electors shall be permitted to vote anywhere in the State for State officers; and provided, further, that no soldier, seaman or marine, in the army or navy of the United States, shall be entitled to vote at any election created by this constitution.⁶

After some debate over whether or not the proposed article should be rejected, the delegation voted 22 for rejection to 59 against rejection, and it was referred to the Committee on State Affairs. This could be considered quite significant because the suggestion to enfranchise voters without the distinction of sex was not immediately denied. It is possible that Mundine's proposal surprised his fellow delegates because he was known as a relatively conservative Republican. A Unionist, Mundine had supported and served as vice president of the San Jacinto Battle Ground Assembly, pushing for Sam Houston as president, and then actively backing the Constitutional Union Party ticket when Houston failed to be nominated. A merchant who owned three slaves before the war, he was of moderate wealth and remained pro-Union throughout the war, even though it was unpopular in Burleson and hurt his business.⁷

Mundine's proposal received a favorable majority committee report on July 30, 1868, from the chairperson of the Committee on State Affairs, Horatio C. Hunt of Comal County. Hunt's speech focused on extending the right to vote to women, and he stated that the committee thought it should be made part of the "organic law." Hunt proceeded to invoke George Washington, the idea of a republic, and that both the U. S. and Great Britain had both largely discussed enfranchising women. In doing so, he suggested to the convention delegates that woman suffrage would be along the lines of the republican virtues on which the nation was

⁶ Reconstruction Convention Journal 1868, pp. 245-246.

⁷ Reconstruction Convention Journal 1868, pp. 246; *HTO*, s. v. "Titus H. Mundine."

founded, and that it was not new or cutting edge but instead timely since Americans were not alone in exploring these issues.⁸

Furthermore, Hunt then argued that in Texas the history of English common law was mixed with Spanish law. Because of this, Texas law already upheld partial married women's property rights because of the Spanish influence on its legal history. Therefore, he hinted that Texas was beyond, above, and better than the rest of the nation, which mostly relied singularly on the roots of English common law and on Great Britain whose government was the source of such legal definitions. He argued that those legal restrictions were founded when woman was considered "the mere slave of man." This was powerful language based on the convention's mission to reconstruct Texas from reliance on a racial system stemming from slavery to a more egalitarian system of political representation. The understanding was that the United States had moved beyond slavery on its originally designed path to becoming a republic, representing much of the people much of the time. Women were part of the people, and to be represented they needed a voice—the right to vote.⁹

In arguing this way, Hunt placed Texas ahead of the other states in its historical interpretations of the law by arguing that it was this state's destiny to live beyond English political restrictions that maintained the inferiority of women. Married women's property rights had begun to be protected by other states' regulatory practices, but since Texas had historically done so meant that the state had the potential to be a national leader regarding the recognition of women's political rights. Hunt asked, "Is it just that woman, who bears her reasonable portion of the burdens of government, should be denied the right of aiding in the enactment of its laws? It

⁸ Reconstruction Convention Journal 1868, pp. 577-580 (quotations).

⁹ Reconstruction Convention Journal 1868, pp. 577-580. For more information regarding married women's property laws in Texas see Jean A. Stuntz, *Hers, His, and Theirs: Community Property Law in Spain and Early Texas* (Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 2005).

may be truly said that all just governments are founded on the consent of the governed; yet woman has no voice, and her individuality is lost.” Then, he placed women in an exalted position by stating that “the present generation has more educated women than men,” thus trying to justify women as eligible voters who would add to the electorate’s knowledge and education. Finally, Hunt ended by arguing that women were the ones whose devotion kept patriotism alive; he even pointed to woman as the first to witness Christ’s resurrection. Thus, by his explanation, women should be extended the ballot. The address to the convention was well planned and eloquent. The points he made were a mixture of the arguments that nineteenth-century suffragists and twentieth-century suffragists used at different stages. Hunt had served as a lieutenant in a United States Army Cavalry Regiment during the Civil War. Born in New York, he moved to Texas in 1860, opposed secession, and fled to Mexico in 1862. After travelling to New Orleans, he joined the U. S. Army, was mustered out in Texas after the war, and was approximately thirty-two-years-old at the time of the convention. His age and his upbringing in New York placed him in close proximity to some of the earliest suffrage work; this may have made him more aware of pro and con suffrage arguments to be able to address them specifically in his speech.¹⁰

In conclusion, Hunt reported to the convention that the Committee on State Affairs had endorsed equal suffrage to all citizens of the state “without distinction of sex.” The suggested article was the same one delivered by Mundine on July 8, but this time it was accompanied by Hunt’s report and signed by a majority of the committee—Hunt, Mundine, Benjamin S. Watrous

¹⁰ Stuntz, *Hers, His, and Theirs*, 172; Reconstruction Convention Journal 1868, pp. 577-580 (quotations). Moneyhon, *Republicanism in Reconstruction Texas*, 240; *Daily Austin Republican*, April 9, 1970; Ninth Census of the United States, 1870, Smith County, Texas, Schedule 1, Population, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D. C. Both Moneyhon and Sandlin refer to him as H. E. Hunt in their works, but the Convention records show him as H. [Horatio] C. Hunt, as do multiple newspaper articles in papers from across the state. For the discussion of women’s property rights changing in southern states, see Suzanne Lebsack, “Radical Reconstruction and the Property Rights of Southern Women,” *Journal of Southern History* 43 (May 1977): 195-216.

of Washington County, William H. Fleming of Red River County, and Loring P. Harris of Upshur and Wood counties. Interestingly, while this group signed the suggestion to the delegation, when the vote finally came for the whole convention regarding this measure, on January 29, 1869, Hunt and Watrous voted against the proposed woman suffrage extension.¹¹

Not all members of the committee supported the move to grant woman suffrage. Pleasant P. Adams and Anderson Buffington delivered a minority report against granting women the vote. They argued that women were too good to vote, and the dirtiness of elections and politics should be left to men who were “rougher” by nature. Furthermore, their influence “as wives and mothers” was much more important than that of participation at the ballot box; “every true woman” understands that granting woman suffrage was an “open insult to their sex, by the implication that they are so unwomanly as to desire the privilege.” These arguments that most women did not want the vote and were too good for politics were common threads throughout anti-suffragist sentiment up until the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920. It kept men from having to insult openly the women in their lives by pushing to keep them ballot-less. Instead, it was disguised as a compliment. Not only did many men believe it, but so did a number of women—who often ended up as anti-suffragists.¹²

The discussion regarding suffrage stirred up additional responses from the delegation. James T. Armstrong of Jasper County delivered two separate declarations concerning voting rights. His first, also presented and signed by Webster Flanagan, argued that nothing the federal government had done, nor the Texas convention had the right to do, removed voting rights from

¹¹ Reconstruction Convention Journal 1868, pp. 577-580 (quotation); *Journal of the Reconstruction Convention, Which Met at Austin, Texas, June 1, A. D., 1868*, vol. 2 (Austin: Tracy, Siemering & Co., 1870) [hereafter referred to as Reconstruction Convention Journal 1868 Second Session], 414; Sandlin, “The Texas Constitutional Convention,” 249-261.

¹² Reconstruction Convention Journal 1868, p. 580 (quotations).

the state's citizens on the grounds of their involvement in the "rebellion." He argued that it was the right of citizens to vote, unless the federal government chose to prosecute people for their involvement in the "rebellion." The convention had no jurisdiction to deny those in question their right to suffrage. They wrote

It is, therefore, our deliberate opinion, that every male citizen of this State, of European or Mexican origin, who is twenty-one years old, is as legally and fully entitled to exercise the privilege of suffrage as Thaddeus Stevens, of Pennsylvania, and we therefore recommend that so much of said majority declaration as provides for the exclusion of persons from the privilege of suffrage for participation in the late rebellion, or for being in any manner connected therewith, be stricken out.¹³

Then, Armstrong made a report arguing that African Americans were "incapable" of voting due to a number of reasons he believed would cause their votes to be easily manipulated. Directly after stating that it was the right of citizens to vote, he argued that, on the basis of race, African Americans should not be able to vote and by using the word "male" disqualified women as well. He subsequently submitted a substitute article disfranchising both women and African Americans.¹⁴

It was not surprising that Armstrong was against both black and female enfranchisement. He was a member of the conservative faction of the convention and one of the few Democrats there. He was nominated for lieutenant governor later that year by a group of Democratic

¹³ Reconstruction Convention Journal 1868, pp. 581-582 (quotations).

¹⁴ The substitution suggested by Armstrong said, "SUBSTITUTE. That all persons (except Indians not taxed, and Africans and descendants of Africans,) born or naturalized in the United States and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, and aliens (Africans and descendants of Africans excepted,) who have declared their intention to become citizens of the United States, and actually residing in this State, are hereby declared citizens of the State of Texas. That every male person who is a citizen of the United States and of this State, who shall have resided in this state --- next preceding an election, and ---- within the district or county in which he offers to vote (Indians not taxed, Africans and descendants of Africans excepted), shall be deemed a qualified elector; and should such qualified elector happen to be in any other county situated in the district in which he resides at the time of an election, he shall be permitted to vote for any district officer; provided, that the qualified elector shall be permitted to vote anywhere in the State for State officers; and provided further, that no soldier, seaman or marine, in the army or navy of the United States, shall be entitled to vote at any election created by this Constitution." Reconstruction Convention Journal 1868, pp. 582-583.

newspaper editors who held a convention in October in Brenham, Texas, despite the fact that the official Democratic Party refused to hold a convention that year in the state and claimed no connection with the group. Such a determined group of conservatives in Texas at a time when it was basically ineffectual to be so, indicates a strong connection to antebellum beliefs over the enslavement and disfranchisement of African Americans. Furthermore, Armstrong had also been a delegate to the 1845 Texas Constitutional Convention establishing statehood. At that point, when the group discussed and subsequently approved married women's property laws, Armstrong was among the minority to vote against the measure. Thus, his service to the disfranchisement of all groups, other than white male citizens twenty-one and older, was consistent and decades long by this point.¹⁵

After this series of speeches, the topic immediately shifted to the creation of counties without any transition or explanation. The convention as a whole did not address voting requirements again directly until its second session. On January 29, 1869, delegates entertained the topic of suffrage for the final time during the convention. Earlier that night president of the constitutional convention and future Texas governor, Edmund Jackson Davis, appointed a committee of delegates to revise, correct, and supplement the articles adopted to that point, and they brought to the table a revised version. The committee suggested that "Article III, Section I, of the constitution state,

Every male person who shall have attained the age of twenty-one years, and who shall be (or who shall have declared his intentions to become) a citizen of the United States, or who is, at the time of the acceptance of this Constitution by the Congress of the United States, a citizen of Texas, and shall have resided in the State one year next preceding an election, and the last six months within the district or county in which he offers to vote, and is duly registered, (Indians not taxed excepted,) shall be deemed a qualified elector: and should such qualified

¹⁵ Ernest William Winkler, ed. *Platforms of Political Parties in Texas* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1916), 122; William F. Weeks, rpt., *Debates of the [1845] Texas Convention* (Houston: J. W. Cruger, 1846), 530.

electors happen to be in any other county, situated in the district in which he resides, at the time of an election, he shall be permitted to vote for any district officer; provided that the qualified elector shall be permitted to vote anywhere in the State for State officers; and provided further, that no soldier, seaman or marine in the army or navy of the United States, shall be entitled to vote at any election created by this Constitution.¹⁶

During the course of the debate Mundine suggested a substitution to that presented by the revision committee; it stated

Every person, without distinction of sex, race or previous condition, who shall have arrived at the age of twenty-one years, and who shall be a citizen of the United States, or is at the time of the adoption of this Constitution by the Congress of the United States a citizen of the State of Texas, and shall have resided in this State one year next preceding an election, and the last six months within the district, county, city or town in which he or she offers to vote (Indians not taxed excepted), shall be deemed a qualified elector; and should such qualified elector happen to be in another county, situated in the district in which he or she resides, at the time of an election, he or she shall be permitted to vote for any district officer; provided, that the qualified electors shall be permitted to vote anywhere in the state for state's officers; and provided further, that no soldier, seaman or marine in the army or navy of the United States shall be entitled to vote at any election created by this Constitution.¹⁷

Mundine appeared unwilling to give up what one reporter had called his “favorite measure.”

Despite his drive, the convention delegates voted against Mundine’s proposed article 52 to 13, and thus refused to grant Texas women the right to vote. The debate ended with the convention approving the suggested article by the revision committee by a vote of 40 to 26. Texas voters

¹⁶ Sandlin, “The Texas Constitutional Convention,” 195-197; Reconstruction Convention Journal 1868 Second Session, 412; *Constitution of the State of Texas Adopted by the Constitutional Convention: Convened Under the Reconstruction Acts of Congress Passed March 2, 1867, and the Acts Supplementary Thereto; to be Submitted for Ratification or Rejection at an Election to Take Place on the First Monday of July 1869* (Austin: The Daily Republican, 1869), 7. While the convention did approve the report by the Committee on Political and Legislative regarding Article III Section 1, suffrage requirements, on August 23, 1868, the debate resumed the following January and the article was not specifically discussed by the convention. Reconstruction Convention Journal 1868, p. 853.

¹⁷ Reconstruction Convention Journal 1868 Second Session, p. 413.

subsequently approved the constitution in a referendum scheduled from November 30 to December 3, 1869.¹⁸

A number of historians who have discussed this convention argue that there were four factions of the Republican Party that often bloc-voted, and that the eleven Democrats at the convention constituted a small minority that usually performed a balancing act between the Republican groups. Regarding the blocs suggested by these historians, one was led by Andrew J. Hamilton, former provisional Governor of Texas, anti-slavery and anti-secession activist, former U. S. representative, and former Texas senator. Additionally there was an East Texas bloc, a West Texas bloc, and one made up of the ten African American delegates. These Republican blocs may explain why Hunt and Watrous voted against the suggestion they originally supported. When looking at the thirteen delegates that voted in favor of Mundine's suggested suffrage definition who enfranchised women and blacks, most of them were from Northeast and East Texas counties. Furthermore, their represented counties were mostly, except Gillespie, in three clusters. Two of the county clusters were very near most of the counties represented by the Democrats at the convention and/or surrounding the counties represented by the black delegates.¹⁹

Not a single Democratic delegate voted in favor of the enfranchisement of women. This is not surprising since this very conservative minority, which was holding onto party alliances from antebellum years, would be expected to maintain values from that period and be much less

¹⁸ *Dallas Herald*, September 26, 1868 (quotation); Reconstruction Convention Journal 1868 Second Session, pp. 414-416; Campbell, *Gone to Texas*, 280.

¹⁹ Reconstruction Convention Journal 1868 Second Session, pp. 414-416; Moneyhon, *Republicanism in Reconstruction Texas*, 236-252; Sandlin, "The Texas Constitutional Convention," 249-261; *HTO*, s. v. "Constitutional Convention of 1868-69," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/CC/mjc4.html> (accessed September 8, 2008). For information regarding the bloc voting at the convention, see Moneyhon, *Republicanism in Reconstruction Texas*, passim; Sandlin, "The Texas Constitutional Convention," passim; *HTO*, s. v. "Constitutional Convention of 1868-69."

reform oriented. Yet, in a speech to the convention, Lemuel Evans, a Democrat from Titus County, stated that he voted against the measure because he believed the nation was not ready for such an action. He thought it would be the right thing to do once citizenship was more well-defined and understood by the government and the public.²⁰

It is possible these delegates were influenced by their surroundings. Most of the “yeas” were from Unionist Republicans in an area that held much of the state’s African Americans and former slaveholders. These individuals lived in areas with high concentrations of both groups for whom the federal government sought political reforms for former slaves and against former slaveholders. This personal view of the stakes could have made these delegates more open to the need for universal enfranchisement. Of the thirteen “yea” votes, seven were from native southerners including one born in Texas. Of the remaining six, one was of unknown origin; two were immigrants—one German and one British—and three were born in northern states. Nine of them had lived in Texas for more than a decade, some for two or three decades. Thus, the majority of the “yeas” had a large stake in Texas’ future. These were not newly-arrived northern Republican radicals. Instead, they were delegates who saw universal suffrage, without the distinction of sex or race, as a positive benefit to the state in which they had invested their lives. This was not the last time Texans heard from reform-minded pro-woman suffrage legislators. Indeed, following the 1869 convention there was a continual presence of woman suffrage support until the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment, though sometimes it seemed to be more of a stream than a flood.²¹

²⁰ Reconstruction Convention Journal 1868 Second Session, pp. 414-416; “Remarks on the Resolution of Mr. Mundine by L. D. Evans,” in Winegarten and McArthur, *Citizens at Last*, 59-60.

²¹ Reconstruction Convention Journal 1868 Second Session, pp. 414-416; *HWS III*, pp. 801-802.

One faction at the convention that should have been considered very reform-oriented was the African American bloc. These individuals and the black citizens they represented had the most to gain from broader definitions of enfranchisement. Only one of the ten, George Ruby, voted in favor of Mundine's proposal at the January 29, 1869, vote. Ruby was the only northern black delegate, and therefore, may have been less likely to be swayed by the fear that pushing woman suffrage could endanger black-male suffrage. Increasing arguments over universal suffrage began between national universal and woman suffrage leaders immediately after passage of the Thirteenth Amendment. Once the abolishment of slavery was secured, the next discussion concerned defining and granting citizenship and voting rights to freedpeople. Nationally, woman suffragists saw this as a period that should be shared by all women and African Americans. Yet, congressional Republicans did not want to jeopardize black suffrage by adding women to the debate. Therefore, following ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment, Congress drafted the Fourteenth Amendment that defined citizenship and introduced the word "male" for the first time to the U. S. Constitution. National woman suffrage leaders were appalled and petitioned vigorously against this version, but to no avail because the Fourteenth Amendment passed both houses with the word "male" used in Article 2, which referred to voting rights. This by implication excluded women from the benefits of the Amendment's suffrage reform.²²

Most of the convention's black delegates were former slaves who knew what ultimate disfranchisement was like. They may have feared that this state constitution and the possibility of universal manhood suffrage in Texas would be endangered by the woman suffrage debate.

²² Merline Pitre, *Through Many Dangers, Toils and Snares: The Black Leadership of Texas, 868-1900* (Austin: Eakin Press, 1985), 7-36; Flexner, *Century of Struggle*, 126-145; Moneyhon, *Republicanism in Reconstruction Texas*, 236-252; Sandlin, "The Texas Constitutional Convention," 249-261; McMillen, *Seneca Falls*, 149-175.

Furthermore, it is not surprising that after the majority at the convention began to appear against giving women the vote, most of the African American delegates chose not to press the issue.²³

This convention explains a great deal about the relationship between racial and ethnic minorities and women's rights. Historian Rosalyn Terborg-Penn discusses the fact that there has often been a misconception that black men were anti-women's rights and anti-suffrage. Examination of this Texas constitutional delegation supports her findings. Thirty percent of the black delegates stood for women's rights at some point during the constitutional convention. This was a large percentage of support for women's rights in comparison to the convention's white delegates. Additionally, there is the perception that immigrants (in Texas—usually from Germany and Mexico) and African American communities did not support woman suffrage because it went against what has often been described as their intensely patriarchal cultural structures. Of the three German delegates who voted on the woman suffrage issue, one of them voted “yea.” Jacob Keuchler of Gillespie County settled in Texas during the antebellum period, and served during the Civil War as an enrolling officer for the Confederate States Army. One of the other two, who both voted “nay,” was actually Prussian (the regional distinction still existed at the time)—Julius Schuetze represented Fayette and Bastrop counties. The third, Edward (Eduard) Degener of Bexar County was well educated, a freethinker, and an abolitionist, who had played an important role in the 1848 failed German Revolution. Arriving in Texas with his family in 1850, Degener was among the German revolutionaries fleeing political persecution that included Karl Marx's brother-in-law Baron Edgar von Westphalen. During the Civil War,

²³ Pitre, *Through Many Dangers*, 7-36; Flexner, *Century of Struggle*, 126-145; Moneyhon, *Republicanism in Reconstruction Texas*, 236-252; Sandlin, “The Texas Constitutional Convention,” 249-261. James McWashington was the first delegate to suggest the section on married women's property law during this convention. *Reconstruction Convention Journal* 1868, p. 456. This does not suggest that the African American delegates were intimidated in any way by the rest of the delegates to vote down woman suffrage or that they would have backed down if there had been pressure. Numerous times during the two sessions the African American delegates openly confronted intimidation attempts. Pitre, *Through Many Dangers*, 7-36.

Degener and his sons opposed secession. He was imprisoned for his Unionist activities, and his two sons were killed during the Battle of Nueces while trying to escape Texas through Mexico in an attempt to join the United States Army. Following the constitutional convention, Degener served as a United States House of Representative member from 1870-1871. Something that can be learned from this convention is that male German and black political support for woman suffrage and/or women's rights existed during a period before additional causes and political issues (temperance and anti-immigration rhetoric) were connected to woman suffrage. Also, this occurred before national woman suffrage organizations began trying to balance the support from segregated southern organizations with that of black woman suffrage advocates—often choosing the former over the latter. Showing who supported woman suffrage and who did not in the period between Seneca Falls in 1848 and the 1920 ratification was often complicated by more than the belief in votes for women.²⁴

The convention's attention to woman suffrage had lasting effects even though Texas women remained disfranchised with the passage of the Reconstruction constitution. *The*

²⁴ Terborg-Penn, *African American Women*, 3; Sandlin, "The Texas Constitutional Convention," 249-261; Moneyhon, *Republicanism in Reconstruction Texas*, 236-252; Frederick Law Olmsted, *A Journey through Texas: Or, a Saddle-Trip on the Southwestern Frontier*, ed. Randolph B. Campbell (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press and DeGolyer Library and William P. Clements Center for Southwest Studies, 2004), 123-126, 270 n. 37. For the discussion of black male opposition to woman suffrage by modern historians, see Bess Beatty, review of *The Afro-American Woman: Struggles and Images*, edited by Sharon Harley and Rosalyn Terborg-Penn, *Journal of Southern History* (May 1979): 304-305. See also Nettie Rogers Shuler and Carrie Chapman Catt, *Woman Suffrage and Politics* (New York: Scribner's, 1926); Alma Lutz, *Created Equal: Elizabeth Cady Stanton, 1815-1902* (New York: John Day, 1940). It is important to note that Mexican Americans were excluded from all late-nineteenth century conventions. Technically and formally speaking, they could not vote on the question of woman suffrage either way, even if they had wanted to. Despite close ties with lead anti-suffrage families and Conservative Democratic Party political machines, José Tomás (J. T.) Canales (considered the first post-Civil War Texas legislator of Hispanic descent) openly advocated woman suffrage and voted on its behalf as a Texas House of Representatives member. *Journal of the House of Representatives of the Fourth Called Session of the Thirty-Fifth Legislature [of the State of Texas]: Convened in Obedience to the Proclamation of the Governor February 26, 1918, and Adjourned Without Day March 27, 1918* (Austin: Von Boeckmann-Jones, 1918), 328-336. For information discussing the political and social conditions of Mexican Americans in Texas during this period, see David Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 1836-1986* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987); Evan Anders, *Boss Rule in South Texas: The Progressive Era* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982).

Revolution, a suffrage paper edited by Susan Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, reported on August 20, 1868, that “Texas has been reached....We need scarcely bespeak attentive reading.” With excitement, they published the “Report of the Committee on State Affairs upon Female Suffrage, with accompanying Declaration: July 30, 1868.” They received some of the information through articles printed in *Flake’s Daily Bulletin*, of Galveston, which had reported happily in May 1868 that merchants in the city were carrying *The Revolution*. *Flake’s Bulletin* continued to publish increasingly pro-woman suffrage pieces at least through 1868 and 1869, suggesting that there was an audience in Galveston that was open to reading such information. A communication network between reformers at the state and national levels was forming, and these links set the foundation for decades of involvement and interest by national leaders of the movement in state efforts to enfranchise women.²⁵

When Republicans continued their work to strengthen black enfranchisement by discussing a Fifteenth Amendment that guaranteed voting rights to all men without the distinction of race, the American Equal Rights Association (AERA) called its annual convention in 1869 to discuss the issue. Over a thousand people attended the convention held in New York at Steinway Hall on May 12 and 13 and in Brooklyn at the Academy of Music on May 14. The AERA listed a woman named Elizabeth Wright as their vice president for Texas. This may be the first known instance of a woman who was publicly involved on behalf of Texas woman suffrage. It was at this meeting that the national suffragists split between what subsequently became the National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA), led by Anthony and Stanton, and the American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA), led by Lucy Stone, Henry Blackwell, and Mary Livermore. Stanton and Anthony—staunch protesters against excluding women from the

²⁵ *HWS III*, pp. 802-803; *The Revolution*, August 20, 1868 (quotation); *Flake’s Daily Bulletin*, May 10, 1868, July 12, 1868, August 8, 1868.

Fifteenth Amendment—sided against Stone, Blackwell, Frederick Douglass, Abby Kelley Foster, and Henry Ward Beecher, who believed women’s enfranchisement would be next following that of African Americans.²⁶

Two days after the AERA convention, Anthony and Stanton held a quickly organized, and often considered exclusive, meeting to organize the NWSA. Open only to female members at first, the organization worked on a number of women’s rights issues and focused on lobbying for woman suffrage at the federal level. In response, Stone, Blackwell, and Julia Ward Howe—abolitionist and author of the “Battle Hymn of the Republic,” held a planning meeting for the formation of the AWSA the following fall. The AWSA differed from the NWSA when it included an open invitation for involvement—extending an invitation to male members—supported the Fifteenth Amendment, and aimed to focus only on woman suffrage mostly at the state level. Later that year, the American Woman Suffrage Association, sent out a call for its organizational convention in Cleveland, Ohio, on November 24 and 25, 1869. Elizabeth C. Wright signed the AWSA call for participants as the representative from Texas.²⁷

²⁶ *HWS II*, p. 378, 381. For a discussion of the split, see McMillen, *Seneca Falls*, 149-175. A number of studies mention a group of women petitioning Mundine and/or the 1868-69 Constitutional Convention. After an extensive search, no evidence has been found regarding the possibility. Instead, the discussion of a group of women petitioning the 1868 convention most likely originated with a commonly used secondary source that presented a misreading of the *History of Woman Suffrage* Vol. III. It states, “In the adoption of the first constitution of Texas, **woman had some representatives in the convention to remind the legislators of that State of her existence**, and to demand that the constitution be so framed as to secure the right of suffrage alike to both sexes.” It is this author’s experience that the formal use of language during the period in which Stanton, Anthony, and Matilda Joslyn Gage wrote and edited the third volume of the *History of Woman Suffrage*—published in 1886—it was common to use phrases like the bolded portion to represent possession over an action. While this portion of the *HWS* meant that there were men present at the 1868 Texas Constitutional Convention who spoke on behalf of women’s well-being, it does not mean that the men represented specific women. Furthermore, it says “woman,” the phrasing does not state “a group of women were represented by” which is how this portion of the *HWS* has been interpreted. *HWS III*, p. 801 (footnote quotation). For examples of discussion of the 1868 convention being petitioned by a group of women, see Winegarten, ed. *Citizens At Last*, 56.

²⁷ McMillen, *Seneca Falls*, 174; *HWS II*, p. 757. Little is known about Wright, except that she was probably not from Texas originally. A newspaper entry in the *Dallas Weekly Herald* appeared after she signed the call for the creation of the AWSA. Its author, inflamed with Wright for affiliating herself with Texas, stated that Wright was from the North, only lived in Texas a little while, and during her residence had worked for a paper in Paris, Texas, in Lamar County, called the *Vindicator*. Apparently, Wright wrote black advocacy pieces for the newspaper (this author called it “a negro political and social equity sheet” and stated that “Texas women

A few months later, in April, Mary E. Walker visited Texas on a speaking tour to promote “women’s franchise.” Among her stops were Galveston and Houston. Walker, by this time, was famous as a women’s rights and dress reform advocate, suffragist, and the first woman to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor. She was a physician who assisted Union troops as both a doctor and spy during the Civil War, and it was this service for which she received the honor. Through most of her life, Walker refused to wear women’s attire and chose bloomers, and later men’s pants, partially because she believed they were a healthier choice for the body.

emphatically repudiate any such association”—it is unclear whether he meant African American rights or woman suffrage). *The Paris Vindicator* was a Republican-run paper whose existence abruptly ended around 1870 as Democrats in the state began to regain control of the political realm. *Dallas Weekly Herald*, November 20, 1869; Richard H. Abbott and John W. Quist, *For Free Press and Equal Rights: Republican Newspapers in the Reconstruction South* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2004), 79. There was a Miss Elizabeth C. Wright, of Ceres, Pennsylvania, who was mentioned in the 1853 proceedings of the twentieth anniversary of the formation of the American Anti-Slavery Society minutes who might have been the AWSA Texas representative in 1869. American Anti-Slavery Society, *Proceedings The Twentieth Anniversary of the Formation of the American Anti-Slavery Society: Second Decade, Held in the City of Philadelphia, Dec. 3^d, 4th and 5th, 1853* (Boston: J. B. Yerkinton and Son, 1854), 36, 37, 95, Internet Archive under “Proceedings of the American Anti-slavery Society, at its second decade, held in the city of Philadelphia, Dec. 3d, 4th and 5th, 1853 (1854),” http://www.archive.org/stream/proceedingsofame00ameri/proceedingsofame00ameri_djvu.txt (accessed November 15, 2008). Also, an Elizabeth C. Wright was the author of *Lichen Tufts, from the Alleghanies* [sic]. The book contained poems and verse that explored the moralistic view that humans could be saved from their own ills by turning to nature as a guide. Within her naturalist approach to society and culture, Wright appeared to be an abolitionist and women’s rights advocate. Elizabeth C. Wright, *Lichen Tufts, from the Alleghanies* (New York: Doolady Press, 1860); Daniel Patterson, Roger Thompson, Scott Bryson, *Early American Nature Writers: A Biographical Encyclopedia* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2007), 405; Lorraine Anderson and Thomas S. Edwards, *At Home on this Earth: Two Centuries of U. S. Women’s Nature Writing* (University Press of New England, 2002) 41. The similarity of the tone and content of both the Elizabeth C. Wright’s remarks at the Anti-Slavery Society meeting, and the Elizabeth C. Wright’s *Lichen Tufts* suggest that all three of these Elizabeth C. Wrights were the same person. Additionally, it would make sense that if this were so that she would support the AWSA due to its pro-African American founding above that of the NWSA. The *HWS I* also mentions an Elizabeth C. Wright who was on a short list of women to “occupy the platform” at the first annual meeting of the New York state women’s temperance society in 1853 that also included Elizabeth Cady Stanton. It is most probable that this temperance, abolition, woman suffrage activist moved to North Texas for a short period during Reconstruction. Connectedly, the town in which Wright lived, Paris, Texas, was the also the home of Ebenezer Lafayette Dohoney, the 1875 Texas Constitutional Convention delegate who supported a woman suffrage addition to that state constitution, remained a lifelong prohibition activist, and was often known as the father of local option in Texas for prohibition. He brought Frances Willard to Texas in 1881 and 1882 when she helped form the Texas Woman’s Christian Temperance Union. Dohoney was an attorney and newspaper publisher during much of his life, and it is distinctly possible that he knew Wright when she lived in Paris, Texas. *HWS I*, p. 493 (footnote quotation). For a discussion of Dohoney’s life as a reformer, see E. L. Dohoney, *An Average America: Being A True History of Leading Events in the Life of Lafayette, Who Was Born in Ky.; But “Went West to Grow Up with the Country”* (Paris, Texas: n.p., 1907); *HTO*, s. v. “Ebenezer Lafayette Dohoney,” <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/DD/fdo7.html> (accessed September 22, 2008). The Thirteenth Legislature of the State of Texas met in one regular session from January 14, 1873, to June 04, 1873.

She was right but was jailed multiple times because of her style of dress. By the end of the 1870s, Walker's suffragist associates found her increasingly eccentric and distanced themselves from her to an extent. Yet, this woman, who many considered radical, was well received by *The Houston Daily Union*. The paper wrote, "We hope to hear another lecture from this remarkably gifted lady orator before she leaves our city." It is unclear whether all of Walker's receptions in the state were as positive, but Texas was increasingly gaining the attention of national suffragists and their associations as being receptive to the cause. These budding relationships affected Texas for decades and laid the foundation for area suffragists to play key roles in winning votes for women.²⁸

Not only were lasting connections being made with national suffragists, but also, following the 1868-1869 Constitutional Convention, the discussion of woman suffrage was kept alive in Texas politics by office holders through the end of the Reconstruction period. During the Regular Senate Session of the Twelfth Legislature of the State of Texas in 1870, Senator E. L. Alford presented a joint resolution directing the state's federal senators and representatives to push for a Sixteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution granting women the right to vote. It was referred to the Committee on Federal Relations and not reported on again. Yet, this kept political attention on the topic, and thus, continually exposed more people to it. The next year, on May 5, 1871, during the special session of the legislature, Benjamin Rush Plumley (the appointed speaker of the Texas House) presented a resolution suggesting the composition of a committee to report to the next session on the issue of woman suffrage. The house rejected it 47

²⁸ *Flakes Daily Bulletin*, April 9, 1870 (first quotation); *Houston Daily Union*, April 14, 1870 (second quotation). For information regarding Mary E. Walker's life, see Charles McCool Snyder, *Dr. Mary Walker: The Little Lady in Pants* (New York: Vantage Press, 1962); Dale L. Walker, *Mary Edwards Walker: Above and Beyond* (New York: Macmillan, 2005).

to 46, thus suggesting while there were Texas legislators in favor of granting votes for women; advocates still had a fight ahead of them to win.²⁹

Leaders of the two national associations also continued their efforts lobbying legislators at both the state and federal levels for woman suffrage. For example, in 1872 the AWSA sent a memorial to the Texas Senate and House of Representatives asking Texas to grant the women of the state the right to vote in the upcoming presidential election and to pass a law granting women the right to vote fully in state elections. A report by the next legislature was not found in its journal. On the other hand, Belva A. Lockwood as part of her report on suffrage work in each state to the National Woman Suffrage Association in 1876, noted “in the Senate of the Thirteenth Legislature [1873] of the State of Texas, Senator [Ebenezer Lafayette] Dohoney, Chairman of the Judiciary Committee, made a report strongly advocating woman suffrage.” More evidence of support for woman suffrage in Texas came in 1874 when Texas United States Senator James W. Flanagan gave a pro-woman suffrage testimonial on the floor of Congress. The senator stated that he was a recent “convert” because of the magnificent work of women in the temperance fight. He proceeded to say that only women through divine guidance could rescue the nation from what he considered the most serious of all problems—“intemperance.” He made this declaration during a debate on the admission to the U. S. of a new territory called Pembina, from the northeastern section of the Dakota Territory. One of the California senators suggested using

²⁹ *Senate Journal of the Twelfth Legislature of the State of Texas: First Session* (Austin: Tracy, Siemering, and Co., State Journal Office), 58; *Galveston News*, May 8, 1871; T. R. Fehrenbach, *Lone Star: A History of Texas and Texans, From Prehistory to the Present The People, Politics, and Events that Have Shaped Texas*, updated edition (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Da Capo Press, 2000), 415.

this territory to test woman suffrage. In the end, the resolution failed. Flanagan voted for it, while the other Texas senator, Morgan C. Hamilton, was absent.³⁰

Flanagan, a Republican and staunch Unionist, lived in Northeast Texas where many Republican reformers resided. His placement as a United States senator and his successful political career were made possible in part by Reconstruction politics and its structure in Texas, which were all coming to a close. In 1872, the Democratic Party regained both houses of the Texas legislature. The Thirteenth Texas Legislature, following a suggestion by Governor Richard Coke, put forth an election giving Texas voters the chance to approve a constitutional convention to replace the unpopular 1869 constitution. Voters concurred and the convention met from September 6 through November 24, 1875. Much of the convention's time was spent reversing Reconstruction enactments put in place by the 1869 constitution and subsequent legislatures. Mostly, there were dramatic differences between the two constitutional delegations; they were similar in the fact that both debated woman suffrage.³¹

On September 22, 1875, William T. G. Weaver, a lawyer and the delegate from Cooke County, introduced a resolution on behalf of woman suffrage. Weaver took the position that "woman" is the first caregiver of mankind, and historically speaking has "risen above the masses" when given the power to "speak and act for herself." He argued that woman is fundamentally good, "morally and mentally man's equal," and has to abide by the laws and pay taxes just as men do. Therefore, she should have the "same rights at the ballot-box that man

³⁰ "Memorial to the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Texas," in *Citizens at Last*, 62-64; *HWS III*, p. 5 (first quotation); *HTO*, s. v. "Ebenezer Lafayette Dohoney," *New York Times*, May 29, 1874 (second and third quotations); *HWS II*, p. 575.

³¹ *HTO*, s. v. "James Winwright Flanagan," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/FF/ff14.html> (accessed November 19, 2008); *HTO*, s. v. "Constitutional Convention of 1875," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/CC/mjc5.html> (accessed January 20, 2009); *HTO*, s. v. "Constitution of 1876," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/CC/mhc7.html> (accessed January 20, 2009).

has.” Weaver’s suggestion was referred to the Committee on Suffrage, chaired by Ebenezer Lafayette Dohoney from Lamar County. Nevertheless, two days later S. H. Russell of Harrison County stated that he wanted a black mark drawn around the woman suffrage resolution from the twenty-second to edit it out from the convention journals. His suggestion was also sent to the committee but apparently not acted upon because the resolution remained in the published convention journal.³²

Then, on October 4, 1875, Dohoney read a petition for woman suffrage sent to the delegation from Sarah G. W. Hiatt of Wise County “praying for woman suffrage as a ‘legitimate application of Democratic principles.’” Marion Martin and William Blassingame, of Navarro and Grayson counties respectively, adamantly opposed introducing the petition and recording it in the convention journals. In response, Dohoney argued that every citizen should have the right to petition office holders and be heard. Weaver, Charles Demorse of Red River, Fletcher Stockdale of Calhoun, and John Whitfield of Lavaca agreed, and upon Dohoney’s suggestion, the petition was referred to the Committee on Suffrage. Dohoney wrote Hiatt that he had been presented the petition by the president of the convention, Edward Pickett, because Dohoney was the chair of the Committee on Suffrage. It had subsequently been read to the entire delegation. While he was able to get it referred to the Committee on Suffrage, he was convinced that would be its last success because Dohoney believed he would never be able to get it out of committee. As chair, he was able to direct the wording on the article defining voting rights so as specifically

³² *Journal of the Constitutional Convention of the State of Texas, Begun and Held at the City of Austin, September 6, 1875* (Galveston: The “News” Office [for The State of Texas], 1875), 191-192 (quotations), 196 [hereafter referred to as the Constitutional Convention Journal 1875].

not to deny women the franchise. Therefore, he reasoned, that only an act of the legislature was necessary to extend the vote to women.³³

Hiatt's petition to the Texas Constitutional Convention controlled by southern Democrats had made a larger impact than even she could realize at the time. The act of a southern woman in publicly advocating woman suffrage by petitioning the Texas delegation impressed national woman's rights leaders. AWSA leader and *Woman's Journal* editor Henry Blackwell invited Hiatt to participate in the organization's national convention that year. Judging by his actions decades later, Blackwell was probably fascinated by the possibility of woman suffrage work in the South. As national leaders, whose purpose was state-by-state suffrage work, those associated with the AWSA, would have recognized Hiatt's public activism as a potentially pivotal indication of support for the movement in Texas and possibly the rest of the South.

In November 1875, the month after the Constitutional Convention discussed her petition, Hiatt wrote a letter to Blackwell and the AWSA that appeared in *The Woman's Journal* the following month. She told him that his invitation to her and her physician husband, L. B. Hiatt, arrived too late for them to attend that year's AWSA meeting. She said that while it would be wonderful to meet and listen to suffrage veterans, reading *The Woman's Journal* would have to do for the time being. She doubted her action of sending a memorial for woman suffrage to the Texas convention would be successful in gaining votes for women but said it resulted in numerous "leading men" writing her on the topic—some for, some against. She sent a copy of one of the letters that reported only two men outright supported suffrage publicly. The letter continued to say that many others would only admit privately their agreement with the cause but avoided conflict by reasoning that women do not want the vote. That, she said, keeps them from

³³ Dohoney, *An Average America*, 164-165; Seth Shepard McKay, ed. *Debates in the Texas Constitutional Convention of 1875* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1930), 142-143 (quotation).

having to be morally courageous. Therefore, the fear of ignoring the right to petition kept her memorial from being completely rejected, but in the end it was defeated. Hiatt then stated that there was hope because Texas had some of the best women's property laws in the nation, that the state's women were involved in most levels of business transactions, and they often pushed their children's education even when theirs was nonexistent. She concluded, "Knowing what I do, I cannot help the conviction that, in the hearts of our people, there is good soil for the germination and growth of that particular end of justice enveloped in Woman Suffrage, if only it could be skillfully planted, shone upon by Southern suns, and fanned by Southern breezes." She thought she had not made a difference because the convention ended without granting woman suffrage, but she was wrong. Her petition kept the discussion alive and had won additional advocates that continued to support the cause for decades.³⁴

Less than two weeks after the *Woman's Journal* printed Hiatt's letter, Elizabeth Cady Stanton arrived in Texas on a lecture tour. She traveled to three cities, Dallas, Sherman, and Houston, with plans for two more, Galveston and Austin that were ruined by flood. Following Stanton's favorite speech "Our Girls" in Field's Theatre in Dallas on December 17, 1875, *The Dallas Weekly Herald* reported that "a large and fashionable audience" filled the venue. This was the tour in which Stanton made contact with the southern woman from Georgia whose group of friends had concentrated their curiosity on suffrage pamphlets from the Saratoga Springs, New York, Convention in 1855. Additionally, while stuck in Houston for two weeks because of the weather, Stanton scattered leaflets, held several public meetings and parlor talks, and believed she made some "valuable acquaintances." One of the groups she addressed included John Finnigan, the father of future Texas, New York, and NAWSA suffrage leader Annette Finnigan.

³⁴ Sarah G. W. Hiatt, "Woman Suffrage in Texas," *The Woman's Journal*, December 4, 1875 (quotations).

Years later Annette recalled in a letter regarding her involvement in woman suffrage that she and her sisters became interested in the subject because her family had always been. “My father was particularly so,” she recalled,

I remember often hearing him speak of Julia Ward Howe, also of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, both of whom I afterwards knew. Elizabeth Cady Stanton visited Houston on one of her lecture tours ~ I think this was in the late seventies, and spoke at the Opera House on the subject of “Our Girls.” My father attended, of course, but there were less than a dozen people present, all being men. They were so charmed with her lecture that they tried to get her to remain over and repeat it the following night, promising her a large audience, but her lecture arrangements prevented [it]. I took no particular interest in the subject, in fact, I never heard it discussed outside of my home, until my first year in college, when I attended a large meeting in Boston, and heard Lucy Stone speak.³⁵

When Stanton visited Texas, Annette Finnigan was only three years old, but the fact that her father and family were interested in the subject and were later supportive of her efforts on its behalf may explain why decades later she and her sisters became active suffrage leaders.

One of the main lessons learned by examining woman suffrage in Reconstruction Texas is that social support was essential for advocates to stand publicly for the cause. In communities where participants based their concerns on political reform, woman suffrage was more likely to be accepted. Furthermore, when multiple people stood up for women’s enfranchisement, it was more likely that others followed. When Sarah Hiatt wrote about Texas that “there is good soil for the germination and growth of that particular end of justice enveloped in Woman Suffrage,” she did not realize how prophetic her words were. In the long run, the era of Reconstruction proved to be a platform on which Texas suffrage would build. The topic of women’s

³⁵ *The Dallas Weekly Herald*, December 18, 1875 (first quotation), and January 15, 1876; *HWS III*, p. 802; Elizabeth Cady Stanton, *Eighty Years and More: Reminiscences of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, 1815-1897* (New York: European Publishing Company, 1898), 297-298 (second quotation); Geoffrey C. Ward, Ken Burns, Martha Saxon, Ann Dexter Gordon, Ellen Carol DuBois, *Not For Ourselves Alone: The Story of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1999), 164; Annette Finnigan, Copy of Letter To Texas Woman, December 16, 1918, folder 9, box 5 (third quotation), Jane Y. McCallum Papers (Austin History Center, Austin Public Library, Austin, Texas) [hereafter cited as McCallum Papers]. For “Our Girls” being Stanton’s favorite speech, see Elisabeth Griffin, *In Her Own Right: The Life of Elizabeth Cady Stanton* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 165.

enfranchisement was widely discussed in the newspapers and in politics. Relationships between Texans and the national associations formed from each organization's earliest years. During the second half of the decade, women's rights advocates came to Texas specifically to educate and lecture on the issue. Consistently Texas politicians debated and supported woman suffrage in the legislatures and constitutional conventions. Some of them, including Ebenezer Dohoney, proved to be important suffrage advocates for decades.³⁶

An interesting thing about the issue of woman suffrage in Texas during the Reconstruction period, though, is that there are only a few recorded accounts of women working openly on behalf of the cause. There are reasons for this beyond the cliché that women's records may not have been as prized and thus no longer exist. Most of the discussion pertaining to giving women the vote was by men to men. With regard to the extension of voting rights during the period to any of the "have not groups" much of the time it was the "haves" debating over which of the "have-nots" should get the vote. While more African American men seemed vocal on their own behalf, few women came forth for themselves.

A number of studies examining women's Reconstruction activity and women's suffrage advocacy during later decades provide possible reasons for the lack of women's political activism during the post-Civil War decade. Historian Marjorie Spruill Wheeler, in her groundbreaking work on southern woman suffrage leaders, argues that southern white women anti-suffragists opposed enfranchisement because they believed it threatened, "southern womanhood," "the home," and "white supremacy." Furthermore, with political involvement also came additional responsibilities—all of which many conservative southern white women were happy to leave to southern white men. When women from this group did become publicly

³⁶ Sarah G. W. Hiatt, "Woman Suffrage in Texas," *The Woman's Journal*, December 4, 1875 (quotation).

active in the decades following Reconstruction, it was often first as part of memorial societies created to pay homage to the southern “lost cause” and designed to venerate white southern manhood.³⁷

Historian Elna Green, when examining twentieth-century southern anti-suffragists, found that these women were part of the South’s conservative agrarian elite with historic ties to the region’s antebellum planter class. The 1860 U. S. Census reported that 21,878 Texans were slaveholders, and approximately 10 percent of these were members of the planter class. It can be assumed that those most likely to own slaves in the state were white men between the ages of twenty and seventy years, and there were 104, 869 individuals fitting this description recorded as living in Texas in 1860. Thus, the total number of slaveholders in the state in 1860 amounted to 20 percent of the population in Texas that was most likely to own slaves. Traditional antebellum views of white southern womanhood, which reinforced the right of white men as the heads of their households, were still very prevalent during Reconstruction. Women who supported this ideal would not have publicly worked on behalf of woman suffrage. This certainly seemed to aid those who argued that women did not want the vote, when it looked as if women in most cases were not the ones asking for it.³⁸

³⁷ Wheeler, *New Women of the New South*, 25 (quotations). For examples of white southern women’s activities during Reconstruction and following, see Jane Turner Censer, *The Reconstruction of White Southern Womanhood, 1865-1895* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003). For discussion of white southern women’s memorial organizational activity in connection to the lost cause, see Karen L. Cox, *Dixie’s Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and The Preservation of Confederate Culture* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003).

³⁸ Green, *Southern Strategies*. Census numbers were obtained from Bureau of the Census, Eighth Census of the United States, 1860. Historical Census Browser from the University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center, <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/index.html>; Internet; (accessed November 15, 2009). Planter class defined here as slaveholders with twenty or more slaves. For an extensive discussion of planter class and slavery in Texas, see Richard G. Lowe and Randolph B. Campbell, *Planters & Plain Folk: Agriculture in Antebellum Texas* (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1987); Richard G. Lowe and Randolph B. Campbell, *Wealth and Power in Antebellum Texas* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1977); Randolph B. Campbell, *An Empire for Slavery: The Peculiar Institution in Texas, 1821-1865* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989). For a discussion of white women’s roles as part of the plantation household, see Catherine Clinton, *The Plantation Mistress: Women’s World in the Old South* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1982).

There are accounts of African American women who strongly encouraged African American men to get out and use their new vote, but these women did not appear to request the vote for themselves. The existence of a patriarchal political structure in the U. S. meant the existence of a certain level of expectation for black men to step forth and claim the public role of representing African American society. Additionally, as historians Jacqueline Jones, LeeAnn Whites, and Laura Edwards argue, African American women often sought to remain in their own homes and put their families first. Forced under the bonds of slavery to put white owners' demands above the needs of their own families, one of the first acts of freedpersons following emancipation was to legalize familial bonds in the preparation for the creation of private space that they were denied under slavery. Protection of this private space often came above all else as many black women refused to work in the fields, and parents preferred to place their children in school rather than as part of the laboring class. Extreme racial and sexual violence on African American women likely played a central role in the absence of their political activism during Reconstruction, as it would during the following century of Jim Crow rule.³⁹

In the end, it is those with the power who make the decision to broaden the voter base, even though it is very important for those who want increased political rights to be involved and vocal in the fight. Reconstruction was a period when the power structure was changing, but these alterations were being attempted mostly by those who already had a voice—white men. Once African American men began to be enfranchised in 1867, many also entered the political realm in the state on behalf of further measures toward permanent enfranchisement. Yet, women

³⁹ Campbell, *Grass-Roots Reconstruction in Texas*, 192-193; Moneyhon, *Texas After the Civil War*, 84; Jones, *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow*, passim; Foner, *Reconstruction*, 62-63. For the discussion of slave women in relation to the patriarchy of the plantation, see Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, *Within the Plantation Household: Black and White Women of the Old South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988). For the discussion of African American women's activities during the Civil War and Reconstruction, see Edwards, *Gendered Strife and Confusion*; LeeAnn Whites, *The Civil War as a Crisis in Gender: Augusta, Georgia, 1860-1890* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1995).

were still on the outskirts. The politics of patriarchy dominated, and woman suffrage would have to wait.

Southern communities, and more specifically Texans, apparently were not ready to generate this type of women's organized involvement in their own enfranchisement. This was an era (a generation perhaps) of introduction: men making it part of Reconstruction's enfranchising theme—with only a few women active. The next generation built on this because the public had been introduced to some pro-suffrage rhetoric and political work by members of their own communities. While woman suffrage was not mainstream yet, it became less foreign. This second generation toward the end of the nineteenth century included southern woman suffragists who, first through grassroots activities, and then through organized activity built on the platform of consciousness-raising started during the Reconstruction years. The next two chapters will explore the grassroots activism of this second generation of suffrage workers and their increasingly organized activity in Texas, the South, and nationally.

CHAPTER 2

EARLY GRASSROOTS ACTIVISTS AND THEIR METHODS, 1876-1890

One of the striking differences in Texas between woman suffrage work during Reconstruction and that of the last quarter of the nineteenth century was the public role women played in demanding the vote. During Reconstruction in Texas, with a few exceptions, men did most of the talking—whether it was for or against votes for women. Beginning in the post-Reconstruction years, women started claiming their voices and taking center stage on behalf of the cause. Not all suffragists were women—some were men—and not all women were pro-suffrage, but the public space women claimed attracted increased attention and supporters.

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, woman suffrage activities in Texas went through two phases. The first phase, discussed in this chapter, was made-up of grassroots activists who acted without an official state suffrage organization and who were often spilt by ties to the two competing national groups, the American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA) and the National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA). During this period, 1876-1890, woman suffrage lecturers and grassroots activists, using educational materials and personalized public contact, built an essential foundation for future organizational activities. The second phase, discussed in the next chapter, began with the building of networks and the laying of groundwork that led to the founding of the Texas Equal Rights Association (TERA) in 1893. This organization from its inception dominated woman suffrage work in Texas for much of the 1890s.

During the 1870s and 1880s, the nation went through a period of recovery and reorganization following the Civil War and Reconstruction that had an enormous influence on woman suffrage in the South. Regionally, this era was marked by the return of the Democratic Party; in Texas, this started in the early 1870s and was solidified with the approval of the

“redeemer” state constitution in 1876. With the removal of federal control and the return of power to southern Democrats, increased legal and social restrictions based on race returned and/or grew stronger, and by the end of the century these Jim Crow practices influenced every aspect of life.¹

Texas, like the rest of the South, was also transformed by large increases in transportation, industrialization, and urbanization that affected reform movements such as woman suffrage. In Texas, from 1870 to 1890 railroads became central to this period of change. While there were fewer than 500 miles of track in 1870, by 1890 more than 8,000 miles connected most of the major cities. With the arrival of railroads, Texas cities began to grow extensively, including Dallas, Fort Worth, Waco, Austin, San Antonio, and Houston. Additionally, with the rise in transportation and concentrated population centers came industrial and service trade opportunities as well as agricultural growth. Industrial production in the state grew 500 percent in these years, the number of farms 275 percent, and the number of improved acres 600 percent.²

All of these political, social, and economic changes influenced the development of woman suffrage activities in the state. The reasons people supported woman suffrage were often related to the fluctuating social and political environment established in reaction to the omnipresent Democratic Party. Multiple groups sought to reduce or overthrow the Democratic

¹ There is vast literature regarding the creation of post-Reconstruction racial segregation in the U. S., the South, and in Texas. For examples of this discussion see, Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*; Woodward, *Origins of the New South*; Litwack, *Trouble in Mind*; Blight, *Race and Reunion*; Barr, *Reconstruction to Reform*; Hine, *Black Victory*. For the relationship between gender and white supremacy arguments, see Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow*.

² See, Edward L. Ayers, *The Promise of the New South: Life After Reconstruction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992). For further information regarding growth in Texas during this period, see Randolph B. Campbell, *Gone to Texas: A History of the Lone Star State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); Char Miller and Heywood T. Sanders, eds., *Urban Texas: Politics and Development* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1990); John Stricklin Spratt, *The Road to Spindletop: Economic Change in Texas, 1875–1901* (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1955).

Party and sometimes believed that women's enfranchisement could help in the endeavor. With regard to transportation, as travel became an increased possibility suffragists became more mobile and reached larger and more widespread audiences. At the same time, as more people moved to Texas among them were reformers and suffragists who became central to the cause's growth during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Finally, with increased population and transportation came greater communication systems facilitating the first woman suffrage networks in the state. These years, 1876-1890 (from the end of Reconstruction to the unification of the NAWSA) that brought great change to the state, even though most Texans focused on their local communities and functioned at the most basic grassroots level.³

It took more than two decades of door-to-door and town-to-town communication, outreach, education, networking, and organizing to align enough supporters to call for a successful state woman suffrage convention in 1893. As part of the process, these activities also carved out public space. They altered gender norms in an often traditionally conservative southern environment that "emphasized the softness, purity, and spirituality of women while denying them intellectual capacity." For women to request, let alone demand, the right to vote was to exclaim publicly that southern "gentlemen" were not fulfilling their defined roles. The region's patriarchal image commanded that men needed to be trustworthy home and community leaders in whom women could "place perfect confidence in [their] judgment and to believe that [they] always knew best." Many southerners believed, "a difference with your husband ought to be considered the greatest calamity." A vote was a voice and to declare that women needed to project their own voices was to suggest that women sought to "differ" with the men in their lives

³ For discussion of local isolationism, see Wiebe, *Search for Order*, in which he discussed "island communities." For a discussion of New South changes in Texas, see Walter L. Buenger, *The Path to a Modern South: Northeast Texas between Reconstruction and the Great Depression* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001).

if they so chose. Yet during this period, growing numbers of southern women and men began to believe differently. Some came to support woman suffrage to gain increased influence for separate causes. Others formed a belief that “If we would be free, let all vote that have an interest in the management of the Government.” As these individuals sought out others to recruit for the cause of woman suffrage, it took many sources of support to facilitate growth in a society taught from childhood to expect women’s silence.⁴

An important factor in encouraging individual woman suffragists to proclaim their advocacy publicly was their communication with the NWSA and the AWSA. Between the years 1876 and 1880, multiple Texas women corresponded with leaders of both the NWSA and AWSA. One of these correspondents, Martha Goodwin Tunstall, was active in her communication with the NWSA, and their records list her as the Texas representative on its advisory committee in 1876. In addition to correspondence with national leaders, the *Woman’s Journal* published by the AWSA in Boston provided a source of information and a forum for communication with other suffragists in Texas and around the nation. Founded in 1870 by Lucy Stone, Henry Blackwell, and Mary Livermore, the weekly suffrage newspaper soon gained a national audience and served as the central woman’s rights forum nationwide for decades. It became the official organ for the AWSA and eventually the NAWSA.⁵

⁴ Scott, *The Southern Lady*, 15 (first quotation), 6 (second and third quotations); Harvey Jirrells, “letter to the editor September 21, 1885,” *Woman’s Journal*, October 3, 1885 (fourth quotation).

⁵ *HWS III*, 18-19, 117-120, 153; Letter from Martha Goodwin Tunstall, in *Papers of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony*, eds, Patricia G. Holland and Ann D. Gordon (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources Inc., 1989, microfilm), series 1 [hereafter cited ECS-SBA Papers]; Mrs. S. D. Curtis to ECS, May 26, 1880, ECS-SBA Papers; Abbie Buck to ECS, May 30, 1880, ECS-SBA Papers; Martha Goodwin Tunstall to Mrs. Sara Andrews Spencer, January 15, 1880, ECS-SBA Papers; McMillen, *Seneca Falls*, 181. Martha G. Tunstall’s husband, William Vaughn Tunstall, was an active Republican during Reconstruction. His political ties reportedly put the family at risk multiple times, and the couple was called as witnesses in the United States House of Representatives hearing for the contested seat of William S. Herndon in 1872. During their testimony, they both gave in-depth witness accounts of brutality toward Republicans in Texas’ first congressional district, and they testified that Herndon was an active Democrat, supporter of the Confederacy, and was unfit to fill the House seat. The irony here is that Herndon’s wife, Mary Louise Herndon, was one of the eleven women to sign the call for

Most woman suffrage historians argue that only a few elite southern white women supported suffrage before NAWSA's systematic efforts in the 1890s to organize the South. On the contrary, a close examination of woman suffrage activity in Texas shows that a grassroots movement driven by individual reformers existed almost two decades prior to the creation of a state association. Shortly after the Texas 1875 constitutional convention, letters and articles from and about Texas began to appear on the pages of the *Woman's Journal*, and it served as a suffrage and women's news lifeline for social reformers scattered in often-isolated parts of the state. One example of this was Jenny Bland Beauchamp, who after moving to Texas became one of the leading woman suffrage advocates during the post-Reconstruction era. She sought a larger audience and a networking tool in the pages of the weekly suffrage newspaper. The wife of a Baptist minister, Sylvester A. Beauchamp, and mother of at least seven children, Beauchamp wrote about "the woman question" in denominational newspapers. She first contacted the *Journal* and AWSA leaders in June 1878 seeking a more political voice, but she continued writing for multiple newspapers in the state including a series of articles on woman suffrage starting in May 1879 in the Houston-based *Baptist Herald*.⁶

TERA's creation in 1893. Furthermore, there is no record of Martha Tunstall having any other connection with the first woman suffrage association in Texas other than serving as a witness against one of its founders' husbands. On the other hand, Herndon's daughter Elizabeth Herndon Potter was an active woman suffragist in Texas and organizer for NAWSA during the early twentieth century. The connection and conflict between these two suffragist families gives historians a good example of the transition of political power toward the end of Reconstruction and the following decades. The Democrats were back in power, and members of key families were usually at the center of political activities of all sorts in the state. United States House of Representatives, "G. W. Whitmore vs. W. S. Herndon: Papers in the Contested-Election Case of G. W. Whitmore vs. W. S. Herndon in the First Congressional District of Texas," in *The Miscellaneous Documents Printed by Order of The House of Representatives During the Second Session of the Forty-Second Congress, 1871-82* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1872) 11-24, 49-52, 59-69, 74, 116-142, 155; Texas Equal Rights Association Scrapbook [hereafter cited as TERA Scrapbook], folder 1, box 34, McCallum Papers.

⁶ Wheeler, *New Women of the New South*, 20, 205-206 fn. 48; *HTO*, s. v. "Jenny Bland Beauchamp," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/BB/fbeaj.html> (accessed March 26, 2008); *Dallas Morning News*, "Mrs. Jennie Bland Beauchamp is Dead," February 22, 1914; Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, Denton County, Texas, Schedule 1, Population, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D. C.; Jenny Beauchamp, "letter to the editor June 18, 1878," *Woman's Journal*, June 22, 1878; "The Woman's Movement in Texas," *Woman's Journal*, July 13, 1878. For a discussion of Beauchamp's writing for the *Baptist Herald*, see H.

In December 1881, the *Texas Journal of Education* published a lengthy and in-depth article by Beauchamp entitled “The Ballot an Educator,” that argued on behalf of granting woman suffrage. Published at this time by the Secretary of the State Board of Education Orlando Hollingsworth, this publication provided an audience beyond individuals predisposed to woman suffrage such as the readers of the *Woman’s Journal* or the limited communities reading denominational news. In the article favoring woman suffrage, Beauchamp argued that the ballot would raise the standard for women’s self-education and an individual’s preparation to be an informed voter. Furthermore, she stated that the nation, by not providing the ballot to women, degraded them in the eyes of their sons. In this particular article, she touched on the growing battle between some groups supporting “white woman suffrage” and the vote granted to African American men by the Fifteenth Amendment to the U. S. Constitution. Beauchamp appeared annoyed that white women could not vote whereas black men could. Unfortunately, this was a common grudge held by white woman suffragists that led to further racial polarization.⁷

Another indication of a growing interest in woman suffrage came in 1881, the same year that Beauchamp’s “The Ballot an Educator” was published, when Frances Willard made her first appearances in Texas culminating in a new framework through which women’s rights activists formed alliances. As part of Willard’s active push to align southern states under the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union’s (WCTU) white banner, she made a series of tours that included at

B. B. [Henry Browne Blackwell], “Woman’s Rights in Texas,” *Woman’s Journal*, May 24, 1879. The discovery of an active stream of local grassroots woman suffragist in Texas calls for similar examinations in other southern states.

⁷ Jenny Beauchamp, “The Ballot an Educator,” *Texas Journal of Education* (December 1881): 22-23; *HTO*, s. v. “*Texas Journal of Education*,” <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/TT/edt5.html> (accessed February 14, 2009); *HTO*, s. v. “Orlando Hollingsworth,” <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/HH/fho35.html> (accessed February 14, 2009). For more information on nineteenth-century white woman suffragists using racist arguments to further their own cause, see Rosalyn Terborg-Penn, “Nineteenth Century Black Women and Woman Suffrage,” *The Potomac Review*, 7 (Spring/Summer 1977): 13-24; also see Terborg-Penn, *African American Women*.

least three separate visits to Texas. At the beginning of the first visit in May 1881, Willard met Ebenezer L. Dohoney, one of the few known local temperance supporters in Paris, Texas. Dohoney, as discussed in the previous chapter, was a former state senator, a member of the 1875 Texas constitutional convention, and the author of the state's local option prohibition standard. He had been a pro-suffrage supporter since the mid 1870s. Apparently, arrangements for Willard's visit to Paris were passed on to Dohoney because none of the ministers in town supported temperance—still primarily a northeastern reform movement. According Dohoney's his autobiography, though, over three hundred individuals attended her talk on the subject despite very short notice. By the time of her departure from Texas, she organized the state's first local temperance unions in all three towns she visited, Paris, Denison, and Sherman.⁸

Upon Willard's return the following year, in May 1882, she organized the Texas WCTU in Paris, and the union elected its first president, Marilda Denton Maxey, wife of United States Senator Samuel Bell Maxey and Paris resident. When the second annual meeting convened in 1883, the assembly elected Jenny Beauchamp as its second president, and she began to travel extensively across the state organizing local temperance auxiliaries. She served in this office from 1883 until 1888. Beauchamp, like Willard, was actively pro-suffrage and saw the success of each cause dependent on the other. She served multiple times during the 1880s and early 1890s (before the formation of the first state woman suffrage organization) as the vice-president for Texas and other advisory positions representing the state for NWSA, AWSA and later the NAWSA. These titles appeared to be little more than honorary during the pre-NAWSA period but did serve to identify the official contacts for the national suffrage associations. Furthermore,

⁸ McArthur, *Creating the New Woman*, 7-8; Dohoney, *An Average American*, 209-211; *HTO*, s. v. "Woman's Christian Temperance Union," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/WW/vaw1.html> (accessed February 25, 2009); *HTO*, s. v. "Ebenezer Lafayette Dohoney."

the individuals who held the positions were often the source of state reports to each national organization's annual convention.⁹

During this time, the communication Texas leaders pursued with national temperance and suffrage figures publicized a debate that lasted over two decades. In August 1881, in response to her inquiry, Dohoney wrote Willard regarding laws dealing with woman suffrage in Texas. In a letter subsequently printed in the *Woman's Journal*, Dohoney stated that as part of the suffrage committee for the Texas 1875 Constitutional Convention he had championed woman suffrage. Thus he worked for the state's constitution specifically to disqualify "minors under twenty-one years, idiots and lunatics, paupers, convicted felons, and soldiers and marines in the United States army and navy," but, he argued, his committee did not directly remove women from the voter base. The second section of that constitution defined electors as all male citizens not previously disqualified. This meant Texas women could not vote. Yet, in 1879 the Texas legislature changed the constitutional civil statues by adding that "The masculine gender shall include the feminine and neuter." Dohoney claimed that this legal change opened up the possibility of woman suffrage in Texas because the male citizen electors could also include women electors that were not disqualified by the other requirements. He told Willard, however, that he did not believe that it was politically savvy to pursue the issue in the courts at that point.¹⁰

⁹ For a discussion of Willard's "do everything" campaign that included suffrage, also see Ruth Bordin, *Frances Willard: A Biography* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986). *HWS* III, 957; *HWS* IV, 24, 409; "Resolutions and Officers," *Woman's Journal*, September 23, 1882; Harriet Taylor Upton, ed., *Proceedings of the Twenty-fifth Annual Convention of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, Held in Washington, D.C., January 16, 17, 18, 19, 1893* (Washington D. C.: Stormont and Jackson Printers for National American Woman Suffrage Association, 1893), 77; National Woman Suffrage Association, *Report of the Sixteenth Annual Washington Convention, March 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th, 1884: With Reports of the Forty-eighth Congress* (Rochester, New York: Charles Mann, 1884), 141.

¹⁰ E. L. Dohoney to Frances Willard, *Woman's Journal*, August 20, 1881 (quotations); *Journal of the Constitutional Convention of the State of Texas, Begun and Held at the City of Austin, September 6, 1875* (Galveston: The "News" Office [for The State of Texas], 1875).

When the legislature put forth that the masculine included the feminine, this was publicized in a wide range of forums, including Beauchamp's article in the *Texas Journal of Education* and an article in the *New York Times*. The *New York Times* questioned what such legislation could foster. Lucy Stone had also published a congratulatory letter to Texas legislators for passing woman suffrage without a fight earlier in the year in the *Woman's Journal*—probably fueled by similar arguments. Dohoney continued to make the argument that technically women had the right to vote in Texas through his speech at the organizational TERA in 1893. The truth was, though, the 1879 statute was not regarded as providing Texas women with the right to vote and was never applied in such a manner. This misinterpretation publicly uncovered two things. First, when temperance workers perceived the need to decide between prohibition and suffrage, they would choose the fight for prohibition. Dohoney did not see that it was a good idea at the time of his correspondence with Willard to pursue legal battles over suffrage. Prohibition statutes on the ballot for a public referendum, and he implied that suffrage fights might endanger their success. The state needed leaders to focus on the woman suffrage fight as their first political priority. Second, state suffrage workers needed knowledgeable help. The problem was that while pro-suffrage Texans had good intentions, they often lacked campaigning experience, suffrage training, legal expertise, or a combination of these skills. Dohoney was an active political figure and attorney who continued to argue into the twentieth century that women just needed to demand their right to vote in court that the legislature had mistakenly defined. His theory was idealistic and unlikely to do much but stir up a large amount of anti-suffrage sentiment.¹¹

¹¹ Beauchamp, "The Ballot an Educator;" *New York Times*, February 25, 1879; *HWS III*, 307; L. S. [Lucy Stone], "Suffrage Established in Texas," *Woman's Journal*, January 8, 1881; *Dallas Morning News*, May 11, 1893. For examples of Dohoney's twentieth-century discussion of Texas woman suffrage with regard to "masculine shall include feminine," see correspondence between Dohoney and Erminia Folsom, folder 4, box 1, Erminia Thompson

An answer to some of these deficiencies arrived in 1884 in the form of suffrage reinforcement Mariana Thompson Folsom. An Iowa Woman Suffrage Association lecturer and Universalist minister, Folsom was well regarded among national woman suffragists, including Lucy Stone, Henry Blackwell, Susan B. Anthony, and Mary Livermore. She was educated in theology at St. Lawrence University and later ordained as a Universalist minister in 1870, making her one of the first clergywomen in the nation to serve in an official capacity. And it was in that capacity that shortly after finishing seminary, she first met Anna Howard Shaw, who credited Folsom in her autobiography (at that time she was still Mariana Thompson) for encouraging Shaw's higher education. Shaw wrote,

Before I had been working a month at my uncongenial trade Big Rapids, [Michigan,] was favored by a visit from a Universalist woman minister, the Reverend Marianna [*sic*] Thompson, who came there to preach. Her sermon was delivered on Sunday morning, and I was, I think, almost the earliest arrival of the great congregation which filled the church. It was a wonderful moment when I saw my first woman minister enter her pulpit; and as I listened to her sermon, thrilled to the soul, all my early aspirations to become a minister myself stirred in me with cumulative force. After the services I hung for a time on the fringe of the group that surrounded her, and at last, when she was alone and about to leave, I found courage to introduce myself and pour forth the tale of my ambition. Her advice was as prompt as if she had studied my problem for years. "My child," she said, "give up your foolish idea of learning a trade, and go to school. You can't do anything until you have an education. Get it, and get it now." Her suggestion was much to my liking, and I paid her the compliment of acting on it promptly, for the next morning I entered the Big Rapids High School, which was also a preparatory school for college.¹²

Folsom Papers (Archives and Information Services Division, Texas State Library and Archives Commission, Austin, Texas) [hereafter referred to as Folsom Papers].

¹² Sometimes Mariana is spelled Marianna or Marianne in the primary and secondary sources discussing her. Louise R. Noun, *Strong-Minded Women: The Emergence of the Woman-Suffrage Movement in Iowa* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1969), 119n, 119; *HTO*, s. v. "Mariana Thompson Folsom," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/FF/ffo43.html> (accessed March 1, 2009). For an overall view of Folsom's connections see correspondence in folder 1, box 1, Folsom Papers; Phebe Ann Hanaford, *Women of the Century* (Boston: B.B. Russell, 1877), 376; *General Catalogue of the Trustees, Officers, and Graduates and of Students Not Graduates of the St. Lawrence University, Canton, New York, 1856-1910* (Canton: St. Lawrence University Press, 1910), 62; Anna Howard Shaw, Elizabeth Garver Jordan, and Rowena Keith Keyes, *The Story of a Pioneer* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1920), 55-56.

Shaw eventually earned her doctorate in theology and became the first clergywoman ordained by the Methodist Protestant Church. She served as the third president of NAWSA from 1904 to 1915. Shaw's anecdote serves to show the importance of an individual's exposure to examples of success in that profession which they themselves are trying to enter. Additionally, it provides a good example of the mentorship often present between publicly successful women during the nineteenth century in both ministerial and suffrage work. These two phenomena were essential to the spread of suffrage support.¹³

Folsom wrote to the editors of the *Woman's Journal* in December 1884 stating that she had been travelling on a lecture tour in Texas for ten weeks (from approximately September to December 1884) giving more than sixty lectures. Early in the tour people warned her that "[Texans] will not listen to you on woman suffrage," and "You must handle the subject very tenderly." Folsom was an accomplished orator, not surprising due to her chosen profession as a minister, and newspapers often referred to her and her lectures on woman suffrage as "eloquent," "interesting," "a woman of superior ability and of unbounded energy and enthusiasm," and an "educated lady and very pleasant speaker." Contrary to the warnings, she found her lectures were well attended despite "short notices and serious obstacles." Folsom told *Journal* readers, "Some of the lectures have had few women in the audience, but the men were orderly, and often requested us to stay longer, and promised to get the women out next time." The addition of her knowledge, capabilities, and suffrage connections were central to the successful spread of woman suffrage in Texas.¹⁴

¹³ In a letter to Mariana Folsom in 1907, Shaw discusses how she had met Folsom in Big Rapids as "Miss Thompson" years before. Anna H. Shaw to Mariana T. Folsom, March 6, 1907, folder 1, box 1, Folsom Papers.

¹⁴ Mariana T. Folsom, "letter to the editor December 10, 1884," *Woman's Journal*, December 27, 1884 (first, second, seventh and eighth quotations); *San Francisco Bulletin*, October 3, 1870 (third quotation); *Galveston Daily News*, December 21, 1884 (fourth quotation); *Dallas Morning News*, December 3 1885 (fifth quotation);

Subsequently, Folsom and her family (husband Allen Pérez Folsom and children Oriana, Allison, and Erminia) moved permanently to Texas sometime around late 1884 or early 1885 following the lecture tour in the state. Her husband had received an appointment in educational work in Texas that facilitated the family's relocation to the state and Mariana's continued suffrage work. By that time, Mariana had worked on suffrage in Iowa, Kansas, Massachusetts, and Minnesota, with tours in multiple other states. Conditions in Texas, she found though, were rustic. She often brought her own candles to light the places where she lectured, and once during a "norther" she spoke in a room where women sat in the limited seats and men stood with their outerwear still on.¹⁵

It is important to examine what made this family willing to provide for the wife and mother's professional success. Much of the answer lies in the communities from which Mariana and Allen came. Mariana's parents were members of the Religious Society of Friends (popularly known as "Quakers"), and thus she was raised in a community in which women were placed on the same plane as men. It was not unusual for Quaker women to become woman suffrage activists, including twentieth-century National Woman's Party leader Alice Paul. It was often difficult for these women to reconcile the discrepancies found between the norm of gender equality practiced in the Quaker church and the lack of such in the United States legal structure. Additionally, Mariana's parents most likely supported their daughter's pursuit of a higher education and vocational choice as a minister because of her access to higher education on the East Coast away from her adolescent home of Iowa. Allen was also educated as a Universalist

Galveston Daily News, February 16, 1885 (sixth quotation); *Galveston Daily News*, August 21, 1896. The AWSA also claimed Folsom and the 200 lectures she gave during 1885 at their annual meeting. *HWS IV*, 416.

¹⁵ Mariana T. Folsom, "letter to the editor December 10, 1884," *Woman's Journal*, December 27, 1884 (quotation); Mary A. Livermore, "letter to the editor," *Woman's Journal*, April 10, 1886; *HWS II*, 545. Throughout the 1883 *Woman's Journal*, reports from Mariana Folsom came from both Iowa and Minnesota.

minister and was thus part of this religious community that provided for the professional advancement of women. There is also evidence that his mother was an Iowa woman suffragist. This meant that he was exposed at multiple stages of his life to central female figures that advocated women's equality.¹⁶

Together Mariana and Allen laid the foundation for the expectation that the wife/mother's abilities outside the home were as important as her roles inside their domestic space. Allen at some points also actively campaigned with Mariana for woman suffrage. When his ability to work and earn a living was compromised, she labored to hold the family together and create income. Furthermore, it is likely that while she traveled on lecture tours, he had to perform domestic duties at home. The Folsoms created a home environment that supported women's equality, complementing their joint-advocacy of female political enfranchisement. In turn, at least two of their children became woman suffragists. Their daughter, Erminia Thompson Folsom was an active twentieth-century suffrage leader in Texas, and their son Allison Thompson Folsom can be found among the supporting members of the Austin Woman Suffrage Association between 1900 and 1920.¹⁷

Folsom was not alone among nineteenth-century women with families that provided active woman suffrage leaders. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucy Stone, Jennie Beauchamp, and founding TERA president Rebecca Henry Hayes were also professionally active and needed to

¹⁶ "Glimpses of Womanhood Under Texas' Star and Its Inheritance," folder 15, box 1, Folsom Papers; Rebecca Larson, *Daughters of Light: Quaker Women Preaching and Prophesying in the Colonies and Abroad, 1700-1775* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 19-26; Katherine H. Adams and Michael L. Keene, *Alice Paul and the American Suffrage Campaign* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2007, 70); *General Catalogue of the Trustees...St. Lawrence University*, 61, 97, 162; "Friday Morning," *Woman's Journal*, December 10, 1881; Seventh Census of the United States, 1850, Columbia County, Wisconsin, Schedule 1, Population, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D. C.; Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, Mitchell County, Iowa, Schedule 1, Population, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D. C.

¹⁷ Mary A. Livermore, "letter to the editor," *Woman's Journal*, April 10, 1886. For evidence of the Folsom children's woman suffrage activism—especially that of Erminia Folsom, see correspondence in folders 4-7, box 1, Folsom Papers; and Folsom Membership dues listed in small red account book in folder 11, box 31, McCallum Papers.

have supportive familial structures to facilitate their suffrage activities with young children at home. In contrast, very often the twentieth-century key suffrage leaders both in Texas and at the national level were women who never married, never had children, or whose children were grown. For example, Anna Howard Shaw, Annette Finnigan, and Eleanor Brackenridge never married, and Carrie Chapman Catt, Minnie Fisher Cunningham, and Mary Heard Ellis never had children.¹⁸

Folsom stood in contrast not only to many of her twentieth-century counterparts but also to many of the women she encountered in nineteenth-century Texas during her travels. In May 1887, a *Woman's Journal* reader wrote to its editors discussing how Folsom had come to Meridian, Texas, lecturing on woman's rights. She said, "Not many men went. Most of the men sneered or growled. The women thought 'she had better have stayed at home and done her housework.' They 'wondered where her children were,' and 'what her husband said.' They pitied the 'poor man.' But some of us had longed to hear something on the subject and attended." Folsom and her family, and activists like her, were acting as living examples of the possibilities brought by women's equality. While not everyone, often not even the majority of people, exposed to their examples listened with open minds, nineteenth-century grassroots suffragists'

¹⁸ Why this generational division existed and how pervasive it actually was is the subject for another study. Yet, that there may have been a divide is important to point out in relation to the experiences of Mariana Folsom. For examples, Flexner, *Century of Struggle*; McMillen, *Seneca Falls*; *HTO*, s. v. "Jenny Bland Beauchamp"; *HTO*, s. v. "Annette Finnigan," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/FF/ffi35.html> (accessed March 1, 2009); *HTO*, s. v. "Mary Eleanor Brackenridge," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/BB/fbr4.html> (accessed March 1, 2009); *HTO*, s. v. "Minnie Fisher Cunningham," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/CC/fcu24.html> (accessed March 1, 2009); *HTO*, s. v. "Mary Heard Ellis," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/EE/fel35.html> (accessed March 1, 2009); Rebecca Henry Hayes to Laura Clay, November 8, 1894, Laura Clay Papers (Special Collections and Digital Programs, Margaret I. King Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky) [hereafter referred to as Clay Papers]. A special thanks to Judith McArthur for providing me with her copies of the letters between Hayes and Clay.

efforts made an important impact. Like the effects of Folsom on Shaw, these suffragists were living templates for change.¹⁹

As she travelled across Texas, Folsom often encountered gender norms that surprised her just as much as her public presence did with conservative southerners. As part of a December 1884 letter to the *Woman's Journal*, she described gender roles regarding behavior of different social classes of men and women and the separation of activity and visibility in public and private spaces. Folsom seemed genuinely surprised by the affluent women whom she described as “timid” living mostly inside and rarely seen in public spaces even in cities. Gender expectations for modesty and harsh living conditions, she reported, combined to produce a class of women who did not venture onto muddy streets even to shop for their own clothes. She described families that preferred to live in cramped houses with beds in almost every room instead of multi-story houses affected by “blowing winds.”²⁰

Folsom's tone appeared judgmental. While it was highly unlikely that she was completely unaware of criticisms that existed regarding her place as a very public woman, she also appeared somewhat sheltered. She believed that the “timidity” of Texas women was either ridiculous or unusual. This speaks to the possibility that liberal thinkers in other regions in the U. S. were just as sheltered from alternative cultural norms as those living in conservative southern communities. This could explain the apparent difficulties woman suffragists from other regions had when approaching southern constituencies, even if the southerners were pro-suffrage.²¹

¹⁹ M. L. Golden, “letter to the editor,” *Woman's Journal*, May 14, 1887 (quotation).

²⁰ Mariana T. Folsom, “letter to the editor December 10, 1884,” *Woman's Journal*, December 27, 1884 (quotations).

²¹ *Ibid.*, (quotation).

Woman suffrage activities in the state continued, but social and political change did not occur overnight. Women increasingly entered public space in the South, including Texas, but changes in restrictive social expectations placed on women had to be fought alongside their political inequality. Many suffragists reported to the national associations the hesitation often presented by southerners when approached on behalf of the cause. Individuals who privately supported it refused to sign petitions for fear of the stigma attached. One Texas suffragist hoped in 1885 to have 1,000 signatures to submit to the next legislature but reported that many who are “suffragists at heart” stay silent afraid of losing “prestige.” Two years prior, the same woman noted that teachers shied away for fear of “loss of popularity and the stigma of ‘strong mindedness.’” There were serious repercussions to professions of allegiance for the cause. One teacher wrote to the *Woman’s Journal* proclaiming secret pro-suffrage sentiments but reported fears of losing her job. She said, “I have never dared to come out and openly advocate the cause, because I am dependent on the public for my work, and could not get a place in the public schools if it were generally known that I am a suffragist.” What had been a problem during Reconstruction was still an issue, people favorable to the cause did not speak out for fear of social, and sometimes professional, rejection.²²

Texas leaders in the national political scene, furthermore, often favored upholding conservative southern stereotypes by opposing woman suffrage. In December 1883, Texas United States Representative John H. Reagan denounced extending the voting right to women during a congressional hearing to determine whether or not to reappoint the Select House Committee on Woman Suffrage. He argued that he did not want to refuse a request from any “lady,” but it was necessary to protect woman when she “misunderstands her duty” and asks to

²² I. [sic] Michelly, “letter to the editor November 11, 1885,” *Woman’s Journal*, November 28, 1885 (first and second quotations); J. Michelly, “letter to the editor July 18, 1883,” *Woman’s Journal*, July 21, 1883 (third quotation); N. G. P., “letter to the editor January 29, 1889,” *Woman’s Journal*, February 16, 1889 (fourth quotation).

build roads, railroads, and go to war. Furthermore, he argued changing the social status based on gender, which he believed was historically strong, and changing the nation's political process was unwise. Granting women the right to vote, he claimed, would lead the nation back into "barbarism." The House allowed the select committee to lapse, and during that session issues regarding woman suffrage were heard by the less sympathetic Judiciary Committee.²³

Reagan's strong position against woman suffrage that year earned him the label of "principal opponent" of the women's enfranchisement by Susan B. Anthony. A Unionist who followed his state instead of his nation into the Civil War, Reagan served the Confederate States of America as its postmaster general under Jefferson Davis. When taken captive by the United States Army, he wrote an open letter to Texans in which he advised the citizens of the state to limit African American suffrage. It was not surprising that he opposed enfranchising women. He had been an advocate of poll taxes during the 1875 Texas Constitutional Convention, a measure designed to disfranchise large and specific parts of an electorate. Reagan had already established a solid record as being firmly planted in southern hierarchical patriarchy by the time he stood in Congress against women voting. With his anti-woman suffrage demonstrations, he joined the public debate over gender roles that challenged traditional images of southern "gentlemen" and "ladies."²⁴

Strangely, Dohoney in his autobiography credited Reagan for helping save woman suffrage; Reagan supported the delegates fighting to turn the issue over to the suffrage committee

²³ HWS IV, 31-32; National Woman Suffrage Association, *Report of the Sixteenth Annual Washington Convention, March 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th, 1884: With Reports of the Forty-eighth Congress* (Rochester, New York: Charles Mann, 1884), 1-3 (quotations); *Fort Wayne Sunday Gazette*, December 30, 1883; Alana S. Jeydel, *Political Women: The Women's Movement, Political Institutions, the Battle for Women's Suffrage and the ERA* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 61-63.

²⁴ HWS III, 219-221; HWS IV, 31 (quotation); *HTO*, s. v. "John Henninger Reagan," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/RR/fre2.html> (accessed March 10, 2010); Foner, *Reconstruction*, 192.

that Dohoney chaired during the Texas Constitutional Convention of 1875 instead of its instant dismissal. The petition ability had been the real argument on the floor regarding woman suffrage in 1875, and Reagan openly supported the right for petition in the debate. His actions inadvertently looked like it aided woman suffrage. By the 1883 and 1884 congressional hearings, Reagan was adamantly against women receiving the vote. In the 1890s, Reagan would be associated with the Reform Democratic faction of the state's political party, most of who avoided discussing and/or openly opposed the enfranchisement of women.²⁵

Despite opposition at every level, suffragists continued to agitate the question. By January 1885, Marianna Folsom corresponded with Lucy Stone and Henry Blackwell urging the creation of a Texas woman suffrage association and asking for financial support in organizing it. They responded in a letter to Folsom, writing that state societies take an enormous amount of work, money, and supporters to get started and sustain themselves. Stone stated that she thought Texas might need more work before it was primed, but if Folsom was ready and willing to make it an auxiliary to the AWSA, they would send her fifty dollars. Stone also responded to a comment Folsom made about Jane Amy McKinney possibly moving to Texas. She wrote, "you know perhaps that she is not in sympathy with the American Association and would rather have an auxiliary of the National in Texas but you will see that if the American sends money to organize a society, it should be an auxiliary to the American." Like the Folsoms, McKinney was from Iowa, and a NWSA vice-president for Iowa. Blackwell wrote a note at the bottom of the letter stating, "P. S. My wife and I, in consultation with the officers of the American WS Assn., feel that we cannot consistently use its funds except in the work of organizing auxiliary State

²⁵ Dohoney, *An Average American*, 164; *Journal of the Constitutional Convention of the State of Texas, Begun and Held at the City of Austin, September 6, 1875*; *HTO*, s. v. "John Henninger Reagan;" Lewis L. Gould, *Progressives and Prohibitionists: Texas Democrats and the Wilson Era* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1973), 9, 70; see Chapter 4 for further discussion of Reform Democrats.

Societies. As you know the American differs from the National in respecting State rights and holding an annual meeting of delegates from States' Societies." The tone in which the AWSA leaders discussed the NWSA and some of the issues dividing the two organizations showed that as late as 1885 schisms existing between the two groups were still very fresh. The divisions also presented problems of affiliation for organizers in the field.²⁶

By July 1885 Folsom began to agree with Stone that more work needed to be done in Texas before the creation of a state woman suffrage association. She wrote that there might have existed an opening for formation in Austin during the state legislative session. She was advised, however, by many of the woman suffragists in the state from whom Folsom had requested "cooperation" that such efforts needed to wait until the legislature made decisions regarding "the woman's clerkship bill" and a petition for prohibition. The first required the state's treasury, comptroller, and land commission offices to employ women as clerks. After being passed, this was a big win for women's rights advocates in the state because it began to set a standard for the right to employment regardless of gender. The other bill asked for a state constitutional amendment creating statewide prohibition but was not picked up by the legislature. Neither of the issues were decided until the end of the legislative session, and thus Folsom did not get the chance to organize that year.²⁷

²⁶ Lucy Stone and Henry Blackwell to Mrs. [Mariana] Folsom, January 22, 1885, folder 1, box 1, Folsom Papers (quotations); *HWS* III, 956; *HWS* IV, 628; Mariana T. Folsom, "letter to the editor July 24, 1885," *Woman's Journal*, August 1, 1885; *HWS*. Jenny Beauchamp was listed as the vice-president ex-officio for Texas for the AWSA in 1884. *HWS* IV, 409. *The History of Woman Suffrage* lists Jane Amy McKinney as the NWSA vice-president for Iowa in 1886. *HWS* III, 956.

²⁷ Mariana T. Folsom, "letter to the editor July 24, 1885," *Woman's Journal*, August 1, 1885 (first quoted word); Patsy McDonald Spaw, ed. *The Texas Senate: Civil War to the Eve of Reform, 1861-1889*, vol. 2 (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1999), 354; Andrew J. Jutkins, *Hand-book of Prohibition* (Chicago: Lever Print, 1885), 156; J. Michelly, "letter to the editor February 6, 1885," *Woman's Journal*, February 14, 1885; Jane Amy McKinney, "letter to the editor February 15, 1885," *Woman's Journal*, March 21, 1885 (second quotation).

In a July 1885 letter to the *Woman's Journal*, Folsom appeared very optimistic with plans for a state woman suffrage association before the next legislative session convened in 1887. She stated that she had formed cooperative committees for future work where possible, and that in her view Texas was possibly the most promising southern state with regard to getting woman suffrage passed. The AWSA leadership began to pay increased attention to Texas, and at its seventeenth annual meeting in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in October 1885, reports from Folsom were read as part of those from twenty-six states. Yet hers, discussing Texas, was of "especial interest," and it was stated that she had delivered nearly 200 public addresses by that point.²⁸

The next year AWSA's attention to Texas took a turn. In April 1886 Mary Livermore, AWSA and *Woman's Journal* founder, made an appeal in the pages of the newspaper on behalf of Mariana Folsom. The Texas suffragist, who gave birth to the couple's fourth child Clarence in August 1885, was in dire straits. Within a couple of months after the birth of their child, her husband became extremely ill and the family's house burned. Clearly stating that Folsom had not asked for help, Livermore requested financial aid from *Woman's Journal* subscribers on her behalf. Numbers of suffragists sent money to the *Journal* for the Folsom fund and some sent their donations directly to the Texas suffragist. Those funds that funneled through the AWSA were listed in the pages of the *Woman's Journal* presenting an interesting look at the individuals wanting to participate in helping Folsom and keep her suffrage work in Texas alive. By May 11, 1886, Folsom received \$103.40 from AWSA bookkeeper Catherine Wilde on behalf of *Woman's Journal* subscribers, which was followed by additional funds from Stone and others. It is possible Folsom received more help than that recorded in the weekly suffrage newspaper or in

²⁸ Mariana T. Folsom, "letter to the editor July 24, 1885," *Woman's Journal*, August 1, 1885; *HWS* IV, 411, 416 (quotation), 432.

her surviving correspondence. The money helped her small family survive and aided her quick return to woman suffrage work in the state.²⁹

During this mid-to-late 1880s period, Folsom and others toured Texas in an attempt to spread the word about woman suffrage. Folsom, for example, traveled up and down Texas railroads speaking in towns, educating the public, and becoming increasingly well known in the state. As historian Robert Wiebe and others have pointed out, there “was a revolution in the patterns of distribution” in the United States during the late nineteenth century that was extraordinary because of the connectivity railroads provided between small towns and the rest of the nation. While Wiebe referred to the distribution of goods, trains also provided people with increased mobility. In the hands of certain reformers, this meant that the towns and areas connected by railroads were more easily accessible.³⁰

Keeping in mind that the majority of southerners lived in rural areas until after World War II, and that Texas alone was 268,581 square miles in size, travel was essential to successful reform. By surveying the locations where Frances Willard made her early tour of Texas, the towns she visited were often defined by how accessible they were by train. Connectedly, Mariana Folsom often reported of travel through extensive areas of Texas by rail. In 1886, she gave a detailed account that demonstrated the importance of transportation:

Numerous stage lines run from [San Antonio], besides five railroads. As I went towards Mexico, in all the villages along the way, I found willing listeners, and sometimes gentlemen from other localities who volunteered to arrange a lecture at home on the evening I could be there...In one place I saw the effect of good work...[that she heard referred to]...two hundred miles away...I went a little way toward California. The stations are small, as stock and sheep raising is the main

²⁹ Mary A. Livermore, “letter to the editor,” *Woman’s Journal*, April 10, 1886. Listings for contributions found in *Woman’s Journal* issues dated from April 17, 1886 to May 22, 1886. Additionally, correspondence regarding financial help for Folsom in folder 1, box 1, Folsom Papers. Mariana T. Folsom to Miss [Catherine] Wilde, May 11, 1886, *Woman’s Journal*, May 22, 1886.

³⁰ Wiebe, *Search for Order*, 2, 12, 23, 47 (quotation), 48. Also see, Spratt, *The Road to Spindletop*, for transportation discussion regarding Texas.

business. There was always a school-house, and I never failed of an audience...On returning [to San Antonio], I went five miles off the railroad to the quaint town of Castroville...Thirty miles out [on another road] I went to Floresville and talked woman suffrage in a neat court-house. The whole village turned out to hear. In all these directions the question was extremely new.³¹

Transportation taking woman suffrage to isolated areas of the state had changed since Elizabeth Cady Stanton reported being stuck in Houston and limited in the places she could visit in the state in late 1875. As Folsom and other reform leaders demonstrated, the ability physically to reach different areas of the state was essential in gaining pockets of support. At one point Folsom suggested that that while she had covered a lot of ground by rail, much of the state was not easily accessible that way. She went on to say what was really needed was a lecturer with a private horse and buggy. Folsom was suggesting that a wealthier suffrage worker had the possibility of making a bigger impact. Questions of social class and economic wealth when choosing state suffrage leaders began to be especially important to NAWSA leaders after the mid-1890s partially because of the amount of travel required.³²

Besides the importance of transportation, Texas suffragists' writings also show an altering view of the relationship between woman suffrage and universal suffrage in the years following Reconstruction. As discussed in chapter 1, the split of the American Equal Rights Association (AERA) in 1869 into the AWSA and the NWSA was partially over whether or not the AERA should endorse the proposed Fifteenth Amendment. As it stood, the amendment

³¹ Char Miller and David R. Johnson, "The Rise of Urban Texas," *Urban Texas: Politics and Development*, 4; Rupert Bayless Vance and Nicholas J. Demerath, eds. *The Urban South* (Manchester, New Hampshire: Ayer Publishing, 1971), 4; "Texas' Natural Environment," *Texas Almanac* <http://www.texasalmanac.com/environment/> accessed, July 6, 2009; McArthur, *Creating the New Woman*, 7-8, for discussion of places Willard visited in Texas; Mariana T. Folsom, "letter to the editor," *Woman's Journal*, June 19, 1886 (quotation).

³² *HWS III*, 802; Stanton, *Eighty Years and More (1815-1897)*, 297-298; Ward and Burns, *Not for Ourselves Alone*, 164; Mariana T. Folsom, "letter to the editor," *Woman's Journal*, June 19, 1886; Jane Amy McKinney, "letter to the editor February 15, 1885," *Woman's Journal*, March 21, 1885.

secured voting rights without racial restrictions but did not do so for gender—thus constitutionally granting enfranchisement for black men but leaving women without the vote. Those who founded the AWSA were upset with the voter designation of male but believed it was just as important to secure voting rights for black men as it was for women. NWSA leaders disagreed and for decades carried the mast to gain votes for women at any cost. Beauchamp's address on the issue in an 1878 letter to the *Woman's Journal*, gave away her position. She wrote, "You Northern women owe it to Southern ones. You sent up a petition to Congress, 800,000 strong, for the elective franchise for the freedmen. This was perhaps right; still, it riveted our chains the tighter, for when shall we rise superior to this ignorant vote?" In this segment of her correspondence, the possibility of leaning toward supporting the fairness of universal male suffrage was quickly cast aside by strong racist rhetoric and a belief of a social hierarchy based on race. Beauchamp wrote in her 1881 *Texas Journal of Education* article, "[Men] were alert to the negro's, but deaf to the woman's claim. They thrust the ballot on the negro before he asked for it, but thousands of the noblest and best women [i.e., white] sue in vain." By this time over a decade of tension had built between some white woman suffragists and supporters of black voting rights. Furthermore, while Beauchamp's claims regarding the Fifteenth Amendment were not accurate, both her 1878 letter and 1881 article are useful in placing her among the group of woman suffragists who believed it necessary to wave the race card to try and further their own cause.³³

This practice was became increasingly more common among white woman suffragists across the nation and continued beyond the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920—used by those including Susan B. Anthony in the nineteenth century and Carrie Chapman Catt in

³³ Jenny Beauchamp, "letter to the editor June 18, 1878," *Woman's Journal*, June 22, 1878 (first quotation); Beauchamp, "The Ballot an Educator," (second quotation).

the twentieth century. With regard to how the South, including Texas, fit into this developing trend, historian David Blight argues that the nation was trying to come to terms with the sectional violence of the Civil War. Native-born whites often exchanged generations-old sectional strife for common ground that rested on shared prejudices. Therefore, increasingly during the formation of national reform movements in the latter-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries a unifying factor to overcome sectional differences was the subjugation and segregation of the “other”—often meaning African Americans, immigrants, the labor class, or a combination. To focus on a common enemy to highlight oneself and reform allies as the “correct” and “prepared” peoples to “properly guide” democracy also meant that there were established beliefs defining “unprepared” individuals.³⁴

White woman suffragists sometimes worked to include certain groups of women in the “prepared” and “proper” categories to further their arguments for women’s enfranchisement. For example, a pro-woman suffrage man in Ellis County, Texas, wrote in 1887

I was not much in favor of it until we began to agitate the prohibition amendment in our State. But when I see thousands of negro men who can neither read nor write, and of foreigners who cannot speak our language, voting to perpetuate the rum-traffic on me and my four boys, and thousands more of Texas-born and Texas-raised men like myself who have done all we could to carry the amendment, I am thoroughly convinced that our wives, mothers and sisters have as good a right to vote as these hordes who defeated the amendment.³⁵

First, this segment of correspondence shows a supporter of a separate political issue, prohibition, who saw women as a possible addition to the voting base that would help the bill pass. Second, here lies a view of a social hierarchy built on gender, race, and national origin.

³⁴ Terborg-Penn, *African American*, 115; Terborg-Penn, “Nineteenth Century Black Women and Woman Suffrage;” McMillen, *Seneca Falls*, 168-120; David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 127; Carrie Chapman Catt to Edith Hinkle League, July 17, 1918, folder 4, box 3, McCallum Papers; see also, David W. Blight, *Beyond the Battlefield: Race, Memory & the American Civil War* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002).

³⁵ C. T. [Cyrus T.] Hogan, “letter to the editor August 24, 1887,” *Woman’s Journal*, July 3, 1887 (block quotation).

This North Texas man represented those who believed race and country of birth trumped gender. He preferred to see gender norms broken to allow women of his same race and national origin (white, native-born United States citizens) to vote because he saw them as qualified voters—second only to white, native U. S. men. It is questionable if this same man and the co-workers he discussed later in his letter to the *Woman's Journal* (whom he claimed supported his views) would have argued for woman suffrage if African American and immigrant men had not possessed voting rights.³⁶

In some cases, woman suffragists personally believed in equality for all under the law, but designed their strategies and speeches to appeal to the assumptions of their audiences. In July 1885, a few years after Beauchamp's article appeared in the *Texas Journal of Education*, Mariana Folsom reported to the *Woman's Journal*, "It seems to me that an educational qualification is the wedge for woman suffrage here, and I have always talked for it when I said anything on that topic, although I believe in universal suffrage." Henry Blackwell, of the AWSA, exhibited similar personal contradictions between the American's universal suffrage stance and his public advocacy for restricted woman suffrage. In 1867, he sent copies of a letter he wrote to southern state legislatures called, "What the South Can Do: How the Southern States Can Make Themselves Masters of the Situation." In it, trying to appeal to his southern audience, he curtailed the woman suffrage argument to try and convince legislators that enfranchising women would counterbalance federally mandated black suffrage. Then, around the time of Folsom's remark about educated suffrage as a selling point in the South, Blackwell approached both Kentucky suffrage leader (and soon-to-be NAWSA leader) Laura Clay and the Mississippi Legislature with educated woman suffrage plans. Blackwell and other NAWSA leaders

³⁶ Ibid.

continued trying to win southern support and state-level woman suffrage with these directions into the 1890s and early 1900s.³⁷

The difference between educated suffrage and universal suffrage was becoming a common thread of conversation regarding voting rights in the late nineteenth century. “Universal suffrage” meant the belief in or practice of providing voting rights without racial or socioeconomic restrictions, and sometimes was also used to include women’s enfranchisement. “Educated suffrage,” on the other hand, was used in a variety of ways that ranged from local implementation to the way a federal amendment could be worded to allow limited woman suffrage. At the local and state levels of implementation, local voting requirements could be set to enable the voter registrar to test a potential voter’s legal comprehension or knowledge of laws, ability to read and write a text selection in English chosen by the registrar, or some other version of a knowledge or literacy test. At the national level, such a requirement was sometimes suggested by white native-born woman suffragists to be included in a constitutional amendment. These requirements, as historian Rosalyn Terborg-Penn and others have also argued, were designed to disfranchise African American, non-native born, and labor class voters, and thus were aimed at gaining woman suffrage support from conservative groups of legislators and voters.³⁸

³⁷ Mariana T. Folsom, “letter to the editor July 24, 1885,” *Woman’s Journal*, August 1, 1885 (quotation); Marjorie Spruill Wheeler, *New Women of the New South: The Leaders of the Woman Suffrage Movement in the Southern States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 113-125.

³⁸ Terborg-Penn, *African American Women*, 68-69. For a discussion in the relationship between universal and restricted forms of suffrage, see also Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*; Woodward, *Origins of the New South*; Blight, *Race and Reunion*; Dailey, Gilmore, and Simon, eds., *Jumpin’ Jim Crow*; Hine, *Black Victory*; Kousser, *The Shaping of Southern Politics*; Litwack, *Trouble in Mind*; Perman, *Struggle for Mastery*; Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow*. In addition to Terborg-Penn, for the discussion of the relationship between woman suffrage and racial segregation in the South, see also Wheeler, *New Women of the New South*, 100-132; Lebsack, “Woman Suffrage and White Supremacy,” 62-100.

In the years before the founding of a state suffrage association in Texas, decisions on how to approach audiences and what arguments to make were solely at the discretion of local grassroots reformers. Often, contradictions and duplications in their efforts and messages can be found. Sometimes they upheld southern conservative prejudices, and sometimes they advocated more liberal views. Other times these grassroots suffragists upheld the southern “moderate” line that historian Suzanne Lebsock stated “did not disavow white supremacy” but did not push for it, either. A consistent fact, though, was that these activists built the platforms on which the growing movement stood. The messages that they used, and the political connections they made to woman suffrage often lingered for decades as part of the campaigning, as will be shown in the following chapters.³⁹

It is important to understand that during the late-nineteenth century the efforts of grassroots activists in Texas to educate crowds on woman suffrage were essential in rallying support for the cause, but they also had to accomplish much more. It was just as necessary to make people aware of the issue’s existence, that there was a nationwide movement forming to support it, and to connect the possibilities of women’s votes to other concerns affecting people’s daily lives. People had to believe suffrage for women would make their own lives better, and that they were not alone if those chose to support it. Finally, those who were or became suffrage allies needed to learn what they could do to become active in its implementation. Local woman suffrage activists participated in a variety of ways designed to educate and connect the Texas public to woman suffrage. Those at the grassroots circulated petitions addressed to the state legislature, orchestrated

³⁹ Lebsock, “Woman Suffrage and White Supremacy,” 65 (first and second quotation).

public debates on the subject, addressed crowds large and small, advocated woman suffrage in personal conversations, circulated copies of the *Woman's Journal*, and distributed informational leaflets.⁴⁰

The legal reality surrounding woman suffrage was tied to the Texas legislature, which had to act on woman suffrage by either granting women enfranchisement directly or passing it on to voters for a constitutional amendment. Legislators' involvement was inevitable, and approaching the congressional bodies was essential in furthering the cause. Because of this, talk of petitioning was often mentioned as part of state work. For an example following Reconstruction, Jenny Beauchamp was one of the first during this grassroots era to plan to send a petition to the 1878 state legislature. By 1885, one of the state's suffragists that wrote often to the *Woman's Journal* hoped to have one-thousand signatures on a petition for woman suffrage before the next legislative session. Getting petition signatures ready for the legislature was essential in keeping congressional representatives aware of the cause's support amongst their constituents. It also provided the opportunity to educate the public on the issue. One suffragist reported that while she was collecting signatures, a man who agreed to sign it then refused, saying that he had thought it was a prohibition petition. The activist replied, "So I am; the vote of women will secure it." While it is unlikely that she won his agreement, this scenario highlights that educational dialogue usually came with the petition process.⁴¹

Another display of public support and education came in the form of planned public debates on the topic of woman suffrage. As early as 1878, three debating clubs discussed

⁴⁰ For examples of individual's localized efforts on behalf of woman suffrage in Texas, see *Woman's Journal*, November 28, 1885, April 10, 1886, April 24, 1886, June 19, 1886, August 7, 1886, April 10, 1886, December 4, 1886, April 10, 1886, May 14, 1887, May 21, 1887, September 3, 1887, March 24, 1888.

⁴¹ Jenny Beauchamp, "letter to the editor June 18, 1878," *Woman's Journal*, June 22, 1878; J. Michelly, "letter to the editor November 11, 1885," *Woman's Journal*, November 18, 1885 (quotation).

woman suffrage. Beauchamp reported to the AWSA that Baylor University's Literary Society would have been another, but those assigned the opposition's stance refused to participate. She said their reasons were, "We cannot afford to oppose it; it might ruin us," citing that a large number of young women there were supporters of the cause. Additionally during this period, frequent debates on woman suffrage occurred in county schools. Access to and participation in woman suffrage debates in the schools encouraged younger populations in the state to explore topics connected with the issue. These young people were the next generation of citizens, voters, leaders, and politicians. Being exposed at an age before their political views and community beliefs were solidified provided for the increased possibility for them to consider women's enfranchisement as a necessary norm instead of a cultural danger.⁴²

Furthermore, schools were not the only place in which these debates occurred. One man requested that the AWSA send him "twenty-eight different woman suffrage tracts" because the issue was brought up at the last Texas State Grange meeting, but opponents successfully postponed it until the next meeting. He was most likely requesting the educational material to prepare for the debate at the political gathering but also possibly for dissemination at the event. The relationship between woman suffrage and the Grange, rural farmers, and subsequently the Texas People's Party became an important network of ties in the late-nineteenth century that will be discussed in the following chapter.⁴³

Probably the largest and immeasurable way in which grassroots suffragists influenced local audiences was by personalized advocacy through speeches, conversations, and the distribution of printed material. Individual stories appear in newspapers, state and national

⁴² Jenny Beauchamp, "letter to the editor June 22, 1878," *Woman's Journal*, June 29, 1878 (quotation); J. Michelly, "letter to the editor March 31, 1886," *Woman's Journal*, April 10, 1886.

⁴³ R. T. Kennedy, "letter to the editor May 10, 1887," *Woman's Journal*, May 21, 1887 (quotation).

suffrage records, and family archival collections, but what the surviving information suggests is that only a small portion of these accounts survived for posterity. Just in Texas, the records suggest that these planned encounters reached out to at least tens-of-thousands in the last decades of the nineteenth century. For example, Mariana Folsom traveled across the state regularly from 1884 until her death in 1909 speaking about woman suffrage. In 1886, she reported to the leaders of the AWSA the process by which she chose locations for suffrage lectures in Texas. Folsom preferred to begin woman suffrage work in a state by focusing on the rural towns, which she called “smaller places.” She believed that while meetings in the city reported “large and enthusiastic” crowds, these groups did not translate to the polls when the issue came up for vote. Therefore, the smaller “outlying points” had “voters who will take time to think,” and while “such work is less showy, [it lays] the foundation,” and she believed ended up making more allies and surprising anti-suffragists at the polls. In one such case, a man in West Texas told her that he had seen her speak a year and a half before, and since then had “talked woman suffrage to his neighbors.” He was in attendance at her third speech in Texas and subscribed to the *Woman’s Journal*. He told her that once he and his wife read it, they lent it out, and for those that did not want the loan he told them some of the news from the weekly suffrage paper. This open personal advocacy by members of close-knit communities was priceless. It often meant that logic and argument supporting women’s enfranchisement came with a trusted face thus possibly adding to the issue’s appeal.⁴⁴

Fame could also help draw a crowd curious about the issue. Mariana Folsom was well known among woman suffrage leaders nationwide and became increasingly famous during the 1880s in Texas. While talking to members of the audience after one of her suffrage lectures, a

⁴⁴ Mariana T. Folsom, “letter to the editor October 10, 1886,” *Woman’s Journal*, December 4, 1886 (quotations).

young woman informed her that she had attempted to attend one of Folsom's lectures earlier that year, but it was discovered later that the advertised event was an April-fools trick played by a few local young men. Folsom stated that she had never been to or heard of the town, and that it was more than twenty miles from the railroad. Yet, the advertisement of her lecture drew a crowd even without any further connection or effort by her.⁴⁵

While grassroots activists often preferred public speaking tours to press work, pro-suffrage newspapers were also important in reaching broader audiences with suffrage arguments and logic and forming a sense of support among those who believed in women's legal equality. Folsom wrote to the *Woman's Journal* that she often saw facts from her speeches quoted anonymously in Texas papers. Additionally, the editor of the *Hillsboro County Visitor* responded to being called a "women's rights man" by the editor of the *Texas Mirror* in an article that highlighted all of his reasons why he was proud to be a "women's rights man." In doing so, he related to a broad readership a long list of reasons why women deserved equal treatment. When Texas newspapers reported positively about woman suffrage, it allowed countless Texas residents exposure to the issue without having to actively seek education on the topic or publicly proclaim advocacy.⁴⁶

Finally, a process by which suffragists reached the public was the distribution of written woman suffrage material that often accompanied all of the above activities. Referred to as leaflets, tracts, pamphlets, and/or newsletters, accounts of woman suffragists participating in this type of public education was one of the most commonly mentioned and least elaborated on of the woman suffrage activities. Overall, grassroots reformers were town-to-town campaigners,

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Mariana T. Folsom, "letter to the editor October 10, 1886," *Woman's Journal*, December 4, 1886; "Good for Texas," *Woman's Journal*, August 1, 1885 (quotations).

adding personal touches and faces to an issue many southerners thought of as obscure, foreign, and often dangerous.⁴⁷

On the other hand, these individual woman suffrage workers lacked the collaborative apparatus efforts usually associated with legislative accomplishments. Texas was still without a state organization to orchestrate cooperative work between local activists. Suffrage work in the state progressed slowly, and in 1888 at the Texas WCTU's annual convention, the organization officially endorsed woman suffrage. Believed by historians to be the first southern state to do so, this action was a strong step toward further state recognition and more widespread support for equal enfranchisement. Actually, from the beginning of Beauchamp's first presidency in 1883 until the formation of the Texas Equal Rights Association in 1893, the Texas WCTU acted in many ways as the woman suffrage organization in the state. Even though the group did not officially endorse woman suffrage until 1888, many of its members were active and vocal advocates. Beauchamp, for example, served in different official capacities representing Texas for the AWSA, NWSA, and NAWSA from 1881 to 1893.⁴⁸

The year of the group's official endorsement, WCTU members elected Elizabeth Austin Turner Fry of San Antonio to serve as the state suffrage committee chairperson. She continued in this capacity from at least 1888 to 1896. In October 1888, she and a small group organized the San Antonio Woman's Suffrage Club and met periodically to discuss the cause and distribute

⁴⁷ Examples of discussions of these activities in the 1870s-1880s Texas can be found in, J. Michelly, "letter to the editor November 11, 1885," *Woman's Journal*, November 18, 1885; J. Michelly, "letter to the editor March 31, 1886," *Woman's Journal*, April 10, 1886. Yet, the distribution of written material is discussed in a large number of local, state, regional, and national woman suffrage collections.

⁴⁸ *Dallas Morning News*, May 14, 1888; *HTO*, s. v. "Woman's Christian Temperance Union;" C. T. Hogan, "letter to the editor August 24, 1887," *Woman's Journal*, September 3, 1887; M. L. Golden, "letter to the editor," *Woman's Journal* May 14, 1887; Mary C. Billings, "letter to the editor March 5, 1888," *Woman's Journal*, March 24, 1888; *Woman's Journal*, November 5, 1881, September 23, 1882; National Woman Suffrage Association, *Report of the Sixteenth Annual Washington Convention, March 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th, 1884: with reports of the Forty-eighth Congress* (Rochester, New York: Charles Mann, 1884), 141; *HWS* III, 957; *HWS* IV, 406, 409; Harriet Taylor Upton, ed., *Proceedings of the Twenty-fifth Annual Convention of the National American Woman Suffrage Association*, 76.

copies of the *Woman's Journal* and other suffrage literature. By July 1889, she organized two more clubs in San Marcos and Denison and corresponded with Frances Willard and Anna Howard Shaw with regard to forming a Texas State Suffrage Association with local auxiliaries. She spoke publicly on behalf of the issue, and in 1893 signed the call for the first TERA convention and became an active leader after its inception. Because of her long-time service to the cause, Fry was presented with the honor of casting the first vote in San Antonio after Texas women gained the right to vote.⁴⁹

At this early stage of woman suffrage development during the late-nineteenth century, the WCTU and temperance supporters were very important to the advancement of woman suffrage. Across the South temperance supporters often became interested in woman suffrage through their activities for the WCTU. Additionally, it was not uncommon for individuals to begin to support woman suffrage because of women's roles in temperance work and other social reform activities. As early as 1874, Texan and United States Senator James W. Flanagan gave a pro-woman suffrage testimonial on the floor of Congress, stating that he came to support the cause due to witnessing women's temperance work. By the late 1880s, accounts of woman suffrage coming out of Texas often mentioned temperance and the WCTU as if the issues were inseparable.⁵⁰

Some historians have connected the plummet of the Texas WCTU membership numbers in 1888 to the same year's official suffrage endorsement, but it is more likely that the failure of

⁴⁹ Elizabeth A. Fry, "letter to the editor," *Woman's Journal*, July 13, 1889; Elizabeth Brooks, *Prominent Women of Texas* (Akron, Ohio: Werner Co., 1886), 149; TERA Scrapbook, McCallum Papers; *Dallas Morning News*, January 2, 1922.

⁵⁰ Scott, *Natural Allies*, 135-137. For discussion of southern connection between suffrage and temperance, also see Wheeler, *New Women of the New South*; and Green, *Southern Strategies*. *New York Times*, May 29, 1874; C. T. Hogan, "letter to the editor August 24, 1887," *Woman's Journal*, September 3, 1887; M. L. Golden, "letter to the editor," *Woman's Journal*, May 14, 1887; Mary C. Billings, "letter to the editor March 5, 1888," *Woman's Journal*, March 24, 1888.

the state prohibition referendum the previous year affected membership. Temperance was a volatile political topic in the state. The Prohibition Party's state convention in September 1886 started reporting a decline in attendance due to the Texas Democratic Party platform supporting partial prohibition. Yet, by 1888 the Texas Democratic Party discussed dangerous divisions over the 1887 prohibition voter referendum. While the local prohibition option was popular, too many factors weighed against the state's support for a Texas constitutional amendment to outlaw completely the sale and manufacture of liquor. Connecting the decline in the state's WCTU membership to its official endorsement woman suffrage is a large jump, especially when the WCTU was also the major organizational supporter of the state's fledgling Prohibition Party and the failed referendum for a statewide ban on liquor. The Texas WCTU was founded by Frances Willard and primarily run by women figureheads from its inception. State temperance advocates, at least in part, were becoming used to women in public roles.⁵¹

Historians have also believed that local unions did not work for the woman's ballot after 1888. On the contrary, there is evidence that in Texas, woman suffrage was an important topic during union meetings, and members often openly advocated women's enfranchisement. In 1890, *The Dallas Morning News* reported from a San Antonio temperance meeting that Anna Howard Shaw and possibly Susan B. Anthony were expected at the next state WCTU convention along with Frances Willard. There is no record if they actually came. By the 1892 state convention, Fry's report from the suffrage committee called for organization on behalf of enfranchisement. Suffrage was not the unions' main objective and thus possibly propelled a number of Texas suffrage advocates to the next step of forming an equal rights association. On the other hand, nine of the eleven women who signed the call for the 1893 organizational TERA

⁵¹ McArthur, *Creating the New Woman*, 8; Buenger, *Path to a Modern South*, 8; Winkler, *Platforms of Political Parties in Texas*, 244, 247, 257.

convention were active WCTU members as were many of the TERA members. The Texas WCTU proved to be an essential networking tool for suffrage collaboration in the decade after its formation. It appears that the state's temperance unions abandoned equal franchise work only after the formation of an association specifically for the advocacy of equal suffrage. The two topics, though, continually remained intertwined in the minds of the public and politicians for decades.⁵²

At the same time as the Texas WCTU's official endorsement in 1888, on the national scene, decades-old divisions between woman suffrage figureheads were coming to a close. At the prompting of Lucy Stone, the two national suffrage associations, the AWSA and NWSA, began to plan a reunification surrounding the fortieth anniversary of the Seneca Fall's Convention. After three years of preparation, negotiation, and ceremonies, in 1890 the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) emerged as the nation's leading suffrage organization. This event may have seemed far away and unimportant to many southerners, but the unified association was now able to direct more focused organizational work from the grassroots level to the top. As discussed previously, in Texas, suffragists had floated from one national association to the other, or in some cases they were forced to choose sides in order to receive organizational aid. In either case, these constant balancing acts undoubtedly had a negative impact on solidifying a holistic approach to woman suffrage in the state.⁵³

⁵² McArthur, *Creating the New Woman*, 145, 155-156 n. 31; *Dallas Morning News*, February 5, 1890, February 7, 1890, May 20, 1892; Rebecca Henry Hayes to Laura Clay, February 13, 1893, Clay Papers; *Galveston Daily News*, July 8, 1893. With regard to suffragists forming an organization specifically for woman suffrage because the WCTU's main purpose was not woman suffrage, and thus not its top priority, see comments by Grace Danforth in *Dallas Morning News* article clipping, TERA scrapbook, pp. 3-4, McCallum Papers.

⁵³ McMillen, *Seneca Falls*, 195-196, 224-229. A number of sources talk about the conflict and duplication of efforts by the AWSA and NWSA, see also *HWS I to IV*; Flexner, *Century of Struggle*. For Texas examples, other than this work, see *Woman's Journal* 1875 through 1888; correspondence in folder 1, box 1, Folsom Papers.

Both groups had connections in Texas, although the AWSA often appeared stronger during the 1880s. Folsom formed cooperative committees under the auspices of the AWSA, and both she and Beauchamp, two of the leading woman suffragists in the state, were affiliates of the American. Yet, Beauchamp, who was also officially connected to the NWSA during much of the decade, held positions with both groups during the 1880s. She most likely made the NWSA alliance originally through her temperance work with Frances Willard, who was a high-ranking supporter of this group.

Which of the two suffrage groups had the possibility of long-term success in the South is difficult to determine, though each had its strengths and weaknesses in the region. The AWSA focused on state-by-state woman suffrage campaigns, emphasizing that locals needed to do the work in their individual areas. This often appealed more to southerners, including Texans, integrating with their strong beliefs in states' rights to self govern. Yet, the AWSA had been active and vocal advocates of universal suffrage without restrictions—especially on race as well as gender. This was not a popular sentiment in the South, and woman suffrage campaigners found it necessary to downplay this particular issue. Folsom reported to the AWSA that while she supported universal suffrage, she found the need to advocate “educated suffrage” restrictions. Beauchamp had also entered into discussions on the relationship between suffrage restrictions based on race and gender.

The NWSA, on the other hand, had pushed for a federal amendment from the beginning, which proved to be unpopular among southerners through the nineteenth century and much of the twentieth century. Furthermore, the *Woman's Journal* brought the AWSA into the lives of many southerners, as Willard did with the NWSA through her temperance work. And after all, temperance was one of the central sources of transcendentalism-connected reform outreach in the

South. Finally, as can be seen by looking at the different grassroots efforts disconnectedly spread across Texas, for example, without one central source to connect all suffrage work a lot of duplicate and inefficient effort and time was spent at both the local and national levels. As discussion in the following chapters will show, with a unified national presence, changes were made to support work that affected campaigning and organization down to the grassroots.⁵⁴

While at the end of Reconstruction few women claimed public space for woman suffrage, by 1890 every corner of Texas showed evidence of activity on the subject. Grassroots reformers canvassed the state, educating the southern public on the benefits of women's enfranchisement. They traveled, lectured, wrote articles and letters, distributed written materials, and advocated the issue in their local communities. During the process, woman suffrage also became intertwined with other political and social issues of the era including prohibition, rising practices of racist, ethnocentric and nativist discrimination, and anti-Democratic Party activities. Through the advocacy of women's enfranchisement and connected equal rights issues, women began to change regional expectations. Reformers continued to encounter anti-suffrage forces, some coming from powerful opponents, such as United States Senator John H. Reagan, and the state's majority was still arguably against votes for women. Nevertheless, this era marked by individual activism was successful in laying a firm foundation on which future generations of suffragists built successful campaigns.

⁵⁴ For example of the relationship between temperance and woman suffrage in Kentucky, see Fuller, *Laura Clay*, 33-35. For a discussion of southern WCTU's as "prime target for Northern feminists in search of converts," see Wheeler, *New Women of the New South*, 63.

CHAPTER 3

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE TEXAS EQUAL RIGHTS ASSOCIATION, 1890-1900

In the two decades following Reconstruction, women in Texas began to assert their voices in the debate regarding gendered suffrage. By 1890, grassroots suffragists had canvassed the state educating both the public and the politicians on the existence of and possibilities connected with their cause. By the time the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) unified that year (from the American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA) and National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA)), loose networks already existed linking individual activists with each other and national leaders. The call to organize a state suffrage association in Texas simultaneously came from local suffrage activists and the NAWSA. It was short-lived, and by the end of the decade the Texas Equal Rights Association (TERA) crumbled under the pressure of social and political class conflicts. In the interim, organizational structures emerged that began to formalize procedure, hierarchy, and campaigning methods with regard to woman suffrage activities that far outlasted the Lone Star State's first votes for women association.

Historian Robert Wiebe argues that throughout the nineteenth century most Americans existed in "island communities" in which they were cut-off from the rest of the world except when they chose to look beyond locality. Yet toward the century's end, isolation was increasingly taken away by growing populations and new methods of transportation, communication, and industrialization. As the isolation that encapsulated these "island communities" faded, some Americans decided to take the opportunity to organize with other

like-minded individuals to reform the societal ills they believed were encroaching upon their environment.¹

This was the age when the American Historical Association, the American Medical Association, the American Federation of Labor, and other national movements formed to connect individuals interested in like issues. These groups played important roles in setting standards and requirements for participation and acceptance into their networks. Simultaneously, during this era women's organizations provided increased forums in which to discuss political and social topics of interest to women. The settlement house movement, the General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC), the WCTU, and NAWSA solidified their hold on the national presence that represented and directed each group's chosen realm.²

The 1890s also became a hotbed of political and social contest, with certain issues having an especial impact in the South. The increased urbanization and industrialization discussed in the previous chapter continued, and the nation experienced a widespread economic depression in 1893. Added to these influences, the decade saw the rise and fall of a third party that catered to

¹ For discussion of this centralizing trend, see Samuel P. Hays, "Preface to the Atheneum Edition," in *Conservation and The Gospel of Efficiency: The Progressive Conservation Movement, 1890-1920* (New York: Atheneum, 1979); for more information regarding "island communities," see Wiebe, *Search for Order*, 11, 44-75, 111, 133.

² Wiebe, *Search for Order*, 121, 114, 117, 184. For information about the development and spread of the settlement movement through its workers' outreach, see Eleanor J. Stebner, *The Women of Hull House: A Study in Spirituality, Vocation and Friendship* (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1997). For information about the creation of the GFWC and its leadership in the development of a national movement, see Karen J. Blair, *The Clubwoman as Feminist: True Womanhood Refined, 1868-1914* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1980). For information about the WCTU as a national presence, see Ruth Bordin, *Woman and Temperance: The Quest for Power and Liberty, 1873-1900* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1981), and Frances Willard: *A Biography* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986). For studies that focus on NAWSA's development as the national leader of woman suffrage during the late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century, see Flexner, *Century of Struggle*; and Wheeler, *New Women of the New South*.

the working class, the racial intra-segregation of the Republican Party, and the solidification of *de facto* and *de jure* racial discrimination.³

Texas experienced the creation of the People's Party in 1891, which threatened the Democrats and Republicans in state political campaigns from 1892 through 1897. In Texas, the People's Party started forming in 1886 from those who supported the Grange, a faction of the Democratic Party, the Greenback Party, and the Farmers' Alliance (often referred to as the Alliance). While nationally this group (also known as the Populist Party) tried to represent small farmers, agricultural laborers, and industrial laborers, in Texas much of its base came from farmers and farm workers even though industrial workers had some representation. The Populist movement arose from multiple sources of discontent with political structures that supported the wealthy over labor groups and with the rising urban middle-classes over rural farm-based communities. Connectedly, during the 1890s a large faction of the state's Democratic Party started strongly to support increased investment of time and money in industrialization and urbanization. Texans clashed over the financial future of Texas and where it was best invested in agriculture or industry, something historian C. Vann Woodward called "the divided mind of the New South." At the same time, Jim Crow laws started turning racial discrimination from social practice to legal implementation through regulations like the one passed in 1889 requiring separate railroad accommodations in the state.⁴

³ C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South, 1877-1913* (1951; reprint, Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1971), 107-174, 211, 216-219, 264, 235-238, 479.

⁴ For information on the People's Party in Texas see, Roscoe C. Martin, *The People's Party in Texas: A Study in Third Party Politics* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1933); *HTO*, s. v. "People's Party," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/PP/wap1.html> (accessed June 6, 2009); *Dallas Morning News*, February 26, 1892; Ernest W. Winkler, *Platforms of Political Parties in Texas* (Austin: The University of Texas, 1916), 293-299. Robert C. McMath, Jr., *American Populism: A Social History, 1877-1898* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1993), 153-154; Woodward, *Origins*, 370, 142-174 (quotation), 211-212.

Texas women's rights activists were involved in and affected by all stages of national networking and social and political activity between 1890 and 1900. A single formalized network did not exist in Texas dedicated exclusively to the discussion of women's issues before 1890. The WCTU's membership and leadership was made up of a majority of women, and the group did provide the platform on which to discuss other issues relating to women, although its defining purpose was temperance.⁵

After the formation of the WCTU in 1882, a plethora of women's organizations flourished in the 1890s. Austin resident Benedette Tobin led a group of women in forming the next women's statewide organization in 1890, the Women's World's Fair Exhibit Association of Texas. Its purpose was to raise funds for and secure a building to house Texas booster activities at the Columbian Exposition (often called the 1893 Chicago World's Fair), and thus did not last for more than three years. Also, as early as 1890, Mexicanas in the state started forming *sociedades mutualistas* ("mutual aid societies"). These local community building groups existed in cities including Corpus Christi, Laredo, San Antonio, Brownsville, and Eagle Pass.⁶

The Daughters of the Republic of Texas (DRT) organized in November 1891, followed by the Texas Woman's Press Association in May 1893. In October of that year, inspired by the World's Congress of Representative Women at the World's Fair (often referred to as the Women's Congress), the Texas Woman's Congress held its first meeting. Then, in May 1896, the Texas United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) organized. In 1897, Lucy Thurman, the national organizer of the Colored Division of the WCTU, founded fifteen unions and a state association in Texas. That same year, in 1897, the Texas Federation of Literary Clubs held its

⁵ McArthur, *Creating the New Woman*, 8.

⁶ Jeffrey Zemler, "The Texas Building and the Women's World's Fair Exhibit Association of Texas," unpublished paper in author's possession; Teresa Palomo Acosta and Ruthe Winegarten, *Las Tejanas: 300 years of History* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003), 67-69.

first meeting and subsequently changed its name to the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs (TFWC). The TFWC was a racially segregated organization, and thus Texas African American women organized the Texas Federation of Colored Women's Clubs (TFCWC) in 1905. The Phyllis Wheatley Club of Fort Worth became part of a national network of women through the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs (NACWC) during the decade (probably between 1899 and 1901). At the dawn of the new century, the Texas Division of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) formed in 1900. The creation of the TERA to organize woman suffragists into a statewide association and subsequently affiliate with a national movement was part of a larger wave in Texas, the South, and nationally.⁷

When Galvestonian and NAWSA Vice President for Texas, Rebecca Henry Hayes, approached the podium on May 10, 1893, at the first state woman suffrage association convention held in Texas, she was surrounded by dozens of individuals connected by a slew of associations. Both women and men came together that warm and humid day to determine the next steps in organizing the state toward gaining votes for women. People representing a variety of other groups sat in the audience, including members of NAWSA, the state's WCTU, Texas Farmers' Alliance, Texas Press Association, and Texas Woman's Press Association. This meeting was due in part to the existence of networks formed as a result of these and other associations. Furthermore, many of TERA's members were influential during this decade in the creation of a number of social and political groups including the Texas Woman's Press

⁷ *HTO*, s. v. "Daughters of the Republic of Texas," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/DD/vnd3.html> (accessed June 6, 2009); *Dallas Morning News* (May 11, 1893), (October 29, 1893); Kelly McMichael Stott, "From the Lost Cause to Female Empowerment: The Texas Division of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, 1896-1966" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Texas, 2001); McArthur, *Creating the New Woman*, 10-14, 16-18; *HTO*, s. v. "Texas Association of Women's Clubs," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/TT/vet1.html> (accessed June 6, 2009); *HTO*, s. v. "Daughters of the American Revolution," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/DD/vnd1.html> (accessed June 6, 2009).

Association, the Texas Woman's Congress, the Texas Division of the UDC, the TFWC, and the Texas State Historical Association (TSHA).⁸

At first these alliances crossed party and class lines, but as the decade continued political divisions crept into the woman suffrage network. Political definitions separating rural vs. urban and labor-class vs. entrepreneurial elite were under construction during this decade, but these were not as quickly enacted as discriminatory practices based on race. From the beginning Texas equal suffrage organizing was like many other southern progressive efforts, as C. Vann Woodward termed "for whites only."⁹

As the new day under NAWSA dawned, changes in leadership created opportunities for an increased variety of viewpoints to set the agenda for the National's attention. Early presidencies were held by such established icons as Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, but these figureheads soon began to identify younger members of the movement to take the helm. One of these voices emerged from southerner and Kentuckian Laura Clay. Co-founder of the Kentucky Equal Rights Association in 1888, Clay thought that the South was ripe for woman suffrage successes. She believed the region housed fresh audiences who had not been exposed to decades of equal enfranchisement debate, and at the 1892 NAWSA convention she argued that the National should spend a good part of their finances organizing the South. At that meeting NAWSA leaders decided to form a committee to focus woman suffrage work in the South.¹⁰

⁸ Hot afternoon determined by articles from *Dallas Morning News* (May 10, 1893), and "Yet Below the Average," *Dallas Morning News*, May 11, 1893. TERA Scrapbook. For information regarding the history of the Texas State Historical Association, see Richard B. McCaslin, *At the Heart of Texas: One Hundred Years of the Texas State Historical Association, 1897-1997* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 2007).

⁹ Woodward, *Origins*, 369 (quotation).

¹⁰ McMillen, *Seneca Falls*, 228, 233; Susan B. Anthony to "My Dear Rachel" [Rachel Foster Avery], April 7, 1895, Anthony-Avery Papers; Fuller, *Laura Clay*, 32-33, 51-60; *HWS IV*, 216, 219; Wheeler, *New Women of the New South*, 63, 115-116. In this chapter, the term "National" with regard to suffrage is synonymous with NAWSA.

The Southern Committee, as it was referred to by NAWSA, chose Clay as its chairperson, and was originally made up of six additional NAWSA leaders from other southern states. The first year's work focused on Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi, additionally the committee wrote to NAWSA-appointed vice presidents for Alabama, Texas, and South Carolina pressing "cooperation" and "organization" in those states. At NAWSA's Twenty-fifth Annual Convention in Washington D. C. from January 16 to 18, 1893, Clay reported on the Southern Committee's previous year of activity as well as upcoming plans. She said as part of her communication with woman suffragists in the South, she had interviewed suffragists from Virginia, Texas, and Florida, and the region was ready to be organized. Included in Clay's convention report was the announcement that Jenny Beauchamp stepped down from the Texas vice presidency because she was moving from the state, but at the NAWSA executive meeting a few days later Rebecca Henry Hayes of Galveston, Texas, was chosen to fill the position.¹¹

In February 1893, Hayes wrote to Clay asking for more information regarding her new NAWSA appointment. Hayes wanted to know if the position required the state organization to be a NAWSA affiliate. She said that some people, including herself, wanted to organize "independently." She continued by asking, "Does the money we might ask of you, or rather I might ask of you, place me under obligation to organize under NAWSA?...Because I might consider it after meeting not polite to do so, and if I had already used your money I would feel very little." Her hesitation to affiliate with NAWSA is perplexing when Texas was in need of encouragement to form a statewide association. In an age when people who considered themselves reformers and/or progressives sought networks of affiliation and communication, her

¹¹ Harriet Taylor Upton, ed. *Proceedings of the Twenty-fifth Annual Convention of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, Held in Washington, D.C., January 16, 17, 18, and 19, 1893* (Washington D. C.: Stormont and Jackson Printers, 1893), 76-78, 100, 127, 163; *HWS IV*, 202.

desire to avoid such links with the only national suffrage group shows a strong need for control over local matters.¹²

Hayes practiced many of the formalities progressives used to identify themselves as “part of the club.” Judging from her activities in relation to TERA, the WCTU, the Texas Woman’s Press Association, the TFWC, local reform efforts in Galveston, and the invention of a number of objects for which she received a patent, Rebecca Hayes was a member of the state’s growing reform-minded urban middle class. Furthermore, she understood structural process and how to obtain leadership positions by using her knowledge of systems, rules, and regulations. For example, fellow Texas suffragists described Hayes as knowing and precisely applying parliamentary law in all meetings at which she was present. In many ways, she appeared to be among the growing masses who considered themselves progressive except for her strong distaste for national affiliation.¹³

Born in Illinois in the 1840s, she and her husband Charles Waldo Hayes moved to Galveston in the 1870s looking for success through entrepreneurial city boosterism. As part of a series of promotional activities by Galveston business men, in 1874 Charles Hayes visited Nebraska, Kansas, and Missouri in an attempt to set up trade partnerships between Galveston businesses and those in the Midwestern states. Additionally, he also worked with railroad companies in an attempt to set reasonable rates to Galveston and provided information about the Oleander city to newspapers in the areas. C. W. Hayes was a professional journalist, a leader in

¹² Rebecca Henry Hayes to Laura Clay, February 13, 1893, Clay Papers (quotations).

¹³ Grace Danforth to Laura Clay, August 3, 1894, Clay Papers; TERA Scrapbook; Rebecca Henry Hayes to Laura Clay, February 13, 1893, Clay Papers; *Dallas Morning News*, February 12, 1898, June 15, 1903, November 17, 1904; *HTO*, s. v. “Lasker Home for Homeless Children” <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/LL/yn11.html> (accessed July 10, 2009); Elizabeth Hayes Turner, *Women, Culture and Community: Religion and Reform in Galveston, Texas, 1880-1920* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 140, 142; *The Galveston News*, October 10, 1897; Autumn Stanley, *Mothers and Daughters of Invention: Notes for a Revised History of Technology* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1995), 551.

the Texas Press Association, and the author of *Galveston: History of the Island and the City*. At the time of his 1874 trip to the Midwest, he was the business reporter for *The Galveston Daily News*, but by his death in 1905 he had worked his way up to leadership positions in the state's press. In direct connection with her husband's success as a newspaper leader, Rebecca Hayes became a writer and was among those who founded the Texas Woman's Press Association on the same day and same place as the TERA. Much of her focus when NAWSA contacted her in 1893 was on journalistic endeavors. While she was not born in the South, both of her parents were southern born. Furthermore, by the formation of TERA she had lived in Texas for almost two decades. Therefore, while she was among the rising group of urban middle-class reformers in the state, she appeared to be a southern progressive in many ways. She often sought to maintain local/state control over the reform activities in which she was affiliated and vocally advocated the practice of racial discrimination in the groups where she was active.¹⁴

In her correspondence with Clay, Hayes expressed a frustration with the WCTU and temperance workers in Texas for becoming too "narrow" and stuck "into a groove" with regard to their clubwork. She believed that it caused people to "lose their influence" when such single-mindedness took root. This, in part, may have been why she hesitated to affiliate the soon-to-be formed Texas suffrage organization with NAWSA. Hayes may have been concerned that the

¹⁴*The Galveston Daily News*, March 21, 1924; Tenth Census of the United States, 1880, Galveston County, Texas, Schedule 1, Population, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D. C.; Earle B. Young, *Galveston and the Great West* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1997), 46-49; Charles Waldo Hayes, *Galveston: History of the Island and the City* 2 vols., 1879; reprint, (Austin: Jenkins Garrett Press, 1974); *The Galveston Daily News*, March 10, 1904, April 18, 1905, March 25, 1924, July 29, 1928, April 3, 1904; Rebecca Henry Hayes to Laura Clay, February 13, 1893, Clay Papers (quotation); Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, Morgan County, Illinois, Schedule 1, Population, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D. C. ["Rebecca Henry" is listed in 1860 as living in Jacksonville, Illinois, with her mother and siblings under the listed head of the household "Ebenezer Hogg"]; Grace Danforth to Laura Clay, August 3, 1894, Clay Papers; *Dallas Morning News*, May 10, 1893. C. W. Hayes's book, *Galveston: History of the Island and the City*, has been used by a number of Galveston historians and is an important collection of information regarding the city up to its completion in 1879. For important city histories that use Hayes's book, see Turner, *Women, Culture and Community*; and David G. McComb, *Galveston: A History* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986).

connection might mark the state association as one with a solely woman suffrage work platform, and this could limit potential supporters who might come to suffrage via other “women’s issue” interests like temperance, legal reform, women’s economic and professional interests, or women’s desire for fellowship with other women.¹⁵

On the other hand, it is most probable that Hayes hesitated to affiliate with NAWSA because it meant losing local control. This also fits well with ideas expressed by Hayes and actions performed by her during her two years as TERA president and NAWSA vice president. Hayes was very vocal about considering Texas a southern state and believing that limitations came with this regional identity. Throughout her reign as a TERA leader, Hayes who did not support universal suffrage, presented her opinions. She thought that southerners were unwilling to accept lobbying by northern entities, and that local and limited woman suffrage was the road to success in Texas.¹⁶

In contrast to the urban middle-class reform direction from which some TERA leaders came, rural activists associated with the growing Populist movement represented another influential group among woman suffragists. Included in the platform of the newly-formed People’s Party of Texas was the pledge of supporters “to enact radical reforms of the abuses and usurpations of power by those who have been elevated to positions by the Democratic and Republican parties...That they have extended every aid and fostering care to corporate enterprise, organized to oppress and enslave the people.” The Texas Populist platform was like most other states in that it favored railroad regulation, free silver coinage, anti-foreign land ownership, graduated income tax, direct election of U. S. senators, public school funding, and the eight-hour workday. In relation, active supporters of the Populists appeared that they would

¹⁵ Rebecca Henry Hayes to Laura Clay, February 13, 1893, Clay Papers (first, second and third quotations).

¹⁶ *Dallas Morning News*, May 10, 1893, June 9, 1894, November 4, 1894, December 16, 1894.

have problems with individuals they saw as part of established political, economic, urban, or industrial structures. Variations of those traits described much of the state's rising progressive middle-class, including some of its woman suffragists and most of the future clubwomen.¹⁷

On the other hand, some woman suffragists and Populist supporters were sympathetic to and found a good match between the purposes of the two movements. Even though the national Populist group declined to place the issue in its 1892 platform, a number of People's Party supporters were woman suffragists looking for a friendlier political Party than the dominant conservative Democratic Party. Not all Populists or Alliance members supported woman suffrage, and even among the pro-suffragists there were varying views. For example, when Ellen Lawson Dabbs, physician, woman suffragist, TERA founder, and Populist, addressed the People's Party of Texas convention in Dallas in 1892, she stated her intent to go to the national People's Party convention in Omaha, Nebraska, and urge the convention of women meeting there not to push the Party to add a suffrage plank. As a delegate from Texas to the party convention, she believed, "This was no time to be adding new planks." While "strongly favoring woman's suffrage," she "preferred success to the People's Party above all else." Despite her reluctance, she took the convention podium alongside People's Party leaders such as A. B. Bristol, Ebenezer Lafayette Dohoney, Charles McAnulty, L. B. Roebuck, Thomas Russell, and others who were pro-woman suffrage men and who served the TERA as founding members. These activities furthered the women-friendly image of the People's Party. In both the Alliance and the People's Party women were encouraged to become members and dues were suspended

¹⁷ Winkler, *Parties in Texas*, 293 (quotation), 295-297. Gregg Cantrell's forthcoming book on the People's Party in Texas under contract with Yale University Press will provide a crucial look at gender and the state's Populist movement. Additionally, for more information on women and the Texas Farmers' Alliance, the national Populist Party, and the People's Party in Texas, see Melissa Gilbert Wiedenfeld, "Women in the Texas Farmers' Alliance" (master's thesis, Texas Tech University, 1983); Charles Postel, *The Populist Vision* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); and Marion K. Barthelme, ed. *Women in the Texas Populist Movement: Letters from the Southern Mercury* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1997).

for those women. Members understood the problems with women's property rights and that income producing women constituents were rare.¹⁸

Bettie Munn Gay, one of TERA's founding members and an active letter writer to the *Southern Mercury*, served as a delegate from Texas to the national Farmers' Alliance and Industrial Union meeting in St. Louis in 1892. Women writers often published in Alliance newspapers, including the *Southern Mercury*—the official organ of the Texas Farmers' Alliance from 1884 to 1907. Furthermore, other TERA leaders like Alice McFadin McAnulty and physician Grace Danforth were enthusiastic Populists and regulars at People's Party conventions. Actually, it was common place to have these and other women supporters and speakers present and/or be seated at places of importance on the stage at local, state, and national conventions and political gatherings. A *Dallas Morning News* reporter covering a campaigning function in Ferris, Texas, for People's Party candidates for Texas governor and Congress, Thomas Nugent and Jerome Kearby, took note of the women present. The article stated, "The wives of the People's Party men, it was noticed, paid great attention to the speeches and seemed thoroughly posted on the economic questions discussed from the platform." Whether women in Populist families were more likely to pay attention to politics than those in Democratic families is unsure, but it is certain the People's Party paid more attention to women.¹⁹

As part of the increased interest in enfranchisement shown by women in the state, during the spring of 1893 the founding of the first Texas suffrage organization took shape as Hayes and ten other women sent a call out for the soon-to-be Texas Equal Rights Association. In April

¹⁸ *Dallas Morning News*, February 26, 1892, March 3, 1892, June 24, 1892 (first, second and third quotations); Winkler, *Parties in Texas*, 298. Clippings throughout TERA Scrapbook show names of TERA founders and also identify men who were Populists and TERA supporters.

¹⁹ *HTO*, s. v. "Bettie Munn Gay," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/GG/fga60.html> (accessed July 10, 2009); *Dallas Morning News*, June 24, 1892; TERA Scrapbook, McCallum Papers; *Dallas Morning News*, August 6, 1892 (quotation); Postel, *The Populist Vision*, 73-75, 83, 85-87, 93, 94, 96, 98, 120, 256, 285, 286.

Rebecca Henry Hayes, Elizabeth Austin Turner Fry, Grace Danforth, Aurelia Hadley Mohl, Elizabeth Strong Tracy, Sarah M. Cooke Acheson, Mary Louise Herndon, Margaret L. Watson, Bettie Munn Gay, Mary E. Collins Prendergast, and Ellen Lawson Dabbs issued a call for a state woman suffrage convention in Dallas on May 10. Numerous newspapers in the state published versions of the notice to form an “equal suffrage association.” This group of white Texas women knew each other and combined forces for this initiative from a number of social networks.²⁰

Those who signed the call were among some of the most active organizational leaders in the state. The scope and variety of each woman’s social and political connections became evident after surveying the first year of TERA activity. The association attracted an interesting mix of activists, whose backgrounds often seemed contradictory. For instance, among the signers were Mary Louise Herndon and Ellen Lawson Dabbs, whose political party affiliations differed. The former was from a historically Bourbon-Democrat East Texas family; the latter was an ardent Populist from Northeast Texas and later Fort Worth. Additionally, Sarah Acheson was a former state WCTU president and one of the founding members, while Mary Ellen Keller was a physician, the inventor of a patented “electrovitalizer” machine, designed to treat gynecological medical disorders with mechanized sexual stimulation.²¹

²⁰ Inside cover of TERA Scrapbook has a copy of the original call. TERA Call in TERA Scrapbook, McCallum Papers. A slightly different version appeared in state newspapers. *Dallas Morning News*, May 1, 1893 (quotation); *Galveston Daily News*, April 30, 1893.

²¹ *Galveston Daily News*, April 30, 1893; United States House of Representatives, “G. W. Whitmore vs. W. S. Herndon: Papers in the Contested-Election Case of G. W. Whitmore vs. W. S. Herndon in the First Congressional District of Texas,” in *The Miscellaneous Documents Printed by Order of The House of Representatives During the Second Session of the Forty-Second Congress, 1871-82* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1872); *HTO*, s. v. “William Smith Herndon;” *HTO*, s. v. “Ellen Lawson Dabbs,” <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/DD/fda66.html> (accessed July 1, 2009); *Dallas Morning News*, June 24, 1892; *HTO*, s. v. “Sarah C. Acheson,” <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/AA/fac5.html> (accessed July 1, 2009); William Harvey King, *History of Homeopathy and its Institutions in America* (New York: Lewis Publishing Company, 1905), 403-404 (quotation); *Medical Century: An International Journal of Homeopathic Medicine and Surgery* vol. 5 (1897), 122. Additionally, Keller also was the inventor of a device called

Interestingly, within a few years of the formation of this Texas suffrage association the leaders and members were fighting amongst themselves, and the fact that they came from such different backgrounds continued to “fuel the flames.” The split was still more than a year away, however, and on May 9, 1893, the day before the state’s organizational suffrage convention, a reporter from the *Dallas Morning News* interviewed four of the group’s coordinators: Rebecca Hayes, Elizabeth Fry, Grace Danforth, and Margaret Watson. In the article, the reporter successfully revealed aspects of the personalities and interests of all four suffragists. Hayes appeared as the key connection to NAWSA leaders both regionally and nationally. She emphasized her correspondence with southern suffrage leader and Kentuckian, Laura Clay, and alluded to connections with Susan B. Anthony. Interestingly, Hayes commented that she had hoped Anthony could be at the Texas convention, but since she could not “we will hold out every inducement to bring her soon to Texas.” Hayes’s urging of Anthony to come to Texas in 1893 was a vastly different position than the one she took a year later.²²

The other NAWSA member among the organizing group, Elizabeth Fry, stood in some contrast to Hayes. Fry spoke of women’s ability to accomplish temperance and municipal housekeeping endeavors with the vote. Furthermore, she also alluded to republican motherhood in the stance that women needed the vote to protect the interests of their children—“the future citizens of the republic.” Grace Danforth was the most political and edgy of the four, and she

the “combined pessary and womb battery.” Among its possible uses was as an electrical abortive device that probably delivered electrical current into the uterus through its metal construction. Yet, judging by the description and diagrams of similar devices, it also may have been used in a way similar to modern intrauterine devices (often called IUD’s) to prevent pregnancy. Canadian Intellectual Property Office, “Canadian Patents Database,” Patent # CA 54045, issued to Martha Ellen Keller, United States, filed July 24, 1896, issued November 11, 1896. Hoag Levins, *American Sex Machines: The Hidden History of Sex at the U. S. Patent Office* (Holbrook, Massachusetts: Adams Media, 1996), 65; Paul Fortunatus Mundé, *Minor Surgical Gynecology: A Manual of Uterine Diagnosis and the Lesser Technicalities of Gynecological Practice: For the Use of the Advanced Student and General Practitioner* (New York: William Wood & Company, 1880), 335-336.

²² *Dallas Morning News*, May 10, 1893 (quotation), November 4, 1894.

dared readers not to be surprised at the idea of a woman as president of the United States. She was also the one to answer questions regarding “old political parties” being afraid of suffrage and woman’s roles broadening in the U. S.’s increasingly industrializing society.²³

Finally, Margaret Watson seemed very mindful of public relations. As a cautious leader looking to give careful answers and undo misconceptions and stereotypes, she appeared concerned about how Texas conservatives might react to the movement. Hayes also addressed what might have been conservative concerns stating, “With equal rights we do not believe in universal suffrage; we believe in equal suffrage with all the privileges it implies.” This comment confused the reporter who thought she was referring to gender. He asked if the suffrage this group wanted for women included the ability to serve as legislators, jurors, and city officeholders. They unanimously said yes. Judging by later comments and events following the formation of TERA, Hayes was more likely discussing racial suffrage restrictions than those associated with gender.²⁴

The convention met on May 10, 1893, at the Grand Windsor Hotel in Dallas, Texas, for the day session and at the Knights of Pythias Hall for the evening session. “An organization of 52 was effected,” and those in attendance addressed a number of issues during the course of the day, including selecting the Texas Equal Rights Association as the group’s official title. Even though Hayes had previously voiced concern regarding this issue, TERA affiliated with the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA). The group determined that TERA’s purpose was “to advance the industrial, educational and legal rights of women and to secure suffrage to them by appropriate state legislation.” TERA members elected Hayes as

²³ *Dallas Morning News*, May 10, 1893 (quotation).

²⁴ *Dallas Morning News*, May 10, 1893 (quotation). See section in chapter 2 for discussion of educated versus universal suffrage.

president of the state association, Sarah L. Trumbull first vice president, Elizabeth Fry second vice president, Mary Louise Herndon third vice president, Sarah Acheson fourth vice president, Elizabeth Strong Tracy fifth vice president, Margaret Watson recording secretary, Ellen Lawson Dabbs corresponding secretary, Lucy Knowles treasurer, and Sarah L. Trumbull as state organizer. Connectedly, the NAWSA delegates elected were Elizabeth Fry, Margaret Watson, Sarah Acheson and alternates Mary Louise Herndon, Ellen Lawson Dabbs, and Alice McFadin McAnulty.²⁵

During the morning session, those present read notes and messages from absentee well-wishers. Numerous individuals attended the meetings who were not listed on the original membership roster, including Hattie Huntington of Minden, Louisiana, the social and alliance writer for the *National Economist*. She stated that Louisiana did not have “an organization of [this] kind;” she had seen the call and wanted to align herself with the “nearest association.” Louisiana in fact did not initiate a statewide woman suffrage association until 1896, nor did it consistently maintain one until the twentieth century. On the other hand, Texas was not completely ahead of the rest of the South. Hayes announced at this first meeting that prior to the creation of TERA, Texas was one of four states in the South not to have NAWSA auxiliaries.²⁶

²⁵ *Dallas Morning News*, May 11, 1893 (quotation); Texas Equal Rights Association, *The Texas Equal Rights Association: Minutes of the First Session, Held in the Parlors of the Windsor Hotel, Dallas, Texas, May 10, 1893* (Beaumont, Texas: Journal Print, n.d.) [hereafter cited as TERA Minutes], TERA Scrapbook. The count of 52 members comprised the people who paid their dues either at the first convention or by mail soon after. There appeared to be more than 52 people present at the first meetings of the TERA, and not all on the final list of members were present at the convention. *Dallas Morning News*, May 27, 1893.

²⁶ *Dallas Morning News*, May 11, 1893 (first and second quotation); TERA Minutes, TERA Scrapbook, McCallum Papers; *HWS VI*, 216.

NAWSA reported in 1894 that the three Southern states left unorganized after Texas was organized were West Virginia, North Carolina, and Mississippi. Harriet Taylor Upton, ed. *Proceedings of the Twenty-sixth Annual Convention of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, Held in Washington, D.C., February 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20, 1894* (Washington D. C.: Chronicle Print, 1894), 46. In the case of Louisiana, a local suffrage organization acted as the state auxiliary. Wheeler, *New Women of the New South*, 168.

At the end of the morning session, those present passed resolutions thanking specifically the Texas Press Association newspaper affiliates, and generally all newspapers globally, for reporting on woman suffrage activities, and they invited those in attendance at the Texas Press Association meeting, also meeting at the Windsor Hotel, to the night session. That night Hayes opened the meeting by stating the objective was a “general discussion of the suffrage question,” and the “word ‘woman’ would not be used in future in this connection.” The gender implications with this particular assertion are important. Hayes believed that it was necessary openly to separate TERA suffrage discussion and purpose from woman suffrage as a defining title. Her reasons behind this action could have been that membership was open to both men and women or that she was trying to push aside critics who argued that equal suffrage on the basis of gender was just a woman’s issue. The male voters and legislators in the state were the ones who would have to grant suffrage. If men carried the perception that TERA was for women and its issues only affected women, many male voters would see little need to grant woman suffrage in the state. Continuously, from the first discussion of woman suffrage in the Texas legislature—from the 1868 Texas Constitutional Convention until the ratification of the United States Nineteenth Amendment in 1919—every introduction of a resolution or a bill to enfranchise women was in connection with male legislators needing women’s votes to accomplish their own political agendas. Hayes did not have the ability to see into the future, but TERA leaders knew that the state’s men were the only ones who could change suffrage laws. Therefore, it was counterproductive to be exclusionary in the association’s chosen title and constituency description. Texas suffragists would take the same approach in changing the state association’s name in 1916 to be more gender inclusive.²⁷

²⁷ *Dallas Morning News*, May 11, 1893 (first quotation), May 13, 1916; TERA Minutes, TERA Scrapbook, McCallum Papers.

It would be logical to argue that exclusionary membership practices were also contradictory to the group's purpose of working for women's political, social, and economic inclusion, except for the fact that the group operated as a racially segregated society. Hayes had stated the day before that she and the rest of the TERA supported restricted suffrage. Her careful choice of loaded vocabulary separated this group of Texas suffragists from the belief that all women should vote. Hayes was laying the ground to imply that TERA only supported white woman or white educated suffrage instead of "universal suffrage."²⁸

Later in the evening Aurelia Mohl, TERA founder and newly-elected Texas Woman's Press Association president, was less subtle when she said "the most ignorant, degraded negro had the right to vote, but a woman is denied that right, no matter how much taxes she pays." Her outburst highlighted the growing connection between the subject of woman suffrage and increasing Jim Crow practices. As discussed in the previous chapter, sometimes white woman suffragists made similar statements with regard to "their own inability to vote when African American men could." This translated into a belief that white women had a higher position in the social structure and, therefore, were more entitled to the privilege of voting because of racial hierarchy. It was an injustice in that person's mind that black men could vote and white women could not. Such arguments suggested that the author assumed her/his audience agreed with the racist assertions.²⁹

Woman suffragists in both the North and the South often used this racist argument. Its only real consequence was to leave black women alienated from the woman suffrage movement, and it injured any argument for the vote this group made. Furthermore, it degraded black men to be used as political steps for white women's enfranchisement arguments. NAWSA leaders and

²⁸ *Dallas Morning News*, May 10, 1893 (quotation).

²⁹ *Ibid.*, May 11, 1893 (quotation), May 10, 1893.

suffragists in other states around this time also participated in similar nativist arguments that were aimed at immigrant populations. In the coming decades, especially between 1910 and 1920, Texas suffrage leaders would incorporate Nativism in their campaign messages as well. TERA's formation coincided with the increase of women's organizations in the state and region, but it also paralleled a drastic increase in racial restrictions and voter limitations. The truth was that all of the founders and known members of TERA were white, and membership in groups officially affiliated with the state suffrage associations in Texas remained segregated through the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920. The *Dallas Morning News* article chronicling the TERA convention did not report whether anyone further addressed Mohl's assertion, so it is assumed that the discussion of race was not taken any further during that meeting. It is possible that the lack of debate was because the attendees assumed agreement with one another, or it could be because no one else wanted to pursue the topic at that time.³⁰

After Hayes's opening speech, she turned the podium over to Ebenezer Dohoney, who gave a speech presenting the argument that women already had the right to vote in Texas. He used biblical examples, the Declaration of Independence, the Thirteenth through the Fifteenth Amendments, and the state constitution to make the argument. Some of these were most likely the same arguments Dohoney had publicized since 1881 through Frances Willard and the *Woman's Journal*, discussed in the previous chapter. He continued to make this argument over the next couple of decades. At this particular utterance, Hayes immediately disagreed with Dohoney that women could vote in Texas, but a few from the audience asserted that at least three women in Houston had cast counted votes—Cora Bacon Foster, Ella Hewatt, and a Mrs. Bryan.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, May 11, 1893. Discussions of woman suffrage and racist rhetoric, see Terborg-Penn, *African American Women*; and Wheeler, *New Women in the New South*. For an example of the Nativist rhetoric, specifically anti-Mexican American, practiced by NAWSA leaders like Susan B. Anthony, see Buhle and Buhle, eds. *The Concise History of Woman Suffrage*, 331-332.

Aurelia Mohl claimed that when John Ireland was governor of Texas (1882-1886), she told him she believed she had the legal right to vote. In turn, Ireland said to try it, and he would defend her at no cost if she got into any legal trouble. This is interesting because Ireland was considered a fairly conservative governor who tended to support limited government. Yet, that may have been why he made the comment; he might have seen women's voting inability as the over-assertion of government. Finally, she could have misunderstood a moment of patronizing humor to be a serious offer of support.³¹

A heated debate over the role of religion in denying women enfranchisement arose in connection to a speech given by John H. Copeland, Texas Press Association president. Hayes gave the floor to Copeland, asking him to address the meeting. He took that opportunity verbally to support the woman suffrage movement. In his speech he also advised the women in the group to “throw away mythology and superstition, cut loose from preachers and priests, study science and make women of themselves” or “their cause would never thrive.” He advised the women to invest their time and money on education instead of “puny priests and humbug preachers.” Copeland's speech caused a serious stir, and a number of those present spoke out against his remarks. Among them was physician David MacKay, associated with “the secular union.” He was a Dallas minister who was also considered the “city's best known white Republican,” and a member of the Dallas Freethinker's society (a group of professional middle-class individuals who met Sunday nights to deconstruct intellectual topics related to religious content—thus labeled secular). MacKay, “objected to lugging either religion or politics into the movement.” This is interesting because multiple times individuals discussed “politics” as something that

³¹ *Dallas Morning News*, May 11, 1893; *Journal of the Constitutional Convention of the State of Texas, Begun and Held at the City of Austin, September 6, 1875* (Galveston: The “News” Office [for The State of Texas], 1875); E. L. Dohoney to Frances Willard in *Woman's Journal*, August 20, 1881; *HTO*, s. v. “John Ireland,” <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/II/fir1.html> (accessed July 1, 2009);

should not be brought up with regard to TERA or woman suffrage. The context in which the word was used most likely meant political party affiliations and connected issues.³²

The belief that the issues of politics and woman suffrage could be separate is important. A number of those present at this first TERA convention thought woman suffrage had nothing to do with political parties or their platforms. On the other hand, there were also men and women at the meeting, and consequently as part of TERA leadership, who were active in the state's Democratic, People's, or Republican parties. This had to be common knowledge amongst many in the group. There may have been a fear that political party affiliation would split the group and disrupt suffrage work. Trying to keep TERA from approaching political parties in any way caused conflict within a year of TERA's creation. It was more than a conspicuous side discussion at this convention; the group's approach to non-partisan politics would continue to be an issue.³³

Additionally, the discussion about religious positions upset many of those present that night, and many chimed in either against or for Copeland's comments. Grace Danforth charged that, "the church was what was oppressing woman, and if they could not discuss their worst oppressor things had come to a pretty howdy-do indeed." Hayes at that point weighed in trying to explain to the group that everyone was there for an open exchange, and "the church was certainly very unfriendly to the movement." As the debate heated-up further, Hayes adjourned the meeting. Over the course of the next few weeks the *Dallas Morning News*, one of the papers in which the events of the meeting had appeared, printed more discussion connected to the

³² *Dallas Morning News*, May 11, 1893 (first, second, third, fourth, and sixth quotations); Ferdinand B. Baillio, Henry Edwards, Anthony Banning Norton, eds., *History of the Texas Press Association: From Its Organization in Houston in 1880 to Its Annual Convention in San Antonio in 1913* (Dallas, Texas: Southwestern Printing Company, 1916), 155, 161; Patricia Everidge Hill, *Dallas: The Making of an a Modern City* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996), 192 n (fifth quotation).

³³ *Dallas Morning News*, May 11, 1893, December 16, 1894; Grace Danforth to Laura Clay, August 3, 1894, Clay Papers.

religious debate started at the TERA convention. A few days after the meeting, the paper published a rebuttal by the evangelical superintendent of the Texas WCTU, Mrs. S. J. Sweeney, denouncing Danforth and Copeland's remarks at the TERA meeting. Then, the following week it did the same for a letter from Rebecca Hayes in which she tried to distance TERA as a whole from remarks regarding, "religion, church or kindred societies." Her tone suggested others had been the sources of religious conversation even though she had also participated. This strategy, trying to handle public opinion through subsequent letters to the press after controversy arose and denying her role in the conflict, was one Hayes would continue to use throughout her two years as president. It appears to have been effective in 1893, but her approach would not work with other events in later years.³⁴

In addition to local suffrage auxiliaries, another group started by TERA leaders was the Texas Woman's Congress in October 1893. A number of Texas women attended the Woman's Congress at the World's Fair in May of that year and decided to organize a similar event at the Texas State Fair that fall. TERA leader Ellen Lawson Dabbs was elected president of the Texas Woman's Congress. As part of the activities, Rebecca Hayes presented a speech on "Women and the Ballot," where she asserted that women were unfairly disfranchised. Unlike its national counterpart, the organizers of the Texas Woman's Congress planned for it to be a permanent group that would meet yearly at the state fair, and like its sister association, TERA, it was a segregated-all white organization. After its debut in 1893, the Texas Woman's Congress convened annually three additional times; in 1894, at the group's second convention, members changed its name to the State Council of Women of Texas and affiliated with the National Council of Women. Dabbs served as president during the organization's four-year life span,

³⁴ *Dallas Morning News*, May 11, 1893 (first and second quotations), May 14, 1893, May 27, 1893 (third quotation), June 5, 1893, June 9, 1894, June 30, 1894, November 4, 1894, December 16, 1894.

when in 1897 its growing membership organized the TFWC, replacing its predecessors as the central women's association network in the state.³⁵

During TERA's first meeting, each charter member was given the position of local organizer, and during the first year organizers formed local affiliates to the state organization in a number of places across the state. By the next convention in June 1894 local chapters included Denison, Taylor, Granger, Dallas, Fort Worth, Belton, San Antonio, and Beaumont. This plan for organizing local clubs differed from the formation of some statewide suffrage organizations in other southern states. Often, historians have found that two or more local clubs cooperated and formed a state association. This was the case with Louisiana, Kentucky, and Alabama. Another common organizational thread was that one local association existed and acted as both a local and state auxiliary to NAWSA; this was the case with Arkansas during the nineteenth-century and Texas from 1908 to 1912.³⁶

Within the first year, while local auxiliaries were forming, Mariana Thompson Folsom, Texas suffrage lecturer and activist, toured the state from November 1893 to March 1894 giving speeches to audiences of various sizes. She reported to the editors of the *Woman's Journal* in

³⁵ Rebecca Henry Hayes to Laura Clay, February 13, 1893, Clay Papers; McArthur, *Creating the New Woman*, 10-14; *Dallas Morning News*, November 7, 1893 (quotation).

³⁶ Upton, ed., *Proceedings of the Twenty-sixth Annual Convention of the National American Woman Suffrage Association*, 91; Wheeler, *New Women of the New South*, 168; Fuller, *Laura Clay*, 31-32; Mary Martha Thomas, *The New Woman in Alabama: Social Reforms, and Suffrage, 1890-1920* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1992), 118, 125-126; A. Elizabeth Taylor, "The Woman Suffrage Movement in Arkansas" *The Arkansas Historical Quarterly*, 15 (Spring 1956): 21; Turner, *Women Culture and Community*, 278-279. Historian Margaret Nell Price argued that southern woman suffrage activity often fell into three periods—the first, prior to 1885 "with individual interest and isolated societies," the second from 1885 to 1912 "when some state-level associations formed," and the third from 1912 to 1920 "when organizations that had disappeared revived and permanent local suffrage societies spread." Margaret Nell Price, "The Development of Leadership by Southern Women through Clubs and Organizations," (master's thesis, University of North Carolina, 1945), 96. Relying mostly on secondary historical research, sociologist Holly McCammon concluded that the most common reason state-wide woman suffrage associations formed in the U. S. between 1866 and 1914 was due to encouragement and funding from one of the national woman suffrage groups. Holly J. McCammon, "Stirring up Suffrage Sentiment: The Formation of the State Woman Suffrage Organizations, 1866-1914" *Social Forces*, 80 (December 2001): 449-480. The examination of Texas suffrage from 1868-1920 provides insight into why the national associations chose to invest in some places and not others. In this case, when diverted away from Texas NWSA, AWSA, and NAWSA's attention and investment was always renewed following state legislative consideration.

April 1894 that she held eighty-three meetings during her journey. Folsom canvassed the state along the Gulf of Mexico, through East Texas, up through Northeast Texas, down through the center of the state, and arrived back at her home in San Antonio. She gave woman suffrage talks in locations that included Austin, Houston, Denison, Corsicana, and Shiner. The *Dallas Morning News* reported that the question of women's enfranchisement was new to Shiner, but Folsom was well received and spoke to a "fair" sized audience. While her report to the editors of the *Woman's Journal* was that people reacted positively to the discussion, she did seem slightly overwhelmed with how large Texas was when it came to spreading reform. She said, "There were sixty counties in Colorado to organize, in Texas there are more than two hundred and sixty counties."³⁷

When NAWSA met in February 1894 in Washington D. C, part of the discussion regarding Texas was its size and the belief in its promise to get suffrage legislation passed. Clay reported on the work of the Southern Committee to the national delegation. While giving the appropriations report for the committee, she said that Texas received twice the money from the committee than any other state because its size required double the work. Immediately following that statement she also remarked that Texas might be able to grant enfranchisement to women without a state constitutional amendment because of the way the document was written in comparison to other states. She concluded her discussion by saying, "Texas may yet be the fifth star in our blue sky," referring to the few states that had passed full suffrage. This is important

³⁷Mariana T. Folsom to Editors *Woman's Journal*, April 4, 1894, in *Woman's Journal*, April 21, 1894 (second quotation); *Dallas Morning News*, January 23, 1894, November 24, 1893 (first quotation). Actually, Texas had fewer than 260 counties. See *Texas Almanac*, "Population History of Counties from 1850–2000," <http://www.texasalmanac.com/population/population-counties-history.pdf>; Internet; (accessed January 10, 2009).

because it highlighted Texas as the state with the most promise in the region by those leading southern work for the national association.³⁸

Reports of TERA's 1894 annual convention, held from June 6 through 8 in Fort Worth, described the meeting as full of conflict over a number of issues starting with the city's welcome address given by Mayor Buckley Burton Paddock. He used the address to express his personal views that the conditions of the nineteenth century did not require women to bond together. He expressed his belief that women should stick to their own sphere, and that he thought too highly of the female sex to support their enfranchisement. Multiple people present expressed their offense at the mayor's comments.³⁹

The next contention dealt with TERA officer elections. Hayes was re-elected president, but according to Danforth, this presidential re-election was mostly due to the efforts of Danforth and Belle Burchill. In December, Hayes had sent out a letter to TERA members opposing any political efforts to approach the state's political parties (Democratic, Republican, Populist/People's) demanding suffrage planks in their platforms. Her stance angered much of the membership, but Hayes argued that she wanted TERA to remain non-partisan. When she provided a copy of the letter to the *Dallas Morning News* a year later to publish in an article discussing the TERA leadership fight, she added a preface that explained her stance. She wrote, "the ballot [should] have an educational basis" (meaning she supported educated instead of universal suffrage), and "I have also held from the beginning the opinion that it was inconsistent and injudicious for women who wanted to be enfranchised to take a partisan stance in politics."

³⁸ Upton, ed., *Proceedings of the Twenty-sixth Annual Convention of the National American Woman Suffrage Association*, 47 (quotation). Wyoming continued to provide full enfranchisement to women when it gained statehood in 1890, as a territory women were enfranchised in 1869. Utah went through the same process, and in 1893 Colorado and in 1896 Idaho became the third and fourth states to fully enfranchise women.

³⁹ *Dallas Morning News*, June 7, 1894; *HTO*, s. v. "Buckley Burton Paddock," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/PP/fpa3.html> (accessed July 2, 2009).

While a number of TERA's leaders were active in party politics, Hayes's views were similar to what became the TFWC's policy in the early twentieth century; she did not want TERA to become too political. Like a lot of reformers of her generation, Hayes's ideas of woman's place were caught somewhere between the ideals of progressive feminist freedom of opportunity and Victorian notions of the limits of separate spheres.⁴⁰

Despite the fact that TERA's leadership and membership split on the issue of politicization and party alliance, members elected Hayes to serve a second term because she agreed to defer to the wishes of the delegates on the issue. At that same convention, though, soon after being reelected, she announced that NAWSA was planning a southern tour by Susan B. Anthony and Anna Howard Shaw to help rally support and solidify woman suffrage efforts in the region. A letter from Laura Clay was read inquiring into whether any stops in Texas could be arranged. Hayes told the delegation present that TERA was in financial trouble and could not afford to bring Anthony to Texas. Danforth argued with Hayes saying Anthony would be just what the state organization needed to strengthen suffrage work and support. Hayes then changed the subject from financial to sectional issues. She stated that she disagreed with NAWSA in planning its next convention in the southern city of Atlanta, and it was better when it had been held on the "neutral ground" of Washington D. C. She noted that because it was in Atlanta Frederick Douglass, the famous abolitionist and suffrage rights advocate, had vowed not to attend because, "when he had last left Georgia he had done so as a slave and he did not propose again to place his feet on the soil of that state." Hayes believed that Anthony and southern audiences were not ready for each other, and that NAWSA leaders from the North should wait

⁴⁰ *Dallas Morning News*, June 7, 1894, December 16, 1894 (quotations); Grace Danforth to Laura Clay, August 3, 1894, Clay Papers. Susan B. Anthony was one of the national leaders that urged this sort of thought, although she pressed/preferred the idea of "all partisan" instead of non-partisan. Rebecca J. Mead, *How the Vote was Won: Woman Suffrage in the Western United States, 1868-1914* (New York: New York University Press, 2004), 71, 83, 86, 94, 99, 127, 128, 180.

until after they got a lesson in southern culture at the Atlanta Convention before embarking on a lecture tour in the region. This began a firestorm of debate amongst those present.⁴¹

Her only vocal supporter at the convention and the only male delegate present, J. W. Baird, agreed financially it would be a bad idea. He also feared Anthony might receive a bad reception from the state's southern audiences. Baird was a leader in the People's Party and argued that when the Populist delegate for president in 1892 toured the South, audiences in Georgia threw rotten eggs at him, and stated that, "I for one would not expose Mrs. [sic] Anthony to such." A heated exchange followed as members defended southern sensibilities. Danforth stated that she thought the "bloody shirt had been buried forever," and that as a southern woman she welcomed Anthony to the South on behalf of woman suffrage work. Belle Burchill adamantly disagreed with Hayes and Baird, saying that as a northerner who had lived in Texas for two decades, she believed Anthony would receive a very courteous reception. Lucy Knowles, Elizabeth Fry, Margaret Watson, and Lizzie Craig stood to make assertions from the floor in support of Burchill and Danforth, and each added their thoughts on how Anthony would be able to fill any venue in the South. Watson then abruptly moved that the corresponding secretary write to Anthony about a Texas lecture tour, and the body of delegates voted unanimously in favor of the motion. The results of the correspondence were to be reported to TERA's executive committee at its next meeting.⁴²

In the meantime, on the pages of the state's newspapers the fight begun at the TERA meeting continued. Hayes wrote to the *Dallas Morning News* and took exception to the way the

⁴¹ Grace Danforth to Laura Clay, August 3, 1894, Clay Papers; *Dallas Morning News*, June 9, 1894 (first and second quotations). Additionally, it is interesting that Hayes's claim is historically inaccurate; no one noticed the fact that Frederick Douglass was never a slave in Georgia—evidence of the disassociation of Texas woman suffragists from the movement's abolitionist roots and leaders. Frederick Douglass, *My Bondage and My Freedom* (New York: Miller, Orton, and Mulligan, 1855).

⁴² *Dallas Morning News*, June 9, 1894 (quotations).

newspaper reported the events of the TERA meeting and claimed it had inaccurately recorded her statement regarding Frederick Douglass and his intended boycott of the Atlanta NAWSA convention. She wrote, “Who can for a moment suppose that I care whether Fred Douglass ever steps foot on Southern soil or not? But I quoted what Fred Douglass had said which was taken from the report of the national convention proceedings as printed in the *Woman’s Tribune* of Feb. 17, 1894.” Hayes then changed the subject. She opposed Anthony, Anna Howard Shaw, and Carrie Chapman Catt coming to the South, including Texas, to campaign for woman suffrage. She argued that southern women owed it to themselves to do their own suffrage organizing, and her arguments had not been whether Texas women would show respect to the NAWSA leaders but instead concern over financial ability to hold the tour. She finished by stating, “But the work of organizing this state is ours, and I feel quite equal to any part in the task.” Hayes’s advocacy of states’ rights foreshadowed conflicts between southern woman suffragists and national leaders that eventually led to a formal divide with the creation of the Southern States Woman Suffrage Conference (SSWSC) in 1913.⁴³

When the issues of states’ rights and sectionalism did not sway TERA members to refuse a lecture tour by the NAWSA leaders, Hayes turned to Frederick Douglass, an enfranchised black man, and his unwillingness to return to a southern state to attend the NAWSA convention. This new argument was most likely designed to arouse the sentiments expressed by some white woman suffragists who believed it was unfair that black men could vote when white women could not. In her reply to the newspaper, she also brought up regional identity and culture. Hayes argued that it was the right of the women of the state to canvass their own territory and hinted that the National should refrain from interfering. While, again, one of the state’s suffrage

⁴³ *Dallas Morning News*, June 30, 1894 (quotations); Wheeler, *New Women of the New South*, xvi, xvii, 98, 112.

leaders was using race to gain an upper-hand in fighting for woman suffrage, very little about the fight over Anthony's southern tour was about race. It was mostly about sectionalism, and the subsequent split in the organization's leadership followed the lines of socio-political class and political party alliances.⁴⁴

In the June 1894 letter to the *Dallas Morning News*, Hayes had once again tried to change the story in connection to her assertions during the public TERA convention. This came about through a new account in the newspaper days after the event took place. She had attempted this successfully the year before with regard to the religious argument that erupted at the 1893 convention. This time, though, it did not work. The newspaper editors waited to print Hayes's letter until they had testimony from their reporters, a number of audience members, and a couple of TERA leaders who had been present during the debate over Anthony's visit. Seven individuals present during the meeting, including the two reporters who wrote the original story and a separate reporter from another paper, all gave written testimony that the original report made by the newspaper was correct.⁴⁵

That August, the issue over whether TERA should invite Anthony to Texas heated up again. Danforth wrote to Laura Clay expressing her concern over the conflict between the Texas suffrage leaders and complained about how Hayes's "egotism and evident desire to make the movement contribute to her personal prominence created considerable opposition to her election

⁴⁴ Socio-political class is defined here as social classifications based on expressed political identity that lead to separate community expectations and social perceptions regarding the relationship of the individual to their chosen political community. The actual reason that Douglass did not attend the NAWSA convention in Atlanta related to the National's fear of confrontation over his past as a key abolitionist leader and southern reaction to a black man addressing crowds of white women. Anthony approached Douglass and asked him not to attend because she wanted to avoid embarrassing him and possibly jeopardizing woman suffrage support from southern white women. Terborg-Penn, *African American Women*, 110-111.

⁴⁵ *Dallas Morning News*, June 30, 1894, May 27, 1893.

at our last meeting.” She also said, “[Hayes’s] desire for performance had rather amused us before but here it clashed with the interest of our cause.”⁴⁶

Furthermore, Danforth argued that the only reason Hayes brought up Douglass was to arouse any sectionalist feelings and scare the state’s women from becoming active at the national convention because of the presence of a famous abolitionist. Danforth urged that Hayes did this because she wanted to stay the center of attention and not share the limelight with anyone else, and Danforth gave other examples in the letter when she claimed similar self-centered actions by Hayes. Much of the rest of the letter listed women in many of the state’s cities who would handle the tour in their area when Anthony and Shaw came, and she asked Clay to work on getting them to come to Texas. She additionally asked that the state receive seven of Anthony’s sixteen available engagements.⁴⁷

At TERA’s executive meeting in October the group voted to invite Susan B. Anthony, Anna Howard Shaw, and Carrie Chapman Catt to Texas for a lecture tour. Days prior to the meeting, Hayes sent copies of a letter to the members of the TERA executive committee stating that she would report their wishes that Anthony and others come to Texas, when NAWSA’s executive committee met in November, but as a member of the Southern Committee she would fight against the southern lecture tour. At the meeting Burchill read the letter and asked Hayes about its meaning. Hayes responded that she would communicate the pro-Anthony tour wishes of the TERA executive council, but when it came to a Southern Committee vote, Hayes would vote against it. In response Danforth read a pre-prepared statement demanding that Hayes had

⁴⁶ Grace Danforth to Laura Clay, August 3, 1894, Clay Papers (quotations).

⁴⁷ Ibid.

undermined TERA's decisions and thus forfeited her position as the organization's president. She asked her to resign. Hayes refused.⁴⁸

The following week, a faction of TERA's executive council called a committee meeting in which Knowles, McAnulty, Danforth, Burchill and Keller (by proxy) voted Hayes out of office and replaced her with Elizabeth Fry. Hayes reported this action to NAWSA's executive committee who ruled that it was illegal. TERA delegates had voted her in as president at the annual convention and only that body could place another president in office. According to the TERA Constitution, election of officers occurred on the last day of each annual convention and the members present voted through the submission of ballots, thus the TERA executives' actions were in conflict with the organization's governing document. At one point, Anthony observed that NAWSA needed copies of all state affiliate constitutions, which at the time the National did not possess, in case of future conflicts of this kind. Throughout the entire process, the increased conflict between the state's leaders was made very public on the pages of Texas newspapers and in correspondence between TERA and NAWSA leaders. Those involved at the national level included Anthony, Clay, Catt, Rachel Foster Avery, Ellen B. Dietrick, Anna Howard Shaw, Harriet Taylor Upton, and Alice Stone Blackwell.⁴⁹

This entire series of events weakened the Texas suffrage organization considerably. It caused its members to choose sides over more than NAWSA leaders canvassing the state, and

⁴⁸ *Dallas Morning News*, October 21, 1894, November 4, 1894, November 18, 1894, December 16, 1894; Rebecca Henry Hayes to Laura Clay, November 8, 1894, Clay Papers; Grace Danforth to Laura Clay, November 10, 1894, Clay Papers. Alice M. McAnulty to Susan B. Anthony, March 1, 1895; Susan B. Anthony to "My Dear Rachel" [Rachel Foster Avery], April 7, 1895; Mrs. [Alice Moore] McComas to Grace Danforth, November 30, 1894; SBA [Susan B. Anthony] to [Rachel Foster Avery], [winter 1895], all in Anthony-Avery Papers.

⁴⁹ *Dallas Morning News*, October 21, 1894, November 4, 1894, November 18, 1894, December 16, 1894; Rebecca Henry Hayes to Laura Clay, November 8, 1894, Clay Papers; Grace Danforth to Laura Clay, November 10, 1894, Clay Papers. Alice M. McAnulty to Susan B. Anthony, March 1, 1895; Susan B. Anthony to "My Dear Rachel" [Rachel Foster Avery], April 7, 1895; Mrs. [Alice Moore] McComas to Grace Danforth, November 30, 1894; SBA [Susan B. Anthony] to [Rachel Foster Avery], [winter 1895], all in Anthony-Avery Papers; TERA Minutes, TERA Scrapbook.

each side attempted to gain increased support from Texas suffragists. Additionally, patterns relating to other issues become noticeable after examining the split between office holders and active members. The increased conflict clarified that the group had disagreements over entitlement. Two different state groups had started woman suffrage agitation before the call to organize TERA was publicized. Four years prior in May 1889, under the auspices of Fry and the Texas WCTU woman suffrage committee, some union members were sent out as “superintendents to organize all over the state.” Fry reported to the *Woman’s Journal* that year that she had helped organize clubs in San Antonio, Denison, and San Marcos. By the spring of 1893, Anthony and Avery were involved in urging the Denison Equal Rights Association (whose members continuously claimed their place as the first suffrage club in the state) to form a statewide organization with itself as the core. Yet, NAWSA’s Executive and Southern committees chose Hayes as their new Texas vice president in 1893 and told her to form a state association.⁵⁰

There were probably three reasons for their choice. First, the former Texas vice president, Jenny Beauchamp, had been so involved in temperance work that she put WCTU work in front of suffrage activity. Second, when trying to establish a woman suffrage movement in Texas nothing had happened even though NAWSA leaders had urged Fry and others to organize since 1889. Third, Hayes claimed a decades-old connection to Anthony during woman suffrage work in Kansas. She discussed this so often in Texas reform circles that on occasion other suffragists sarcastically referred to Hayes speaking of “Aunt Susan.” Finally, while unsuccessful this time, NAWSA’s actions were part of a trend that would continue through the 1910s in which

⁵⁰ *San Antonio Daily Light*, May 9, 1899 (quotation); Elizabeth A. Fry to Editors *Woman’s Journal*, in *Woman’s Journal*, July 13, 1889; *Dallas Morning News*, September 2, 1894; Rebecca Henry Hayes to Laura Clay, February 13, 1893, Clay Papers.

national suffrage leaders asserted their state leadership choices in connection with establishing an affiliated state organization.⁵¹

The agitation over who had the legitimate right to preside predated the fight over Anthony's southern tour. During her correspondence with Clay in 1893, Hayes complained about WCTU members who were likely going to attempt to remove her from competition for Texas suffrage control. When she wrote to Clay in 1894, she expressed anger and frustration that the "other" group WCTU supporters could have called a statewide organization at any time, but she complained that they waited to act on the idea until right before Hayes was ready to send out her call for TERA in the spring of 1893. The long list that signed the 1893 TERA call to organize had been an amalgamation of the two competing Texas woman suffrage factions, which explained why so many women from so many areas in the state were included and the majority listed the WCTU as an affiliation.⁵²

Also included in her 1894 correspondence to Clay, Hayes complained that prior to the 1893 TERA convention the other TERA faction accused Hayes of deceptive activity in order to secure the ability to organize her own statewide association. Therefore, when the dispute over power came to a head in 1894, Hayes's opponents voted her out of office and placed Fry—the long-time WCTU woman suffrage committee chairperson—in the disputed presidency. With regard to who could be considered the ring-leader of the Hayes opposition, Hayes, Avery, and Anthony all believed that it was Danforth. In a letter to Avery, Anthony expressed her opinion

⁵¹ Upton, ed., *Proceedings of the Twenty-fifth Annual Convention of the National American Woman Suffrage Association*, 76-77; *HTO*, s. v. "Jenny Bland Beauchamp;" *San Antonio Daily Light*, May 9, 1899; Elizabeth A. Fry to Editors *Woman's Journal*, in *Woman's Journal*, July 13, 1889; *Dallas Morning News*, September 2, 1894; *Dallas Morning News*, June 30, 1894; Grace Danforth to Laura Clay, November 10, 1894, Clay Papers (quotation). For twentieth-century examples of NAWSA leadership choices in Texas, see chapter 4.

⁵² Rebecca Henry Hayes to Laura Clay, February 13, 1893, Clay Papers; Rebecca Henry Hayes to Laura Clay, November 8, 1894, Clay Papers; TERA call in *Dallas Morning News*, May 1, 1893 and *Galveston Daily News*, April 30, 1893; *Dallas Morning News*, November 4, 1894.

that “Fry and her followers or leaders” did not have the right to insist on holding on to the TERA presidency even after the NAWSA executive committee ruled otherwise. Even from a distance, the National realized Fry was not in control. It was clear; TERA had too many rulers and not enough pawns.⁵³

The general political and economic climate of the period further compounded the TERA power struggle. There were two sides during the fight, the one led by Hayes and the other, originally Danforth. Hayes portrayed herself very much as one who wanted to be considered a well-connected urban professional middle-class journalist. In her fight against bringing Anthony to Texas, she argued that she felt equal to her part of the task in organizing Texas and thought the state’s women should complete the work themselves.⁵⁴

On the other side, there was Danforth, a rural physician, who openly introduced herself as an Alliance woman and enthusiastic People’s Party supporter. Often Danforth described, discussed, and connected her suffrage activities and hopes with the Alliance. During the first TERA convention, Danforth asserted that the wrongs and “political economy” of the past were based on “individualism” and “competition;” her hope for the future hung on the ability to employ “co-operation” and increased knowledge within groups like the Farmers’ Alliance. In a letter to Clay in 1894, Danforth asserted that the People’s Party would soon win in Texas, which

⁵³ Rebecca Henry Hayes to Laura Clay, November 4, 1894, Clay Papers; Grace Danforth to Laura Clay, August 3, 1894, Clay Papers; Grace Danforth to Laura Clay, November 10, 1894, Clay Papers; Susan B. Anthony to “My Dear Rachel” [Rachel Foster Avery], April 7, 1895, Anthony-Avery Papers (quotation).

⁵⁴ Rebecca Henry Hayes to Laura Clay, February 13, 1893; Rebecca Henry Hayes to Laura Clay, November 8, 1894; Grace Danforth to Laura Clay, November 10, 1894; Grace Danforth to Laura Clay, August 3, 1894; Rebecca Henry Hayes to Laura Clay, July 1, 1895, all in Clay Papers; Alice M. McAnulty to Susan B. Anthony, March 1, 1895, Anthony-Avery Papers; Susan B. Anthony to “My Dear Rachel” [Rachel Foster Avery], April 7, 1895, Anthony-Avery Papers; *Dallas Morning News*, June 30, 1894, December 16, 1894.

would then be followed by these politicians enfranchising women in the state. She saw this cooperative community as the hope and essence of the future.⁵⁵

There were strong differences between the middle-class progressives and the Populists in their views of sociopolitical class as well. As historian William F. Holmes points out, “The Populists had strong faith in grassroots democracy, believing that the electorate, if given the opportunity, would make wise decisions. The Progressives tended to rely more on experts and bureaucratic agencies.” A good example of this was the argument for universal enfranchisement versus educated enfranchisement; Hayes appeared to be a supporter of the latter.⁵⁶

While educated suffrage was often used in an attempt toward racial and ethnic discrimination, it was also used as a means to disfranchise the laboring class (the Alliance’s and Populists’ central constituency). Hayes and other middle-class urban women in her group, such as Texas Woman’s Press Association leader Aurelia Mohl, openly advocated educated suffrage. Populists, such as Danforth and McAnulty, would have been in direct opposition to the idea. Connectedly, Hayes abhorred attempts to connect woman suffrage in any way to political party activities. This must have upset many of TERA’s leaders who were very active in the state’s political parties. While part of the TERA leadership opposing Hayes supported the People’s Party, a few were Republicans. Republicans had been the long-standing opponent to southern conservative state-rights rule in the region for decades. A political minority in the state, these individuals had often been the loudest opponents to sectionalist arguments like the ones Hayes

⁵⁵ *HTO*, s. v. “Grace Danforth,” <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/DD/fda75.html> (accessed November 15, 2008); Winkler, *Parties in Texas*, 293-299. For some examples of Grace Danforth’s views in the *Southern Mercury*, see August 21, 1890, December 20, 1894, December 27, 1894. Danforth to Laura Clay, November 10, 1894, Clay Papers; *Dallas Morning News*, May 11, 1893 (quotations). For examples of Populist community belief regarding acting as a group for the best interests of the group, see Populist voting patterns in the Texas Legislature in *Dallas Morning News*, April 14, 1895, April 21, 1895, April 27, 1895.

⁵⁶ William F. Holmes, “Reflections on Woodward’s *Origins*” in *Origins of the New South Fifty Years Later: The Continuing Influence of a Historical Classic*, ed. John B. Boles and Bethany L. Johnson (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003), 281 (quotation).

had voiced in 1894 because so much of their support nationally had been from the northeastern United States.⁵⁷

Therefore, the fights with Hayes over Anthony were not just a difference of opinion about a suffrage tour; they aroused debates fueled by differences in social class expectations and larger political beliefs for the future of the state and nation. Expected actions of the individual accompanied each class/group into broader social and political interactions. Therefore, when the labor-community-oriented Alliance supporters came in contact with individualist-competition-driven middle-class urban reformers, the two groups did not see in the other the expected behaviors each thought was necessary for suffrage cooperation and success. In the end, the leadership of TERA split and was forced to take sides. The state's woman suffrage organization continued to deteriorate over the next few years, and these existing fractures, compounded with additional factors, resulted in TERA's demise.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Woodward, *Origins*, 321-322, 331-333; Terborg-Penn, *African American Women in the Struggle for the Vote*, 10; *Dallas Morning News* May 10, 1893, May 11, 1893, December 16, 1894. For a good source on the Republican Party in Texas during this period, see Barr, *Reconstruction to Reform*. Included in those who opposed Hayes from either the Farmers' Alliance or the People's Party were Alice McAnulty, Grace Danforth, Ebenezer Dohoney, Catherine Nugent and possibly Elizabeth Fry. *Galveston Daily News*, August 6, 1896; *Southern Mercury*, March 14, 1895; *Dallas Morning News*, March 3, 1892. Those that were Republicans included Belle Burchill and Elizabeth Good Houston. For an account of Belle Burchill's political beliefs, see unpublished manuscript of the Burchill Family written by Edna M. Burchill, Burchill Family Papers (Genealogy, History & Archives, Fort Worth Public Library, Fort Worth, Texas) [hereafter cited as Burchill Family Papers]. *HTO*, s. v. "Andrew Jackson Houston," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/HH/fho69.html> (accessed August 10, 2009). While Sarah L. Trumbull, one of Hayes's TERA executive committee supporters, addressed the 1893 People's Party Convention, it appears she did so as a representative of the Texas Equal Rights Association as its first vice president. There is no other evidence of her connection with the party, and she also approached other political parties for the cause. *Dallas Morning News*, July 5, 1896. Margaret L. Watson, Hayes's other executive committee supporter, addressed the Farmers' Alliance in August 1895. It is more likely she may have been an Alliance supporter because she also wrote at least one letter to the editor of the *Southern Mercury*, but there is no evidence of whether she supported the People's Party. *Southern Mercury*, January 24, 1895; *Dallas Morning News*, August 24, 1895. It was not uncommon for suffragists during this period to approach an "all partisan" approach. This particular strategy was led and encouraged by NAWSA and especially Susan B. Anthony. See Mead, *How the Vote was Won*, 71, 83, 86, 94, 99, 127, 128, 180. Both Trumbull and Watson became part of the groups in the state known as 'clubwomen' by the turn of the twentieth-century. *Dallas Morning News*, August 19, 1897.

⁵⁸ That TERA divided because of other issues that split opinions of some of its leaders contradicts what historian Elna Green says in her book, *Southern Strategies*. She states, "Moreover, 'votes for women' served as a focal point, a source of unity among diverse groups with different agendas." Green *Southern Strategies*, 3. While this was partially true with regard to the national movement, the majority of suffragists that were granted national

In the meantime, though, Texas suffragists had public opinion to contend with in addition to their internal strife. During their continued efforts to organize the state, two of its leading newspapers published the results of their (separate) informal polls questioning Texans on their beliefs regarding woman suffrage. In March the *Dallas Morning News*, interviewed thirty of the state's leading men in politics. Out of the group, seven supported women voting, two said there might be a time when women should vote in some capacity, and twenty-one were against it in varying degrees. Those against women voting included the state's governor, James Hogg; former U. S. Senator, John Reagan; and Lt. Governor Martin Crane, who later changed his mind in the decade preceding the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment. In San Antonio, a similar article outlined the opinion of twenty-six of the city's women on their view of "women's rights." Whereas the article headline and introduction noted that "San Antonio Ladies are Divided on the Question," out of the twenty-six women interviewed, twelve gave an unqualified yes in favor of woman suffrage; two women were mostly for it, one refused to comment at that time, two were against it but open to changing their minds, and nine were totally against it. According to these information polls, women were much more open to female enfranchisement than men.⁵⁹

In July 1894, while travelling in the Northeast and in response to a question on the topic, Hogg denied the existence of a woman suffrage movement in the state. In retort, TERA sent a series of resolutions to the governor informing him of the organization's existence, demanding an apology for not acknowledging such, and inviting him to that year's suffrage convention to

affiliation during the majority of time when Green focuses most of her study, the twentieth century, were middle-class, white, progressives.

⁵⁹ *Dallas Morning News*, March 20, 1894; TERA Scrapbook, McCallum Papers, 27-29. For sources confirming M. M. Crane's support of woman suffrage by 1918, see M. M. Crane to Minnie Fisher Cunningham, July 11, 1918; M. M. Crane to Minnie Fisher Cunningham, July 15, 1918; M. M. Crane to Minnie Fisher Cunningham, August 10, 1918; Minnie Fisher Cunningham to M. M. Crane, July 13, 1918; Minnie Fisher Cunningham to M. M. Crane, July 16, 1918, all in folder 1 box 5, Minnie Fisher Cunningham Papers (University of Houston Library Archives, Houston, Texas) [hereafter cited to as Cunningham Papers].

apologize in person. Hogg's reply stated, "I beg to thank you for your courteous letter of the 1st notifying me of the organization of the Equal Rights Association of Texas, and to express my appreciation of the good ladies of Texas under all circumstances." It is unlikely that Hogg was unaware of the group's existence since it had received continuous press coverage in many of the state's newspapers for more than a year, and because he had been asked about the issue by *Dallas Morning News* in March. Hogg was an economic booster by nature, and if he believed saying or doing something would benefit the state, he acted. He may have considered women's demand for enfranchisement as negative for the state's image and therefore denied its existence. On the other hand, like many politicians during the period, he also may not have seen suffragists as a group he needed to be concerned about. The one instance when he made an appearance at an equal suffrage meeting in Dallas for a few minutes, in August 1894, the women sang a song in his honor as he entered. Then, since individuals outside the meeting were calling for him, the women decided not to detain him. The assembly of suffragists did not use their limited time with the state's governor to question his views even though Hogg had denied their existence and told the *Dallas Morning News* that he did not support woman suffrage.⁶⁰

While pro-suffrage legislators in Texas were still a minority, not all state politicians held the views of Hogg, Reagan, and Crane. In the spring of 1895, State Representative Arthur C. Tompkins introduced a joint resolution in the Texas House of Representatives to grant woman suffrage. Tompkins was a Republican from Hempstead and represented Waller and Fort Bend counties. He was the only white Republican in the Texas House that session. It is not surprising that he supported the cause. He was an attorney and considered "liberal" by his contemporaries. On March 20, Tompkins introduced Joint House Resolution 29 to amend section 2 of Article 6 of

⁶⁰ TERA Scrapbook, 29 (quotation), McCallum Papers; *Dallas Morning News*, March 20, 1894, August 15, 1894. For portrayals of Hogg's political personality and discussion of his business progressivism, see Gould, *Progressives and Prohibitionists*.

the Texas constitution enfranchising women that were not disqualified for reasons other than gender. This was the first time since the end of Reconstruction at the 1875 Texas Constitutional Convention that a state amendment had been introduced to enfranchise women.⁶¹

The introduction of the bill by Republican Arthur Tompkins fit a larger trend in the legislative consideration of woman suffrage in Texas. Every resolution or bill for women's enfranchisement was introduced at a point when the presenting legislator believed his party or political faction had the potential to gain control over state politics with additional voters. That meant that the support base for those in power, usually Conservative Democrats, was wavering. It also meant that the legislator/s supporting the bill believed women voters would be most likely to support their own party with their votes. The dominant Democratic Party had split twice in the past decade. First, factions had developed between urban Reform Democrats and Conservative Democrats, and then, some of the Reform supporters left to form the People's Party. With a number of the TERA leaders and members as Republican supporters, it may have looked like Tompkins's bill had some potential to increase Republican support. He misjudged the political environment, though, and the bill was referred to the Committee on Constitutional Amendments and not discussed again on record. While it was a quick flash of recognition for woman suffrage in the state legislature, it was an important one. Twenty years had passed since the subject was officially approached in session. In that time, women began to take a central public role in demanding a variety of equal rights in the social, economic, educational, and political arenas.⁶²

⁶¹ *Dallas Morning News*, September 8, 1896; Texas Legislature, *House Journal*, Regular Session, 1895, 50, 60, 70, 90, 126-27, 132-34, 136, 146, 173-75, 506, 509, 514, 535; McKay, *Debates in the Convention of 1875*, 142-143; *Constitutional Convention Journal 1875*, 191-192.

⁶² *Dallas Morning News*, September 8, 1896; Texas Legislature, *House Journal*, Regular Session, 1895, 50, 60, 70, 90, 126-27, 132-34, 136, 146, 173-75, 506, 509, 514, 535; McKay, *Debates in the Convention of 1875*, 142-143; *Constitutional Convention Journal 1875*, 191-192. For the discussion of southern women's changing public

This legislature was very busy with discussions of gender and sexuality and entertained legislation against masturbation, homosexuality, oral-sex, bestiality, as well as a bill to raise the age of sexual consent leading to the discussion of the legal definition of rape. The lengthy and heated debate over the “age of consent” bill erupted because by 1895 tens of thousands of Texas women across the state had signed petitions asking the legislature to raise the age of sexual consent from twelve to variances of fifteen to eighteen, most of the petitions asking for eighteen. This particular debate over the definition of “statutory rape” between the lawmakers invoked utterances of gendered, sexual, and racial fears within the legislative session. Many of the age-of-consent campaigners who had petitioned this congressional body were members of TERA, Texas Council of Women, People’s Party, and/or the WCTU members—including a petition from Ellen Lawson Dabbs. This campaign specifically highlighted how much women in the state had connected over political issues of interest within Texas and throughout the South.⁶³

The age-of-consent drives were part of a national campaign to reform rape laws initiated by the WCTU. While petitions came from all over the state, similar campaigns were underway in other southern states, such as Kentucky, at about the same time. Texas women were actually beginning to function like progressives—connecting with other likeminded individuals to

presence in the late nineteenth century, see Elizabeth Hayes Turner, *Women and Gender in the New South, 1865-1945* (Wheeling Illinois: Harland Davidson, 2009), 1-125.

⁶³ Legislature, *House Journal*, Regular Session, 1895, 50, 60, 70, 90, 126-27, 132-34, 136, 146, 173-75, 506, 509, 514, 535; Gregg Cantrell, “‘The Dignity of Full-Grown Manhood’: Texas Populists and Gender” chapter of Texas People’s Party book project presented at Dallas Area Social History Group Meeting, February 27, 2009, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas; Alyssa Honnette, “To Protect and Redefine Girlhood: The 1895 Age-of-Consent Campaign in Texas,” paper presented at the Eighth Southern Conference on Women’s History, June 4-6, 2009, Southern Association for Women Historians, University of South Carolina, Columbia, South Carolina; Alyssa Honnette, “‘Does the chivalry of the men of Texas protect our girlhood?’ The 1895 Age-of-Consent Campaign in Texas,” unpublished paper in author’s possession. Age-of-consent campaigns aimed at raising the age requirements for “statutory rape,” the age at which persons are intellectually capable of making a decision about their participation in sexual activity. For discussion of this in its southern regional context, see Turner, *Women and Gender in the New South*, 123-124.

exchange ideas to implement in their own claimed space. Additionally, the age of consent campaign also highlighted the changes in women's public identities since Reconstruction. During Reconstruction, men did most of the talking regarding what laws should exist in the state and the region's political fate—government was male space. By 1895, groups of Texas women were demanding the right to vote. Furthermore, they were demanding laws to keep young girls safe from rape. The women's rights activists' petitions were not suggesting that aggressors were more likely to come from any particular social, economic, racial, or ethnic group. At the height of the Jim Crow practice of lynching African American men in the name of white women's sexual safety, these southern women were not condoning unsubstantiated acts of violence. Instead, they were lobbying for systematic laws designed so that any young woman who was violated could accuse her aggressor and receive justice.⁶⁴

The age-of-consent campaign was connected to woman suffrage by the women activists involved. Supporters of both causes demanded that government place in the hands of woman the ability to speak for and protect herself. It would be out of these very movements that twentieth-century leaders, such as anti-lynching advocate Jessie Daniel Ames, were eventually introduced to the political arena where they would demand that white men stop lynching blacks in the name of white southern womanhood. The evolutionary process of these women who claimed space and then claimed power in that space was well underway. It was just that moving into the political arena was a gradual process of generations building on the accomplishment of previous groups. Woman suffragists still had decades to go.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Alyssa Honnette, "To Protect and Redefine Girlhood: The 1895 Age-of-Consent Campaign in Texas," paper presented at the Eighth Southern Conference on Women's History, June 4-6, 2009, Southern Association for Women Historians, University of South Carolina, Columbia, South Carolina; Honnette, "'Does the chivalry of the men of Texas protect our girlhood?' The 1895 Age-of-Consent Campaign in Texas."

⁶⁵ For more on Jesse Daniel Ames's woman suffrage and anti-lynching work see later chapters, and Hall, *Revolt Against Chivalry*. Interestingly, in the 1890s in Texas, governors James Hogg and Charles Culberson both

By the 1895 TERA convention, a number of occurrences in the previous year had directly affected the ability of the state suffrage organization to function, and it soon became evident that the association was not going to last much longer. In the midst of the conflict within the TERA leadership, one of its central and most vocal suffragists died. On February 21, 1895, Grace Danforth accidentally overdosed on antipyrine, a pain relief medication widely used at the time. Her sudden removal from the TERA leadership left a hole in the statewide suffrage movement. Furthermore, she had been the key director in the growing numbers of TERA supporters opposing Hayes's continued presidency.⁶⁶

When Danforth's friend, fellow suffragist, and People's Party supporter, Alice McAnulty, wrote to Anthony in March, she said, "this is a fearful blow to our cause—whose influence is incalculable. We have a world of suffrage sentiment here only needing to be crystallized and we need a strong brave woman who will come to our rescue." She continued to write that the others in the state who were "qualified to lead the movement are tied up with obligations which will not submit to it." She then continued to lament the loss of the possibility of Anthony coming to Texas assuring her that no one but Hayes thought there was a "southern feeling" against the tour. Anthony herself weighed in on the decision. She told Hayes to report to the state she could not visit audiences there because of problems with connecting trains, when in fact she decided not to make appearances in Texas because the whole ordeal had been such a "tempest in a tea pot." McAnulty gave a brief report to Anthony on the development of the TERA situation and told her

introduced anti-lynching bills. The bill was enacted by the legislature in 1897 when Culberson made a gendered argument describing the need of women to be protected by members of the legislature not nameless participants in angry mobs. This is important because he made this argument that helped get the bill pass in 1897 as TERA had faded away. While women were demanding the right to a political voice and to protect themselves through legislation during this decade, legislative decisions were still being made in connection with the belief that women needed men's protection. For information regarding the anti-lynching law in Texas, see Sara Spillers, "The 1897 Texas Anti-Lynch Law: An Attempt by Governor James S. Hogg to Eliminate Mobocracy in Texas," unpublished paper in author's possession.

⁶⁶ *Dallas Morning News*, February 24, 1895, February 25, 1895.

that while she knew the National wanted Texas leaders to “harmonize,” the majority did not believe it served the interests of the cause. During the series of events, Anthony communicated her own observations to NAWSA leader Rachel Foster Avery; she believed there must have been other problems between the TERA executive committee for such conflict to arise over discussion of an Anthony tour. Anthony and Avery urged the Texas suffragists to proceed in accordance with parliamentary law (possibly meaning to hold a convention and election to determine official state leadership) and that was “the one and only way for either faction to secure recognition of the National.”⁶⁷

McAnulty’s statements foreshadowed a number of events to come in the next two years. In June 1895, TERA held its third convention in Dallas and the delegation elected officers for the following year. The members spoke with their votes and chose not to re-elect Hayes. Instead, Elizabeth Good Houston, Andrew Jackson Houston’s wife and Sam Houston Sr.’s daughter-in-law, was elected president. Danforth’s side of the leadership split won, but at a price. As Hayes lost the presidency, it was a very public fight, injuring NAWSA’s view of Texas. The conflict damaged TERA’s support in the state as well. Newspapers reported a small attendance at the June 1895 convention in comparison to the previous two, and in October a large tent was set up for TERA’s semi-annual gathering but only seven people were present. Additionally, the faction that took control of many of the state association’s executive positions were supporters of the two less powerful political parties in both Texas and the rest of the South. Houston’s husband was a leading Texas Lily-White Republican, and Burchill was also a strong Republican Party supporter. Alice McAnulty was elected recording secretary, and Annie Smythe became press

⁶⁷ Alice M. McAnulty to Susan B. Anthony, March 1, 1895, Anthony-Avery Papers; Susan B. Anthony to “My Dear Rachel” [Rachel Foster Avery], April 7, 1895, Anthony-Avery Papers; SBA [Susan B. Anthony] to [Rachel Foster Avery], [winter 1895], Anthony-Avery Papers.

superintendent (at whose house the executive committee met and originally voted to forcibly remove Hayes).⁶⁸

Hayes wrote to Clay the following month describing the details and events leading up to the June 1895 TERA convention. Apparently, through a letter from Carrie Chapman Catt, Anthony told Hayes to agree with her opposition to hold the convention in Dallas and place preparations in their hands. According to Hayes, she arrived to attend the June 1895 convention and McAnulty, Fry, Craig, and others were not present, and there was no program planned. She said she saved the day by lining up a couple of speakers and planning a program but refused any offices, although it is unlikely she was nominated for anything after she lost the presidency. Multiple times in the letter Hayes expressed anger toward Anthony, Catt, and the rest of the NAWSA “self constituted advisers” for leading Texas work in the direction that ended-up cutting Hayes out. She believed that “The National came very near advising us out of existence,” and took credit for putting “[TERA] on their feet again and started them out alone.” Hayes concluded by describing her plans to tour and lecture as a “freelancer.”⁶⁹

By the 1896 Texas State Fair, TERA’s future looked brighter as the group met for their annual convention on October 14 and 15. The second day of the suffrage convention was also named “Equal Rights Day” by the state fair association, and TERA met their second convention day in the fair’s exposition building. Mariana Folsom attended the TERA convention for the first time. Folsom had been named the association’s state lecturer the previous July and subsequently began work to tour the state from August through September. The report of that tour published in the *Woman’s Journal* discussed conditions and travelling arrangements

⁶⁸ HTO, s. v. “Andrew Jackson Houston;” *Dallas Morning News*, October 22, 1895, June 6, 1895, June 8, 1895, November 4, 1894; see newspapers clippings in Burchill Family Papers.

⁶⁹ Rebecca Henry Hayes to Laura Clay, July 1, 1895, (quotations) Clay Papers.

enormously improved from when she first began work in Texas in the 1880s. Folsom stayed with different suffragists at some points during her travel at a few large and comfortable homes, including those of Fry and McAnulty. Additionally, in the lecture tours taken by Folsom during the 1890s, she seemed to have spoken in large cities just as often as in small towns. This was vastly different from her preference a decade earlier for rural audiences. The groups of people interested in suffrage were changing, and this grassroots activist realized it.⁷⁰

This resuscitation of the state suffrage organization did not last. In November 1896, the Democratic and People's parties' presidential candidate, William Jennings Bryan, lost the election. In Texas, a large anti-Bryan sentiment had prevailed, and the majority of supporters of the People's Party in the state fought what they saw as efforts to fuse the People's and Democratic parties. The Populist gubernatorial candidate, Jerome Kearby, lost with 44 percent of the vote. Following the 1896 elections, the People's Party quickly declined, and over the next few years in Texas and nationally it completely fell apart. In relation to TERA, increasingly suffrage leaders had hung their hopes on the success of this third party. Danforth, before she died, had written to Clay that she believed it was only a matter of time after the Populists won in 1896 until they enfranchised Texas women. McAnulty had been a strong supporter of connections between TERA and the People's Party. In January 1895, even a Rebecca Henry Hayes supporter, Margaret Watson, wrote to the *Southern Mercury* advocating woman suffrage and spoke at that year's annual convention of the Texas Farmers' Alliance. Others, such as Fry and Trumbull, had addressed the party in hopes of a woman suffrage plank. With the death of

⁷⁰ *Dallas Morning News*, October 11, 1896 (quotation); Mariana T. Folsom to Editors *Woman's Journal*, October 23, 1896 in November 7, 1896 *Woman's Journal*.

this political force and voice of the laboring classes, many of TERA's pro-Alliance members faded from political life or moved from Texas altogether.⁷¹

As the TERA faded away, the state witnessed the birth of a new state organization that would soon dominate women's public activism—Texas Federation of Women's Literary Clubs (TFWLC), soon to be renamed the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs (TFWC). In 1890 some of the state's civic-minded women began to work in an organized effort to establish a Texas building at the 1893 World's Fair. Like women from across the nation, those from Texas visited the Columbia Exposition and brought back various ideas about civic and fraternal organizing. That fall, the Texas Woman's Congress met and the following year changed its name to the State Council of Women of Texas. The purpose of the name change brought “the organization into harmony with the National Council of Women” and freed “the federation from the objectionable inference that it had any political significance whatever, the word ‘Congress’ being clothed with only a political definition by some.” The official stance taken by the TFWC against women's overt political activity began to draw the line between women's clubwork and suffrage activism in the state. Continuously during its four years of existence, the State Council of Women met during the Texas State Fair. Except for its first year, leaders carefully separated the group from suffrage advocacy. At the 1895 convention, the president of the Women's Wednesday Club of Fort Worth gave a paper in which she urged the group not to participate in the “vexed” subject of woman suffrage and instead seek influence in politics and economic affairs through the men in their lives. After a few years, the growing masses of clubwomen began to change their affiliation interests and in response to a call to organize sent out by the Woman's Club of Waco, the Texas Federation of Literary Clubs held its first convention May 13 and 14, 1897, in Waco.

⁷¹ Postel, *Populist Vision*, 269-290; *Southern Mercury*, January 24, 1895; Grace Danforth to Laura Clay, August 3, 1894, Clay Papers; Alice M. McAnulty to Susan B. Anthony, March 1, 1895, Anthony-Avery Papers; *Dallas Morning News*, July 5, 1896.

By 1899 the organization dropped the word literary from its title and became an auxiliary of the General Federation of Women's Clubs.⁷²

In the last few years of the decade, the letters from Folsom highlighted the clubwomen's movement in Texas and the drastic decline of woman suffrage—it was quickly becoming the age of the clubwoman. In 1897, Folsom wrote to the *Woman's Journal* discussing the work of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas and how legislators were presenting its members as good examples for women's civic activity. In 1898, she wrote Susan B. Anthony about the growth of the clubwomen's movement, referring directly to the International Congress of Women and the Federation of Women's Clubs. In the following decades, much of suffragists' efforts nationwide consisted of working to attract or cooperate with the rising clubwomen's movement. In Texas, these efforts dominated state and national attention. At its annual convention in 1898, NAWSA reported receiving no correspondence from the Texas association. TERA was gone, but Folsom continued on, and that year she began to correspond with Elisabet Ney, the famous Texas sculptor. The two women discussed strategies to organize a suffrage association in Austin. Ney gave Folsom a list of people to contact and expressed her wishes to address the state legislature for women's enfranchisement. Ney did approach the state's legislators but not until 1907 as part of a women's delegation to do so. In 1899, Folsom wrote,

The wisdom of the first woman suffragists in asking for equal suffrage with men is confirmed by the experience of those who ask for less and get nothing. During the session of the last Texas Legislature a bill was introduced "To Abolish the Distinction Between Married Women and Other Persons," also a bill making women eligible to the office of County Superintendent of Schools. Both bills

⁷² Stella L. Christian, ed., *The History of the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs* (Houston: Dealy Adey Elgin Company, 1919), 5; *The Fort Worth Mirror*, November 10, 1894 (first and second quotation); *Dallas Morning News*, April 14, 1895 (third quotation); *Dallas Morning News*, May 24, 1897. For a history of the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs, see McArthur, *Creating the New Woman*; Meagan Seaholm, "Earnest Women: The White Woman's Club Movement in Progressive Era Texas, 1880-1920," (Ph.D. diss., Rice University, 1988); Turner, *Women, Culture, and Community*, Chapter 6.

were strangled at once. The reason of this is simply because there is no vigorous discussion of woman suffrage in the State.⁷³

In the end, multiple factors contributed to the dissolution of TERA. The split of the executive committee, the death of one of the organization's strongest leaders, Danforth, the death of the People's Party in the state, and the decade's volatile social and political environment all contributed to TERA's demise. It has been believed that TERA members and leadership just disappeared, but that assumption is not true. Actually, many TERA members became active in the TFWC and other state organizations. Mariana Folsom assumed the role of committee chairperson in charge of trains for the 1905 TFWC convention in Austin. Elizabeth Strong Tracy, one of the signers of the original TERA call, became an active TFWC leader and proponent of parliamentary training within the organization. Another TERA founder Margaret L. Watson was involved in the TFWC, the Texas UDC, and the TSHA. Additionally, Texas woman suffragists Rebecca Henry Hayes, Sarah Trumbull, Mary C. Billings, and Elisabet Ney were all affiliated with clubwomen's work either during the 1890s, the following decade, or both.⁷⁴

Some TERA members and many of their daughters, nieces, and other family members later became active in Texas suffrage organizations. Mariana Thompson Folsom remained committed to suffrage work until her death in 1909, and her daughter Erminia was also a twentieth-century suffragist. After serving as president of the State Council of Women, Ellen Lawson Dabbs engaged in Texas organizational work around the turn of the century. Elisabet

⁷³ Mariana T. Folsom to Editors *Woman's Journal*, in *Woman's Journal*, April 17, 1897; Mariana T. Folsom to Editors *Woman's Journal*, in *Woman's Journal* June 20, 1896; partial letter copy from Mariana T. Folsom to Susan B. Anthony (Dearly Beloved), July 8, 1898, Box 1 Folder 15, Folsom Papers; Elisabet Ney to Mrs. Mariana Folsom, [December] 1898, Box 1 Folder 1, Folsom Papers; *Dallas Morning News*, February 22, 1907; Mariana T. Folsom to Editors *Woman's Journal*, July 20, 1899, in *Woman's Journal*, August 12, 1899 (quotation).

⁷⁴ Stella L. Christian, ed., *The History of the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs* (Houston: Dealy Adey Elgin Company, 1919), 7, 133, 136, 137, 220, 224, 225, 244, 256, 280, 286, 383; *Dallas Morning News*, May 14, 1899, November 6, 1905.

Ney, Helen Stoddard, and Alice McAnulty all gave speeches and answered questions during a woman suffrage hearing held by the Texas House of Representatives in 1907. Mary Louise Herndon held the meeting to reorganize Tyler suffragists under the Texas Woman Suffrage Association (TWSA) in 1913. Additionally, one of her daughters, Elizabeth (Bessie) Herndon Potter, was an active suffragist with both NAWSA and the Texas Equal Suffrage Association between 1910 and 1920. Margaret Bell Houston Kaufman, one of the nieces of TERA's last president Elizabeth Good Houston, became the first president of the Dallas Equal Suffrage Association when the local group reorganized in 1913.⁷⁵

Woman suffrage in the state did not disappear with TERA. Instead, a number of woman suffragists who had made a lifetime of campaigning for women's enfranchisement continued their activism in other organizations and planned for a new century. It was a period of transition when state and national suffragists had to move away from nineteenth-century grassroots methods designed to link isolated suffragists, a type of activism quickly becoming extinct with the disappearance of "island communities." Instead, twentieth-century suffrage leaders had to learn new methods to attract women already investing their time and energy in other associations and active in their communities.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ Mariana Folsom listed amongst members of Austin Woman Suffrage Association in small red account book in folder 11, box 31, McCallum Papers; *Dallas Morning News*, April 17, 1900, February 22, 1907; The Smith County Equal Franchise League Minutes Book, Folder 2E313, H. Elbert Lasseter Collection, Center for American History, University of Texas, Austin, Texas; *HWS* VI, 632; Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900, Smith County, Texas, Schedule 1, Population, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D. C.; Enstam, *Women and the Creation of Urban Life*, 158. This list of TERA legacies is not meant to be exhaustive and includes just a few examples as part of a trend that is suspected to be much larger. Ellen Carol DuBois discusses the generational transition national woman suffrage leadership went through that was similar to that of Texas suffrage leaders. See Ellen Carol DuBois, "The Next Generation: Harriot Stanton Blatch and Grassroots Politics," in *Votes for Women: The Struggle for Suffrage Revisited*, ed. Jean H. Baker (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 159-173.

⁷⁶ For a discussion of suffragists approaching socially elite women and being concerned about the lack of support of clubwomen, see Graham, *Woman Suffrage*, 33-34.

In the ten years concluding the nineteenth century, Texas saw an enormous increase in social, political, and economic reform activities. Included among these were multiple state associations to unite women with national networks focused on various reform issues. During this time a statewide woman suffrage association, TERA, went through a much publicized rise and fall. In the midst of the two events, national suffrage leaders communicated high hopes for the state to be the first in the South to grant women full enfranchisement. When TERA started to split over issues grounded in sectionalism and class-based power-struggles, the conflict and the association's decline threatened organizing in the region. Sectionalism and states' rights were dangerous issues that had the potential to spread and hamper the National's southern work. For some NAWSA leaders the entire episode provided an up-close view of potential organizational problems at state and local levels, especially in the South. In turn, when Texas women attempted to reorganize for suffrage in the twentieth century, some of these same NAWSA leaders took careful new approaches and set new regulations when aiding those efforts.

CHAPTER 4

WOMAN SUFFRAGE IN A WORLD OF CLUBWOMEN, 1900-1915

In the years around the turn of the twentieth century, it was generally accepted by National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) leaders that the South continued to be the most underdeveloped region of the United States with regard to woman suffrage work. The Northeast held claim to the oldest suffrage organizations and was home to the key national leaders; the West encompassed all four states that had granted full voting rights to women citizens. Therefore, existing southern and national leaders set out to identify and recruit southern women to lead the cause in the region and solidify its role in future national endeavors. In Texas, this meant finding women who were suffrage friendly and who had sufficient social connections to establish a strong support base; it took multiple attempts to successfully accomplish this feat.

During the last two decades in the fight for woman suffrage, the votes-for-women movement in Texas went through two phases as part of the larger regional and national campaigns. The first, discussed in this chapter, was a period in which state and national leaders set out to strengthen support for the cause in Texas and make it not only socially acceptable but also trendy to support woman suffrage. During this period, 1900-1915, leaders established a lasting state organization that encompassed thousands of members. The second, discussed in the next chapter, highlights the solid engagement of women in the state's political arena. This occurred by winning state primary suffrage for women and through the ratification of the federal woman suffrage amendment in Texas. Both events magnified the level of importance of state suffragists and their successes to NAWSA leaders. Texas woman suffrage leaders used women's newly established primary voting power to ensure Texas ratification of the Nineteenth

Amendment, and then turned to lead other states' suffragists in their efforts to do the same. Each series of events built on the last, and at points during each there existed an essential bilateral flow of campaign methods and resources in which the state and national groups led each other.

The years discussed in this chapter, 1900-1915, also overlapped a period often referred to as "the doldrums" in U. S. woman suffrage history. The referenced "doldrums" reportedly lasted from 1896 to 1910 and were called this because these years encompassed a time when no new states granted woman suffrage. Wyoming had granted women citizens the right to vote in 1890, Colorado in 1893, and Utah and Idaho in 1896, but then not another state approved voting rights for women until Washington did so in 1910. Some woman's historians have concluded that there was a lull in effective suffrage activity because during this period there was no new legislative progress on the federal amendment in Washington, D. C., and despite NAWSA's primary focus on state-by-state amendment campaigning there was almost fifteen years between any new state-level woman suffrage wins.¹

On the other hand, modern suffrage histories have argued that this was actually a period of reorganization and growth for the national organization. Sara Hunter Graham has suggested the term "suffrage renaissance" as a more accurate description of these years wherein NAWSA changed its strategies and methods to attract new audiences and expand its base of supporters. Graham's description best matches the relationship and activities shared between national suffrage leaders and Texas suffragists and audiences. NAWSA leaders continued to be involved in Texas organizing, planning, and campaigning. NAWSA presidents made multiple trips to the state to encourage organization, support, and continued connection to the National, including a trip by Carrie Chapman Catt in 1903 and Anna Howard Shaw in 1903 (before she was NAWSA

¹ Flexner, *Century of Struggle*, 214, 247-248, 241, 255-256.

president), 1908, and 1912. NAWSA leaders orchestrated the formation of a state association in 1903, the Texas Woman Suffrage Association (TWSA) which at best was mildly successful. It maintained correspondence and interest in suffrage in the state through local suffrage activity. Then, in 1913, the National participated in the reorganization of the TWSA. The reorganized TWSA was enormously successful compared to previous attempts at state associations in Texas and remained in existence until the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920, changing its name to the Texas Equal Suffrage Association (TESA) in 1916. Additionally between 1900 and 1915, Texas legislators introduced state suffrage resolutions during four separate sessions—1907, 1911, 1913, and 1915. During this period, between 1900 and 1915, NAWSA leaders kept being drawn back to the Lone Star State until their search for the right socio-political equation eventually produced one of the largest and most successful state organizations in the South.²

During the first decade and a half of the twentieth century, the politics in Texas changed dramatically from that of the 1890s. Between 1901 and 1905, the legislature introduced a series of strict voting requirements in the state, including a poll tax and new primary and election regulations. Among the changes to the political scene was the removal of any contest to power outside the Democratic Party and the systematic disfranchisement of a large number of the state's African American, Mexican American, and working-class white voters.³

This had a large impact on woman suffrage campaigning in the state. During the 1890s, a great many of the state suffrage leaders and vocal supporters associated with the minority parties in the state, the Republican and People's parties. While the People's Party had faded away by

² Flexner, *Century of Struggle*, 256; Graham, *Woman Suffrage*, 33-34; *Dallas Morning News*, December 17, 1908, January 26, 1911, February 4, 1911, February 24, 1915.

³ Lewis L. Gould, *Alexander Watkins Terrell: Civil War Soldier, Texas Lawmaker, Diplomat* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004), 149-152. For an examination of the political scene in Texas during this period, see Barr, *Reconstruction to Reform*.

the late 1890s, new election rules ensured its demise and removed any possibility of another group, especially the Republican Party, seriously challenging the Democrats in state politics. This meant that many of the former Texas Equal Rights Association (TERA) supporters no longer had a stake in women's enfranchisement in Texas on account of party affiliation and/or economic status. Even if women in the state gained the right to vote, they would be disqualified from exercising the right because of new voting restrictions. If there were going to be a future for woman suffrage work in Texas, those associated with the cause were going to have to change their campaign strategies significantly. The new political reality was that most potential suffragists would have two things in common: they would need to be of the middle or upper classes and would be much more likely to support the Democratic Party. Associations with both groups at times had been publicly rejected by many of the leaders of the TERA a decade before.

These new political realities in Texas made the area prime for testing new organizational strategies developed by NAWSA in the mid-1890s. The recently unified NAWSA began actively to pursue "southern work" after 1892. By 1895, southern state suffrage associations existed in all of the states in the region except West Virginia, including the TERA in Texas formed in 1893. Through their work in the South, NAWSA leaders determined that formally educated women of prominent social standing, with well-known families, and economic wealth were those that had the potential to lead their states in successfully organizing for woman suffrage. Carrie Chapman Catt made the "society plan" an official NAWSA strategy when she took the national association presidency in 1900. Additionally, as historian Sara Hunter Graham argues, NAWSA developed a strategy to distance suffrage work from controversial histories connected to women's rights activities such as nineteenth-century abolitionism or the negative public reaction to Elizabeth Cady Stanton's *Woman's Bible*. They did this by rewriting the

suffrage history the National chose to claim and actively pursuing younger and potentially more liberal audiences through college community organizing. NAWSA leaders began to implement these strategies in Texas shortly after the turn of the century, and subsequently National-chosen state leaders and affiliated suffragists followed suit. The state had increasing masses of clubwomen looking for social standing through organizational activities and NAWSA leaders believed that with the right leadership the masses of clubwomen could be led to work for suffrage. Texas suffrage had a rough and publicly controversial suffrage history surrounding the years TERA was active, and thus the National sought new leaders. Finally, the University of Texas was quickly growing and had been coeducational from its founding in 1883, and thus became a source from which to recruit woman suffragists.⁴

The messy battle for control of the TERA in the 1890s by the state association's leaders led to its collapse. This meant that a fresh start was necessary in organizing Texas. In April 1900, TERA founder Ellen Lawson Dabbs reported to the *Dallas Morning News* that recently elected NAWSA president, Carrie Chapman Catt, planned to arrive in Texas the following month to reorganize the state association. Her stop was supposed to be part of a southern tour to attend a number of state suffrage association conventions including those in Tennessee, Louisiana, Mississippi, and organizational work in Texas. There is no record of whether Catt visited Texas that year, and thus she probably did not.⁵

The next woman suffrage stirrings in Texas began in February 1903 when sisters Annette and Elizabeth Finnigan and Katherine Finnigan Anderson held a meeting in their Houston home to organize a city suffrage society. The sisters had been brought up in Houston but had moved to

⁴ NAWSA Proceedings 1893, 76-78, 100, 127, 163; Wheeler, *New Women of the New South*, 48, 38-50, 64, 116, 219 n. 71; Graham, *Woman Suffrage*, 37-43.

⁵ *Dallas Morning News*, April 17, 1900.

the Northeast where Annette had graduated from Wellesley in 1894. Her father, John Finnigan, had been pro-suffrage for decades and was in attendance when Elizabeth Cady Stanton delivered a talk to a small group in Houston in 1875. Annette remembered years later that even though woman suffrage and its leaders were discussed often in her childhood home, she had not become interested or involved in the movement until college when she heard Lucy Stone speak. Finnigan never married, and following graduation from Wellesley College in Wellesley, Massachusetts, she moved to New York City to attend graduate school at Columbia University and to work in her father's firm. While there, she helped organize a small suffrage club that was soon absorbed into the newly reorganized New York Woman Suffrage League. Carrie Chapman Catt served as president for the league, Finnigan as first corresponding secretary, and a number of well-known women of social prestige were active members. Both Annette and her father were listed as contributors by NAWSA to the New York group for 1901, and she was listed on its executive committee at the 1902 NAWSA convention. Between NAWSA's 1902 convention and February 1903, the Finnigan family moved back to Texas.⁶

Approximately fifty persons attended the first meeting at the Finnigan home in Houston. The next month at the NAWSA Convention, held March 16-18 in New Orleans, the delegation voted to admit the "Misses Finnegan [sic]" to represent Texas. This was the first time a Texas resident had represented the state since 1895. Annette Finnigan was appointed to NAWSA's finance committee and where she was listed as the only life member from Texas, and as

⁶ "Copy of Letter To Texas Woman," from Annette Finnigan, December 16, 1918, folder 9, box 5, McCallum Papers; *The Dallas Weekly Herald*, December 18, 1875, and January 15, 1876; HWS III, 802 Alice Stone Blackwell and Harriet Taylor Upton, eds. *Proceedings of the Thirty-fourth Annual Convention of the National American Woman Suffrage Association and First International Woman Suffrage Conference, held in the First Presbyterian Church...Washington, D.C., February 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18, 1902* (Warren Ohio: Frank W. Perry Press, 1902) [hereafter cited as NAWSA Proceedings 1902], 47, 54, 98, 112; Harriet Taylor Upton, ed. *Proceedings of the Thirty-fifth Annual Convention of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, held at New Orleans, La., March 19th to 25th, inclusive, 1903* (Warren, Ohio: Wm. Ritezel and Co., 1903), [hereafter cited as NAWSA Proceedings 1903], 10, 11, 20, 55, 101, 120.

contributing \$50 or more. A few weeks later Carrie Chapman Catt visited the Houston club at Finnigan's invitation.⁷

Catt and Finnigan knew each other from suffrage work in New York, and Finnigan was definitely among the class of wealthy socialites NAWSA had started to bring into positions of authority. It is most likely that Catt or other NAWSA leaders had hand-picked Finnigan to revive woman suffrage in Texas. It was not unusual for Catt to send outside NAWSA organizers into a southern state to lead the formation of an affiliated association. During the previous decade, she had done so in Mississippi, and then subsequently Mississippian Nellie Nugent Somerville accepted the presidency of the Mississippi Woman Suffrage Association (MWSA). NAWSA leaders were more experienced with southern work by this time, and it appears they associated themselves with leaders who had some connection with the state.⁸

Finnigan fulfilled a number of important requirements: she was a socially elite suffragist from Texas who had experience with suffrage organizing from New York, and who had not been involved in any of the controversy involving the Texas Equal Rights Association in the 1890s. The Houston suffragists followed NAWSA's socialite formula closely and held a number of parlor meetings in Galveston to organize that city's women. Additionally, they also worked to get a woman appointed to the Houston school board. While these acts publicized the suffrage cause, Finnigan reported to NAWSA that the majority of the public ignored the petitions. In the end, three men were appointed to fill the school board vacancies.⁹

⁷ NAWSA Proceedings 1903, 10 (quotation), 11, 20, 55, 101, 120; Harriet Taylor Upton and Elizabeth J. Hauser, eds. *Proceedings of the Thirty-sixth Annual Convention of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, held at Washington, D.C., February 11th to 17th, inclusive, 1904* (Warren, Ohio: Wm. Ritzel and Co., 1904), [hereafter cited as NAWSA Proceedings 1904], 99-100; *Houston Chronicle*, March 31, 1903.

⁸ Wheeler, *New Women of the New South*, 219-220 n. 17; "Copy of Letter To Texas Woman," from Annette Finnigan, December 16, 1918, folder 9, box 5, McCallum Papers.

⁹ "Copy of Letter To Texas Woman," from Annette Finnigan, December 16, 1918, folder 9, box 5, McCallum Papers; Texas Woman Suffrage Association Account Book, folder 6, box 26, [hereafter cited as TWSA

In late November and early December 1903 a call to organize a Texas Woman Suffrage Association (TWSA) appeared on the pages of the state's papers. It had been a decade since the organization of the TERA. Instead of a list of organizers from different areas of the state and various political affiliations, as had been the case with the TERA, three women signed the call for the TWSA—Annette Finnigan, president of the Houston Equal Suffrage League, Althea Jones, secretary of the Houston Equal Suffrage League, and Ida Moore, secretary of the Galveston Equal Suffrage League and wife of wealthy industrialist and banker Charles H. Moore. The calls stated that the meeting would be “a mass convention of the friends of political equality for men and women” in Houston on December 8-9. Furthermore, the articles articulated issues of taxation without representation and discussed states and other nations that had extended votes to women.¹⁰

Among those present at the Texas convention was Anna Howard Shaw to assist in organizing the TWSA. The group adopted the NAWSA recommended state association template constitution. Among those elected to serve as officers of the association were Annette Finnigan as president, Moore as vice-president, Mary Roper of Houston as recording secretary, Virgie Pannell of Houston as corresponding secretary, Mrs. Nelson Webb of Houston as treasurer, Mrs. Calder of Galveston as first auditor, and Adella Penfield of La Porte as second auditor.¹¹

At the 1904 NAWSA convention, Finnigan reported to the national delegation that much of the TWSA work had been focused in Houston. She stated that the Houston association had

Account Book] McCallum Papers; *HTO*, s. v. “Women and Education,” <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/WW/khwku.html> (accessed September 21, 2009); NAWSA Proceedings 1904, 100.

¹⁰ *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, November 30, 1903; *Dallas Morning News*, December 5, 1903 (quotation); Frank W. Johnson, Eugene C. Barker, and Ernest W. Winkler, *A History of Texas and Texans* (Chicago: The American Historical Society, 1914), 1595.

¹¹ *Dallas Morning News*, December 9, 1903, December 10, 1903.

seventy-five members and the Galveston group had twenty-five with some interest expressed in a few other cities, but the large distances between the state's cities had been a major obstacle in organizing. Interestingly she explained how she believed that Texas was a promising field for suffrage work because the state was less conservative than the rest of the South partially because of increased immigration from other areas of the U. S., especially the Northeast. Overall, she communicated great hope for the state.¹²

The following year at the NAWSA convention, held June 28 to July 5, 1905, in Portland, Oregon, a report from TWSA president Annette Finnigan revealed a dramatic change in the Texas leader's sentiments. The Texas president appeared disgruntled with what she perceived as the National's limited activity in the Lone Star State. It stated that little work outside Houston had been accomplished and that because of the enormity of the state it was difficult to get suffrage supporters to organize. Additionally, she stated, "For several reasons our State association believes that until the National Association is prepared to help the work in Texas it would not be advisable to try to do much in the way of organizing. Of course we shall always take advantage of any opportunity that may offer to advance the work." Finnigan's charge that the national association was not helping in Texas and thus there was no point in trying to organize the state was serious. She was openly holding the national group responsible for another failed attempt at utilizing the state's potential. That same year, Annette Finnigan moved back to New York and over the next few years assumed control of her father's business. Until 1909, Texas appeared on NAWSA convention rolls in name only, and while Annette Finnigan continued to pay dues and technically remained the TWSA president, she was no longer a resident of the state. Texas suffrage leaders in the state continued limited efforts for the cause,

¹² NAWSA Proceedings 1904, 99-100.

but the 1906 TWSA report to the NAWSA convention mentioned that the absence of the state president had been an obstacle for their efforts.¹³

NAWSA leaders had begun to focus on the states where amendments were winnable, which meant focusing NAWSA resources on the few and leaving others without help. For a decade national suffrage leaders invested their time and money in gaining support and state amendments in the South by arguing for restricted woman suffrage. As part of increased Jim Crow practices many southern legislators sought further to disfranchise African American voters through varied enactments including literacy tests, poll taxes, and residency and property requirements for voting. Some southern and national woman suffrage leaders (including Anna Howard Shaw, Carrie Chapman Catt, Harriet Taylor Upton, Henry Blackwell, and southerners Laura Clay, Jean Gordon, Kate Gordon, Belle Kearney and Nellie Nugent Somerville) viewed the increased focus on voting requirements in the region as an opportunity to argue the benefits of enfranchising white women. According to Marjorie Spruill Wheeler, this “Southern Strategy” hinged on lobbying for woman suffrage as a way to increase the percentage of the electorate invested in the racially segregated, wealthy-white controlled power structures in the South.¹⁴

The failure of this campaigning method marked the removal of NAWSA interest and resources from the South. Harriet Taylor Upton, NAWSA treasurer, explained her support for this new direction, “I have often thought that the southern women might be enfranchised before the northern women because of the solution of the colored question but we meet the indifference

¹³ National American Woman Suffrage Association, ed. *Proceedings of the Thirty-seventh Annual Convention of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, held at Portland, Oregon, June 28th to July 5th, inclusive, 1905* (Warren, Ohio: Tribune Company Printers, 1905), [hereafter cited as NAWSA Proceedings 1905], 131-132 (quotation); 1906 NAWSA Proceedings report from Texas in folder 1, box 32, McCallum Papers; “Copy of Letter To Texas Woman,” from Annette Finnigan, December 16, 1918, folder 9, box 5, McCallum Papers; Mrs. C. S. [Adella] Penfield to Alice Stone Blackwell, 1906, folder “Adella S. Penfield,” box 25, Records of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.).

¹⁴ Wheeler, *New Women of the New South*, 113-122.

of southerners at every turn.” The region that suffrage leaders saw as an untouched resource in the 1890s began to be viewed as an insurmountable obstacle.¹⁵

Meanwhile, Texas politics had changed. After the People’s Party state and national election defeats in 1896, it began quickly to fracture and fade. While Populists were not successful in overthrowing Democratic Party rule in Texas, the perceived threat had been great enough to worry Texas Democrats. Furthermore, not all Democrats were actually in agreement about current politics or the best means for a strong state and party future. There were actually two wings of the Texas Democratic Party vying for control—the Reform Democrats and the Conservatives. The Reformers, often with James Stephen Hogg at the helm, were good representatives of the modernist portion of Wilbur J. Cash’s *Mind of the South*. As historian C. Vann Woodward points out, these southerners were pro-industry, pro-urbanization, laissez-faire capitalists, who believed the best future for the South lay in these pursuits. Hogg, a good example of this, was a vehement civic booster and while in office he worked to promote Texas to capitalist audiences. He increased his involvement in these business activities after his gubernatorial terms ended; in 1898 he toured the Northeast promoting investment opportunities in Texas and within a few years became extremely wealthy from oil-company promotion.¹⁶

¹⁵ The exception was a NAWSA funded campaign that won limited suffrage for taxpaying women on voter referendums on taxes passed in Louisiana in 1898. *Ibid.*, 120 (quotation).

¹⁶ Woodward, *Origins*, 148, 282, 307, 369-370; W. J. [Wilbur Joseph] Cash, *The Mind of the South* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1941). The Reform faction of the Democratic Party in Texas is often combined in historical discussion with the Progressive faction of the Democratic Party of the state, the latter being those that fought the Conservative faction and were active in the impeachment of Conservative Democratic governor, James E. Ferguson, in 1917. When this combined discussion exists, both Reform Democrats and Progressive Democrats fall under the label “Progressive,” but a closer examination shows that the two groups were from two different generations and differed in their political priorities, including their beliefs regarding woman suffrage. While some legislators did bridge between the two, it was more likely for conservative Democrats to maintain legislative positions consistently from the 1890s to the 1910s. The Progressive faction began to solidify about 1911 around the time the University of Texas Alumni Association was formed and held its first meeting in June 1911. A close examination of the minutes from that meeting show that many of the individuals associated with the Progressive faction of the Democratic Party in the years following 1910 were involved with the UT Alumni Association and eventually connected with the issues leading to the impeachment of Conservative Democratic governor, James Ferguson. The Alumni Association was created in connection with a public space controlled by the state’s political progressives, the University of

Historian Worth Robert Miller argues that when a number of Populists formed the People's Party in an attempt to overthrow Democratic rule in Texas, they inadvertently ended up strengthening the conservative Democratic wing. By forming a new party, the Populists removed their support from the reform wing of the Democratic Party. As a result, the Conservatives were able to regain control of both party and legislative affairs. Following Reform Democrat Hogg's two terms as Texas governor from 1891-1895, the state had returned to conservative control that lasted for more than a decade. In Texas, in 1894 and 1896 voters elected Conservative Democrat Charles Allen Culberson as governor, followed by Joseph D. Sayers in 1898 and 1900 and Samuel W. T. Lanham in 1902 and 1904. Election antics were not unique to the Conservative Democrats, but their political machine infamously used a number of methods to ensure its continued dominance. These activities included setting mid-winter primary dates that undermined opponents' campaigning ability and arranging block-voting by farm-laborers dependent on employment by supporters of the Conservative political machines in southern and western regions of the state.¹⁷

Texas, unlike the Texas Democratic Party that continued to be contested space. "The Alumni Reunion," *Bulletin of The University of Texas*, No. 190, *The University of Texas Record*, July 8, 1911 (Austin: University of Texas, 1911), 79-103. Historian Worth Robert Miller gives a good explanation and background discussion of the Reform Democratic faction in "Building a Progressive Coalition in Texas: The Populist-Reform Democrat Rapprochement, 1900-1907," *Journal of Southern History* 52 (May 1986): 163-182. Historian Lewis Gould discusses the two generations of anti-conservative Democrats in Texas, in which he refers to both as "progressives," but designates between the two generations by labeling the older generation, "the party of the fathers," in *Progressives and Prohibitionists: Texas Democrats in the Wilson Era* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1973), 3-27. For a discussion of the role of the UT Alumni Association and leaders in the Democratic Party fight and to impeach Ferguson, see Lewis L. Gould, "The University Becomes Politicized: The War with Jim Ferguson, 1915-1918," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 86 (October 1982): 256-276.

¹⁷ Miller, "Building a Progressive Coalition in Texas," 165-168; Woodward, *Origins of the New South*, 238-239; *HTO*, s. v. "Charles Allen Culberson," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/CC/fcu2.html>; s. v. "Joseph Draper Sayers," <http://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/SS/fsa41.html>; s. v. "Samuel Willis Tucker Lanham," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/LL/fla34.html> (all accessed September 10, 2009); Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans*, 130, 14; Gould, *Alexander Watkins Terrell*, 149-152. For examples of detailed accounts of Texas political machine activities specifically aimed at maintaining conservative Democrat political control in the state between 1890 and 1920, also see Miller, "Building a Progressive Coalition in Texas," 163-182; Gould, *Progressives and Prohibitionists*; Gould, "The University Becomes Politicized"; Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans*; Anders, *Boss Rule in South Texas*; Barr, *Reconstruction to Reform*; Mark Stanley, "People,

The continued success of the Conservative faction of the Democratic Party in Texas led Reform Democrats to change their political strategy in two ways. They began to advocate election reform and to look for potential voters likely to support the Reformers over the Conservatives. The introduction of woman suffrage fell into both of these categories. When Reform Democrat Jess Baker introduced the joint resolution in the 1907 Texas House, legislators and voters had recently passed a number of laws changing electoral practices in Texas.¹⁸

In 1901, the Texas legislature sent a referendum to voters to approve the addition of a poll tax, which they did in 1902. In 1903 and 1905, the state legislature enacted a series of laws, often called the “Terrell Election Laws,” named for their central proponent Alexander W. Terrell, aimed at reforming the state’s election practices and ensuring that the majority of votes cast were from those who reformers saw as “right” voters. The Terrell Election Laws established uniform primary election dates, the secret ballot system, gave Democratic county committees the right to determine voter participation in primaries (thus creating “white primaries” to eliminate the African American vote from any influence in the Democratic Party), and required poll taxes to be paid only by the actual voter. In combination, the poll tax and Terrell Election Laws reduced the African American vote in Democratic elections to as little as 2 percent, eliminated any potential influence by the Republican Party in state politics, solidified the Democratic Party primary as the true election for legislators, increased the difficulty of and reduced the number of “bought votes” by the conservative Democratic Party machine, and removed the control of the elections from the parties. The Reform Democrats had reduced their conservative opponents’

Populism, and the Poll Tax: The Institution of the Poll Tax in Cooke County, Texas,” unpublished paper in author’s possession.

¹⁸ Miller, “Building a Progressive Coalition in Texas,” 163-182; Baker as a Reform Democrat, see *Dallas Morning News*, March 25, 1910.

influence and their ability to maneuver election workings to their benefit while at the same time limiting the franchise to an “improved electorate.”¹⁹

In the struggle between the two factions of the Democratic Party the playing field had been significantly leveled. Yet, the fight over control of state politics continued. For example, in 1907 Conservative Democrats were able to prevent reformers from removing Joseph Weldon Bailey (known for his skill as a verbal satirist, his violent temper, and his racist and sexist demagoguery) from his U. S. Senate seat, and Conservatives still continued to vie with Reformers for legislative seats and state control including winning the gubernatorial elections from 1910 through 1916. The Reform Democrats needed additional voter support to throw them into control of state politics.²⁰

On February 1, 1907, Texas House of Representative member Jess Alexander Baker of Granbury introduced “House Joint Resolution No. 17, To amend section 2, article 6, of the Constitution of the State of Texas, relating to suffrage,” in order to grant the state’s women the right to vote. After its first reading, the resolution was referred to the Committee on Constitutional Amendments. On February 21, the committee held a hearing at which Baker arranged for seven women to present testimony—former Populist figurehead and TERA corresponding secretary Alice McFadin McAnulty of Circleville, Texas WCTU president Helen M. Stoddard of Fort Worth, Emma J. Mellette of Waco and formerly of Colorado—one of the four states that granted woman suffrage in the 1890s, famous sculptor and suffrage advocate Elisabet Ney, Helen Jarvis Kenyon and a Miss Jarvis—both associated with the University of

¹⁹ Miller, “Building a Progressive Coalition in Texas,” 163-182; Gould, *Alexander Watkins Terrell*, 146-152, 156-157. For examples of discussion of attempts at election reform in the South, see also Morgan Kousser, *The Shaping of Southern Politics*; V. O. Key *Southern Politics in State and Nation*, 533-535; C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South*, 321-349. It is important to note that the poll tax also went toward Texas schools and clubwomen lobbied for it on the grounds that an educated electorate would do well financially and be able to pay the tax. McArthur, *Creating the New Woman*, 68-69.

²⁰ Miller, “Building a Progressive Coalition in Texas,” 163-182.

Texas, and a Mrs. Holden. Also present at the hearing was the wife of Representative Walter P. Lane of Fort Worth, but she did not speak.²¹

The women present had not known the others would be in attendance and no prior organization or strategy was developed to handle the event. Therefore, each woman addressed the committee and then answered any questions the legislators had. Each gave testimony on the reasons to enfranchise the state's women. Ney later wrote to the *Woman's Tribune*, a national suffrage newspaper, that she was distributing copies of the paper to members of the legislature when she found out one of them had introduced a suffrage bill. After meeting Baker, the legislator invited her to attend the hearing. Ney was especially impressed by Mellette, who repeatedly was able to disarm a ridiculing member of the legislative committee so successfully that the rest of the legislators turned on him. Ney originally became interested in suffrage work in 1898 when suffrage lecturer and life-long activist Mariana Thompson Folsom contacted her on behalf of the cause. At the time, the two women discussed the possibility of addressing the legislature, but it appears the opportunity did not present itself until 1907.²²

The last time a suffrage bill was introduced in the Texas legislature was 1895, when there had been a fractured but still functional Texas Equal Rights Association. It made sense at that time because there was an active state woman suffrage organization, and the issue was alive in much of the political talk and press around the state. At that time, State Representative Arthur C.

²¹ *Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Texas Regular Session Thirtieth Legislature* (Austin: Von Boeckmann-Jones Co. State Printers, 1907), [hereafter cited as *1907 Texas House Journal Regular Session*], 308, 311 (quotation); *HTO*, "Woman Suffrage," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/WW/viw1.html> (accessed December 18, 2006); *Dallas Morning News*, February 2, 1907, February 22, 1907, February 23, 1907; *Woman's Tribune*, "Woman Suffrage Movement in Texas," April 13, 1907. The "Miss Jarvis" referred to was probably University of Texas Fellow May Mason Jarvis. University of Texas, *Catalogue of the University of Texas* (Austin: State Printing Office, 1907), 11, 120-123, 319, 385.

²² *Woman's Tribune*, "Woman Suffrage Movement in Texas," April 13, 1907; Elisabet Ney to Mrs. Mariana Folsom, [December] 1898, folder 1, box 1, Folsom Papers.

Tompkins, a Republican, most likely introduced the potential legislation in order to gain woman voters to strengthen anti-Democratic Party groups' electorate constituencies (namely those of the state's Republican and People's parties). When Baker introduced the resolution in 1907, the Texas political scene was vastly different than it had been in the 1890s.²³

When Baker introduced the possibility of enfranchising the state's women in 1907, he orchestrated the list of woman suffrage speakers to address the Committee on Constitutional Amendments. The list of women who spoke represented the kind of reform-minded potential voters the Reform Democrats were looking for to increase their portion of the electorate. Among the speakers was Stoddard, who had been the president of the Texas WCTU for sixteen years. She was a stout prohibitionist and strongly advocated the removal of the state's liquor lobby that financed much of the Conservative Democrat's political activities. Another speaker, McAnulty, was the granddaughter of a Battle of San Jacinto veteran. Her family had been in Texas since before the Texas Revolutionary War, were comfortable property owners in central Texas but remained independent farmers. McAnulty had been both a Populist figurehead and an executive board member of the TERA in the 1890s, and both of these facts would have made her strongly reject the Conservative faction. Kenyon and Jarvis's associations with the University of Texas meant that they were connected with the increasing numbers of women seeking higher education. Additionally, this also meant that they were part of the University of Texas community, which was becoming increasingly hostile to Conservative Democrats. Mellette, formerly of Colorado, addressed the potential of women voting from experience, and Ney was famous for her artistic work as a sculptress. Many Reform Democrats knew Ney because of the connection between

²³ *Dallas Morning News*, September 8, 1896; 1895 *Texas House Journal Regular Session*, 50, 60, 70, 90, 126-27, 132-34, 136, 146, 173-75, 506, 509, 514, 535; Cantrell, "'The Dignity of Full-Grown Manhood.'" For information regarding Populist-Republican alliances to defeat Democratic Party measures, also see Miller, "Building a Progressive Coalition in Texas," 172-173.

their civic booster activities in the 1890s and her work to create statues of Stephen F. Austin and Sam Houston for display in the Texas Building at the 1893 World's Fair. These women were chosen to represent those whom Reform Democrats would see as the "right" voters if women were enfranchised, and their presence was likely orchestrated to help create the image that woman suffrage was good for the Reform faction.²⁴

The Committee on Constitutional Amendments came back to the House with a majority report on March 5, 1907, against passing joint resolution number 17; however, a positive minority report was prepared. On the other hand, the introduction of the joint resolution started an increase of woman suffrage activity inside Texas and revived NAWSA interest in the state's suffrage potential. Following the Committee on Constitutional Amendment hearing, the women present met and decided to reorganize the Texas suffrage association; Kenyon was delegated to correspond with NAWSA.²⁵

In addition to lighting the organizational spark in Austin by bringing suffragists together in action for the cause, Baker had identified himself as a woman suffrage friendly Democrat—an ally in the legislature for both Texas and NAWSA suffragists. As an experienced suffrage activist, Mariana Folsom advised Baker on issues involving woman suffrage. In a letter she wrote to national suffrage leader Henry Blackwell, Folsom explained that she was answering any questions Baker had, including those about presidential suffrage. Blackwell was among the national suffragists who had actively lobbied southern legislators to introduce limited woman

²⁴ *Dallas Morning News*, February 2, 1907, February 22, 1907, March 4, 1907; *Woman's Tribune*, April 13, 1907; *HTO*, s. v. "Helen M. Gerrells Stoddard," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/SS/fst98.html>; s. v. "David Hutchinson McFadin," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/MM/fmc49.html> (both accessed December 7, 2009); TERA Minutes, TERA Scrapbook, McCallum Papers; Gould, "The University Becomes Politicized," 256-276; Emily Fourmy Cutrer, *The Art of the Woman: The Life and Work of Elisabet Ney* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988); Zemler, "The Texas Building and the Women's World's Fair Exhibit Association of Texas.

²⁵ 1907 *Texas House Journal Regular Session*, 762.

suffrage, such as presidential suffrage, in connection with other restrictions. This was an attempt to appeal to those interested in maintaining Jim Crow control. Folsom maintained, though, that the best avenue to take was for the women of the state to ask for full suffrage through a voter referendum for a constitutional amendment. Folsom was an educator more than a strategist and hoped the shock value of the amendment would open doors to public interest and possibly outweigh any negative response that could come from the public denying woman suffrage. The publicity gained by proposing a constitutional amendment had caused people to become interested in learning more about enfranchising women. Folsom supplied statistics and educational materials to legislators. She also passed out copies of the *Woman's Journal* at different places, including the Texas State Fair, hoping to attract additional supporters to the cause and readers to the national suffrage newspaper. In response to her efforts, she received positive feedback from her correspondence with national leaders like Shaw, Upton, and Kate Gordon.²⁶

A letter from Shaw to Folsom in March 1907 contains essential information helpful in understanding NAWSA's view of both state-level and southern suffrage work in relation to national campaigning during this period. Shaw and Folsom's acquaintance dated back to the late 1860s when Shaw saw Folsom (then Miss Mariana Thompson) give a religious sermon in Big Rapids, Michigan. Shaw credited Folsom for encouraging her to become a minister. There was a decades-old connection between the two women that led Shaw to be more candid than she probably would have been otherwise.²⁷

²⁶ Mariana T. Folsom to Mr. H. B. [Henry Browne] Blackwell, April 2, 1907; Henry B. Blackwell to Mrs. [Mariana T.] Folsom, October 8, 1907; Anna Howard Shaw to Mariana T. Folsom, March 6, 1907; Harriet Taylor Upton to Mariana T. Folsom, March 25, 1907; Kate M. Gordon to Mariana T. Folsom, February 26, 1908 (quotation), all in folder 1, box 1, Folsom Papers; Wheeler, *New Women of the New South*, 113-125.

²⁷ Anna Howard Shaw to Mariana T. Folsom, March 6, 1907, folder 1, box 1, Folsom Papers; Shaw, Jordan, and Keyes, *The Story of a Pioneer*, 55-56.

The NAWSA president spoke openly about keeping a close eye on any news of the proposed Texas amendment. Importantly, she promised NAWSA financial and campaign resource support if the amendment made it to the public for a voter referendum. She then stated, “and as far as it is considered advisable, speakers and co-operation in any other way in which it may seem to you women of Texas desirable for the National to take part.” She told Folsom that the national leaders had learned that it always needed to appear that each state’s women were controlling their own campaigns and that national support was being directed by local leaders, even if it was not completely the case. This was an important view into the strategies of NAWSA leaders when dealing with state associations. Shaw did not say that state leaders had to have control; she said they had to appear to be in charge. In actuality, as in the case of Texas, NAWSA played a central role in much of the suffrage organizing. For example, NAWSA leaders had a large part in choosing every president of each newly chartered or reorganized Texas suffrage association recognized by the National as an affiliate, Rebecca Henry Hayes (1893), Annette Finnigan (1903), and Eleanor Brackenridge (1913).²⁸

Shaw went on to say that the current Texas president, Annette Finnigan, was again living in New York, and she would be willing to hand over the office to another woman “just as soon as anyone forges to the front and shows a willingness to take hold of it.” What transpired between 1907 and 1913 was that the presidency was not returned to a woman living in Texas until the “right” woman who could lead Texas women in successfully organizing in force was identified. Shaw volunteered to come to Texas in 1908 to lecture and help re-organize the state. Kate Gordon, NAWSA Corresponding Secretary and Louisiana woman suffrage leader, corresponded with Folsom in February 1908 about the possibility of Shaw touring the state. She said that

²⁸ Anna Howard Shaw to Mariana T. Folsom, March 6, 1907, folder 1, box 1, Folsom Papers (quotation); Rebecca Henry Hayes to Laura Clay, November 8, 1894, Clay Papers; *Woman’s Journal*, January 4, 1913.

Finnigan had directed Gordon to contact Adella Penfield for arrangements in San Antonio, Helen Jarvis Kenyon in Austin, Isadora Calloway in Dallas, and Althea Jones in Houston with regard to arranging Shaw's visits. In April, NAWSA president Anna Howard Shaw toured Texas in an effort to "rouse" Texas women into organizing for suffrage.²⁹

An examination of Shaw's audiences and hosts suggest that the NAWSA president not only was trying to stir up support in Texas, but also was on a mission specifically to interest the state's clubwomen in the cause. It is very probable that she was also surveying the leading cities' socialites looking for the "right" woman to lead the state re-organization efforts. During the preceding decade, the General Federation of Women's Clubs rose to be the largest women's reform network in the U. S. Its Texas affiliate, the TFWC, had the distinction of being the largest women's network in the state. Without the support of at least some of the clubwomen, the state's suffrage association would never successfully reorganize. Shaw began the tour by lecturing on the subject of the "Legal Status of Woman in Texas," to an audience of the Second District of the TFWC in Dallas on April 23. The following month Dallas Federation of Women's Clubs president, journalist, and social editor of the *Dallas Morning News*, Sara Isadore Sutherland Callaway (penname Pauline Periwinkle), discussed Shaw's criticisms of Texas women's property laws. Calloway reported that the TFWC chairman of the committee on laws relating to women and children in Texas, in connection with Shaw's speeches, recommended that "the property rights of married women" be included as part of club study the following year.

²⁹ Anna Howard Shaw to Mariana T. Folsom, March 6, 1907, folder 1, box 1, Folsom Papers (first quotation); *Dallas Morning News*, April 12, 1908, May 18, 1908; *Austin Statesman*, April 25, 1908; *San Antonio Express*, April 27, 1908, April 28, 1908; Kate M. Gordon to Mariana T. Folsom, February 26, 1908 ("rouse" quotation), folder 1, box 1, Folsom Papers.

Furthermore, the TFWC planned to begin work to lobby the state legislature to readdress a bill to give the state's women control over their own property.³⁰

Following her brief Dallas visit, Shaw lectured in Austin and then continued on to San Antonio, wherein she spent the majority of her time. She spoke three times while in San Antonio, twice of to audiences of over 300. At the first engagement she delivered a religious sermon, leaving in references to women's need for equality; and at the second she gave a suffrage lecture on "Woman as Citizen." During the latter talk she criticized U. S. Senator Joseph Weldon Bailey of Texas for his patronizing treatment of women in a speech she heard him give that morning. Shaw asked if the audience thought he would have so lightly treated women audience members had they been able to vote. Additionally, much of this talk focused on the points for why voting should not be considered "unladylike," an argument pointed toward socially elite women, such as TFWC members, who shied away from the cause for fear of criticism.³¹

The San Antonio Woman's Club, one of the leading TFWC affiliates in the state, sponsored the two largest lectures in the city. Mrs. J. Tom Williams, former president of the Woman's Club, introduced Shaw, who sat with the NAWSA president on the stage and who was joined by Eleanor Brackenridge. Following her stay in San Antonio, Shaw continued to Houston and then New Orleans. The Texas tour put her in connection with some of the state's most

³⁰ *Dallas Morning News*, April 12, 1908 (first quotation), May 18, 1908 (second quotation); *HTO*, s. v. "Sara Isadore Sutherland Callaway," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/CC/fcaba.html> (accessed September 30, 2009). For the history of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, see Blair, *The Clubwoman as Feminist*. For a history of the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs, see McArthur, *Creating the New Woman*; Meagan Seaholm, "Earnest Women: The White Woman's Club Movement in Progressive Era Texas, 1880-1920," (Ph.D. diss., Rice University, 1988); Turner, *Women, Culture, and Community*, 160; Enstam, *Women and the Creation of Urban Life*; Jacquelyn Masur McElhaney, *Pauline Periwinkle and Progressive Reform in Dallas* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1998).

³¹ *Austin Statesman*, April 25, 1908; *San Antonio Express*, April 27, 1908, April 28, 1908.

influential clubwomen. The TWSA was not immediately reorganized, but a series of other events followed the tour that led in that direction.³²

The TFWC did pursue a clubwomen's lobby of state legislators to change the married women's property laws in Texas. The same year as the next attempt at a suffrage resolution by state legislators, in 1911, the married women's property bill was not successful either until Senator Alexander Terrell introduced a Texas Senate bill, which also required a husband's consent and a district court ruling "to declare her feme sole for mercantile and trading purposes." Clubwomen were unsuccessful in getting the married women's property law changes they were asking for until 1913. By that time, even though the Texas legislature again voted down an amendment to enfranchise women, a state suffrage movement had taken hold and was quickly growing. This added to the reality that progressive government structures were beginning to control much of the reform activities that previously had been the sole responsibility of the private sector. As clubwomen lost their influence because of government involvement in reform, it became increasingly common for political outcomes to fall short of the clubwomen's expectations. It is possible that politicians were gaining increased experience with progressive government and believed they needed less guidance from non-voters, or it is possible that male politicians were tiring of women's entrance into the very public business of government. Either way, they were not obliged to answer to individuals without a vote. As these conflicts over public policy increased between legislators and women's civic service organizations more and more women started to turn to the suffrage movement as an answer. While it might have been the long way around, suffrage work that had been often viewed as unladylike must have seemed

³² *Dallas Morning News*, April 12, 1908, May 18, 1908; *Austin Statesman*, April 25, 1908; *San Antonio Express*, April 27, 1908, April 28, 1908; Kate M. Gordon to Mariana T. Folsom, February 26, 1908, folder 1, box 1, Folsom Papers.

less controversial once political conflict began to invade the purposefully bland public space of clubdom.³³

Following Shaw's Texas tour, in December 1908 a group met to organize the Austin Woman Suffrage Association and by the end of the month state and national dues had been sent by twenty-five members including Mariana Folsom and her daughter Erminia. The organization continued to grow and by the end of 1909 there were more than forty dues paying members, but meetings usually had an attendance of less than ten. In January 1909, Carrie Chapman Catt corresponded with Erminia Folsom encouraging her in the organization of her "little club in Austin." Additionally, NAWSA sent petition blanks to some of the Austin women as part of their national effort to demand a federal amendment granting woman suffrage.³⁴

From inception the local group acted as city and state organizers and Texas contacts for the National, but it lacked two important traits. While the Austin association had worked to support national petitions and on state suffrage campaigning and organizing, its leaders lacked enough social clout to warrant NAWSA's recognition of its desire to become the state organization. NAWSA President Anna Shaw had told Marianna Folsom in 1907 that TWSA president Annette Finnigan would gladly give over the presidency to the "right" woman, but after Mariana Folsom's death in January 1909 her daughter took the helm temporarily as a key state contact to the National. While Erminia Folsom had been raised surrounded by suffrage work, she was young, had little organizational experience, had few social contacts outside Austin, and was relatively limited economically. She was not the "right" person the National

³³ *Dallas Morning News*, March 8, 1907, May 11, 1908, November 18, 1908, January 20, 1911, January 21, 1913, April 13, 1913, December 5, 1918; Austin Woman Suffrage Association Minutes Book 1906-1915 [hereafter cited as Austin WSA Minutes 1908-1915], 49 (quotation), box 2L117, Austin Women's Suffrage Association Records, 1908-1915 (Center for American History, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas); McArthur, *Creating the New Woman*, 102-103; Wheeler, *New Women in the New South*, 39.

³⁴ Small red Austin Woman Suffrage Association account book in folder 11, box 31, McCallum Papers; Carrie Chapman Catt to Miss Erminia Folsom, January 18, 1909, folder 4, box 1, Folsom Papers.

had in mind to lead Texas in a successful suffrage campaign. Instead, national leaders continued to direct her to remain under Annette Finnigan's command even though Finnigan now lived in New York. NAWSA continued to recognize the TWSA council elected before Finnigan left the state in 1905 as the official representatives of Texas until Brackenridge called a convention in 1913.³⁵

The history of woman suffrage during the period from 1903 to 1913 has often been portrayed inaccurately as having no state activity and no affiliation with NAWSA from Texas. Actually, Texas was a dues paying affiliate of NAWSA from 1903 through the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment. When the Austin WSA met in December of 1908, it gathered state and national dues for 1909. NAWSA mistakenly counted those dues for 1908, and those for 1909 were repaid personally by Erminia Folsom to ensure good standing. It is questionable whether the act of paying national dues constitutes an active state organization, though. In this case, it does. Paying national dues meant that Texas was entitled to representation at NAWSA's yearly conference, continued affiliation and recognition by the national organization, and at least official existence of a state organization on paper. The problem was that national leaders and the official TWSA executive elected in 1905, from the latter especially Annette Finnigan and Adella Penfield, were not satisfied that the workers in Austin were sufficient to aid Texas in meeting NAWSA's belief in its larger potential as a leading southern suffrage state. Continuously from 1909 to 1913, NAWSA, Finnigan, and other Texas executive members kept the Austin

³⁵ Anna Howard Shaw to Mariana T. Folsom, March 6, 1907, folder 1, box 1, Folsom Papers (first quotation). For evidence that the Austin Association did work as if it were the state association, see the Austin WSA Minutes 1908-1915; correspondence in Erminia T. Folsom: Letters Sent, 1907-1912, folder 6, box 1; correspondence in Erminia T. Folsom: Letters Received, 1903-1920, folder 4, box 1; correspondence in Erminia T. Folsom: Letters Sent, 1914-1957, folder 7, box 1. For evidence of her economic standing, also see open letter from H. B. Marshall, September 25, 1903, folder 4, box 1. For direct communication from NAWSA that Erminia Folsom was not the woman in mind to lead the state, see Anna H. Shaw to Erminia T. Folsom, December 11, 1909, December 9, 1912, March 15, 1910, folder 4, box 1, all in Folsom Papers.

suffragists at arms' length trying to present them from setting up a third failed state organization.³⁶

It might sound strange that the National would purposely keep such a large and promising southern state from officially organizing, but the act fell under two national suffrage strategies in play during Anna Shaw's presidencies. First, the society plan discussed earlier in this chapter was still being worked out while national leaders identified and prepared the "right" woman to lead Texas. Second, this period fell during a time when NAWSA was concentrating on state campaigns where there were constitutional conventions or potential to receive a voter referendum. After failing to achieve full enfranchisement for women at the constitutional conventions in Mississippi and Kentucky in 1890, South Carolina in 1895, Louisiana in 1898, Alabama in 1901, and Virginia in 1902, NAWSA turned its sights farther west toward the area that had won all four state victories in the 1890s. At this point the National began working on referendum initiatives in Oregon in 1906, Oklahoma's first state constitutional convention in 1907, and a woman suffrage bill before the Arizona territorial legislature in 1909. Even though the Austin women continued to press state legislators to send a state amendment to voters, and there was some activity in the Texas House led by Jess Baker, all efforts continued to die in committee. NAWSA did not believe that there was enough activity in Texas to invest extensive

³⁶ *HWS VI*, 631; Taylor, "Woman Suffrage Movement in Texas," 203; Harriet Taylor Upton, ed., "Constitution of the National American Woman Suffrage Association: 1908," *Fortieth Annual Report of the National-American Woman Suffrage Association: Held At Buffalo, October 15th to 21st, inclusive, 1908* (Warren, Ohio: [NAWSA] Headquarters, 1908), 71-72; Austin WSA Minutes 1908-1915; Anna H. Shaw to Miss Erminia T. Folsom, March 15, 1910, Box 1 Folder 4; Anna H. Shaw to Erminia T. Folsom, December 19, 1912, fold 4, box 1; [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Eleanor Brackenridge, November 14, 1912, folder 6, box 1; [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Eleanor Brackenridge, November 16, 1912, folder 6, box 1; [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Eleanor Brackenridge, November 21, 1912, folder 6, box 1 [first letter]; [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Miss [Annette] Finnigan, [November 1912], folder 6, box 1; [second] [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Miss [Annette] Finnigan, [November 1912], folder 6, box 1; [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Miss [Annette] Finnigan, December 16, 1912, folder 6, box 1; ETF [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Miss [Annette] Finnigan, December 21, 1912, folder 6, box 1; ETF [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Miss [Anna Howard] Shaw, December 23, 1912, folder 6, box 1, all in Folsom Papers.

amounts of time or money there, but they were not going to allow a small group of local suffragists to spoil the southern state in which the National saw so much promise by not doing things correctly.³⁷

In August 1909 Adella Penfield, vice president of the TWSA since Finnigan resided in Texas, sent a copy of the state constitution to Erminia Folsom informing her that she did not see anything in it that prevented the Austin women from forming a club on their own initiative. This was almost a year after their first Austin WSA meeting, which suggested that there had been controversy in connection with the club's activities. In 1903, in an attempt to appeal to southern states' rights advocates, NAWSA executives made an official statement granting a say over membership in state associations to each state's suffrage organization. Lack of an active association in Texas left that decision up to the TWSA executive officers. A letter from Anna Howard Shaw the following December informed Erminia Folsom that Shaw had seen a letter she had written to Carrie Chapman Catt discussing possible fundraising measures in Texas. Shaw seemed apprehensive of the plan and told Folsom that neither she nor the Austin WSA had the authority for such an undertaking. Instead, she demanded that it should only be done under the initiative of the state association's president, Annette Finnigan, or another one of the state executives. This candid communication left little doubt that the National did not recognize the Austin group as anything but a local organization, even if they were paying the dues for the TWSA.³⁸

³⁷ Anna H. Shaw to Miss Erminia T. Folsom, March 15, 1910, Box 1 Folder 4, Folsom Papers; Anna H. Shaw to Erminia T. Folsom, December 19, 1912, fold 4, box 1, Folsom Papers; Graham, *Woman Suffrage*, 7; Wheeler, *New Women of the New South*, 14, 20, 21, 46, 116, 118, 120; *Woman's Journal*, February 11, 1911, February 18, 1911.

³⁸ A. [Adella] S. Penfield to Miss [Erminia] Folsom, August 14, 1909, Box 1 Folder 4, Folsom Papers; Wheeler, *New Women of the New South*, 118; Anna H. Shaw to Miss Erminia T. Folsom, December 11, 1909, Box 1 Folder 4, Folsom Papers.

Additionally in the same letter Shaw told Folsom that she was in correspondence with Finnigan and NAWSA executive and Louisiana suffrage leader Kate Gordon on the subject of a southern conference to rally the “far South,” which Shaw defined as Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. By March 1910, southern conference organizational work was still unsettled, but Shaw hoped that by the end of the year Texas could hold a state suffrage conference. “Texas must be organized,” she stated to Folsom, “but before we begin our organization in any state we have made up our minds through many years of experience that it is necessary to have good officers to take charge of the work.” She went on to declare that a strong state president that could build support and run state affairs could make all the difference in campaigning; otherwise it was useless to try. NAWSA was going to change its policies in supporting state work and would no longer engage in activity anywhere without an active state executive. At the time, Shaw expressed hope that Sara Isadore Calloway would accept the position as president of the re-organized state suffrage association, but this never happened. Instead, NAWSA leaders soon set their sights on another Texas socialite who they believed had all the qualities necessary to make Texas a southern suffrage success.³⁹

By 1910, national suffrage leaders interested in Texas identified San Antonio clubwoman Eleanor Brackenridge as the socialite best fitted to revive the movement in Texas. Brackenridge had founded a number of women’s organizations including the prestigious Woman’s Club of San Antonio. This organization had been the first associated with the TFWLC to focus on social reform and just a literature. She was considered one the foremost women in Texas, and her power and influence stretched well beyond her home city of San Antonio. Because of Brackenridge’s and other San Antonio members’ social standing, the TFWLC had dropped

³⁹ Anna H. Shaw to Miss Erminia T. Folsom, December 11, 1909, folder 4, box 1; Anna H. Shaw to Miss Erminia T. Folsom, March 15, 1910, Box 1 Folder 4, (quotations), all in Folsom Papers.

“literary” from its title and broadened its purpose to accommodate the San Antonio group’s continued affiliation.⁴⁰

The pieces of the puzzle national leaders had been waiting for began to fall into place. Brackenridge was from a wealthy Texas family whose state residency dated from before the Civil War, and she continued to be increasingly idolized by a large number of the clubwomen of the state. For example, within her lifetime, a number of women’s clubs were founded that bore her name as a tribute to her social position, and her birthday was observed as “Friendship Day” in Texas. By the time she started corresponding with the National about work in Texas, Brackenridge was in her seventies, and her closest social circles of family and friends were on record as adamantly supporting votes for women, including her brothers George W. and John S. Brackenridge, and close family friend Alexander Terrell. As Marjorie Spruill Wheeler wrote, one of the most important factors in the entrance of southern women of high social standing into suffrage work was familial and close community support for their activities. In 1913, Brackenridge stated that her brother George, her lifelong closest confidant and companion, had urged her to join the movement and dedicate herself to enfranchisement long before she actually

⁴⁰ Austin WSA Minutes 1908-1915; McArthur, *Creating the New Woman*, 18, 24, 37-39; *HTO*, s. v. “Woman’s Club of San Antonio,” <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/WW/pww2.html> (accessed November 28, 2009); Mary Simmerson Cunningham Logan [Mrs. John A. Logan], *The Part Taken By Women in American History* (Wilmington, Delaware: Perry-Nalle, 1912), 420; *Dallas Morning News*, February 15, 1924. It is possible that NAWSA leaders began to identify Brackenridge as early as 1906 or 1907. Adella Penfield wrote to Alice Stone Blackwell in 1906 that Marin Fenwick, San Antonio clubwoman and *San Antonio Express* writer, was pro-suffrage. Fenwick was one of Brackenridge’s closest friends, confidant, and co-founder of the Woman’s Club of San Antonio. Additionally, when Anna Howard Shaw visited Texas in 1908, it is unlikely she did not recognize Brackenridge’s social position among clubwomen. Unfortunately, a collection of Eleanor Brackenridge’s papers are not known to exist. Her brother George, with whom she was closest, destroyed most of his own papers before he died. George Brackenridge’s biographer, Marilyn Sibley, believes it is likely Eleanor did the same with hers. Mrs. C. S. [Adella] Penfield to Alice Stone Blackwell, 1906, Folder “Adella S. Penfield,” box 25, Records of the National American Woman Suffrage Association; *San Antonio Express*, April 27, 1908, April 28, 1908; Marilyn McAdams Sibley, *George W. Brackenridge: Maverick Philanthropist* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1973), 7.

did. Eleanor Brackenridge had the potential to organize the state successfully, and she was also likely to bridge the gap between many of the state's clubwomen and suffrage work.⁴¹

The events leading to Eleanor Brackenridge becoming one of NAWSA's few southern hopes, however, began in 1901 with a falling out between some of the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs executive officers. That year she served as vice president of the TFWC and was next in line for the presidency. Mary Peters Young Terrell decided, though, that she wanted her protégé Anna J. Hardwicke Pennybacker to inherit her office instead. To accomplish this Terrell had the state association's election rules changed and scheduled the state convention to be in Pennybacker's hometown of Tyler. Pennybacker won the presidency, and the whole ordeal soured Brackenridge on state-level clubwork. Thus, this highly connected socialite was abruptly removed from the TFWC leadership structure that refused to address or endorse woman suffrage. Brackenridge was no longer part of the TFWC executive committee and would have felt no obligation to adhere to their social rules of propriety regarding definitions of acceptable political work.⁴²

Brackenridge sloughed off Pennybacker's offer to assist the executive committee of the TFWC following the election. She stated that her reason was that she would prefer to remain in San Antonio with the morally superior clubwomen there, referring to the underhanded way in which Brackenridge felt she had been treated. Her close community of confidants became the San Antonio clubwomen, the Texas Congress of Mothers executives—both groups for which she

⁴¹ Sibley, *George W. Brackenridge*, 3-103; Johnowene Brackenridge Crutcher Menger, "M. Eleanor Brackenridge, 1837-1924, A Third Generation Advocate of Education," (master's thesis, Trinity University [San Antonio], 1964); *Dallas Morning News*, January 31, 1910, May 30, 1913, February 15, 1924 (quotation); Austin WSA Minutes 1908-1915; Wheeler, *New Women of the New South*, 38-50; *Dallas Morning News*, May 30, 1913.

⁴² McArthur, *Creating the New Woman*, 24-26; Eleanor Brackenridge to My Dear Mrs. [Anna] Pennybacker, July 24, 1901, Eleanor Brackenridge to My Dear Mrs. [Anna] Pennybacker, October 1901, folder Eleanor Brackenridge, box 3-1 Administration Correspondence: Rotan 1897-1899; Pennybacker 1901-1903, A-F, Texas Federation of Women's Clubs Collection [hereafter referred to as TFWC Collection] (Woman's Collection, Texas Woman's University, Denton, Texas).

was the undeniable leader—and her family. Many of these supporters were or soon would be open advocates of woman suffrage. The next step in her progression toward being NAWSA's Texas hope occurred when Brackenridge became actively interested in woman suffrage during a world-tour vacation in 1905 and 1906 organized by her brother George. The group travelling together included her friend, *San Antonio Express* writer and fellow Woman's Club of San Antonio founder Marin B. Fenwick. Their destinations included New Zealand, Australia, and Egypt.⁴³

While abroad, Fenwick wrote articles about their experiences for the *San Antonio Express* under the penname Lacy Lucky. Many of the articles showed an expressed interest in women's living conditions and political and social rights worldwide. While in Australia, members of the group were invited as guest members to join the Sydney, Australia, Woman's Club for the month they were there. This allowed Brackenridge and Fenwick to learn more about woman suffrage and question the Australian socialites on their newly won voting rights. Brackenridge, always the *noblesse oblige* at heart, saw examples at work of how voting women could have a stronger impact on the political outcomes of social reform. When asked about the "before and after" with regard to women voting, the president of one of Australia's central women's political leagues responded that before they could vote issues supported by women

⁴³ Eleanor Brackenridge to My Dear Mrs. [Anna] Pennybacker, July 24, 1901, Eleanor Brackenridge to My Dear Mrs. [Anna] Pennybacker, October 1901, TFWC Collection; Sibley, *George W. Brackenridge*, 207.

HTO, s. v. "Marin B. Fenwick," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/FF/ffeen.html> (accessed February 21, 2009). Fenwick wrote articles published in the *San Antonio Express* of the trip taken by the Brackenridges and friends. For a list of some members of the group including Eleanor Brackenridge and Marin Fenwick, see Sibley, *George Brackenridge*, 207. For examples of Fenwick's world-tour articles, see *San Antonio Express*, October 15, 1905, November 5, 1905, November 19, 1905, December 3, 1905, December 10, 1905, January 7, 1906, January 28, 1906. For proof that the series of articles discussing the "San Antonio Party's" world-wide-tour are the ones by Fenwick, see Lacy Lucky, "San Antonio Party Learns in Australia: Tramp Abroad Broadens the Vision and Makes Tourists Wonder About Some Things," *San Antonio Express*, January 7, 1905. The article discusses the author and her friend whom she called "the Investigator," meaning Eleanor Brackenridge, meeting with the Liberal League of New South Wales, and the following day the city's largest daily newspaper's headlines reading, "The ex-president of the largest woman's club in Texas spoke in opposition to the introduction of colored races into Australia." They were referring to Brackenridge and the Woman's Club of San Antonio.

were not taken seriously by parliament. After, though, legislation including child support laws, raising the age of consent, and women's educational rights were considered of great importance. She stated, "As to woman's influence with the ballot all I can say is that before we voted these bills were not considered."⁴⁴

Brackenridge and Fenwick's conversion to suffrage and the formation of the Austin association during those years contradicts what historians have previously believed happened in Texas. The belief has always been that women in those areas were too scared to organize for enfranchisement at that time. This assumption was based on a report by Finnigan that women in San Antonio, Austin, and Beaumont were "'interested' but 'too timid to organize.'" Yet, if prominent San Antonio clubwomen were apt to be swayed to action for woman suffrage, and Austin women organized a couple of years later, why did Finnigan believe otherwise, and why did Brackenridge succeed in quickly organizing Texas when Finnigan could not? While on the surface Brackenridge and Finnigan appeared to be of a similar economic and social class and while both were from Texas, there were important differences. San Antonio and Austin women probably chose not to organize under Finnigan's call because she was an unknown entity. As discussed in the last chapter, the 1890s were an important time of social organizing in Texas. During this time meritocratic networks were solidified including the creation of the TFWC which quickly became the largest women's organization in the state. Finnigan was away at college and then living in New York during this period, and thus had not established herself in

⁴⁴ *San Antonio Express*, December 3, 1905, December 10, 1905 (quotation); "Copy of Letter To Texas Woman," from Annette Finnigan, December 16, 1918, folder 9, box 5, McCallum Papers. *Noblesse oblige* used here to mean, because of their social position, and usually economic class, "they felt a special responsibility for guiding and nurturing southern society," see Wheeler, *New Women of the New South*, 39.

these networks when she tried to organize the TWSA in 1903. For all practical purposes, she was an outsider.⁴⁵

Additionally, as many suffragists, including Finnigan pointed out, the size of Texas made it difficult to organize. Usually, each area of the state had its own leaders who rarely deferred to those elsewhere. A few individuals, though, gained statewide status as social icons between 1900 and 1910. Among the few was Eleanor Brackenridge. She was a formally educated woman, a Victorian liberal, and a member of the state's upper social class—her wealth was supplied by her brother George beginning during Reconstruction. It required two things to bring her into action for woman suffrage. Women she admired (and there were not many) had to bring her to it, and she had to be convinced by a reliable source that it was necessary and befitting for a woman of her social standing to get involved. It took visiting with women's political and suffrage leaders in other nations to do this, including Australia's premier suffrage organizer, Rose Scott—who was extremely well connected with members of parliament. Additionally, Brackenridge became acquainted with the secretary of the Australian District Nurse Association, whose family was probably old European aristocracy, and whose mother told Brackenridge and Fenwick that “her family had lived in the same house in Scotland since the Fourteenth Century.” These women had worked for suffrage, and they had more influence among their legislators and

⁴⁵ Taylor, “Woman Suffrage Movement in Texas,” 202 (quotation); McArthur, *Creating the New Woman*, 15; “Copy of Letter To Texas Woman,” from Annette Finnigan, December 16, 1918, folder 9, box 5, McCallum Papers. Most accounts of Austin, San Antonio, and Beaumont women come from A. Elizabeth Taylor's 1951 *Journal of Southern History* article discussing Texas woman suffrage. In it she quoted Finnigan as stating that women from these cities were “‘interested’ but ‘too timid to organize.’” Her source citation was a manuscript of “Woman Suffrage in Texas” by Annette Finnigan in the private papers of Jane McCallum. Taylor received access to McCallum's papers prior to the collection being donated to the Austin History Center, therefore, there is no way to know the location of the actual document Taylor used. The manuscript Taylor cites is not among the collection's papers. Yet, in the chapter on Texas in the *History of Woman Suffrage* Vol. 6, published by NAWSA, the exact phrase Taylor used appears, and the editors of the volume thank Jane Y. McCallum in the footnotes to that section for writing the portion on Texas. Taylor, “Woman Suffrage Movement in Texas,” 202 (first and second footnote quotations); Ida Husted Harper, ed. *History of Woman Suffrage*, Volume VI: 1900-1920 (New York: J. J. Little & Ives Company by National American Woman Suffrage Association, 1922), 630.

older money and class status than Brackenridge. They were effectively using their newly won political status as voters to accomplish goals similar to those Brackenridge favored back home in the U. S. Interestingly, events that resembled NAWSA's society plan had actually worked abroad to bring Eleanor Brackenridge into suffrage work so that NAWSA could eventually identify her as the key socialite to organize Texas for suffrage. Women Brackenridge admired were suffragists, and thus it was making it socially acceptable and necessary for her to become a suffrage leader as well. Always the "investigator," it took a few years for Brackenridge to actively begin to pursue a suffrage leadership position. By 1910, she was corresponding with leaders of the NAWSA, Austin WSA, and TWSA.⁴⁶

The transition to the new NAWSA-chosen Texas regime, with Brackenridge at the center, was not as seamless as it publicly appeared. As the NAWSA backed group, associated with Brackenridge, took increased control of state suffrage organizing, a potential territory war along class lines threatened to develop. A state woman suffrage association in Texas had already collapsed because of conflict across class lines over control of the organization, a factor leading to TERA's demise in the 1890s. The potential for a similar event started to appear again, but this time NAWSA leaders knew who they wanted to back for control of the state association.

Brackenridge was a member of the upper class and thus expected deference from members of the

⁴⁶ Lucy Stone and Henry Blackwell to Mrs. [Mariana] Folsom, January 22, 1885, folder 1, box 1, Folsom Papers; NAWSA Proceedings 1894, 47; NAWSA Proceedings 1905, 131-132; *Dallas Morning News*, February 15, 1924; *San Antonio Express*, December 3, 1905, January 7, 1906 (quotations), December 10, 1905; Austin WSA Minutes 1908-1915, 33; *HWS* V, 328. The Brackenridge family moved to the state prior to the Civil War from Indiana, and the patriarch John Adams Brackenridge had been friends with Abraham Lincoln. They were Republican Unionists. Early during Reconstruction, George Brackenridge obtained one of the first licenses in Texas from the federal government to export cotton out of East Texas, where the family lived. He bought low and sold high and invested the capital gained in the founding of San Antonio National Bank. Brackenridge also had controlling interest in a number of other business ventures including the San Antonio Water Works Company and the *San Antonio Express* newspaper. Neither George nor Eleanor ever married, and about the same time as the contest over the TFWC presidency in 1901, George had built a mansion in San Antonio to house his unmarried sister, widowed mother, and himself. George died in 1920 and Eleanor in 1924, and during the preceding decades she ran the household. Additionally, she served on the board of trustees for the San Antonio National Bank. Sibley, *George W. Brackenridge*, 7, passim.

middle and lower classes. Erminia Folsom was from the middle class. The social norm in relationships between members of these groups in the South was that, depending on the social prominence of the middle-class individuals concerned, members sometimes shared public social space. Those that did so on a regular basis knew each others' names and participated in organized social activities together including association memberships but did not form personal relationships or congregate in private across class lines. When active in the same association, the members of the higher class expected to be in control and lead.⁴⁷

The problem in this case was that while Brackenridge was of a higher social and economic class than Folsom, the latter was the daughter of famed suffrage lecturer Mariana T. Folsom. As discussed in chapter 2, Mariana Folsom started suffrage work in Texas in the 1880s, and Erminia was raised in a household active in woman suffrage work. Her mother had been friends with and had worked with suffrage icons, including Lucy Stone, Henry Blackwell, Anna Howard Shaw and Susan B. Anthony. Additionally, Erminia had been among the founders of the Austin Woman Suffrage Association, and in its first years had been its most active member. One had a class-defined claim to leadership, and the other had historic ties and an older local association to claim the right to be involved in leading a Texas association. Historian Sara Hunter Graham writes that it was not unusual for suffragists with ties to nineteenth-century suffrage regimes to dislike NAWSA's society plan. A vocal minority argued that it "smacked of impropriety and elitism" and wondered what Lucy Stone would have thought of the new system. It was a new age, with different suffrage leaders, and a much more aggressive agenda.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Susan B. Anthony to "My Dear Rachel" [Rachel Foster Avery], April 7, 1895, Anthony-Avery Papers; SBA [Susan B. Anthony] to [Rachel Foster Avery], [winter 1895], Anthony-Avery Papers; Allison Davis, Burleigh B. Gardner, and Mary R. Gardner, *Deep South: A Social Anthropological Study of Caste and Class* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press), 59-79.

⁴⁸ Graham, *Woman Suffrage*, 39 (quotation). For evidence of Erminia Folsom as a founding and active member of the Austin Woman Suffrage Association, see Austin WSA Minutes 1908-1915; correspondence in

As Brackenridge became more active in Texas organizing, Folsom tried harder and harder to retain a central leadership position in Texas suffrage work and NAWSA networks. In January 1911, Erminia Folsom wrote to a Houston suffrage supporter that Galveston suffragists were engaged in organizing an active local association and arranged for both Eleanor Brackenridge and herself to be present later that month. Earlier that month, Mary L. Fulton, a Galveston physician, wrote to Folsom about the possibility of forming a local organization in that city. Folsom wrote back to her that one had existed, organized in 1904, and suggested strategies for obtaining member lists from that time for reorganization. Folsom then sent a copy of this letter to Fulton to Annette Finnigan with one explaining how she had become involved in organizing Galveston. Folsom stated, "I know this is State work; so you should know at once what I have suggested. Now I wish to be very careful not to do anything of this kind that the State Association would rather not have me do." A week later Folsom wrote the above letter to the Houston suffrage supporter mentioning the plans for her and Brackenridge to travel to Galveston to aid organizing the city. Apparently either Finnigan or another state or national officer directed that Brackenridge be involved in organizing Galveston.⁴⁹

By the following month, Folsom was reporting to Brackenridge the details of local Austin suffrage organizing. Brackenridge had requested that a few of the local Austin leaders contact Austin resident Mrs. Bell for the purposes of holding a parlor meeting at her home. This effort to bring members of Austin society into suffrage work was unsuccessful, and Folsom wrote to Brackenridge that Bell declined the offer to hold the meeting at her home. While the Austin

Erminia T. Folsom: Letters Sent, 1907-1912, folder 6, box 1; correspondence in Erminia T. Folsom: Letters Received, 1903-1920, folder 4, box 1; correspondence in Erminia T. Folsom: Letters Sent, 1914-1957, folder 7, box 1, all in Folsom Papers. Graham, *Woman Suffrage*, 39 (quotation).

⁴⁹ [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Mr. W. S. Wallace, January 10, 1911, folder 6, box 1; [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Dr. Mary L. Fulton, January 3, 1911, folder 6, box 1; [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Miss Annette Finnigan, January 3, 1911 (quotation), folder 6, box 1, all in Folsom Papers.

WSA continued to be the only officially active affiliate of the TWSA and had paid the state association's NAWSA dues for two years, Brackenridge was directing work in Austin. The report for plans in Galveston and the directions for the Austin suffragists suggested that Brackenridge held leadership position that reached beyond San Antonio. During 1911, a number of letters written by Folsom discussed the organizing of suffrage societies in San Antonio and Galveston even though official organizational meetings were not publicized until 1912. The 1911 activities were most likely parlor meetings and quiet network building within the woman's clubs along the lines of NAWSA society plan strategies. Additionally, Brackenridge addressed the delegation at the NAWSA convention in October 1911 in Louisville, Kentucky. Upon her return she wrote to the Austin WSA regarding the need to organize Texas officially. Her social position as a woman suffragist inside Texas and among NAWSA audiences was being established for a future official debut.⁵⁰

In November 1912, Brackenridge sent invitations to the Austin WSA and the Galveston suffrage society to join other invited Texas suffragists at an organizational convention of the TWSA in San Antonio. Folsom accepted the invitation on behalf of the Austin WSA and informed Brackenridge that she and Austin president Anna E. Walker would attend to represent their local organization. Additionally, Folsom reminded Brackenridge of the Austin WSA's history of being in existence longer than the San Antonio league and keeping the TWSA in good standing with NAWSA since 1908. In doing so, she suggested that the existing TWSA, for

⁵⁰ [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Eleanor Brackenridge, February 19, 1911; [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Mr. W. S. Wallace, January 10, 1911; [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Dr. Mary L. Fulton, January 3, 1911; [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Miss Annette Finnigan, January 3, 1911 (quotation); [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Eleanor Brackenridge, June 21, 1911; [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Alice Stone Blackwell, July 18, 1911; [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to S. Adella Penfield, August 7, 1911; [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Mrs. C. M. Hughes, September 21, 1911; Erminia T. Folsom to Eleanor Brackenridge, November 9, 1911; Erminia T. Folsom to Althea Jones, October 16, 1912, all in folder 6, box 1, Folsom Papers; *San Antonio Express*, February 19, 1912; *Woman's Journal*, March 16, 1912; Graham, *Woman Suffrage*, 37-38; *HWS* V, 328; Austin WSA Minutes 1908-1915, 57.

which the Austin WSA had paid the national dues while Finnigan held the presidency living in New York, cease to exist one hour before the group reorganized using the same name with Brackenridge at the helm. This expression was a reminder of who had been involved in state suffrage work first and which group had worked on state association affairs longer. In addition, correspondence surrounding these reorganization events also requested that the Austin WSA should name the Texas representative to the NAWSA Executive Committee, instead of the TWSA treasurer as Brackenridge wanted. Folsom had held the NAWSA Executive Committee seat for Texas in the listing for 1912 and wanted to stay potentially central in the connection between state and national suffrage organizing.⁵¹

Included in Folsom's correspondence to Brackenridge was the consistent reassurance of the Austin women's intentions to cooperate with the San Antonio suffrage leader in organizing Texas. The fact was, though, that tension had developed between Brackenridge, Folsom, and the rest of the Austin suffragists by November 1911. As plans were made to call a state convention, conflict developed over whether or not a TWSA already existed. Brackenridge maintained that it did not and that she had the power to call a convention to organize the state and affiliate with NAWSA. Correspondence flew back and forth between the Austin suffragists, Finnigan, and Brackenridge. Folsom subtly suggested to Finnigan that the Austin suffragists might have to meet and revise their local constitution to remove their affiliation with the TWSA, and Brackenridge warned that the San Antonio Equal Franchise Society (SAEFS) had more than 300

⁵¹ [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Eleanor Brackenridge, November 14, 1912; [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Eleanor Brackenridge, November 16, 1912; [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Eleanor Brackenridge, November 21, 1912; [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Mrs. Bornefelt, November 16, 1912; [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to [Alice Stone] Blackwell, [November 1911]; [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Dear Marguerite, [November 1912]; [first letter] [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Miss [Annette] Finnigan, [November 1912]; [second] [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Miss [Annette] Finnigan, [November 1912]; ETF [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Miss [Annette] Finnigan, December 21, 1912; ETF [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Miss [Annette] Finnigan, December 23, 1912, all in folder 6, box 1, Folsom Papers; Austin WSA Minutes 1908-1915, pp. 71-72.

members—enough to affiliate directly with NAWSA. The largest association in Texas and the state capital’s local society were both important in bringing the state organization together but the TWSA appeared to be in danger of failure even before its reorganizing charter meeting. In many ways, this dispute amongst the state’s suffrage leaders looked much like the division of the Texas Equal Rights Association (TERA) executive committee in the 1890s.⁵²

Unlike the TERA fight in the 1890s, there were clear differences in the social prominence of each woman. NAWSA leaders had consistently, though sometimes subtly, shown that they did not envision Erminia Folsom as the individual to serve as state president. They continued to recognize Annette Finnigan as president of the TWSA for the years between the Texas conventions in 1904 and 1913, even though she resided most of that time in New York, and Adella Penfield held onto the vice presidency during the entire period. Both acts kept the TWSA in flux, and Finnigan had been directed not to call a state convention and possibly persuaded not to turn the presidency over to a resident of Texas until NAWSA identified their “right” woman to organize the state. During the 1890s, NAWSA support and affiliation went with whomever the state’s delegates chose for the presidency, and the association soon died out. National suffragists had learned a lot about state organizing since then, and NAWSA executives would not make the same mistake twice. Brackenridge would be the next Texas president.⁵³

⁵² [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Eleanor Brackenridge, November 14, 1912; [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Eleanor Brackenridge, November 16, 1912; [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Eleanor Brackenridge, November 14, 1912; [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Dear Marguerite, [November 1912]; [first letter] [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Miss [Annette] Finnigan, [November 1912]; [second] [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Miss [Annette] Finnigan, [November 1912]; [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Miss [Annette] Finnigan, December 16, 1912; ETF [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Miss [Annette] Finnigan, December 21, 1912; ETF [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Miss [Anna Howard] Shaw, December 23, 1912, all in folder 6, box 1, Folsom Papers.

⁵³ Anna H. Shaw to Erminia T. Folsom, December 11, 1909, December 9, 1912, March 15, 1910, folder 4, box 1; ETF [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Miss [Annette] Finnigan, December 21, 1912, folder 6, box 1; ETF [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Miss [Annette] Finnigan, December 23, 1912, folder 6, box 1; ETF [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Miss [Anna Howard] Shaw, December 23, 1912, folder 6, box 1; [second] [Erminia Thompson Folsom] to Miss [Annette] Finnigan, [November 1912], folder 6, box 1, all Folsom Papers; Susan B.

Folsom appeared not to have made an open play for control over the state suffrage affairs. In letters between Folsom and Dohoney the two discussed the possible creation of a secret political machine Dohoney wanted to form. Folsom was unaware that Dohoney was an aging man whose political heyday had passed. Additionally, Folsom showed bitterness toward Eleanor Brackenridge and her brother George, and she told Dohoney that they should be left out of planning the secret political machine. Both missed the fact that the existence of their desire for a secret political machine meant that neither was part of the circles of state decision makers. They were both outsiders who could do nothing for the other, and the machine looks like it never came to fruition.⁵⁴

Three months before the TWSA state convention, in a January 1913 article in the *Woman's Journal*, it was reported that "Miss Eleanor Brackenridge will be president of the Texas W. S. A. which is soon to hold a state convention," and "Miss Finnigan has gone to San Antonio to talk over plans." Folsom had written to the *Woman's Journal* to point out that Brackenridge had been chosen to be president before the Texas delegation assembled to vote. Folsom did not receive the NAWSA executive committee appointment and was not among the officers of the reorganized TWSA during the following years. Instead, she continued periodically to be involved in the dissemination of information on woman suffrage, especially when it dealt with the university, state government workings, or state suffrage history. She

Anthony to "My Dear Rachel" [Rachel Foster Avery], April 7, 1895, Anthony-Avery Papers; SBA [Susan B. Anthony] to [Rachel Foster Avery], [winter 1895], Anthony-Avery Papers.

⁵⁴ Erminia T. Folsom to Col. [Ebenezer Lafayette] E. L. Dohoney, December 26, 1914, folder 7, box 1; Erminia T. Folsom to Col. [Ebenezer Lafayette] E. L. Dohoney, December 18, 1914, folder 7, box 1; Erminia T. Folsom to Col. [Ebenezer Lafayette] E. L. Dohoney, November 14, 1914, folder 4, box 1; Dear friend and Coworker [Erminia T. Folsom] to Ebenezer L. Dohoney, September 30, 1914, folder 4, box 1; My Dear friend [Erminia T. Folsom] to Eben L. Dohoney, December 11, 1914, folder 4, box 1; Dear friend [Erminia T. Folsom] to E. L. D. [Ebenezer L. Dohoney], December 21, 1914, folder 4, box 1; Dear friend and Coworker [Erminia T. Folsom] to E. L. Dohoney, January 8, 1915, folder 4, box 1; My Dear friend [Erminia T. Folsom] to E. L. Dohoney, January 20, 1915, folder 4, box 1; Dear friend and Coworker [Erminia T. Folsom] to Eben L. Dohoney, February 21, 1915, folder 4, box 1; Dear friend [Erminia T. Folsom] to E. L. Dohoney, July 25, 1915, folder 4, box 1, all in Folsom Papers.

remained somewhat active with the Austin suffrage society, and in order to be able to stay active in Texas woman suffrage work, Folsom organized a college suffrage league at the University of Texas and directly affiliated with NAWSA. This enabled her to carve out her own public space for continued woman suffrage activities. Overall, though, the suffrage activities after 1913 were directed by members of the TWSA executive board who were hand-picked or endorsed by Brackenridge, Finnigan, or NAWSA, and Erminia Folsom did not appear to be among them.⁵⁵

As mentioned before, after its first official meeting in January 1912, the SAEFS became the largest local association in state history. Within two days of the SAEFS's first official meeting, 140 people were enrolled as members, and the group "expected to have endorsements by thousands of women within the next few weeks." While complete member lists do not exist for state or local associations prior to 1913, it is likely that the SAEFS within a few months grew to be the largest woman suffrage association in state history, larger than the TERA and the 1903-1905 TWSA. From January 1912 to April 1913, TWSA financial account records show payment from the SAEFS for 575 members, "the Galveston League" for 125, "the Austin League" for 50, "the Houston League" for 13, and "the Dallas League" for 30. Therefore, it is not surprising that more than 150 people attended the TWSA convention called by Brackenridge on April 1-2, 1913, including delegates representing city associations in San Antonio, Austin, Houston, Dallas, Galveston, Temple, and Del Rio.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ *Woman's Journal*, January 4, 1913 (quotations); *San Antonio Express*, April 2, 1913; Erminia Thompson Folsom to Secretary of College Equal Suffrage League, 1914, folder 7, box 1; M Carey Thomas to Erminia Folsom, January 22, 1914, folder 4, box 1; Agnes Ryan to Erminia Folsom, February 14, 1914, folder 4, box 1; John A. Lomax to Erminia Folsom, December 17, 1915, folder 4, box 1, all in Folsom Papers; *The University Of Texas Record* Vol. 7 (Austin: University of Texas, June 1906 to August 1907), 308; H. Y. Benedict and John A. Lomax, *The Book of Texas* (New York: Doubleday & Page & Co., 1916), 417-421; Austin WSA Minutes 1908-1915; Letter from TWSA board member to My Dear Dr. [Alexander Caswell] Ellis, April 17, 1919, folder 13, box 5, McCallum Papers.

⁵⁶ *Dallas Morning News*, March 3, 1912 (quotation), April 7, 1912; April 2, 1913; TWSA Account Book, 10, folder 6, box 26, McCallum Papers.

By the April 1913 convention and the official election of Eleanor Brackenridge as TWSA president, many former state suffrage leaders and prominent society women had joined the organizing efforts. TERA founder Mary Louise Herndon helped organize the first meeting of the Smith County suffrage association in 1913. Herndon's husband, William S. Herndon, had been one of the first Redeemer Democrats elected to represent Texas in Congress during the decline of Reconstruction in Texas and was a wealthy East Texas attorney. When the Dallas Equal Suffrage Association organized in February 1913, the group elected Margaret Belle Houston Kaufman, Sam Houston's granddaughter and the niece of the last TERA president Elizabeth G. Houston. Anna Maxwell Jones, Texan native and NAWSA suffragist in New York, aided the group in its formation, and membership in the Dallas association was by invitation only. According to historian Elizabeth York Enstam, the Dallas suffrage leaders were from the upper and middle-classes, and the majority were native Texans and/or southerners. The papers called the founding members of the SAEFS "prominent San Antonio ladies." Galveston's suffrage society, formed similarly to the SAEFS through parlor meetings and an official meeting in February 1912, had already elected Mary Fowler Bornefeld to the presidency of the Galveston Equal Suffrage Association's (GESA) whose membership included Loula Lasker, daughter of one of Galveston's wealthiest philanthropists, Jane Alvey, granddaughter of some of the earliest Texas Presbyterian missionaries, and many of Galveston's debutants. NAWSA's society plan was working in force to organize Texas.⁵⁷

On the first day of the 1913 TWSA convention the delegation officially elected Brackenridge as the association's president and Bornefeld as vice president. Ellen Maury

⁵⁷ The Smith County Equal Franchise League Minutes Book, Folder 2E313, H. Elbert Lasseter Collection, Center for American History, University of Texas, Austin, Texas; *HTO*, s. v. "William Smith Herndon;" *Dallas Morning News*, March 16, 1913, March 3, 1912 (quotation); Enstam, *Women and the Creation of Urban Life*, 157-158; Turner, *Women, Culture, and Community*, 261-262.

Slayden, wife of a U. S. House of Representatives member for Texas, was elected as the NAWSA executive committee member—the position Erminia Folsom had wanted.

Additionally, among the other officers were San Antonio clubwoman and Brackenridge confidant Marin B. Fenwick, who was elected corresponding secretary, and AWSA president and wife of wealthy railroad businessman, Anna E. Walker, who was elected treasurer.⁵⁸

The difference between this organizational convention and the state's two prior conventions in 1893 and 1903 was remarkable. In 1893, while there was excitement at the convention, many of the officers and delegates were affiliated with the Republican and People's parties in a Democrat-controlled state. While many were middle class by economic standards, their social and political associations provided them little influence within the state's power structures. In 1903, the convention in Houston was attended by members of the upper-middle class and lower-upper class, but limited to women from the coastal cities of Houston, Galveston, and La Porte. Therefore, their influence was restricted to the coastal region, and the statewide organization really never got off the ground. In 1913, there were leading women members of the upper-middle and upper social classes from urban areas across the state. It was quickly becoming trendy to support woman suffrage, and the more socially prominent women affiliated with the cause, the more members of the burgeoning middle class were willing to join and be led.⁵⁹

Not all suffrage leaders agreed on the direction of work, though. A strong growing undercurrent in the southern suffrage movement demanded work on the state constitutional amendments and the abandonment of federal amendment efforts. In connection with the

⁵⁸ *Dallas Morning News*, April 2, 1913.

⁵⁹ *San Antonio Express*, January 8, 1913; NAWSA Proceedings 1904, 99-100; NAWSA Proceedings 1905, 131-132.

southern creed of states' rights, a number of southern woman suffragists did not believe their region's constituencies or legislators would support a federal amendment without the political structures that existed during Reconstruction that had provided for the ratification of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments. Leaders of the southern suffrage states' rights group were Kentuckian Laura Clay and New Orleans activists Kate and Jean Gordon. All three had been NAWSA supporters and office holders, but increased tension with other NAWSA executives, especially national president Anna Howard Shaw, and growing focus on the federal amendment work began to drive a wedge between these southern leaders and NAWSA. This influenced Texas in a number of ways. First, Clay and the Gordon sisters had all been influential contacts in the past between the state's leaders and NAWSA. As recently as October 1912, Jean Gordon had given a suffrage lecture in Austin under the auspices of the Austin WSA. Therefore, in 1913 there was still strong connection with organizational efforts in Texas.⁶⁰

On the second day of the 1913 TWSA convention a resolution from, at that time still a NAWSA leader, Alice Paul was read asking President Woodrow Wilson to press Congress to pass a federal woman suffrage amendment. The discussion of the resolution created two factions among those at the Texas convention—one supporting the resolution and one advocating states' rights. While the resolution was being adopted, Ellen Slayden threatened to resign as the NAWSA executive committee member. She disagreed with, "carrying the suffrage movement into national politics." Those that disagreed with her argued that not passing the resolution would be an act of separation from NAWSA, and the majority of those present refused to secede from the National.⁶¹

⁶⁰ *Dallas Morning News*, April 3, 1913; Austin WSA Minutes 1908-1915, 67.

⁶¹ *Dallas Morning News*, April 3, 1913 (quotation); Ellen Maury Slayden, *Washington Wife: Journal of Ellen Maury Slayden from 1897-1919*, ed. Walter Prescott Webb and Terrell D. Webb (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), 196, 225.

The conflict over NAWSA's increased support for federal amendment work was not over, though. Instead, in November of that year southern suffrage delegates met in New Orleans to organize the Southern States Woman Suffrage Conference (SSWSC). Among those listed was Annette Finnigan representing Texas. Once the SSWSC's agenda to try and block NAWSA's federal amendment work became clear, by 1915 many moderate southern suffrage leaders including Finnigan renounced the southern woman suffrage organization and its tactics. Finnigan had more ties with Northeastern suffragists, NAWSA executives, and incoming NAWSA president Carrie Chapman Catt than with southern states' rights supporters. Additionally, the creation of the SSWSC and its agenda drove a wedge further between key southern NAWSA contacts, Laura Clay and the Kate and Jean Gordon. This left the southern NAWSA leadership open for new activists. Some connection remained between local Texas suffrage leaders and the SSWSC, but between its reorganization in 1913 and the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment TWSA executives continued strongly to support NAWSA agendas over all else. Even though Texas suffragists continued to battle amongst themselves over states' rights versus the federal amendment issue, the dedication of Texas executives to NAWSA, and the state association's continued expansion were factors that would help clinch Texas' position as a regional priority for NAWSA after 1915.⁶²

At the 1914 TWSA convention, held April 9 and 10, 1914, state vice president Mrs. W. E. Spell presided because seventy-seven-year-old President Eleanor Brackenridge was too ill to

⁶² *Woman's Journal*, November 22, 1913; Wheeler, *New Women in the New South*, 135-159; McArthur and Smith, *Minnie Fisher Cunningham*, 48-49. Minnie Fisher Cunningham and Eleanor Brackenridge were both listed in connection with the SSWSC in 1915, but other than name connection claimed by the SSWSC there is no evidence that these TWSA leaders actively pursued woman suffrage work through the SSWSC. The connection with these two TWSA executives was more likely related to the TWSA delegation voting to join and support the SSWSC at the 1915 TWSA convention in Galveston. The official TWSA affiliation with the SSWSC seems to have been in name only, as the southern suffrage organization began actively to campaign against NAWSA's endeavors. *Galveston Daily News*, May 15, 1915; Slayden, *Washington Wife*, 225.

leave her San Antonio home. A message from Brackenridge to the delegation pressed the point that, “We must not make the mistake of converting our suffrage organizations to social clubs, but make them real working organizations in the interest of votes for women.” Since the last convention, a number of parlor meetings had been held across the state and a few more local clubs organized, but much of the year was spent talking about suffrage as a topic and not in political activity. This trend was about to change. At this convention delegates elected Annette Finnigan as president of the state association and Eleanor Brackenridge as honorary president for life. This position was more than simply a title of thanks. The honorary presidency kept Brackenridge’s name on the TWSA executive board correspondence, and she continued to direct select state work and fundraising through 1918 from her home. Continued association with Brackenridge legitimized TWSA efforts when appealing to members of the state’s upper-class.⁶³

Following the 1914 convention, Finnigan sought further to organize the state. While the existing TWSA city affiliates had grown dramatically in membership, only one city organization had been added to those in attendance between the 1913 and 1914 conventions. As president, Finnigan canvassed the state speaking to groups and working to organize more local suffrage associations. The TWSA was in continuous need of additional funds, a situation that plagued the association during its entire existence. Additionally, the state legislative session was scheduled to begin in January 1915, and the TWSA executive board had voted to press a suffrage bill. To prepare the state suffragists to efficiently lobby legislators, Finnigan implemented the NAWSA practice of organizing suffrage work along Texas senatorial district lines.⁶⁴

⁶³ *Dallas Morning News*, April 9, 1914, April 10, 1914; *Wichita Daily Times*, April 9, 1914; *HWS* VI, 631-632. For examples of Eleanor Brackenridge involved in directing TWSA (and subsequently TESA) efforts, see correspondence in folder 1, box 2, Cunningham Papers.

⁶⁴ McArthur and Smith, Minnie Fisher Cunningham, 32-43; 1914 NAWSA Proceedings report from Texas in folder 1, box 32, McCallum Papers; Annette Finnigan to Mrs. H. A. Deats, December 9, 1914, folder 3, box 4,

To aid her in organizational and fundraising efforts, Finnigan hired Perle Penfield as a field organizer for the 1914 summer. Penfield had been a NAWSA organizer and was the daughter of long-time TWSA officer Adella Penfield. Perle had returned to Texas a few years before to attend the Medical Department of the University of Texas in Galveston, and since had periodically worked, traveled, and lectured on behalf of state suffrage efforts.⁶⁵

Another gifted, but green, suffrage organizer who came to Finnigan's attention and aid the same year was newly elected Galveston Equal Suffrage Association president, Minnie Fisher Cunningham. Minnie Fish, as she was nicknamed later in life by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, was the wife of insurance executive B. J. Cunningham. According to Judith N. McArthur and Harold L. Smith, both of her grandfathers had been wealthy antebellum planters in East Texas who had migrated from Alabama during the 1850s. Yet unlike Brackenridge or Finnigan, the family wealth did not exist in the post-Civil War era, and Cunningham was raised surrounded by a mixture of stories from the past of white-planter-class luxuries set against the stark reality of her parents' small farming life. At seventeen, Minnie Fish convinced her parents to let her study for a pharmaceutical degree at the Medical Department of the University of Texas in Galveston. She graduated in 1901, and after a year in the profession, pitted by gender discrimination, she retired in 1902 to marry B. J. Cunningham. While no longer wealthy, she was from a well-known family in Walker County whose patriarchs had held a multitude of elected offices starting soon after arrival in the state. B. J., on the other hand, was born in Illinois and had moved to Huntsville by the time he was twenty-six. The couple eventually moved to

McCallum Papers; *HWS VI*, 631-632; Annette Finnigan to Minnie Fisher Cunningham, January 2, 1915, folder 5, box 5, McCallum Papers.

⁶⁵ McArthur and Smith, *Minnie Fisher Cunningham*, 32; 1914 NAWSA Proceedings report from Texas, folder 1, box 32, McCallum Papers; *HWS VI*, 631-632; Perle Penfield, "Report of Work, Summer 1914," folder 2, box 33, McCallum Papers; Austin WSA Minutes 1908-1915, 53-55.

Galveston in 1907, and B. J. became an insurance executive in the American National Insurance Company.⁶⁶

While the move made the Cunninghams part of the growing urban professional class, they were never enormously financially successful. After it was determined the couple could not have children, like many urban middle-class women Cunningham threw herself into club and civic organizational work. In 1912, she became a member of the elite Wednesday Club in Galveston and soon was elected to its executive committee. During this time she also became an active member of the city's Women's Health Protective Association, and like a number of civic-minded clubwomen joined the state's growing suffrage movement reorganizing under Eleanor Brackenridge. One of the founding members of the Galveston Equal Suffrage Association (GESA) in 1912, she was also appointed to the organization's local executive committee. The following year as Annette Finnigan was elected to the presidency of the TWSA, Cunningham was elected GESA president.⁶⁷

Cunningham brought both youth and vitality to her suffrage work. What she lacked in experience, she made up for in strategic use of creativity. The Galveston suffragist became very skilled at organizing local clubs around the state, and Finnigan utilized Cunningham at every opportunity. She appointed Cunningham as the TWSA chairperson of Galveston County and called her to do state work to prepare for professional suffrage organizer Helen Todd during the 1915 legislative session. TWSA executive officers had been hard at work since the 1914 suffrage convention, polling legislative candidates on the issue of woman suffrage. A card catalogue was created for every legislative member and was kept and updated for the following

⁶⁶ McArthur and Smith, *Minnie Fisher Cunningham*, vii, 8-25.

⁶⁷ McArthur and Smith, *Minnie Fisher Cunningham*, 24-32; Turner, *Women, Culture, and Community*, 282-286.

years. Finnigan added the professional organizer to the legislative efforts and moved the TWSA headquarters from Houston to Austin during the 1915 legislative session. That spring NAWSA president Anna Howard Shaw made a southern tour and added Texas to her stops. For three months, a number of suffrage leaders from around the state stayed in Austin working to gain support for a state constitutional woman suffrage amendment introduced by Representative Jess Baker. While it never received a Senate vote, the House voted in favor of woman suffrage 90 to 32.⁶⁸

Finnigan and the other TWSA executives were successful in keeping legislative attention on woman suffrage, which in turn kept NAWSA interested in Texas, but Finnigan's health declined during her years as TWSA president. Her father had died in 1909, and her mother's death in April 1914 had been the reason she did not attend the state convention where she was elected to the Texas presidency. Finnigan's sister, Elizabeth Finnigan Fain, and protégé Minnie Fisher Cunningham aided the ailing Finnigan; their assistance appeared to be priceless as Finnigan tried to balance her ill health with the most active organizational year the state had seen. As the date for the 1915 TWSA convention approached, it was becoming clear that she would be unable to serve as president for another year. Without an active and assertive president holding the suffrage groups in Texas together, the TWSA was at risk again of falling apart. Fain

⁶⁸ McArthur and Smith, *Minnie Fisher Cunningham*, 32-43; Minnie Fisher Cunningham to Annette Finnigan, December 9, 1914, folder 5, box 5; Mrs. H. A. Deats to Annette Finnigan, December 14, 1914, folder 3, box 4; Minnie Fisher Cunningham to Annette Finnigan, December 20, 1914, folder 5, box 5; Annette Finnigan to Marin Fenwick, December 8, 1914, folder 3, box 4; Annette Finnigan to Anna E. Walker, December 14, 1914, folder 3, box 4; Annette Finnigan to Minnie Fisher Cunningham, January 5, 1915, folder 5, box 5; Minnie Fisher Cunningham to Annette Finnigan, [January 1914], folder 5, box 5; Helen Todd to Annette Finnigan, February 10, 1915, folder 7, box 4; Texas Woman Suffrage Association 1915 Convention Minutes, folder 3, box 32; "Copy of Letter To Texas Woman," from Annette Finnigan, December 16, 1918, folder 9, box 5, all in McCallum Papers; *HWS VI*, 632. Those that worked with Finnigan that summer in Austin included, Minnie Fisher Cunningham, Emma Harris, and Mrs. J. H. W. Steele of Galveston; Texas Erwin Armstrong of Dallas; Mrs. J. O. Creighton, Nell Horne Doom, Louise Hale Connerly, Anna E. Walker, Clara Snell Wolfe, and Mrs. R. H. Griffith of Austin; Amy Cresswell Dunne of San Antonio; Elizabeth Herndon Potter (daughter of TERA suffragist Mary Louise Herndon) of Tyler; and Jane Spell of Waco. *HWS VI*, 632.

was convinced that Cunningham was the one to take the office. Finnigan agreed, and the convention was scheduled for Galveston—Cunningham’s hometown.⁶⁹

Finnigan reported to the convention of delegates the events of the past active year. TWSA business had been conducted like never before. Official records were kept of all activities and correspondence. Additionally, press and legislative files were being kept for lobbying purposes. At the convention, Cunningham addressed the delegates on “How to Organize,” thus placing her in the position to highlight her talents which had been so valuable the previous year. The delegation elected Cunningham to the Texas presidency, and she was reelected every year following until ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment and the absorption of the organization into the League of Women Voters (LWV) in 1920.⁷⁰

Cunningham inherited an organization of more than 2,500 members with twenty-one local affiliates when she assumed the TWSA presidency in 1915. Unlike her two predecessors, she was not independently wealthy. Instead, she usually did not hire domestic help in order to be able to afford her suffrage work. Cunningham took the TWSA presidency at the same time Carrie Catt returned to the NAWSA presidency, and the national association began a period of reorganizational transition and under the new leadership began to invest in political strategy more and membership growth less. Cunningham would have not fit the National’s definition for an effective state leader to charter the TWSA a few years prior, but that work was complete. A growing state association existed, and while Finnigan became partially paralyzed in 1916, ending

⁶⁹ “Copy of Letter To Texas Woman,” from Annette Finnigan, December 16, 1918, folder 9, box 5; Annette Finnigan to Minnie Fisher Cunningham, February 13, 1915, folder 5, box 5; Annette Finnigan to Minnie Fisher Cunningham, February 20, 1915, folder 5, box 5; Minnie Fisher Cunningham to Annette Finnigan, n. d., folder 5, box 5; Annette Finnigan to Minnie Fisher Cunningham, April 8, 1915, folder 6, box 5; Elizabeth Fain to Minnie Fisher Cunningham, April 19, 1915, folder 6, box 5, all in McCallum Papers; *Galveston Daily News*, May 13, 14, 1915.

⁷⁰ Texas Woman Suffrage Association 1915 Convention Minutes, folder 3, box 32, McCallum Papers; McArthur and Smith, *Minnie Fisher Cunningham*, 42-44; *Galveston Daily News*, May 13, 1915, May 14, 1915; Winegarten and McArthur, eds. *Citizens At Last*, 133-135.

her political work, and Brackenridge was more often than not home or bed-ridden due to increasing age-related health problems, they had lent their names and efforts to the movement at the right time to make suffrage socially acceptable and increasingly trendy. Brackenridge continued to participate and lend counsel when possible, and Cunningham had the unyielding support of both former TWSA presidents, which meant a certain amount of social status stability when directly connected to woman suffrage work.⁷¹

By the 1915 NAWSA convention, held in Washington D. C. from December 14 to 19, the TWSA had a number of new developments to report to the National. The public endorsements for the state suffrage association had mounted over the past year and came from organizations connected to both the rural and urban constituencies of the state. Cunningham reported to NAWSA a “cyclonic” “stimulus” followed by a nearly-successful woman suffrage amendment in the Texas House of Representatives in March 1915. Added to the long-time relationships between Texas suffragists and the Texas Woman’s Press Association and a renewed commitment from the Texas WCTU, the Texas Federation of Labor fully endorsed suffrage at its 1913 convention. Building on decades-old connections between suffrage and former Farmers Alliance and Populist supporters, in July 1915 the Texas Farm Women, Texas Farmers’ Institute, and the state Farmers’ Congress all endorsed suffrage at their annual conventions.⁷²

⁷¹ 1914 & 1915 NAWSA Proceedings reports from Texas in folder 1, box 32, McCallum Papers; *Woman’s Journal*, May 22, 1915, May 29, 1915; Texas Woman Suffrage Association 1915 Convention Minutes, folder 3, box 32, McCallum Papers; McArthur and Smith, Minnie Fisher Cunningham, 43-45, 59-60; Wheeler, *New Women of the New South*, 38-50. For examples of the friendship and support between Eleanor Brackenridge and Minnie Fisher Cunningham, see correspondence in folder 1, box 2, Cunningham Papers.

⁷² 1915 NAWSA Proceedings report from Texas (quotations) in folder 1, box 32, McCallum Papers; *Woman’s Journal*, July 26, 1913, May 22, 1915, August 21, 1915; *Dallas Morning News*, July 21, 1915, July 23, 1915.

In October 1915, Willie Cooper Hobby, wife of Lieutenant Governor William Pettus Hobby, was one of the speakers at a luncheon held for Cunningham by the Women's Political Equality Union of Houston. Helen Smith Woods, wife of Texas Speaker of the House John W. Woods, was TWSA Twenty-eighth Senatorial District chairperson. Additionally, Conservative Democrat Governor James E. Ferguson remarked at an event during Rural School Week at the University of Texas, "If women want to vote, I say let them." His support was not solid, however, and by 1916 the governor became one of the key opponents to woman suffrage on both Texas and national stages.⁷³

Then, shortly before the NAWSA 1915 convention, at which Cunningham delivered her report, the TFWC added its public endorsement to the growing number of suffrage supporters in the state. After the Second District of the TFWC endorsed suffrage at their June 1915 meeting, two-thirds of the entire TFWC delegation voted in November 1915 at the state convention in favor of a resolution supporting suffrage. This act made Texas number thirty in the state federations that officially endorsed suffrage, including four southern states—Arkansas, Kentucky, West Virginia, and Texas. Within two years of the birth of the most successful suffrage association in state history, NAWSA and TWSA efforts over the previous year had obtained the public backing of some of the most powerful social organizations in the state. Texas suffragists saw all of the events during 1915 as "handwriting on the wall" and began to plan for the next state legislative session in 1917.⁷⁴

The Texas report of such successful endeavors in the state came at an important transitional time for national suffrage work. Also at the 1915 NAWSA convention Carrie

⁷³ *Woman's Journal*, August 21, 1915 (quotation), November 6, 1915.

⁷⁴ *Woman's Journal*, June 19, 1915, November 20, 1915; *Dallas Morning News*, May 24, 1916; McArthur and Smith, *Minnie Fisher Cunningham*, 50; 1915 NAWSA Proceedings report from Texas (quotation) in folder 1, box 32, McCallum Papers.

Chapman Catt was elected as the association's president. She had resigned in 1905 for personal health reasons, but spent much of her time working as the president of the International Woman Suffrage Association. Her return to the NAWSA presidency marked a change in national strategy that influenced state campaigning methods, solidified NAWSA hold on regional and state matters, and began to set the stage for an intense focus on ratifying a federal suffrage amendment. Catt had historic ties with suffrage work in Texas and the rest of the South, including involvement in Annette Finnigan's original return to Texas in 1903 to organize the first TWSA. The five years following, 1916 to 1920, were the most active in suffrage organizing in national history, and continuously Texas was one of NAWSA's priorities—especially in the South. National leaders knew that it was going to take three-fourths of the states' support to get a federal amendment ratified. That meant that statistically at least some of the South would have to be involved in paving the final portion of the road to enfranchise women.⁷⁵

The U. S. woman suffrage movement went through a reorganizational period at the turn of the twentieth century. The decade from 1890 to 1900 was marked by the reunification of the national leadership, the granting of woman suffrage in four states, and the concerted efforts to organize suffrage in the South. The years between 1900 and 1910 must have seemed like a disappointment. The future of the movement looked grim during the fourteen years between state suffrage victories. Many of the southern suffrage associations that NAWSA had invested in no longer existed. On the contrary, suffragists entered the twentieth century surrounded by a vastly different social environment and had to adjust their strategies accordingly.

By 1900, the existence of a woman suffrage movement was well recognized; the individuals at the head of the nation's social and power structures usually knew about NAWSA's

⁷⁵ Graham, *Woman Suffrage*, 86.

existence. Therefore, members of NAWSA made it their strategic focus to identify the key social and political leaders at the national, regional, and state levels and work to gain their support. At the center of this strategy was NAWSA's society plan, which was tried multiple times in the South—including twice in Texas. NAWSA affiliated suffragists spent more than a decade trying to pick the right leaders to mobilize the growing Texas clubwomen movement in support of suffrage.

When the TFWC officially endorsed woman suffrage in November 1915, it marked the end of an era when clubwork and suffrage activity were considered separate issues by many of the state's women. Decades of effort at the state, regional, and national levels went into the number of state associations that year that publicly endorsed votes for women. In the following years, the solidification of the anti-suffrage forces in the state in reaction to the growing influence of suffragists would take center stage in much of the very public state political battles. In 1915 not all Texans supported the movement, but the numbers were increasing quickly and soon state efforts began to help pave the final stretch of the road to national woman suffrage.

CHAPTER 5

THE TEXAS WOMAN'S PRIMARY VOTE AND THE ROAD TO THE "PERFECT THIRTY-SIX," 1915-1920¹

The success of a movement can be measured by the clout of its friends and enemies. If a movement is unsuccessful then it will not have powerful friends, and therefore it will not be threatening enough to cause its enemies to organize against it. By 1916, powerful friends and enemies of woman suffrage were gearing up for what became the final battles for and against the votes-for-women movement. In Texas, the years 1916 through 1920 were the most active for both suffragists and anti-suffragists. Before this, anti-suffragists in the state had not organized, but as more people joined the votes-for-women movement and with a near victory in the Texas House of Representatives in 1915, the opponents of woman suffrage organized publicly to battle to preserve their political and social conservatism. On the other hand, the growing public endorsements for women's enfranchisement and a volatile political environment in Texas opened new doors for woman suffragists. In turn, they won primary suffrage for women in 1918, and in the following year they also won federal and state legislative support for the Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution—which made it illegal to deny a citizen the right to vote based on sex. Texas (on June 28, 1919) became the first southern state, the ninth in the nation, to ratify the Nineteenth Amendment. This amendment subsequently was adopted after being ratified by Tennessee, the necessary thirty-sixth state, in August 1920.

Much of this period for suffragists became a balancing act between publicly proving that women were viable and essential members of the defense of democracy and the strategic preparation of legislative opportunities to gain the right to vote. When the United States declared

¹ Parts of this chapter have been previously published in, Jessica Brannon-Wranosky, "Defining the United States-Mexico Border and Immigration from 1910-1920: Geographical, Cultural, Economic, and Political Communities," *Journal of South Texas* 22 (Spring 2009): 67-84.

war against the Central Powers on April 6, 1917, and nationalistic rhetoric became focused on making the world safe for democracy, it provided an opportunity for suffragists to use their war work as a political strategy. In Texas, while the state's suffragists conducted war work, another battle developed inside the state. The Conservative Democrat governor, James Ferguson, declared a political war on state progressives and the University of Texas. State suffragists were involved at every level throughout the entire process. After Ferguson's impeachment suffrage leaders used their increased alliance with Progressive Democrats, now vying to solidify and keep their hold over state politics, to negotiate a woman primary suffrage law. Once in place, Texas women had the power to vote in primary party elections.

Texas, on the surface, was part of the solid one-party—Democratic Party—South. This meant the Democrats and their supporters had so much control over voting requirements that the Party's primary elections determined the office holders. The general election was usually just a formality. As previously discussed, the Texas Democratic Party was not solid. In place of a multi-party system, a multi-faction party developed, and woman suffragists potentially added voters to the Progressive faction. Anglo American, African American, and Mexican American women came forth to begin to vote. After Texas suffragists won the right to vote in the state primaries, they used their leverage as voters to pressure U. S. Senate and House of Representative members to support the Nineteenth Amendment in Congress. Once sent to the states, the same lobbying and pressure tactics were used to ensure its ratification by the Texas legislature.

The near victory in the Texas House of Representatives in 1915 for a state constitutional amendment granting the state's women the right to vote was an indication of this changing political tide. Whereas too few legislators had voted for the amendment to satisfy the two-thirds

requirement for it to be sent to the voters, the majority of the House had voted in favor 90 to 32. This indicated that the majority of the legislators were either Progressive Democrats or not completely under the control of the Conservative faction. The Conservative Democrat's control over the Texas Senate was apparent by the allowance of a speech by anti-suffrage speaker, Pauline Kleiber Wells of Brownsville, Texas. In the speech, Wells pleaded for the Texas legislature not to grant woman suffrage. She declared, "we have waked up, and we too the *haus frauen*, the women in the rocking chair, the stocking darners, are clamoring for our rights: the right of exemption from a burden that we will have none of." While a portion of the Texas Senators favored the woman suffrage amendment, it did not consider the bill. That December, a similar series of events played itself out in the nation's capitol.²

During the December 1915 convention of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) in Washington, D. C., the United States House of Representatives Committee on the Judiciary held a hearing on woman suffrage December 16, 1915. As part of the proceedings both woman suffragists and anti-suffragists provided testimony. Sixteen speakers for woman suffrage and twelve opposed presented their cases to the members of the committee. One of the anti-suffrage speakers was Pauline Wells, who was the wife of South Texas Conservative Democrat political machine boss James "Jim" Wells. At the time she was the temporary chairperson of the forming Texas branch of the National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage (NAOWS). The Texas Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage (TAOWS) began to organize in May 1915 in Houston, Texas.³

² HWS VI, 631-632; Lauren Ashley Laumen, "Womanly Women: The Antisuffrage Movement in Texas, 1915-1919" (master's thesis, Texas Christian University, 2005), 21 (quotation).

³ HWS V, 469-479; *Hearings Before the Committee on the Judiciary House of Representatives Sixty-Fourth Congress First Session on Woman Suffrage: December 16, 1915 and February 1, 1916* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1916) [hereafter cited as 1915 U. S. Congressional suffrage hearings],74; *Dallas Morning News*, May 16, 1915.

At the congressional hearing, Pauline Wells focused on two subjects related to the anti-suffragists' arguments. First, she discussed the common anti-suffragist perspective that woman suffrage would grant African American women the right to vote. She said she had spoken with a leading New Orleans suffragist, likely either Kate or Jean Gordon, who had told Wells that there were ways to enfranchise only white women. Wells told the congressional committee that she did not see how that was possible since the Fifteenth Amendment removed race as a voting requirement. One of the committee members, John M. Nelson from Wisconsin, asked her if African American men voted in the South. Wells tried to avoid the subject that black men in the South faced disfranchisement through a number of measures. Instead, she made the argument that African American women would be much more difficult to keep from the polls than African American men. She argued that enfranchising women would mean enfranchising black women, and in the South, she continued, African American women outnumbered white women in some states and many counties. She then stated, "But colored women would take part in sending a woman to the legislature if they had the right...I think they would show far more zeal than colored men--as I know them in Texas; of course, I do not know the darkies in any other State; but I know the Texas colored women would vote. Of course, I can only speak of my own State. It is a difficult proposition to discuss as to other States." Her attempt to instill fear in the minds of the committee members to the possibilities connected with granting woman suffrage through a federal amendment did not end with the discussion of the enfranchisement of African American women.⁴

Wells also used the idea of state rights. She stated the South had existed as part of the United States since Appomattox Courthouse, but warned the legislators that if they passed the

⁴ 1915 U. S. Congressional suffrage hearings, 74-77 (quotation).

federal amendment for woman suffrage that states' rights would be awakened in the South. Without expressly coming out to threaten secession, she did suggest that the vast majority of southerners were solidly against woman suffrage and if the federal government interfered in the region's patriarchal institutions, as it had in connection with race during Reconstruction, another American Civil War might break out. Historian Elna Green argues that southern anti-suffragists, including Wells, were usually the descendants of the region's planter class. With their wealth, or at least their cultural identities, tied up in maintaining the conservative restrictions of old, anti-suffragists feared losing their social positions and their political hegemony if the nation's women were enfranchised.⁵

The Texas anti-suffragists were not the only newcomers to participate in the growing woman suffrage debate. In January 1916, Clara Snell Wolfe of Austin and Rena Maverick Green of San Antonio organized a Texas branch of the National Woman's Party (NWP). The NWP had formed out of the Congressional Union, NAWSA's federal amendment committee, when key leaders Alice Paul and Lucy Burns split from NAWSA in 1913. While a few of the Texas NWP founders, such as Wolfe, were lifelong influential members of the NWP, little came out of the branch overall. Most of the state's suffrage organizing continued to be directed by TWSA or NAWSA, and many of the Texas NWP supporters maintained dual membership with the TWSA.⁶

Yet, the creation of the Texas NWP did worry TWSA and some NAWSA leaders due to simultaneous events on the southern and national suffrage scenes. At the same time that NWP

⁵ 1915 U. S. Congressional suffrage hearings, 74-77; Green, *Southern Strategies*, 31-32.

⁶ Alice Paul, *Conversations with Alice Paul: Woman Suffrage and the Equal Rights Amendment*, an oral history conducted 1972-1973 by Amelia R. Fry (Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 1976), 111; *Suffragist*, January 29, 1916; Carrie Chapman Catt to Minnie Fisher Cunningham, January 11, 1916; Carrie Chapman Catt to Minnie Fisher Cunningham, January 17, 1916, both in folder 3, box 19, McCallum Papers.

leaders left the NAWSA, a group of southern suffrage leaders—Laura Clay, Jean Gordon, and Kate Gordon—also deviated from NAWSA and formed the Southern States Woman Suffrage Conference (SSWSC). In the face of national division, the TWSA leaders worked to keep Texas suffragists united. In 1915, SSWSC leader Kate Gordon addressed the Texas convention in Galveston as a guest speaker and argued for Texas to join her southern crusade against a federal amendment. Following her states’ rights appeal, the Texas delegation voted to join the SSWSC, but then TWSA president, Annette Finnigan, strongly opposed the affiliation. She did not want the introduction of a states’ rights or any other racially charged suffrage debate brought into the votes-for-women campaign in Texas. Cunningham wrote to fellow Texas suffragists in 1916, “there is room for all in our great cause.” She figured that if the state association stayed neutral it could avoid splitting over the issue. Additionally, Catt strongly urged Cunningham to avoid affiliation with either group. By nature, the NWP’s stance—federal amendment work only—was contradictory to the SSWSC’s anti-federal amendment arguments. With an organized opposition backed by the wealthy and well-connected Conservative Democrat machine, Texas suffragists could not afford to divide over which road to take to enfranchising women. They needed to be as inclusive as possible.⁷

In May 1916, at the TWSA convention in Dallas from May 10 through 12, members of the organization changed its name to the Texas Equal Suffrage Association (TESA) “so as not to exclude men.” Much of the discussion during a portion of the convention was how to raise support and awareness amongst Texas men, including forming a Century Club. The delegation

⁷ Wheeler, *New Women of the New South*, 135-159; McArthur and Smith, *Minnie Fisher Cunningham*, 48-49; *Galveston Daily News*, May 15, 1915; Minnie Fisher Cunningham to Mrs. J. M. Young, January 8, 1916 (quotation), folder 2, box 15; Minnie Fisher Cunningham to Carrie Chapman Catt, December 31, 1915, folder 4, box 19; Carrie Chapman Catt to Minnie Fisher Cunningham, January 11, 1916, folder 3, box 19; Carrie Chapman Catt to Minnie Fisher Cunningham, January 17, 1916, folder 3 box 19; Minnie Fisher Cunningham to Carrie Chapman Catt, May 18, 1916, folder 3, box 19, all in McCallum Papers; *New York Times*, November 15, 1914.

reelected Cunningham as TESA president. Also during the year Jane Yelvington McCallum became president of the Austin Equal Suffrage Association (AESA) and TESA press and publicity manager. McCallum was a native Texan whose parents had moved to Texas during Reconstruction. By the time she was elected to the AESA presidency in October 1915, her husband Arthur McCallum had been superintendent of Austin's public school district for twelve years since 1903, and the couple had four children. McCallum became state publicity manager the following year because of her three years of journalism classes at the University of Texas from 1912 to 1915.⁸

In addition to electing officers and changing the association's name, another highlight of the 1916 TESA convention came when, as a political jab, Cunningham announced a Joseph Weldon Bailey Monument Fund to raise money in the name of the anti-suffragist U. S. Senator. The TESA president did this in response to a Houston speech she heard him give in which he compared a pre-suffrage woman to a glass of clear water and a post-suffrage woman to water dirtied with ink. In addition to the discussion of the Conservative Democratic senator, a letter from Texas Governor James E. Ferguson's secretary was read to the TESA delegation. In the letter Ferguson was quoted as saying, "If all the women of Texas want to vote, let them vote." The TESA immediately passed a resolution to ask the Texas Democratic Party to add a woman suffrage plank to the platform.⁹

Later that month (at the Texas Democratic Party convention), on May 24, the *Dallas Morning News* reported how Bailey and Ferguson responded to the TESA request for a suffrage

⁸ *Dallas Morning News*, May 13, 1916 (quotation); *HTO*, "Jane Legette Yelvington McCallum;" Austin WSA Minutes 1908-1915, CAH; Jane Y. McCallum, *A Texas Suffragist: Diaries and Writing of Jane Y. McCallum*. Ed, Janet G. Humphrey (Austin, Texas: E. C. Temple, 1988), 59-60; Jane Y. McCallum University of Texas transcript, official copy in possession of author.

⁹ *Dallas Morning News*, May 13, 1916 (quotation).

plank. The paper reported that the Conservative faction of the party “absolutely dominated the committee on platform and resolutions.” Bailey and Ferguson worked to frame “the anti-prohibition and anti-national woman suffrage planks” of the Texas Democratic Party’s four-plank platform. The convention delegates elected Jim Wells, South Texas political machine boss and husband of the TAOWS leader, as platform and resolutions committee chair. As part of his duties he appointed the platform committee, including Bailey and Ferguson. The convention adopted their four-plank platform, including specific planks against prohibition and woman suffrage and elected Ferguson as chairman of the Texas delegation to the National Democratic Party convention.¹⁰

The battle between Texas suffragists and Governor Ferguson heated up in June 1916 at the National Democratic Party convention. NAWSA, SSWSC, NWP, and NAOWS all flooded the Democratic and Republican national conventions that year with separate requests for support. NAWSA wanted each party to place a plank for support of woman suffrage in their party platform. The SSWSC urged for a plank in each platform for amendment to each state’s constitution. The NWP demanded support from each party for a woman suffrage amendment to the United States Constitution, and the NAOWS asked legislators to keep women out of politics. At the national Democratic Party convention in St. Louis, Missouri, June 14-16, TESA representatives arrived in a special train car specially decorated for the event. While at the convention they participated in a “walkless” parade of suffragists standing still with arms outstretched lining the path from the delegates’ hotel to the convention. Texas suffragists’ participation in the convention events was essential. Catt wanted all NAWSA southern affiliates present because of the strong southern political influence inside the national Democratic Party.

¹⁰ *Dallas Morning News*, May 24, 1916 (quotations); May 25, 1916.

She wrote Cunningham multiple times in the months and weeks prior to the convention urging Texas attendance and pressing TESA to support NAWSA endeavors over that of the SSWSC.¹¹

NAWSA received TESA's backing, and Cunningham wrote to Catt,

I would say that it is a matter of great regret to the Texas Equal suffrage Association that Miss Kate Gordon, of New Orleans, insists on acting as [though] the South was a separate and distinct country, with separate and distinct interests from the rest of the United States. We feel that in this she does the South a great injustice, and she loses the valuable results that we might get from concerted action. We also feel that she had no right to patent the South and act in the name of the whole when in fact she represents a very small minority of sentiment.¹²

Those representing the Texas Democratic Party as convention delegates, including Governor Ferguson, were another story. During a portion of the convention debate when the delegation discussed woman suffrage, Ferguson took the podium and argued against the party supporting any sort of woman suffrage plank. He declared that women needed to stay in their place, which in his opinion was divinely determined as subordinate to men. Cunningham and the rest of the TESA delegation left the convention extremely angry at the Texas governor and staged an impromptu demonstration outside his hotel equipped with a Texas flag covered in black cloth (a symbolic mourning for Texas women). At the Democratic and Republican Party conventions that year, SSWSC leaders claimed success because both major national parties passed resolutions declaring woman suffrage a state issue.¹³

¹¹ Minnie Fisher Cunningham to Carrie Chapman Catt, June 1, 1916, folder 3, box 19; Carrie Chapman Catt to Dear Sir [Democratic Party], May 10, 1916, folder 3, box 19; Carrie Chapman Catt to Dear Sir [Progressive Party], May 10, 1916, folder 3, box 19; Carrie Chapman Catt to Dear Sir [Republican Party], May 10, 1916, folder 3, box 19; Carrie Chapman Catt to State President, March 21, 1916, folder 3, box 19; Carrie Chapman Catt to State President, May 15, 1916, folder 3, box 19; Carrie Chapman Catt to Minnie Fisher Cunningham, June 10, 1916, folder 3, box 19; NAWSA "Campaigns for Suffrage Planks in the Platform of the Two Dominant Parties: Things to Do," folder 3, box 19; NAWSA petition pamphlet, "To the National Democratic Party Convention Session at St. Louis, June 14, 1916," folder 3, box 19, all in McCallum Papers; *Dallas Morning News*, May 13, 1916; Park, *Front Door Lobby*, 15 (quotation); Graham, *Woman Suffrage*, 84-85.

¹² Minnie Fisher Cunningham to Carrie Chapman Catt, May 18, 1916, folder 3, box 19, McCallum Papers.

¹³ Park, *Front Door Lobby*, 15; Graham, *Woman Suffrage*, 84-85.

Cunningham took Ferguson's actions as a direct declaration of war, and returned to Texas ready to campaign against the governor and his Conservative Democratic allies. Following the Democratic Party convention Cunningham, along with NAWSA field organizer Lavinia Engle, spent months touring South Texas, the Conservative center, speaking for woman suffrage and against Ferguson. In spite of the suffragists' anti-Ferguson activity, Cunningham was able to secure permission to address the Texas Democratic Party's election platform committee at the state party convention in August 1916. Despite TESA's efforts, Ferguson won the nomination and subsequently the election, but it turned out the following year that TESA supporters would get the last say as they aided in the efforts to impeach "Farmer Jim."¹⁴

In the meantime, at the 1916 NAWSA convention in Atlantic City, New Jersey, from September 5-10, Catt won reelection as president. Catt immediately proceeded to unveil her "Winning Plan" to obtain nationwide votes for women by 1920. The plan focused on gaining the federal amendment but also provided for certain assigned roles at the state level. At a meeting of the state presidents during the 1916 Democratic Party convention in St. Louis, Catt presented her idea to divide NAWSA affiliate state organizations into three categories. The states that already had full suffrage were to obtain resolutions passed by their legislatures asking for the federal amendment. States in which it appeared that suffragists could get suffrage passed had permission to work on state campaigns for voter referenda. Finally, states, where referenda were believed to be unlikely or unsuccessful, were to seek partial suffrage either by way of primary or presidential suffrage campaigns. To keep control over the entire process, and specifically Catt and her chosen national executive committee, the presidents of more than thirty-six state

¹⁴ Hannah J. Patterson to Minnie Fisher Cunningham, February 10, 1916, folder 3, box 19, McCallum Papers; McArthur and Smith, *Minnie Fisher Cunningham*, 51-52.

associations chosen by Catt as part of the “Winning Plan” were required to sign compacts with NAWSA.¹⁵

The NAWSA executive committee accepted the plan, and at the NAWSA convention in September 1916 the delegation voted for a campaign run and mostly funded by NAWSA. Under these conditions, Catt declared that any state organization that did not comply with NAWSA directives would be considered in revolt and ran the risk of being replaced by a NAWSA-created state organization. This new focused plan removed any influence the SSWSC leaders might have had with NAWSA southern affiliates. It also relegated many southern states to very minor roles in the final years of the national fight for woman suffrage. Many of the Deep South states, Catt determined, were a waste of time and money because none of those legislatures were likely to support woman suffrage in any form. A few southern states, including Texas, were still promising, and these were the ones directed to seek partial suffrage.¹⁶

TESA executives left the September 1916 NAWSA convention prepared to lobby state legislators for primary suffrage. In January, both Texas suffragists and anti-suffragists moved their headquarters to Austin for the 1917 legislative session. State Senator Offa Shivers Lattimore proposed a resolution to extend primary suffrage to Texas women in January. By the time it reached the House of Representatives, state senators attached a grandfather clause which the majority of the House opposed. Both branches seemed unwilling to change their stance, and the woman suffrage primary resolution died. This could have been the end for Texas woman

¹⁵ Park, *Front Door Lobby*, 15-18.

¹⁶ Carrie Chapman Catt to Minnie Fisher Cunningham, January 11, 1916, folder 3, box 19, McCallum Papers; *Ibid.*

suffragists to contribute to the “Winning Plan” for the federal amendment, but a change in Texas Democratic Party politics was underway.¹⁷

After an argument with the University of Texas (UT) president over funding issues, Governor Ferguson entered into a series of conflicts with members of the faculty and administration, alumni, students, and university supporters. By spring 1916, the governor approached the board of regents demanding the dismissal of a number of faculty members, including former acting university president William J. Battle; Alexander Caswell Ellis, philosophy of education professor and acting director of the university’s extension office; university student and faculty secretary John Lomax; law professor R. E. Cofer; journalism professor Will H. Mayes; and the new regents-appointed university president, Robert E. Vinson. Over the following months it became clear to those involved that the reason Ferguson demanded the removal of the chosen individuals was that he viewed them as political opponents. For example, Mayes wrote newspaper articles publicly criticizing the governor. At this point, the board refused to act on Ferguson’s demands merely because he was governor. Ferguson threatened to fire any regent who did not submit and replace him with someone who would. Ironically, in 1910 Ellis had written, “Politics have no more to do with the appointments in the University of Texas, than they do with the canals on Mars,” but he was proven wrong. The struggle escalated, and on July 12 and 13, 1917, the board of regents met and the majority voted to fire Lomax, Ellis, and some of the others Ferguson opposed.¹⁸

¹⁷ *Dallas Morning News*, January 16, 1917, January 30, 1917, February 11, 1917; *Fort Worth Star Telegram*, February 2, 1917, February 10, 1917; Minnie Fisher Cunningham to Carrie Chapman Catt, February 12, 1917; Minnie Fisher Cunningham to Carrie Chapman Catt, April 9, 1917; Carrie Chapman Catt to Minnie Fisher Cunningham, April 14, 1917, all in folder 8, box 1, Cunningham Papers.

¹⁸ Gould, *Progressives and Prohibitionists*, 188 (quotation), 192-193, 208; Gould, “The University Becomes Politicized,” 256-276; *Austin Statesman*, June 13, 1917, July 19, 1917; *Dallas Morning News*, May 11, 1915.

As state leaders and socially prominent citizens started to take sides, the affiliations formed along Texas Democratic Party faction lines. On one side were the Conservative Democrats who supported or associated with Ferguson, including Joseph Weldon Bailey and Charles Culberson. In the other side were the Progressive Democrats, including Morris Sheppard and William Hogg—son of deceased Reform Democratic Governor James Hogg, and still publicly and politically active members of the old Reform Democratic faction, including former attorney general Martin Crane.¹⁹

During this battle between Conservative Governor Ferguson and his supporters and the Progressive Democrats, many Texas women's organizations demonstrated actively against Ferguson and what they viewed as his dictator-like maneuvers. George Brackenridge San Antonio millionaire, former UT regent, and brother of TESA Honorary President Eleanor Brackenridge, donated \$2,000 to fund a campaign against the governor. With Brackenridge's financial help, Cunningham and AESA members including Jane McCallum, Belinda Pearce, Mary Heard Ellis (Caswell Ellis's wife), and home economics professor and AESA officer Mary Gearing, organized the Woman's Campaign for Good Government (WCGG). The WCGG formed "to bring to the attention of the people of Texas the facts that have convinced the Committee that James E. Ferguson is unfit to conduct the affairs of our state." In addition to key women's club leaders, including Anna J. Hardwicke Pennybacker, Clara Driscoll, and Mary Peters Young Terrell, also participated in the activities to support the University of Texas. On May 28, 1917, when the board of regents met at the capitol with the governor, over 2,000 people

¹⁹ *HTO*, "Democratic Party;" Gould, *Progressives and Prohibitionists*, 185-221; McArthur, *Minnie Fisher Cunningham*, 54-55. See all correspondence regarding fight between Ferguson and university in "Campaign Material," Campaign Material box 2P30, Alexander Caswell Ellis Papers, CAH, University of Texas, Austin, Texas, [hereafter cited as Ellis Papers]; folders 3-10, box 63, McCallum Papers.

gathered at the university to rally against Ferguson, and many of the members of the WCGG were present.²⁰

In June 1917 the governor vetoed the university's budget. The Ex-Student Association, directed and funded by Will Hogg, investigated the governor and prepared a campaign for his impeachment. This series of events left a gray area in which some politicians fell. Those in the gray area had ties with one side or the other, such as Lieutenant Governor William P. Hobby with his Conservative ties through his father-in-law Samuel B. Cooper and TAOWS organizer John H. Kirby. Those in between were extremely cautious for fear of choosing the losing side. Eventually the fight with the university and related charges filed against Ferguson led to the governor's impeachment on September 25, 1917. The reappointment of the fired faculty soon followed. Following the impeachment, Hobby ascended to the governorship, and the entire affair caused a shift in power inside the state's Democratic Party and the larger political environment.²¹

Ferguson alienated a large number of the civically and politically minded Texas public. Even some Conservative Democrats joined the campaign for his gubernatorial demise. Former Conservative Governor Joseph Sayers, for example, helped direct the pro-university endeavors. Ferguson's impeachment and conviction divided the Democratic Party further. Those who supported the Conservative Democrat faction because of its supremacy in political power moved to support the Progressive faction. This was good for reformers in the state who had

²⁰ Jane Y. McCallum, *A Texas Suffragist: Diaries and Writings of Jane Y. McCallum*, Janet G. Humphrey, ed. (Austin, Texas: E.C. Temple, 1988), 64, 87-91; Mary Gearing to George Brackenridge, December 10, 1917, box 4P162, University of Texas Memorabilia, CAH; Minnie Fisher Cunningham to Eleanor Brackenridge, September 2, 1917, folder 37, box 4, Cunningham Papers; "Campaign Material," (quotation) Campaign Material box 2P30, Ellis Papers; McArthur, *Minnie Fisher Cunningham*, 54-55; Gould, *Progressives and Prohibitionists*, 185-221; *Austin Statesman*, July 4, 1917.

²¹ *Austin Statesman*, June 3, 1917; Gould, "The University Becomes Politicized," 256-276; *HTO*, "Samuel Bronson Cooper;" *Dallas Morning News*, May 16, 1915.

continuously been blocked by Conservative control. Suffragists were not sorry to see Ferguson removed from office, as he was a key supporter of the anti-suffrage fight in Texas,. During the events surrounding the UT fight and impeachment, Catt and Cunningham corresponded on a regular basis. The TESA president kept NAWSA well informed of the situation. Additionally, the entire affair had proven what many Reform and Progressive Democrats had believed for decades; the state's women could be powerful political allies if given the chance.²²

Dudley K. Woodward, Jr., secretary of the Texas Ex-Students' Association which served as the committee in charge of the campaign to impeach Ferguson later stated,

The impeachment of former Governor Ferguson could not have been brought about without the cooperation of the women of the State... Their work was under the direction of Mrs. Cunningham, president of the Texas Equal Suffrage Association, who came at once to Austin and established headquarters. The women were asked to reach the remote sections, to eradicate prejudice and leave understanding in its stead... They did all that was asked of them and more. The most confirmed skeptic on the question of women's participation in public life must have been converted had he witnessed the unselfish, tireless, efficient work of these hundreds of devoted women and the striking ability of their leader, whose genius for organization, knowledge of public affairs and public men of Texas and sound judgment on all questions of policy were of untold value.²³

The impeachment and related university business, though, dominated the remaining 1917 legislative sessions, and a woman suffrage bill was not the priority at the time. This soon changed. By the end of 1917, Ferguson officially announced that he would seek election for governor in 1918. While legally the Texas Senate ruled that he was "disqualified to hold any office of honor, trust or profit under the State of Texas," as part of their impeachment ruling, if Ferguson won the gubernatorial election it could mean a contested state executive office while

²² *Austin Statesman*, June 9, 1917, June 16, 1917; Gould, "The University Becomes Politicized," 256-276; Minnie Fisher Cunningham to Carrie Chapman Catt, July 31, 1917, folder 8, box 1; Minnie Fisher Cunningham to Carrie Chapman Catt, August 28, 1917, folder 8, box 1; Minnie Fisher Cunningham to Carrie Chapman Catt, September 26, 1917, folder 8, box 1; Carrie Chapman Catt to Minnie Fisher Cunningham, August 8, 1917, folder 8, box 1; Carrie Chapman Catt to Minnie Fisher Cunningham, September 4, 1917, folder 8, box 1, all in Cunningham Papers.

²³ *HWS VI*, 635.

the issue played itself out in the courts. Over the next year it became very clear that in no way did moderate or Progressive Democrats want to see Ferguson elected again. TESA leaders saw their chance in February 1918 and quickly acted. They approached Governor Hobby and Progressive Democrats with a deal that if Texas women got the primary vote, Hobby in turn would receive their support.²⁴

The fourth called session of the Thirty-fifth Texas Legislature convened on February 26, 1918. Because of state law, legislators could only discuss business related to that which the governor issued. Suffragists and their political allies worked to get Governor Hobby to add to the order of business the issue of woman suffrage, but even though he and his wife had been somewhat pro-suffrage in years past, Hobby did not specifically issue in the directions to the legislature a mandate to discuss woman suffrage. Instead, as Cunningham informed the press the day before the opening of the legislative session, “the Governor is to open up the entire subject of election law amendments by submitting the matter of requiring majority nominations.” Since Governor Hobby had opened up the subject of amending election laws, suffrage-friendly legislators were prepared to use this opportunity to submit a bill providing Texas women with the ability to vote in political party primaries the following July. Additionally, suffragists asked that the poll tax requirements be waved for those primaries.²⁵

²⁴ Minnie Fisher Cunningham to Carrie Chapman Catt, July 31, 1917, folder 8, box 1; Minnie Fisher Cunningham to Carrie Chapman Catt, August 28, 1917, folder 8, box 1; Minnie Fisher Cunningham to Carrie Chapman Catt, September 26, 1917, folder 8, box 1; “An Appeal to the Friends of the University by the Women of Texas,” folder 1, box 2P30, Ellis Papers; *Dallas Morning News*, September 26, 1917 (quotation); Martin M. Crane to Minnie Fisher Cunningham, August 10, 1918, folder 1, box 5; William Hobby to Minnie Fisher Cunningham, February 13, 1918, folder 4, box 5, all in Cunningham Papers; “Women Can Vote in Texas July, 1918,” folder 10, box 3, McCallum Papers; Gould, *Progressives and Prohibitionists*, 172, 234-246. For a good description of the primary suffrage deal between TESA leaders and Hobby supporters, see Judith N. McArthur, “Minnie Fisher Cunningham’s Back Door Lobby in Texas: Political Maneuvering in a One-Party State,” *One Woman, One Vote: Rediscovering the Woman Suffrage Movement*, ed. Marjorie Spruill Wheeler (Troutdale, Oregon: NewSage Press, 1995), 315-332.

²⁵ *Dallas Morning News*, February 26, 1918 (quotation); *Journal of the House of Representatives of the Fourth Called Session of the Thirty-Fifth Legislature, Convened in Obedience to the Proclamation of the Governor*

On March 12, 1918, a group of legislators led by Representative Charles Metcalfe introduced House Bill No. 105, which was “An Act to provide that women may vote in all primary elections and nominating conventions in Texas; prescribing qualifications for such voters; providing for registration in cities of 10, 000 and over, and declaring an emergency.” Metcalf had been among those that TESA leaders approached with the political deal to support Hobby in the 1918 Democratic Party primary against Ferguson if Texas women gained primary suffrage. Metcalfe wrote to Cunningham shortly before the legislative session convened, asking if she could find evidence that suffragists would provide their unyielding support for the Hobby gubernatorial campaign. Cunningham replied with a letter for Metcalfe, to show and to disseminate as he needed, that guaranteed TESA support. In short, it argued that Texas suffragists would “quite naturally concentrate on the man who enfranchised us.” While Hobby did not openly support the bill through the process, TESA leaders who made the deal with progressive legislators supporting Hobby did follow through with their end of the bargain. After the introduction of the bill, it was immediately referred to the Committee on Privileges, Suffrage and Elections.²⁶

Two days later, on March 14, a letter from President Woodrow Wilson addressed to NAWSA and Texas suffrage leader Elizabeth Herndon Potter was read into the Texas House of Representatives record. The letter stated that Texas United States Senator Morris Sheppard, prohibitionist and friend of woman suffrage, had delivered a letter from Potter to Wilson, and that the President of the United States hoped that the Texas Legislature would grant primary

February 26, 1918 and Adjourned Without Day March 27, 1918 (Austin: Von Boeckmann-Jones, 1918), [hereafter cited as *1918 Texas House Journal Fourth Session*] 273, 297, 326, 328-336, 353, 461, 471, 513, 515.

²⁶ *Dallas Morning News*, March 8, 1918; *1918 Texas House Journal Fourth Session*, 273 (first and second quotations), Minnie Fisher Cunningham to Charles B. Metcalfe, January 28, 1918, folder 28, box 5; Charles B. Metcalfe to Minnie Fisher Cunningham, February 10, 1918, folder 28, box 5; Minnie Fisher Cunningham to Charles B. Metcalfe, February 13, 1918 (third quotation), folder 28, box 5; Charles B. Metcalfe to Minnie Fisher Cunningham, February 18, 1918, folder 28, box 5, all in Cunningham Papers.

suffrage to the state's women. He added that the national Democratic Party was so "clearly committed" to woman suffrage that as the party's leader he strongly supported it as well. Texas suffragists and their allies in both the state and national legislatures combined efforts to place as much political pressure on the Texas House and Senate as possible.²⁷

The political lobbying worked, and the woman primary suffrage bill passed the Texas House with a vote of 84 to 34 and in the Senate 18 to 4. Suffragists were thrilled, and legislators applauded as the women left the capitol building. On March 25, the day before he signed the woman primary suffrage act into law, Hobby wrote to his father-in-law, Conservative Democrat Judge Samuel Brown Cooper. In the letter, Hobby supported the "vast majority" of Texans who wanted woman suffrage. He went on to state that he had been "in favor of woman suffrage for several years because I have considered it an inevitable development." He informed Cooper that he believed it would be "an unjustified and unwise act to veto" the legislation. The letter serves as evidence that Hobby was being pressured from every angle to block woman suffrage. Judging by his choice of words, Hobby knew it would be political suicide to stand against a large sector of the soon-to-be-voting population. While it appears Hobby was on board with woman suffrage for reasons of self-preservation, his stance differed dramatically from Ferguson's. The next day, on March 26, 1918, Hobby signed the bill into law, giving Texas women the primary vote.²⁸

To prepare for the upcoming primary, Texas suffragists employed three strategies. In connection with their deal with Democratic Party leaders, they organized "Hobby Clubs" to campaign for Governor Hobby's reelection, placed a woman candidate on the state-wide ballot for Superintendent of Public Instruction—Annie Webb Blanton, and organized voter registration

²⁷ 1918 *Texas House Journal Fourth Session*, 301-302 (quotation); *Dallas Morning News*, March 13, 1918.

²⁸ Hobby to Samuel Cooper, March 25, 1918 (quotation), Records of William P. Hobby, Texas Office of the Governor, Texas State Library and Archives; Brown, *Hood, Bonnet, and the Little Brown Jug*, 97; *HWS VI*, 635-638.

and education drives. Hobby Clubs were created across the state from the Conservative Democrat lair of Kingsville in Kleberg County and Marfa in Presidio County to Palestine in Anderson County. The organizing of groups on behalf of Hobby and the Democratic Party fulfilled TESA's promise to party leaders, but it also meant training the state's women in campaigning and the political process. The opportunity for Texas women to director portions of such a large candidate-based campaign alongside the leadership of the state's dominant political party was invaluable. TESA suffragists learned even more about the inner culture of the state's political elite and in turn started to be considered part of the club.²⁹

While the Hobby and Blanton campaigns were sparking up with brilliant success, TESA leaders had not gotten everything they asked for when lobbying for primary woman suffrage. Women were not required to pay the poll tax in 1918, but after that year they would be required to do so. Additionally, during the legislative process, Texas Senators added a literacy test by requiring that women living outside of cities of 10,000 or more inhabitants fill out their own registration forms in duplicate without any help. The *Austin American* newspaper reported that the last minute literacy test requirement was designed specifically to disfranchise rural African American and Mexican American women further because some progressives claimed were more likely to vote for Ferguson and other Conservative faction candidates.³⁰

²⁹ HWS VI, 635-638; *Kingsville Record*, June 7, 1918, July 16, 1918, box AN K 55 (South Texas Archives, James C. Jernigan Library, Texas A&M University-Kingsville, Kingsville Texas) [hereafter cited as South Texas Archives]; Minnie Fisher Cunningham to Kate Hunter, Jun. 7, 1918, Folder 76, Box 6, MFC, microfilm reel 3; Mrs. Charles Bailey to "Minnie Cunningham Fisher," Jun. 21, 1918, Folder, 110, Box 8, MFC, microfilm reel 3.

³⁰ 1918 *Texas House Journal Fourth Session*, 328-336; *Journal of the Senate of the Fourth Called Session of the Thirty-Fifth Legislature, Convened in Obedience to the Proclamation of the Governor February 26, 1918 and Adjourned Without Day March 27, 1918* (Austin: Von Boeckmann-Jones, 1918), [hereafter cited as 1918 *Texas Senate Journal Fourth Session*], 355; Minnie Fisher Cunningham to Carrie Chapman Catt, March 25, 1918, folder 9, box 1, Cunningham Papers; *Dallas Morning News*, March 15, 1918, March 21, 1918, March 22, 1918; *Austin American*, March 21, 1918.

The combination of the white primary and the literacy test had the potential to keep African American, immigrant women, and rural women in the state disfranchised. The literacy test required of women by the primary suffrage law was partially aimed at immigrants in the state whose first language was not English, and thus, may not have been able to read or write in English. The state's schools were segregated on a tripartite system for facilities, funding, and availability—the white were better funded and were much more numerous and available to students than those designated for black or Mexican students. Additionally, rural voters had higher illiteracy rates than urbanites because of their diminished access to public education. Since these voting constituents were more likely to support “Farmer Jim” and his cohorts than urban middle-class progressives, it is very probable that the literacy test requirement was also designed for their disfranchisement. When discussing Texas, most academics believe that the state never instituted a literacy test. On the contrary, from 1918 to 1920, as some legislators sought the support of Texas women voters, many also aimed to limit which women could vote. While the state's women were not provided with the vote specifically to disfranchise the state's minority communities, white legislators feared inadvertently increasing voting constituencies that were more likely to support any political opposition.³¹

During the TESA lobbying efforts for primary suffrage, Cunningham used anti-German nativist rhetoric when lobbying Metcalfe for support. She knew his son was in the military and involved in World War I. In addition to the argument that suffragists could help Hobby's

³¹ Gould, *Progressives and Prohibitionists*, 129, 156, 132-246. For a discussion of the segregation of the Texas public school system, see Carlos Blanton, *The Strange Career of Bilingual Education in Texas, 1836-1981* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2007). For examples of studies that either claim that Texas “never” had a literacy test for voting, see Abigail M. Thernstrom, *Whose Votes Count?: Affirmative Action and Minority Voting Rights* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 51; Chandler Davidson and Bernard Grofman, *Quiet Revolution in the South: The Impact of the Voting Rights Act, 1965-1990* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 239; William Earl Maxwell and others, *Texas Politics Today* (Boston: Wadsworth, 2001), 69.

campaign against Ferguson, Cunningham also added that U. S. troops serving abroad needed “loyal American” voters and not “a solid pro-German vote.”³²

Furthermore, after the primary suffrage law passed, she wrote to Catt explaining that TESA leaders were not completely happy about the literacy requirement. Cunningham explained, however, that she did not see the necessity in fighting the addition since it was “aimed at the ignorant foreign vote on the border” and the called session was running out of time. Cunningham’s letter to Catt was an ethnocentric reference to the large agrarian Mexican immigrant population in South Texas—one of the Conservative Democrats’ strongholds maintained by the Wells political machine. Jim Wells’s political machine often stood accused of “herding Mexicans” and taking them to polling places with strict instructions for whom to vote. This boss rule was similar to that seen in urban areas. It established a link between immigrant populations and assured their reliance on what Wells referred to as “friendship” and government assistance under his control. Networked with large agricultural empires, such as the King Ranch in South Texas, and monetary support provided by brewery interests, the Wells machine often determined that statewide elections would go to fellow Conservative Democrats based on their control over voters who had recently immigrated from Mexico.³³

This Mexican immigrant vote was essential to the machine’s political power and that of the boss. The financial and political status of anti-suffragist leader Pauline Wells also hinged on her husband’s political machine and thus its ability to secure immigrant votes. Texas suffragists

³² Minnie Fisher Cunningham to Charles B. Metcalfe, January 28, 1918 (quotations), folder 28, box 5, Cunningham Papers.

³³ Minnie Fisher Cunningham to Carrie Chapman Catt, March 25, 1918 (first quotation), folder 9, box 1, Cunningham Papers; Brown, *Hood, Bonnet, and Little Brown Jug*, 5, 79, 90; Green, *Southern Strategies*, 47, 50; Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans*, 130 (second and third quotations), 143. At this time in Texas, men who had begun the naturalization process towards citizenship could vote. The term “Mexican immigrant” is used to distinguish between those individuals viewed by progressives as recently immigrated from Mexico and believed to have supported the Conservative Democrat machine. For a detailed account of the boss machinery in South Texas, see Anders, *Boss Rule in South Texas*.

often used this relationship between the political machine and Mexican immigrant labor to campaign against what they viewed as un-democratic behavior. Suffragists' campaigning against political machines also took on nativist sentiments—defining the boundaries of the “national community” and those who should have access to political enfranchisement in the U. S. as native-born.³⁴

The nativist backlash against Mexican Americans during the 1910s and early 1920s was largely a reaction to increased immigration from Mexico. Historian David Montejano argued that as the Texas economy evolved into an increasingly complex mixture of industry and agriculture, the place of Mexican Americans in society changed as well. Some white Texans viewed Mexican American laborers as subordinate to the Anglo-Saxon world. Furthermore, they viewed this subordination as potentially dangerous when paired with the political machines (connected with Wells and other Conservative Democrats) in Texas. As increasing numbers of immigrants coming from Mexico fled the unstable conditions of a revolutionary government, white Texans often feared losing control of state politics. Montejano stated that white Texans often did not see the difference between the Mexican American immigrants who worked for the *patrons* of the political machines and those Texans who were of Mexican descent. Therefore, anti-machine politicians often sought the disfranchisement of all (or as many as possible) Mexican Americans.³⁵

In an effort to discourage political bosses from “herding” Mexican American voters to the polls, Texas legislators had passed a poll tax requirement in 1902. While the tax did not end the *patrons'* manipulation of thousands of Mexican American voters, it did make it much more

³⁴ Brown, *Hood, Bonnet, and Little Brown Jug*, 97, 209, 211-221; Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans*, 143, 149; Brannon-Wranosky, “Defining the United States-Mexico Border,” 67-84 (quotation).

³⁵ James E. Crisp, *Sleuthing the Alamo: Davy Crockett's Last Stand and Other Mysteries of the Texas Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 152-158; Montejano, 143.

expensive to do so. The following year the first of the Terrell Election Laws aimed at regulating the state primary system and poll tax payment went into effect. Historian Evan Anders argued that the combination of the poll tax and Terrell laws were designed “to eliminate corruption” and were partly a reflection of a “racist distrust of black and Mexican American participation in politics.” Apparently, anti-machine politicians believed these two measures were not effective enough and sought further disfranchisement and added the only literacy test in Texas history to the woman primary suffrage law.³⁶

As TESA leaders began to work registering Texas women to vote in the primary, conversations regarding race and ethnicity became increasingly complicated. Anti-suffragists continued to argue that enfranchising the state’s women would introduce a stronger black vote but were careful to mention nothing about any other minority communities. Texas affiliated suffragists often tried to avoid debating the race or ethnicity issues and reiterated that the vote would not erase the state’s poll tax or the Democratic Party’s white primary—which was tantamount to the election determining Texas officeholders. Texas women became eligible in June 1918 to register for the upcoming primary, and suffragists had only sixteen days to register the state’s women. During this two-week period, over 386, 000 Texas women registered to vote. This huge feat required the mobilization of women from all over the state. The Arkansas legislature had passed an act the previous year using an early version of Texas Senator Lattimore’s legislation as the template. In the following primary election, in May 1918, more than 40,000 Arkansas women voted. While there is no count for the number of women who

³⁶ Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans*, 130 (first quotation); Anders, *Boss Rule in South Texas*, 66, 87, 91(second and third quotations), 92-93, 107, 115, 158, 164, 168, 183.

voted in the Texas primary in July 1918, those that voted in Arkansas amounted to just less than 10 percent of those who registered in Texas in sixteen days.³⁷

Despite the segregation of TESA-affiliated suffrage organizations, the appeal to vote in the state's primaries crossed both ethnic and racial lines. It would have been difficult to miss the fact that the ability for Texas women to vote in primaries and nominating conventions potentially held wide implications for the state's racially and ethnically underrepresented women. Regardless of white primary regulations, the attached literacy requirements, or future poll taxes, evidence shows that Texas African American and Mexican American women showed a strong interest in registering and exercising their political voices. Women could now vote, and they had been granted the right so quickly that many local officials were still unsure of what that meant as hundreds of thousands of women descended upon county voter registrars in preparation for the upcoming election.

The state's suffrage organizations distributed voter training pamphlets, including a sample version of the long ballot required for the upcoming primary, published ads in newspapers, and held voter education schools. Yet, the details of getting individual women voters registered and to the polls in preparation for election day became a local matter. It is here that the varying degrees of cultural norms connected to racial and ethnic relations across the state became magnified. As illustrated in Table 5. 1. and shown in Figure 5. 1., eastern and northeastern Texas housed the majority of concentrated African American urban communities. Since it is long understood by woman suffrage historians that urban areas were where the majority of suffrage activity was located, it is not a surprise that much of the activity of African

³⁷ *HWS VI*, 24; Taylor, "The Woman Suffrage Movement in Arkansas," 17–52; Jane Y. McCallum, "Activities of Women in Texas Politics," in *Texas Democracy*, ed. Frank Carter Adams (Austin: Democratic Historical Association, 1937), 638. The deadline to register for the July 27, 1918, primary was 15 days before the election.

American women connected to registering for women's first eligible election in Texas occurred in close proximity to the urban areas in East and Northeast Texas.³⁸

Table 5.1. Largest Urban African American Populations in Texas, 1920

City	Number	Percent to total City Population
Beaumont	13,210	32.68
Houston	33,960	24.56
Galveston	9,888	22.34
Waco	7,726	20.07
Austin	6,921	19.84
Dallas	24,023	15.11
Fort Worth	15,896	14.93
San Antonio	14,341	8.89

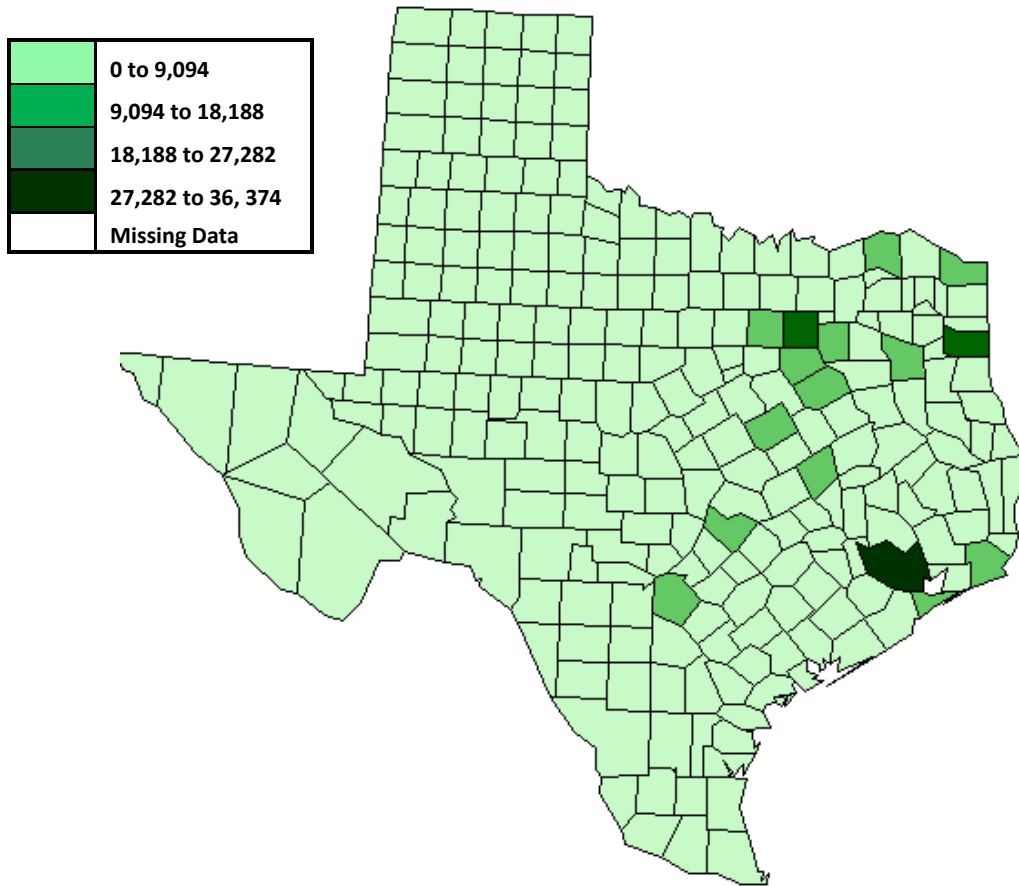
Source: United States Census numbers from Bureau of the Census, Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920, Historical Census Browser, University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center, <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/index.html> (accessed October 28, 2006).

In Austin and Galveston, African American women held meetings in connection with voter education and mobilization. In Orange, Texas, on the Texas-Louisiana border, more than 100 black women petitioned Orange County Sheriff and Tax Collector R. M. Johnson for the right to register. He turned them away with the explanation that the “construction of the new woman suffrage law did not permit them to register.” While he was probably referring to the white Democratic Party primary regulations created by the Terrell laws over a decade before, the new primary law said nothing about racial restrictions for voter registration. Actually, as the *Fort Worth Star Telegram* reported, “the registration receipt as adopted by the legislature [left] a blank for the applicants color.”³⁹

³⁸ Keyssar, *The Right to Vote*, 194; Turner, *Women, Culture and Community*, 278-280.

³⁹ Winegarten, *Black Texas Women*, 210; Terborg-Penn, *African American Women*, 146-148; *Austin American-Statesman*, June 29, 1918; *Dallas Morning News*, July 11, 1918; *Houston Post*, July 12, 1918; *Dallas Morning News*, July 9, 1918 (first quotation); *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, July 10, 1918 (second and third quotation).

Figure 5.1. Texas African American Population in 1920 by County



Source: United States Census numbers from Bureau of the Census, Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920, Historical Census Browser, University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center, <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/index.html> (accessed October 28, 2006).

Additionally, even though the Tarrant County, in which Fort Worth is the county seat, voter receipts were labeled with “white or black,” the county’s tax collector informed six African

United States Census numbers used in Table 5. 1., Figure 5. 1., and Figure 5. 2. and the map structure in Figure 5. 1., all from Bureau of the Census, Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920, Historical Census Browser, University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center, <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/index.html> (accessed October 28, 2006). The author of this study accepts the problems and limitations of using census data when examining population distribution. In all cases, there are pages that are difficult to read, and thus census numbers published by the government are not 100 percent accurate. Furthermore, when using census data to discuss under-represented groups, such as communities with highly concentrated African American or Mexican American populations, census-takers often skipped areas where individuals resided. Therefore, this statistical study does not claim perfect accuracy, but instead uses numbers to examine known and registered residences of urban African Americans and immigrants from Mexico living in Texas. For further discussion of issues related to census accuracy, see Margo J. Anderson, *The American Census: A Social History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988).

American women they could not register because of the white primary. In Beaumont, black women were represented by legal counsel in unsuccessful court proceedings in the attempt to gain access to voter registration. On the other hand, in Houston the newly-formed local NAACP threatened to sue and successfully compelled local authorities to allow the city's African American women to register. At the Harris County tax collector's office, in which Houston sits, black women had to use separate booths from whites, but despite the public segregation, over 1,000 successfully registered. In Austin and Waxahachie African American women were also successful in registering, but in Austin the women were denied the vote in the primary.⁴⁰

Following the unsuccessful attempt by black women in Orange County to register, white women gathering for the same reason were surprised to hear the news. Interestingly, their shock was not aimed at the fact that the women had been turned away but rather at their insistence to register. The Anglo women wanted to know why African American women would attempt to register and want to vote in primary elections when apparently the only nominating convention in the county was that of the Democratic Party, in which the participation was racially restricted. The group ascertained that the act must have been evidence that the Republican Party was preparing to hold a primary soon in the area as well. While their assumption may not have been entirely wrong (there is no evidence to suggest either way), it is interesting that the white women from the area could not see—in the face of their own excitement and interest in voting—the possibility that local black women would feel the same way. This example shows just how strong racially segregated community boundaries potentially could be.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Winegarten, *Black Texas Women*, 210; Terborg-Penn, *African American Women*, 146-148; *Austin American-Statesman*, June 29, 1918; *Dallas Morning News*, July 11, 1918; *Houston Post*, July 12, 1918; *Dallas Morning News*, July 9, 1918; *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, July 10, 1918.

⁴¹ *Dallas Morning News*, July 9, 1918.

White women seemed to be somewhat less negrophobic when it came to the enfranchisement of African Americans in areas where the majority underrepresented group was not black but of Hispanic descent instead. El Paso and Kingsville, as seen in Figure 5. 2, were in areas that held the state's largest concentration of Mexican immigrants. In these cities, between 1918 and 1920, cross-racial civic cooperation between Anglo and black women's organizations led to women of both races working together in woman suffrage and voter-registration activities.⁴²

In El Paso, in preparation for the upcoming 1918 July primary, the county's Democratic executive chairman asked Belle Critchett, the president of TESA's El Paso local affiliate, to suggest the names of a few women to serve as clerks in the county election. Since the local suffrage league had communication with the African American women's club in the city on other issues, Critchett asked black women's club president Maud Sampson for a few names of African American women with interest in serving as election clerks. According to Critchett, the county chairman "indignantly" turned down the black women's names. In a letter to TESA headquarters secretary, Edith Hinkle League, Critchett recounted how she had to rescind her request of Sampson, ending with disappointment for the African American woman. Critchett seemed to like Sampson, with whom she had worked multiple times in local club cooperation, and she was genuinely sorry at the outcome of the entire situation.⁴³

The incident came to the attention to TESA and NAWSA executives because Sampson had written to national suffrage executive Maude Wood Park to enroll her club as an auxiliary branch to NAWSA. Following her request, a series of letters flew back and forth between white NAWSA and TESA leaders, including national president Carrie Chapman Catt and Texas

⁴² Belle C. Critchett to Edith Hinkle League, July 1, 1918, folder 4, box 3, McCallum Papers.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, (quotation).

president Minnie Fisher Cunningham. NAWSA amended its constitution the year before, in 1917, to keep African American clubs from directly associating with the National Association for fear that it would upset southern campaigning and members. The only way clubs could affiliate with NAWSA by this point was directly through their state's association. Catt noted that it was up to the individual states to determine whether or not African American women's clubs could join and the TESA leaders decided against it. Catt told League to inform Sampson that TESA "will be able to get the vote for women more easily if they do not embarrass you by asking for membership." When Cunningham responded to Sampson, she informed the El Paso leader that since the local group's application for membership was the first of its kind, it required delegate action and the next convention would not be until the following spring. The TESA president went on to say that by then she hoped the federal amendment would be ratified and thus insinuated that TESA would not have to act.⁴⁴

A similar instance occurred two years later in the South Texas town of Kingsville involving Christia Adair, an African American woman who became famous during the second half of the twentieth century due to her role in forming cross-racial alliances through work with the NAACP in Houston. Decades later Adair traced her roles in politics and activism back to their beginnings in Kingsville, before the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment. As newlyweds, she and her husband—a brakeman for the St. Louis, Brownsville and Mexico

⁴⁴ Mrs. E. Sampson to Mrs. Park, June 1918, folder 4, box 3; Belle C. Critchett to Edith Hinkle League, July 1, 1918, folder 4, box 3; Carrie Chapman Catt to Edith Hinkle League, July 17, 1918 (quotation), folder 4, box 3, all in McCallum Papers; McArthur, *Creating the New Woman*, 112, 115. Sampson's story has become somewhat well-known in the past two decades among women's historians. For examples of these, see McArthur, *Creating the New Woman*, 112, 115; Winegarten, *Black Texas Women*, 209. For other examples of discussion regarding Sampson's request, see Bruce Glasrud, "Time of Transition: Black Women in Early Twentieth-Century Texas, 1900-1930," in *Black Women in Texas History*, ed. Bruce A. Glasrud and Merline Petrie (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2008), 113.

Railway Company—moved to Kingsville in May 1918. This placed Adair in Kleberg County about the same time the state legislature passed the woman’s primary suffrage law.⁴⁵

Adair had a background in teaching and Sunday school education, and soon formed a small inter-denominational Sunday school group. One day she noticed one of her students leaving a local gambling operation located in Kingsville’s black ward. Adair contacted the local president of the white Mother’s Club because the Adairs knew her husband (he was the local insurance dealer). She told the woman about the gambling facility and informed her that there were boys and young men from all areas of the community participating in illegal activities there. The woman agreed with Adair that the operation needed to be shut down and suggested that Adair and her friends form an African American Mother’s Club to organize community support. The two groups combined efforts and successfully pressured the local district attorney to shut down the gambling facility.⁴⁶

These two groups through inter-racial cooperation also began to communicate on other issues, the efforts to rally support for the ratification of the federal amendment for woman suffrage in the spring of 1919. Adair and a large group of African American women went to the polling place the following election year during the summer of 1920, and those running the primary would not allow the group to vote. In a 1977 interview, Adair discussed the series of events. She said, “They gave us all different kinds of excuses why, but we just stayed. We stayed, we asked. We wanted to know why we couldn’t vote. The answers to the questions were so invalid, we were not satisfied. So finally one woman, a Mrs. Simmons said, ‘Are you saying

⁴⁵ *HTO*, “Christia V. Daniels Adair;” Christia Adair, “Interview with Christia Adair, April 25, 1977,” interview by Dorothy R. Robinson, *The Black Women Oral History Project from the Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America, Radcliffe College*, vol. 1, ed. Ruth Edmonds Hill (Westport, Connecticut: Meckler Publishing, 1991), 39-99, 58 [hereafter cited as Adair interview].

⁴⁶ Adair interview, 58-60.

we can't vote because we're Negroes?' And he said, 'Yes, Negroes don't vote in primary in Texas.' So that just hurt our hearts real bad and we went on. There was nothing we could do about that but just take it as it was.'"⁴⁷

In both cases, the two women, Sampson from El Paso and Adair from Kingsville, were educated middle-class African American women. Both were homeowners and teachers and resided in townships/urban areas within the Texas region where African Americans were not the larger of the minority communities. They were involved in the leadership of African American women's organizations, of which it can be safely assumed many of the members were socially and economically similar to Adair and Sampson. Both the El Paso and Kingsville organizations had participated in prior cross-racial civic activity in which local white women had encouraged the black women to participate in voter registration or election activities.⁴⁸

In the case of El Paso, the sources of racial anxiety came from both the white male Democratic Party chairman and white woman suffrage leaders at the state and national levels. In Kingsville, the "he" that turned Adair and cohorts away from the polls was most likely Kleberg County voter registrar/sheriff/tax collector/local Democratic Party leader James S. Scarborough. These findings fit with others from across the South that discuss when women first received the

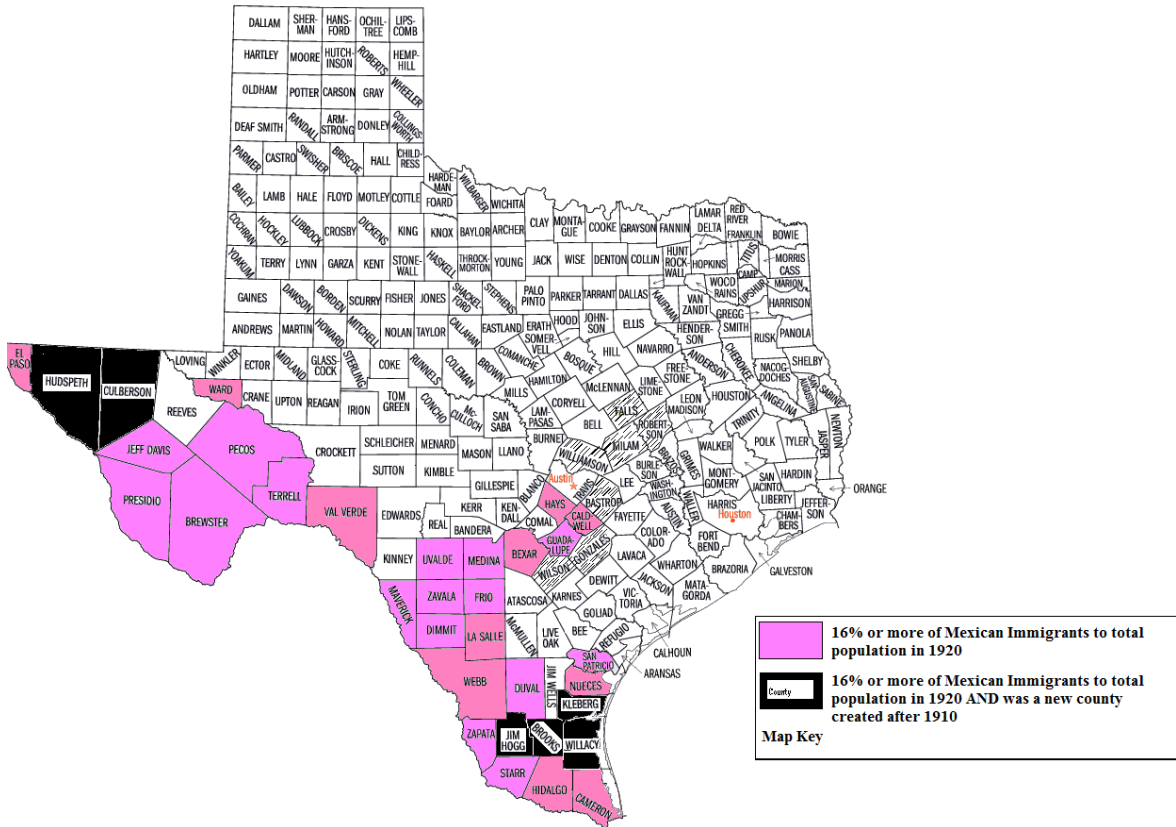
⁴⁷ Ibid., (quotation).

⁴⁸ Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910, El Paso County, Texas, Schedule 1, Population, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D. C.; Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920, El Paso County, Texas, Schedule 1, Population, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D. C.; El Paso City Directories for 1906, 1914, 1917, 1918, 1919, 1922, 1923, 1926-1933 (Texas/Dallas History & Archives Division, Dallas Public Library, Dallas, Texas); Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, El Paso County, Texas, Schedule 1, Population, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D. C.; Fourteenth, Census of the United States, 1920, Kleberg County, Texas, Schedule 1, Population, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D. C.; *Kingsville, Texas* [map]. 1915. Scale not given. "Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1867-1970 – Texas". ProQuest Information and Learning's Digital Sanborn Maps, 1867-1970. < <http://libproxy.library.unt.edu:4444/tx/8603/dateid-000001.htm?CCSI=1207n> > (accessed February 2, 2009); *Kingsville, Texas* [map]. 1922. Scale not given. "Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1867-1970 – Texas". ProQuest Information and Learning's Digital Sanborn Maps, 1867-1970. < <http://libproxy.library.unt.edu:4444/tx/8603/dateid-000001.htm?CCSI=1207n> > (accessed February 2, 2009); Kathryn Evan, *Come Aboard: Kingsville's 100th Birthday* (Corpus Christi, Texas: Printers Unlimited, Inc. Kleberg County Historical Commission, 2004), 149.

right to vote, before connected institutional racism was able to be systematically planned and implemented, black and white women sometimes worked together to achieve increased diversity in the voter base. When localized and removed from the responsibility of suffrage endeavors at larger regional or national levels, women were more likely to work together across racial lines. Historian Lorraine Schuyler found similar instances, for example in Georgia, while studying voting patterns in the South in the decade following the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ *Kingsville Record*, July 16, 1918, June 7, 1918, box AN K 55, South Texas Archives; Lorraine Gates Schuyler, *The Weight of Their Votes Southern Women and Political Leverage in the 1920s* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 25. All Kleberg County Records predating 1997 had been purposefully destroyed on the order of the County Clerk prior to 2008. The newspapers used are among the only surviving copies of the *Kingsville Record*, the newspaper's office burned in 1925. Texas Archives staff at Texas A&M University Kingsville, and also featured on their webpage under "House Papers" listing http://archives.tamuk.edu/new/template/STA_Collections.html (accessed March 2, 2009). Interview with employees of Kleberg County Clerk's Office by author, March 4, 2008, Kleberg County Clerk's Office, Kleberg County Courthouse, Kingsville, Texas.

Figure 5.2. Texas Mexican Immigrant Population in 1920 by County



Source: United States Census numbers from Bureau of the Census, Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920, Historical Census Browser, University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center, <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/index.html> (accessed October 28, 2006). Quantitative analysis, highlighting, and map structure changes created by author.

Examining the interest in woman suffrage exhibited by Mexican American communities in Texas provides additional evidence that suffragists were most likely to come from educated urban middle-class communities. In 1911, a group of Mexican American women living on the Texas-Mexico border, including civil rights activist Jovita Idar, founded *La Liga Femenil Mexicanista* (a civic organization for middle-class women educators and journalists of Hispanic descent). Mexican American studies scholar, Clara Lomas argues that, “the league’s agenda was to institute regular study sessions for women; to found some of the first bilingual schools for Tejano children; and to establish benefit fundraisers to finance its cultural project and assist newly-arrived immigrants and their families.” *La Liga Femenil* consisted of members in Laredo,

Texas, and Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas, Mexico, and was most likely part of a larger association founded by Idar's family called *La Gran Liga Mexicanista*—an association of mutual aid societies.⁵⁰

La Gran Liga formed as part of a larger movement during the decade. In response to two brutal lynchings of Mexican Americans in Texas, one of which was a thirteen-year-old boy, activists including the Idar family organized *El Primer Congreso Mexicanista* to aid in the mutual protection and whose self-proclaimed purpose was “union, equality, and justice.” During the organization's short life, there is no record of *La Liga Femenil* after 1911—the year following the start of the Mexican Revolution, founding members published pro-education and pro-feminist articles in *La Crónica*, Idar's father's newspaper. Under the penname “Astrea,” Idar identified herself as a feminist and suffragist.⁵¹

Working women recognizing your rights, proudly raise your chins and face the fight. The time of your degradation has passed. Woman is no longer the slave sold for a few coins, no longer man's servant, but the equal of man, his companion. Man's divine role is as your natural protector and not your lord and master. Much has been said and written against the feminist movement but despite the opposition, women in California can vote on a jury and hold public offices. Much mistaken, these discontented spirits—superficial and unworthy—these critics of that woman are wrong [because they cannot see] that the setting

⁵⁰ Clara Lomas, “Transborder Discourse: The Articulation of Gender in the Borderlands in the Early Twentieth Century” *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 24 (No. 2&3, 2003), 65 (quotation); Leonor Villegas de Magnón, *The Rebel*, ed. Clara Lomas (Houston, Texas: Arte Publico Press, 1994), 264. The map structure used in Figure 5.2 originally contained Texas county positions as of 2006. Kenedy County was removed because it was created in 1921. Map structure provided by U. S. Census Bureau State and County Quick Facts Texas County Selection Map, http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/maps/texas_map.html (accessed December 10, 2006). The counties not shaded either did not receive an increase reaching 16 percent of the total county population, or numbers were not available. The categorical limitation of 16 percent was selected because it was that of Bexar County, which was an interior county with a historically high immigrant population and the second largest in percentage and numbers in Texas in 1920. The nine counties formed during or after this period were Brooks, Culberson, Jim Wells, and Willacy Counties in 1911; Jim Hogg, Kleberg, and Real Counties in 1913; Hudspeth County in 1917; Kenedy County, the last in the state, in 1921. *Texas Almanac*, “Population History of Counties from 1850–2000,” <http://www.texasalmanac.com/population/population-counties-history.pdf>; Internet; (accessed January 10, 2009).

⁵¹ Cynthia E. Orozco, *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed: The Rise of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009), 69-71 (quotation). Translated into English, *La Liga Femenil Mexicanista* means “The League of Mexican Women,” *La Gran Liga Mexicanista* “The Grand Mexican League,” *El Primer Congreso Mexicanista* “The First Mexican Congress.”

aside of social conventions is dedicated to working for something useful or beneficial.⁵²

Soon after its founding, some members of *La Liga Femenil*, including Idar, became involved in *La Blanca Cruz*, an organization similar to the Red Cross that served individuals injured or affected by the violent revolution. It was not uncommon for women to put aside their own civic and political agendas during time of war. Strong community ties that transcended the two countries' borders led to a vast number of individuals from the U. S. becoming involved in the Mexican Revolution. The fighting associated with the Mexican Revolution was right in the proverbial backyards of Idar and her cohorts. While many of the volunteers associated with *La Blanca Cruz* served as nurses, one of the organization's founders, Leonor Villegas de Magnón, wrote in her memoir that some of the members also participated in the revolution as spies disguised as military officers and in armed battles. Thus, these women literally used the pen and sword to express their political voices.⁵³

Toward the end of the Revolution and after the death of their father, Jovita and her brother Eduardo started a pro-Revolutionary newspaper in Laredo in 1916. The *Evolución* included regular articles on woman suffrage. Similar to many of the era's papers, most of its articles did not identify the author specifically, but in one 1918 pro-suffrage report Eduardo identified himself as the author and reported on national woman suffrage and political activities, including the recent Nevada Senate race run by Anne Martin. It is highly likely, as one of its

⁵² *La Crónica*, December 7, 1911. The above paragraph was translated from the Spanish version printed in *La Crónica* by the author of this study. Original read, “*La mujer obrera reconociendo sus derechos, alza la frente orgullosa y se afronta a la lucha; la época de su degradación ha pasado, ya no es la esclava vendida por unas cuantas monedas, ya no es la sierva, sino la igual del hombre, su compañera, sien este su protector natural y no su amo y señor. Mucho se ha tratado y escrito contra el movimiento feminista, pero a pesar de los opositoristas ya en California las mujeres pueden dar su voto como jurado y pueden desempeñar oficinas públicas. Yerran y mucho, esos espíritus descontentadizos, superficiales e indignos de una buena obra, críticos de aquella mujer, que haciendo a un lado los convencionalismos sociales se dedica a trabajar por algo provechoso o benéfico.*”

⁵³ Lomas, “Transborder Discourse,” 66-68; Villegas de Magnón, *The Rebel*, passim.

owners, editors, and writers, Jovita also authored some of the woman suffrage news coverage. Over the next two years, at least four newspapers—two in Laredo and two in San Antonio—ran articles regularly discussing woman suffrage. In one instance, in July during the sixteen-day registration period for women to vote in the 1918 primary elections, the San Antonio newspaper *La Prensa* translated and published a Spanish version of a pamphlet originally written in English by Texas NWP leader Rena Maverick Green.⁵⁴

In 1920, newlyweds Jovita Idar-Juárez and her husband, Bartolo Juárez, moved to San Antonio. There she was among the organizers of *El Club Demócrata* (a political group for Spanish-speaking San Antonians inside the Texas Democratic Party). This further connected Idar-Juárez's activities with that of known Texas suffragists. If women wanted their votes to count and to participate in politics they often, like male Texan voters, invested in the Democratic Party. Similarly, two days before the primary election in 1918, the Colored Women's Progressive Club of El Paso (quite possibly the organization of which Sampson was president) endorsed the county's Democratic Party candidates. Also, Adair moved her support from the Republican to Democratic Party after Republican president-elect Warren G. Harding showed racist tendencies toward some of Kingsville's African American children in a post-campaign stop in the town in 1920. After the Adairs moved to Houston in 1925, Christia became involved in the city's NAACP and eventually, along with Frankie Randolph, a wealthy white woman and

⁵⁴ The Mexican Revolution lasted until 1920, but the government established under the Constitution of 1917 marked the beginning of the post-Revolutionary national structure, see Leslie Bethell, ed. *Mexico Since Independence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991). Lomas, "Transborder Discourse," 51-74; *Evolución*, August 20, 1918; *La Prensa*, July 8, 1918; For discussion of woman suffrage in Texas Spanish newspapers, see 1918-1919 issues of *La Prensa*, *Evolución*, *Revista Mexicana*, *El Imparcial de Texan*.

leader among Houston liberals, organized the Harris County Democrats—an interracial alternative to the local segregated Democratic Party organization.⁵⁵

Historians have assumed that women did not identify their own political voices until granted suffrage, and that their votes were consistently a reflection of the men in their lives. While it was more likely for women to become active in the movement if their families were supportive, woman suffragists often held definite political identities and priorities and came to support the votes-for-women movement in search of an outlet for their own voices. Furthermore, women from ethnically and racially underrepresented communities claimed their political presence in spite of overt racism, ethnocentrism, and discrimination demonstrated by their party of choice—whether that was the Democratic or the Republican Party. In connection with the woman suffrage movement, this suggests that similar patterns existed prior to women gaining the vote. Like the Texas Democratic Party dominance over state politics, NAWSA and TESA controlled the majority of the state’s suffrage activity. Also like the Texas Democratic Party, TESA was a racially segregated organization. Yet, just as some Mexican American and African American women carved out a space for themselves inside the Democratic Party, many did this as part of the woman suffrage movement in the midst of the discriminatory, volatile, and dangerously violent Jim Crow South.⁵⁶

Texas women had been a growing political force for some time, and following the passage of the woman primary suffrage law they were a force with votes. In 1918, 386,000 Texas women registered to vote. Hobby won the primary that year with 461, 479 votes

⁵⁵ Adair interview, 60-61; *New York Times*, November 18, 1920; Monroe Nathan Work, ed. *The Negro Year Book: An Annual Encyclopedia of the Negro* (Tuskegee Institute, Alabama: Negro Year Book Publishing Company, 1918), 58.

⁵⁶ For discussion of gender and civil rights activism in the South during this era, see Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow*; Orozco, *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed*; and Mario T. García, “The Chicana in American History: The Mexican Woman of El Paso, 1880-1920—A Case Study,” *Pacific Historical Review* vol. 49, no. 2 (May 1980), 315-337.

compared to Ferguson's 217, 012. Hobby won by more than a 244, 467 vote majority. More than 131, 533 women had registered than the total by which Hobby won. Ferguson charged that the women's votes had been "illegal" because the primary suffrage law had not been voted on in a voter referendum but acceded that women voted "for Hobby 10 to 1."⁵⁷

With the strong support of woman suffragists in the state, William Hobby won the gubernatorial and Annie Blanton the state superintendent of education primaries in July 1918, and both won the general elections in September 1918. The influence of female voting and political involvement and the increased pressure from Democratic county conventions led the Texas Democratic Party to support a woman suffrage plank at their convention in September 1918. At the same convention, the Texas Democratic Party also supported a citizenship clause for voting requirements. This citizenship clause was undoubtedly designed as a blow to German and the Mexican labor voters that were inclined historically to support Conservative Democrats, including Ferguson during the recent election.⁵⁸

At the urging of Carrie Chapman Catt, TESA suffrage leaders advocated that the two proposed amendments be introduced to the state assembly as one. As the president of TESA, Cunningham had signed the NAWSA compact promising not to seek a state referendum without the national association's permission, but the submission of a woman suffrage amendment to the legislature and subsequently through a voter referendum was out of Texas suffragist's hands. A group of legislators who supported woman suffrage with the hope of aiding prohibition became concerned when two separate courts cases questioned the constitutionality of the Texas primary suffrage act. Therefore, these prohibitionist legislators became determined to send a woman

⁵⁷ Gould, *Progressives and Prohibitionists*, 245 (first and second quotation).

⁵⁸ *Dallas Morning News*, September 4, 1918. For a biography of Annie Webb Blanton, see Debbie Mauldin Cottrell, *Pioneer Woman Educator: The Progressive Spirit of Annie Webb Blanton* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1993).

suffrage bill to the voters in an effort to solidify their recently-increased support base. Against TESA and NAWSA leaders demands, the woman suffrage amendment passed through the Texas House and Senate and a voter referendum was scheduled for May 24, 1919. Cunningham returned from Washington, where she had been working directly for NAWSA for the federal amendment, to run the Texas referendum campaign. Additionally, even though NAWSA was strongly opposed to the Texas referendum, it funded the campaign for Texas work. Catt also expressly advised TESA leaders to have the state legislators attach the woman suffrage bill to the bill requiring citizenship as a voting requirement. Strategically, her directive was based on evidence that the citizenship requirement had been a largely popular idea in Texas in recent years. Additionally, over the past two decades NAWSA had supported similar campaigns based on using white women's suffrage to disfranchise southern African Americans. In this case, Catt seemed to be attempting to "Mexicanize" and "Germanize" NAWSA's "Southern Strategy."⁵⁹

In Texas, male immigrants who had begun the process of applying for citizenship could vote in all elections, while the state's women could only vote in primaries and thus not in this referendum. The 1920 U. S. census recorded 48,186 "Foreign Born White Males 21 Years of Age and Over" that were either "Naturalized" or "With First Papers" in Texas. At least, 48,186 possible male voters had personal ties to immigrant voting populations, 8,865 of which were "With First Papers." It would have been self-detrimental for those individuals to vote for the

⁵⁹ *Dallas Morning News* (September 4, 1918); "Suffrage Amendment Requires Citizenship," *Dallas Morning News*, January 18, 1919; Carrie Chapman Catt to Minnie Fisher Cunningham, December 26, 1918, folder 1, box 9; Carrie Chapman Catt to Minnie Fisher Cunningham, January 23, 1919, folder 1, box 9, both in McCallum Papers; Gould, *Progressives and Prohibitionists*, 185-221, 255, 266. Ferguson was not the only one who argued that the woman's primary suffrage law was illegal. Two law suits were filed to contest this fact. Neither case was successful in overturning women's primary suffrage law. *Hamilton v. Davis*, January 28, 1920, Texas Civil Court of Appeals, Austin; *Koy v. Schneider*, October 27, 1920, Texas Civil Court of Appeals, Galveston.

woman suffrage bill or not to vote. Therefore, it can be assumed that Catt made a strategic mistake in advising Texas suffragists to seek a joint amendment.⁶⁰

Another possibility was that Catt, NAWSA, and TESA suffragists expected the state woman suffrage amendment to fail and sought publicly to connect it with an issue that could be explained for its demise. The federal amendment was moving through Congress at the time the Texas referendum was scheduled. Failure of the Texas amendment potentially endangered the federal amendment in two ways. First, it threatened Texas legislators' support—both in Congress and the Texas legislature for the federal amendment if the state's male voters turned down the state amendment. States' ratification of the federal amendment was going to be close, and this was not a risk suffragists could take. Second, there was no way to measure collateral impact on other states' legislators and public opinion. Either way, attachment of the two issues into one state amendment meant that the Anglo woman suffragists had put themselves in the politically strategic position of having to use nativist rhetoric to campaign for woman suffrage support. This especially affected two ethnic groups in Texas—Mexican Americans and German Americans, who then became campaign targets. Since both naturalized and non-naturalized immigrants could vote in the election, but Texas women could not, TESA leaders designed the anti-immigrant rhetoric to be strong and emotionally charged.⁶¹

TESA ran leaflets that portrayed immigrant “aliens,” non-naturalized residents, as “enemies.” One in particular stated that in the upcoming election on May 24, “the state chooses

⁶⁰ *Dallas Morning News* (September 4, 1918); “Suffrage Amendment Requires Citizenship,” *Dallas Morning News*, January 18, 1919; Carrie Chapman Catt to Minnie Fisher Cunningham, December 26, 1918, folder 1, box 9; Carrie Chapman Catt to Minnie Fisher Cunningham, January 23, 1919, folder 1, box 9, both in McCallum Papers; Gould, *Progressives and Prohibitionists*, 185-221, 255, 266. Statistics calculated from data collected from *Fourteenth Census of the United States. Taken in the Year 1920. Vol. IV. Population, 1920: Occupation Statistics* (Washington, D. C., 1923).

⁶¹ San Antonio suffragist to The Editor of the Express, *San Antonio Express*, April 24, 1919; “Are You an American Citizen?” folder 3, box 6, McCallum Papers.

between her women and the alien enemies within our gates as citizens.” The leaflet further went on to ask the “Men of Texas” to vote in favor of the “loyal American women” who supported them during the war effort, thus tying war-related romantic patriotism to anti-immigrant rhetoric. The ability to connect the campaign to patriotism had been one of the purposes behind Catt’s suggestion to consolidate of the woman suffrage and citizenship amendments.⁶²

Woman suffragists nationwide were highly engaged in war-time thought and action and expressed this in a variety of ways. Following the U. S. official entry into World War I, the discussion of the connection between suffrage activities and war work dominated the agenda at the TESA convention in May 1917 in Waco. The delegation voted to send resolutions to the War Department to remove saloons near military bases, pledged the organization to the “loyal and untiring support of the government,” and asked President Wilson to support the federal woman suffrage amendment. TESA joined forces with the state’s women’s organizational leaders in an assertive campaign for war work. Included in these activities were the use of victory gardens, Red Cross service, and participation in liberty loan drives. One of the largest contributions to service for the war effort was the creation of the Texas Woman’s Anti-Vice Committee (TWAVC) with Cunningham as president. This group’s purpose was specifically to lobby for and investigate the creation of “white zones” around the state’s military bases. “White zones” were areas surrounding military encampment in which prostitution and establishments selling alcohol were illegal. The war effort served two purposes, first it contributed to supporting local suffragists’ communities, and often loved-ones, who were engaged aiding or

⁶² “Men of Texas,” (quotations) folder 7, box 4, McCallum Papers; Carrie Chapman Catt to Minnie Fisher Cunningham, December 26, 1918, folder 1, box 9, McCallum Papers.

fighting on the frontline of battles in Europe, and second, it provided women's rights activists to publicly invest and advertise their patriotic activities.⁶³

Another example of hyperpatriotism associated with woman suffrage can be seen in an issue of the Texas suffrage publication, the *Texas Democrat*. This ran a political cartoon lumping together Mexico and U. S. enemies Turkey and Bulgaria with the notion that all three were inferior societies because they did not offer woman suffrage as did Anglo "civilized" countries such as England, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. The cartoon focused on a similar idea that ran in a NAWSA poster, arguing that the United States was behind the times by not joining other forward nations in granting woman suffrage. Yet, there was a different message bound to the Texas cartoon. The artist of the cartoon illustrated the United States icon, "Uncle Sam," standing for citizenship and patriotism, against which, the artist also implied, Mexico and Mexican immigrants were threats. Historian David Montejano stated that often white Texans did not see the difference between the Mexican immigrants who worked for the *patrons* of the political machines and those Texans who were of Mexican descent. Therefore, disfranchising all Mexican immigrants was usually the option sought, as in the woman's primary suffrage literacy requirement and the citizenship clause to the state woman suffrage amendment.

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In the end, Texas women lost the state amendment on May 24, 1919. It was at this point that TESA leaders knew the federal amendment soon-to-be under consideration in their state was increasingly at risk. Despite election results, the TESA suffragists believed they had to convince legislators that Texan male voters really wanted to grant full voting rights to the state's women.

⁶³ McArthur and Smith, *Minnie Fisher Cunningham*, 56-67; *HWS VI*, 635-636; Minnie Fisher Cunningham to Carrie Chapman Catt, June 20, 1917, folder 8, box 1, Cunningham Papers; McCallum Diary, 79.

⁶⁴ "How to Embarrass a Democrat," *The Texas Democrat*, May 2, 1919; "Why do not ALL WOMEN Vote Under the flag of Democracy," folder 11 box 1985/119, Folsom Papers; McArthur, *Creating the New Woman*, 112, 115; Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans*, 143.

Cunningham asked Alexander Caswell Ellis, University of Texas professor, woman suffragist, and TESA and NAWSA political advisor, to compile statistical data to discredit the recent election; he did so by laying blame on the citizenship rider. Immediately he composed a report to show a relationship between the rider and the counties that defeated the suffrage amendment. In doing so he brought issues of race and ethnicity right to the surface. Furthermore, if Texas legislators were to be convinced, it would take a powerful argument that would catch them off guard—and that was exactly what Ellis provided.⁶⁵

Ellis's hand-written report focused on the questions of immigration and race in relation to the failure of the woman suffrage amendment. He concluded that the more Germans there were in the county the larger the vote against woman suffrage was. He made the same conclusions for counties that he labeled with a large population of "Negro males of voting age." He wrote, "fortunately, many Negroes did not vote" and some of the scattered "foreign-born were more democratic but even if one in six voted," he calculated that they cast 50,000 votes against the amendment. He then estimated statistical assumptions regarding the white vote that he thought supported woman suffrage and used these points to analyze the amendment defeat by 25,000 votes. He then asked, "Should we Democrats take our orders from these Negroes and Un-Democratic Aliens?" and "With whom will the white legislator take his stand?" Finally, Ellis ended the report with an explanation of why the suffrage amendment passed in many of the "border counties" that had a large Mexican immigrant population. He said, "the foreigners in those border counties are illiterate Mexicans, who cannot read English and hence could not vote at all this time on account of the new election law...Taking out the aliens and Negroes these

⁶⁵ "ELLIS—Suffrage," box 2P362, Ellis Papers; "Democratic Platform adopted Unanimously at Waco 1918," box 2P92, Ellis Papers.

counties all went for suffrage just as all the other counties would if only the white Democrats voted [as much] as they do in the Democratic primaries.”⁶⁶

A published version of the report was passed out as both broadsheets and press releases. In the circulated leaflet, it openly indicted over-confident supporters believed not to have voted. It also went on to lay blame on the war effort for keeping 200,000 “loyal men in the army” from being able to vote for the amendment. He pointed to other reasons for the amendment’s failure: the short time given to prepare for the election when other efforts took priority such as “a Liberty Loan drive which was given right of way until just two weeks before the election.” Finally, he levied a charge of election tampering. Overall, the last major campaign for woman suffrage support in the state, and the last state referendum for woman suffrage in the nation, rested largely on racist and ethnocentric messages. Both regional and NAWSA leaders believed Texas was one of the few southern states that stood a chance to pass the federal amendment. If the South stayed solidly against it, there would not be enough states to pass the federal amendment, and women would remain disfranchised. Both state and national suffragists knew this, and their central purpose was votes for women above all else.⁶⁷

Texas women’s disfranchisement—as a whole—did not last much longer though. The U. S. House of Representatives had passed the federal amendment on May 21, 1919, by a vote of 304 to 89, and the following month, on June 4, the U. S. Senate passed it with a vote of 56 to 25. Both Texas Senators Morris Sheppard and Charles Culberson voted in favor of woman suffrage. While Sheppard was a prohibitionist and suffrage advocate, the Texas suffragists waged a

⁶⁶ Handwritten report by Ellis on reasons the suffrage amendment failed (quotation), Box 2P92, Ellis Papers.

⁶⁷ Printed version of circular (quotations) “Many Factors Contributed to the Apparent Defeat of Suffrage,” folder 1, box 6, McCallum Papers; box 2P92, Ellis Papers; Carrie Chapman Catt to Minnie Fisher Cunningham, December 26, 1918, folder1, box 9, McCallum Papers; Carrie Chapman Catt to Minnie Fisher Cunningham, January 23, 1919, folder1, box 9, McCallum Papers; “ELLIS—Suffrage,” box 2P362, Ellis Papers.

successful publicity campaign toward Culberson—calling him day after day, inundating newspapers with pro-suffrage news, and having influential Texans talk with him. Texas suffragists’ telegrams and the letter-writing campaigns were so successful in applying pressure aimed at congressmen that Catt began to refer to this strategy as the “heavy artillery down in Texas.”⁶⁸

After the Nineteenth Amendment was sent to the states, Governor Hobby called a special session of the Texas Legislature. It convened on June 23, 1919, and the Texas House of Representatives passed the federal amendment 96 to 21. The Texas Senate took longer, and some senators unsuccessfully argued that the process should require a voter referendum. On its third reading, the federal amendment passed the Texas Senate with a vote of 18 to 9. That night, anti-suffragists tried to smuggle some of the senators out of Austin, but “friendly [Senate] members and [woman suffragists] ‘shadowed’ the passengers on all out-going trains” to keep the anti-suffragists’ plans from being successful. Then, on June 28, the Texas Senate passed the Nineteenth Amendment in a voice-vote 19 to 10. Hobby subsequently signed the decree that Texas had ratified the Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, which made it illegal to deny a citizen the right to vote based on sex. This made Texas the first southern state and the ninth in the nation to do so. By the end of 1919, as can be seen by Table 5.2, thirteen more states ratified the amendment, and on August 18, 1920, the required thirty-sixth state, Tennessee, ratified with an act of its legislature.⁶⁹

Seven southern states ratified the Nineteenth Amendment as part of the constitutional process—Texas, Missouri, Arkansas, Kentucky, Oklahoma, West Virginia, and Tennessee.

⁶⁸ Graham, *Woman Suffrage*, 127; *HWS VI*, 636 (quotation).

⁶⁹ *HWS VI*, 642-643. For a discussion of the process to ratify in Tennessee, see A. Elizabeth Taylor, *The Woman Suffrage Movement in Tennessee* (New York: Bookman Associates, 1957).

None of these were among the southern colonies that became part of the original thirteen states (see Table 5.2). Furthermore, of those southern states that did ratify, only three were former members of the Confederacy—Texas, Arkansas, and Tennessee. Instead, all seven are usually referred to as Border South states. This fits with historian Don Doyle's argument in *New Men, New Cities, New South* that progressive southerners were usually found in urban areas in the region, not in those that housed older repressive community structures where patriarchy had existed without disturbance for centuries. Texas, while definitely southern, fits this argument. The examination of the state's involvement in the woman suffrage movement highlights the development of its New South regional identity which carried with it strong national characteristics as well.⁷⁰

The ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment did not end suffrage battles in the United States or woman suffrage battles internationally. Racial, ethnic, and socio-political voting restrictions continued to exist, and only began to fade following a series of federal regulations including the Voting Rights Act of 1965. A number of women and men who had been active in the fight for women's rights leading to the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment were active at different stages of these continuing civil rights movements—both for and against. Additionally, some woman suffragists followed their success with removing gender-based voting restrictions by taking the campaign to the international level. Over the course of the following century after women's enfranchisement, many Texans played a central role and the state often

⁷⁰ Don H. Doyle, *New Men, New Cities, New South: Atlanta, Nashville, Charleston, Mobile, 1860-1910* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990); and Buenger, *Path to a Modern South*. For reference to woman suffrage and the border southern states, see Graham, *Woman Suffrage*, 127.

served as a stage for national battles further to remove civil rights restrictions as it had during the long battle for woman suffrage.⁷¹

⁷¹ International Woman Suffrage Alliance (US member Katharine D. McCormick) McCormick to Mrs. Percy V. Pennybacker, February 16, 1921, folder "Woman Suffrage Correspondence, 1921-1922," box 2M12, Pennybacker Papers, CAH. For examples of histories discussing the post-Nineteenth Amendment civil rights battles, see Carroll, Patrick. *Felix Longoria's Wake: Bereavement, Racism, and the Rise of Mexican American Activism* (Austin, University of Texas Press, 2003); Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past." *The Journal of American History* 91 (March 2005): 1233-1261; Glenda Gilmore, *Defying Dixie: The Radical Roots of Civil Rights, 1919-1950* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2008); Sarah Wilkerson-Freeman, "The Second Battle for Woman Suffrage: Alabama White Women, and Poll Tax, and V. O. Key's Master Narrative of Southern Politics." *Journal of Southern History* 68 (May 2002): 333-374.

Table 5.2. State Ratifications & Rejections of the Nineteenth Amendment by Date with Regional Identity, Statehood, and Applicable Connection to the Former Confederate States of America Identified

	Ratified	Date	Rejected	Symbolically Ratified	Southern	Former CSA	Original 13 Colonies	Not a State Before CW	Full Suffrage Prior to 19th	Partial Suffrage (Primary or Presidential) Prior to 19th
1	Illinois	June 10, 1919								X
2	Michigan	June 10, 1919							1918	X
3	Wisconsin	June 10, 1919								X
4	Kansas	June 16, 1919							1912	
5	New York	June 16, 1919					X		1917	
6	Ohio	June 16, 1919								X
7	Pennsylvania	June 24, 1919					X			
8	Massachusetts	June 25, 1919					X			
9	Texas	June 28, 1919			X	X				X
10	Iowa	July 2, 1919								X
11	Missouri	July 3, 1919			X					X
		July 24, 1919	Georgia	February 20, 1970	45	X	X	X		
12	Arkansas	July 28, 1919			X	X				X
13	Montana	August 2, 1919						X	1887, 1914	
14	Nebraska	August 2, 1919						X		X
15	Minnesota	September 8, 1919								X
	New									
16	Hampshire	September 10, 1919					X			
		September 22, 1919	Alabama	September 8, 1953	42	X	X			
17	Utah	October 2, 1919						X	1870, 1896	
18	California	November 1, 1919							1911	
19	Maine	November 5, 1919								X
20	North Dakota	December 1, 1919						X		X
21	South Dakota	December 1, 1919						X	1918	
22	Colorado	December 15, 1919						X	1893	
23	Kentucky	January 6, 1920			X					
24	Rhode Island	January 6, 1920					X			X
25	Oregon	January 13, 1920							1912	
26	Indiana	January 16, 1920								X
27	Wyoming	January 16, 1920							1869, 1890	

	January 28, 1920	South Carolina	July 1, 1969	44	X	X	X	
28 Nevada	February 7, 1920							1914
29 New Jersey	February 9, 1920						X	
30 Idaho	February 11, 1920						X	1896
31 Arizona	February 12, 1920						X	1912
	February 12, 1920	Virginia	February 21, 1952	41	X	X	X	
32 New Mexico	February 21, 1920						X	
	February 24, 1920	Maryland	March 29, 1941	40	X		X	
33 Oklahoma	February 28, 1920				X		X	1918
34 West Virginia	March 10, 1920				X		X	
35 Washington	March 22, 1920						X	1910
	March 29, 1920	Mississippi	March 22, 1984	48	X	X		
	June 2, 1920	Delaware	June 2, 1923	39	X		X	
	July 1, 1920	Louisiana	June 11, 1970	46	X	X		
36 Tennessee	August 18, 1920				X	X		X
37 Connecticut	September 14, 1920						X	
38 Vermont	February 8, 1921							
	tabled action	North Carolina	May 6, 1971	47	X	X	X	
	no action	Florida	May 13, 1969	43	X	X		

Source: For state and colonial histories regarding suffrage, Nineteenth Amendment ratification dates, and state woman suffrage laws, see Keyssar, *The Right to Vote*. For each states' southern status, see Introduction chapter herein footnote 12.

CONCLUSION

Following the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment by the Texas legislature in 1919, the TESA became the Texas League of Women Voters (TLWV) headed by Jesse Daniel Ames, former treasurer of the TESA. As with the National League of Voters, the TLWV's purpose was to register, educate, and represent the state's women voters in a non-partisan manner. By the time the federal amendment passed in August 1920, that year's primary elections had already determined most of the elected offices in Texas for the term. The Nineteenth Amendment really began to affect Texas politics during the 1922 elections. That year, voters elected former Dallas suffragist Edith Wilmans as the first woman legislator in the Lone Star State. In 1928, voters elected former TESA leader Helen Moore and after multiple reelections when she retired from legislative service in 1936, the Texas House *Journal* called her "a pioneer in the humanitarian history of our state."¹

Wilmans was not the first woman elected to office in Texas. A few Texan women had run successful local campaigns, and in 1918—in the first primary elections when the state's women could vote—Annie Webb Blanton won the office of State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Yet, after women's full enfranchisement their role in politics changed. More women ran for office and invested in a vast array of new political opportunities. Between 1921 and 1922, for example, a group of the Texas women's organizations led by the TFWC, TLWV, Texas Mother's Congress, and Texas WCTU formed the Joint Legislative Council. Dubbed the "Petticoat Lobby," for at least ten years the group successfully represented the political concerns

¹ Emma Louise Moyer Jackson, "Petticoat Politics: Political Activism Among Texas Women in the 1920s." Ph.D. diss., University of Texas at Austin, 1980; Hall, *Revolt Against Chivalry*; Nancy Baker Jones and Ruthe Winegarten, *Capitol Women: Texas Female Legislators, 1923-1999* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000); Campbell, *Gone To Texas*, 371; *HTO*, s. v. "Edith Eunice Therrel Wilmans," <http://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/WW/fwi48.html> (accessed April 15, 2010); *HTO*, s. v. "Helen Edmunds Moore," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/MM/fmo83.html> (accessed April 15, 2010).

expressed by many of the state's women. Minnie Fisher Cunningham made an unsuccessful bid for the U. S. Senate in 1927, but she continued to participate in a variety of ways as an important and influential political force for decades. Jane Y. McCallum served from 1927 to 1933 as Texas Secretary of State—through sequential appointments by Governors Daniel Moody and Ross Sterling. Additionally, she subsequently worked on the Austin city planning commission and as Travis County grand jury commissioner.²

Furthermore, new Texas women political leaders were added to the list. The Lone Star State has had two woman governors—Conservative Democrat Miriam Ferguson, from 1925 to 1927 and from 1933 to 1935, and Liberal Democrat Ann Richards from 1991 to 1995. Journalist and woman's rights activist Mary Elizabeth "Liz" Carpenter served on Lyndon Baines Johnson's executive staff during his terms as vice president and president of the U. S. Afterwards, she became a founder of the National Women's Political Caucus in 1971 and was appointed by later presidents to a variety of offices, including by President Jimmy Carter as assistant secretary of Education for Public Affairs. In 1967, Barbara Jordan became the first African American woman elected to the Texas Senate, and six years later, she won a seat in the U. S. Congress. The Texas Equal Rights Amendment campaign, led by Hermine Tobolowsky, successfully won a state voter referendum in 1972—thus granting women and men equal legal rights in Texas. The

² Cottrell, *Pioneer Woman Educator*; Jackson, "Petticoat Politics;" Brown, *Hood, Bonnet, and the Little Brown Jug*; HTO, s. v. "Jane LeGette Yelvington McCallum," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/MM/fmc7.html> (accessed April 15, 2010); McArthur and Smith, *Minnie Fisher Cunningham*;

state's voters elected Irma Rangel in 1976 as the first Mexican American woman to serve in the Texas House.³

This study nationalizes the woman suffrage movement much earlier than previously thought. Cross-regional woman suffrage activity has been marginalized by the belief that campaigning in the South did not exist or had not connected with the national associations until the 1890s. The closer examination herein provides a different view. Early woman's rights leaders aimed at a nationwide movement from the beginning. This national goal included the South, and reciprocal woman suffrage interest soon spread to the region. In Texas, for example, this culminated in the Lone Star State having a long and complicated history when it came to women's rights that included the more than five-decade involvement in the votes-for-women movement. During which legislators introduced pro-suffrage resolutions as part of the 1870, 1873, 1895, 1907, 1911, 1913, 1915, 1917, 1918, 1919 sessions, and two constitutional conventions—1868 and 1875. The activity in Texas went from discussion that was primarily directed by the state's men—for or against—to a movement led by women. By examining the state's woman suffrage activities, a pattern emerges that highlights the bilateral flow of resources that aided both the national and state levels of the votes-for-women campaign. One of the major factors in this relationship was that the primarily northeastern-based national leadership desperately needed southern support from both activists and state legislators to aid in their larger goals. Texans consistently kept their attention because of the sheer volume of legislative consideration given to women's enfranchisement and connected issues.

Unfortunately, the support for women's enfranchisement was not the only ideology shared by state and national women's rights advocates. Some Texas and some national leaders

³ Brown, *Hood, Bonnet, and Little Brown Jug*; Campbell, *Gone To Texas*, 421-422, 439-441; Baker and Winegarten, *Capitol Women*; *Washington Post*, March 21, 2010.

also engaged in reinforcing each other's ethnocentric and racist campaign methods in connection with woman suffrage work. While sporadic during most decades, the segregated state associations by nature were a reminder that such prejudices prevailed, and in the last years of the state's involvement in the movement TESA and NAWSA participated in the increased use of racist and nativist rhetoric as part of their strategies in Texas. Even so, some Texas African American and Mexican American women and men were still able to participate in the movement to enfranchise women despite strong political discouragement. Removing voting restrictions related to gender held promise for Texas citizens regardless of demographics.

The interest expressed by national woman suffragists began during Reconstruction upon learning that some of the state's male political leaders were arguing for the enfranchisement of Texas women. In the decades following Reconstruction, Texas women reached out to national associations—including the NWSA, AWSA, and WCTU—as part of their grassroots activism and desire to spread understanding and support for the cause amongst the state's residents. These individual activists travelled, lectured, petitioned legislators, circulated suffrage literature, and reported information to the larger national association's networks as part of the efforts to further the women's rights movement. Yet, Texas activists were split between the two competing national organizations.

The combination of the unification of NAWSA and a loose network of Texas woman suffrage supporters from around the state culminated in the creation of its first organization, the TERA. While its short life only spanned a few years in the mid 1890s, some members of the Texas association held affiliations with all three of the state's political parties—the Populist Republican, and Democratic parties. And while the decade housed a rise in political

opportunities for women in the state, none of it was enough to survive divisions among the TERA's leadership along social and political lines.

By 1903, NAWSA leaders were again involved in the creation of a state woman suffrage organization with the advent of the TWSA. Within a few years Texas leaders became frustrated with the lack of direct national support for their activities and the TWSA went dormant for a period. During that time, local suffragists returned to grassroots activism until an Austin Association began to spark organizational interest once again by late 1908. During this decade, NAWSA leaders including presidents Carrie Chapman Catt and Anna Howard Shaw set out to identify socially elite women in Texas who could lead the state in a victorious reorganization effort. For the third time, by 1911, national leaders determined who they wanted to lead Texas in woman suffrage activism. Following a reorganizational convention in 1913, Eleanor Brackenridge served for one year as the TWSA president, followed by Annette Finnigan, and then Minnie Fisher Cunningham held the position during the last four years of woman suffrage battles.

A split in the Texas Democratic Party that had developed over the previous decades led to an internal contest for power. After the impeachment of Conservative Governor James Ferguson, a fight in which a number of the state's TESA leaders proved to be immensely valuable, some of the Progressive Democratic Party leaders struck a deal to support a primary woman suffrage bill. After the state's women gained the right to vote in political primaries, they had the ability to elect or remove legislators from power, and many officeholders expressed their unwillingness to reject subsequent woman suffrage legislation for fear it might keep them from reelection. Thus, in June 1919, following an unsuccessful Texas woman suffrage voter referendum, which had also aimed at the disfranchisement of immigrant voters who had not

completed the naturalization process for full citizenship, the Texas House and Senate ratified the recently-passed federal Nineteenth Amendment.

In 1986, pioneer southern woman's historian Anne Firor Scott sadly wrote, "If one walked down the streets of Austin or San Antonio asking citizens... 'Who were Minnie Fisher Cunningham and Jane Y. McCallum?' ninety percent, at a conservative estimate, would have no idea." Her observation was probably correct. Following the Nineteenth Amendment, many Texas women, like those across the South and the nation, quickly moved on to the business of citizenship. There were new battles to fight, offices to win, and votes to cast. Yet, all has not been lost. If those same people in San Antonio and Austin were asked about Barbara Jordan, Liz Carpenter, or Governor Ann Richards many would know and have stories of their own. As it had been for generations leading up to women's enfranchisement, the roads these Texas women took connected to the ones paved by those who came before. The events leading up to 1920 in many ways were a beginning not an end, and the political contributions made by women, decades after gaining the vote, still rest on platforms built by the suffragists of yesteryear.⁴

⁴ Winegarten and McArthur, eds. *Citizens at Last*, x (quotation).

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J qppgw. 'Cn' uuc0' 0' F qgu' y' g' ej kxct { "qh' y' g' o gp' qh' Vgzcu' r tqgev' qwt 'i knj qqf A' Vj g' '3: ; 7"
 Ci g/ qh' Eqpugpv' Eco r cki p' kp' Vgzcu 0' "Wpr wdrukj gf 'r cr gt 'kp' cwj qt ai' r quuguukqp0'

J qppgw. 'Cn' uuc0' 0' Vq' Rtqgev' cpf 'Tgf g' hpg' I knj qqf < Vj g' '3: ; 7' Ci g/ qh' Eqpugpv' Eco r cki p' kp'
 Vgzcu 0' "Rcr gt 'r t gupvgf 'cv' y' g' Gki j y' "Uqwj gtp' Eqphgt gpeg' qp' Y qo gp' ai' J kuqt { . 'Lxpg'
 6/8. '422; . 'Uqwj gtp' Cuqekv' kqp' hqt 'Y qo gp' J kuqt kcpu. 'Wpkxgtuk' { "qh' Uqwj 'Ectqkpc. "
 Eqnwo dlc. 'Uqwj 'Ectqkpc0' Rcr gt 'kp' cwj qt ai' r quuguukqp0'

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