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A HISTORY OF WOMAN SUFFRAGE IN MICHIGAN

By

Virginia Ann Paganelli Caruso

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
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ABSTRACT

A HISTORY OF WOMAN SUFFRAGE IN MICHIGAN

By

Virginia Ann Paganelli Caruso

This is the first study of the woman suffrage movement in Michigan since women obtained the vote in 1918 through an amendment to the state constitution. The work presents a clear chronology of the development of the movement in Michigan and its accomplishments over sixty-five years agitation for suffrage in Michigan. The work involves both narrative and analysis.

The narrative is built on most of the surviving manuscript and printed sources for the woman suffrage movement in Michigan. One finding of interest is that the first partial suffrage achievement, school suffrage, occurs in a period devoid of observable suffrage agitation. Secondly the split between the American and National Woman Suffrage Association appears to be non-existent in Michigan. The two state associations that exist before the split is healed have cordial relations with both groups.

The analysis examines the impact of a number of variables on attitudes toward woman suffrage through manuscript and printed materials, regression analysis and roll call analysis of legislative and constitutional convention voting patterns. Findings of significance are

that the association of support for prohibition and support for woman suffrage emerges in Michigan after 1874, but is not consistent across the twentieth century, and that partisanship is rarely associated with support for woman suffrage in Michigan. Also significant is the finding that support for woman suffrage was on occasion linked to nativist attitudes.

Women in Michigan achieved equal suffrage with men largely as a result of their persistent efforts in agitation, education and organization. Even before the National American Woman Suffrage Association revived, reorganized and redirected its energies under Carrie Chapman Catt after 1915, Michigan suffragists had moved in those directions under Nellie Sawyer Clark. This revitalized movement both at the state and national level is the largest single factor in the success of the movement in Michigan.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It has taken me six years to complete this study from first idea to final draft. Along the way numerous people have helped with advice, facilities, suggestions, emotional support and time. At Nazareth College in Kalamazoo where I teach, Registrar Joan Noteboom has accommodated my needs for research time by scheduling my classes so that I had large blocks of time in which to write or do research off campus. I started my Ph. D. program with the encouragement of Academic Dean Jack Hopkins. His successors, Dr. Marie Gabriel Hungerman IHM and Dr. Lynn W. Lindeman also encouraged and supported my efforts by adjusting my work load. A year's sabbatical in 1984-1985 enabled me to travel to research sites, and uninterrupted by any college responsibilities, write over a sixteen month period. It was a productive experience. Dr. Rosemary Kenarny, SSJ and Dr. George McMurrow provided special encouragement along the way. My office mate Dr. William A. Sprunk, Jr. read a draft and made comments on its style in his inimitable way. Dr. G. K. Kripalani, Professor of Economics at Western Michigan University, and family friend, graciously discussed an early version

of the regression work and offered suggestions for improvement.

My research trips outside Michigan were underwritten by a Woodrow Wilson Educational Foundation Dissertation Grant in Women's Studies. Some of my Michigan trips were funded by an Albert J. Beveridge Research Grant in American History from the American Historical Association. Both grants were deeply appreciated and most helpful in enabling me to travel to materials I needed.

The unfailing courtesy and helpfulness of librarians and archivists was impressive. The staff of the Michigan Historical Collections housed in the Bentley Historical Library at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan saw me every day for seven weeks in the summer of 1984 and sporadically for 18 months after that. Nancy Bartlett, reference archivist at the Bentley, was especially helpful in correspondence. The staff at the Burton Historical Collections in the Detroit Public Library, Detroit Michigan was thoughtful. Curator Joseph Oldenberg deserves special commendation for tracking down the Clara B. Arthur Papers and for photocopying courtesies. The New York Public Library Manuscript Division staff went to extra effort to obtain material from remote storage where there had been damage and disordering of the stored material four days before my research appointment was

scheduled to start. It would have been costly for me to reschedule my trip, so they made the extra effort.

The Interlibrary Loan Service of Michigan State University Libraries located books, articles and dissertations in large numbers for me. Sister Mary Hallock of the David Metzger Library at Nazareth College in Kalamazoo patiently ordered reels and more reels of microfilm from the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress. Dr. Louis J. Marchiafava of the Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Houston Public Library, Houston, Texas mailed me photocopies of the four letters regarding Michigan in the Minnie Fisher Cunningham Collection, saving me a trip to Texas.

Librarians and archivists at other institutions were also helpful. These include: Richard Lucas of the Library of Michigan, Lansing, Michigan, whose knowledge of Michigan documents was invaluable; Leroy Barnett of the State of Michigan Archives, Lansing, Michigan; Catherine Larson, Local History Librarian, Kalamazoo Public Library, Kalamazoo, Michigan; Gordon Olson, City Historian, Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Dione Miles Reference Archivist, Archives of Labor and Urban History, Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan; Galen Wilson, The William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan; the staff in the manuscript room of the Library of Congress, Washington D. C.; Elizabeth Shenton and the staff at the Schlesinger

Library on the History of Women in America at Radcliffe College, Cambridge, Massachusetts; Charles Lindquist, Curator, Lenawee County Historical Museum, Adrian, Michigan; Mary Ann Bamberger, Special Collections Librarian, University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, Illinois; Susan L. Boone, Curator, Sophia Smith Collection, Women's History Archive, Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts; Mary M. Huth, Rare Books and Special Collections, University of Rochester, Rochester, New York; and the staff of the Regional History Collections, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

At Michigan State University my committee has been supportive, informative, knowledgeable and considerate. Dr. William Hixson, as dissertation supervisor, has given service above and beyond the call of duty. He has promptly read and responded to my drafts with clear and detailed commentary and suggestions for improvement. Professors Alan P. Grimes and Victor Howard made suggestions which have strengthened the paper at particular points. Professor Sam Baskett was there when I needed him.

My family has been supportive. My brother-in-law, Jerry Klomparens, asked good questions to help me focus how much background non-historians needed to understand my project. My sister, Jeanette Paganelli, has patiently listened to my frustrations and helped me deal with them. My cousins' expressions of interest have been encouraging. My parents, Santi and Naomi Paganelli supported my interest

in education and learning from childhood. Even during the fatal illness of my mother they both encouraged me to research and write as much as I could under the circumstances and asked intelligent questions about my progress. My father's injunction "Keep after it" sustained me during final revisions after his sudden death. My husband, Phillip P. Caruso, has served as statistical consultant and discussant, computer operator, occasional typist, and general support mainstay throughout my graduate program.

Obviously none of these helpful and supportive people are responsible for the pages that follow. Without their support and suggestions the pages would be less than they are. What they are is my responsibility.

PREFACE

The women's liberation movement of the last twenty years has resulted in a revived interest in earlier women's rights movements in the United States. The earlier movements focused on the denial of educational and to a lesser extent economic opportunities and civil and legal disabilities; and they demanded the extension of opportunities and civil and political rights for women, including the suffrage. Only suffrage is not an issue for the current women's movement. The Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution settled that issue.

The successful passage of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920 came seventy-two years after the issue had been raised publicly at the woman's rights meeting in Seneca Falls, New York on July 19 and 20, 1848. By 1919 years of agitation at both the state and national levels had made ratification possible by obtaining woman suffrage of some kind in thirty-seven of the forty-eight states. Members of Congress, even ones personally opposed to the idea of women voting, had voted for the amendment in Congress because their state had some form of woman suffrage. Without the successes at the state level, Woman Suffrage might well have suffered the fate of the Child Labor Amendment rather

than being the last successful reform of the progressive era.¹

Most general studies of women in America have not focussed heavily on the battle for suffrage and have been narrative rather than analytical.² Recently Carl Degler has attempted to incorporate the two major themes of women's history as they have been developed in the United States into a single interpretive framework. Degler has tried to identify and address the tensions created between the "separate spheres doctrine" of female domesticity and the undeniable importance of home and family for women on the one side and the doctrine of equality with its corollary of equal political participation by women on the other. He suggests that woman suffrage was highly radical because it "asserted the individuality of women and assumed

¹ Maud Wood Park, "The Winning Plan" in National American Woman Suffrage Association Victory: How Women Won It; A Centennial Symposium, 1840-1940 (New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1940).

² Among them are: Carol Hymowitz and Michaela Weissman, A History of Women in America (New York: Bantam Books, 1978); Robert E. Reigel, American Women: A Story of Social Change (Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1970); Mary P. Ryan, Womanhood in America from Colonial Times to the Present 3rd ed., (New York: Franklin Watts, 1983); Andrew Sinclair, The Emancipation of the American Woman (New York: Harper Colophon Books, Harper and Row, Publishers; 1965, 1966); Page Smith, Daughters of the Promised Land: Women in America History. (Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1970); June Sochen, Herstory: A Record of the American Woman's Past 2nd ed., (Sherman Oaks, California: Alfred Publishing, 1981).

and asserted a woman's self-interest." Suffrage attacked the doctrine of separate spheres directly.³

Most published studies of the woman's rights struggle have followed the lead of The History of Woman Suffrage.⁴ While scholars have paid attention to issues of education, property rights and employment, woman suffrage, especially the struggle for the Federal amendment, has commanded the bulk of the attention. These studies mostly confined themselves to a narrative of the events.⁵ More recently some political analysis of the voting patterns in Congress and the influence of party politics and regional variations has been done by David Morgan. He finds that while President Woodrow Wilson and the national Democratic

³Carl Degler, At Odds: Women and the Family in America from the Revolution to the Present (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980) pp. 328-361, 343.

⁴Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony and others. The History of Woman Suffrage 6 volumes (Rochester and New York, New York: Susan B. Anthony and National American Woman Suffrage Association, 1881-1922).

⁵The classic is Eleanor Flexner, A Century of Struggle: The Woman's Rights Movement in the United States (Cambridge Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, revised edition, 1975). Others include: Mildred Adams, The Right to Be People (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1966); Olivia Coolidge, Woman's Rights: The Suffrage Movement in America 1840-1920 (New York: Dutton, 1966); Richard Evans, The Feminists: Women's Emancipation Movements in Europe, America and Australia 1840-1920 (London: Croon Helm, and New York: Barnes and Noble, 1977); National American Woman Suffrage Association, Victory: How Women Won It; A Centennial Symposium, 1840-1940 (New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1940); William L. O'Neill, Everyone Was Brave: The Rise and Fall of Feminism in America (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1969); Robert E. Reigel, American Feminists (Lawrence, University of Kansas Press, 1963).

Party came gradually to favor woman suffrage, they could not muster enough votes to get the Federal woman suffrage amendment through Congress. The southern Democrats could not be moved to vote for woman suffrage. Morgan argues that the southern Democrats were fearful of Federal action on any voting issue both because they opposed possible re-enfranchisement of the blacks and because they feared that women's voting would lead to the outlawing or restricting of child labor and would lessen the South's advantage for its developing textile industry. And so it was the Republicans, after the election of 1918, who pushed it through and reaped whatever rewards there were to be had.⁶

At the beginning of the revival of interest in woman's rights struggle the ideas of the suffragists and their opponents were ably delineated by Aileen Kraditor. Her central perception is that the rhetoric and arguments used by supporters of woman suffrage changed greatly around 1890. Before 1890 woman suffrage advocates stressed the natural rights argument: women were persons and entitled to give consent to their government in the same way that men did. After 1890 suffragists increasingly stressed the benefits which would occur in a society which granted women

⁶ David Morgan, Suffragists and Democrats: The Politics of Woman Suffrage in America (East Lansing: Michigan State University, 1972).

the vote. She calls the first argument the argument from justice, the second the expediency argument.⁷

To fully understand and appreciate the enormity of the task involved in obtaining woman's suffrage historians need to look not only at the struggle for the federal amendment but also at the struggles for woman suffrage in each of the individual states.⁸ The various combinations of political factions, interest groups, ethnic and religious differences and urban-rural proportions that the forty-eight states provide is immense. Historians could ask themselves a number of questions about the patterns of support and opposition woman suffrage faced and explore those questions with the data from various states. To create a manageable dissertation topic this paper will focus on Michigan, a state for which the last study of the entire woman suffrage movement preceded the establishment of full suffrage!⁹

The author became convinced that a study of the woman suffrage movement in Michigan was needed while she tried to assemble a chronology of woman suffrage in

⁷ Aileen Krador, The Ideas of the Woman's Suffrage Movement, 1890-1920 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965), pp. 43-74.

⁸A number of state studies of varying quality and interest exist. I read all for which I could obtain copies. Those I found useful or suggestive are in the footnotes and the bibliography.

⁹Karolena M. Fox, "Equal Suffrage in Michigan", Michigan History Magazine, 2 (January 1918): 90-109.

Michigan from the one article on the subject, the three chapters on Michigan in The History of Woman Suffrage and the standard books on Michigan history. To illustrate the problem, when did Michigan women gain full suffrage? Both Bald and Dunbar state that women in Michigan did not have full suffrage until after the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, while The History of Woman Suffrage implies that the successful woman suffrage referendum of 1918 gave women full suffrage beginning with the April 1919 elections.¹⁰ My research has confirmed that the History of Woman Suffrage was correct.

This dissertation involves both narrative and analysis. The narrative questions require establishing a clear and specific chronology for the woman suffrage movement in Michigan and describing the efforts by women suffrage advocates through a variety of organizations in agitating for the vote. Subsidiary questions in this part of the work include:

- 1) What prompted legislative action at various times?
- 2) In what areas of Michigan were there woman suffrage and women's rights activists?

¹⁰ Fox "Equal Suffrage": and "Michigan" in HWS 3:513-532, 4:755-771, 6:303-316; Clever F. Bald, Michigan in Four Centuries (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954) 334; Willis F. Dunbar, Michigan Through the Centuries 4 volumes (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc. 1955) I:467-68.

3) How did school suffrage come about and how did it operate?

4) How much activism was there at any one time?

5) How did woman suffrage get on the ballot as a referendum issue in 1874, 1912, 1913 and 1918?

The analysis requires looking for linkages between woman suffrage and other issues and events among Michigan legislators, among Michigan voters and among suffrage advocates. Questions addressed include:

1) Did generational changes make any difference in the vigor of the woman suffrage movement? To what extent does the revival in several states, associated with new blood in the movement between 1890 and the turn of the century, extend to Michigan?¹¹

2) In all the maneuvering that occurred when woman suffrage was discussed and voted on were party advantages or disadvantages perceived by the legislators? Morgan suggests there might be. Alan P. Grimes also points to partisan advantages in the

¹¹Flexner, Century of Struggle, pp. 225, 245 comments on the revival of suffrage activity at the turn of the century and connects it to a changing social climate and the increase in the numbers of college educated women. Sharon Strom notes a generational change coupled with social changes which helped fuel a revival of woman suffrage activity in Massachusetts in "Leadership and Tactics in the American Woman Suffrage Movement: A New Perspective from Massachusetts", Journal of American History, 62 (September 1975):296-315.

decision to adopt woman suffrage by some western states and territories.¹²

3) Was woman suffrage presented to the voters in Michigan or any other state as being connected or linked to other reforms being advocated, or did the voters have to make the connections by themselves? Can one find behaviors that suggest connections? The following are possibilities this work will examine.

a) In light of the conviction by woman suffrage advocates that the liquor interests opposed them, are there observable links to the prohibition movement in the early twentieth century? Are there observable links to the temperance movement of the late nineteenth century? The Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) was the most prominent anti-liquor group in the United States. Beginning in the 1880's the WCTU at the national level endorsed woman suffrage. In addition, from 1872 on the Prohibition party supported woman suffrage in its platforms. Many suffragists were

¹²Morgan, Suffragists and Democrats describes the party platforms of the Republicans and the Democrats pp. 107-108. The 1917 maneuvering in Congress is described on pp. 127- 138. Alan P. Grimes The Puritan Ethic and Woman Suffrage (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967) points to a Democratic advantage in Wyoming p. 54.

temperance people. Some historians have insisted on the link.¹³

b) Does foreign birth, ethnicity or religion matter? What kind of voting patterns for woman suffrage does one see in relation to the ethnic or religious composition of the geographic area? An article published as this was being written finds some connections. Eileen M. McDonagh and H. Douglas Price used some Michigan data pooled with some Ohio data in a statistical analysis of referenda voting patterns in the Midwest. They find that Protestant and northern European areas tended to support woman's suffrage, that German areas consistently opposed woman suffrage and that

¹³ Ruth Bordin: Woman and Temperance: The Quest for Power and Liberty, 1873-1900 (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1981); Donald Bruce Johnson: National Party Platforms, 1840-1956 rev. ed. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1978) p. 46; T. A. Larson, "The Woman's Rights Movement in Idaho", Idaho Yesterdays 16 (1972): 2-15. A number of early woman suffrage advocates, including Susan B. Anthony were temperance people. See Ross Evans Paulson, Woman's Suffrage and Prohibition: A Comparative Study of Equality and Social Control (Glenview Ill., Scott Foresman and Company, 1973) pp. 70-71. Anne F. Scott and Andrew M. Scott: One Half the People: The Fight for Woman Suffrage (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1975) pp. 41-42 argue that the woman's suffrage amendment passed the United States Congress only after the prohibition amendment had already done so and effectively separated the two issues. Barbara Leslie Epstein, The Politics of Domesticity: Women, Evangelism, and Temperance in Nineteenth Century America (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1981) delineates similarities and differences between the women's rights advocates goals and concerns and the WCTU's home protection orientation. Their goals and concerns overlapped some, but far from completely.

southern European and Catholic areas showed no clear pattern of support or opposition regarding woman suffrage.¹⁴

c) Does geography matter? Burnham in his study of realigning elections in Pennsylvania noticed a connection between the vote patterns and the distance from railroad and other means of communication.¹⁵ Did The upper peninsula of Michigan show a different pattern of behavior regarding woman suffrage than the lower peninsula in any of the four referenda elections? Engelmann in his study of Michigan local option elections, separates the upper peninsula from the lower one because the two peninsulas behave so differently in local option elections.¹⁶

4) Lastly, what happened in Michigan between the referendum of November 1912 in which woman suffrage lost by 760 votes and the referendum of

¹⁴Eileen L. McDonagh and H. Douglas Price, "Woman Suffrage in the Progressive Era: Patterns of Opposition and Support in Referenda Voting, 1910-1918", American Political Science Review, 79 (June 1985): 415-435.

¹⁵ Walter Dean Burnham, Critical Elections and the Mainsprings of American Politics (New York, W. W. Norton & Company Inc. 1970) pp. 42-44.

¹⁶Larry Engelmann, "Dry Renaissance: The Local Option Years; 1889-1917", Michigan History, 59 (Spring-Summer 1975): 69-90.

April 1913 in which woman suffrage lost by 96,144 votes?

The narrative sections of this dissertation required research in the Journals of the Michigan House and Senate to establish a clear chronology of events in the legislature: reading the Journals and the Proceedings and Debates for the Michigan Constitutional Conventions of 1835-1836, 1850, 1867 and 1907-1908 and the Journal of the Constitutional Commission of 1873 to establish attitudes regarding qualifications of electors. I also sought and read all the papers and information I could find about the Michigan Equal Suffrage Association and its predecessor the Michigan State Woman Suffrage Association. Fires had destroyed some records I sought. The State of Michigan archives were largely destroyed in the February 1951 fire at the State Library and Archives. The official files of the Michigan Equal Suffrage Association were lost during a fire at the home of the association President in 1917.¹⁷ The various volumes of The History of Woman Suffrage provide in footnotes a calendar of where the state conventions were held and a list of officers and speakers. I continued hunting for personal papers even while writing drafts of this dissertation. Newspapers gave accounts of

¹⁷"State Library Fire Problems Many", Michigan Library News 10 (February 1951):2 & ff. describes the fire and the nine day smoldering that followed: Ida Porter Boyer to Mary Ogden White, May 15, 1918. State Ratification Correspondence, Michigan 1918-1919, NAWSA Papers, RL-NYPL.

suffrage meetings and editorial reaction to them. The Library of Michigan has participated in a newspaper microfilming project which makes available to Michigan residents on interlibrary loan most of the newspapers I wanted to examine for information.

The Michigan Manual for each legislature lists the members of the legislature and gives biographical information about them. Party affiliation proved difficult to establish for legislators before the mid 1880s because it was not given in the Michigan Manual. Party affiliation for all members of all constitutional conventions and commissions and for legislators before the 1880s had to be sought in biographical dictionaries and newspapers contemporaneous with the individual. It proved to be tedious, tiresome work and not always rewarding. The woman suffrage referenda results for 1874, 1912, 1913 and 1918 are in the Michigan Manual published immediately after each referendum year. The Journals of the Michigan House and Senate and the Constitutional Conventions and commission give the roll call votes which were useful both for narrative and analysis. The papers of individuals yielded information about internal tensions among the supporters of woman suffrage, some indications how strategic decisions were made and the feelings of suffrage supporters through the numerous campaigns for school, municipal and full suffrage.

The analytical sections of the dissertation required research activity of several types. First, since the Constitutional Conventions of 1850, 1867 and 1907-08 were actively petitioned, I cross-tabulated each topic addressed by the petitions and each area from which the petition came in every constitutional convention in order to examine possible association among issues. Second, I applied regression analysis to the state-wide referenda of 1874, 1912, 1913 and 1918 to look for linkages among issues. The United States Census for 1870, 1910 and 1920 coupled with the Michigan Census of 1874 contained the demographic data I needed for my regression analysis.

Realizing that the analytical sections of the project required some statistical knowledge, I began reading methodological materials in 1981. I read both examples of quantitative history and discussions of the various techniques. In the summer of 1983 I attended the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) Summer Institute to take the Quantitative Historical Analysis Workshop under Dr. Terence McDonald of the University of Michigan. In the workshop I learned how to formulate appropriate questions, look for data and interpret the simple contingency tables tools I would use for roll call analysis.

From my reading I learned that anyone analyzing group behavior must be careful to avoid the "ecological fallacy" first discussed by W. S. Robinson. He pointed out

that correlations that a researcher obtained in .fo
xx regression and correlation analysis for a group could
not describe the action of any single individual in that
group. This means that in working with voting data at the
county level a researcher's descriptions could only be for
the voters as a group in that county and not for any
individual voter.¹⁸ For a number of years concerns over
ecological fallacy retarded discussion of past voting behavior
and other phenomena for which scholars had only aggregate data.
Two responses to the problem gradually emerged. Some
scholars set out to develop techniques to make possible
qualified estimates of individual behavior from group data.
This technique, ecological inference, has been used by
several historians to examine voting behavior.¹⁹ In recent
years other political scientists and historians also
interested in electoral behavior and developing a "new

¹⁸W. S. Robinson, "Ecological Correlations and the Behavior of Individuals", American Sociological Review, 15 (June 1950): 351-357; Leo Goodman, "Ecological Regression and the Behavior of Individuals", American Sociological Review, 18 (December 1953): 663-664; "Some Alternatives to Ecological Correlation", American Journal of Sociology, 64 (May 1959): 610-625 are the pioneering works in this area.

¹⁹Laura Irwin Langbein and Allan J. Lichtman, Ecological Inference Sage University Paper series on Quantitative Applications in the Social Sciences, 07-010, (Beverly Hills, Calif., Sage Publications, 1978). A recent example of the technique in all its refinement is Allan J. Lichtman, Prejudice and the Old Politics: The Presidential Election of 1928 (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1979). Lichtman discusses his methodology with great detail and clarity on pages pp. 25-39, 247-264.

political history" have chosen to avoid the dangers of ecological fallacy by describing trends and tendencies for groups.²⁰ I have followed their lead. All students of electoral history agree that, regardless of the techniques chosen, careful specification of variables, as many variables as possible, and caution in interpreting the results are called for in analyzing electoral behavior.

I analyzed voting patterns among the state legislators to explore whether legislators who supported woman suffrage consistently and as a group supported other reforms or activities using roll call analysis by contingency tables.²¹ Exploring the linkage between woman suffrage and other reforms of the progressive era will be difficult. Just because one has coincidence in time does not mean one has causality or connections.

²⁰Jerome M. Clubb, William, H. Flanigan and Nancy H. Zingale, ed., Analyzing Electoral History: A Guide to the Study of American Voter Behavior (Beverly Hills Calif.: Sage publications, 1981) 198-200: In the same volume see all of Part III: "Analyzing Quantitative Data on Electoral Behavior" pp. 195-303. On the "New Political History" see Philip Vandermeer, "The New Political History: Progress and Prospects" in Georg Iggers and Harold T. Parker, ed., International Handbook of Historical Studies: Contemporary Research and Theory (Westport Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1979) 87-108.

²¹Roderick Floud An Introduction to Quantitative Methods for Historians 2d.ed. (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd. 1979) pp. 133-138 provides an example of the approach I used. See also Charles H. Dollar and Richard J. Jensen, Historians Guide to Statistics: Quantitative Analysis and Historical Research (New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1971) pp. 80-87.

In the case of prohibition, some testing of the linkage can be done not only for legislators' votes but also for voter behavior. From 1889 on Michigan allowed local county option regarding prohibition. This meant a county could vote itself "dry" or prohibitionist in a county referendum. A county which did not support prohibition was known as "wet" By comparing the results in the "dry" and "wet" counties on woman suffrage referenda in 1912, 1913 and 1918 we can see if there is any ground for supposing the ordinary voter saw a connection between woman's suffrage and prohibition. If there was a link in the mind of the ordinary voter, dry counties should show a more favorable percentage for women's suffrage than wet counties. If the existence of prohibition in an area made a difference, the Michigan woman's suffrage referendum of 1918 should be especially informative. In 1916 Michigan voters in a state wide referendum had approved state wide prohibition to take effect May 1, 1918. Did the counties which had opposed prohibition in the 1916 state referenda oppose woman's suffrage in 1918?

A history of the woman suffrage movement in Michigan is important for several reasons beside the need for an accurate chronology for the state's movement. The slow progress of woman suffrage in Michigan presents a case study in the agitation, education and conversion of voters to a position. The Equal Rights Amendment supporters might have learned something from the woman

suffrage supporters development of grass roots support through agitation and education over a long period of time.

The drive for woman suffrage took place in a society with clear social divisions between the sexes in which woman's place was in the home. This separation allowed, even encouraged, the development of a separate woman's culture. Many women who participated in this woman's culture were concerned with what can be called woman's emancipation without being supporters of suffrage. Gerda Lerner has suggested the terms woman's rights and woman's emancipation as ways to distinguish among activists in the woman's movement of the nineteenth century. She suggests this is a better distinction than the blanket terms feminism and feminist which have very ambiguous meanings. Woman's rights advocates were concerned with equality with men in all aspects of society. Woman's emancipation advocates were concerned with freeing women from oppressive restrictions imposed by sex. They shared the concern of the woman rights supporters for ending biological and societal restrictions on women. Their main concern however was not equal rights with men but woman defined goals and processes. Lerner points to Susan B. Anthony as a woman's rights advocate and Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Catherine Beecher as emancipation advocates. Woman's Culture is what I call the world of single sex voluntary organizations women created to address the needs and concerns of women in their society. This culture is

discussed by Carroll Smith-Rosenberg in several places.²² Scattered work has been done on separate woman's culture in America, both describing and analyzing it in studies of the various women's organizations in the nineteenth century.²³

This dissertation will attempt to show how suffragists used the existence of this woman's culture with its complex of concerns and goals as a wedge for gaining support for suffrage. To do this the drive for woman suffrage must be placed in the context of this woman's culture. Unfortunately historians have done little in this area with Michigan women. This means it will be difficult for me to put the Michigan movement in a specifically Michigan context.

The success of women in gaining suffrage raises the question of how women influenced politics in the years before they had the vote. A study of the struggle for woman suffrage in a single state provides a microcosm in which to examine how women influenced politics, especially reform politics, without the vote. A study of woman suffrage in Michigan will illustrate in one case how women influenced politics.

²²see "Politics and Culture in Women's History: A Symposium" Feminist Studies 6 (Spring 1980): 50-51 for Lerner's comments and 55-63 for Smith-Rosenberg's discussion.

²³Nancy Hewitt: Women's Activism and Social Change: Rochester New York, 1822-1872 (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1984) is an example of the kind of work that is beginning to appear.

I hope this study will provide women's studies students with a case study of women's influence on politics before suffrage, students of Michigan history with a clear chronology, and students of woman suffrage with a detailed narrative and analysis of developments in Michigan.

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KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

- AAW Association for the Advancement of Women.
- AERA American Equal Rights Association.
- ALTB Alde L. T. Blake.
- AWSA American Woman Suffrage Association.
- BB Belle Brotherton.
- BHC-DPL Burton Historical Collections, Detroit Public Library, Detroit, Michigan.
- CBA Clara B. Arthur.
- CCC Carrie Chapman Catt.
- CU Congressional Union.
- FMHR-GRPL Family and Michigan History Room, Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids, Michigan.
- HWS History of Woman Suffrage, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Matilda Josyln Gage and Ida Husted Harper, eds. 6 vol. (Rochester, N.Y. and New York: Susan B. Anthony and National American Woman Suffrage Association, 1881-1920).
- IWVA Independent Women Voters Association.
- LESSD League of Equal Suffrage Societies of Detroit.
- LG Lucia Isabelle Grimes.
- LTSSC Lucy Tilden Stewart Suffrage Collection.
- MAOWS Michigan Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage.
- MD-LC Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.
- MESA Michigan Equal Suffrage Association.

MHC-BHL Michigan Historical Collections, Bentley
Historical Library, University of Michigan, Ann
Arbor, Michigan.

MSFWC Michigan State Federation of Woman's Clubs.

MSWSA Michigan State Woman Suffrage Association.

NAWSA National American Woman Suffrage Association.

NEWC New England Woman's Club.

NSC Nellie Sawyer Clark.

NWSA National Woman Suffrage Association.

NWP National Woman's Party.

OBH Olivia B. Hall.

RHC-WMU Regional History Archives, Western Michigan
University, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

RL-NYPL Rare Books and Manuscript Division, Research
Library, New York Public Library, Astor Lenox and
Tilden Foundations, New York, New York.

SBA Susan B. Anthony.

SL-RC Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library on the
History of Women in America, Radcliffe College,
Cambridge, Massachusetts.

TMS The Michigan Suffragist.

WCTU Woman's Christian Temperance Union.

WRA Woman's Republican Association.

WRC Women's Rights Collection, Arthur and Elizabeth
Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in
America, Radcliffe College, Cambridge
Massachusetts.

CHAPTER 1

TO 1867: "SUCH AN INNOVATION"
Senate Select Committee, 1859

The French were the first Europeans in Michigan. Initially seeking a water route to the Pacific the French returned because of the profits in the fur trade. To further the fur trade they established forts and trading posts. When Antoine deLamothe Cadillac arrived in 1701 he wanted his base, Pontchartrain du Detroit, to be not just a fur trading post and fort, but a self-supporting town. To persuade prospective settlers and the Indians he was serious, he had his wife and the wife of his lieutenant come to Detroit. Madame Cadillac thus become the first white woman to enter what is now the state of Michigan. Recognizing the dangers, hardships, and isolation of living in Detroit, she joined her husband motivated by love and duty.¹ How many other women followed Madame Cadillac to Michigan because their husbands or fathers chose to come and they followed out of love or duty is unknown.

The French settlement at Detroit grew slowly in the eighteenth century, partly because the century saw a series of wars between Great Britain and France. In 1763

¹ F. Cleaver Bald, Michigan in Four Centuries (New York: Harper, 1954), p. 50.

at the end of the French and Indian War (the Seven Years War in Europe) Canada which included all the territory between the alleghenies and the Mississippi River passed to Great Britain as part of the victor's spoils. During the American War of Independence the British used Detroit as a base of operations for raids into the Western country. At the end of the war in 1783, title to Michigan passed to the United States. But it was not until 1796 that the British withdrew their military presence from Michigan.²

In 1781 Congress created the Northwest Territory, territory held by all the people of the United States and formed out of the area formerly claimed by several of the states and ceded to the central government under promise that the western lands would become members of the federal union "with the same rights, and sovereignty, freedom and independence as the other states." Michigan and the other states formed from the Northwest Territory came under the Land Ordinance of 1785 and the Northwest Ordinance of 1787. The Land Ordinance provided that the land must be surveyed before it was open to sale and settlement. The ordinance also set the amount that could be purchased and the price. Both the amount one could purchase and the price were

² The discussion of Michigan while a French and British territory draws on Willis F. Dunbar, Michigan: A History of the Wolverine State (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), pp. 19-172 and Bald: Michigan in Four Centuries, pp. 8-92.

altered several times before Michigan became a state in 1837.³

At first Michigan was simply part of the Old Northwest. After 1803, when Ohio was granted statehood, Michigan remained part of the Indiana territory until 1805 when Michigan and Indiana territories were separately organized. In 1818 the Michigan territory was re-defined again, covering all of what is now Michigan and Wisconsin. That arrangement lasted until statehood in 1837.⁴

The Northwest Ordinance stipulated three stages of government through which a territory must pass on its road to statehood. In 1805 Michigan was a first-grade territory. As such it was governed by a governor a secretary and a council of three judges, all appointed by the President. The only places where white settlers lived were around Detroit and Mackinac. The rest of the state had not been surveyed and the Indian titles had not been extinguished. The War of 1812 delayed the solution of these problems, but after 1815 they were energetically attacked.

In 1823 Michigan became a second-grade territory. Congress authorized voters to nominate eighteen persons for a territorial council. The President with the advice and consent of the Senate chose nine from that group to serve.

³Dunbar, Michigan, pp. 158, 161-167.

⁴Bald, Michigan in Four Centuries, map p. 105.

The council served as a legislature. From 1827 to statehood, Michigan was a grade three territory. Michigan voters elected their own legislative council and a territorial delegate to Congress. All adult male inhabitants could vote in these elections.

Of the five states formed from the old Northwest Territory, only Wisconsin took longer to fill with settlers and become a state. To settle in Michigan, pioneers had to turn north from Ohio, Indiana or Illinois, and few bothered to do so. Only after the development of navigation on the lower Great Lakes (Lakes Ontario and Erie) made getting to Michigan easier, quicker and cheaper than it had been before, did Michigan really grow. Federal expenditures for buoys and lighthouses made Great Lakes travel safer. Steamboats came to the Great Lakes in 1818 making travel quicker. Finally, the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825, linking the the Hudson River and Lake Erie eased transportation to Michigan.⁵

The people who came to Michigan in the 1820s and 1830s brought with them the customs and ideas of the areas from which they came. Pioneer life in Michigan was hard. The pioneer farming family needed all the workers it could get to fell trees, plow fields, plant gardens and fields, hunt game, build shelter for people and animals, cook,

⁵Dunbar, Michigan, pp. 191-199.

clean, prepare and repair clothing and equipment, and process and preserve food stuffs. While traditions of division of labor between male and female were strong, in farm families whoever was healthy did what ever had to be done. In this environment women worked at least as hard as the men and the work they did was as necessary as that of the men. One historian has characterized this rough economic equality of men and women (in the sense they both made a positive economic contribution to the household) as a status of "Adam's rib," a period of rough economic equality, even while the subordination of women to men was maintained in principle.⁶ By the time Michigan population began growing rapidly, this idea was already being replaced in the cities back East by another concept of the position of women in American society.

Between the 1770s and the 1820s Americans successfully established themselves as an independent nation. The commercial sector of the economy grew rapidly, especially in the cities. The process of industrialization began with textiles. Rapid change and great fluidity of status and role accompanied these changes. The idea of woman as man's helpmate declined. The household was less an economic unit. In the industrial world and the

⁶Mary P. Ryan, Womanhood in America: From Colonial Times to the Present 3d ed. (New York: Franklin Watts, 1983), pp. 19-68 presents the concept. Dunbar discusses rural and urban frontier life in Michigan, pp. 256-269.

mercantile world, men's and women's work became increasingly separated as it had not been in the agricultural world. Men got a pay envelope and therefore had obvious economic value. In cities and towns, the housekeeping roles that middle class women had filled could be performed by hired help. If a married couple chose to live in a boarding house, there were no housekeeping roles for the wife.⁷

The ideal image of woman that emerged in conjunction with these changes was very different from a helpmate. Woman under this ideal is described as "pious and pure, fragile and weak, submissive and domestic, passive and un-intellectual."⁸ Women were expected to live what today we would call lives of vicarious satisfaction and service to others.⁹ A true woman was pious, pure, domestic and submissive.¹⁰ Physicians united in finding woman physically frail and dominated by her reproductive

⁷Keith E. Melder, The Beginnings of Sisterhood: The American Woman's Rights Movement, 1800-1850 (New York: Schocken Books, 1977), p. 4.

⁸Barbara J. Berg, The Remembered Gate The Origins of American Feminism; The Woman and the City, 1800-1860 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980 paperback edition), p. 85.

⁹Ibid., pp. 75-94 develops the belle-ideal. The consequences are outlined on pp. 95-142.

¹⁰Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood 1820-1860" American Quarterly 18 (Summer 1966): 152-165.

organs and functions.¹¹ Motherhood became woman's crowning glory; her tasks, to civilize the age and to guide future generations in the paths of righteousness.¹² This development of separate spheres for men and women may have given some women more status in marriage than wives had had earlier. At least now women were not just decorative or brood mares or drones.¹³

The legal status of women in the colonies had varied. Though custom (especially in sea-going areas) and antenuptial agreements could retain femme sole status for a married woman, her more common status was femme coverte. Under this common law doctrine a married woman could not sign contracts, had no title to her earnings or property and her children were the husband's. A femme sole could sign contracts and control her own property and wages.

¹¹Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "From Puberty to Menopause: The Cycle of Femininity in Nineteenth Century America" pp. 24-34 and Regina Morantz, "The Lady and her Physician" pp. 38-53 in Clio's Consciousness Raised: New Perspectives on the History of Women Mary S. Hartman and Lois Banner eds., (New York, Harper and Row, 1974).

¹² Melder, Beginnings, pp. 8-10.

¹³ Carl N. Degler, At Odds: Women and the Family in America from the Revolution to the Present (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981 paperback edition). In pp. 26-51 Degler develops the doctrine of two spheres to describe the distinctness of the separation between male and female spheres in the family. He argues that the nineteenth century saw the female responsibilities as serious and that they probably marked an improvement in status for women.

Divorce was difficult or impossible to obtain.¹⁴ Michigan laws did not deal with the status of women in the territorial period.

Bringing some of these attitudes with them, the men who gathered to write Michigan's first state constitution in May and June of 1835 simply did not think of women as part of the body politic with specific needs or rights. From the scattered debates and records that have survived it is clear that they were aware of attitudes and ideas current in the East. The suffrage debates show clearly they were aware of attitudes toward suffrage in the other states of the Union.

Since colonial times, voting in America had moved from being a suffrage restricted to those who had a stake in society (usually defined by property holding or taxpaying) to a suffrage restricted by category. By the 1830's the idea that all white male adult citizens should have the vote was increasingly common. But the focus on white males disenfranchised black property holders in several states and in the case of New Jersey, the 1807 revision of suffrage qualifications disenfranchised not only some blacks but also the few women who had voted in New Jersey between 1790 and 1807 when suffrage definitions applied to all inhabitants who met the property

¹⁴Eleanor Flexner, Century of Struggle: The Woman's Rights Movement in the United States (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, Belknap Press, 1975), p. 8.

qualification.¹⁵ Similar patterns had existed in Michigan. In April 1804, property holding widows in Detroit voted on the defense of the town.¹⁶

On the bases of surviving records the greatest concern in the Michigan Constitutional Convention of 1835 centered on a bill of rights which took up more than three days of debate and the elective franchise which took up more than five days of debate. Discussion on the rest of the Constitution took seven days.¹⁷ Debate on colored suffrage began on Friday, May 22, 1835 and ran

¹⁵Chilton Williamson, American Suffrage from Property to Democracy, 1760-1860 (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1960), discusses the shift from property qualification to white male universal suffrage in the first eleven chapters of the book. On New Jersey see Sophie H. Drinker, "Votes for Women in Eighteenth Century New Jersey" Proceedings of the New Jersey Historical Society 80 (January 1962): 31-45.

¹⁶"The First Woman Voter in Michigan," clipping, Scrapbook (brown), p. 3 Nanette Gardner Papers, MHC-BHL.

¹⁷Minutes were kept and Journals published for the 1835-1836 conventions. The debates, proceedings, committee reports and supporting papers were not officially printed for distribution. Over time the materials were lost, scattered or destroyed. The territorial press reported some of the debates. A compilation made in 1940 drew on the Journals, the surviving committee reports and supporting papers. The debates were partially reconstructed from the territorial press materials that had survived. What the press reported was partly a function of what interested the press and partly a function of the importance and political alignment of those who spoke. The compiler of the debates describes the debate coverage as neither balanced nor complete. Henry M. Dorr, ed., The Michigan Constitutional Conventions of 1835-1836: Debates and Proceedings (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1940), pp. v, vi, 27.

intermittently until Wednesday, May 27 when striking the word "white" out of the provisions lost 17 to 63. Arguments from justice and natural right were the pillars of the few supporters of colored suffrage. The fear of a black influx into the state, a belief in black inequality and a view that suffrage was a conventional not a natural right all were ideas used to defeat it.¹⁸

The debate on foreigners voting covered many more pages and occurred over more days. The discussion began on Monday May 25 and ran through Thursday May 29. The convention apparently could not find a compromise solution to the divisions among them for a long time. Part of the problem was that all white male inhabitants over twenty-one years of age had voted in the territorial elections and many were reluctant to disenfranchise those aliens who had voted while Michigan was a territory, some for reasons of justice, others for reasons of political expediency. The issue was tackled again on June 15. Finally on June 17 a compromise was reached. Every white male citizen above twenty-one years of age, who had resided in the state six months preceding any election and every white male inhabitant above twenty-one years of age, resident of the state at the time of the signing of the constitution had the right to vote. This version of the definition of elector held against the attempt on June 22 to remove

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 154-169, 246.

"inhabitant" from the article; 7 to 60. The idea of Indians voting commanded few supporters in the convention. It lost; 17 to 63.¹⁹

Only twice did the convention consider recognizing that women lived in Michigan, both times over what we today would call sexist language in the Constitution. The Convention declined to add "or herself" to Section 8, Article I which dealt with a person's rights in relation to trials and to counsel. The Convention did agree to substitute person for man in Section 4, Article I which dealt with religious freedom.²⁰

Within the first decade of the state's existence, discussion about woman suffrage began in some places. The Kalamazoo Lyceum debated the issue of woman suffrage at least twice before 1840. On "Would the effect of extending to females the right to vote at elections be beneficial to them and to the institutions of our country?" the judges felt the nays made a better argument and the house concurred. In a November 1839 Lyceum debate, the judges gave the nod (on the weight of argument) to the affirmative on the question "Ought women to be allowed the

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 173-245, 249-267, 382-384, 392-394, 406-407, 246-248.

²⁰Ibid., pp. 288, 290.

same political rights with man?" The house decided against the question 5-11.²¹

In the legislature, maneuvering about suffrage began soon after the state was organized. The focus was usually colored suffrage, but a few legislators acted on woman suffrage. In 1841 in connection with maneuvering regarding colored suffrage proposals, Gurdon C. Leech of Macomb county in the House moved an amendment so that unmarried females twenty-one years of age be allowed to vote if they held the same freehold (\$250) as was proposed for the colored males. Leech's amendment lost 10-31. Leech then moved that Indians with a \$250 freehold be given the vote. That proposal passed the House but not the Senate.²² Despite frequent discussions and recommendations nothing was actually done about suffrage qualifications until the Constitutional Convention of 1850.

At least once or twice a session, members of the legislature voted the use of the chamber to someone for a presentation of some kind. On March 24 and 25 1846, Ernestine Rose, an advocate of woman's rights, was allowed to use the House chamber to give two speeches, "Science of Government" and "Antagonistic Principles of Society".

²¹Kalamazoo Gazette, 6 January 1838, p. 2; 13 January 1838, p. 3; 9 November 1839, p. 3; 13 November 1839 p. 3.

²²Michigan House, Journal, 8 April 1841, p. 631.

Whether either speech focused on woman suffrage or even women's rights is unclear.²³

Ernestine Rose's appearance in Michigan is an example that not all women accepted the ideology of the woman-belle or true woman. The ideology of woman's place insisted that women should be in the home making it a refuge and sanctuary from the turmoil of the world. Not all women passively accepted the vision. In a number of ways some women pushed against the cage of society's ideal woman. Women in moral reform societies identified problems, analyzed their causes, and then planned and took action to address those problems. Their work concerned prostitutes, orphans, and women's health. The work was justified as part of woman's mission of "practical piety."²⁴ Most women engaged in the moral reform movement did not become women's rights advocates. They accepted the popular definitions of women's proper sphere as the home with some extension to church work of various types. Their loyalty

²³Michigan House, Journal, 23 March 1846, p. 342; 25 March 1846, p. 353. I have been unable to locate a newspaper account of either speech in the Detroit newspapers of the period and no ms. or report of either speech has survived.

²⁴Berg, Remembered Gate, pp. 146-261.

to church work made it difficult for many of these women to separate religion from religious institutions.²⁵

When women stepped out of their sphere ministers and others invoked Biblical injunctions to put the women back into their appropriate sphere. The best known of these attacks is that launched against Sarah and Angelina Grimke when they spoke in opposition to slavery before mixed (male and female) audiences in Massachusetts during 1837.²⁶ Sarah and Angelina Grimke would claim the right to speak and act publicly for abolition of slavery because women, as well as men, were morally responsible persons and obliged to speak out on moral issues. Both men and women had a responsibility to the community.²⁷

For the Grimke sisters and some other abolitionists, Garrisonian abolitionism provided a world view which enabled them to free themselves from the conventions of woman's sphere. Garrison and his followers

²⁵ Ellen DuBois, "Women's Rights and Abolition: The Nature of the Connection" in Anti-Slavery Reconsidered: New Perspectives on the Abolitionists, Lewis Perry and Michael Fellman eds. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979), p. 241.

²⁶For "The Pastoral Letter of the Massachusetts Congregationalist Clergy" and an excerpt from Sarah Moore Grimke's response see Aileen Kraditor, ed. Up From the Pedestal: Selected Writings in the History of American Feminism (Chicago, Quadrangle Books, 1968), pp. 50-57.

²⁷Blanche Glassman Hersh, "Am I Not a Woman and a Sister? Abolitionist Beginnings of Nineteenth Century Feminism" in Perry and Fellman eds., Anti-Slavery Reconsidered, p. 277.

assumed absolute human equality. Women appropriated this for themselves along with Garrison's critical approach to religious institutions. This freed many to claim they were religious persons motivated by high Christian principles, but allowed them to be critical of churches and ministers who supported, defended or advocated female or black inferiority.²⁸

Increasingly in the 1850s, however, women advocating the abolition of slavery were not the only women in public roles. In the temperance movement women acted in a variety of roles and became less subordinate to men in temperance activity. In the 1850s male temperance leaders increasingly shifted away from moral suasion to legislative prohibition which required political action. If the end of drinking required political action, women, who did not have the vote, would have a smaller role in temperance work than previously.²⁹ Several women became women's rights advocates in part because of struggles within the temperance movement over the right of women to speak at meetings or act in public roles. In 1854, Otsego Michigan women axed the town's liquor supply and were defended in court and print by men as protecting their homes and

²⁸DuBois, "Women Rights and Abolition" in Perry and Fellman eds., Anti-Slavery Reconsidered, pp. 242-244.

²⁹Jed Dannenbaum, "The Origins of Temperance Activism and Militancy Among American Women," Journal of Social History 15 (Winter 1981):235.

families.³⁰ In the years after the Civil War "protecting the home and family" would become the justification for women doing and demanding a number of things outside their "separate sphere."

From their experiences in the various reform movements of the early nineteenth century and their own needs, between the 1830s and the 1850s women gradually built up a women's rights movement. Its primary concerns were property rights and child custody for married women and educational and job opportunities for all women. Emma Willard, Mary Lyon and Catherine Beecher are justly famous for their work in education for women.³¹ Michigan law provided equal opportunity for elementary education. How many families sent their girls as well as their boys is unclear. At the elementary level boys and girls were taught together. Coeducation beyond the elementary grades was not popular. In theory those academies and institutes which admitted both males and females had separate departments for females. In Michigan, Lucinda Hinsdale Stone worked for wider education opportunities for women. She taught in the women's department at the Kalamazoo Branch of the University of Michigan which became Kalamazoo

³⁰ Ibid., pp. 240, 242-243. Susan B. Anthony is perhaps the most famous example.

³¹ Flexner, Century of Struggle, pp. 23-40 describes their efforts and accomplishment as well as those of other women.

College after 1855 while her husband was Principal of the Branch and President of the college 1843-1863. After they were forced out at Kalamazoo College she continued to be active for women's education. Hillsdale College (then called Michigan Central College) was the only Michigan College to grant a degree to a woman before the Civil War.³²

Ernestine Rose had begun petitioning for property rights for married women in 1838 in New York state. In the 1830s and 1840s a number of states acted to give married women various degrees of control over their property and their wages. While there is no trace of effort to persuade the Michigan legislature in this direction in the Journals of the Michigan House and Senate between 1836 and 1850, the legislature acted in 1844. The act provided that a married woman's real and personal property was her own separate estate and not liable for her husband's debts. A student of women's property rights law suggests the Michigan legislature was motivated by a desire to protect wives' property in a time of financial panic and hardship.³³

³² Dunbar, Michigan, pp. 412, 411. The most recent discussion of Lucinda Hinsdale Stone is Gail B. Griffin, "Heretic; Lucinda Hinsdale Stone" in Emancipated Spirits: Portraits of Kalamazoo College Women by Gail B. Griffin and others, (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Ihling Bros Everard Co., 1983), pp. 31-124

³³ Elizabeth Warbasse, "The Changing Legal Rights of Married Women, 1800-1861" (Ph.D. dissertation, Radcliffe College, 1960), pp. 202-204.

Michigan's revision of the status of married women's property was part of a general movement in the states during the 1840s and 1850s to revise married women's property rights.³⁴ The movement grew out of the codification movement in which each state adjusted the common law to be compatible with its needs. Property rights for married women were urged as enabling women to be better wives and mothers.³⁵

While Michigan women were quiet, women further east were petitioning and even holding meetings. The first known women's rights meeting was held in Seneca Falls New York, July 19 and 20, 1848. It was called "to discuss the social, civil and religious rights of woman"³⁶ The organizers were unsure how many people would come since it was the haying season. About 300 attended, some coming from as far away as fifty miles. At the end of two days of discussion, they issued a "Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions." The declaration and subsequent resolutions attacked organized religion for hindering woman's spiritual development and denying her right to be a minister of God. The resolutions demanded property and civil rights,

³⁴Ibid., pp. 182-248 outlines the results of that reform in each state.

³⁵Ibid., pp. 86-87, 136.

³⁶HWS, 1:67-74. The "Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions" is easily available in Miriam Schneir, ed. Feminism: The Essential Historical Writings (New York, Vintage Books, 1972) pp. 76-82.

insisted on equal opportunity for education and work and voiced the mother's right to have custody of her children. Significantly, the only resolution which did not pass unanimously was the demand for woman suffrage. That demand sparked fierce debate and a close vote.³⁷ Their demand would be seconded in Michigan in 1849 by a legislative committee whose report gives no indication they had heard of the meeting.

On February 15, 1849 the Special Senate Committee on the General Revision of the Constitution reported in favor of a number of revisions. The revision on which they spent the most paper and argument was the right of woman to vote. Using natural rights arguments about the consent of the governed, the committee called limiting the franchise to one portion of the adult population "unjust and anti-republican" and "this doorway to unlimited oppression." The committee concluded its discussion of woman suffrage with the observation that regarding consent and representation women in Michigan were in a parallel position to that of the American colonies in relation to Great Britain. The committee went on to urge a single set of qualifications for all voters, more elective offices, a general system of charters for towns and cities and corporations, a uniform system of valuation of property, free schools, a reformed

³⁷Flexner, Century of Struggle, pp. 74-77.

judiciary, a limit on the right to pursue fugitive slaves and revisions regarding apportionment.³⁸ Senators Dwight Webb, Edward Thompson and Rix Robinson signed the report. The Constitutional Convention which met in 1850 did not share the committee's view of woman suffrage.

In the 1850 Convention the debate over foreigners voting, unlike that of 1835, was short. The debate over colored suffrage was longer. Democratic principles were urged as the reason to support colored suffrage. The supposed black inferiority in intelligence and morals were urged against it. John D. Pierce argued that voting was a conventional right not a natural one. Pierce was willing to give "coloreds" their natural rights but not legal or political ones. He stated bluntly that part of his opposition was rooted in his conviction that giving blacks the vote would open the door to amalgamation. The motion to strike out the word "white" lost. The vote was not recorded.³⁹

Beardsley of Eaton County presented a resolution to instruct the elective franchise committee to examine the

³⁸Michigan Senate, Senate Documents 1849, Document 10, pp. 32-69. The quotations are from p. 35. The Great Britain parallel is on p. 38.

³⁹Report of the Proceedings and Debates in the Convention to Revise the Constitution of the State of Michigan, 1850 (Lansing: R. W. Ingals, State Printers, 1850), pp. 278-284 contains the debate on foreigners voting, pp. 284-296 the debate on colored suffrage. Pierce's speech is on pp. 289-290.

propriety suffrage for all white, single females twenty-one years of age or older. Crouse of Livingston County amended it to "single and married" but the the resolution in either form was not supported by the Convention with no vote reported.⁴⁰

Regarding suffrage the Constitution of 1850 continued the pattern of the one of 1835. White male citizens, aged twenty-one or older and white male inhabitants as of June 24, 1835 could vote. The Constitution of 1850 provided that residents who had declared their intention to become citizens at least six months before an election could also vote if male, white and over twenty-one years of age. Indians also were given the right to vote if male, civilized, native of the United States, twenty-one years of age or older and not a member of a tribe.⁴¹

The Constitutional Convention of 1850 was actively petitioned by residents. The presentation of petitions was one of the first orders of business each day. Petitions were recorded in the Proceedings and Debates. The topic, the number of signatures and the geographic area from which the petition came are usually clear. On the basis of that information Tables 1.1 (p. 23) and 1.2 (p. 24) were constructed.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 37.

⁴¹1850 Constitution of Michigan, Article VII Section 1.

Table 1.1 shows the petitions by topic. The liquor issue was the one which most agitated Michigan residents. Almost half the petitions the convention received concerned that issue. Residents petitioned for outright prohibition, for no authorization to sell (no licensing system for the sale of liquor), and against prohibition. The no-authorization option expressed a position that saw liquor as a moral evil and did not want the state to regulate a moral evil. The qualifications for electors was also a topic of considerable concern, especially for "colored suffrage" as they phrased it. The petitions concerning colored suffrage came from both blacks and whites. On only two other issues were there more than one or two petitions. Workingmen's organizations protested the use of convict labor in Michigan prisons and jails as injurious to the workers economic interests. The petitions concerned with the courts were all from groups of lawyers.

In Table 1.2 the distribution of petitions is broken down by topic and area. Michigan was organized into thirty-two counties in 1850. Residents of twenty-one of them petitioned the convention. Petitions regarding colored suffrage came from eleven counties while liquor petitions came from fourteen counties. There does not seem to be any clear pattern of association among the issues. Wayne County, the most populous in the state, was the only one in which residents petitioned on liquor, colored

TABLE 1.1

PETITIONS PRESENTED TO THE 1850
CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION: BY TOPIC

Liquor	38	(19 prohibitionist, 17 no authority to sell, 2 opposed to prohibition)
Electors	16	(12 favor colored suffrage, 1 oppose colored suffrage, 1 aliens not vote until naturalized, 2 unclear what desired)
Prisons	8	(7 no convict labor competition, 1 about management of prisons)
Courts	7	(7 an independent Supreme Court, 1 the circuit judges compose the Supreme Court)
Public Lands	3	(all for obtaining all U.S. lands)
Taxes	3	(2 re equalization and collection, 1 call for corporations subject to local taxes)
Grand Juries	2	(abolish the institution)
Legislature	2	(1 single member districts, 1 biennial sessions of the legislature)
Militia	2	(1 re location of armory, 1 re encouraging enlistment)
Race	2	(forbid black immigration into the state)
Other	5	(1 each; debt collect, amendments, civilized Indians, townships, ministers no hold public office)
TOTAL	88	

TABLE 1.2

PETITIONS PRESENTED TO THE 1850
CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION: BY AREA AND SELECTED TOPICS

	prohibit liquor	no license liquor	no prohibit	colored suffrage	other	total
Allegan	-	-	-	1	-	1
Berrien	1	-	-	-	4	5
Calhoun	2	-	-	-	1	3
Cass	-	3	-	-	1	2
Genesee	-	-	-	1	-	1
Hillsdale	-	1	-	1	-	2
Ingham	-	-	-	1	-	1
Ionia	2	-	-	-	-	2
Jackson	3	-	1	1	2	7
Kalamazoo	4	-	-	-	2	6
Kent	-	-	-	-	4	4
Lapeer	1	-	-	1	2	4
Lenawee	-	-	-	1	1	2
Livingston	1	-	-	-	1	2
Macomb	2	-	-	1	1	4
Monroe	-	-	-	1	1	2
Oakland	1	2	-	-	1	4
Saginaw	-	-	-	-	1	1
St. Joseph	2	-	-	-	2	4
Washtenaw	-	1	-	3	-	4
Wayne	0	10	1	1	12	19
unknown	-	-	-	-	0	1
TOTALS	19	17	2	13	37	88

suffrage and a variety of other issues. The only petitions delegates indicated women signed were the ones concerned with liquor issues.

The Constitution of 1850 remained in operation until replaced by the one written in 1907-1908. All principal state officials were elected including the judges. The circuit court system was established in the Constitution of 1850. Reflecting the opinions acquired in the boom-and-bust economic cycle of the the early 1840s, special acts of incorporation were forbidden and banking laws could take effect only after a majority vote of approval by the voters. The new Constitution mandated three months of free schooling in each district. The requirement was to take effect five years after the Constitution was ratified. The State University's Regents were to be elected by the people. In order to satisfy prohibitionist demands, the convention adopted a provision which forbade the granting of licenses for the sale of spirits and intoxicating liquors.⁴²

The Constitution of 1850 enlarged and more securely established certain property rights for married women. The "Exemptions" article gave the wife a right to hold the homestead, and its income, rents and profits while she remained a widow. A female could hold property held

⁴²Dunbar, Michigan, pp. 424-425; Bald, Michigan in Four Centuries, p. 256.

before marriage as a sole femme and be able to inherit. A wife was not liable for her husbands debt's. A married woman could also write her own will.⁴³ These provisions strengthened the property rights of married women which had been created in 1844 by the legislature.

In the years after the Constitution of 1850 went into effect, the legislature saw petitions from time to time about women's rights or woman suffrage. The House Judiciary Committee on 26 January 1853 reported it "unwise" to allow the woman in a marriage to have the full exercise of her rights to property as if not married.⁴⁴ In 1855 another attempt was made to obtain the same right. The concern was to bring the law of 1844 into conformity with the Constitution of 1850 which had expanded the rights obtained under that law.⁴⁵

On February 5, 1855 James H. Parker of Lenawee County submitted a petition signed by Betsey P. Parker and sixty-one others asking for the extension of the elective franchise to women.⁴⁶ The petition was referred to the Elections Committee. The Elections Committee reported on

⁴³Michigan Constitutional Convention 1850, Proceedings, pp. 672, 740. The married women's exemptions were inserted in the Constitution with no debate.

⁴⁴Michigan House, Journal, 26 January 1853, p. 201.

⁴⁵Michigan House, Journal, 10 January 1855, p. 63.

⁴⁶Michigan House, Journal, 5 February 1855 p. 368.

February 12. The ladies were called "strong minded." The committee because of gallantry was

opposed to imposing upon the women of our country the politicians sorry part... care of political life rather than the more congenial fostering of those domestic relations, which now make women little less an angel. ...when the scenes of excitement and brute force that now prevail at the election poll shall give way to the same holy impulses that control womanhood, your committee would gladly see the elective franchise given to the Betsys, Lucindas and Electras on an equal right with men.

Representative Parker found the report "contemptuous in its tone, uncourteous and ungentlemanly in its language and unworthy of the approbation of this house." His resolution to that effect was laid on the table.⁴⁷

The House session of 1857 received five petitions for woman suffrage. The House session of 1859 received fourteen petitions regarding equal political rights. These were the first years that more than one petition appeared for either topic. The petitions came from Wayne, Lenawee and Washtenaw Counties. In 1859 the House Special Committee on Constitutional Amendments reported favorably on colored suffrage. Woman suffrage was another matter. The committee agreed that taxation and representation are inseparable but woman suffrage was such an "innovation" that the popular will would not sustain it and therefore it

⁴⁷Michigan House, House Documents 1855, Report 31 "Report of the Committee on Elections" p. 1; Michigan House, Journal, 12 February 1855, p. 606.

should not be made law. To grant woman suffrage would not accomplish the objective of its proponents which was "the enlargement of the sphere of woman's influence." 48

The Senate also was petitioned regarding woman suffrage. In 1857 the Senate Committee of State Affairs reported that woman suffrage was "...an innovation... [which demands]...candid and careful examination." The committee supported the idea pointing out that woman was a citizen and subject to the laws, and that taxation and representation went together. Later in the report the committee waxed less prosaic.

The Author of nature allows the great and small each its place together which together yield perfection of the whole. Relations of life therefore should be so adjusted as to leave personal identity to develop spontaneously its own forces of nature and thus occupy just such positions as congenial qualification command. Law should be instituted for no other purpose than to establish a relative equality and to secure the most perfect development, and complete happiness of each and every subject; and man fails to imitate the Supreme Legislative authority, and falls below the high demands of his nature when he neglects to recognize for others that which he claims for himself.

48 Michigan House, House Documents, 1859 Document 25, "Report of the Special Committee on Constitutional Amendments relative to the right of suffrage" pp. 1-2; or see Michigan House Journal, 7 February 1859, p. 599.

The committee concluded by observing that woman would humanize public life.⁴⁹

In 1859 the Senate Select Committee upon Amendments to the Constitution did not concur in the report of 1857. They declined to call for the elective franchise for women because

such an innovation ... [would]...so destroy and overthrow the high regard for the female character ...as to really defeat the object which friends of the measure seem to have in view, viz; the enlargement of the sphere of female influence.⁵⁰

The Senate was petitioned for equal franchise rights in 1861 but declined to make any recommendations.⁵¹

People in Michigan were moved by the same reform currents that circulated through the rest of the county. The temperance movement was strong enough to get liquor licenses forbidden in the 1850 Constitution and to put strong pressure on the legislature for other prohibitory legislation. Anti-slavery sentiment was strong. The underground railway had routes through Michigan to Ontario, Canada. Michigan passed a strong personal liberty law after

⁴⁹ Michigan Senate, Senate Documents, 1857, Document 27, "Report of the Committee on State Affairs upon the memorial of Ladies, praying the Legislature to grant them the privilege of the Elective Franchise," pp. 1-3, 5,6.

⁵⁰ Michigan Senate, Senate Documents 1859, Document 12, "Report of the Select Committee upon Amendments to the Constitution," p. 2

⁵¹ Michigan Senate, Journal, 7 March 1861, "Report of the Committee on Privileges and Elections" pp. 834-5.

the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850. In 1854 Michigan anti-slavery people organized and ran a full slate of state office candidates. That meeting in Jackson took the name Republican for the party. From their success in 1854 until 1932, Michigan was a citadel of Republicanism, the party rarely lost a statewide election.⁵²

Michigan sent more than 90,000 men to serve in the Civil War. One Michigan woman, Sarah Emma Edmonds, served under the name Franklin Thompson for two years. She later received a pension and was the only woman admitted to full membership in the Grand Army of the Republic. Michigan women worked for victory in the Soldier's Aid Societies and by taking up the work left by the men who served.⁵³

Michigan legislatures were little petitioned about suffrage during the Civil War. In 1863 a group of women petitioned the House to have woman suffrage submitted to the people. A petition for colored suffrage appears in the House Journals for 1864. In January 1867 Michigan ratified the Fourteenth Amendment.⁵⁴ The Michigan Constitution of 1850 provided that the issue of a new constitution be submitted to the

⁵²Dunbar, Michigan pp. 418-420. In chapter 18, pp. 525-546, he discusses political party patterns from the Civil War to the Depression under the title "Citadel of Republicanism".

⁵³Ibid., pp. 454-455, 457.

⁵⁴Michigan House, Journal, 9 February 1863 p. 408, 18 January 1865, pp. 159-165; Michigan House, Journal, 15 January 1867 p. 125; Michigan Senate, Journal, 17 January 1867, p. 162.

people every 16 years. The voters approved a Constitutional Convention for 1867.

Advocates of woman suffrage met a variety of responses in the legislature in the years before the Constitutional Convention of 1867. Sometimes requests for woman suffrage and justifications for it were received respectfully. At other times they were mocked. In the arguments presented in the various House and Senate reports the clear outlines of the two basic positions regarding woman suffrage can be seen. One side argued that woman as citizen, subject and taxpayer had the right to signify her consent to the government and be represented by voting. The other side felt that to give woman the vote would be to allow her to enter into the public sphere and that would somehow lessen or damage her influence and power in the one sphere nineteenth century gladly gave woman, the home. The national debate on citizenship and suffrage that accompanied the debates and ratification struggles over the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments and Reconstruction would do little to alter the main arguments on each side. The national debate would alter the proportions on the two sides, and lessen the ridicule in the Legislature.

CHAPTER 2

1867-1874: "A GREAT WORK BEFORE US"

James Stone, 1874

As the Civil War ended national debates developed about what to do with the states of the Confederacy and what to do about slavery and those of African descent. The answers emerged gradually in the three Civil War era amendments to the Federal Constitution and the various reconstruction and civil rights acts that Congress passed. Congressional debates on the Thirteenth Amendment focused on two issues: the need to protect property (slaves) and the power to amend the Constitution (nature of sovereignty).¹ The Thirteenth Amendment abolishing slavery was sent to the states in February 1865 and proclaimed ratified in December of the same year. The abolition of slavery raised starkly the issue of the status of the freed slaves in American society and forced Americans to confront issues about the nature and content of citizenship in the United States which they had avoided in the pre-Civil War

¹Edward R. Lewis, A History of American Political Thought from the Civil War to the World War (New York: Macmillan Company, 1937; reprint ed., New York: Octagon Books, 1969), pp. 2-11.

period. The answers would have significance for both blacks and women.

By the end of the Revolutionary period Americans had identified three major principles of republican citizenship. Citizenship rested on consent, it was uniform without invidious gradations and it ought to confer equal rights. Negroes and Indians were consciously not included.² Women went unmentioned. Questions left unclear by the Constitution and debates surrounding its ratification included: who was a citizen; what rights were included; how did one become a citizen; and was citizenship dual or singular?³ The federated republic forged by the Constitution conferred membership rights and obligations that were both local (i.e. state) and national. This dual status created a number of problems, not examined at the time of the writing of the Constitution or immediately thereafter, which emerged during the debates on the admission of Missouri to the Union in 1821.⁴

The debate focused on a provision of the proposed Missouri Constitution which barred free Negroes and mulattoes from entering the state. Were free Negroes citizens? If they were, the provision violated the federal

²James H. Kettner, The Development of American Citizenship, 1608-1870 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press 1978), pp. 3-10.

³Ibid., pp. 231-2.

⁴Ibid., pp. 248-286 discuss this issue in detail.

Constitution's guarantee of equal privileges and immunities. The position taken by Congressmen from southern states was that free blacks were persons, but either aliens or denizens. As Senator Alexander Smith (Va) phrased it "not every person...born in a state and born free could become a member of the political community." The position of Congressmen from northern states was that free blacks were citizens with rights to acquire and bequeath property, religious freedom, personal protection and with obligations to pay taxes and bear arms. "If being native and free born of parents belonging to no other tribe or nation does not constitute a citizen of this country, then I am at a loss to know in what manner citizenship is acquired by birth." was the way Representative Joseph Hempill (Pa) phrased it. The debates dragged on for months and settled nothing. In the end the clause was left standing but Congress declared it unenforcable.⁵

In the years following the Missouri debates, the state courts responded variously to the question of free Negroes citizenship. Northern courts tended to defend the idea that free native-born Negroes were citizens but denied that the fundamental privileges of citizenship included suffrage, a right which few states before the Civil War

⁵Annals of Congress 16th Cong. 2d sess. pp. 556, 599, quoted in Kettner, The Development of American Citizenship, pp. 312-314.

were willing to grant to them. Courts in the slave states increasingly argued that the lack of rights (i.e. discriminatory laws) proved that free Negroes were not citizens. In the North the idea developed that since free Negroes were citizens their rights should be protected against the wishes of individual states. For most southerners that idea was frightening. It meant that Southern states were not free to identify their own citizens and were subject to the dictates of another government.⁶

There did gradually emerge some agreement on what rights of citizenship the states were obligated to respect. All states agreed that the right to acquire, possess and protect property and life and liberty were fundamental rights which each was obligated to respect. There was no agreement that access to federal tribunals, the right of habeas corpus or the right to pass through another state on business were among the fundamental rights of citizenship the states must respect.⁷

The federal courts avoided the issue until the Dred Scott case reached the Supreme Court. Chief Justice Taney concluded Negroes could not enjoy the privileges and immunities of citizenship. His position rested on two premises. The first was that state and national

⁶Ibid., pp. 314-324.

⁷Ibid., pp. 258-259.

citizenship were separate in both theory and fact except for naturalization. The second was that national citizenship did not derive automatically from birth but from descent of those who formed the political community in 1789. Justice Curtis in his dissent argued that state and national citizenship were joined: if an individual black was a citizen in Ohio or Massachusetts, that person remained a citizen in Mississippi or South Carolina.⁸ These differing legal positions went unresolved before the Civil War. After the war, Congress confronted the issue.

In the summer and fall of 1865 public discussion turned from the abolition of slavery to the definition of the status of the freedmen and the right of suffrage for Negroes. Concepts that would go into section 1 of the Fourteenth Amendment began to receive much thought and discussion in the press.⁹ Section 1 of the amendment defines citizen as one "born or naturalized in the United States". That person automatically holds citizenship in the state in which he or she resides. The section also guarantees citizens the "privileges and immunities" of citizenship, "due process" of the laws and "equal protection" of the laws.

⁸Ibid., pp. 324-331.

⁹Joseph B. James, The Framing of the Fourteenth Amendment Illinois Studies in the Social Sciences vol. 37, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1956), pp. 21-33.

Congressional Radical Republicans seeking Negro suffrage went about it cautiously. The public and Congress both needed to be educated to the idea. At the same time there was a general consensus within the Republican Party that whatever was done should ensure party ascendancy in Congress. In the Fourteenth Amendment Congress went at Negro suffrage by the back door in Section 2. Representation in Congress would be reduced for those states which denied the vote to male citizens on grounds other than crime or participation in rebellion in the same proportion as the number of male citizens who were denied the vote was to the total number of male citizens in the population of that state. (my emphasis).

Women's rights advocates were deeply distressed when the word "male" appeared with "citizen" in Section 2. The use of "male" with "citizen" could imply that females were not citizens or it could permit unequal citizenship, one male, one female. Increasingly, citizenship in the nineteenth-century in the United States was based on the direct relationship between the individual and the government, not on the individual's role in the family as it had been in the seventeenth century. The wording of the Fourteenth Amendment suggested that political citizenship was male and individual and the relationship with the

government was direct.¹⁰ Where this left female citizenship was unclear. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony organized a petition drive against the use of "male" in connection with "citizen" in the proposed amendment and by the end of the Congressional session had more than 10,000 signatures.¹¹ But the word "male" stayed in the amendment. In June of 1866 the amendment was sent to the states and proclaimed ratified in July of 1868.

During the struggle over the political status of black males in the United States, the thirty-year connection between women's rights and Negro rights was gradually severed. Pre-Civil War women's rights advocates had almost all been abolitionists. Advocates of Negro rights had often been advocates of women's rights. The women's rights movement had used the abolitionist papers to agitate for women's rights. Women's rights advocates now divided over whether they should insist on the whole loaf of universal suffrage -- both male and female, black and white -- or settle for a half loaf of black male suffrage. The debate was conducted primarily within the framework of the American Equal Rights Association (AERA) which was formed in May of 1866 by women's rights advocates to work

¹⁰Ellen Carol DuBois, Feminism and Suffrage: The Emergence of an Independent Woman's Movement in America; 1848-1869 (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1978), p. 58.

¹¹James, The Framing of the Fourteenth Amendment, p. 56.

for equal rights for blacks and women. The association initially focused on state issues seeking to remove racial and sexual restrictions from state constitutions. The two major campaigns were in New York for constitutional revision and in Kansas where separate referenda on Negro and woman suffrage were submitted to the voters in 1867. The New York campaign was only a partial success. Negro males were enfranchised on the same terms as white males but women remained unenfranchised.¹²

The Kansas campaign was the immediate background for the split in the AERA. The association's AERA effort for universal suffrage (female and Negro) in Kansas ran not only into indifference regarding woman suffrage from Republicans and abolitionists in Kansas but outright hostility and attacks from the former. The campaign emphasized the difference between those willing to settle for half a loaf and those insisting on both Negro and woman suffrage. Abolitionists and woman suffrage advocates in the AERA found themselves with a choice: accept the Republican leadership's choice to push for black suffrage or reject Republican leadership and seek a base for woman suffrage independent of most abolitionists and Republicans.

¹²DuBois, Feminism and Suffrage, discusses the women's rights-abolitionist link pp. 31-40. For the founding of the American Equal Rights Association see particularly pp. 64-67. The New York campaign is discussed on pp. 87-88.

Stanton and Anthony chose the second alternative and set out to find new alliances, constituencies and strategies. Lucy Stone and most other women's rights advocates within the abolitionist tradition chose the first alternative.¹³

While the Kansas campaign was being waged, Michigan held a constitutional convention to review and revise the 1850 Constitution. It was controlled by the Republican Party. The Democrats pushed for a separate submission of the manhood suffrage issue which would remove the qualifier "white" from the definition of elector, but the Republicans steamrolled every attempt.¹⁴ There was little petitioning or discussion regarding foreigner's voting or Negro suffrage. Only the Congregational Churches of Michigan memorialized the 1867 Constitutional Convention in favor of Negro suffrage. Given the pattern of petitioning for Negro suffrage before the Civil War, especially during the Constitutional Convention of 1850, the lack of petitions to the Constitutional Convention of 1867 suggests three possibilities: 1) no interest (not likely), 2) a conspiracy of silence or 3) general agreement on granting it. An examination of the papers of party,

¹³Ibid., pp. 101-103. The Kansas campaign is discussed in detail pp. 79-104.

¹⁴Leslie H. Fishel Jr. "Northern Prejudice and Negro Suffrage 1865-1870," Journal of Negro History 39 (January 1954):21.

abolitionist and Negro leaders in Michigan might suggest an answer.

The issue of woman suffrage in Michigan did generate some interest. Of the 677 petitions and memorials recorded in the Convention Debates and Proceedings, eight-four were on woman's suffrage. There was no woman suffrage or women's rights organization in the state. The petitions appear to have been circulated on individual initiative and without any coordination or central direction. Five hundred, thirty six petitions and memorials were on the liquor question. The liquor question battle was fought out basically between those who wanted some kind of license system and those who opposed it. Forthright prohibition drew somewhat less support. Fifty-seven petitions and memorials covered other issues. Women appeared as petitioners on the liquor question and woman suffrage. Inhabitants of forty-five of the fifty-nine counties in Michigan petitioned the Convention. In addition seven state-wide organizations memorialized or petitioned the Convention. Those are not included in the tables and charts which follow.

In looking for possible patterns of association in the counties between woman suffrage advocacy and other issues two tables were constructed, one for the counties from which woman's suffrage petitions were received (Table 2.1 p. 42) and one for the counties where inhabitants did not petition on woman's suffrage. (Table 2.2 p. 43).

TABLE 2.1
1867 CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION
COUNTIES WITH WOMAN SUFFRAGE PETITIONS

COUNTY	WOMAN SUFFRAGE	PROHI- BITION	S47A4	LICENSE	OTHER	TOTAL
ALLEGAN	3	2	7	1	0	13
BERRIEN	1	0	5	6	2	14
BRANCH	5	0	5	1	3	14
CALHOUN	3	0	15	3	3	24
CASS	4	1	2	2	0	9
CLINTON	9	1	6	5	0	21
EATON	1	0	5	3	1	10
GENESEE	2	3	5	3	3	16
HILLSDALE	3	3	14	2	4	26
INGHAM	2	1	8	9	1	21
IONIA	3	6	20	5	0	34
ISABELLA	2	0	2	0	0	4
JACKSON	1	0	6	5	1	13
KALAMAZOO	6	0	12	2	1	21
KENT	3	2	30	19	1	55
LAPEER	2	0	4	4	5	15
LENAWEE	10	7	9	4	3	33
OAKLAND	2	5	15	2	2	26
ST. CLAIR	2	0	3	7	2	14
ST. JOSEPH	14	1	8	2	0	25
TUSCOLA	2	0	1	0	0	3
VANBUREN	3	0	25	0	3	31
WASHTENAW	1	1	4	4	1	11
TOTALS	84	33	211	89	36	453

TABLE 2.2

1867 CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION
COUNTIES WITHOUT WOMAN SUFFRAGE PETITIONS

COUNTY	PROHIBITION	S47A4	LICENSE	OTHER	TOTAL
BARRY	2	1	2	0	5
BAY	0	8	1	0	9
GRATIOT	0	2	2	0	4
HOUGHTON	0	0	1	1	2
HURON	0	1	0	0	1
KEEWENAW	0	0	1	0	1
LIVINGSTON	0	3	3	1	7
MACOMB	0	18	5	2	25
MARQUETTE	0	0	0	1	1
MECOSTA	0	2	0	0	2
MONROE	0	3	28	2	33
MONTCALM	0	4	1	0	5
MUSKEGON	0	3	3	3	9
NEWAYGO	1	0	1	2	4
OCEANA	1	1	0	0	2
ONTONAGON	0	1	1	0	2
OTTAWA	1	5	2	0	8
SAGINAW	0	6	7	1	14
SANILAC	0	11	2	0	13
SHIAWASSEE	0	7	3	2	12
WAYNE, DETROIT	15	6	10	2	33
WAYNE, REST	2	5	12	0	19
TOTALS	22	87	85	17	211

Petitions on the liquor issue were grouped by the three basic positions which Michigan residents held about it. Prohibition petitions advocated the prohibition of the sale and manufacture of distilled spirits and usually also fermented beverages. S47A4 designates the advocacy of forbidding the legislature to issue licenses to sell alcohol which the Constitution of 1850 did in section 47 of Article IV. Petitions which supported the retention of the clause or its spirit are listed there. While the section ensured the state was morally pure by having nothing to do with liquor, it did not stop the sale or manufacture of liquor in Michigan. The clause simply prevented regulation. License indicates the petitioners sought some form of license system, often described in the petitions as "well regulated" or "safe and secure", so that the state could regulate the sale and manufacture of liquor and tax it.

The only pattern revealed is that counties which petitioned on woman's suffrage had a larger percentage of their liquor petitions in favor of Article IV, section 47, the no-license position, than did the counties which did not petition on woman's suffrage. Table 2.3, p. 45, summarizes the differences. Dannenbaum's theory that women supporting temperance saw it as a matter for moral suasion while men increasingly saw the liquor problem as a matter

for legislation suggests why this pattern might appear.¹⁵ Supporting section 47 of Article IV in the 1850 Constitution was a moral position to take. Most activist women in the 1860 were in reform movements such as temperance or in benevolent activities of some kind and were committed to moral suasion rather than political force to address the liquor problem. Most of the petitions on woman suffrage received by the convention were signed by at least as many women as men. This suggests that petitioning on woman suffrage, in some degree, captures a woman's willingness to assume public roles or existing activism in public roles. In areas with activist women, one would expect large numbers of them to be concerned about temperance and if Dannenbaum is accurate in urging that women were disproportionately among those who regarded the liquor problem as a moral problem, then they would be strong and numerous supporters of keeping S47A4 in the constitution.

¹⁵Jed Dannenbaum, "The Origins of Temperance Activism and Militancy Among American Women," Journal of Social History 15 (Winter 1981):235-252.

TABLE 2.3

COMPARISON OF PERCENTAGE OF PETITIONS ON THE
LIQUOR ISSUE, 1867 MICHIGAN CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

	PROHIBITION	NO LICENSE (S47A4)	LICENSE
COUNTIES W/WOMAN SUFFRAGE PETITIONS	10%	63%	27%
COUNTIES W/O WOMAN SUFFRAGE PETITIONS	11%	45%	44%

Debates in the Committee of the Whole on the definition of electors consumed most of the attention on Saturday, July 20, and Monday, July 22 and some time on Tuesday, July 23 with woman suffrage occupying some of the debate. Indian suffrage consumed the largest number of pages of any single topic in the debate on Electors, sixteen pages in all. During the debate the question was raised, why grant suffrage to "wild, savage Indians" and not to women?¹⁶ Woman suffrage occupied three pages of debate as did residency and age of voter. How to provide for voting by persons in the United States armed forces took up five pages of debate.¹⁷ The issue of woman suffrage came up again on August 12 when the Convention sat

¹⁶The Debates and Proceedings of the Constitutional Convention of the State of Michigan, Convened at the City of Lansing, Wednesday May 15, 1867. Officially reported by Wm. Blair Lord and David Wolfe Brown. 2 volumes. (Lansing: John A. Kerr & Co., Printers to the State, 1867), II:259-275.

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 275-278, 252-255, 255-258, 284-289.

as the Convention rather than as a Committee of the Whole. Eleven pages of debate were spent on the issue of deleting "male" from the description of electors. Supporters of woman suffrage tried to get the convention to submit woman's suffrage separately to the voters as a possible amendment to the Constitution. They lost on a roll call vote, 31 yeas to 34 nays.¹⁸

The arguments on each side are familiar to students of the issue. In the July 22 debate supporters had urged woman suffrage on grounds of abstract right, but also as expedient. This argument urged that if women had an indirect influence on men and policy, why not give them a direct influence with the vote? It further insisted that to exclude women the convention must establish either a woman's unfitness to vote or a public danger in her voting. If women were weaker than men, all the more reason to give them the ballot since the "... weak need protection against the strong. You grant the surest protection to an individual when you give the ballot to that individual."¹⁹ Another delegate observed that if women voted, elections would be as orderly as a church. Since votes were given to the foreign-born, the vote should be given to women "who are more capable intelligently and virtuously voting than

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 766-775, 791.

¹⁹William S. Farmer, Ibid., p. 275.

the foreign born"²⁰ Opponents sought to maintain the "sacred right of the domestic circle, the protection and enjoyment of home life, the prevention of strife and wrangling in the domestic circle."²¹ Another opponent expressed the conviction that women did not really want the vote. Out of a population of about 125,000-150,000 women over 21 years of age, only about 2,500 had petitioned for the the right to vote. ²²

In the August 12 debate delegates elaborated on points made in the July debates. The doctrine of the consent of the governed was advanced in support of the argument that voting was a natural right not a privilege. The same supporter attacked objections as "puerile", arguing that only women were fit to decide the fitness of women voting and that those who claimed women did not want the vote were getting their information from those intimidated by ridicule.²³ Another advocate pointed out that if the husband represented the married woman, who represented the unmarried or widowed woman? The same delegate suggested that women as voters would be less bound by party.²⁴ An opponent responded:

²⁰Nathaniel I Daniels, *Ibid.*, pp. 277-278.

²¹William B. Williams, *Ibid.*, p. 278.

²²Jacob VanValkenburgh *Ibid.*, p. 276.

²³Marsh Giddings, *Ibid.*, pp. 768-770.

²⁴Henry R. Lovell, *Ibid.*, pp. 771-772.

who shall vote is a political question...within the competency of those exercising or representing the sovereignty of the state to fix the limit and decide who shall be and who shall not be permitted to vote;... no violation of abstract justice, no infringement of unalienable rights when they do so.²⁵

The roll call votes in the Constitutional Convention of 1867 provide an opportunity to examine whether woman suffrage supporters were of a single party, supported temperance in great numbers or were disproportionately supporters of colored suffrage. The statistic known as a chi-square allows the researcher to quickly estimate if there is any relationship between two variables. Using the statistical package MIDAS, the roll call votes of the delegates to the 1867 Convention on No license (NL) a temperance position, colored suffrage (CS), and woman suffrage (WS), plus the party affiliation of the delegates were entered in a data matrix and chi-squares for woman suffrage and each of the other variables computed. Table 2.4 below indicates the results. In the table below none of the chi-squares is above 1.0. This indicates that there is little or no relationship between the vote on each of the issues given and woman suffrage.²⁶

²⁵DeWitt C. Chapin, *Ibid.*, p. 773.

²⁶Hubert M. Blalock Jr., Social Statistics (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979), pp. 279-292 discusses chi-square calculation and usage.

In contrast, party and colored suffrage had a chi-square of 46.08. All eighteen Democrats voting on the issue opposed colored suffrage and 86% of the Republicans supported it.

TABLE 2.4

1867 CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION SUMMARY TABLE
ISSUE LINKAGE, WOMAN SUFFRAGE AND SELECTED VARIABLES

PARTY	.758
NO LICENSE	.005
COLORED SUFFRAGE	.591

The Constitution devised in 1867 was rejected by the voters. The provision for manhood suffrage regardless of race was widely regarded as the reason the Constitution was not ratified by the voters. After Michigan had ratified the Fifteenth Amendment in March 1869, the state legislature sent to the voters the question of allowing Negroes to vote. In November of 1869 colored suffrage was narrowly approved, 54,105 to 50,598.²⁷

Congress had begun work on the Fifteenth Amendment, which guarantees the right to vote regardless of race, color or previous condition of servitude, in December 1868 when it convened after the 1868 Congressional and Presidential elections. Republican Congressmen knew they

²⁷Willis F. Dunbar, Michigan: A History of the Wolverine State, rev. ed by George S. May. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1980), p. 446. (Hereafter cited as Dunbar & May, Michigan.)

had to move carefully. Voters in northern referenda between 1865 and 1868 had frequently rejected Negro suffrage. Of the eleven referenda in states and territories nine had resulted in rejection.²⁸ In debates two primary objectives emerged. One would ensure Negro suffrage in the North, thereby securing a Republican Party dominance and to do it without submitting the issue to the voters, since a Constitutional amendment could be ratified by the state legislatures and the Republicans controlled twenty-two of the thirty-seven state legislatures to which the amendment would be submitted. The second objective was to make sure the amendment would protect the southern Negro against disenfranchisement.²⁹ The amendment was sent to the states in February 1869 and proclaimed in March of 1870.

The Fifteenth Amendment brought tensions regarding strategy and tactics among woman rights supporters in the American Equal Rights Association to a head. The tension resulted in an explosion over linking Negro and women suffrage and relationships with the Republican Party. The

²⁸William Gillette, The Right to Vote: The Politics and the Passage of the Fifteenth Amendment, The Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science, Series 83, number 1. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1965) pp. 25-26. Voting against Negro suffrage in 1865 were Colorado, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Minnesota & Wisconsin; in 1866, Nebraska & Ohio; in 1867, Kansas; in 1868, Michigan. In 1868 Iowa & Minnesota approved Negro suffrage.

²⁹Ibid., p. 49.

immediate issue was Frederick Douglass's motion to give unqualified support to the Fifteenth Amendment offered at the AERA meeting in May 1869. The split ran along the tactical and political lines which had developed as a result of the Kansas campaign. It also had a geographic dimension. By and large the New England women and the male abolitionists supported the motion, New York and western women tended to oppose it. When the oratory ended, for all practical purposes, so did the American Equal Rights Association.³⁰

At a reception for the women delegates to the AERA meeting held two days after the meeting adjourned, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony led in the formation of the the National Woman's Suffrage Association (NWSA). In the November of 1869 the American Woman's Suffrage Association (AWSA) was organized in Cleveland. The split would last twenty-one years. The sources of the split were numerous. There were genuine tactical differences regarding the linking of black and woman suffrage. There were real ideological differences regarding the family and divorce. One historian suggests that the split represented a power struggle between Stanton and Lucy Stone. Another stresses the differing attitudes of the westerners led by

³⁰DuBois, Feminism and Suffrage. pp. 162-202 is the most recent complete discussion of the break up of the American Equal Rights Association.

Stanton and the easterners led by Stone regarding the Republican Party and what it would do for women after the Fifteenth Amendment was ratified.³¹ In operation the National put most of its efforts into a federal amendment, the American concerned itself with working for state amendments. The creation of the National and American Woman Suffrage Associations in 1869 marked the emergence of woman suffrage as a movement in its own right with its own organizations, leaders and constituencies.

The new constituency was found among the members of the developing woman's club movement. These women were in many ways middle class descendants of those who entered the reform societies of the early nineteenth century. Initially the NWSA contacts were with Sorosis and the AWSA contacts were with the New England Woman's Club. Both clubs justified their existence in terms of self improvement and action to erode the doctrine of separate spheres by invoking the domesticity and morality ladies were supposed to embody.³² The two clubs took differing approaches to suffrage. Sorosis founder Jane Cunningham Croly discouraged discussion of religion and suffrage. The

³¹James M. McPherson, "Abolitionists, Woman Suffrage and the Negro, 1865-1869" Mid-America 47 (January 1965): 47; DuBois, Feminism and Suffrage, pp. 199-200.

³²DuBois, Feminism and Suffrage, describes Stanton's and Anthony's search for a constituency in pp. 126-161. See also Karen J. Blair, The Clubwoman as Feminist: True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914. (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, Inc. 1980), p. 15.

New England Woman's Club quickly committed itself to suffrage and sought women to run for the Boston school committee. A woman won in 1874, fifteen years before women were eligible to vote for the office.³³ Similar clubs devoted to self improvement and varieties of domestic feminism grew in Michigan. The Kalamazoo Ladies Library Society was founded in 1852. Battle Creek had one by 1864. Other early clubs in Michigan were in Grand Rapids (1869) and Detroit (1872). In 1875 the state-wide Women's Christian Temperance Union (W.C.T.U.) was organized.³⁴ Lucinda Hinsdale Stone, "the mother of women's clubs" in Michigan was a founder of the Kalamazoo society and the American Woman's Suffrage Association.

No Michigan residents were at the meeting that founded the NWSA. Nine Michigan residents signed the call for the Cleveland convention of November 1869 which founded the AWSA. Only two of the eight delegates from Michigan in November were signers of the call.³⁵ When the Michigan State Woman Suffrage Association (MSWSA) was formed at Battle Creek, 20 January 1870 four of its officers and executive committee were people connected with the Cleveland Convention. MSWSA did not affiliate with either

³³Blair, The Clubwoman as Feminist, pp. 23, 34-36.

³⁴Dunbar & May, Michigan p. 687.

³⁵HWS, 3:757,759.

of the two national organizations, though the issue was debated with vigor.³⁶

By the time MSWSA was formed, Michigan women in some areas were already doing more than petitioning. In Sturgis, they were voting. The Sturgis Journal reported the first instance, one in which the votes were only symbolic. The ladies were urged to do something in a prohibition campaign in the city. The ladies, 120 strong, cast votes in a separate ballot box since they could not deposit them in the regular box, not being entitled to vote on the issue. They voted 114 in favor of prohibition, 6 opposed to it. In school issues, on the other hand, the legislature in 1867 had rewritten the description of school electors. Section 145 of the Primary School law read "The words 'qualified elector' shall be taken and construed to mean and include all taxable persons residing in the district of the age of twenty one years, and who have resided within three months next preceding the time of voting." Former State Superintendent John M. Gregory stated that this meant without distinction of sex, color or nationality. The Sturgis Star printed Gregory's opinion and published a notice in which the ladies eligible were urged to meet in Mrs. Pendleton's parlor to consider exercising the privilege of voting at the August 1868 school meeting. The Star noted that a woman who owned "a

³⁶Ibid., 3:515-516

watch, cow, buggy, or personal property of any kind subject to tax, or who has real estate in her own name , or jointly with her husband, can vote" in school elections.³⁷

MSWSA memorialized the legislature at each regular session and some special sessions. In 1871 the Association met in Lansing while the Legislature was in session. In the evenings on both March 1 and March 2 the House chamber was made available to the convention for public lectures on woman suffrage over objections of some members. Three different women spoke over those two nights. Susan B. Anthony, speaking on March 2, was the only national leader mentioned. The memorial was sent to the relevant committee in each House on March 3 and apparently buried, as no report is recorded. In each house, Mrs. Mary T. Lathrop, the Association President, presented the memorial and addressed the house. The memorial stressed taxation without representation. In each house there was some procedural maneuvering before Mrs. Lathrop was allowed to speak.³⁸

Other areas of the country were also experiencing suffrage activity of various types. In 1870, both Wyoming and Utah territories enfranchised women. In Utah, the

³⁷Ibid., 3:514-515 quotes The Revolution of 30 April 1868 and 3 September 1868.

³⁸Michigan House, Journal, 27 February 1871, p. 945; 1 March 1871, p. 1022; 3 March 1871, pp. 1104-05; Michigan Senate, Journal, 3 March 1871, p. 809.

Mormon Church brought about woman suffrage to serve its own advantage in a struggle to maintain its power in Utah. One issue was certainly polygamy for which the church leaders sought support and defense among the women voters in their struggle for Utah's statehood and noninterference from territorial governors in the matter of polygamy.³⁹ In Wyoming, party advantage, some logrolling, persuasive women and public relations seem to have contributed to the decision of the territorial legislature to approve the idea. Once on the voting lists, women in Wyoming were eligible for jury duty. That issue raised even more fuss than woman suffrage, but Wyoming women did both without either their homes or the government of Wyoming falling apart.⁴⁰

Vermont's Constitutional Convention of 1870, rejected woman suffrage without debate and with only one vote in favor despite efforts of both local and New England woman suffrage advocates in an extensive canvass of the state. Most of the state newspapers had opposed the idea because it would destroy the cohesiveness of the family and

³⁹Alan P. Grimes, The Puritan Ethic and Woman Suffrage, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), pp. 34-41; Eleanor Flexner, Century Of Struggle: The Woman's Rights Movement in the United States, rev.ed., (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, Belknap Press, 1975), pp. 165-166.

⁴⁰Grimes, Puritan Ethic, p. 54; Flexner, Century of Struggle, pp. 163-164.

respect for men, because women were unfit for the ballot as their sphere in life was different from men's and because the ballot would be an unnecessary burden for them.⁴¹

In 1871 some Michigan women tried to vote using the Fourteenth Amendment as justification. The idea was the brainchild of Francis Minor, a Missouri lawyer, and his wife Virginia and first appeared in the resolutions of a St. Louis woman's suffrage convention in 1869. The Minors sent a copy of the resolutions and Virginia L. Minor's speech containing the same idea to The Revolution which circulated them throughout the nation and saw to it that every member of Congress got a copy when the NWSA held a convention in Washington D. C. in 1870. Basically the Minors' idea centered on the vote as one of the privileges of citizenship guaranteed by the Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments. With a definition of citizen in the Fourteenth Amendment which made clear that women were citizens if native born, women had the vote if this interpretation withstood court challenges.⁴²

On 25 March 1871 Catherine A. F. Stebbins, accompanied by her husband attempted to register in Detroit and was refused. Her friend, Nanette B. Gardner succeeded

⁴¹Deborah P. Clifford, "An Invasion of Strong-Minded Women: The Newspapers and the Woman Suffrage Campaign in Vermont in 1870," Vermont History 43 (Winter 1975):1-19.

⁴²HWS, 2:407-410.

in registering in another voting district. She claimed she was a person under the Fourteenth Amendment, a taxpayer without representation, and a widow. Peter Hill, the enrolling officer, registered her. The Detroit Board of Registry debated both the Stebbins and Gardner applications and refused to register Stebbins, but let the Gardner registration stand. Gardner voted in 1871 and 1872, Hill sustaining her right even after the Board of Registry voted to censure him. Stebbins tried again in November of 1872 when she presented herself at the polls arguing she had been "wrongfully prevented from registering" and claiming her vote should be counted under the "enforcing act". The election board declined her vote on the advice from City Counselor, D. C. Holbrook, who insisted women could not be register or enrolled. Mary B. Wilson of Battle Creek also succeeded in voting in 1871.⁴³

Gardner certainly was aware of the significance of her actions. A modern public relations person would envy her press coverage and sense of occasion. Press reports suggest Gardner persuaded the registrars to enroll her by a combination of logic and feminine wiles.

⁴³HWS, 3:523-524.

The Damascus blade of her logic was twined with the rose wreath of her smile and all the time the rare products of her conservatory breathed fragrance upon airs unaccustomed to such enchanting odors. Of course the judges yielded. The combined influence of her legal logic, her persuasive petition and her fascinating flattery, were more than mere mortal men could resist....⁴⁴

On two occasions Gardner presented Hill and the other registrars with tokens of esteem. After voting in April, 1871 she gave them a large vase of flowers and a picture representing Justice and Columbia leading women out of darkness through an archway inscribed "Liberty". The women have used as the talisman to open the gates a scroll inscribed "The Fourteenth Amendment." Underneath the picture were some lines from a song composed for the occasion and then "Welcome, beloved daughters" from Columbia.⁴⁵ In 1872 Gardner presented Peter Hill with an address in which she credits him with helping to move Wayne County into the third era of human history by accepting her vote. She calls Hill "...a mountain among his peers for being the first to act as Woman's Emancipator."⁴⁶

⁴⁴"Bouquets and Ballots" Scrapbook (brown) p. 4, Nanette Gardner Papers, MHC-BHL.

⁴⁵"The First Woman Ballot" Scrapbook (brown) p. 1, Nanette Gardner Papers, MHC-BHL.

⁴⁶"The Law of Progress" from the Boston Investigator 5 November 1872 in Scrapbook (brown) p. 9, Nanette Gardner Papers, MHC-BHL.

Gardner had a quieter time of it than did Susan B. Anthony. Anthony was arrested for the "crime of voting" and tried in federal court on the charge of corrupting an election. The trial was conducted by a judge who had his mind made up before it started. Anthony was found guilty and fined two hundred dollars, which she never paid. The case contained so many irregularities that officials never pursued the matter of her not paying the fine for fear the case would be thrown out on appeal and Anthony allowed to vote.⁴⁷

While Gardner voted without legal battles and Anthony was tried in federal court but never able to appeal the case, Virginia Minor's attempts to vote resulted in the court case which settled the issue of a woman's right to vote under the Fourteenth Amendment. When Mrs. Minor was denied registration to vote in St. Louis she sued the Registrar. The case was finally appealed by the Minors to the United States Supreme Court. In Minor v Happersett the Court upheld the right of states to limit the suffrage to males. Suffrage was not coextensive with citizenship⁴⁸

During the 1873 regular session of the Michigan legislature, the Senate received only two petitions concerning woman suffrage, one favoring and one opposed.

⁴⁷Flexner, Century of Struggle, pp. 168-171.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 172.

The House received thirty, all favorable petitions. The Legislature authorized the governor to appoint a Constitutional Commission to recommend changes in the Constitution of 1850. The Commission met in the fall and made a number of recommendations to the legislature for referenda. The Commission discussed woman suffrage but did not recommend it to the Legislature.⁴⁹

The eighteen delegates make a small statistical sample. Usually it was even smaller since not all delegates voted on all issues. Again chi-squares were calculated for woman suffrage, in this case the vote to delete male from the qualifications for electors was used, paired with party affiliation of the delegate or a tax on liquor. Table 2.5 below summarizes the results.

TABLE 2.5

1873 CONSTITUTIONAL COMMISSION SUMMARY TABLE
ISSUE LINKAGE, WOMAN SUFFRAGE AND SELECTED ISSUES

PARTY	.933
TAX ON LIQUOR	.244

The chi-squares are very low suggesting no connection between either party or the willingness to tax liquor and support for woman suffrage by deleting the word "male" from the qualifications for elector.

⁴⁹Journal of the Constitutional Commission of Michigan, Henry R. Clubb reporter, (Lansing: W.S. George & Co. State Printers and Binders, 1873), pp. 163-4, 167.

In 1874 a special session of the Legislature considered the recommendations of the Commission and submitted several to the voters for approval. As in 1873 most petitions concerning woman suffrage went to the House. Twenty-five of the thirty-three petitions received in the House asked the issue be submitted separately to the voters. The Senate received four petitions, three favorable and one opposed. The Senate and House passed a joint resolution which placed the issue of woman suffrage on the ballot in connection with the revised Constitution. If accepted, Article VII section I of either the amended Constitution (1874) or the 1850 (unamended) Constitution would describe electors by use of the words such as citizen, inhabitant or person with no distinction about sex. The balloting was to be as a separate issue with separate ballot and box. The ballots would read "Woman suffrage - Yes" and "Woman suffrage - No". If woman suffrage received a majority of the votes cast on the issue the proposition would be applicable to either the new (1874) or old (1850) Constitution⁵⁰

Roll-call analysis using contingency tables was used to examine the possibility of links between party affiliation and support for woman suffrage among the legislators during the 1874 special session. Did the Republicans support woman's suffrage to a greater degree

⁵⁰Michigan Senate, Journal, 18 March 1874, p. 129.

than did the Democrats? In 1872 the national platform of the Republican Party had urged a wider role for women in gratitude for their efforts in the Civil War.⁵¹

Partisan affiliation was established from the columns of the Lansing State Republican for January 1873 and January 1874. The chi-square for the Senate is 1.154 suggesting a weak connection between party affiliation and support for woman suffrage. In the Senate twenty-six of the thirty Senators voting or 87% favored woman suffrage. If partisan affiliation bore no relationship to support for woman's suffrage 87% of the Republicans and 87% of the Democrats voting would support woman's suffrage.⁵² Table 2.6 gives the actual votes and the expected votes if there were no relationship between partisan affiliation and support for woman suffrage. The expected results are so similar to the actual vote that no partisan link is observable.

⁵¹Donald Bruce Johnson, National Party Platforms (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1978), p. 45.

⁵²Roderick Floud, An Introduction to Quantitative Methods for Historians, 2nd ed., (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1979), pp. 133-138.

TABLE 2.6
1874 MICHIGAN SENATE: ROLL CALL ON WOMAN SUFFRAGE

	ACTUAL VOTE			EXPECTED VOTE		
	YES	NO	TOTAL	YES	NO	TOTAL
REPUBLICANS	24	3	27	23.5	3.5	27
DEMOCRATS	2	1	3	2.6	.4	3
TOTALS	26	4	30	26.1	3.9	30

In the House the chi-square is 7.066 suggesting a much stronger relationship between party affiliation and support for woman suffrage. Using the same logic as for the Senate, Table 2.7 was constructed for the House. Sixty-six of ninety-three representatives voting, 71%, favored woman's suffrage. While the Republican expected vote is smaller than the actual vote, the differences are not so large one can argue for a strong link between support for the Republican Party and support for woman's suffrage. Democrats in the House tended to oppose woman's suffrage, but again the connection is weak.

TABLE 2.7

1874 MICHIGAN HOUSE: ROLL CALL ON WOMAN SUFFRAGE

	ACTUAL VOTE			EXPECTED VOTE		
	YES	NO	TOTAL	YES	NO	TOTAL
REPUBLICANS	64	22	86	61.1	24.9	86
DEMOCRATS	2	4	6	4.2	1.8	6
INDEPENDENT	-	1	1	.7	.3	1
TOTALS	66	26	93	66	27	93

The Michigan State Suffrage Association made plans to canvas as much of the state as possible. James Stone's report describes what was needed:

We have a great work before us, and no time should be lost in organizing a general canvas of the entire State. Competent lecturers should be employed wherever hearers can be found, and money raised to defray expenses. Printed documents too, must be circulated; arguments and conclusions framed by those who have thought on these subjects for men, and sometimes for women, who are too indolent to think for themselves. And there are many other things which we must do before the November election; ballots must be furnished for every township and polling place, especially affirmative ballots, and placed in the hands of all the voters.⁵³

Elizabeth Cady Stanton spoke at the Lansing Opera House May 6, 1874 the last night of the convention that planned the campaign. She stressed the taxation without representation

⁵³HWS, 3:520

argument and insisted that women voting would cause no social upheaval.⁵⁴

Committees were organized in every senatorial district in the state, directly reaching forty-five of the seventy-five counties in the state. The canvas included people of both political parties. Money proved to be difficult.⁵⁵ Susan B. Anthony was invited to join the canvass, arrived in late September and stayed until the election. She was based in Grand Rapids and spoke almost every day she was in the state.⁵⁶ Some women canvassed on election day. Nanette B. Gardner Smith, who had voted in Detroit before her marriage and now lived in Hillsdale with her husband, returned to Detroit for the election. She opportuned votes right at the polls both by speaking with them just before they voted and by decorations at the actual polling location.⁵⁷ The vote was so discouraging, 40,077 yes to 135,957 no, that MSWSA went out of existence.

⁵⁴"Evening, May 6," Michigan State Woman Suffrage Association Fifth Annual Meeting, 1874, BHC-DPL.

⁵⁵George Stickney to Giles B. Stebbins 4 July 1874; Lucy L. Stout to Stebbins 10 July 1874, Correspondence-1874, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

⁵⁶HWS 3:521-522: Anthony left Rochester for Michigan 24 September 1874 and spoke or otherwise worked on the campaign every day but 13 and 14 October when she was in Chicago from 25 September through 2 November. "Diary, 1874," Susan B. Anthony Papers, MD-LC microfilm.

⁵⁷"The Elections," Scrapbook (brown) p. 10 Nanette Gardner Papers, MHC-BHL.

Some local groups remained in existence, but no state organization existed between 1875 and 1884.⁵⁸

Regression analysis with county level data was done to examine possible relationships among population characteristics, partisanship, support for the new constitution and woman suffrage. The percentage support for woman suffrage (%WSY) was the dependent variable. Support for the new constitution was measured by the percentage vote in favor of it (%CONY). Since the new constitution and woman suffrage would each be large changes in the political environment, it was possible that support for one would lead to support for the other. The percentage of foreign born (%FB) in the county's population was also used because suffragists felt the foreign born usually opposed them in referenda in the twentieth century. The 1874 referendum provides an opportunity to examine the significance of this variable early in the history of the woman suffrage movement. The percentage of females in the population (%FEM) was used in an attempt to explore whether areas with a smaller percentage of females in the population were more or less supportive of woman suffrage. Partisanship was measured by the percentage vote for the each party's candidate for governor. Three parties ran candidates for governor; the Republicans (%REPG), the

⁵⁸Karolena Fox, "Equal Suffrage in Michigan," Michigan History Magazine, 2 (January 1918):93

Democrats (%DEMG) and the Prohibitionists (%PROHG). Lower and upper peninsula counties were identified and coded 0 for upper peninsula (UP), 1 for lower peninsula to explore whether geography made any difference.

The R-squared of .56398 for the regression equation for the thirty-nine counties in which there was a vote for the Prohibition Party candidate for governor indicates that slightly more than 56% of the vote for woman suffrage is statistically associated with the seven independent variables chosen. The geographic variable was the only one which was significant. Table 2.8 summarizes the results of the equation.

TABLE 2.8

1874 REGRESSION RESULTS: COUNTIES WITH PROHG VOTES

VARIABLE	B	STANDARD ERROR B	SIGNIFICANCE T
%PROHG	-0.325862	.47929	.4985
%DEMG	-0.006478	.116348	.9559
UP	-32.339605	5.605904	.000***
%FEM	-0.415244	.369359	.2693
%FB	.002747	.070719	.9693
%CONY	.116661	.080223	.1556
CONSTANT	72.583688	19.820136	.0009***

*denotes significance at the 10% level; **significance at the 5% level; ***significance at the 1% level

If one uses of a sample of all 68 Michigan counties in 1874 and ignores the vote for the Prohibition

Party candidate for Governor, the R-squared (.24277) of the regression equation suggests that about 24% of the vote for woman suffrage is statistically associated with the six independent variables. Table 2.9 summarizes the results.

TABLE 2.9

1874 REGRESSION RESULTS: ALL COUNTIES; NO PROHG VOTE

VARIABLE	B	STANDARD ERROR B	SIGNIFICANCE T
UP	-7.494628	4.211438	.0801*
%REPG	.285461	.389695	.4667
%FEM	-0.474775	.300367	.1191
%CONY	.190701	.068778	.0074***
%FB	-0.184941	.093285	.0519*
%DEMG	.536592	.398770	.1834
CONSTANT	12.988392	42.860765	.7629

*denotes significance at the 10% level; **significance at the 5% level; ***significance at the 1% level

Support for the new constitution is the most significant variable in this equation. An examination of the correlation matrix of this equation suggests the possibility that all three variables that are significant at any important level are inter-related. The counties with the largest percentages of foreign born, and the strongest support for the new constitution are in the upper peninsula. Those are also the counties with the smallest percentage of females in their population and

the percentage female variable (%FEM) just misses being significant at the 10% level.

Woman suffrage did poorly everywhere in Michigan. State-wide slightly better than 23% of the male voters supported woman suffrage. The upper peninsula counties ranged from a vote of 9.30% support to 81.5% support for woman suffrage. The lower peninsula counties ranged from a low of 13.8% support to a high of 36.6% support for woman suffrage.

While the officers of the MSWSA recognized the amount of work that needed to be done, they did not have the organization or the numbers to do it. In addition the association of supporters of woman suffrage with the Beecher-Tilton scandal then in the newspapers may have hurt the cause. At least in Hillsdale Susan B. Anthony was not wanted by the local association as a speaker and they said so plainly.⁵⁹

Woman suffrage lost in Michigan and elsewhere because it was too radical. Most people, male or female were not ready to think of a woman as an individual person. A woman was a wife, a mother, a sister, a daughter, all roles rooted in the family. The idea of separate spheres which had developed in the late eighteenth and early

⁵⁹A. Dickman to Colonel William Ferry, 9 October 1874, in William Montague, 1863-1895, Ferry Family Papers, MHC-BHL. Anthony's diary indicates she went to Hillsdale anyway.

nineteenth century defined man's sphere as the public one and woman's sphere as the private one, the family. As social custom the idea of separate spheres was so imbedded in peoples' thought that even suffragists thought woman had a special calling in domestic and familial areas. The demand for suffrage insisted that woman had a role as an individual in the public sphere as well as a role in the private sphere. Few people were ready to accept the idea. Through out the battle for suffrage, woman as having a role only in the family would be the strongest argument used against woman suffrage.⁶⁰ The more radical suffragists usually refused to seek partial enfranchisement, such as school or municipal suffrage, because those were usually demanded on the bases of woman's familial role and did not make the case for woman's right to full and equal participation in the public sphere.⁶¹ In Michigan, the first gains for woman suffrage (school suffrage) were solidified in the years when there was no state organization, though there were active individuals and local groups.

⁶⁰ Ellen DuBois, "The Radicalism of the Woman Suffrage Movement: Notes Toward the Reconstruction of Nineteenth Century Feminism," Feminist Studies 3 (Fall 1975):63-71 outlines this argument with clarity and brevity.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 67.

CHAPTER 3

1875-1893: "OUR ONE BIT OF FRANCHISE"
Women's APA of Michigan, 1895

After the defeat in 1874 of the woman suffrage referendum by such a large margin, the Michigan State Woman Suffrage Association ceased to exist. Between 1875 and 1884 there was no central organization in Michigan, though sporadic local activity continued.¹ At the national level both the NWSA and the AWSA continued to meet annually, the National usually in Washington to press for the federal amendment, the American in various locations to spread the word.

The 1870s and 1880s saw three general types of woman suffrage activity: legal, demonstrative, and political. Legal activity included the attempts to vote under the Fourteenth Amendment and the legal cases that grew out of those attempts. Minor v. Happerstett effectively ended the legal activities.

One of the last demonstrative activities was the demonstration at the opening of the Centennial Celebration in Philadelphia on July 4, 1876. Susan B. Anthony led four other women up to the platform as the opening ceremonies

¹HWS, 4:755.

began, presented the startled chairman with a Declaration, turned around and left. The five women scattered copies of the Declaration they had handed the chair as they left. Once outside, Anthony spoke from the bandstand to the people outside, the group distributed more copies of the Declaration and then the women went to a woman suffrage meeting at the First Unitarian Church. The Declaration was less strident than that of 1848: it focused on the failures of the male dominated state rather than excoriating men in general; and it contained fewer demands. The demands for equal education, for the right to speak on public platforms and public issues, for the opportunity to preach, teach, write and earn a living were gone. New demands included the right of women to serve as jurors, giving women the vote or no longer taxing them, and repeal of the word male from the qualifications for electors. The 1876 declaration continued the Seneca Falls protest against the double standard of morality, (that sexual behavior which society found reprehensible in women was tolerated in men), and complained of the inequality of the divorce laws. Demonstration activities declined in the 1880s and revived after the turn of the century when parades became a way to get publicity for the cause of woman suffrage.

Political activities continued throughout the period and included organizing state suffrage associations, educating public opinion through speaking tours and

articles in newspapers and magazines, conducting campaigns in states for suffrage referenda, (there were six between 1875 and 1890) and pressuring Congress for the federal amendment.²

Developing allies among other women's groups was also a political activity. On the national level, the earliest endorsement for woman suffrage came from the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) in 1881. The idea had first been broached at the 1876 national meeting by Frances Willard who called it "home protection". It had been received in shocked silence. Suffrage sentiment grew in the WCTU from 1876 to the endorsement in 1881. In 1879 some Michigan delegates reported on how their exercise of school suffrage had been received by the rest of the electors.³

The Michigan WCTU at its annual meeting of 1880 resolved "Whereas, Woman is responsible for the purity of the home; therefore Resolved That we will petition our Legislature that woman's voice for home protection against all forms of legalized vice, may be heard through the

²Eleanor Flexner, Century of Struggle: The Woman's Rights Movement in the United States (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, Belknap Press 1975), pp. 167, 178, 174-176.

³Ruth Bordin, Woman and Temperance: The Quest for Power and Liberty, 1873-1900 (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1981), pp. 58-63.

ballot at the polls"⁴ How much earlier the Michigan WCTU supported woman suffrage is difficult to establish as records of earlier meetings have not been found. In 1881 at the state convention, the Big Rapids WCTU urged woman suffrage as a necessity for "the complete triumph of our righteous cause, ... and if a necessity then a duty, to work to secure the ballot...." Resolution XIV that year stated "That as a convention, we hold ourselves in readiness nobly to use the ballot against our worst enemy when by the proper authority it shall be put into our hands."⁵ One of the officers of the Michigan WCTU from at least 1877 on was Mary T. Lathrop of Jackson, a former President of the MSWSA. In the years she was President of the Michigan WCTU the franchise department of the Union was active, presenting detailed reports each year, and her Presidential address usually mentioned suffrage.⁶ No state or local union was bound to support all the national's positions nor was a local union bound to follow the state pronouncements.⁷ Consequently WCTU work for the franchise in Michigan was uneven, depending on whether a

⁴Michigan WCTU, Seventh Annual Report, 1880, p. 35, BHC-DPL.

⁵Michigan WCTU, Eighth Annual Report 1881, pp. 17, 2, BHC-DPL.

⁶See her presidential address in each Annual Report 1886-1893 and the reports of the state superintendent of franchise for the same years.

⁷Bordin, Woman and Temperance, p. 119.

local union had a woman who believed in gaining the franchise.

Developing support for woman suffrage in the WCTU was not easy. Women in the WCTU were strongly oriented toward protecting the home and family. Frances Willard, long time WCTU national president was able to obtain WCTU support for woman suffrage by urging it as a means of home protection. Many women were persuaded temperance was a moral issue and did not accept the argument that political action such as voting in the cause of home protection was an appropriate activity for them.⁸

Marilyn Motz's study of Michigan women's correspondence suggests why support for woman suffrage grew slowly. Motz's sample is drawn from women's correspondence 1820-1920 held by the Michigan Historical Collections. She finds that Michigan women show little consciousness of politics or economics. She describes the women as fairly ordinary women living on farms and in cities. The women's correspondence focused on the personal and the specific. Occasionally wages and prices were discussed, but not connected to national political or economic issues. Motz reports that discussions of the unfortunate circumstances

⁸Barbara Leslie Epstein, *The Politics of Domesticity: Women Evangelism, and Temperance in Nineteenth Century America* (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1981), pp. 115-137 discusses the tensions between conventional religiosity and secularism as the impact woman suffrage and the WCTU.

of other women seldom connected those circumstances to legal constraints on women or suggested that woman suffrage might alter the position of women in society. The Civil War is the only major political event discussed that is not directly connected to personal experience.⁹ Motz sees Michigan women as accepting the "separate spheres" concept and developing coping strategies within it. Under this concept husbands by law and custom owed wives financial support, sexual fidelity and freedom from ill treatment. Wives owed sexual fidelity, and their time, earnings and services. Michigan women attempted to develop and nurture kin networks to meet myriad possible needs in relation to child rearing, nursing the ill and the elderly, and sharing financial support and household labor. The tightest kin network included parents, siblings, nieces and nephews. Uncles, aunts, cousins and grandparents were less tightly connected.¹⁰ In the correspondence of Michigan women Motz discusses, little concern with public affairs emerges. Yet we know women's clubs in the years after the Civil War sometimes discussed public affairs. Out of those groups would come allies for the woman suffrage movement.

⁹ Marilyn Francis Motz, True Sisterhood: Michigan Women and Their Kin, 1820-1920, SUNY Series in American Social History, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983), pp. 72-73.

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 22, 30, 37.

From the 1830s women had been active in benevolent and reform organizations. With the exception of abolition and women's rights activities these reform groups had been tied to women's domestic or moral concerns. During the Civil War women in the Sanitary Commission had done work that the government was unable or unwilling to do that needed doing. The conviction that man's sphere of activity was public and woman's sphere of life was private and domestic had fueled the idea that women had special attributes and roles; roles such as moral caretaker, housekeeper and child rearer. In the years after the Civil War women banded into literary clubs and then they used the domestic and moral traits attributed to the ideal lady to try to increase their autonomy, assert their sorority, win education for themselves and seize influence beyond the home in the public sphere.¹¹ Historians have labelled this strategy "domestic feminism". The best known of these early groups were Sorosis, based in New York City, and the New England Woman's Club (NEWC), based in Boston. Both met with opposition from the press when founded in 1868 and initially separated themselves from the suffrage movement. The range of issues discussed in Sorosis and NEWC included "the woman question," efficient housekeeping, cultural

¹¹Karen J. Blair, The Clubwoman as Feminist: True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914 (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1980) pp. 2-4.

matters, women's education and child rearing.¹² The woman question involved discussion of what were acceptable roles for women in American society. It included questions about the level of education, the types of appropriate public behavior, the responsibilities of wives and mothers and the innate attributes of women. Suffrage gradually became one of the issues included in the woman question and one of the concerns of the women's clubs as the members discovered that without the vote it was difficult to get legislatures to approve the laws they felt necessary.

In 1873 Sorosis and NEWC had helped found the Association for the Advancement of Women (AAW) which became the major propagator of domestic feminism to the clubwomen of America. The goal of the AAW was to secure higher intellectual, moral and physical conditions for women and to improve domestic and social relations. The AAW did its work primarily through yearly congresses in which the papers presented were marked by a belief that women should bring their special moral sense to bear on the social problems of America. The congress met in a different place each year. Audiences included the professional women and club women of the community, along with some husbands, babies, reporters and students. Topics included numerous branches of domestic feminism: enlightened motherhood, the

¹²Ibid., pp. 19-37 describes the early development and opposition to both.

guardianship of children, the status of mothers, women and public health, temperance, and the social purity movement. Members of AAW urged that it was woman's moral duty to improve society, and not waste time doing housework. Homemaking was a career but housekeeping was not. The congresses particularly focused on women's special gifts in relation to children's education.¹³

Women in the club movement gradually developed skills in public speaking, in conducting meetings, and in organizing and administering groups.¹⁴ Gradually between the 1870s and the 1890s the balance in women's clubs shifted from the literary to greater concern with public matters. Much of the justification for women's clubs had been that they would make women better wives and mothers. As the clubs shifted their concerns to public affairs and de-emphasized culture, women had to justify their interest in housing, sanitation, civil service etc. They claimed their concerns were simply municipal housekeeping, a further extension of woman's special moral and domestic attributes.¹⁵ Events in Michigan illustrate some of these developing views on the appropriate roles for women.

¹³Ibid., pp. 45-51.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 67.

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 73-94 has an extended discussion of two early examples of woman's clubs municipal housekeeping activities.

The state school law of 1867 had given the right to vote in school meetings to "persons" with property subject to tax. In 1881 the law was further amended so that parents or guardians of children of school age could also vote for school trustees.¹⁶ In these years the legislature also created city-wide school districts, either by special act or by revision of municipal charters. The legislature may have known what it intended regarding school suffrage, but election officials in cities were unsure which legislative act determined electors for school elections in the various cities. It was unclear to election officials whether the municipal charter, the special school act which created the city-wide district, or the revised general school act of 1881 determined the qualifications for electors in school elections. It was understandable that court cases to determine the issue would follow.

The first case to reach the Michigan Supreme Court which grew out of this confusion was Mudge v Jones which was argued November 6, 1885 and decided January 20, 1886. The legislature had incorporated the Board of Education of Hastings, creating a single school district for the entire city. The elections for school board members were set to coincide with the annual city election but the Board of Education candidates ran on a separate ticket. The

¹⁶HWS, 4:768

legislative act incorporating the school district failed to prescribe by whom the members of the school board would be elected or to define qualified electors. The city charter provided for election of city officers from among the qualified electors of the city, meaning those holding the qualifications of township elector. Under the Constitution of 1850 (the one operative) only males met the qualification.¹⁷ Mrs. Ruth K. Mudge was a widow and her attorneys argued that she had the right to vote in school elections when the act incorporating the Hastings Board of Education was passed. Mudge, they argued, cannot be deprived of that vote "by express enactment, much less by implication". The City of Hastings was a graded school district and women in graded school districts had the same rights as in primary districts. In making this argument, Mudge's attorneys cited People v Board of Education of Detroit, 18 Michigan 400, (decided May, 1869) for the contention that Hastings was a graded school district.¹⁸

The defendants, election officials Allen Jones and William H. Stebbins, and their attorney argued that by incorporating the Board of Education the machinery of a corporation or municipal government regarding the school entirely changed while the educational rights, duties and

¹⁷Mudge v Jones, 59 Michigan 165-166.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 166-167.

liabilities remained unchanged. In other words, incorporation had made the school district similar to other municipal corporations regarding the qualifications for electors. In this context suffrage was a privilege not a right and women had no constitutional right to vote even at school district meetings contemplated by the general school law.¹⁹ The court found against Mrs. Mudge. Under the act incorporating the Hastings school district no school meetings were possible since the act creating the Hastings district did not authorize them. Therefore Mrs. Mudge had no vote. Justice Champlin concluded:

Until the Legislature confers the right of suffrage upon females in the election of the board of education, they [the board] must continue to be elected by the electors qualified to vote for city officers at the annual township elections.²⁰

Three years later a second case regarding the school laws came to the Michigan Supreme Court. Belles v Burr was argued October 19, 1888 and decided July 11, 1889. Eva Belles, a married, female resident of Flint, owning property liable to assessment for school taxes and the mother of a child in the school census, offered her ballot for school trustees and was refused by the election commissioners, William A. Burr, Salmon I. Beecher and John

¹⁹Ibid., p. 167.

²⁰Ibid., pp. 171-2.

Algoe. Before the election they had sought legal advice concerning the eligibility of women to vote in Flint and had been advised that the Mudge decision indicated that women in Flint were ineligible to vote in the school elections. Belles's attorney argued that she met the requirements for a school elector under the general school law and had the right to vote in school elections in Flint.

Justice Champlin, who had written the Mudge decision for the court, wrote the Belles decision. He traced the history of the legislative enactments regarding school suffrage. It was clear that the qualifications for electors for school officers or for questions at school meetings were not identical with electors as defined by the Constitution and "never have been." The law of 1867 named as electors for all school questions those resident 3 months, with property liable for assessment. Those who were without property but were electors under the Constitution might vote on all school questions except money by taxes. No officer of the school district was mentioned by the Constitution, therefore school district officers were not Constitutional officers. There were none but school district officers on the ballot and there were separate boxes. The constitutional limitation for electors of male did not apply to elections for officers not mentioned in the Constitution. The legislature has the power to provide qualifications other than those given by

the Constitution for offices not mentioned by the Constitution and among those offices are school trustees.²¹

Justice Morse in his concurring opinion pointed out that the management of the schools was in the hands of the Legislature. School voters had (at least since 1838) been different than constitutional electors as defined by Article VII section 1. The drafters of the Constitution of 1850 were aware of the differences and did not prescribe the qualifications of voters in school elections, leaving that to the legislature as under the Constitution of 1835. Morse did not like the attendant confusion, the unequal representation, or the voting by non-citizens this allowed but believed he had to follow legislative discretion here. Since school inspectors were named as township officers in the Constitution (see Article XI section 1), if he could satisfy himself the trustees were school inspectors, Belles would be denied the vote since only males are electors for offices named by the constitution.²² Morse supported Belles's right to vote in Flint school elections reluctantly and only because he could not establish that the school trustees were school inspectors.

In dissent Justice Campbell argued that the election of school trustees in the Union District of Flint was governed in all respects in the same way as other city

²¹Belles v Burr, 76 Michigan 2-10, 12.

²²Ibid., pp. 15-17.

officers except for a separate ballot and box. The laws which created the Union district of Flint provided for an annual school meeting, but the election of trustees since 1879 had coincided with the Flint annual charter election and was under the control of city inspectors. The Constitution of 1850's definition of electors was applicable to "all elections" including municipal. Campbell found the Union School District of Flint to be part of the municipal government. "When an election for any local officer is required by law, the Constitution declares who shall be qualified to act as electors." When the Flint Union District was created voting to persons not constitutional electors remained only in the school meetings.²³

The distinguishing difference between the Mudge and Belles decisions for Justice Champlin seems to be the continued existence of the general school meeting in Flint, but not in Hastings. Champlin, who wrote both decisions, plainly saw the City of Flint serving solely as the school district's agent for administering the election. In the case of Hastings, because there was not a separate general school district meeting, he found the school district part of the municipal government and the Constitution of 1850 restricting the suffrage to males held there.

²³Ibid., pp. 18-23, 24, 30.

The Mudge and Belles decisions clarified that women could vote in school elections in Flint and not in Hastings, but left the issue unclear in other cities and towns. Some cities after the 1881 revisions of the school law altered their city charters to clearly include the school boards as part of the municipal government and exclude women as voters. In these cases women had to seek municipal charter revision in the state legislature to gain the right of school suffrage in cities. In 1884 Grand Rapids women obtained the right to vote in Grand Rapids school elections after a charter amendment. In 1889 Detroit women made a successful attempt to revise the Detroit charter so they could vote in school elections in that city. Even the fact that "registration was held in saloons as usual" did not deter women from registering²⁴

Political activity regarding woman suffrage and women's rights in Michigan was very slight after 1874 for several years. In 1875 a bill to exempt women from the property tax was introduced. The Ways and Means Committee recommended it not pass and no further action was taken.²⁵ For each session of the legislature from 1875

²⁴"Rejoicing in Detroit," The Woman's Tribune, 23 March 1889, p. 116; "The Good News from Detroit," The Woman's Tribune, 30 March 1889 p. 121, in the LTSSC, folder 22, Special Collections, The Library, University of Illinois at Chicago.

²⁵Michigan House, Journal, 24 February 1875 p. 533; 26 February 1875, p. 575.

through 1893, all petitions recorded in the Journals of either house were categorized and counted. In 1875 and 1877, there were no woman suffrage petitions to either house of the Legislature. In 1879 there was some petitioning activity. Both the Michigan Senate and House received petitions asking that women be eligible to hold school offices. The Senate received twenty-four, the House thirty-four. Each house received one petition asking that women have the vote on liquor questions under local option.²⁶ The House also received two petitions urging "...the duty of the American Congress to submit to the people of the United States, through their several State Legislatures, an amendment to the federal constitution prohibiting the several States from disenfranchising United States citizens on account of sex."²⁷ In 1881 the House received three petitions for woman suffrage, the Senate none. One of the petitions asked specifically that ..."the elective franchise be extended to women of legal age in all questions pertaining to schools."²⁸ Also in the House, House Joint Resolution 19 to amend the constitution and

²⁶Michigan Senate, Journal, 25 March 1879, p. 588; Michigan House, Journal, 17 February 1879, p. 478.

²⁷Michigan House, Journal, 25 January 1879 p. 229; 4 March 1879, pp. 729-30. The second petition is quoted.

²⁸Michigan House, Journal, 21 April 1881, pp. 1138; 2 May 1881, p. 1258.

give the ballot to females left the Elections Committee without any recommendation and failed to pass.²⁹

The 1883 session saw the introduction of a bill to grant municipal suffrage for women. Municipal suffrage, like school suffrage, could be defended as an extension of a woman's household and family responsibilities. School suffrage was a natural outgrowth of a woman's concern for children. Municipal suffrage was a natural outgrowth of her concern for the health and safety and well being of family members, matters that in the cities were tied to matters of sanitation, health and safety regulations, food inspection and the like. Increasingly in the 1880s and 1890s women who lived in cities became aware of the impact of city government on their families as they sought improvements and reforms in municipal services through influence rather than the vote.³⁰ Women's influence consisted primarily in their right to speak at public meetings and publicize problems and issues through public speaking, article and book writing, and petitioning and lobbying municipal, county and state officials. These

²⁹ Its course can be traced in Michigan House, Journal 1881, pp. 393, 564, 934, 1298, 1365, 1373-4.

³⁰ Mary P. Ryan Womanhood in America: From Colonial Times to the Present, 3rd ed. (New York: Franklin Watts, 1983, paperback) discusses the phenomenon as "Social Housekeeping" pp. 208-209. See also Carl Degler, At Odds: Women and the Family in America from the Revolution to the Present (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980, Galaxy paperback, 1980), pp. 298-327.

actions would persuade men to enact the changes women sought. Obviously each woman could also attempt to persuade her husband, father or brothers of the need to undertake the actions a woman's group urged.

On May 21, 1884 the various individuals and groups which were interested in woman suffrage came together at Flint and formed the Michigan Equal Suffrage Association (MESA).³¹ In 1885 MESA memorialized the Michigan Legislature for municipal suffrage for women. The memorial written by Mrs. S. W. Fowler (Fannie Holden Fowler) of Manistee did not stress either motherhood, or municipal housekeeping, but natural rights. Fowler argued that she was a citizen under the Fourteenth Amendment and entitled to the privileges and immunities of citizenship, the equal protection of the laws, and the due process of law in matters of liberty and property. Without the vote she was subject to taxation without representation and deprived of liberty under laws "... she has no voice in enacting." Fowler asserted that women are as patriotic and concerned about taxation and good government as men.

Having made the general case for woman suffrage, Fowler then turned to refuting the specific arguments against municipal suffrage. She argued that municipal suffrage was no more unconstitutional than the school suffrage already granted to women. Fowler pointed out that

³¹HWS, 4:755.

some groups were not asked if they wanted the vote, they were simply given the vote. She pointed particularly to civilized Indians (those who lived as white persons and had no tribal allegiances) who had voted since the Michigan Constitution of 1850, and Negroes who had voted since the Fifteenth Amendment. Despite not insisting that all civilized Indians and all Negroes demand the vote before it would be given to either group, the legislature, composed of men, refused to give women the vote under the claim that some women did not want it. All men did not vote yet this was not used to exclude men who wanted to vote from doing so. She also pointed out that not all men bore arms in defense of the country, but all could vote even if too old, too feeble or too cowardly to serve in the armed services. Fowler concluded by asking men to put aside all bigotry and prejudice and demonstrate their love of justice by giving Michigan women "at least full municipal suffrage."³²

Fowler's memorial for MESA, successor to the MSWSA, followed the most common type of argument used by woman suffrage supporters before the 1890s. One historian, Aileen Kraditor has called this the argument from "justice". It is an argument rooted in eighteenth-century rationalism and natural rights doctrines and has deep roots

³²Michigan House, Journal, 18 February 1885, pp. 374-376. The memorial was also apparently used a broadside at one time. An undated copy is among Miscellaneous Materials, Michigan Equal Suffrage Association, BHC-DPL.

in American political symbolism, especially the Declaration of Independence.³³ After the 1890s however, she contends that the type of argument increasingly heard from woman suffrage supporters was an argument from "expediency". Its central focus was the claim that enfranchising women would counteract the votes of undesirable men and result in better wives and mothers. The decline in the "justice" argument and the rise in the "expediency" argument reflected in part the general decline in the faith in democracy and equality in the 1890s. The strength of the expediency argument in the progressive era would lie in the perception of the state as a social welfare agency. A perception, women's reform activities had helped create.³⁴ Kraditor attributes the suffragists's shift to the argument expediency to a number of factors. The logic of the justice argument and the achievements of women in education and public life had by the 1890s convinced people of the innate equality of men and women, the debate now centered on how that equality should be practiced. The entrance of the socially conscious woman seeking particular reforms which woman suffrage would further also contributed to the development of expediency arguments. Kraditor also points

³³Aileen Kraditor, Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement, 1890-1920 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), pp. 43-52.

³⁴Ibid., pp. 52-74.

to a change in the groups of men in or near power to whom the suffragists appealed as being a factor in the shift. Lastly she thinks the brightening prospects for victory of woman suffrage contributed to the increasing stress on expediency.³⁵

The MESA met annually (except 1886) after its founding in 1884. In 1886 rather than hold a meeting, the association memorialized the four state political party conventions; the Republicans, the Democrats, the Prohibitionists, and the Greenbackers. The Greenback and Prohibition state platforms incorporated woman suffrage and representatives of the association were well received. The Democrats allowed Sarah E. V. Emery of the association to address them and applauded her speech, but no woman suffrage plank came of it. Emily B. Ketcham attended the Republican Convention as the association's emissary but was not well received and no suffrage plank was forthcoming.³⁶

In 1888 MESA worked hard at organizing, bringing in Helen M. Gougar of Illinois as organizer. MESA's report to NWSA noted that 120 members were already in MESA and that woman suffrage work at the state agricultural fair had

³⁵Ibid., pp. 53-54, 73-74.

³⁶"Michigan Report to the National W. S. A. Convention," The Woman's Tribune, 16 February 1889 p. 80 in the LTSSC, folder 22, Special Collections, The Library, University of Illinois at Chicago.

included distribution of 2,500 leaflets and 150 copies of The Woman's Journal and The Woman's Tribune.³⁷

In 1889 MESA made a major effort to obtain municipal suffrage for women. The WCTU joined the petitioning work early.³⁸ The MESA annual meeting was held in Pioneer Hall, a room in the statehouse, March 19 through 21. In her presidential address Mrs. Mary L. Doe reported on advances in the status of women, new partial suffrage states and the general progress of women and woman suffrage. Doe urged that in "self-defense" women must tell their children they lived in a "false Republic" because one half of the citizens faced taxation without representation. Michigan women sought the municipal suffrage "...to keep the surroundings of the home pure and sweet, to protect the youth beyond the school house door...." She argued that in order to work for reform most effectively women must first free themselves so that they are equal to men.³⁹

Among the local affiliates of MESA were both suffrage clubs and literary clubs. Several clubs reported

³⁷"Letter from Michigan," The Woman's Tribune 23 February 1889, p.85 in the LTSSC, folder 22, Special Collections, The Library, University of Illinois at Chicago.

³⁸"Annual Meeting Michigan Equal Suffrage Association," The Woman's Tribune 30 March 1889, pp. 124-125 in the LTSSC, folder 22, Special Collections, The Library, University of Illinois at Chicago.

³⁹Ibid., p. 125.

on women serving on school boards. Mrs. Knaggs of Bay City reported that she had served as an election inspector for school elections. She also reported that in Bay City the four women who had served on the school board were neither "...babied nor bullied, but treated as intelligent equals...."⁴⁰

Michigan's Senator Thomas W. Palmer sent a letter of encouragement and a draft of \$100 to support the work. He noted that "Suffrage in municipal affairs means better statutes, better ordinances, better officers, better administration, lower taxation, happier homes and a better race." His donation was used to sustain lobbyists for municipal suffrage in Lansing after the hearing of March 21.⁴¹

The closing session of the annual meeting was a hearing before the House Judiciary Committee. Mrs. Catherine A. F. Stebbins, who attended the first convention to demand woman suffrage, urged woman suffrage as a matter of justice, paraphrasing Shylock in Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice to point out the common humanity of men and women. Emily B. Ketcham noted that if she died disenfranchised her protest would be carved on her

⁴⁰Ibid.; see also HWS, 4:757.

⁴¹"Account of Hearing in Representative Hall, Michigan" The Woman's Tribune, 6 April 1889, p. 134 in the LTSSC, folder 22, Special Collections, The Library, University of Illinois at Chicago.

tombstone. Mary B. Clay stressed the unconstitutionality of denying women the vote.⁴²

MESA resolutions in 1889 included an insistence on woman suffrage as a right, and specifically encouraged exercising school suffrage or seeking it by charter amendment if necessary, and expressed an admiration to women who were opening the professions. MESA extended support to those professional pioneers and promised "...their careers shall ever be an object of our solicitation and pride."⁴³

In mid-April three MESA members returned to Lansing to lobby both the House Judiciary Committee and all House members. The Judiciary Committee approved municipal suffrage unanimously and the chairman joked that he had expected a bouquet. The ladies responded to his jest with pink rosebud boutonnières for each committee member and the members wore them on the floor of the house. Ketcham reported that the women would continue to push the work in Lansing.⁴⁴

Beginning in 1890 MESA published annual reports, and its activities can be easily followed for the years the

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³"Among the Workers, Michigan," letter from Emily B. Ketcham, no date, The Woman's Tribune, 4 May 1889, in the LTSSC, folder 22, Special Collections, The Library, University of Illinois at Chicago.

⁴⁴HWS, 4:755-757.

reports have survived. Presidential addresses regularly cited the advances of women, women's rights and woman suffrage in the United States and the world. Helen P. Jenkins used military imagery to stress the difficulty and length of the campaign she foresaw. She did not anticipate the Michigan legislature ratifying woman suffrage before 1920.⁴⁵ The plan of work suggested usually included strategies for getting people to discuss and consider woman suffrage. Parlor meetings, debates, and conversations were suggested.⁴⁶ Among the resolutions of 1891 is one which thanked the Federation of Labor, the Farmers Alliance, the Patrons of Industry, the Grange and the Knights of Labor for putting women in official positions and making hearty declarations in favor of woman suffrage.⁴⁷ The resolution suggests some of the allies MESA had in the municipal suffrage struggle.

Working for woman suffrage involved different kinds of work. Emily B. Ketcham lived in Grand Rapids and was an active worker in woman suffrage. In 1888 she described herself as having kept "the thought of suffrage warm". In that year Anna Howard Shaw spoke in the city and some suffrage socials were held in Grand Rapids. In 1892

⁴⁵ MESA, Annual Report 1891, pp. 12-13.

⁴⁶ MESA, Annual Report, 1890, p. 16.

⁴⁷ MESA, Annual Report 1891, pp. 23-25.

Ketcham worked to organize a Grand Rapids branch of the MESA. Ketcham hosted a number of meetings at her home. She sought to awaken her guests to the importance of woman suffrage and invited Rev. Caroline Bartlett and Eliza Sunderland, both prominent Michigan women, to speak at some of these parlor meetings.⁴⁸

Olivia B. Hall of Ann Arbor spread the word in a different way. She took her suffrage friends to meetings of associations she belonged to. The results in one case were recorded as follows:

By the generosity of Mrs. Israel Hall we were allowed the pleasure of listening to a lecture by Miss Susan B. Anthony who at the time was a guest of Mrs. Hall. By the kindness of this lady there was little or no cost to the library but a net gain of \$69.75....

Anthony also gave the library some books.⁴⁹

Another strategy was to make women aware of the legal restrictions and discriminations that existed. The address "The Legal Status of Woman in Michigan" was an attempt at consciousness raising by Belle Perry in 1891 for the Michigan WCTU state convention. Perry reported what she saw as the law's discrimination against women. The age

⁴⁸Ketcham to Mrs. North, 1 March 1888, Miscellaneous Materials, Michigan Equal Suffrage Association, BHC-DPL; Ketcham to Sunderland, 12 March 1892, Eliza Jane Read Sunderland Papers, MHC-BHL.

⁴⁹ Ann Arbor Ladies Library Society, "Record Book 4" pp. 4, 6, MHC-BHL.

of consent was fourteen, the age of marriage sixteen and the age for full control of property, twenty one. The disposal of property required more maturity than the selection of a spouse according to the law. She plainly saw these age lines as in the wrong order. She reported that a husband controlled his wife's earnings unless he expressly waived that right and he could collect damages for her injuries while she cannot collect for his. Mothers did not have equal guardianship with fathers, he took precedence. The woman citizen is taxed but has no jury of her peers. The only suffrage state, Wyoming, is the only state that has no legal disabilities for woman. Perry concluded that women need the vote to be fully persons.⁵⁰

Lucinda Hinsdale Stone of Kalamazoo sought converts for woman suffrage by letter writing. Her particular target was State Senator Mardin Sabin. On March 12, 1891 Stone wrote him that she was a signer of a petition for municipal suffrage for women. She was very disappointed it had lost in the Senate. "I am an old woman, Mr Sabin, and have had many disappointments in life, but seldom has anything in all my life made me feel as did the failure of that bill by a lack of men's votes, (her emphasis)... Will you not think this thing over again?" In

⁵⁰Belle M. Perry, "The Legal Status of Woman in Michigan," MHC-BHL. This was printed separately from the Annual Report. Perry was State Superintendent of Franchise for the Michigan WCTU in 1891.

his reply of March 17 he admitted he had not given woman suffrage any extended thought. He conceded that women were citizens of the republic. Women were excluded from political participation because they were better adapted by nature and habit to exercise their genius in molding the forces which "...eminate (sic) from our houses and form our social life. ...she has not more reason to complain about being shut from the ballot box than have the angels of heaven whose grandeur (sic) sphere is in the peculiar realm (sic) appointed by God himself." He concluded by saying he was not firm in his opposition.

On March 21 Stone thanked him for his considerate reply. The greatest difficulty she noted was to get people to think seriously and steadily about woman suffrage. Her husband thought woman suffrage right on the basis of Declaration of Independence and espoused the cause even when it was less popular than now. The petitions asked for the vote in municipal affairs, not the affairs of the state. She enclosed some literature for him. On March 30 she sent him more literature and a petition gathered quickly at a Women's Relief Corps meeting in Muskegon. She reiterated she sought the vote as a matter of justice. On April 2, 1891 Mardin Sabin wrote that he had read some of the literature and was now unsure how he would vote. If his vote would ensure the passage of municipal suffrage in the Senate, "I think I will listen to your respectful

request...and change my vote to favorable" He concluded that he would always try to further good government and justice to all.⁵¹ On May 13, 1891 municipal suffrage failed of passage in the Senate 14 yes to 15 no with Sabin among the nos. In 1893, Sabin supported municipal suffrage.⁵²

In the odd numbered years from 1887 through 1893 MESA met in Lansing during the period the state legislature was in session. In 1887 Susan B. Anthony spoke in Representative Hall the room in which the Michigan House usually met. In 1889 a full hearing before the House Judiciary Committee was held. In 1891 the association secured a joint hearing on the Municipal Suffrage Bill.⁵³

From 1883 through 1893 the legislature was petitioned every regular session for municipal suffrage for women. Table 3.1 below illustrates the pattern of petitioning for the regular sessions of the legislature which met biennially.

⁵¹Lucinda Hinsdale Stone Papers, Local History Room, Kalamazoo Public Library, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

⁵²Michigan Senate, Journal, 13 May 1891, pp. 994-995; Journal, 25 May 1893, pp. 1541-1542.

⁵³HWS, 4:757.

TABLE 3.1

NUMBER OF WOMAN SUFFRAGE PETITIONS AT
EACH REGULAR SESSION OF THE LEGISLATURE 1883-1893

DATE	HOUSE	SENATE	TOTAL
1883	9	3	12
1885	12	41	53
1887	54	72	126
1889	25	85	110
1891	53	124	173
1893	9	8	17

The large numbers of petitions for 1887, 1889 and 1891 is in large part a result of the cooperation of the Michigan WCTU and MESA. In 1889 Michigan WCTU President Mary T. Lathrop reported on the cooperation of the Unions and MESA. In that year municipal suffrage passed the house but lost in the Senate. Lathrop described the new-style opposition as inspired by liquor interests rather than coming from chivalrous and religious motives as in the old days.⁵⁴ The WCTU was particularly interested in gaining the municipal suffrage since the Michigan legislature in both 1887 and 1889 had enacted local option laws which allowed individual counties to vote on the sale of liquor in the county. The WCTU thought municipal suffrage would allow women to vote in these local option elections.

⁵⁴Michigan WCTU, Sixteenth Annual Report, 1889, p. 21.

One of the interesting things revealed in Table 3.1 is that the legislature passed municipal suffrage for women in a year (1893) in which there were very few petitions for it, after three sessions of heavy petitioning activity. The lack of petitions does not indicate a lack of interest. In 1892 MESA canvassed candidates for the state legislature to discover their position regarding municipal suffrage. In January of 1893 Mrs. Cora Colby had spoken to the legislature on the good effects of woman suffrage in Wyoming. The annual meeting in March involved much lobbying of the legislature. Instead of committee hearings, the legislature accepted addresses by Rev. Anna Howard Shaw, Rev. Caroline Bartlett and Susan B. Anthony ⁵⁵

The correspondence and speeches of Henry Newkirk, a state representative in 1893 indicate something of the feelings of supporters of municipal suffrage. Thanking him for introducing the bill and his speech at that time one supporter noted she had saved both so "...that my children's children may know ages hence what one noble man dared to do for the women of Michigan...." When the bill finally passed both the House and the Senate another correspondent wrote that she had announce the "glorious news" at a meeting in the Woman's Building at the World's Columbian Exposition. "The message was rec'd (her

⁵⁵HWS, 4:764.

abbreviation) with prolonged cheers...."⁵⁶ In a speech given sometime during 1893 Newkirk reminded his listeners that the constitutionality of the bill was being questioned but that if the courts struck it down, another champion would come. He concludes "May God speed the Day when you are declared the equals of men and entitled to the same rights before the laws of the state."⁵⁷

The successful passage of municipal suffrage by the Michigan legislature provides an opportunity to explore some questions about the links between woman suffrage and other political issues and cleavages. Among the relevant questions are : 1) Was woman suffrage a party issue? 2) Was support for woman suffrage linked to support for prohibition? 3) Was support for woman suffrage linked to nativist concerns, particularly to fears of aliens voting and naturalized citizens not understanding democracy? Simple contingency table analysis of the roll call votes can indicate connections.

Party affiliation is listed in the Michigan Manual for 1893 and easily established. Michigan was a strong Republican state between the Civil War and the Depression.

⁵⁶ Mrs. N. M. Merrick postcard to Newkirk, 28 March 1893; Helen P. Jenkins to Newkirk, 26 May 1893, Henry Newkirk Papers, MHC-BHL.

⁵⁷Newkirk, "Suffrage", Speeches and Other Writings, vol 2, Henry Newkirk Papers, MHC-BHL. The speech is dated 1893, with no indication of when or where or to what group it was given.

Only two Democrats captured the governorship, and the Democrats controlled the Legislature only once.⁵⁸ In 1893 the Legislature was two-thirds Republican. Sixty-Nine of one hundred House members and twenty-two of the thirty-two Senators were Republicans. The others were either Democrats or members of the People's Party.

The Michigan House and Senate show different patterns for all the issues examined. Stephen and Vera Sarasohn suggest that Republican Party control was stronger in the state Senate where most of the local party leadership served. Most of that leadership had close ties to the McMillan faction of the Republican party. That faction was closely allied to the business interests of the state, particularly the utilities and the mining interests. McMillan controlled federal patronage when the Republicans held the White House and had the loyal support of most upper peninsula Republican leaders. The faction also had close connections to the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR). Given this web of alliances and connections, the Republican state senators were better insulated from popular pressures for social or moral reform than the members of the House.⁵⁹ Whether these differences fully account for

⁵⁸Dunbar & May, Michigan, pp. 445-457.

⁵⁹Stephen B. Sarasohn and Vera H. Sarasohn, Political Party Patterns in Michigan (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1957), pp. 9-12.

the differences in the voting patterns in the House and Senate is unclear.

The Michigan House and Senate show different patterns of party support for municipal suffrage for women. In the tables that follow Y stands for yes and N for no. The Senate passed municipal suffrage (MS) by a vote of 18 to 11. The expected percent of Republican and Democratic senators supporting woman suffrage would be 62.1% (18/29) if municipal suffrage were not a partisan issue. As Table 3.2 (below) shows the expected and the actual votes are very close and no partisan pattern to support for municipal suffrage exists in the Senate.

TABLE 3.2

1893 MICHIGAN SENATE: ROLL CALL ON MUNICIPAL SUFFRAGE

	ACTUAL VOTE			EXPECTED VOTE		
	YES	NO	TOTAL	YES	NO	TOTAL
REPUBLICANS	12	8	20	12.4	7.6	20
DEMOCRATS	5	2	8	4.9	3.1	8
POPULISTS	1	0	1	.62	.38	1
TOTALS	18	11	29	18	11	29

Table 3.3 (below) shows the pattern in the Michigan House. 70% of those voting favored municipal suffrage for women. If there were no partisanship in the municipal suffrage vote only 70% of the Republicans would support it. The actual vote shows 91.9% of the Republicans

avored municipal suffrage where all the Democrats and the one Populist opposed it. In the House municipal suffrage was strongly supported by the Republicans and clearly opposed by the Democrats and the lone Populist.

TABLE 3.3

1893 MICHIGAN HOUSE: ROLL CALL ON MUNICIPAL SUFFRAGE

	ACTUAL VOTE			EXPECTED VOTE		
	YES	NO	TOTAL	YES	NO	TOTAL
REPUBLICANS	57	5	62	43.6	18.4	62
DEMOCRATS	0	18	18	12.7	5.3	18
POPULISTS	0	1	1	.70	.30	1
TOTALS	57	24	81	57	24	81

If support for municipal suffrage for women and opposition to the liquor interests went together, legislators who opposed the liquor interest should support municipal suffrage for women. By 1886 the National Brewers Association was on record as opposing woman suffrage because of its fears that women would vote for prohibition⁶⁰ and the existence of the WCTU certainly lent credence to those fears. In the 1893 legislature there were several liquor issues. In the Senate the one on which there was a roll call vote was the repeal of local option (RLO). In 1889 Michigan had entered the era of local

⁶⁰Resolution 10, Michigan WCTU, Thirteenth Annual Report, 1886, p. 40.

county option in regards to the liquor traffic; therefore a county could by a referendum vote become a dry (prohibitionist) or wet county. Since prohibitionists tended to support local option while liquor interests tended to oppose it, the vote on the repeal of local option serves as a good proxy for prohibitionist sentiment.

Table 3.4 (below) shows the actual and expected vote in the Senate on the repeal of local option (RLO). If the dry voters in the Senate (those in the ROLN column) support municipal suffrage for women in larger than expected numbers one can say that support for municipal suffrage and opposition to the liquor interests are linked. If the actual vote is similar to the expected vote, the voting on each issue is independent of the other issue. The drys (ROLN) support municipal suffrage for women in larger than expected numbers, but not by a large number of votes, suggesting a weak link between support for municipal suffrage and support for retaining local option the dry position.

TABLE 3.4

1893 MICHIGAN SENATE: REPEAL OF LOCAL
OPTION (RLO) AND MUNICIPAL SUFFRAGE (MS)

	ACTUAL VOTE			EXPECTED VOTE		
	RLOY	RLON	total	RLOY	RLON	total
MSY	3	11	14	6.3	9.7	14
MSN	4	5	9	2.7	6.3	9
TOTALS	7	16	23	9	14	23

In the House the liquor issue on which there was a roll call vote was a provision to improve enforcement of local option (ELO). Here support for improved enforcement is the dry position and the dries supported municipal suffrage for women in disproportionate numbers. 47.4% of those voting on both issues supported improved enforcement of local option. If there were no link between support for the dry position and municipal suffrage, 47.4% of the MSY vote should come from supporters of the dry position. In the actual vote 97.3% of the dries supported municipal suffrage. The wets were not so unified, as Table 3.5 shows.

TABLE 3.5

1893 MICHIGAN HOUSE: ENFORCEMENT OF LOCAL
OPTION (ELO) AND MUNICIPAL SUFFRAGE (MS)

	ACTUAL VOTE			EXPECTED VOTE		
	ELOY	ELON	TOTAL	ELOY	ELON	TOTAL
MSY	36	18	54	25.6	28.4	54
MSN	1	23	24	11.4	12.6	24
TOTALS	37	41	78	37	41	78

One way to test for nativism among the supporters of municipal suffrage for women would be to look for high correlation between support for municipal suffrage and support for the constitutional amendment ending alien suffrage. Alien suffrage had existed in Michigan since territorial days. Since 1850 males who were a) citizens, b) Indians without tribal ties, c) those aliens who had voted before 1835 or d) aliens who had first papers, i.e. had declared their intent to become citizens, were eligible to vote. The legislature in 1893 sent to the voters, who approved it in 1894, an amendment to the Constitution of 1850 which limited the vote to citizens of the United States except for those aliens who had voted prior to January 1, 1895. Using this amendment as a variable allows one to examine whether support for woman suffrage had become linked to nativist social and political concerns. The argument for preventing aliens from voting was typically that aliens neither understood nor respected the right to vote and were therefore easily manipulated by the

urban bosses. Those desiring to save America from the "alien hordes" sought to prevent their voting and influencing elections before they had become citizens. If the supporters of restricting suffrage to citizens were also predominantly the supporters of municipal suffrage for women, then the contention that support for woman suffrage was conservative in the sense of conserving certain values, ideals and patterns cherished by old-stock Americans would have some support in the behavior of the Michigan legislators of 1893.⁶¹

The Senate does not show any clear pattern of linkage between support for municipal suffrage and support for limiting alien suffrage. (Table 3.6) The House however does show a pattern of support for municipal suffrage for women and limiting alien suffrage among the same individuals.(Table 3.7)

⁶¹Alan P Grimes, The Puritan Ethic and Woman Suffrage (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), pp. 99-118. See especially pp. 102, 113-115 for nativist attitudes in regards to issues discussed in this chapter.

TABLE 3.6

1893 MICHIGAN SENATE: SUPPORT FOR ALIEN
SUFFRAGE (AS) AND MUNICIPAL SUFFRAGE (MS)

	ACTUAL VOTE			EXPECTED VOTE		
	ASY	ASN	TOTAL	ASY	ASN	TOTAL
MSY	12	2	14	11.6	2.4	14
MSN	8	2	10	8.3	1.7	10
TOTALS	20	4	24	20	4	24

TABLE 3.7

1893 MICHIGAN HOUSE: SUPPORT FOR ALIEN
SUFFRAGE (AS) AND MUNICIPAL SUFFRAGE (MS)

	ACTUAL VOTE			EXPECTED VOTE		
	ASY	ASN	TOTAL	ASY	ASN	TOTAL
MSY	56	0	56	44.1	11.9	56
MSN	7	17	24	18.8	5.2	24
TOTALS	63	17	80	63	17	80

The analysis suggests that in 1893 there were already patterns of support for woman suffrage among persons who supported at least the restriction, if not the prohibition, of liquor. The Michigan House consistently shows these patterns of support to a greater extent than the Michigan Senate. The pattern of partisan support for municipal suffrage is less clear since the Republicans in the Senate do not disproportionately support municipal suffrage, but the Republicans in the House do. A similar problem exists in interpreting the amount of support for municipal suffrage that existed among those who voted to

support limiting alien suffrage. The Senators show no strong pattern, but the House members do.

Once the bill had passed the legislature and been signed by the governor, women began to prepare for municipal suffrage. Mary L. Doe, state organizer for MESA began to organize municipal franchise leagues to study city government.⁶² The plan was to do work only in the incorporated cities and villages. A study plan was devised and 30,000 copies of it printed. MESA officers received daily requests for the study plan and the state organizer. By the summer of 1893 questions about the constitutionality of the law were being asked. At least one suffragist felt that if the law was declared unconstitutional ..."we shall have [unreadable] a revolution (her emphasis)...a strike of a sex..."⁶³

Detroit, the largest city in Michigan, had some of the most active groups getting ready for municipal suffrage. Two groups were in the field, the Independent Women Voters Association (IWVA) which already existed and had been concerned only with school issues, and the Women's Republican Association (WRA). The activities of both can easily be followed in the scrapbooks kept by or for Hazen

⁶²HWS, 4:765.

⁶³ Emily B. Ketcham to Mrs. Stans, no date; Ketcham to Olivia B. Hall, 8 August 1893: OBH papers, MD-LC microfilm, MHC-BHL.

Pingree, Mayor of Detroit. The two groups approached their enfranchisement differently. The Republican women organized with the express purpose of working for the Republican party. Their leader justified the plan because the Republican Party had no places for women in the regular organization. The Evening News observed it had hoped the new voters would not "do politics as usual" but work to correct the glaring evils of the municipal government. The IWVA decided to do as it had done at the last school election and endorse candidates on the basis of their fitness without regard to party.⁶⁴

The WRA developed a card for the use of canvassers which set out the orientation of municipal suffrage supporters clearly.

There are 25,000 women in our city who are entitle to vote at the coming municipal election. In the interests of morality and good government the women's Republican city committee urges them to exercise that right, and who is there that will question that our caucuses and elections will become purer and better, and that the ablest and best men will fill the officers in our city government when women cooperate in their selection.

Can we count upon you to register at the coming registration day and vote on election day? If so kindly write your name and address on the other side of

⁶⁴Pingree Scrapbook 47, August 5-27, 1893: pp. 12, 7, 44. Hazen Pingree Papers, BHC-DPL.

this card, that we may know who to rely upon in this very important campaign.⁶⁵

The IWVA and the WRA were not the only groups seeking to educate women about voting. The Central WCTU of Detroit had a meeting to instruct women how to vote with the Australian ballot. Splitting tickets, obtaining information on candidates, and the function of caucuses were also covered. The ladies grasped caucuses well enough to ask what prevented them from packing caucuses and nominating weak candidates so the prohibition one would stand a better chance of winning.⁶⁶

At one point, charges of Republicans buying women's votes ran through the papers. The charge was first brought by Mrs. C. E. Conley at an IWVA meeting. She charged the going price for women voters was \$25 to \$50. Male votes had traditionally run from \$0.50 to \$2. The Free Press, traditionally a Democratic party supporter, received a letter from a Mrs. Fletcher in which she claimed the Republicans promised that it would "be well worthwhile" for her to vote Republican. Her husband claimed the letter was a forgery. Mrs. Fletcher told the Free Press that the letter was not a forgery, and that her husband simply did not know she had written it. Women were certainly told

⁶⁵Pingree Scrapbook 48, August 27-September 13 1893; p. 15. Hazen Pingree Papers, BHC-DPL.

⁶⁶Pingree Scrapbook 48, August 27-September 13 1893; p. 21, Hazen Pingree Papers BHC-DPL.

that voting Republican would be "worthwhile" and some were offered chairmanships of precinct or ward committees.⁶⁷ Certainly this exchange of charges sounded like politics as usual, not improved politics.

In Detroit controversy also developed over which officers the women could vote for under the municipal suffrage law. The specific problem involved the status of associate justices of the Detroit Recorder's Court. Were they state officers or municipal ones? The local newspapers and the relevant legal authorities split on the question. Detroit's City Counsel ruled that the position of Recorder Court Justice was a state office and that therefore women could not vote for it. The Michigan Attorney General on the other hand saw that office as municipal and therefore women could vote for it.⁶⁸ The city election commission took the advice of its legal counsel and developed two ballots: one for Recorder Court Justices and one for the other Detroit offices. A group of Republican women challenged the action in the courts by seeking a mandamus writ to force the city to have one ballot for all offices. The IWVA also wanted the law tested to clarify the constitutional question. At least

⁶⁷Pingree Scrapbook 48, August 27-September 13 1893; pp. 36, 47, 59, 64, Hazen Pingree Papers BHC-DPL.

⁶⁸Pingree Scrapbook 48, August 27-September 13 1893; p. 87 and Scrapbook 49, September 20-October 4 1893; p. 2 Hazen Pingree Papers BHC-DPL.

one paper found the case artfully constructed so as to only test the constitutionality of voting for the Recorder Court Justices, leaving the larger issue of municipal suffrage for women untouched.⁶⁹

While the case went to the Michigan Supreme Court, the two women voter organizations continued to canvas and organize. The WRA expected from 12,000 to 15,000 Republican women to vote if the law was upheld.⁷⁰ In their oral argument before the Michigan Supreme Court those opposed to the law argued that the legislature was not competent to invest women with the vote under the State Constitution, that the law required a test, literacy, which was prohibited by the constitution and that the law used different standards for male and female electors (only female ones had to prove literacy in English). They insisted that municipal elections were different from school elections. Supporters of the law insisted the legislature had not exceeded its authority in granting municipal suffrage. The two sides also differed on the status of municipal justices, those opposed to municipal suffrage maintaining that the justices were holding state

⁶⁹Pingree Scrapbook 49, September 20-October 4 1893; pp. 25-6, 39, 40, 56, 70; Hazen Pingree Papers BHC-DPL.

⁷⁰Pingree Scrapbook 50, October 5-17 1893; pp. 3-4, 11, 18, Hazen Pingree Papers BHC-DPL.

office while those supporting it insisted that the justices were municipal officers.⁷¹

The Michigan Supreme Court viewed the case broadly, much as the attorneys had argued it. Justice McGrath for the Court ruled that it was a general rule "...that the source of all authority to vote at popular elections is the Constitution; that the electorate is constituted by the fundamental law; and the the qualifications for electors must be uniform throughout the state." The Constitution provided for electors and when it provided that an officer was to be elected "...it certainly contemplates an election by the electorate which it has constituted." Therefore the court found the act invalid. In a concurring opinion, Justice Montgomery traced the debates in the Constitutional Convention of 1850 to establish the intent of the framers and he found that they plainly intended electors defined in Article 7 section 1 to be the electors in city and municipal elections. The legislature, he concluded, cannot override that decision.⁷² Municipal suffrage in Michigan was unconstitutional because the constitution's definition of electors controlled the qualification for electors in municipal elections.

⁷¹Pingree Scrapbook 50, October 5-17 1893; p. 38
Hazen Pingree Papers BHC-DPL.

⁷²Coffin v Election Commissioners of Detroit 97
Michigan 188, 189, 194, 197.

Carrie Oostdyke of the IWVA reported herself as stunned and disappointed at the decision. Emily B. Ketcham, President of MESA, urged the IWVA to work for full suffrage for women, which they did.⁷³ The Detroit Equal Suffrage Association discussed the decision with "considerable fervor and much sarcasm". Helen P. Jenkins noted that the courts were not always right and pointed to the Dred Scott decision as an example. She suspected the judges decision was in line with their prejudices. Dr. Mary Willard was reported as wishing she were 10,000 snakes to hiss in the justices' faces.⁷⁴

The final words on the municipal suffrage struggle came in later years. Carrie Oostdyke, President of the Michigan Woman's American Protective Association, described the women as just beginning to see the ballot as "...the most powerful weapon we possessed..." to protect the public schools, protect and advance patriotism and elevate citizenship when it was lost.⁷⁵ The following year the association resolved, " To carry into effect the principles

⁷³Pingree Scrapbook 52, October 25-31 1893; pp. 10, 48, Hazen Pingree Papers, BHC-DPL.

⁷⁴ Pingree Scrapbook 53, October 31-November 5 1893; p. 33, Hazen Pingree Papers, BHC-DPL.

⁷⁵ Women's American Protective Association of Michigan, Proceedings of State Council Number 1, April 11, 1894. See also p. 23 of their Record Book. MHC-BHL.

of our order in exercising our one bit of franchise".⁷⁶ It would be a generation before the women of Michigan had more.

By the end of 1893 Michigan suffragists could point to small successes in their efforts at agitation and education. School suffrage for women was becoming more acceptable, as its advocates had been able to secure the school vote for women in Michigan's two largest cities, Grand Rapids and Detroit. In each case the legislature had had to amend the charter of the city. MESA education and agitation in conjunction with the work of the WCTU on the same lines had persuaded the state legislature to grant municipal suffrage to women. The State Supreme Court had found the act unconstitutional because only males were eligible to vote in elections, such as municipal, which were governed by the state constitution's definition of elector. Michigan suffragists had formed a suffrage alliance with the Michigan WCTU. Once over their discouragement, work began to develop more allies for suffrage and to amend to State Constitution for woman suffrage.

⁷⁶Women's American Protective Association of Michigan, Second Annual Meeting, May 8, 9, 1895 p. 2, MHC-BHL.

CHAPTER 4

1894-1908: "A SPARK GATHERING"

Phebe Howell, 1894

It was a discouraged group that gathered for the MESA Annual Meeting in 1894. Municipal Suffrage Leagues had been formed in at least seven villages, towns, and cities, besides the two groups working in Detroit. Mrs. Mary L. Doe reported great enthusiasm for woman suffrage while the municipal suffrage for women law was in force. Efforts to form municipal suffrage leagues ceased after the court decision. In their resolutions, MESA congratulated the women of the new state of Wyoming, as well as those in Colorado and New Zealand on their possession of the franchise which they described as essential for women in their efforts to secure equal opportunity and equal pay for equal work. MESA resolutions also demanded that "male" be removed as a qualification for electors; insisted on the need for women on the boards of institutions that had women and children under their care; called for female physicians for the women and children; and favored equal privileges and limitations for both men and women.¹

¹MESA, Annual Report 1894, pp. 3-5.

The decision that municipal suffrage for women was unconstitutional created confusion for election officials and women voters in regard to school elections. The confusion was so great that a ruling from the Michigan Attorney General was finally requested by the Secretary of State, whose office was charged with supervising elections. The Attorney General's opinion was quoted at length by the Legislation Committee of MESA at the 1896 Annual Meeting. The Attorney General ruled that women who could vote in school elections before the Coffin decision could still do so.²

While the Coffin decision left the women discouraged, MESA members continued their work of organization, agitation and education. In the years immediately after the decision, only a few strong-minded women had the energy to work steadily in the cause. A group of between twenty and thirty did most of the organizing, educating and agitating. The credentials committee reports for the annual meetings indicate a low of seventeen members in convention in 1899 and a high of twenty-five in 1900.³

In 1894, MESA made arrangements to publish a small pamphlet commissioned earlier and reported upon at the

²MESA, Annual Report 1896, pp. 6-8.

³MESA, Annual Report 1899, p. 6; Annual Report 1900
p. 24.

1893 annual meeting. The Condition of Women and Girls in Michigan, by Melvin Root, a longtime suffrage supporter and lawyer, sold well. MESA considered its information important and would replace it with a larger pamphlet in 1911 on the same topic.

Twenty of the sixty pages are concerned with property: dower, wills, married women's property rights, and exemptions. Basically a married woman had an absolute right to any property she acquired before and after marriage. She could will it, sell it, etc. and the property was not seized for her husbands debts.⁴

The pamphlet also discussed what women could do in public life. The only elected public offices women could hold were connected with the schools. Since 1891 women could serve in appointive offices, such as state librarian, notary public, deputy county clerk and other clerical posts in the government. A woman could practice law, medicine, surgery or the ministry if fitted for it.⁵ The pamphlet also discussed circumstances under which women could vote in school elections and the municipal suffrage struggle and outcome.⁶

⁴Melvin Root, The Condition of Women and Girls in Michigan (Bay City, Michigan, 1895), pp. 31-41.

⁵Ibid., pp. 17-18.

⁶Ibid., pp. 10-18.

The pamphlet warned women that Michigan law treated marriage, the children of a marriage, and divorce as matters of a civil contract.⁷ It also discussed the issues of sexual assault, the age of consent, and, in connection with truancy, the Industrial Home for Girls.⁸ Root concluded by noting that government was still under male control and that justice demanded that government should be by the consent of the governed, both male and female.⁹

The pamphlet was not the only means MESA used to agitate and educate for woman suffrage. A three-day suffrage meeting was held in Ann Arbor in January, 1894. The meeting included lectures by Susan B. Anthony, Caroline J. Crane (Unitarian Minister from Kalamazoo), Anna Howard Shaw of the NAWSA and Octavia Bates of the General Federation of Women's Clubs. Care was taken that suffrage not appear radical and that audiences be recruited. Anthony had sent very explicit instructions to have persons of stature in the community give the welcome for the group. Crane sent suggestions for attracting the young women to her address which focused on college-educated women and what they could

⁷Ibid., pp. 25-31.

⁸Ibid., pp. 49-58.

⁹Ibid., pp. 59-60.

do with suffrage.¹⁰ Suffragists were pleased with the results. MESA President Emily B. Ketcham was delighted with the press coverage. Harriet Taylor Upton, NAWSA Treasurer, reported that many people wrote her praising the Ann Arbor meeting. Upton especially thanked the organizer, Olivia B. Hall, for the effort that allowed suffragists to reach people whom suffragists did not had usually reach.¹¹

The meeting inspired individuals. Phebe Howell wrote Anthony a thank-you note for her work in Ann Arbor in organizing the Political Equality Club. Howell had put herself through high school, normal school and the University of Michigan. At age forty she wanted to distribute literature for equal suffrage as she was convinced that her road would have been easier with it. She wrote there was "...a spark gathering inside her with greater and greater strength."¹²

The Political Equality Club of Ann Arbor is an example of the kinds of education and agitation that occurred in an organization affiliated with MESA. It began meeting in January 1894. Between February and June 1894

¹⁰ SBA to OBH, 27 December 1893; Octavia W. Bates to OBH, 31 December 1893; Caroline J. Crane to OBH, 12 January 1894, OBH Papers, MD-LC microfilm, MHC-BHL.

¹¹ Ketcham to OBH, 19 January 1894; Taylor to OBH, 27 January 1894; OBH Papers, MD-LC microfilm, MHC-BHL.

¹² Phebe A. I. Howell to SBA, no date, OBH Papers, MD-LC microfilm, MHC-BHL.

the group focused its studies on municipal government and Ann Arbor in particular. Topics included municipal laws, the duties of the mayor and of the other public officers of Ann Arbor, their salaries, and reforms needed in municipal government. The group also planned presentations on prominent woman suffragists and discussed the Australian system of voting. At least once the group suspended its regular program to talk with a special guest, Lucinda Hinsdale Stone, called the "mother of Michigan women's clubs" and a suffrage supporter since 1869.¹³

In 1894-1895, the group focused on the United States Constitution. Topics included: origins of the Constitution, formation of the House and Senate, how laws are passed, the powers of Congress and powers denied to Congress, amending the Constitution, privileges of citizens, and the departments of the executive. The group also discussed the aims of the National Council of Women, the Business League of America, and the National American Woman Suffrage Association. In May, the group held a discussion on the school elections.¹⁴

In the same year the group also used the plan of study recommended by NAWSA. This plan focused on current events through a set of topical News Committees. These

¹³Political Equality Club of Ann Arbor, Minutes I, pp. 3-18, MHC-BHL.

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 23-40.

included Congressional, Legislative, State Judicial, Foreign, Local, Social Problems, Tariff, Labor and Financial News Committees. In addition to reports and discussions in these areas the group also discussed plans for celebrating Mrs. Stanton's birthday, the NAWSA national meeting, Election Laws, Township government, the Woman's Bible, the single tax idea and the MESA annual meeting. They also commended the Regents of the University of Michigan on hiring a woman professor and contributed \$10 to the University for the women's gymnasium fund.¹⁵

In 1896-1897 the group continued the News Committee activity and also examined political economy. Over the year Cuba, taxes, money, various social problems, parliamentary drill, and current events dominated the discussions. The club appointed a school election committee.¹⁶ In 1897-1898 the club studied the executive departments, political economy, including free trade, protection and the Bank of England, and the woman question. Working women's clubs were discussed as was the issue of self-supporting women.¹⁷ In 1898-99 the group continued this pattern. All members in attendance on February 20 signed Anthony's petition to Congress asking that the word

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 41-75.

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 76-104.

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 106-121.

"male" be stricken from the laws relative to Hawaii.¹⁸ In May, 1900, the club hosted a Washtenaw County Conference of the NAWSA. Among the speakers were Carrie Chapman Catt and Rev. Anna Howard Shaw, officers of NAWSA.¹⁹

While the Political Equality Club of Ann Arbor studied and discussed in Michigan, suffragists in other states were able to act. Utah Territory held a constitutional convention in 1894 to write what residents hoped would be a state constitution. Woman suffrage became an issue in that convention because the non-Mormon members feared that the woman vote would be dominated by the Mormon church. The "gentiles" were afraid of the Mormon Church's political and economic domination of the state which all delegates, including the Mormons, believed repugnant to the nation at large. The supporters of woman suffrage urged the reform as a matter of justice and political honesty, since both major parties were pledged to it, and expediency since women would purify politics. The most recent student of the Utah Convention suggests that women suffrage carried in the convention for several reasons. It had the support of the Mormon establishment; women had done much educational work regarding suffrage; the Utah territorial experience (1870-1887) with woman suffrage had been

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 122-128; Political Equality Club of Ann Arbor, Minutes II, pp. 3-4.

¹⁹ Ibid., II pp. 5-10.

favorable; there was considerable grassroots bipartisan support carefully cultivated by the suffragists; and there was a solid core of supporters in the Convention who stood fast.²⁰

Massachusetts suffragists faced a different challenge. Woman suffrage was regularly debated in the Massachusetts legislature. In 1895 the legislature passed a non-binding referendum proposal regarding municipal suffrage for women. Men were to vote on the regular ballot. Women who were eligible to vote for school committees could vote on a separate ballot. Both suffragists and their opponents opposed the bill. The suffragists wanted a binding referendum, the anti-suffragists were confronted with the possible need to violate their principles and vote to defeat the referendum. Massachusetts supporters of woman suffrage tended, like their Michigan counterparts, to also be nativists. The Massachusetts Woman Suffrage Association sounded nativist in some of its campaign material.

While 428,121 men voted for governor, only 279,011 voted on woman suffrage. There were 86,970 yeas and 186,942 nays among the men. The women's behavior was even better from the anti-suffragist point of view. Of the

²⁰Jean Bickmore White, "Woman's Place Is In the Constitution: The Struggle for Equal Rights in Utah in 1895" Utah Historical Quarterly 42 (Fall 1974):344-369 discusses the debates in some detail.

approximately 612,000 women eligible to register for this referenda, only 42,676 did so. There were just 22,204 yes votes and 861 no votes. For the anti-suffragists the referendum proved that men opposed woman suffrage and women were indifferent.²¹

The 1890s began a generation of agitation for political reform. The reform agitation focused on a variety of issues at all levels of government. The issues were of three basic types. One type focused on structural issues in governance. At the local level the struggle against bosses often meant attacking the ward system of governance in the cities and battling for civil service to remove patronage from local politics. At the state level the direct primary and the demand for civil service attacked the bosses' control of the parties. Direct legislation, such as the initiative and referendum, was aimed at lessening the politicians' control as well. At the national level proposals to directly elect United States Senators and reform the civil service addressed the same concern to give the people control of the political process.

A second type of reform focused on political economy. The Populists raged against the economic

²¹James J. Kenneally, "Woman Suffrage and the Massachusetts 'Referendum' of 1895," Historian 30 (August 1968):617-633 details the activities of both supporters and opponents of woman suffrage in the 'referendum'.

concentration of the banks and the railroads and demanded state and federal legislative remedies. In the cities, men like Hazen Pingree of Detroit battled the franchise interests by turning to gas and water socialism to ensure reasonably priced public services and forcing franchises to provide promised services at reasonable rates. States passed laws regulating the railroads. The battle for railroad regulation in Michigan, which Pingree began when he was governor in 1899, finally bore fruit in 1907, several years after his death. At the Federal level, further anti-trust legislation and enforcement and the expansion of federal regulation in to new areas addressed the same concerns.

The third type of reform was more diffuse. It focused on issues of social welfare and social justice. Men predominated in the various movements focusing on reforms in the first two areas. It was women, organized in a variety of organizations from block clubs to national federations, who tended to focus their efforts in this third area of reform. Reforms in this area were more varied than in the other two areas. Women worked to convince governments of men that sanitary sewers and municipal water systems were necessary for urban health. Women worked to provide public health services through voluntary organizations which they supported. Women invented social work as an appropriate field for their

efforts. Women pushed for special facilities for women criminals and girl delinquents.

A look at the kinds of work various women's clubs engaged in suggests the range of their efforts. Libraries and schools were among the first institutions to feel women's reform impulse. Their educational concerns included initiating libraries in their communities and improving conditions in the schools. The range of concerns women's groups focused on in the schools gives some idea of the lack of attention they felt had been given to the schools. The list included environmental conditions, furniture, curriculum, recreational facilities, medical inspections, hot lunches, and schools for the handicapped. The committee list of the the General Federation of Women's Clubs in the early twentieth century gives some idea of the range of issues other than education that women's groups focused on. Committees included food inspection, conservation, public health, civil service, industrial problems, child labor, beautification projects, work with tuberculosis victims, and support for censorship of books and movies to protect children.²²

These kinds of activities and interests from the state and national federation had an impact on local clubs. The Hillsdale Woman's Club was a literary, artistic, and

²²Karen J. Blair, The Clubwoman as Feminist: True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914 (New York: Homes and Meier Publishers, Inc, 1980), pp. 100-104.

scientific study group. But it discussed the woman question occasionally, and in 1899, its secretary noted in the minutes that the reports from the Michigan State Federation of Woman's Clubs (MSFWC) meeting on philanthropic and public work had left the Hillsdale women with the idea that self-culture should not be the sole aim of women in clubs. The uplifting of humanity should also be their concern.²³

The records of the Adrian Woman's Club suggest that membership in the MSFWC was enlightening for their membership. No petitions regarding legislative action appear in their minutes until after 1895 when the group joined the MSFWC.²⁴ The group did discuss the woman question, including woman suffrage, under the heading of "science and education." In January, 1895, a woman suffrage paper precipitated discussion at the next meeting as well as at the one at which it was given. A majority of the members in attendance on January 22 indicated their support for woman suffrage.²⁵

²³Hillsdale Women's Club, Minutes, 15 October and 12 November 1894; 8 April and 13 May 1895; 6 November 1899, MHC-BHL.

²⁴The first petitioning activity appears in the 1 December 1896 minutes. It is a petition for increased funds for traveling libraries. Adrian Woman's Club, Minutes Book pp. 154-155. Adrian's Woman's Club papers, Lenawee County Historical Museum, Adrian, Michigan.

²⁵Ibid., pp. 33-35.

The work of agitation and education for suffrage in Adrian was apparently carried on by the local WCTU which invited the members of the Adrian Woman's Club to both their "franchise meeting" in April of 1895 and their course on civics and government in April of 1896.²⁶

The concerns of the MSFWC's Legislative Committee illustrates the range of issues women urged action upon in Michigan. In 1898 and 1899 the committee's concerns focused on placing women physicians in state institutions where women were held. In 1902, the committee urged the endorsement of state civil service. The committee had concluded that the reason it had so much difficulty getting women on state boards was the spoils system under which 148 appointments and their subsidiary jobs were awarded for political favors rather than on merit. In 1905, the Committee was concerned with a juvenile court bill, a bill to allow the incorporation of women's clubs, an anti-cigarette bill, and a woman's reformatory bill.²⁷

There was very little petitioning to the Michigan Legislature regarding woman suffrage after the Michigan Supreme Courts's municipal suffrage decision. Many of the issues identified above as women's clubs issues appear in the petition records of the Michigan legislature. MESA

²⁶Ibid., pp. 58, 122.

²⁷MSFWC, "Legislative Committee Reports, 1898, 1899, 1902, 1905," MSFWC Papers, MHC-BHL.

petitioning focused especially on women on state boards and women physicians for women and children under state care. MESA annual meetings continued to stress organizational and educational work and making alliances with other groups. Strengthening ties with the working class received the greatest attention.

Mrs. Mary L. Doe of Bay City was the MESA member most clearly associated with this effort. At each annual meeting she tried to persuade MESA members to understand the importance of unions. She tried to teach them ways to express support for unionization without picketing or being unladylike. In 1900 she persuaded MESA to use union print shops for its materials and reports. At the 1901 in Saginaw meeting she sensitized the convention to the plight of women workers by having the the women from the local striking laundry workers' union address the convention and describe their work load, their pay, their working conditions and the importance of the union to them. Doe and Martha Root attended numerous labor meetings as a fraternal delegates from MESA carrying the suffrage message. During 1900 in Bay City they persuaded the Bay City Equal Suffrage Association to meet with the leaders of the striking coal miners' union in the area. The meeting led to a fruitful and eye opening exchange for both sides and a joint Trade Unions' Council-Suffrage meeting to

discuss how suffrage and labor's rights are linked.²⁸ Doe's work strengthened suffrage sentiment among union members and made MESA members, who were mostly middle class men and women, aware of the conditions under which the working class lived and worked. When the suffragists sought union endorsement for suffrage during the Constitutional Convention of 1907-1908, the work of Doe and Root paid off in numerous endorsements.

In 1906 and 1907, women in Oklahoma and their supporters worked hard to get woman suffrage included in the constitution being written preparatory to statehood. NAWSA send five campaign workers to help coordinate petitioning, lobbying by members of both sexes and meetings. Full woman suffrage was not supported by the convention after debate. At least one delegate suggested that fear of Negro women's votes was a factor in the defeat of woman suffrage.²⁹ As the Oklahoma convention finished its work, Michigan began the process of holding a Constitutional Convention, the first full scale attempt to overhaul the Constitution of 1850 since the 1874 recommendations.

²⁸MESA, Annual Report 1900, p. 55; Annual Report 1901, pp.17, 15-16, MHC-BHL.

²⁹Louise Boyd James, "The Woman Suffrage Issue in the Oklahoma Constitutional Convention," Chronicles of Oklahoma 56 (Winter 1978-1979):379-392.

In October 1907, a Convention of Delegates met in Lansing to begin revision of the Michigan Constitution of 1850. The convention had only eight Democrats among its ninety-six members. Many delegates were individuals prominent in civic or reform affairs in their local areas. John J. Carton, the President, asked the members to put aside politics and work for the good of Michigan.³⁰ The request was particularly necessary, because the state legislature had just finished meeting in special session and the two factions of the Republican party, regulars and "boxers," had debated heatedly over a primary bill.³¹ The Convention opened on October 22, and the woman question figured early. Carton invited the members to indicate to him the committees on which they wished to serve. One delegate asked not to be placed where he would have to deal with the liquor traffic or woman suffrage.³² A correspondent to another delegate expressed concern that male clerks should get the plum jobs in terms of salary. He felt that "the dignity of the Convention is not enhanced by

³⁰Michigan, Journal of the Constitutional Convention, 1908, I, 4-5.

³¹ The battle can be followed in The Lansing Republican for October 1907.

³²Eugene Foster to Carton, 26 October 1907, John J. Carton Papers, MHC-BHL.

placing its clerical staff on a par with female janitors as to salary."³³

MESA and its allies who wanted to see woman suffrage a reality had begun planning for the Constitutional Convention as early as 1906. At its 1906 annual convention the state WCTU offered its hearty cooperation in working for the Constitutional Convention. While the WCTU had two goals, constitutional prohibition and striking out the word "male" in the Constitution, President Mrs. E.L. Caulkins urged the group to keep woman suffrage and prohibition separate.³⁴ In both the 1906 and 1907 meetings, MESA resolved to work for the initiative and referendum. The association also created a Constitutional Amendment Committee to coordinate work for woman suffrage in the Constitutional Convention.³⁵ MESA planned to seek endorsement of woman suffrage from various state organizations. The Michigan Federation of Labor had already endorsed woman suffrage, following the lead of the AFL which had been impressed by NAWSA endorsement of

³³Styland McGrath to Robert W. Babcock, Chairman of the Committee on Employment of Assistants, 26 October 1907, John J. Carton papers, MHC-BHL.

³⁴Michigan WCTU, Annual Report, 1906, pp. 60, 69, MHC-BHL.

³⁵MESA, Annual Report 1906 and 1907, pp. 6-7, 16-17 BHC-DPL.

initiative and referendum. The MSFWC at its 1907 meeting declined to work with MESA for woman suffrage.³⁶

The MESA board was divided on the association's endorsement of the initiative and referendum. Caroline Bartlett Crane of Kalamazoo complained to NAWSA President Anna Howard Shaw about the action. Shaw replied that women should focus on suffrage and not on other issues, such as the initiative or referendum. She felt no one else would put suffrage first on their want list and unless the women focused only on suffrage the politicians would not think it important.³⁷ Perhaps the decision to include other issues, or decline to work solely for suffrage reflects women's training to think of others first and themselves last.

MESA planned a full-scale assault on the convention, including lobbying, a hearing, and steady petition pressure. The plan called for one or more woman suffrage petitions, resolutions or endorsements to reach the Convention every day.³⁸ The officers chose Mrs. May Stocking Knaggs, a former president of MESA, to head the Constitutional Amendment Committee. She was acceptable to

³⁶Ibid., p. 4; MSFWC, Annual Meeting 1907, MSFWC Papers, MHC-BHL.

³⁷Shaw to Crane, 4 October 1907, "Suffrage Correspondence File," Caroline Bartlett Crane Papers, RHC-WMU.

³⁸MESA, Annual Report 1908, p. 12. BHC-DPL.

all factions in MESA; could devote her whole time to the work as there was no opposition to her suffrage work from her husband; had a good memory for names and faces; was a rapid writer; and lastly, she was not prejudiced against people because "they have not had all the advantages."³⁹

Mary L. Doe planned to do most of the MESA work contacting labor organizations, using the Women's International Union Label League stationary. Doe was a member and the Michigan organizer for the group whose goal was to support union-made goods by buying union label items. She also had reservations about how solid the support would be from the men's unions: "...men are so easy to influence, that is to get any kind of a resolution if one is there to 'talk it up'. I do not know how long they stay put."⁴⁰ Doe asked the unions to endorse Proposal no. 169, the woman suffrage proposal, by resolution and to send the resolution to the Constitutional Convention. She reported in a later letter that the labor unions returns were beyond her hopes.⁴¹

While Doe worked among the labor groups, MESA President Clara B. Arthur set to work to round up support

³⁹Doe to CBA, 1 November 1907, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL. Doe, the long time Labor Organization Chairman for MESA, was especially aware of class sensitivities.

⁴⁰Doe to CBA, undated, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

⁴¹Doe to CBA, 27 November 1907, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

among women's groups by sending a circular requesting support for woman suffrage to women's clubs. Specifically she asked them to endorse a resolution which stressed how much conditions for women had changed since the first two Michigan constitutions of 1835 and 1850. Women now had educational opportunities similar to men, had by constant agitation and struggle attained most of the legal rights of men, and in other states and countries had the vote. It was time to grant the vote to Michigan women both to further the best interests of the state and as a matter of justice.⁴² Of the forty-two responses among Arthur's papers, forty were supportive. The WCTU unions whose replies are among Arthur's papers were all supportive. The Board of Managers of the Woman's League of Battle Creek wrote that they sympathized with woman suffrage but they declined to take any formal action. An East Lansing group reported that only two members supported woman suffrage when the resolution was presented to the membership.⁴³

Arthur's attempt to enlist the support of woman's groups for woman suffrage in the Constitutional Convention reflected one way women responded to male exclusion. Women had build their own separate organizations, not just clubs,

⁴²CBA to Madam President and Ladies, 11 November 1907, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

⁴³The responses are scattered through Arthur's Correspondence for the period November 1907 to January 1908, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

but a public female sphere. Recent research has suggested that the separate female world was a source of strength for female social and political activists. As this separate female world declined in the 1920s, so did feminism.⁴⁴

Arthur also cultivated the woman suffrage supporters in the Convention with letters of thanks for their support, telling them "We rely on the Convention's sense of justice and the influence as such men as yourself..."⁴⁵ Arthur sought a statement of support for woman suffrage from President Theodore Roosevelt and enlisted the support of Senator Francis P. Warren of Wyoming to get it. When she decided that President Roosevelt was not going to respond, she asked Warren for a letter endorsing woman suffrage. She wanted to have the strongest endorsements she could get for the hearing.⁴⁶

Table 4.1 indicates how many woman suffrage petitions the Convention received in comparison with other topics. Woman suffrage ranks sixth in the quantity of petitions presented to the Convention. Convict labor, the

⁴⁴Estelle Freedman, "Separatism as Strategy: Female Institution Building and American Feminism, 1870-1930," Feminist Studies 5 (Fall 1979):512-529.

⁴⁵CBA to Levi Barbour, 26 November 1907, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

⁴⁶Exchange of letters: CBA to Roosevelt, 11 December 1907 and CBA to Senator Warren, 11 December 1907; Warren to CBA, 15 December 1907; CBA to Warren, 28 December 1907; CBA Papers, BHC-DPL. No trace of a letter from Warren endorsing woman suffrage appears in her correspondence.

TABLE 4.1

PETITIONS TO THE 1907-1908 CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

PETITION	NUMBER
ELECTIONS	3
HOSPITALS	7
CHURCH PROPERTY	10
BOARD OF EDUCATION ELECTION	11
INCORP. PRIVATE SCHOOL	11
CIGARETTES	13
HOME RULE	15
ALMIGHTY GOD	30
MISCELLANEOUS	32
CONTRIBUTORY NEGLIGENCE	33
WOMAN SUFFRAGE	65
CONVICT LABOR	101
INITIATIVE & REFERENDUM	117
PRIMARY SCHOOL FUND	175
DIRECT LEGISLATION	313
LIQUOR TRAFFIC	380

TOTAL	1316

primary school fund, and the liquor traffic rank ahead of it. Direct legislation is another term for initiative and referendum. If combined, the two concepts would rank first on the list rather than second and fourth. It was not possible to establish the place of origin for enough of the petitions to look for regional patterns of petitioning.

The Constitutional Convention also brought new women into the suffrage movement. From Grand Rapids, Arthur began to get information and support for suffrage from Mrs. Huntley Russell, President of the Ladies Literary Club and wife of a Republican state senator. While the MSFWC did not endorse woman suffrage, the Grand Rapids Federation did when Mrs. Russell brought the issue to them. Within three days of the endorsement it had 5,000 signatures. Russell wrote Arthur that the Grand Rapids Federation would circulate petitions to all its member organizations if Arthur would send the petitions.⁴⁷

On the evening of January 8, 1908 the Convention held its major woman suffrage hearing. MESA President, Mrs. Clara B. Arthur, reviewed the history of efforts for woman suffrage in Michigan, stressing that women wanted the vote. At the hearing a woman suffrage petition was presented with 225,000 signatures of which 175,000 were women's.

⁴⁷Russell to CBA, 3 December 1907(?), CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

Organizations which supported woman suffrage sent women representatives to speak, each indicating why the organization supported woman suffrage. These included the State Grange, The Michigan State Association of Farmer's Clubs, the Michigan WCTU, the Michigan Federation of Labor, the Detroit Garment Workers Union, two Lady Maccabees groups, the Michigan Woman's Press Association and the Detroit Woman's Independent Voters Association.⁴⁸ Also speaking were Anna Howard Shaw, President of the NAWSA and Catherine Waugh McCulloch, an Illinois lawyer, who spoke on "Some Wrongs of Michigan Women, 1850-1908".⁴⁹ McCulloch's talk was later printed as a pamphlet.

McCulloch pointed out the inconsistency in the interpretation of the language in laws. In interpreting Michigan law, Michigan courts and officers read the word "man" or "he" as applying to both males and females in matters of crime, taxation and the like, but in matters of voting and office holding insisted the words apply only to males. She described Michigan law as a patchwork of court decisions based both on the common law and on enlightened statutes and cited as an example the situation in which a married woman might control her own property, but she had

⁴⁸ Clara B. Arthur, The Progress of Michigan Women (Detroit: Winder Printing Company, 1911), p. 13. MHC-BHL. See also The Detroit Free Press, 23 January 1908 p. 7; HWS, 6:304-305.

⁴⁹ Shaw to CBA, 16 December 1907, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL

to pay her husband a management fee, if he demanded it, for making decisions regarding that property. McCulloch further pointed out that women voted in school elections without damage to themselves or the schools but that questions of home and family in the cities are decided without woman's input. She insisted Michigan women were as fit to vote as women in Finland, New Zealand, Tasmania, Wyoming, Colorado, Idaho, and Utah.⁵⁰ Shaw later praised the hearing Arthur had organized as the best she had ever attended.⁵¹

The Convention debated woman suffrage on January 29, when the electors section (file 206) came before the Convention. The Elections committee had been converted to woman suffrage. Their elector proposal, file 206, provided that every inhabitant who was a citizen twenty-one years of age or older would be an elector. An amendment from the floor by Martin Cavanaugh to insert "male" before inhabitant precipitated the debate.⁵²

⁵⁰Catherine Waugh McCulloch, Some Wrongs of Michigan Women, 1850-1908, An Address before the Michigan Constitutional Convention, January 8, 1908 (n.p. n.d.) McCulloch Papers, Dillon Collection, Series VII, Schlesinger Collection, Radcliffe College. pp. 9-10, 16-17.

⁵¹Shaw to CBA, 28 January 1908 and 31 January 1908, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

⁵²Michigan, Proceedings and Debates of the Constitutional Convention of the State of Michigan, Convened in the City of Lansing, Tuesday, Oct. 22, 1907, (Lansing, Wyncoop, Hallenbeck Crawford Co., 1907) II p. 1068.

Levi Barbour noted that the friends of woman suffrage were willing to have the issue submitted to voters in the first November general election after the Constitution was accepted. Barbour pointed out that woman suffrage was plainly desired by women, using as his evidence both the petitions and the orderly, logical, persuasive, and conclusive hearing. James VanKleeck supported woman suffrage because it would strengthen society. He observed that women as well as colored men deserved the ballot to protect themselves. Benjamin Franklin Heckert, while supporting woman suffrage, did not want to see the new Constitution burdened with new items and favored submitting the question to the voters by separate amendment. Barbour insisted that women should have the vote for the same reasons that men had the vote. Insisting that Michigan abandon the aristocracy of sex, he quoted Samuel Adams and James Otis on the linkage between legislation and representation. Since women were counted for purposes of representation, they should be represented by their votes. He also pleaded that equal suffrage would increase the moral and law-abiding vote. While Kraditor found a shift to expediency arguments among suffragists, these Michigan debates focused more on justice and natural rights arguments than on expediency, what woman suffrage would do for the state. Despite the supporters' efforts,

the Convention inserted the word "male" by a vote of 47 to 34.⁵³

Walter R. Taylor then moved a substitute section which would give the taxpaying woman the right to vote on tax and bond issues. After considerable maneuvering, the Convention accepted by a vote of 65-13 the right of women who owned taxable property to vote on tax and bond issues which affected their property.⁵⁴ The Address to the People indicates the Convention was persuaded to extend the suffrage to taxpaying women by the idea that property should not be taxed without the consent of its owners.⁵⁵

The roll calls in the 1907-1908 convention were subjected to analysis similar to that done in chapters 2 and 3, to examine the possibility that attitudes regarding woman suffrage were linked to party affiliation or positions on other issues. The initiative and home rule for municipalities were selected as government structural issues. Political economy issues included banking regulation, a railroad commission, and municipal ownership of public utilities. Social welfare issues that came to a vote include provisions for the regulation of the labor

⁵³Ibid., II, pp. 1069-1073. See pp. 91-93 above for a summary of these distinctions.

⁵⁴Ibid., II, pp. 1074-1079.

⁵⁵Address to the People of the State of Michigan Submitting the Proposed Revision of the Present Constitution (n.p., n.d.) p. 6.

of women and children and the liquor question. Table 4.2 indicates the chi-square calculation for each issue and variety of woman suffrage. The chi-squares for party, for a railroad commission and for municipal ownership of public utilities are so low that no connection between the two issues can be inferred. There was no significant partisan division on woman suffrage. Delegates' voting patterns show that their positions on the railroad commission and the municipal ownership of public utilities did not correlate with their position regarding woman suffrage.

TABLE 4.2

SUMMARY TABLE ISSUE LINKAGE, 1907-1908
CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION, WOMAN SUFFRAGE & SELECTED ISSUES

	FULL WOMAN SUFFRAGE (FWS)	TAXPAYER WOMAN SUFFRAGE (TPWS)
PARTY	0.364	0.446
INITIATIVE	8.810	0.432
HOME RULE	0.573	4.903
BANK REGULATION	2.463	10.22
RAILROAD COMMISSION	0.837	0.028
MUNICIPAL OWNERSHIP	0.377	0.818
REGULATION WOMEN & CHILDREN LABOR	5.136	0.027
AMENDED LIQUOR PROPOSAL	13.267	0.652

MESA support for the initiative suggests that support for woman suffrage and support for the initiative might be found among the same people. The results, shown in Tables 4.3 and 4.4 suggest the opposite. (In the tables which follow, Y indicates yes, N indicates no.) If support for woman suffrage and support for the initiative are linked, the observed vote in the cell FWSY-IY (those who voted in favor of both the initiative and full woman suffrage) should be larger than the expected vote. The opposite occurs. The observed vote in the cells FWSY-IN is the one larger than expected. Opponents of full woman suffrage supported the initiative in greater than expected numbers. The voting pattern seems to capture a relationship of supporting the expansion of the number of voters, but not favoring expanded power to the people, or favoring expanding the power of the people but not expanding the electorate. Similarly the chi-square and Table 4.4 show that there is no link between support for taxpayer woman suffrage (TPWS) and the initiative (I), since the actual vote is very close to the expected vote.

TABLE 4.3

VOTING ON FULL
WOMAN SUFFRAGE (FWS) AND INITIATIVE(I)

	OBSERVED VOTE			EXPECTED VOTE		
	IY	IN	TOTAL	IY	IN	TOTAL
FWSY	14	24	38	21.1	16.9	38
FWSN	38	18	56	30.9	25.1	56
TOTAL	52	42	94	52	42	94

TABLE 4.4]

VOTING ON TAXPAYER
WOMAN SUFFRAGE (TPWS) AND INITIATIVE(I)

	OBSERVED VOTE			EXPECTED VOTE		
	IY	IN	TOTAL	IY	IN	TOTAL
TPWSY	33	31	64	34.1	29.9	64
TPWSN	8	5	13	6.9	6.1	13
TOTAL	41	36	77	41	36	77

The chi-square in Table 4.1 suggests some link between taxpayer woman suffrage and support for home rule in municipalities. Analysis of the the contingency table below (Table 4.5) suggests the link is very weak and the chi-square a statistical artifact, reflecting the lack of any delegate vote in the cell TPWSY-MHRN.

TABLE 4.5

VOTING ON TAXPAYER
WOMAN SUFFRAGE (TPWS) AND MUNICIPAL HOME RULE (MHR)

	OBSERVED VOTE			EXPECTED VOTE		
	MHRY	MHRN	TOTAL	MHRY	MHRN	TOTAL
TPWSY	58	0	58	57.1	.9	58
TPWSN	11	1	12	11.9	.1	12
TOTAL	69	1	70	69	1	70

In Table 4.2 both varieties of suffrage show slight and positive links to support for banking regulation. Tables 4.6 and 4.7 show how slight that link is. On the other economic issues, the railroad commission and municipal ownership of public utilities the woman suffrage supporters in the Convention show no obvious pattern of support or opposition to either issue in their votes for either variety of woman suffrage.

TABLE 4.6

VOTING OF FULL
WOMAN SUFFRAGE (FWS) AND BANK REGULATION (BR)

	OBSERVED VOTE			EXPECTED VOTE		
	BRY	BRN	TOTAL	BRY	BRN	TOTAL
FWSY	28	0	28	26.5	1.5	28
FWSN	44	4	48	45.5	2.5	48
TOTAL	72	4	76	72	4	76

TABLE 4.7

VOTING ON TAXPAYER
WOMAN SUFFRAGE (TPWS) AND BANK REGULATION (BR)

	OBSERVED VOTE			EXPECTED VOTE		
	BRY	BRN	TOTAL	BRY	BRN	TOTAL
TPWSY	33	31	64	34.1	29.9	64
TPWSN	8	5	13	6.9	6.1	13
TOTAL	41	36	77	41	36	77

On the issue of granting the state the power to regulate the labor of women and children, supporters of full woman suffrage supported it in greater numbers than expected, while opponents of full woman suffrage opposed the regulation power in greater numbers than expected. (Table 4.8). Those who supported both full woman suffrage and protective legislation might have shared the argument that women have unique interests and roles in society. They would have seen the the protective legislation as helping protect women so that they could more adequately play their role as mothers, and woman suffrage as allowing women to represent themselves by voting for issues and candidates who supported or reflected women's special interests and roles. Those voting on taxpayer woman suffrage and the power to regulate the labor of women and children show no obvious patterns of linkage. (Table 4.9)

TABLE 4.8

VOTING ON FULL WOMAN SUFFRAGE (FWS) AND
REGULATION OF WOMEN'S & CHILDREN'S LABOR (RWCL)

	OBSERVED VOTE			EXPECTED VOTE		
	RWCLY	RWCLN	TOTAL	RWCLY	RWCLN	TOTAL
FWSY	29	3	32	24.9	7.1	32
FWSN	31	14	45	35.1	9.9	45
TOTAL	60	17	77	60	17	77

TABLE 4.9

VOTING ON TAXPAYER WOMAN SUFFRAGE (TPWS) AND
REGULATION OF WOMEN'S & CHILDREN'S LABOR (RWCL)

	OBSERVED VOTE			EXPECTED VOTE		
	RWCLY	RWCLN	TOTAL	RWCLY	RWCLN	TOTAL
TPWSY	39	15	54	39.2	14.8	54
TPWSN	6	2	8	5.8	2.2	8
TOTAL	45	17	62	45	17	62

The committee dealing with the liquor issue reported a prohibition proposal (file 213) which passed in the committee of the whole. In convention, Charles Watson moved that file 213 be amended so that it read that the proposal did not pass. His amendment passed 54 to 39.⁵⁶ In the tables below (Tables 4.10 and 4.11) the dry position is the nay vote. The yeas indicate individuals who did not support prohibition. If support for woman suffrage is not

⁵⁶Michigan Constitutional Convention 1908, Proceedings II, pp. 1165, 1166.

linked to support for prohibition, the yes and no voters on the amended liquor proposal should equally support woman suffrage and the expected vote should be close to the actual vote. If the dries support woman suffrage, the WSY-AMLN observed cell should be larger than expected number.

TABLE 4.10

VOTING ON FULL WOMAN
SUFFRAGE (FWS) AND AMENDED LIQUOR PROPOSAL (AML)

	OBSERVED VOTE			EXPECTED VOTE		
	AMLY	AMLN	TOTAL	AMLY	AMLN	TOTAL
FWSY	13	24	37	21.5	15.5	37
FWSN	41	15	56	32.5	23.5	56
TOTAL	54	39	93	54	39	93

TABLE 4.11

VOTING ON TAXPAYER WOMAN
SUFFRAGE (TPWS) AND AMENDED LIQUOR PROPOSAL (AML)

	OBSERVED VOTE			EXPECTED VOTE		
	AMLY	AMLN	TOTAL	AMLY	AMLN	TOTAL
TPWSY	36	27	63	37.3	25.7	63
TPWSN	9	4	13	7.7	5.3	13
TOTAL	45	31	76	45	31	76

The pairing of the vote for full woman suffrage and the amended prohibition vote shows a pattern of support for woman suffrage coming disproportionately from supporters of prohibition, the no voters. While a large portion of the support for full woman suffrage is drawn from voters who

also support prohibition, there is no clear link between support for taxpayer woman suffrage and support for prohibition observable in the voting pattern of the delegates. The expected vote is close to the actual vote. The difference between the voting pattern between full woman suffrage and the liquor proposal and taxpayer woman suffrage and the same proposal may be accounted for by the fact that taxpaying women would not be able to vote in local option elections, since those did not involve bonding or tax issues. Therefore the delegates responded to taxpayer woman suffrage in terms of whether taxpayers had a right to vote on tax issues regardless of sex, not in terms of how women voters might vote in a local option election.

Overall the contingency table analysis of roll call votes suggests that taxpayer suffrage was almost entirely issue neutral. Only with banking regulation does any positive link between support for taxpayer woman suffrage and an issue emerge. The pattern for full woman suffrage is more complex. No clear connection appears to exist between support for full woman suffrage and that for the initiative, railroad regulation, home rule, or municipal ownership. Contingency table analysis suggests weak links between support for banking regulation and support for full woman suffrage. Stronger links exist between support for full woman suffrage and support for protective legislation regarding the labor of women and children. The strongest links exist between support for

full woman suffrage and support for the prohibition position.

Anna Howard Shaw thought the Michigan Convention's vote very good despite the 47-34 defeat of full woman suffrage. She wanted a copy of the roll call vote and the name of the labor man who had been a slacker in voting for equal suffrage. Shaw intended to see about possible retaliation since both labor and women needed and wanted only men who could be trusted in positions of authority or power. It was time for both to help their friends and to hurt their enemies. She promised that if MESA would send their names and addresses NAWSA would send letters of thanks to those who voted for woman suffrage and to the organizations which sent resolutions in support. Shaw concluded by observing that the Constitutional Campaign was greatly educational. The fact that the Convention ignored the wishes of almost 200,000 women showed women how powerless they are.⁵⁷ In a later letter Shaw reported that McCulloch's speech was to be printed as a pamphlet by NAWSA and that Siamese women have received municipal suffrage. She concluded that letter by observing:

⁵⁷Shaw to CBA, 1 February 1908, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

I think by the time all the European countries, Darkest Africa and the Isles of the Sea have had their freedom, the men of this great and glorious Republic will begin to have some sense of justice....I believe we will be the last country to receive it as we are one of the most difficult countries in which any changes in legislation can be brought upon us.⁵⁸

Despite Shaw's recognition that the achievement of woman suffrage in the United States would be difficult, the organizing effort continued. Even as MESA President Arthur was finishing the work in connection with the Constitutional Convention, she was beginning the work to help organize College Equal Suffrage Leagues in Michigan. The CESL, an affiliate of NAWSA, was organized for the express purpose of involving college-educated women in the suffrage movement. College-educated women were most often from the most well-to-do and socially prominent families in the community. Involving them in suffrage work could make it seem less threatening to middle class women.⁵⁹ As early as the 1890s MESA officers had recognized the desirability of reaching this group at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.⁶⁰ In 1907 an Alumnae CESL had been formed in Detroit. In December of 1908 Maud Wood Park, a

⁵⁸Shaw to CBA, 5 February 1908, CBA Papers. BHC-DPL.

⁵⁹Eleanor Flexner, A Century of Struggle (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), p. 243.

⁶⁰Harriet Upton Taylor to OBH, 27 January 1894, OBH Papers, MD-LC microfilm, MHC-BHL.

CESL organizer found the organization "hardly underway as yet".⁶¹

Park visited Michigan in April and December of 1908. Her correspondence and reports give some idea of the difficulties in organizing for woman suffrage even now that the cause was somewhat respectable. Mrs. Park's April trip had been urged on MESA by the NAWSA which had funds from the Garrett-Thomas fund for organizing work. NAWSA wanted to plant "the seeds of equal rights among the college women of the country." Park liked to do "deep" work for three or four days in one place. She recognized that college calendars were crowded and dates needed to be scheduled long in advance. She found it helpful if a collegiate advisor was already arranged for when she arrived. Kate Gordon suggested that Arthur make up an itinerary after inquiries to colleges had suggested likely places.⁶² After considerable correspondence among Clara B. Arthur and various college Presidents and Deans, Gordon, and Park a schedule of visits to Hillsdale College, Albion College

⁶¹Scrapbook I, p. 62, Maud Wood Park Papers, WRC, SL-RC; National CESL Report December 7-13, 1908, Maud Wood Park Papers, MD-LC.

⁶²Kate Gordon to CBA, 7 January and 6 February 1908, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

and the University of Michigan was arranged for April 22-May 1. Olivet College was added for April 15.⁶³

Olivet offered fifteen minutes at Chapel and freedom to call an evening meeting. The college president, Dr. Lancaster, hosted Park. Arthur described him to Park as the Mathew Vassar type, a man who supported women rights so that it could benefit men.⁶⁴ At Hillsdale, President Mauck hosted her. Both President Mauck and Dean Harvey worked to interest students in Park's evening presentation "What the College Woman Owes to the Equal Suffrage Movement" but neither promised a large audience.⁶⁵ Albion College suggested Friday afternoon at 4 P.M. The suffragists accepted.⁶⁶ Dean Maude Gilchrist of Michigan Agricultural College reported that she did not think the college had enough sentiment for suffrage to make a visit worthwhile. The faculty was opposed; the town girls could

⁶³Arthur's communications with Michigan college officials and Gordon can be followed in her papers, February-April 1908, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL. Gordon's and Arthur's letters to Park are in Maud Wood Park Papers, March-April 1908, WRC, SL-RC.

⁶⁴CBA to Park, 12 April 1908, Maud Wood Park Papers, WRC, SL-RC.

⁶⁵Mauck to CBA, 14 March 1908, Harvey to CBA, 28 March 1908, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

⁶⁶Samuel Dickie to CBA, 24 March 1908, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL

not to be counted upon; the college had few women and they were not interested.⁶⁷

What happened at the University of Michigan is unclear. The Dean of Women had helped arrange for Park to make an address on April 22 at Newberry Hall near campus under the auspices of the Women's League. Since University property could not be used for political agitation and a woman suffrage speech was seen as political agitation, a campus building could not be used. The meeting was rescheduled for April 25 on very short notice. Arthur wrote Park that she had never had a speaker "dished before" and she hoped that the other colleges would not back out.⁶⁸ Despite the difficulties, Park succeeded in informally organizing groups at each school she visited.⁶⁹

In December, Park returned to Ann Arbor for some quiet organizing. Dean of Women, M. B. Jordan and the students seemed to feel self conscious about publicly becoming woman suffrage advocates in a co-educational institution given the ridicule aroused by reports of the English suffragettes' activities. They suggested a well know speaker whose main fame was not in suffrage might be

⁶⁷Maude Gilchrist to CBA, 25 March 1908, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL

⁶⁸Jordan to CBA, 17 April 1908, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL: CBA to Maud Wood Park, 24 April 1908, Maud Wood Park Papers, WRC, SL-RC.

⁶⁹MESA, Annual Report, 1908, p. 15 BHC-DPL

able to overcome the difficulty. Mrs. Florence Kelley the General Secretary of the National Consumer's League was suggested. Park observed that Jordan was a "politic person ...[who is] waiting to find out exactly what sort of association we have before she permits herself to be very active on our side." In the letter attached to her CESL report, she suggests that M. Carey Thomas try to convert Jordan to the woman suffrage cause, if and when, Jordan visited Bryn Mawr of which Thomas was president. ⁷⁰

As the MESA report to NAWSA shows, 1908 was a very busy year for the organization. The Constitutional Convention and the CESL were extra efforts on top of the usual work. The State Fair at Detroit was covered by the Detroit and Wayne County suffragists who distributed much literature and talked suffrage with many people. Unlike earlier years, little literature was thrown away. MESA also petitioned the Michigan delegates to the Democratic National Convention to support the NAWSA memorial for woman suffrage when it was presented to the Convention. The Republicans had already met when the national's request reached MESA.⁷¹ Michigan women were still so politically

⁷⁰"National CESL Report December 7-13, 1908," Maud Wood Park to Thomas, 14 December 1908, Maud Wood Park Papers, MD-LC.

⁷¹MESA, Annual Report 1908, p. 15 BHC-DPL.

unsophisticated they did not think of it themselves, but had to be reminded by the national.

In the years since the Women's Municipal Suffrage Act had been declared unconstitutional in 1893, Michigan suffragists had worked at agitation, education, and organization. They had developed ties with labor groups and other women's groups which supported woman suffrage in the 1908 Constitutional Convention. The justice of their cause and the support it commanded at the hearing had convinced the Elections Committee to support woman suffrage. The entire convention had been more timid, but had supported taxpayer suffrage for women. MESA officers responded to the rebuff of the Convention by continuing their organizational and educational efforts. The CESL work began in 1908 and other organizations whose focus was woman suffrage were to be fostered by MESA after 1908.

CHAPTER 5

1909-1913: "THE FIGHT IS GETTING WARM"
Ida B. Chittenden, 1912

For 1909 NAWSA wanted a monster petition of one million signatures to present to Congress to squash once and for all the idea that women did not want the vote.¹ MESA President Clara B. Arthur undertook to organize the petition work in Michigan. Arthur's correspondence for December 1908 and January 1909 indicates she had difficulty in finding women to do the work. Some flatly refused; some, while themselves declining, suggested others. Mecca Marie Varney of Paw Paw, the National WCTU Franchise Superintendent, wrote that she would push the petition where she spoke, but for organized WCTU work Arthur needed to work with Mrs. Calkins the state president. Varney described the WCTU as "petitioned to death."² Reports from two field workers in February indicated the conditions under which the petition work was undertaken. May Knaggs reported she was not disappointed

¹"Monster Petition for Woman Suffrage" Woman 12 January 1909, p. 12: "Michigan Women, Attention" Woman 23 January 1909 p. 3: FMHR-GRPL.

²Dr. S. G. Banks to CBA, 15 December 1908; Belle Perry to CBA, 10 January 1909; Varney to CBA, 13 January 1909. Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

that NAWSA could not fund her speaking trip. Jennie Law Hardy of Lenawee County reported arranging meetings with WCTU groups and Granges and getting favorable press coverage. Hardy asked for a short history of the woman suffrage movement and employment figures regarding women and children to buttress her arguments.³ The speaking efforts of Knaggs and Hardy contributed to the over 135,000 signatures from Michigan the petition contained when submitted to Congress.⁴

Michigan voters approved the proposed Constitution by a vote of 244,797 yes to 130,783 no in November of 1908. At their 1909 annual meeting, MESA members urged Michigan women to exercise taxpayer suffrage and school suffrage whenever possible. Other resolutions supported equal pay for women and "wise laws" regarding children's labor and recognizing organized labor's support for woman suffrage were also passed.⁵ Mary Doe, the organizing chairman, reported much suffrage sentiment in Michigan, but added that without funds to pay a organizer to stay in the field, creating and maintaining woman suffrage organizations was

³Knaggs to CBA, 1 February 1909; Hardy to CBA, 6 February 1909; Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

⁴Clara B. Arthur, Progress of Michigan Women ... a brief record of the effort and achievement of women in Michigan in the Struggle for Equality before the Law (Detroit, 1912?), p. 14, MHC-BHL.

⁵MESA, Annual Report 1909, p. 24.

difficult.⁶ Doe also reported that women workers were increasingly aware of the need for political rights and organizing for them. She suggested the organization of "Equality Leagues of Self-Supporting Women" in Michigan as a way to channel this awareness.⁷ President Clara B. Arthur reported that state Federations of Woman's Clubs were slowly endorsing woman suffrage. By the end of 1909 state federations in New York, Montana and Maryland had done so.⁸

Arthur's report pointed up the gradual development of suffrage sentiment within woman's clubs. The struggle for the endorsement of woman suffrage by the General Federation of Woman's Clubs (GFWC) had begun at the 1906 biennial meeting where the issue was quietly mentioned. At the biennial meeting in 1908, woman suffrage had been openly discussed and strong sentiment had existed in the 1912 biennial meeting. In 1914 the federation endorsed suffrage.⁹ The Michigan Federation endorsed suffrage in 1910.¹⁰

⁶Ibid., p. 9.

⁷Ibid., pp. 10-13.

⁸Ibid., pp. 8-9.

⁹Karen J. Blair, The Clubwoman as Feminist: True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914 (New York, Holmes and Meier, Publishers, Inc., 1980) p. 113.

¹⁰Arthur, Progress of Michigan Women, p. 15

The 1909 MESA meeting had been held in Grand Rapids which had several strong individual supporters but no organized woman suffrage group. One of the priorities of 1910 was organizing a group in Grand Rapids, the second largest city in Michigan. An organizing meeting was held April 14, and the Grand Rapids Equal Franchise Club organized.¹¹ Other organizing work that year included Lansing and Battle Creek. Mary Doe described the Lansing people as "needing a political kindergarten." They had given almost no thought to woman suffrage.¹² In 1910 and 1911 Jackson, Albion, Ann Arbor, and Hart were also organized.¹³

In 1910, the Men's League for Equal Suffrage began organizing a Michigan chapter. There is considerable correspondence in Arthur's files which suggests that she was the main force behind its coming into existence. The final organizing committee included former U. S. Senator Thomas W. Palmer, Levi V. Barbour, a member of the University of Michigan Board of Regents, and Huntley Russell, a Grand Rapids Republican activist. The letter sent out over their names invited the addressee to join

¹¹Mrs. Huntley Russell (Clara), Diary, 14 April 1910, MHC-BHL.

¹²Doe to CBA, The Lansing work is discussed 18 March 1910, the Battle Creek work, 6 June 1910, Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

¹³MESA, Annual Report 1911, pp. 9-10.

other "eminent men" in contributing money, time or both to the movement. One recipient replied, "Eminent men and few of the other kind may be in this thing, but it does not appeal to me."¹⁴ Others declined because they felt they had no time to give.¹⁵ Some of those who declined wrote letters from which it is hard to establish whether they were opposed to woman suffrage or reluctant to have their name publicly linked to the issue.¹⁶ One man declined because of his opposition to universal male suffrage which allowed too many unfit persons to vote specifically, "saloon bought hoodlums, irresponsible and illiterate foreigners."¹⁷ Seventy-two men accepted the invitation to become charter members.¹⁸ In 1911 Arthur reported to

¹⁴E. L. Maddox handwritten note on the committee's letter of 1 March 1910 inviting him to join them, Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

¹⁵Filbert Roth to the Committee, 9 March 1910; Joseph Mauch to Levi Barbour, 22 March 1910. Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

¹⁶H. Hutchins to Levi Barbour, 21 March 1910; W.B. Williams to Barbour, 21 March 1910; and Frederick D. Leete to Barbour, 22 March 1910, Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

¹⁷Paul Weacok to Barbour, 13 April 1910, Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

¹⁸"Constitution and Charter Members of the Men's League for Woman Suffrage of the State of Michigan," with a 12 January 1912, recruitment letter of the League, Harry Burns Hutchins Papers, MHC-BHL.

MESA that the Men's League had been organized with a full time secretary to tend to its business.¹⁹

In 1910, the state of Washington became a full suffrage state. Washington suffragists conducted a quiet but meticulous campaign, giving suffrage talks at Grange, labor and church gatherings but holding few outright suffrage meetings.²⁰

Later in 1910, MESA began to consider the idea of a joint resolution providing for a woman suffrage amendment to the State Constitution in the 1911 session of the legislature. Grand Rapids suffragists were particularly hopeful of success since the governor and state officials had all signed the Congressional woman suffrage petition.²¹ Huntley and Clara Russell, Republican activists, were consulted for names of strong woman suffrage supporters to manage the bill in the legislature and they suggested Representative Charles Flowers of Detroit and Senator Horace T. Barnaby of Grand Rapids. Mary Doe was worried that members of the Legislative Committee would not be able to work for the bill. She hoped Mrs. Hardy would be in the state and Mrs.

¹⁹MESA, Annual Report 1911, p.15.

²⁰Eleanor Flexner, Century of Struggle: The Woman's Rights Movement in the United States (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, Belknap Press, 1975) p.263.

²¹MESA, Annual Report 1911, p. 10.

Crane not tied up with other responsibilities.²² Having a majority in the Michigan House, but not the two-thirds required for passage, the measure died.²³

California had a successful woman suffrage campaign in 1911. The campaign included a number of new activities by which to reach voters: high school essay contests, pageants, plays, and extensive use of automobiles. The association worked hardest in the rural areas and small towns. It worked hard in the big cities only late in the campaign, hoping to lull the opposition. The tactic succeeded. Woman suffrage won because of the extensive work in the rural areas where there had been no interest before the 1911 campaign.²⁴ Michigan suffragists would adopt some of the California and Washington tactics for their own.

One can follow the activities of local suffrage organizations in these years in a variety of sources. The Ann Arbor Equal Suffrage Club program for 1911-1912 included discussions of different kinds of suffrage, school, municipal, tax-payer; the effect of equal suffrage in homes; women and the law, the powers of congress and the

²²Doe to CBA, 5 December 1910, Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

²³MESA, Annual Report 1911, p. 14.

²⁴Flexner, Century of Struggle, pp. 263-265.

legislatures, talks on great women past and present and the privileges of citizenship.²⁵

Some associations were more active. The Detroit Equal Suffrage Association petitioned the state legislature in 1911 to remedy an oversight in the provisions which allowed women to vote in school elections in Detroit. Women could not vote in the primary because the primary law had no provision for their registration. Speaker of the Michigan House Herbert F. Baker promised the issue would receive the attention its seriousness merited.²⁶

Detroit, the largest city in Michigan, had the most active suffrage groups. The various suffrage groups in Detroit tried to coordinate their efforts through a League of Equal Suffrage Societies of Detroit (LESSD). The League planned a series of lectures for the winter of 1911-1912. The week of the November talk, the League's plans included a dinner, suffrage teas, a request to ministers to preach on woman suffrage, a mass meeting, and the lecture. The League netted \$25.70 over expenses from the lecture.²⁷ The League wrote the governors of states that had woman

²⁵Scrapbook, Henry Newkirk Papers, MHC-BHL. Newkirk spoke to the group 18 January 1912 on the powers of Congress and the powers of the Legislature.

²⁶Detroit Equal Suffrage Association to Herbert Baker, Speaker of the House, 12 January 1911; Baker to the Association, 16 January 1912, Herbert Baker Papers, MHC-BHL.

²⁷LESSD, Minutes 17 October 1911, Minutes 2 November 1911, Minutes 15 November 1911, Box 3, LG Papers, MHC-BHL.

suffrage asking the governors to say something positive about woman suffrage in their remarks in Detroit while attending the Western Governor's meeting in late November.²⁸

The Factory Committee of the League developed a list of factories where women worked and sought to reach these women with literature and speakers. They asked the League to fund enough literature so that there would be a flyer per person. Later the group reported reaching women at four factories with either speakers or literature.²⁹ The literature committee tried to get literature on the trolley cars but was rebuffed by the company. They did put flyers in the matinee programs of "Little Women."³⁰

In 1912, Governor Chase Osborn called two special sessions of the state legislature. The League wrote the Governor asking him to include a woman suffrage amendment to the Constitution in the business he transmitted to the legislature.³¹ In special session the legislature could only address those issues upon which the governor had

²⁸LESSD, Minutes 7 November 1911, Box 3, LG Papers, MHC-BHL.

²⁹LESSD, Minutes 3 January 1912, Minutes 28 February 1912, Box 3, LG Papers, MHC-BHL.

³⁰LESSD, Minutes 15 November 1911, Minutes 28 February 1912, Box 3, LG Papers, MHC-BHL.

³¹LESSD, Minutes 6 March 1912, Box 3, LG Papers, MHC-BHL.

requested they act. When the first session convened February 26, Governor Osborn asked for a presidential preference primary bill with immediate effect, and an employers liability and workmen's compensation bill similar to the one recommended by the Employers Liability and Workmen's Compensation Commission in their report. He also asked for some provision for paying the expenses of delegates to the national conventions.³²

On March 11 Osborn sent several messages to the Legislature, requesting action in a number of areas. He asked for legislative action on amendments to the Constitution providing for initiative, referendum, recall, and woman suffrage which could be presented to the people in November, 1912. He asked for a variety of other legislation, including a banking commission, the end to brewery owned saloons, and an end to the monopoly of the Michigan Bonding and Surety Company which bonded all the saloons in Michigan and was controlled by the brewers.³³

The first session had done little with the governor's agenda. So when the first session ended at noon on March 20, a second special session was called for that afternoon. Osborn insisted that the legislature deal with brewery-owned saloons, the bonding issue, the amendments to

³²Michigan House, Journal, 1912 First Special Session, 26 February 1912, pp. 10-12.

³³Michigan House, Journal 1912 First Special Session, 11 March 1912, pp. 80-84.

the Constitution, immediate effect for the presidential preference primary and provisions to include any and all state offices in the state primary law.³⁴

The Knights of the Royal Ark of Wayne County, a wet group, opposed the proposals on the grounds that in a special session time limits made it impossible to consider them properly. Osborn used their opposition to illustrate the dangers of the liquor interest in politics. That the Knights of the Royal Ark might with justice take a stand on the brewery-owned saloon and on the bonding company issues he conceded. But their opposition to woman suffrage, the initiative, the referendum, and the recall suggested a fear of public opinion.³⁵

While both sessions received petitions, the second session received many more petitions and most were on the liquor issues. Table 5.1 shows the petitioning activity by topic for each house during each session. Figure 5.1 graphically illustrates the increase in petitions between the first and second sessions. In the first session woman suffrage petitions made up 4% of the petitions. In the second session, woman suffrage petitions make up 2% of the total number of petitions.

³⁴Michigan House, Journal 1912 Second Special Session, 20 March 1912, pp. 6-7.

³⁵Osborn's message of 21 March 1912 contains the charge. See Michigan Senate, Journal 1912, Second Special Session, p. 27.

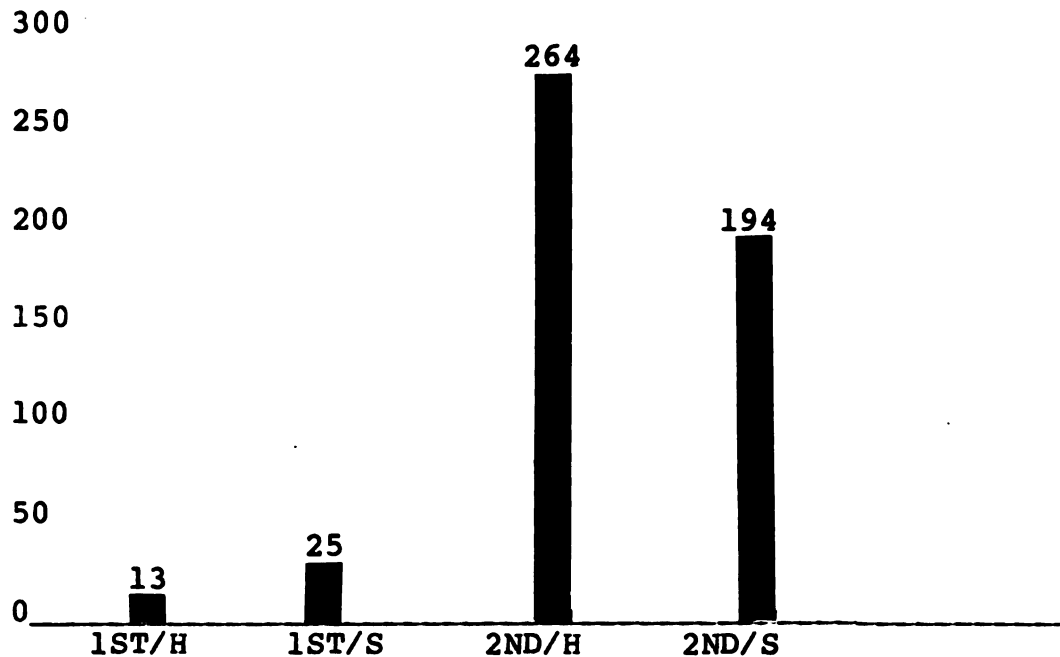
TABLE 5.1

PETITIONS TO THE 1912
SPECIAL SESSIONS OF THE LEGISLATURE
(I=1st session, II=2nd session, H=House, S=Senate)

	I	II	TOTAL
BREWERY OWNED SALOON		119H 89S	208
SALOON BONDING LAW		126H 94S	220
STEELHEAD TROUT SEASON	3H	15H	18
EMPLOYER LIABILITY	5H		5
PRESIDENTIAL PREF. PRIMARY	3H 25S		28
IMMEDIATE EFFECT		1H 5S	6
WOMAN SUFFRAGE AMENDMENT	1H	2H 6S	9
POLLUTION OF WATERS		1H	1
STUMP FENCES ON ROADS	1H		1
TOTALS	(I = 13H + 25S =38	II= 264H + 194S =458)	496

FIGURE 5.1

NUMBER OF PETITIONS IN 1912 SPECIAL SESSIONS



Jenny Law Hardy reported that after the woman suffrage measure passed the Senate twelve liquor dealers and some bonding company men arrived to lobby against it among the House members . Some supporters of woman suffrage thought the measure lost. Hardy got Representative Thomas McNaughton to contact the Grange. Several Michigan Grange officers came to Lansing as soon as they could and went to work on the Representatives whom Hardy feared were backsliding. At least two yes votes Hardy attributed directly to the work of the Grange. She felt that without the Grange all would have been lost.³⁶

³⁶Hardy to CBA, 30 March 1912, Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

Analysis of the roll calls on selected votes in the legislative special sessions of 1912 examined several questions. The first is whether there is any party line in voting for woman suffrage. Did the Republicans favor woman suffrage and the Democrats oppose it? If the vote for the woman suffrage amendment is scattered then the vote is not partisan. If the vote is concentrated by party then woman suffrage is a partisan issue, even if the party platforms took no position.

The bulk of the political fighting occurred over two bills: the presidential preference primary bill and the more controversial issue of the immediate effect. The Republican party "regulars" supported Taft and did not want immediate effect for the bill. The Republican "insurgents" supported Roosevelt and wanted immediate effect for the bill. Immediate effect would mean that Michigan's delegation to the Republican national convention would be bound by the presidential preference primary. All observers agreed that Roosevelt would win such a primary over Taft. Examining votes on this issue allows one to look for splits within the Republicans. Were the Roosevelt supporters (immediate effect supporters) more progressive as a group than the Taft supporters? Did the Roosevelt group support woman suffrage in greater proportion than the Taft group?

The other major issue was workmen's compensation, an obviously "progressive measure". Who supported it? Were the supporters of woman suffrage more apt to support workmen's's compensation?

Lastly, there is a liquor issue that passed both houses of the legislature. The issue was the brewery-owned saloon. Persons opposed to the sale of liquor in Michigan saw the brewery-owned saloon as a source of corruption, drunkenness, and debauchery. The brewery, under pressure to sell a large volume of liquor, contravened laws regarding closing, sale to minors, other activities in the saloon etc. The dries wished to outlaw the brewery owned saloon while wets opposed the law.

The 1912 legislative special sessions provides a wet-dry issue to look for liquor and woman suffrage connections, and a series of progressive legislative issues, some of a political type (presidential preference primary), some of the social welfare type (workmen's's compensation), and some of the social justice type (woman suffrage). The summary below indicates which issues might show some pattern of linkage to woman suffrage. As in previous chapters, a high chi-square indicates a possible linkage.

TABLE 5.2

1912 LEGISLATURE: SUMMARY TABLE;
WOMAN SUFFRAGE & SELECTED TOPICS

	HOUSE	SENATE
END BREWERY OWNED SALOON	13.12	11.41
PARTY	.04	.55
PRES. PREF. PRIMARY	.66	6.01
IMMEDIATE EFFECT	4.61	4.23
WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION	0.00	3.96

Showing very low chi-squares are party, presidential preferential primary (in the House) and workmen's's compensation (in the House). Showing moderate chi-squares are workmen's's compensation (in the Senate) and immediate effect for the presidential preference primary. The only high chi-squares in the 1912 legislature are for woman suffrage and the liquor issue. Since chi-square figures do not indicate the direction or exact degree of issue linkage between two issues, contingency tables for both houses were constructed for the brewery-owned saloon and immediate effect of presidential primary. (In the tables which follow Y indicates yes, N indicates no.)

TABLE 5.3

1912 HOUSE VOTING ON WOMAN SUFFRAGE (WS)
AND ENDING BREWERY-OWNED SALOONS (EBOS)

	OBSERVED VOTE			EXPECTED VOTE		
	EBOSY	EBOSN	TOTAL	EBOSY	EBOSN	TOTAL
WSY	60	9	69	54.6	14.4	69
WSN	8	9	17	13.4	3.6	17
TOTAL	68	18	86	68	18	86

TABLE 5.4

1912 SENATE VOTING ON WOMAN SUFFRAGE (WS)
AND ENDING BREWERY-OWNED SALOONS (EBOS)

	OBSERVED VOTE			EXPECTED VOTE		
	EBOSY	EBOSN	TOTAL	EBOSY	EBOSN	TOTAL
WSY	21	0	21	19.3	1.7	21
WSN	2	2	4	3.7	.3	4
TOTAL	23	2	25	23	2	25

In both the House and the Senate supporters of ending the brewery-owned saloon, a dry position, supported woman suffrage in larger numbers than they would have done if the two issues were not linked in some way in their minds. In a similar fashion, legislators who opposed ending the brewery-owned saloon, a wet position, opposed woman suffrage in larger numbers than they would if the issues were not linked in their minds.

TABLE 5.5

HOUSE VOTING ON WOMAN
SUFFRAGE (WS) AND IMMEDIATE EFFECT
FOR THE PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE PRIMARY (IE)

	OBSERVED VOTE			EXPECTED VOTE		
	IEY	IEN	TOTAL	IEY	IEN	TOTAL
WSY	69	4	73	66.7	6.3	73
WSN	15	4	19	17.3	1.6	19
TOTAL	84	8	92	84	8	92

TABLE 5.6

SENATE VOTING ON WOMAN
SUFFRAGE (WS) AND IMMEDIATE EFFECT
FOR THE PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE PRIMARY (IE)

	OBSERVED VOTE			EXPECTED VOTE		
	IEY	IEN	TOTAL	IEY	IEN	TOTAL
WSY	16	7	23	14	9	23
WSN	1	4	5	3	2	5
TOTAL	17	11	28	17	11	28

In both the House and Senate, legislators who supported immediate effect for the presidential preference primary tended to support the woman suffrage amendment to the constitution. The most obvious possible link is the the idea that individuals should have opportunities to participate in government, whether the nomination of presidential candidates or the participation of women in politics through voting.

After the woman suffrage amendment passed the legislature, suffragists went to Lansing and prepared a

supper similar to a church pot luck and served it to all the legislators. No surviving material indicates the purpose of the suffrage supper. To the modern researcher it looks like a thank you gesture, a reminder that suffragists are womanly and a lobbying effort all rolled into one. The League of Equal Suffrage Societies of Detroit voted \$10 to help defray expenses for the suffrage supper, a fair amount for a group whose minutes indicate careful monitoring of expenses. The League also paid the expenses of three members and four laboring men for trips to Lansing in support of woman suffrage. The League also had sent 350 post cards to people asking them to write the legislature regarding the suffrage bill.³⁷

Michigan women had not planned on a referendum campaign in 1912 and neither had the NAWSA. When the Michigan legislature passed the referendum resolution, NAWSA resources were already well committed to campaigns in Ohio, Kansas, Wisconsin, Oregon, and Arizona.³⁸ April was taken up with the details of organizing for a campaign. One of the first campaign decisions made was to arrange for plate matter to newspapers. Plate matter was material already set. An editor who accepted plate matter had only to insert the plate, or as much of it as he wanted to use,

³⁷LESSD, Minutes 29 March 1912; Minutes 8 April 1912; Box 3, LG Papers, MHC-BHL.

³⁸Flexner, Century of Struggle, p. 268.

into his paper in the appropriate spot when he wanted to use it. Plate matter saved the local paper the cost and bother of setting the material. Plate matter enabled suffragists to get favorable material into small newspapers in areas where there was no suffrage news. The American Press Association agreed to supply plate to newspapers in early May, mid June and early August.³⁹

Anna Howard Shaw, President of NAWSA, urged that special attention be paid to the rural areas where woman suffrage would be strongest. She suggested using reports of federal hearings as literature as much as possible since those could be franked by a sympathetic congressman or senator to voters.⁴⁰ In another letter she urged that the planning and division of the work involve all the organizations that supported suffrage. She suggested involving the Maccabees, women's clubs, Granges, and labor groups.⁴¹ In a later letter Shaw suggested letting the Grange work for suffrage in its own way, since cooperation was difficult to get. She also worried that the WCTU was linking temperance and woman suffrage too

³⁹Memorandum of Agreement, American Press Association and Equal Suffrage Association, 5 April 1912, Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

⁴⁰Shaw to CBA, 2 April 1912 Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

⁴¹Shaw to Caroline Bartlett Crane, 3 April 1912, Suffrage Correspondence file, Caroline Bartlett Crane Papers, RHC-WMU.

openly, a maneuver which would hurt both movements. The problem here was that although the WCTU supported woman suffrage and worked closely with MESA, too open an alliance would hurt the suffrage cause by making woman suffrage appear to be a temperance or prohibitionist cause. Such a perception would likely lose votes. Shaw complained both to Caroline Bartlett Crane and to Mrs. Arthur about Michigan leaders going on summer vacations when a campaign was planned, forgetting that the campaign was a surprise for MESA and not a reality until late March, at which time many people had already made commitments.⁴²

In May Shaw expressed concern about the structure of the Michigan campaign. There were two headquarters, a general one in Detroit and a campaign headquarters in Grand Rapids. Shaw understood that a man, Reverend A. W. Wishart was directing the campaign. She thought that unwise for two reasons: both because a single individual should not be allowed to plan the campaign; and because a man heading the campaign suggested that women could not handle the job. She suggested again a central planning committee to organize numerous outdoor meetings and to visit all possible meetings with literature and woman suffrage

⁴²Shaw to Crane, 18 April 1912, Suffrage Correspondence file, Caroline Bartlett Crane Papers, RHC-WMU; Shaw to CBA, 18 April 1912, Correspondence, CBA papers, BHC-DPL; HWS, 6:306 describes MESA as in "turmoil" after Osborn's message to the legislature.

speakers.⁴³ Arthur replied that Dr Wishart's title was campaign advisor and he understood his role and that he had considerable experience in managing reform campaigns and was secretary of the Men's League. She responded to Shaw's concern about working with other organizations by noting that the WCTU and the Maccabees already had met with the MESA state board.⁴⁴

The existence of more than one campaign headquarters may have contributed to a problem that plagued the suffragists. Arthur described herself as driven to distraction by the Grand Rapids women.⁴⁵ Jenny Law Hardy felt the Grand Rapids women hired too many men for too much money, promised to raise the money to pay the men, and then did not raise the money. Nellie Sawyer Clark sent her support via Mrs. Crane who made suggestions for ways to lessen the tension.⁴⁶ A possible reason for the tension in MESA was a generational gap. From the the group that came into the work in the 1880s, only Arthur, Caroline Bartlett Crane and Mary L. Doe remained active in MESA and on the

⁴³Shaw to CBA, 27 May 1912, Correspondence, CBA papers, BHC-DPL.

⁴⁴CBA to Shaw, 30 May 1912, Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHL-DPL.

⁴⁵CBA to Shaw, 30 May 1912, Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHL-DPL.

⁴⁶Hardy to CBA, 7 June 1912 and 1 July 1912; Caroline Bartlett Crane to CBA, 7 June 1912, Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHL-DPL.

board. The rest of the active women had all entered the work since 1900, including all the Grand Rapids women.⁴⁷

By July the campaign was operating with three headquarters plus a press center. Publicity and the Speakers Bureau operated out of Kalamazoo. The press work originated in Tecumseh, the home of the press chairman. The multiple offices pattern occurred because all the major committee chairmen for the campaign were homemakers and unable to be away from home for long periods.⁴⁸ Undoubtedly the divided headquarters and the inability to communicate fully contributed to the tensions among the groups.

County work involved a variety of activities. Women in Albion, located in Calhoun County, hoped to have a public rally once a month from June through November.⁴⁹ Jackson County suffragists wanted lots of buttons and planned to distribute literature house to house. The editor of largest paper in the county, Jackson Patriot, delivered better than one pro woman suffrage editorial a week. The women visited each social at a school house and

⁴⁷Crane to CBA, 2 July 1912, Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHL-DPL.

⁴⁸MESA, Annual Report January 1913, p. 14.

⁴⁹Mrs. F. T. Carlton to CBA, 25 April 1912; Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHL-DPL.

gave readings and talks. In rural areas in the county organizing by school districts seemed easiest.⁵⁰

In Manistee County MESA Finance Committee member Verna Simons tried to keep woman suffrage separate from the liquor issue. The liquor interests ran the elections in Manistee County and if woman suffrage were perceived as connected to temperance, suffrage would be hurt at the polls. The WCTU seemed bent on running its own woman suffrage campaign in the county because the WCTU members saw the local campaign committee as "society ladies" not serious interested in reform or the issues.⁵¹ In November 1912, the Manistee County vote on woman suffrage was 1,736 in favor, 2,586 opposed.

Kalamazoo County offered cash prizes for school essays on woman suffrage. Kalamazoo campaigners tried to reach every farm auction and silo filling in the county as an opportunity to distribute literature and make speeches.⁵² Mrs. O. A. Chappelle reported that personal contact worked best in Leelanau County since the men would not take information in a group, but privately would listen

⁵⁰Martha Strong to CBA 31 May 1912; Emma Wells Parnall to CBA, 15 June 1912; Belle M. Perry to CBA, 30 July 1912, Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHL-DPL.

⁵¹LVC to CBA, 12 June 1912, Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

⁵²NSC to CBA, 17 November 1912 Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHL-DPL.

attentively to the reasons why women should have the vote.⁵³

The Upper Peninsula was thoroughly canvassed. Maggie Walz of the Finnish- American Woman Suffrage Association arranged a speaking schedule for Dr. Wishart in the Upper Peninsula, and she worked at the temperance league meetings. There were 108 temperance league societies in the Upper Peninsula. Mrs. Woodman toured the area speaking to the Granges. Mrs. Caulkins of the State WCTU spoke in August on suffrage only. Two local suffrage societies were organized in the Upper Peninsula during the campaign. Cora Jeffers organized one in Houghton County while Maggie Walz organized one in Mohawk, Keewenau County.⁵⁴ Luce County got attention in September when Belle Brotherton visited her family there, spoke to five Granges and got someone to staff a woman suffrage booth at the county fair in October.⁵⁵

The summer work was steady, but the two months before the November election were unremitting for woman suffrage field workers. Mrs. Huntley Russell, Organization Chairman for the campaign, spent all but four days of September on suffrage work and all but five days of

⁵³Chappelle to Mrs. Russell, 14 November 1912, Recount of 1912 Correspondence, ALTB Papers, SL-RC.

⁵⁴Maggie J. Walz to CBA, 27 June 1912; Jenny Law Hardy to CBA, 18 June 1912; Cora Jeffers to CBA, 22 August 1912, Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHL-DPL.

⁵⁵F. Belle Brotherton to Mrs. Huntley Russell, 22 September 1912, ALTB Papers, SL-RC.

October on suffrage work. Russell described her work as routine. A five-day trip in October, for example, began when she traveled from her home in Grand Rapids to Bay City by train and then met with suffrage workers in Bay City to encourage their work, attended two teas, and a reception, all on Saturday. On Sunday afternoon she held a meeting in the Congregational church. On Monday, still in Bay City, she worked on translating a flyer into Polish to circulate in a Catholic parish and attended Progressive Party meetings to cement local progressive support for woman suffrage. On Tuesday she travelled by train to Alpena where she arranged the first suffrage meeting ever held in the town for Wednesday. To meet people and encourage them to come to the meeting, she hired an auto and recruited an audience. On Wednesday, sixty people attended the meeting and a campaign committee was organized. She then returned home to Grand Rapids for a day of suffrage work there. This was not an unusual amount of activity for September or October. The week after the November 5 election is a complete blank in her diary, and she was a fairly consistent recorder of activities over several years.⁵⁶

In late October, Mrs. Russell wrote a letter to the Civil War veterans in the Soldier's Home in Grand

⁵⁶Clara C. Russell to ALTB, 7 October 1912, Miscellaneous File, Blake Family Papers, MHC-BHL; Mrs. Huntley Russell, September, October, November 1912 Diary, MHC-BHL.

Rapids. She praised the men for going to war to free a race from slavery and oppression fifty years ago. She asks them now to stand for freedom and right and vote for woman suffrage. She called the states that had woman suffrage the only truly free states in the Union.⁵⁷

The Men's League for Woman Suffrage of the State of Michigan sent two circular letters signed by A. W. Wishart. The first asked for money to support the work of the ladies. Wishart described the Men's League as informal with the women doing most of the work.⁵⁸ In October the second letter went to ministers. It asked them to preach a suffrage sermon on Sunday, November 3, just before the November 5 election. Dr. Wishart preached on "Religion and Citizenship" in his church, Fountain Street Baptist, in Grand Rapids. No copy of the sermon survives in the church archives.⁵⁹

Like Dr. Wishart's sermon, most of the speeches and much of the material surrounding the woman suffrage referendum campaign of 1912 has not survived. Most of the materials that have survived are NAWSA literature used by

⁵⁷Mrs. Huntley Russell to Members of the Soldier's Home, 31 October 1912, scrapbook 26, NAWSA Papers, RL-NYPL.

⁵⁸Circular letter, 3 August 1912, Equal Suffrage League of Wayne County, Emma A. Fox Papers, BHC-DPL: Circular letter, 29 Oct 1912, ALTB Papers, SL-RC.

⁵⁹Fountain Street Baptist Church Bulletin, 3 November 1912, and personal report to author by Naomi Paganelli.

MESA. Only two pieces of specific Michigan origin have been found. Henry Newkirk, a former state legislator, county prosecutor, and judge, gave two weeks of time to lecture in south central Michigan for woman suffrage in October.

Newkirk's notes on woman suffrage indicate he stressed that voting was a natural right to which women were entitled. He criticized the Supreme Court's decision in Minor v Happersett that citizenship did not confer the vote, and pointed out that women were in a parallel position to American colonist before the Revolutionary War. Then Great Britain had argued that the colonists were virtually represented in Parliament. Opponents of woman suffrage now insisted women were virtually represented by men. Newkirk did expect that civic life would improve if women had the vote, but did not expect a millennium.⁶⁰

Alde L. T. Blake wrote a series of columns for The Tradesman urging woman suffrage. She pointed out the justice giving women citizen's the vote and insisted that women would not neglect their families and children when they had the vote. She stressed the vote as a way for

⁶⁰"Woman Suffrage-Michigan 1912," Speeches and other Writings, I, scrapbook, Henry Newkirk Papers, MHC-BHL.

women to directly influence matters that affected their homes and families.⁶¹

MESA circulated a great deal of literature over the course of the campaign. Three tons of material -- literature, buttons, banners, post cards, rubber stamps, and other suffrage novelties -- were forwarded by the Grand Rapids Campaign headquarters.⁶² The literature committee reported it was responsible for 1,710,000 pieces of literature, including 25,000 Polish-language leaflets. The most shipped in one day was 75,000 pieces.⁶³ By the end of the campaign the state Grange reported that it had active campaigns in all but five of Michigan's eighty-three counties.⁶⁴

MESA and its allies tried to anticipate difficulties and be prepared for them. The Wayne County Equal Suffrage Organization issued careful instructions to its poll watchers as to when to arrive, and what to do. The challengers were instructed to be sure that the ballot boxes were empty when the polls opened, that properly

⁶¹Alde L. T.. Blake, "The Vital Question in Michigan Today," 12 June 1912; "What is Being done in the Suffrage States?" 19 June 1912; "The Effect Upon Woman of Equal Suffrage," 26 June 1912; ALTB Scrapbook, Blake Family Papers, MHC-BHL.

⁶²"Six Tons of Literature During the Campaign" Grand Rapids Herald, 26 October 1912, in ALTB Scrapbook, Blake Family Papers, MHC-BHL.

⁶³MESA, Annual Report, January 1913, p. 18.

⁶⁴Ida B. Chittenden, Report of the Equal Suffrage Campaign for 1912 under the Direction of the Michigan State Grange (n.p., n.d.), p. 3.

initialled woman suffrage amendment ballots were given to each voter, and were properly placed in the amendment ballot box. The challengers were even given the correct citations to the laws in case their right to be there was challenged. Challengers were instructed to bring food with them and to stay until after the vote was counted. Polls were open from 7 am to 8 pm in Wayne County.⁶⁵

On Wednesday, November 6, it looked as if woman suffrage had won, making Michigan the first state east of the Mississippi to grant full suffrage to women. Congratulations flowed in to individuals and MESA officers. Catherine Waugh McCulloch wrote Caroline Bartlett Crane that Michigan's success must be a surprise to easterners, since Michigan women had done it by themselves.⁶⁶ Edna Blair, who had organized every township but one in Hillsdale County and seen all but the unorganized one give majorities for woman suffrage, wrote Arthur that her suffrage work was the most important work she had ever done. She simply could not imagine what success meant to the women like Arthur who had been in the work for years.⁶⁷ Alde L. T. Blake received congratulations from her pastor who hoped

⁶⁵"To The Challengers," Emma Fox Papers, BHC-DPL.

⁶⁶McCulloch to Crane, 8 November 1912, Correspondence with Caroline Bartlett Crane, Catherine Waugh McCulloch Papers, Dillon Collection, Series VII, SL-RC.

⁶⁷Blair to CBA, 9 November 1912, Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

that the success of woman suffrage would result in a "clarifying" of political life.⁶⁸ Then, as the final canvass proceeded, the margin of victory grew slimmer and finally disappeared. When all the votes were counted, woman suffrage had lost by 760 votes out of 495,510 cast. Questions about the legality of the ballot and the election immediately arose with the supporters of suffrage charging fraud.

The legality of the ballot issue revolved around the printing of the woman suffrage amendment ballot. The state constitution required the proposal to be printed in full on the ballot, while the Secretary of State's office had instructed the county clerks to indicate the intention of the amendment, but not to print it in full. Some counties printed the proposal in full and some printed only its intent. Wishart tried to get a copy of the woman suffrage amendment ballot used in each county to establish whether it was to MESA's advantage to challenge the vote on the ground of improper ballots.⁶⁹ Some individuals filed protests or court challenges to the vote. G. B. Jennison, a woman suffrage supporter, filed a protest in Bay County

⁶⁸Edwin W. Bishop, D. D. to ALTB, 6 November 1912, ALTB Papers, Blake Family Papers, MHC-BHL.

⁶⁹A. W. Wishart, MESA Campaign Secretary, Recount of 1912 Correspondence, ALTB Papers, SL-RC. Letters over the two weeks after the election frequently deal with this issue.

which had given a majority against woman suffrage. Frank J. Hejl, a liquor dealer, protested the counting of the woman suffrage ballots because the law was not followed in the printing of the ballots in Grand Traverse County which returned a majority for woman suffrage.⁷⁰ Suffrage supporters were interested in having the ballots in counties which went against woman suffrage disqualified while opponents of woman suffrage sought to have the ballots invalidated in counties which had given a majority for woman suffrage.

A second problem was that not all ballots in all counties were initialled by a member of the election board as required by law. Ballots without the initials were void. If MESA insisted on the letter of the law here, both pro- and anti-suffrage ballots would be thrown out as well as at least one Congressman's election.⁷¹ In the end nothing was done on this issue.

Cross Village in Emmet County had a large change in figures from the preliminary to the final canvass. This made suffrage supporters suspicious, but no hard evidence of

⁷⁰G. B. Jennison to A. W. Wishart, 14 November 1912, Wishart to Jennison, 15 November 1912; Mrs. M. S. Sanders to A. W. Wishart, clipping sent with letter, 15 November 1912, Recount of 1912 Correspondence, ALTB papers, SL-RC.

⁷¹Clara Russell to CBA, 18 December 1912, Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

fraud was found among the Indians there.⁷² Suffragists in Saginaw County had affidavits alleging irregularities in three areas that went heavily against woman suffrage. Wishart advised Saginaw supporters to hold back their charges until MESA decided whether they wanted to use them.⁷³ The most glaring irregularity occurred in the twentieth ward where at least ninety ballots were cast before a voter was even offered a woman suffrage ballot. That person asked for one. A search was made and the ballots found. The chairman of the election board there was a driver for a brewery.⁷⁴

Bay County officials made a recount impossible by burning the ballots as soon as the final canvass was made and before anyone could demand a recount. In Wayne County a recount was blocked by the circuit court decision that a recount was not constitutionally possible. The State Supreme Court upheld that decision.⁷⁵ St. Clair County misplaced an entire precinct's figures. In Wayne County,

⁷²Jessie C. Grosenbaugh to A. W. Wishart, 14 November 1912, 2 December 1912, Recount of 1912 Correspondence, ALTB papers, SL-RC.

⁷³Kate V. English to A. W. Wishart, 12 November 1912; Wishart to English, 15 November 1912, Recount of 1912 Correspondence, ALTB papers, SL-RC.

⁷⁴MESA, Annual Report, November 1913, p.50.

⁷⁵G. B. Jennison to A. W. Wishart, 1 December 1912, Recount of 1912 Correspondence, ALTB Papers, SL-RC: Clara Russell to CBA, 18 December 1912, Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

eleven precincts failed to report their count, and the tally sheets could not be found.⁷⁶

When it began to appear that woman suffrage would lose, Anna Howard Shaw urged MESA to fight in the courts to secure the victory won at the polls and lost in the canvass. Ida L. Chittenden, manager of the Grange equal suffrage campaign, observed "...the fight is getting warm," and intended to enjoy it.⁷⁷ Chittenden also sought out a legal advisor who advised that if a legal challenge was going to be made, it should be done quickly.⁷⁸ MESA decided to seek resubmission of woman suffrage rather than fight in the courts.

The decision to resubmit grew out of MESA decision on December 21 to poll its Executive Committee and the boards of groups which had helped in the referendum. The returns indicated that fifty-one of fifty-eight groups preferred to resubmit the issue to the voters rather than seek a recount by the legislature or make an appeal to the State Supreme Court.⁷⁹ The suffragists chose to ask for an April submission to take advantage of two factors. One

⁷⁶Kate R. Miller to A. W. Wishart, 23 November 1912, Recount of 1912 Correspondence, ALTB papers, SL-RC: Chittenden, "Report" p. 6

⁷⁷ Shaw to CBA, 13 November 1912; Ida B. Chittenden to CBA, 13 November 1912, Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

⁷⁸Chittenden to CBA, 19 December 1912 Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

⁷⁹MESA, Annual Report January 1913, pp. 8, 10.

was the widespread indignation after the fraud of 1912. The other was that the usual pattern in April elections was that the rural areas, where woman suffrage had done well, usually had a greater turnout than the cities where woman suffrage had not done as well. They hoped the pattern would hold.⁸⁰

President Arthur and the MESA members at the January 1913 Annual Meeting expected the legislature to vote for another woman suffrage referendum fairly quickly. After all, the 1913 Republican-dominated legislature was not much different from its 1912 counterpart and the Republican party had promised to support resubmission. The Democratic governor, Woodbridge Ferris, was in favor of woman suffrage.⁸¹ The woman suffrage referendum did not pass the legislature until March 5. The Senate mistakenly passed a draft of the House version of the woman suffrage proposal rather than the House proposal and also amended it to require foreign-born women who became naturalized citizens by virtue of their marriage to a United State citizen to reside in the United States five years before they could vote.⁸² Neither house would compromise and accept the other's

⁸⁰"Michigan Report," NAWSA Convention, 1913, pp. 84-86, B1F5, BB Papers, (MS77-119), State of Michigan Archives.

⁸¹MESA, Annual Report January 1913, p. 16.

⁸²MESA, Annual Report November 1913, p. 42.

bill. Finally a bill that included the Senate amendment regarding foreign-born women was agreed upon. To be sure nothing happened to it, the MESA Legislative committee actually followed the messengers who carried the bill from one house to the other and back.⁸³

Besides the woman suffrage amendment, the legislature also voted on two other issues of particular interest to modern researchers. The House voted on a prohibition amendment to the state constitution. The amendment would have prohibited the manufacture of, and traffic in intoxicating liquors.⁸⁴ Both Houses voted to revise the election laws to better protect against fraud. Table 5.7 below gives the chi-squares for the those issues and political party. Only party and prohibition have chi-squares which suggest that detailed analysis by contingency table would be informative for the House. In the Senate only election fraud has a chi-square which suggests a contingency table would be informative.

⁸³Michigan House, Journal, 4 March 1913, p. 734.

⁸⁴Michigan House, Journal, 26 March 1913, p. 1158.

TABLE 5.7

SUMMARY TABLE: WOMAN SUFFRAGE AND SELECTED TOPICS, 1913

	HOUSE	SENATE
PARTY	3.75	.73
PROHIBITION	16.88	No Vote
ELECTION FRAUD	0.00*	18.65

*no chi-square computed, all voting yes on both issues

The chi-square for party in the House is low, but since there were three parties, Republican, Democratic and Progressive, the figure might reflect that. Since the chi square does not indicate how the voting pattern differs from random, contingency table analysis was done on those three items.

TABLE 5.8

HOUSE VOTING ON WOMAN SUFFRAGE (WS)
BY PARTY AFFILIATION (REP, DEM, PROG)

	OBSERVED VOTE				EXPECTED VOTE			
	REP	DEM	PROG	TOTAL	REP	DEM	PROG	TOTAL
WSY	38	24	11	73	38.2	26.1	8.7	73
WSN	10	9	0	19	9.9	6.8	2.3	19
TOTAL	48	33	11	92	48.1	32.9	11.0	92

The Republicans show no partisan connection between woman suffrage and party. The Democrats have a slight tendency to oppose woman suffrage. The Progressives support woman suffrage unanimously. Their national platform had endorsed woman suffrage.

TABLE 5.9

HOUSE VOTING ON WOMAN
SUFFRAGE (WS) AND PROHIBITION AMENDMENT (PROH)

	OBSERVED VOTE			EXPECTED VOTE		
	PROHY	PROHN	TOTAL	PROHY	PROHN	TOTAL
WSY	46	21	67	38.2	28.8	67
WSN	3	16	19	10.8	8.2	19
TOTAL	49	37	86	49	37	86

Plainly House members in 1913 voted as if liquor issues and woman suffrage were connected in some way. Those persons who favored prohibition voted in larger than expected numbers for the resubmission of the woman suffrage amendment. Those who opposed prohibition voted in larger than expected numbers against the resubmission of the woman suffrage amendment. Wets and drys voted as if they believed that women in general supported prohibition and would vote that way if women got the vote.

TABLE 5.10

SENATE VOTING ON WOMAN SUFFRAGE (WS)
AND OPPOSITION TO ELECTION FRAUD (OEF)

	OBSERVED VOTE			EXPECTED VOTE		
	OEFY	OEFN	TOTAL	OEFY	OEFN	TOTAL
WSY	22	0	22	19.5	2.5	22
WSN	1	3	4	3.5	.5	4
TOTAL	23	3	26	23	3	26

Those Senators who supported better election laws to prevent fraud supported woman suffrage solidly. Those who felt the legislation unwarranted predominately opposed the resubmission of woman suffrage to the voters. What is almost impossible to establish is which way the connection between the two issues is structured. Men who were strongly opposed to fraud might support resubmission because women had been fraudulently denied the vote. Men might also support both issues because they believed in the justice of woman suffrage and wanted fraud made more difficult so that woman suffrage could triumph at the polls in 1913. Opponents of both proposals could genuinely believe each was a bad law, or that fraud had not occurred and the laws needed no improvement.

In the spring 1913 Michigan was the only state in which a woman suffrage referendum occurred, so MESA got lots of help from NAWSA and other states. Twelve out of state speakers gave a total of the equivalent of 29 weeks of speaking in Michigan.⁸⁵ Unfortunately for the success of the campaign, the opponents of woman suffrage, who had not made much of a campaign in 1912, came out in force in 1913. For the first time in the woman suffrage struggle in Michigan, women organized in opposition to woman suffrage. A Michigan chapter of the National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage was organized with three branches. Detroit

⁸⁵MESA, Annual Report November 1913, p. 43.

was the only strong branch, and its members were all socially prominent persons.⁸⁶ The association's two strongest personalities, Mrs. Dodge and Mrs. George spent some time in Michigan.

How much material the anti-suffragists circulated in Michigan is unclear, but some of it survived. Like the suffragist material, much of it is not specific to Michigan. Michigan Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage (MAOWS) material such as the pamphlet "Some Kernel Arguments" insisted that voters needed to be persons who could provide the state with physical force (military service) if necessary, that most women did not want the vote, and that the family would be destroyed and woman's purity sullied by her participation in politics.⁸⁷ A handbill of the association insisted that women would be eligible for jury duty and locked up at night with eleven male jurors. Other handbills repeated each of the concerns expressed in "Some Kernel Arguments".⁸⁸ In a letter to editors of Detroit papers the association charged that the woman suffrage amendment discriminated against foreign-born women because they would have to marry U.S. citizens to obtain the vote, and that all women born in the U.S. of foreign parents

⁸⁶MESA, Annual Report November 1913, p. 40.

⁸⁷"Some Kernel Arguments Opposed to Woman's Suffrage," pamphlet, MAOWS, Miscellaneous Material, BHC-DPL.

⁸⁸Hand bills, MAOWS, Miscellaneous Material, BHC-DPL.

would be ineligible to vote.⁸⁹ The anti-suffragists were wrong on both points. One minister charged the suffragists with trying to use political means to address moral issues. He was particularly incensed by Carrie Chapman Catt's claim that woman suffrage was necessary to overcome the social evil (prostitution).⁹⁰ Rev. W. Bryon Forbush of the North Woodward Congregational Church charged that woman suffrage advocates rejected the idea that woman's principal role was motherhood.⁹¹

Woman suffrage precipitated an uproar in the Christian Reformed Church in 1913. Pastor Johannes Groen advocated woman suffrage. He urged that single women were the equals of men and that married women had a right to assist in regulating everything pertaining to family life. He plainly accepted the idea that women needed the vote to protect the home and family. However, church spokesmen were nearly universal in their opposition. They insisted that the husband ruled the wife and that women could not share in the governance of public life. Woman suffrage would be a revolution since it would make the individual

⁸⁹letter to Editor, 1 April 1913, MAOWS, Miscellaneous Material, BHC-DPL.

⁹⁰"Brighton Pastor on Suffrage and Social Evil," Detroit News, 3 April 1913 p. 8. MAOWS, Miscellaneous Material, BHC-DPL.

⁹¹Detroit Free Press, 17 February 1913, Scrapbook 5, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

rather than the family the basic unit of society. They insisted women ruled the world as mothers and that the power of the ballot was illusory. The controversy included heated debate in Grand Rapids churches, the shooting of Groen by one of his parishioners, and his ultimate breakdown.⁹²

These anti-woman suffrage arguments clearly reflect the values and assumptions of the opponents of woman suffrage. They had a very narrow definition of politics: tariffs, international trade, foreign policy. The suffragists had a much wider definition of politics: public health, education, pure foods. Suffragists saw the community as an extension of the home while their opponents did not.⁹³ While the women who opposed woman suffrage accepted the doctrine of separate spheres, they did not accept the suffragists' attempt to expand the woman's sphere by going into "municipal housekeeping."

In the nearly six weeks between the passage of the amendment proposal and the spring election on April 5 MESA worked very hard, especially in Detroit. MESA's plan called for working on the basis of Congressional districts and creating a "missionary team" for each district,

⁹²James D. Bratt, Dutch Calvinism in Modern America: A History of a Conservative Subculture (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdman's, 1984), p. 77.

⁹³Jane Jerome Camhi, "Women Against Women: American Anti-Suffragism" (Ph. D. dissertation, Tufts University, 1973), pp. 80-82.

consisting of an organizer, a speaker, and a finance agent. The plan called for house-to-house canvassing in areas that had voted heavily against woman suffrage in November and for watchers at each precinct so suffrage not be counted out again.⁹⁴

An idea of conditions in Detroit can be gained in Clara B. Arthur's scrapbooks. On March 9 the suffragists raised \$1200 by selling buttons and balloons in Detroit.⁹⁵ The Detroit Federation of Labor did not endorse woman suffrage because of the prohibition issue. The federation vacillated on the issue depending on which organizations attended a meeting.⁹⁶ By March 13 suffragists were beginning outdoor meetings. The police stopped them while allowing men to hold outdoor meetings. Commissioner Croul then ordered that the police were not to interfere with woman suffrage open air meetings.⁹⁷ Michigan Congressman Frank E. Doremus, who opposed woman suffrage, insisted that his secretary was acting on his own time and initiative when he worked against woman

⁹⁴MESA, "Plan of Work for Campaign, 1913," MESA Miscellaneous material, BHC-DPL.

⁹⁵Detroit News-Tribune, 9 March 1913, Scrapbook 5, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

⁹⁶The vacillation can be followed in the clippings in Scrapbook 5, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

⁹⁷Detroit Times, 13 March 1913, Scrapbook 5, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

suffrage.⁹⁸ Carl Bauer, president of the German Statverband Society and William A Livingstone, vice-president of the Men's Association Opposed to the Extension of Suffrage sued in Wayne County Circuit Court to compel separate ballots and boxes for each of the five constitutional amendments on the ballot. The city clerk reported Detroit did not have enough boxes for this.⁹⁹ The State Supreme Court insisted on separate ballots on April 2. Woman suffrage supporters feared that the possibilities for fraud would be greatly expanded by the mass of paper ballots given each voter. It would be easy to stuff a box or not give a voter all the amendments. Many voters would not notice if they did not have all the ballots.¹⁰⁰

In a six-week campaign, MESA distributed 40,200 leaflets from the NAWSA and printed 543,000 leaflets themselves. The literature committee arranged for 1,000 posters, 5,000 "Votes for Women" pennants, and 1,000 buttons.¹⁰¹ The organization committee reported that only four counties had no suffrage work done for the April

⁹⁸Detroit Times, 26 March 1913, Scrapbook 5, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

⁹⁹Detroit News, 29 March 1913; Detroit Free Press, 29 March 1913, Scrapbook 5, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

¹⁰⁰Kalamazoo Gazette, 2 April 1913, Scrapbook 5, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

¹⁰¹Literature Committee Report, Minutes, MESA Executive Board Meeting, 16 April 1913, Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

election. Two, Mackinac and Delta, were in the upper peninsula and two, Roscommon and Ogemaw, in the lower. Of Michigan's eighty-three counties, seventy-five had working committees if not organized societies.¹⁰² The Press Committee tried to contact all Michigan publications, which were not trade journals. Two hundred and thirty-one of the 700 or so published in Michigan were identified as suffrage papers by the press committee, because they accepted plate matter.¹⁰³

The results of the campaign are best described as a disaster. Woman suffrage lost by 96,144 votes. Some suffragists were not surprised. Maud Wood Park of Massachusetts described her meetings as small and the situation as hopeless.¹⁰⁴ NAWSA President Shaw observed that the rural counties were neglected; that the opposition had run a perfect campaign; and that the suffragists were deserted by their friends. She worried that "we will

¹⁰²"Report of the Chairman of Organization Committee," MESA, Annual Report, November 1913, p. 29.

¹⁰³Press Committee Report, Minutes, MESA Executive Board Meeting, 16 April 1913, Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

¹⁰⁴Park to Robert Freeman Hunter, 26 March 1913; Easter Sunday, 1913, Correspondence, Maud Wood Park Papers, MD-LC.

never again have an easy victory."¹⁰⁵ The liquor interests came in for most of the blame for the failure of the amendment.¹⁰⁶

MESA members pondered the loss and looked carefully at the county-level returns in an attempt to understand what had happened. It became clear that the opposition vote had only grown by about 16,000 votes. Most of that gain had come from counties where there was a liquor issue on the ballot or from Saginaw County.¹⁰⁷ The biggest difference between 1912 and 1913 was in the fall off in the support for woman suffrage. There were 78,637 fewer woman suffrage votes in 1913! Why?

Even as they mourned the loss of April 1913, Michigan suffragists began to analyze the campaign and election to learn what needed to be done the next time. In her 1913 report to NAWSA President Arthur cited the activity of the opposition, the unfavorable publicity

¹⁰⁵Shaw to CBA, 7 April 1913, 17 April 1913, Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL; Shaw to Catherine Waugh McCulloch, 25 April 1913, Correspondence with Anna Howard Shaw, Catherine Waugh McCulloch Papers, Dillon Collection, Series VII, SL-RC.

¹⁰⁶Harriet Taylor Upton to CBA, 10 April 1913, Ida B. Chittenden to CBA, 9 May 1913, Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL; Anna Howard Shaw to Catherine Waugh McCulloch, 25 April 1913, Correspondence with Anna Howard Shaw, Catherine Waugh McCulloch Papers, Dillon Collection, Series VII, SL-RC.

¹⁰⁷Edna Blair, "Suffrage," typescript pp. 1-2, October 1912-July 1913 Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL; MESA, Annual Report November 1913, p. 51.

attached to the English militants, the failure to get out the favorable vote, and the abnormal pattern of the spring vote as all contributing to the loss. In a letter Arthur noted that the anti-suffrage material had circulated through newspapers, the mails, saloons, and moving picture shows.¹⁰⁸

In 1912 Michigan suffragists had had to campaign without much outside help because NAWSA resources were committed elsewhere. But the anti-suffragists had their resources fully committed to those same campaigns. In 1913 Jennie Law Hardy reported that every voter in each county she had visited received three to five letters from the anti-suffragists as a follow up to her visit. She estimated that the expense was nearly \$100 for postage on this item alone. MESA simply did not have the financial resources to match that level of expenditures.¹⁰⁹

As to the issue of the liquor interests' support of the anti-suffrage campaign, MESA had what they felt was clear evidence. An editor passed on to MESA an anti-woman suffrage advertisement which MAOWS wanted placed in his

¹⁰⁸"Report of MESA to NAWSA" November 1913, Lectures L-P: CBA to Ellen Kimble Lente, 19 April 1913, Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL

¹⁰⁹MESA. Annual Report, November 1913, p. 40.

newspaper. The letter and payment accompanying the ad was from the Michigan Brewers Association.¹¹⁰

One of the factors which had swayed MESA to seek April 1913 resubmission after the narrow loss by fraud in November 1912 had been the usual pattern of spring elections. Under the 1908 Constitution spring elections in Michigan were for local officials, i.e. township and county officers in rural areas, city officials in villages towns and cities. The usual pattern of spring elections was that the rural and small town areas had relatively high turnouts, while the larger cities had lower turnouts. That suited the MESA executive board, since they felt woman suffrage had done well in the small towns and more rural counties of the state in November 1912. Unfortunately for MESA's plans and hopes, the larger cities had much higher turnouts than usual for a spring election. Some rural areas had much smaller than usual turnouts, mostly due to the worse than usual weather which turned roads into quagmires. Arthur noted that some precincts had no votes cast at all on any issue or for any candidate because even the election board could not get to the polling place.¹¹¹

¹¹⁰ National American Woman Suffrage Association, Woman Suffrage and the Liquor Interests: Some Exhibits (New York: NAWSA Publishing Co., 1914) in Papers, LG Papers, MHC-BHL. The material is also in CBA Papers, April 1913, BHC-DPL.

¹¹¹"Report of MESA to NAWSA" November 1913, Lectures L-P, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

Twenty-seven counties in Michigan showed percentage declines in votes both for and against woman suffrage. Fifteen of those counties were in the northern lower peninsula where woman suffrage had done well in 1912.

Militancy as an issue had two-sides. The American militants, just beginning to be active, held a March 1913 parade in Washington D.C. the day before the Presidential inaugural. The parade participants were mobbed by bystanders and order was restored only by calling in troops.¹¹² This did not hurt the suffragists much if any. More troublesome were the English militants of the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU). Beginning in early 1913 the WSPU moved into a new phase of militancy characterized by the escalating destruction of property and the interruption of public services such as rail lines, telegraphs and public lighting.¹¹³ Former suffrage supporters cited the English militants' activities as the reason they no longer supported woman suffrage. The English suffragists were not "lady-like" in their behavior. While Arthur wrote the militants hurt the cause,

¹¹²Flexner, Century of Struggle, pp. 272-273.

¹¹³Midge Mackenzie, Shoulder to Shoulder: A Documentary, (New York: Knopf, A Borzoi Book, 1975) pp. 216-228 discusses the rising tide of militancy in early 1913.

NAWSA President Shaw thought militancy was simply an excuse men used to rationalize non-action in 1913.¹¹⁴

The biggest reason woman suffrage lost in 1913 was that it garnered 78,000 fewer votes than in 1912 while the opposition gained 16,000. Much of the gain came in counties where there was a local option election on the ballot.¹¹⁵ Where did those yes votes go? One possibility is that woman suffrage supporters never came to the polls. The drop-off between the November 1912 election when Presidential candidates headed the ticket and April 1913 when candidates for local offices headed the ticket is better than 118,000 votes. The drop-off for woman suffrage between the two elections was only 61,000 votes. Since 99% of the voters who went to the polls in 1913 voted on the woman suffrage issue we can conclude that many 1912 supporters failed to vote in the spring election.

Why the change? Modern statistical techniques can offer some suggestions as to what happened. Multiple regression analysis was done for both the 1912 and the 1913 elections. As in the statistical work for 1874, demographic and geographic variables were used. The geographic variable was upper peninsula (UP coded 0) and lower

¹¹⁴Shaw to CBA, 17 April 1913, Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

¹¹⁵Edna Blair, "Suffrage," typescript pp. 1-2, October 1912-July 1913 Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL; MESA, Annual Report November 1913, p. 51.

peninsula (LP coded 1). The demographic variables were percentage of females (%FEM) and percentage of foreign born (%FB) in the population for each county. A liquor status variable (LS) was used to capture the wet or dry status of a county under Michigan local option. If attitudes toward liquor were linked to attitudes toward woman suffrage, voters in dry counties (coded 0) should support woman suffrage much more strongly than those in wet counties (coded 1). A more direct measure of the possible connection between support for woman suffrage and opposition to liquor was possible for those Michigan counties which had local option elections in 1912 (%PRO12Y) or 1913 (%PRO13Y). As 1912 was a Presidential election year, the percentage of the vote for each major party's Presidential candidate - Democrat, Republican, National Progressive - was included in the equation (%DEMP, %REPP, %NPP). A fourth presidential variable was the percentage of the vote the minor party candidates received for President (%OP). This was included because the minor party candidates collectively captured as much as twenty percent of the vote in some Michigan counties. Also developed were some measures of the change in the vote on woman suffrage between 1912 and 1913. Change in turnout on woman suffrage between 1912 and 1913 (%TO) was calculated as 1913 total vote on woman suffrage minus the total vote on woman suffrage in 1912 divided by 1912 total vote on woman suffrage. Some counties had declines in the total

vote, some counties had small increases. Also calculated was the change of percentage in the woman suffrage yes vote ($\%^{WSY}$) which was calculated as the 1913 percentage yes vote minus the 1912 percentage yes vote. Results for 1912 regression equations are below. Two equations were run, one for all eighty-three counties and one for the twenty-five counties which had local option elections.

TABLE 5.11

1912 REGRESSION RESULTS; LOCAL OPTION COUNTIES

VARIABLE	B	STANDARD ERROR B	SIGNIFICANCE T
%OP	.460039	.332218	.1840
%NPP	-0.207849	.227171	.3730
LS	2.642715	1.735411	.1462
%FEM	-0.287450	.619409	.6485
%PRO12Y	.418148	.113416	.0018***
%REPP	-0.325019	.214142	.1474
%FB	.044605	.152759	.7738
CONSTANT	58.789135	.3458065	.1074

*denotes significant at the 10% level; ** significant at the 5% level; *** significant at the 1% level.

The adjusted R squared for this equation is .557 which indicates that the the variables in the equation can statistically account for 55.7% of the outcome. Only one variable in the equation, local option (PRO12), is significant at any level at all, and that at the 10% level. The other variables statistical association with the woman

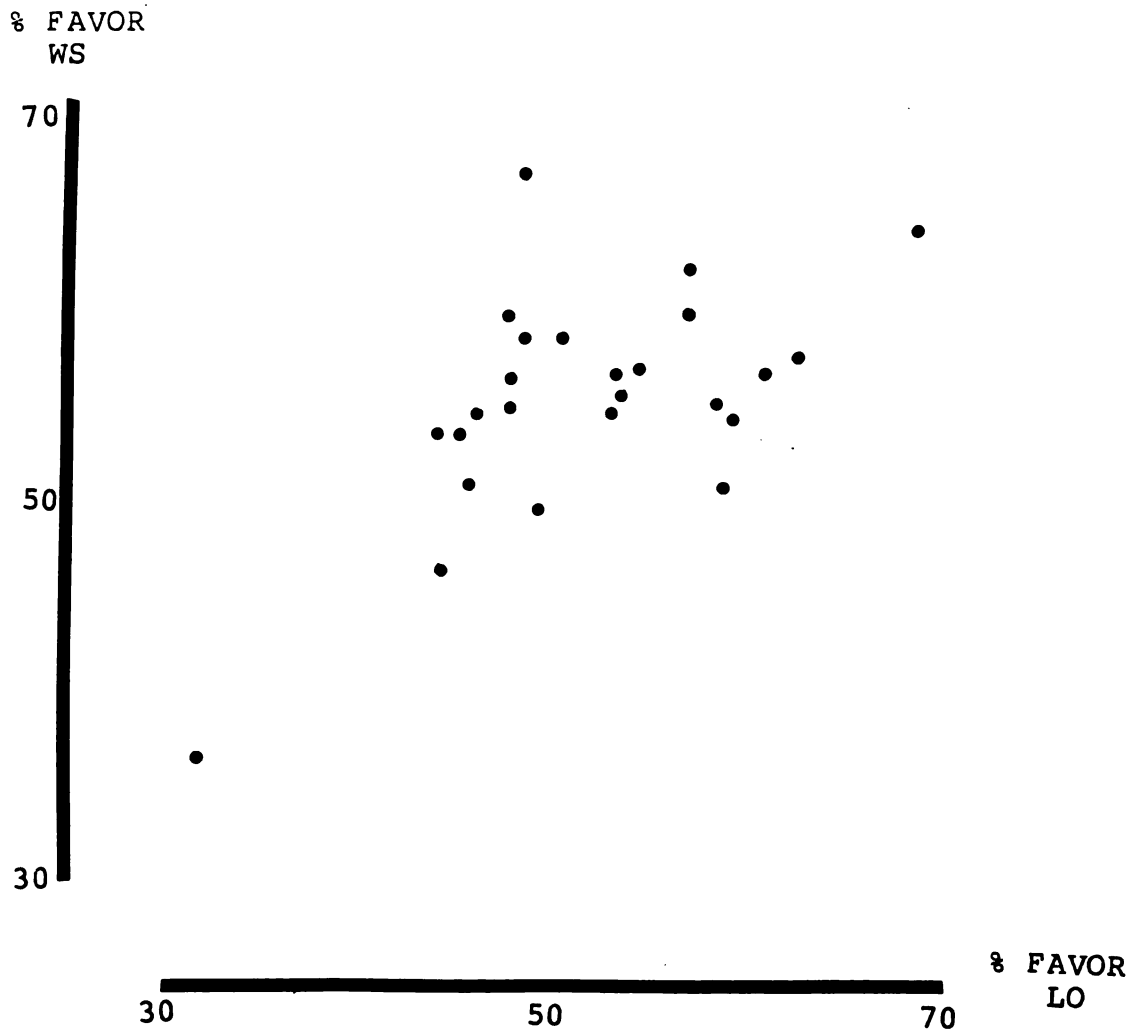
suffrage outcome is not significant at any important level. The scatter diagram Figure 5.2 illustrates the pattern of support for the two issues, local option and woman suffrage in the twenty-five local option election counties.

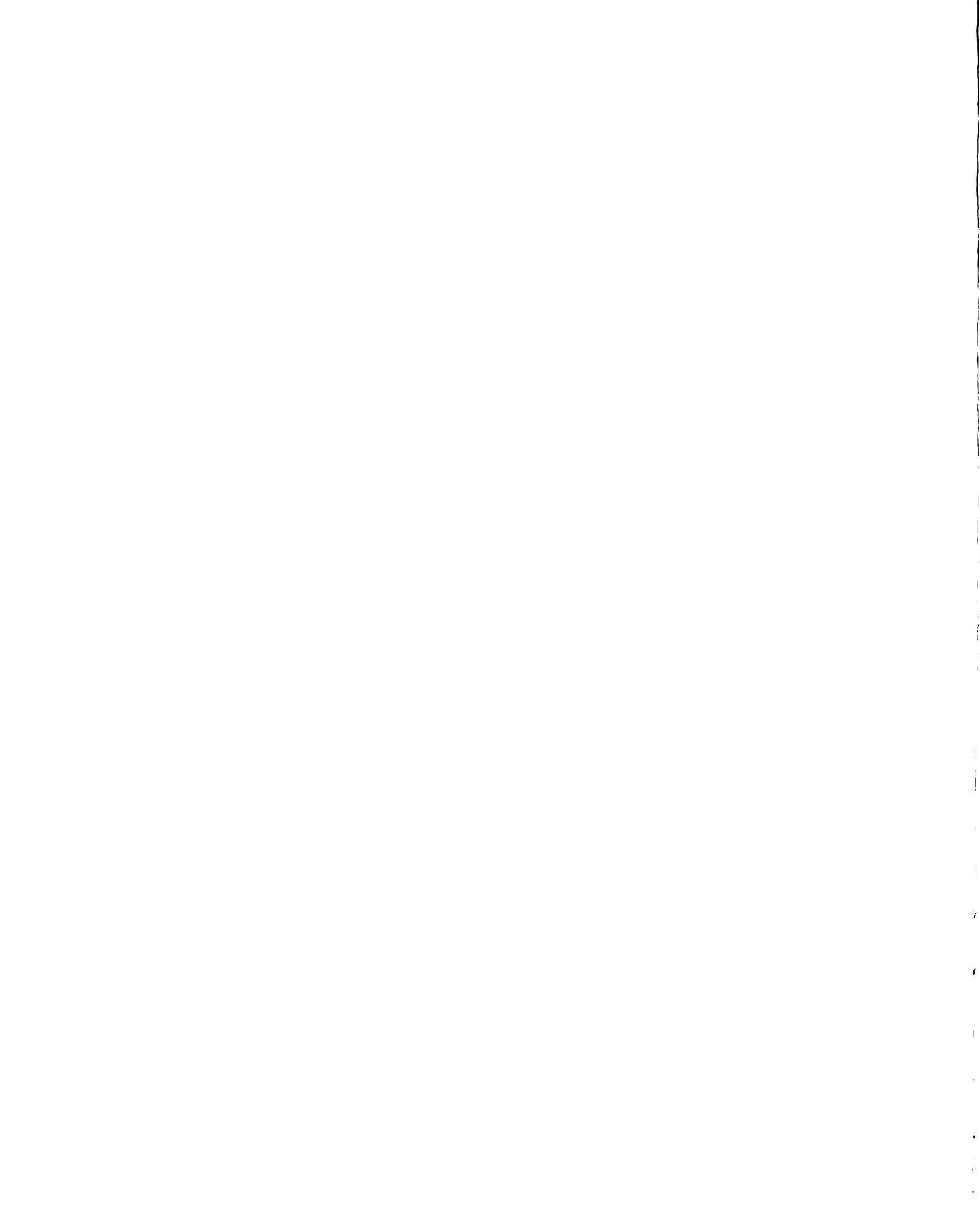
In the equation for all eighty-three counties, which does not include the local option results as part of the equation, four variables have some statistically significant linkage to the woman suffrage result. The variables in the equation can statistically account for only 35% of the outcome since the equation has an adjusted R squared of .35385. Table 5.12 summarizes the results. %OP, the percentage vote for the minor party candidates for president, (the Socialist, the Prohibitionist and the Socialist Labor candidates) has the strongest statistical association. Counties where voters gave strong support to minor party candidates were counties where voters also gave strong support to woman suffrage. These parties had histories of supporting woman suffrage. Neither the Republicans nor the Democrats had supported woman suffrage in their 1912 platforms. While the National Progressive Party had a suffrage plank in its platform, many of its supporters in Michigan were Roosevelt Republicans rather than progressives.¹¹⁶ Both demographic variables show an

¹¹⁶Joseph B. Johnson, comp., National Party Platforms, 1840-1956, rev.ed., (Urbana; University of Illinois Press, 1978) pp. 190, 182.

FIGURE 5.2

SCATTER DIAGRAM: % FAVORABLE VOTE,
WOMAN SUFFRAGE (WS) & LOCAL OPTION (LO), 1912





inverse relationship with woman suffrage. Counties with higher percentages of women or foreign born in them, tended to have voters who gave less support to woman suffrage. Voters in Upper Peninsula counties also tended to support woman suffrage more strongly than those in the Lower Peninsula. The inverse relationship with foreign born is a result other researchers have also found.

TABLE 5.12

1912 REGRESSION RESULTS WITHOUT LOCAL OPTION

VARIABLE	B	STANDARD ERROR B	SIGNIFICANCE T
%OP	.897115	.191150	.0000***
%NPP	.290306	.124940	.0229**
LS	-2.126294	1.567290	.1790
%FEM	-1.037088	.439772	.0210**
%REPP	.171330	.145652	.2432
UP/LP	-9.402975	2.879889	.0017
%FB	-0.344265	.069921	.0000***
CONSTANT	99.714114	24.911381	.0001***

* denotes significance at the 10% level; ** significance at the 5% level; ***significance at the 1% level.

The 1913 regression equations and scatter diagram suggest something about the change in the voting pattern in 1913 from 1912. As regards the connection between opposition to local option and opposition to woman suffrage, both the regression equation and the scatter diagram suggest that no meaningful statistical

association can be found in 1913. Figure 5.3 shows the scatter plot. Table 5.13 summarizes the results of the regression equation for the eleven counties with local option elections. The sample is small, and no factor, including the 1913 local option vote, can be statistically associated at any meaningful level with the outcome. Yet the equation has an adjusted R squared of .8267, suggesting that statistically, the independent variables can explain 82% of the woman suffrage vote in those eleven counties.

TABLE 5.13

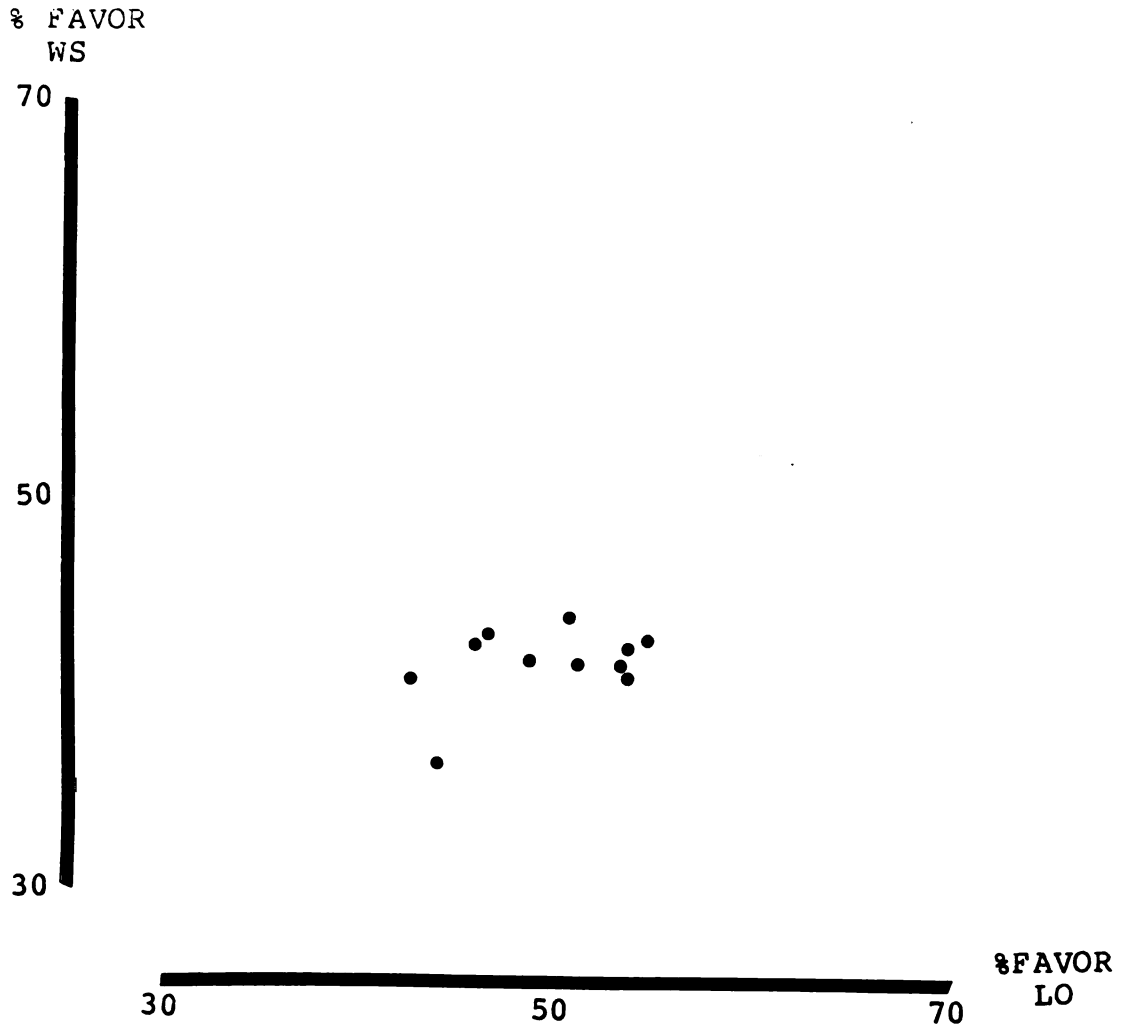
1913 REGRESSION RESULTS; LOCAL OPTION COUNTIES

VARIABLE	B	STANDARD ERROR B	SIGNIFICANCE T
%Prol3Y	.479460	.127439	.1654
%^WS	-0.789094	.574470	.4006
%TO	-0.773047	.246838	.1968
%DEM	.157085	.194637	.5677
%OP	1.225765	.509769	.2509
LS	2.698137	2.511666	.4772
%FEM	1.856475	1.012304	.3178
%REPP	.436564	.424564	.4911
%FB	.239224	.140112	.3373
CONSTANT	-109.626716	79.193657	.3983

In the regression equation for all eighty-three counties without the local option variable, five variables have some meaningful statistical association with the woman

FIGURE 5.3

SCATTER DIAGRAM: % FAVORABLE VOTE,
WOMAN SUFFRAGE (WS) & LOCAL OPTION (LO), 1913



suffrage vote; the vote for minority political parties in 1912 (%OP), the vote for the National Progressives in 1912 (%NPP), the change in support for woman suffrage (%^WS) and the two demographic variables (%FB) and %FEM). Counties where voters had given strong support to minority party candidates or to the National Progressive candidate show a positive statistical association with woman suffrage suggesting voters in those counties supported both. The demographic variables show the same pattern of behavior as in 1912. Voters residing in counties with higher percentages of foreign born or higher percentages of females in the population, tend to support woman suffrage in lower percentages than those in counties with fewer foreign born or fewer women. Since the percentage of foreign born in the population is a proxy for the percentage of ethnic voters in the electorate, the result is not surprising and is similar to others' results and the sense that suffrage supporters had of the locus of opposition. This equation suggests that voters in the upper peninsula supported woman suffrage in greater percentages than did those in the lower peninsula. Perhaps the difficulty of getting information to the upper peninsula helped the suffragists more than their opponents.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁷Walter Dean Burnham, Critical Elections and the Mainsprings of American Politics (New York, W. W. Norton & Company Inc., 1970) pp. 42-44.

TABLE 5.14

1913 REGRESSION RESULTS WITHOUT LOCAL OPTION

VARIABLE	B	STANDARD ERROR B	SIGNIFICANCE T
%OP	.873592	.190436	.0000***
%NPP	.279643	.123923	.0270**
LS	-1.730962	1.564525	.2722
%TO	-0.017261	.065279	.7922
% [^] WS	.695282	.141897	.0000***
%REPP	.173683	.143425	.2298
UP	-8.485399	2.867145	.0042***
%FEM	-1.337402	.461732	.0050***
%FB	-0.327580	.070866	.0000***
CONSTANT	110.076281	25.230034	.0000***

* denotes significant at the 10% level; ** significant at the 5% level; *** significant at the 1% level.

Modern statistical techniques have suggested little that an intelligent and industrious observer of electoral statistics could not have dug out of the data in 1913. The two things the suffragists and their supporters missed was the breakdown of the link between support for local option and support for woman suffrage between the 1912 and 1913 elections and the importance of support for the minor party candidates for President. The scatter diagrams plainly illustrate the difference in the strength of the relationship between woman suffrage and support for

local option. The regression equations suggest the importance of the vote for the minor party candidates. Can either of these help account for the fall off of 78,000 votes between the two elections? What else might contribute to the drop-off?

There is no easy way to establish if the drop-off in woman suffrage votes came disproportionately as a result of supporters of Roosevelt, the National Progressive candidate in 1912, and the supporters of the minor parties not voting or whether the anti-suffragist campaign should receive the bulk of the credit or blame. In 1913 Michigan suffragists credited the anti's campaign.

The anti-suffragist literature forced voters to think about the appropriateness of a public electoral role for women. By stressing the dangers to home and family and the domestic role of women in American society, they weakened male voters' support for woman suffrage. The consequences they envisioned after woman suffrage suggested the collapse of home and family followed by the end of the republic and the demise of virtue and morality, the particular province of women. As roll call analysis in this chapter and chapter 4 suggest, woman suffrage stood very much alone as an issue. The only issue to which it had obvious ties was the liquor question. It was tangential to the core concerns of most progressives whether their focus was political, economic or social

welfare. Woman suffrage had to win on its own without much of a coat-tail effect from other progressive measures.

In 1913 by raising voter fears of the consequences of woman suffrage, the opposition forced many to re-think their position on woman suffrage. Voters who find themselves pulled and pushed in opposite directions by different values they hold or by differing opinions among different groups of persons whose opinions they value are termed cross-pressured by political scientists. The depth and strength of the anti-campaign may well have created a number of cross-pressured voters in Michigan in the spring of 1913. Voters who are cross-pressured either become fanatical for one position or another, or do nothing.¹¹⁸ Michigan voters appear to have done nothing.

The women were right in their list of causes for their defeat. Publicly they cited the anti-campaign, the weather, and the liquor interests. Only privately, among themselves, did they admit they had failed to get out the vote of their supporters. The single most obvious reason for the failure of 1913 was the drop-off in votes favoring woman suffrage.¹¹⁹ Whether it was overconfidence, poor

¹¹⁸International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences 1968 ed. s.v. "Cross Pressured" by Frank A. Pinner.

¹¹⁹Lily Gay Lampinen, "Liquor, the Ladies and the War of 1912," (Research Paper for History 344, May 1960) pp. 56-64 came to this conclusion also and is critical of the suffragists for not admitting it more openly: MHC-BHL.

travel conditions, a lack of rural campaigning or just bad luck that the rural vote was smaller than expected, the loss of 78,637 yes votes is the biggest factor in the failure of the 1913 woman suffrage referendum in Michigan.¹²⁰

Many people who had thought woman suffrage would easily win in 1913, were surprised and angry at the election returns and promised to be less passive in woman suffrage work.¹²¹ Others intended to work for an initiative route the next time since the petitioning would be good campaign work. Other suggestions included developing more organizations at the local level, and a thorough educational campaign coupled with a monthly bulletin.¹²² Edna Blair felt something needed to be done to inform Michigan women about the laws affecting them and how woman suffrage advocates played a role in improving laws relating to women.¹²³ A basis for such presentation existed in the pamphlet MESA had arranged for in 1911.

¹²⁰Blair, "Suffrage" pp. 5, 2, Correspondence, October 1912-July 1913, CBA PAPERS, BHC-DPL.

¹²¹CBA to Ella M. Eckenberger, 19 April 1913, Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL

¹²²Laura Clay to CBA, 12 April 1913; Carolyn Darrow to CBA, 19 April 1913; Ida B. Chittenden to CBA, 9 May 1913, Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

¹²³Blair to CBA, 20 May 1913, Correspondence, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

Harry E. Hunt compiled Michigan Laws Relating to Woman and Girls:... which MESA published after the referendum.¹²⁴

The years 1909-1913 had seen an increase in woman suffrage activity throughout the United States. Michigan, with two referenda within six months was part of that increase. Washington in 1910, California in 1911 and Arizona, Kansas and Oregon in 1912 had passed woman suffrage. Suffragists had hoped Michigan would lead the way for the states east of the Mississippi. Michigan voters didn't but the Michigan referenda provided suffragists with plenty of evidence of the lengths to which the opposition would go and galvanized new and more thorough efforts.

¹²⁴Harry E. Hunt, comp. Michigan Laws Relating to Women and Girls: A Comprehensive Digest of the Statutory Law and the Amendments Thereto as They Relate to Women and Girls. Also Pointed Decisions of the Supreme Court of Michigan Affecting the Same (n.p., n. d.).

CHAPTER 6

1914-1920: "THE COMPLETION OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE"

Alde L. T. Blake, 1920

"We must not be discouraged if there is a seeming lack of interest," Nellie Sawyer Clark wrote Lucia Grimes. Clark felt MESA had accomplished much in 1914. Summarizing the year for Michigan suffragists, she cited The Michigan Suffragist, the May 2 celebrations, and the research work as major accomplishments.¹

The Michigan Suffragist published its first issue in February 1914 with Edna Blair as editor. Subscriptions were \$.25 a year. It had almost no advertising. The Executive Board felt that the monthly could further the goals of MESA. The primary goal was full suffrage for Michigan women. MESA wanted to develop the cooperation of men and women so that Michigan would lead in "matters of progression of which complete equality is not the least...." MESA intended to do this through organization and dignified, sane law-abiding methods. The paper was to serve as a channel of communication among the membership. The paper contained almost no disparagement of men. The

¹NSC to Grimes, 26 October 1914, Correspondence 1913-1915, LG papers, MHC-BHL.

paper tried to personalize the movement by featuring homey touches such as descriptions of the decorations and floral arrangements at the luncheons and teas. In an attempt to counter the stereotype of women as frivolous, the paper was business-like.²

MESA advocated organization through county-level associations, a pattern which was increasingly followed by its affiliates. The state organization urged local affiliates to focus on organization, press relations, education, literature distribution, research, obtaining subscribers to the Womans' Journal, providing and presenting speakers on woman suffrage, and securing endorsements for woman suffrage. MESA's Education Committee intended to focus on women workers and issues relevant to them such as the number who worked in industry, and working conditions including wages and hours. Child labor was another issue the committee expected to address. The committee also concentrated on issues related to woman suffrage such as the history of the elective franchise and practical politics.³ Each issue of The Michigan Suffragist included county reports on woman suffrage activities in the various counties.

²The Michigan Suffragist, (hereafter TMS) (February 1914) p. 4; Camille Berry, "The Anatomy of the Michigan Suffragist" #161, Department of Journalism, Student Papers (Winter 1978) University of Michigan Archives, MHC-BHL.

³TMS, (February 1914) pp. 5, 10.

The Michigan Suffragist reported much of the permanent organization work in the various counties over 1914. By January of 1914, MESA had at least a contact person in all but three of Michigan's eighty-three counties. The list included not only the names of men and women, but in some cases notations about the woman's club affiliations, the man's occupation, or the high quality of either's work.⁴ The list probably served as a contact list of people who might be persuaded to help organize a woman suffrage groups in that area. In addition to new permanent organizations in Manistee and St. Joseph Counties, eight counties reported working hard to deepen suffrage sentiment in their area by organizing ward or township clubs under the county association.⁵

Other counties worked to get out the eligible woman's vote in school or tax issues.⁶ MESA urged women eligible to vote to do so to counter claims that women not want the vote. The work on getting out the female vote paid off in some places. The most spectacular increase reported came in Kalamazoo school elections. The number of

⁴"Headquarters List of Suffragists by Counties, prepared by Mrs. Edna Blair, Jan 8, 1914," LG Papers, 1914-1915, MHC-BHL.

⁵TMS, (February 1914) p. 7; (March 1914) pp. 5-6; (April 1914) p. 6; (June 1914) p. 6; (August 1914) p. 7.

⁶Oakland, Saginaw and Allegan, TMS, (April 1914) p. 6.

votes went from the usual range of 250-300 to 2500-3000, and half the increase in new registrations was women.⁷

For National Suffrage Day, 2 May 1914, Michigan groups did a variety of things. Mass meetings, suffrage supplements to local newspapers, teas, and receptions abounded. Some counties used the occasion to raise funds by selling woman suffrage banners, buttons, pencils and other novelties. Wayne County raised \$2000 for suffrage education.⁸ In Grand Rapids suffragists offered prizes for the best suffrage song or speech. Twenty-five poems/songs and five speeches were entered. The winning speech was given at a mass rally in Fulton Park. The best poems/songs were printed in the suffrage edition of a local newspaper. The winning song "Battle Hymn of the Suffragist" stressing the justice of the woman suffrage cause was set the the "Battle Hymn of the Republic".⁹

Lucia Grimes headed the Political Research Committee which assembled political information on public officials. She visited the Cuyahoga Woman's Party (Ohio), the Citizen's League of Detroit and the secretaries of various political parties before setting up a Michigan card system. The research effort had three prongs: A clipping

⁷"School Elections in Michigan," TMS, (August 1914) p. 3.

⁸TMS, (May 1914) pp. 6-7.

⁹Clipping envelope, Woman Suffrage Material folder, FMHR-GRPL; TMS, (May 1914) pp. 6-7.

service to follow political events in Michigan; the development of charts and maps of all political districts with lists of candidates and suffrage supporters for each district; and a card file on all political candidates in Michigan. County chairmen were asked to fill out the information forms and return them to the Committee.¹⁰

The candidate form had blanks for addresses, age, place of birth, nationality, and religion of the candidate. There were spaces for information about the candidate's parents, such as nativity, interests, citizenship, and public activity. It inquired as to the position on suffrage of the individual and his family. Specific questions asked about the occupation, literary work, reforms, charities, military record, position on prohibition, recreations, hobbies, clubs, health habits, and reputation of the candidate. The research committee also wanted to know what newspapers the candidate read, and what political connections he had. The candidate's financial status was explored in questions about the amount and sources of income. Lastly came questions about the candidate's political affiliations, and the conditions and circumstances of his constituency. ¹¹ Grimes urged the

¹⁰Report of the Political Research Committee, Papers, 1914-1915, LG Papers, MHC-BHL.

¹¹Three page form headed Buehner, Undated Papers, LG Papers, MHC-BHL.

importance of the work to the county chairmen by pointing out the need for votes for woman suffrage in both the state and federal legislatures. She stressed the need to be courteous and discreet in interviewing candidates. Some answers were not to be sought from the candidate, religion being the one she stressed.¹²

In June Senator William E. Borah, in Detroit at a Republican Party meeting, noted that woman suffrage was coming for Michigan women and saw no reason it should not¹³ NAWSA and MESA had a long standing policy of non-partisanship. In The Michigan Suffragist for October that policy was badly strained. Editor Edna Blair's indignation at the Michigan Republican Party's refusal to consider a woman suffrage amendment by tabling it at the convention boiled over into the pages of the paper. The major party platforms for the fall elections were summarized objectively and then Blair's feelings took over. The paper noted that not only had the Republicans not endorsed suffrage, the Republican dominated Michigan legislature had revised the legislation concerning the initiative so that only electors could circulate petitions thereby closing that avenue to suffragists. In the only signed editorial the paper ever ran, Edna Blair angrily attacked the Republicans

¹²Draft letters 4 and 6 August 1914 and undated, Papers, 1914-1915, LG Papers, MHC-BHL.

¹³TMS, (June 1914) p.1

by observing that the party that says it is "fighting for progressive legislation" and "standing on the frontier of civic evolution" tabled the equal suffrage resolution! She charged "bossism" in Republican ranks both in regards to the convention and the legislature's action regarding the initiative.¹⁴ Blair departed as editor of the paper in early 1915. She found the requirement that all copy be approved by the board an unacceptable condition.¹⁵ The board felt MESA must maintain the appearance of non-partisanship, and attacks on the Republican Party hindered that. Also many members of the board were Republicans which did not help Blair's case at all.

On 30 July 1914, Michigan became the first state to initiate "The Melting Pot." The idea was for women to contribute articles of jewelry and other metal objects to the pot. Those of value were to be sold and the proceeds used for suffrage work in the campaign states. Items of little value would be melted down and sold for the metal content.¹⁶

The October The Michigan Suffragist urged suffragists to attend "Your Girl and Mine", a pro-suffrage

¹⁴TMS, (October 1914) pp. 1, 5.

¹⁵Edna Blair to CBA, 9 December and 12 December 1914, Correspondence 1913-no date, CBA Papers, BHC-DPL.

¹⁶TMS, (August 1914) p. 1; Grand Rapids Press, 10 October 1914, ALTB Scrapbook, Blake Family Papers, MHC-BHL.

movie. The development of movies as a means of getting the suffrage message across began around 1910. Early twentieth-century newsreels covered suffrage activities, especially English rallies and American parades. Comedies with anti-suffrage messages had wide circulation before they were challenged in 1911. The anti-suffrage comedies had themes which stressed that women scurried home when confronted by a serious challenge, that militants abused their husbands and neglected their children, and that suffragettes were not womanly, i.e., not romantic. "How the Vote Was Won" was the first pro-suffrage film to enter the market. In 1912 two more films were released with pro-suffrage messages. Pro-suffrage films stressed that women were seeking suffrage to protect the home and children and end corruption in government.¹⁷

MESA held its 1914 convention in Traverse City in early November. Sixty-nine delegates and eight officers and past officers attended. The Convention decided to continue MESA's present system of organizational and educational work, to continue the card index system, to add a committee on elections to the standing list and work in each county on electing suffrage supporters. Plans were begun to establish a Bureau of Information in Lansing with

¹⁷TMS, (October 1914) p. 10; Joan Sloan, "Sexual Warfare in the Silent Cinema: Comedies and Melodramas of Woman Suffragism," American Quarterly 33 (Fall 1981):412-436.

a secretary to hold the state association archives and embrace the educational, legislative, and organizational work of MESA.¹⁸ The convention resolved itself in favor of arbitration between nations, equal pay for equal work, and rejoiced in the victories of Montana and Nevada and the close referenda losses in Ohio, Missouri, Nebraska and North and South Dakota.¹⁹ After "exhaustively" discussing the budget, the convention approved a new dues plan. Dues were assessed by county on the basis of \$.10 for each taxpaying woman in the county. The convention decided to try for the submission of a woman suffrage amendment in 1916.²⁰

Echoes of the deepening split between the Congressional Union (CU) and the NAWSA were heard at the Michigan convention. Throughout 1914 NAWSA and CU had sought a common basis on which to work. They failed to find it. Modeled after the WSPU of Great Britain, CU held the party in power, the Democrats who controlled Congress and the Presidency, responsible for the failure of the woman suffrage amendment in Congress. That policy might make sense in Great Britain with its more tightly disciplined parties and its parliamentary system, but in the U.S. system NAWSA thought it unnecessarily partisan. CU thought it appropriate and therefore in the western equal-suffrage

¹⁸MESA, Annual Report, 1914, pp. 11, 3.

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 2, 11-12.

²⁰Ibid., p. 13; TMS, (November 1914) p. 10.

states CU had campaigned against all Democrats. NAWSA held to its traditional non-partisan approach. By late 1914 the breach was permanent at the national level with CU withdrawing from any affiliation with NAWSA. The two groups went their separate ways.²¹ In Michigan Nellie Sawyer Clark, MESA president, tried to keep all suffragists in a single camp by observing that the differences between CU and NAWSA were over tactics in relation to the federal amendment, not over the importance of woman suffrage.²²

In 1915 many suffragists belonged to both NAWSA and CU. Clark tried to walk a thin line between following the NAWSA's lead in separating the MESA and NAWSA from the CU and its activities, while not alienating some of the strongest suffrage workers in MESA who were also CU members. In July 1915 CU organized a Michigan branch. In August of 1915 Clark wrote Lucia Grimes that she felt cooperation with the Union impossible since it would focus only on the federal amendment and Michigan also needed a state amendment. Marjory M. Whittemore, the Michigan CU chairman, agreed with Clark's assessment regarding the

²¹Eleanor Flexner, Century of Struggle: The Woman's Rights Movement in the Untied States (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, Belknap Press, 1975), pp. 274-276.

²²MESA, Annual Report 1914, p. 5.

chances for cooperation.²³ Of the Michigan delegates to the National Congressional Union meeting in December 1915, three -- Jenny Law Hardy, Lucia Voorhees Grimes, and Grace Hendrie -- were members of MESA executive board or had served on MESA state-wide committees.²⁴

The Michigan Suffragist did not report the CU-NAWSA split until its September 1915 issue. In "The President's letter", a regular column, Nellie Sawyer Clark regretted another organization was working on the federal amendment and reminded her readers that state work was necessary.²⁵

The newspaper reported a year similar to 1914. Organizing, educating, agitating and raising the money for all the activities occupied Michigan suffragists. Since 1915 was a year the legislature met, MESA also conducted legislative work. The work began in December 1914 and January 1915 with a series of meetings among the leaders of those organizations which supported woman suffrage. The Anti-Saloon League, the Knights of the Modern Maccabees, the WCTU, the State Association of Sunday Schools, the Gleaners, and MESA were represented at the meetings. A

²³NSC to Grimes, 7 August 1915, Correspondence 1913-1915, LG Papers, MHC-BHL; Whittemore to Alice Paul, 13 August 1915, NWP Papers-The Suffrage Years, MD-LC microfilm.

²⁴Michigan Report and Delegate List, "Congressional Union Convention Report, 1915" p. 5. NWP Papers-The Suffrage Years, MD-LC microfilm.

²⁵TMS, (September 1915) p. 1.

draft bill to grant partial suffrage, modelled on the Illinois Presidential Suffrage Act, was decided on. The Michigan Attorney General gave an opinion that the bill would be unconstitutional, citing the Coffin v. Election Commissioners of Detroit decision of 1893 in which municipal suffrage was found unconstitutional. As a result, no bill was introduced. A legislative poll conducted by MESA indicated the legislature was hostile to any suffrage legislation so soon after the 1913 referendum defeat. After the legislative poll, MESA did not urge any suffrage legislation.²⁶

Many Michigan suffrage workers were disturbed by the developing split between NAWSA and CU. The 1915 convention approved the work of the NAWSA toward passage of the Susan B. Anthony Amendment and was gratified that the Shafroth Amendment had been dropped. The Susan B. Anthony Amendment was the name often given to what became the Nineteenth Amendment. The Shafroth Amendment would have required any state where eight percent of those voting at the last election signed an initiative petition, to hold a woman suffrage referendum. Supporters felt this would ensure more referenda and eliminate the "states rights" opposition to federal action on woman suffrage. Critics of the idea felt it condemned suffragists to a state by state

²⁶MESA, Annual Report 1915 pp. 17-18, 6; TMS, (March 1915) p. 5.

struggle for woman suffrage and innumerable campaigns. CU activities focusing on the federal amendment probably encouraged those actions. The resolutions committee at the state convention reported out a resolution urging harmony among suffrage organizations and opposing the enactment of discriminatory legislation by NAWSA against any suffrage organization. The resolution was tabled.²⁷

Some Michigan suffragists worked for suffrage in other states by participating in referendum campaigns in New York and New Jersey in 1915.²⁸ Woman suffrage lost in both those states plus Massachusetts and Pennsylvania. Analysis of the election returns in the New Jersey campaign suggest that immigrant and native voters were equally independent of "the bosses" who were mostly anti-suffrage.²⁹ Machine bosses initially opposed woman suffrage because they feared the woman voters would be difficult to influence since they perceived women as more interested in reform issues and honesty, efficiency and economy than males were. In New York the machines opposed

²⁷MESA, Annual Report 1915 pp. 8,10. See Sidney Roderick Bland "Techniques of Persuasion: The National Woman's Party and Woman Suffrage, 1913-1919" (Ph. D. dissertation, George Washington University, 1972) pp. 189-190 for indications how CU impacted NAWSA congressional work. Flexner, Century of Struggle, pp. 276-277 discusses the Shafroth Amendment.

²⁸TMS, (June 1915) p.1.

²⁹Joseph F. Mahoney, "Woman Suffrage and the Urban Masses", New Jersey History 87 (Autumn 1969):151-172.

woman suffrage in 1915, but were neutral in 1917. The shift to neutrality can be attributed to changing perceptions about the suffragists and what women voting would do in the body politic. Women frequently supported economic and social reforms. The experience of woman suffrage states indicated that woman suffrage did not greatly alter the behavior of the electorate.³⁰

New York City women responded to the 1915 loss by announcing the next campaign had already started. In part, their confidence that the next one was underway already reflected their faith in Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt who had headed the New York campaign. NAWSA delegates drafted her as President at the 1915 Convention. Gradually under Catt NAWSA evolved a plan and a centralized system.³¹

Massachusetts also had a referendum in 1915 in which woman suffrage lost. Massachusetts's anti-suffragist forces displayed a division of labor that was interesting and reflected the bedrock source of opposition to woman suffrage. Female anti-suffrage workers did educational work while the men edited the newspaper. Women spoke indoors only, the men spoke outdoors as well. Woman suffragists paraded. Women opposed to woman suffrage

³⁰John D. Buenker, "The Urban Political Machine and Woman Suffrage: A Study in Political Adaptability" The Historian 33 (February 1971):264-279.

³¹Flexner, Century of Struggle, pp.279-284.

stayed home and draped their homes in protest. The women active in opposing woman suffrage tried in their actions not to cross into men's public sphere but to stay in woman's private sphere of home and family.³²

MESA members still thought that one way to interest women in public matters and suffrage was to point out the ways in which the laws had an impact on women's lives. In 1915 they commissioned an updating of their pamphlet Michigan Laws Relating to Women and Girls. Once again as in 1893 and 1913 Michigan women had a handy compendium of how the law affected them in marriage, in motherhood, property matters, wages, income, working conditions, and contracts. Preferences given to women by the law were delineated and as was the law concerning desertion and divorce. Finally the pamphlet discussed the provisions for women voting under Michigan's partial suffrage laws and the offices women could hold.³³

Since 1916 was not a year when the legislature met, suffragists focused on organization, the election of men who were woman suffrage supporters, and obtaining woman

³²Louise L. Stevenson, "Woman Anti-Suffragists in the 1915 Massachusetts Campaign" New England Quarterly 52 (March 1979):80-93.

³³Harry E. Hunt, comp. and Freida K. Blankenburg revisor, Michigan Laws Relating to Women and Girls: A Comprehensive Digest of the Statutory Law and Amendments Thereto as They Relate to WOMEN and GIRLS, also Pointed Decisions of the Supreme Court of Michigan Affecting the Same (Michigan Equal Suffrage Association, Kalamazoo, 1915) 18 pages. passim.

suffrage planks in party platforms. Lucia Grimes recommended that MESA coordinate the work of the congressional, legislative and political research committees carefully under single chairmen in each district and county. The reason for this was that to be effective the political research work and the congressional and legislative work all required a good understanding of the constitutional and political processes of Michigan and the federal government. Grimes suggested that each legislative district in the state needed to find a good man who was both popular and a woman suffrage supporter and persuade him to run for office. Suffragists were to seek men pledged to support the national amendment if it came to a ratification vote. minimally the had to support passage of a presidential suffrage bill in Michigan. Grimes stressed that organizational work in 1916, developing card files on local office holders and local suffragists by political area, would make mobilization for letter writing and other pressure tactics more efficient.³⁴ Some woman suffrage supporters understood the need for such organization very well. Frances Burnes reported she had urged the Maccabee members of Jackson, Washtenaw, Lenawee, and Monroe Counties to write their Congressman, Samuel W. Beakes, regarding the Susan B. Anthony amendment. "We will at least try to rid

³⁴Political Research Work, typescript hand-dated 1916?, Papers 1916, LG Papers, MHC-BHL.

the Congressman of the idea that the women of his district do not want suffrage"³⁵

MESA planned to begin house to house canvassing in 1916 to establish who supported and who opposed woman suffrage in every precinct. The plan called for distributing literature during the canvas. MESA hoped to have a list containing each voter, his position on woman suffrage, the position of all women at that address on woman suffrage, the nationality, religious affiliation, social affiliations, occupations, political allegiances and an estimate of personal income for each adult at the address.³⁶

The amount and kind of work canvassing involved can be estimated from one month's report for a ward in Detroit. The voters in the ward were categorized by intelligence, race, class, and ethnicity. The voters in one district were described as average in intelligence and hard to interest in suffrage. In two other districts in the same ward the people were described as above average in intelligence and interested in woman suffrage. The canvasser visited 1,916 homes. Seven hundred sixty-four families were not at home. Figure 6.1 (below) summarizes

³⁵Frances E. Burnes to Lucia Grimes, 1 April 1916, Correspondence 1916, LG Papers, MHC-BHL.

³⁶"Organizing for Results," TMS, (March 1916) p. 5.

the attitudes of the 1,122 families interviewed by the canvasser.³⁷

FIGURE 6.1

ATTITUDES RE WOMAN SUFFRAGE, 1916, BY PERCENTAGE
IN PARTS OF ONE WARD IN DETROIT
(N=1122)

REFUSED LITERATURE	—	1%
UNCLEAR	—	3%
OPPOSED	_____	9%
FAVORABLE	_____	41%
INDIFFERENT	_____	45%

A different type of canvassing was done Dr. Blanche Haines. She reported on her experiences in canvassing the 212 women taxpayers in her area. Of the 52 she had contacted, 27 had pledged to support MESA campaign work for three years, 6 were opposed to suffrage, 9 women were indifferent; and 5 suffragists did not contribute. She concluded that 70% of taxpaying women were suffragist supporters. Suffrage workers needed to reach those women so MESA could tap their resources financial and otherwise. She felt that the canvas work was worth the effort in

³⁷May B. Corwin (?) Canvasser Report Ward 6, no date, B1F1, BB Papers, (MS77-119) State of Michigan Archives



finding new workers and converting and educating the indifferent and the opposed.³⁸

Michigan suffragists also worked to further the the federal amendment in 1916. Both NAWSA and CU generated activity in Michigan for the federal amendment. In March NAWSA suggested ways state organizations could help secure woman suffrage planks in the platforms of the two dominant parties. Suggestions included compiling and mailing in a list of delegates and alternates so NAWSA could mail the individuals leaflets; deputations to political leaders in the individual states both at home and at the convention, a letter writing campaign especially by persons who might have particular influence on a delegate; and participation in the parade scheduled to impress the Republican convention in Chicago. An "earnest, emphatic, insistent but intelligent, tactful, politic campaign" was urged.³⁹ When the House Judiciary committee voted 10 to 9 to postpone consideration of constitutional amendments, NAWSA leaders felt the work of influencing delegates to the Conventions was even more important than ever, since party endorsement of suffrage had proved useful in state

³⁸"The Canvas of Tax-Paying Women and Some Deductions," TMS (July-August 1916) p. 2.

³⁹"Campaign for Suffrage Planks" and "How to Get a Plank in the Platform", NAWSA to Madam Chairman, 21 March 1916, Papers 1916, LG Papers, MHC-BHL.

campaigns. They expected platform planks would have a similar influence in Congress.⁴⁰

MESA tried to influence the delegate selection process at the county level. Political parties held their county conventions around April 18, and MESA urged suffragists to get the names of delegates to district chairmen. Headquarters would forward the necessary number of copies of a form letter so that each delegate would receive a letter asking for support for the extension of suffrage to women. A deputation of influential women to each delegate was also suggested.⁴¹ MESA urged delegates to support woman suffrage by stressing the rights of the individual. To the Republicans MESA pointed out Lincoln's approval of woman suffrage, the 102,302 disenfranchised women of Michigan who had property assessed at \$177,486,938 but could not vote for those who governed them, and the congruence between expressed Republican commitment to individual rights and woman suffrage.⁴²

CU also tried to influence the state conventions. CU members spoke at each state party convention. The

⁴⁰Janice Bradley Roessing, NAWSA first Vice President, to Madam Chairman, 31 March 1916, Papers 1916, LG Papers, MHC-BHL.

⁴¹NSC to "Dear Suffragist" 14 April 1916, Correspondence 1916, LG Papers, MHC-BHL.

⁴²To the Delegates to the State Republican Convention, April 1916, B1F3, BB Papers, (MS77-119) State of Michigan Archives.

Progressive Party endorsed woman suffrage. The Democratic leadership was divided on woman suffrage. Governor Woodbridge Ferris supported it, but Congressman John Doremos, who chaired the convention, was opposed. In the Democratic convention, the women were allowed to speak after "the business was over". The delegates stayed and listened respectfully. The Republican State Central Committee was opposed to women addressing the convention, but John Baird of Saginaw led a successful fight for their right to speak. Two thousand delegates and guests heard the women speak on suffrage as a national issue and CU's "suffrage special"⁴³

On 23 March 1916 MESA held a Congressional Campaign Conference in Detroit. Speakers included Carrie Chapman Catt, NAWSA President, Nellie Sawyer Clark, MESA President, State Representative Charles Flowers, Blanche Draper, State Press Chairman, Belle Brotherton State Finance Chairman, Lucia Grimes, and eleven of the thirteen Congressional District chairs. In addition to reports by Congressional district chairmen the meeting heard discussions and presentations on "The Congressional Prospect", "State Congressional Work", "Campaigns, Federal and State", and "Publicity". Mrs. Catt and Representative Flowers demonstrated how to interview a politician. A

⁴³Michigan Report, 20 May 1916, 6 May 1916, NWP Papers-The Suffrage Years, MD-LC microfilm.

motion by Grimes in favor of harmony and cooperation among suffrage organization within Michigan was tabled.⁴⁴ This tabling suggested to CU members that NAWSA did not want cooperation between the two organizations and that membership in both association was becoming not possible. Lucia Grimes resigned her MESA Executive Board position over the summer. In her memoirs she reports no overt MESA pressure to resign, but NAWSA insisted a person could only belong to NAWSA or CU, not both. Clark, MESA president, wrote she would miss Grimes at the Board meetings.⁴⁵

In February 1916 all eight-three counties in Michigan had activities to celebrate Susan B. Anthony's birthday. Mass meetings, teas, and club meetings were the most common celebrations. The occasion was used to organize equal suffrage associations in Caledonia, Grandville, Dundee and Blissfield. Detroit suffragists decorated their meetings in suffrage yellow and had two speakers per meeting in every ward of the city. They reported gaining many new members and workers through this

⁴⁴Untitled typescript of report or minutes of the Congressional Campaign Conference, 23 March 1916, Papers 1916, LG Papers, MHC-BHL.

⁴⁵Lucia Isabelle Voorhes Grimes, A History of the Suffrage Movement as Related to Michigan and Detroit (Cass Technical High School, Detroit Michigan, 1968) pp. 37-38; NSC to Grimes, 19 August 1916, Correspondence 1916, LG Papers, MHC-BHL.

effort. Seven Michigan colleges and one institute also celebrated the birthday.⁴⁶

The April 1916 The Michigan Suffragist carried the announcement that organizers wanted 1000 women from Michigan to participate in a June 7 parade in Chicago during the Republican National Convention.⁴⁷ The paper also reported that women in Coldwater had had to get a writ of mandamus to force the election commission to print the school ballot separate from the municipal ballot so that women could vote in the school elections in Coldwater. The issue had arisen when women had been refused ballots in the previous school election.⁴⁸

Nellie Sawyer Clark tried to stimulate volunteers for the June parade by pointing out the importance of the parade as a demonstration of strength. Participants would find it a wonderful memory which would make them stauncher suffragists. Clark also related that both she and Mrs. Catt, NAWSA president, used to fear parades but after marching in several, they found them "exhilarating." Elsewhere the paper stressed that parading was lady-like since it was honest, sincere and in the interest of people

⁴⁶TMS, (February 1916) pp. 6-7.

⁴⁷"President's Letter," TMS, (April 1916) p. 1.

⁴⁸Suffragists Stop Illegal Voting," TMS, (April 1916) p. 6; "School Elections," TMS, (February 1916) p. 9.

in general.⁴⁹ That the issue of lady-like had to be addressed suggests that many were concerned about being seen as un-lady-like. In rain and cold, 5,000 paraded to convention and arrived just as an opponent of woman suffrage was announcing that women did not want the vote.⁵⁰

The pressure on the conventions got some sort of equal suffrage plank in each platform. The Republicans favored, and the Democrats recommended woman suffrage. Both platforms pointedly said that the issue was one for the individual states to address. Among the smaller parties the Prohibitionists endorsed the federal amendment outright and condemned the Republicans and Democrats for their failure to act on it. The Socialists demanded equal suffrage.⁵¹

Just before the Republican Convention, CU organized the National Woman's Party (NWP). The NWP saw the possibility of organizing women as a political factor to be reckoned with. Women already could vote for President in twelve states, with one-fourth the votes in the Electoral College. The NWP hoped to hold the balance of power in those twelve states. It campaigned heavily against the

⁴⁹"President's Letter" and "Is it Lady-Like?" TMS, (May 1916) pp. 1, 4.

⁵⁰TMS (June 1916) p. 1

⁵¹Donald Bruce Johnson, comp., National Party Platforms, 1840-1956 (Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 1978), pp. 199, 201, 207, 210.

Democrats, but with little apparent success. Only in Illinois, which counted women's votes separately could the NWP point to women voting for Hughes, the Republican presidential candidate, in greater numbers than men did. Hughes ran ahead of the Democratic ticket in Illinois.⁵²

At the NAWSA Convention in September 1916, Catt laid before her executive board a secret six-year plan to win full suffrage. It involved coordinated planning, enough publicity to make suffrage a burning national issue, a concerted drive for Presidential suffrage and referendum campaigns only where there was a likelihood of victory. Catt planned a crusade.⁵³

NAWSA set Federal Amendment Days for October 7 and 21 to demonstrate for the federal amendment in each county seat of each non-suffrage state. Suggestions included getting each meeting to endorse a resolution supporting woman suffrage and making sure that local politicians knew of the resolution's endorsement. NAWSA wanted full reports (and enclosed a reporting form) and suggested 500 leaflets per meeting be ordered.⁵⁴ From The Michigan Suffragist it is unclear how many Michigan counties had demonstrations.

⁵²Flexner, Century of Struggle, pp. 286-287.

⁵³Ibid., pp. 287-292.

⁵⁴"President's Letter," TMS (September 1916) p. 1; CCC to Madame President, 18 September 1916, Correspondence-Presidents of State Organizations, NAWSA Papers, MD-LC microfilm.

In November 1916, MESA held its annual convention in Grand Rapids. The Association membership voted to seek NAWSA approval for a state referendum in 1918. MESA sought permission because NAWSA was now trying to plan and coordinate state campaigns to ensure success in some by restricting the number and geographic dispersion of the campaigns the national would support. In that connection Mark T. McKee announced that men who believed in equal suffrage were willing to shoulder half the expected \$100,000 cost of the 1918 campaign.⁵⁵ The convention approved a resolution attacking the federal government policy of giving preference to men in hiring and promoting typists and stenographers and in paying the men more than women.⁵⁶ Dr. Effie McCollum Jones, NAWSA field director, visited Michigan December 11, 1916 to conduct a survey regarding a referendum campaign in 1918. The Board expected the request to be approved.⁵⁷

Throughout 1916 finances concerned MESA. The apportionment plan decided on in 1914, \$.10 per taxpaying woman in the county, had helped, but some counties did not meet their amount. Suggestions for raising funds included systematic monthly paper drives, a breakfast on National Suffrage Day, May 6, securing members for the Men's Century

⁵⁵TMS, (November-December 1916) pp. 2-3.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 7.

⁵⁷"Michigan Survey," TMS, (January 1917) p. 2.

Suffrage Club, giving a suffrage entertainment or play, a house to house canvas, and suffrage teas especially where sentiment was not strong.⁵⁸

A poll by MESA in December 1916 indicated where Michigan legislators stood after the 1916 elections. At the federal level, the Michigan delegation was strongly for woman suffrage. Both Senators and eight Representatives favored it, while three Representatives were opposed and two were uncertain. The Michigan House and Senate showed more individuals uncertain. The House poll showed 37 sure yeas, 3 sure nos and 60 uncommitted. The Senate poll showed 15 yeas, 2 nos, and 15 uncommitted.⁵⁹

The Michigan legislature met in 1917. Two woman suffrage issues came before the legislature in March. Presidential suffrage, which would allow women to vote for President of the United States, was presented by Senator Damon and Representative Flowers. The drive for presidential suffrage was part of a NAWSA coordinated campaign. After a favorable opinion from Michigan Attorney General Groesbeck on the constitutionality of the bill, it passed the on Senate March 21 and the House on April 18. Flowers also presented a resolution providing for full

⁵⁸NSC to Dear Suffragist, 14 April 1916, Correspondence 1916, LG Papers, MHC-BHC.

⁵⁹Michigan Poll, 20 December 1916, B1F2, BB Papers, (MS77-119) State of Michigan Archives.

woman suffrage through a constitutional amendment. This passed the House on March 28 and the Senate on April 19.⁶⁰

The suffragists reported considerable anxiety while the suffrage bills were moving through the legislature. When suffrage lobbyists heard rumors that a legislator was wavering, his constituency was alerted. MESA noted that with few exceptions, the votes corresponded to what their headquarters's file had suggested would be the results.⁶¹ NWP members were also interested in the Michigan legislative activity. Senator Damon informed Lucia Grimes when his bill passed the Senate. She also got people to lobby their representatives.⁶²

The year 1917 was a momentous year for partial suffrage. Not only did the Michigan legislature enact presidential suffrage, North Dakota, Nebraska, and Ohio also enacted it. Indiana's presidential suffrage was declared unconstitutional by its state courts and Vermont's governor vetoed the state legislature's presidential suffrage bill. Arkansas gave its women primary suffrage.⁶³

There were several liquor issues on the legislative calendar in 1917. The legislature had to pass

⁶⁰TMS, (April 1917) pp. 1-2.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 2.

⁶²John A. Damon to Lucia Grimes, 21 March 1917; Alice C. Ervin to Grimes, postcard, 17 April 1917, Correspondence 1917, LG Papers, BHC-DPL.

⁶³Flexner, Century of Struggle, p. 300.

the enforcement legislation for prohibition which had been approved by Michigan voters in November 1916 by a referendum vote of 353,378 to 284,754. Since the voters had spoken almost no one opposed the enforcement bills. Roll call analysis similar to that done in chapter looking for legislator support which suggests issue linkage was not possible. Chi-squares for either suffrage issue paired with any of the enforcement legislation were either zero because every vote on both issues was yes, or below 1.00 or responding to the unanimous votes on enforcement legislation.

While connections between support for woman suffrage and liquor issues was not possible, calculations for each type of woman suffrage presidential suffrage (PS) and full woman suffrage (FWS) and party affiliation was possible. The summary table below indicates that woman suffrage of either type was not a partisan issue to any real degree. The chi-squares are all below 1. Checking the results with contingency tables revealed that the actual votes are all within one vote of those expected from each party if the issue were completely non-partisan.

TABLE 6.1

SUMMARY TABLE, 1917 LEGISLATURE,
BOTH KINDS OF WOMAN SUFFRAGE & PARTY

	PS	FWS
HOUSE	.303	.060
SENATE	.830	.231

By the time the two suffrage bills passed the Michigan legislature, NWP had begun picketing the White House. When the picketing had begun in January, Michigan NWP members had not liked it. Marjory Whittemore described the reaction as "very unpleasant" with members "not at all in sympathy with the plans"⁶⁴ In The Michigan Suffragist MESA criticized the picketing as early as March in The Michigan Suffragist calling the picketing "frivolous" and insisted that MESA was not in sympathy with the NWP tactics.⁶⁵

After the United States entered World War I, NWP continued to picket the White House. NAWSA tried very hard to distinguish itself from NWP. NAWSA actively coordinated and promoted national defense work by women of all kinds, food campaigns, fund raising, Red Cross work, etc.. In an attempt to make the difference clear to the public, NAWSA President Carrie Chapman Catt wrote a public

⁶⁴Marjory Miller Whittemore to Alice Paul, telegram, 10 January 1917, NWP-The Suffrage Years, MD-LC microfilm.

⁶⁵TMS, (March 1917) p. 4.

letter which she urged state presidents to give as wide a circulation as possible. Catt pointed out that NAWSA thought the picketing unwise and had disapproved of the action from the beginning. Further more, she stressed that since America had gone to war for democracy we should not make the mistake of denying self-government to half our people.⁶⁶

Michigan suffragists associated with MESA did a great deal of war work of which scattered records have survived. Some of the war work began even before the U. S. entered the war. The Woman's Committee for Patriotic Service published suggestions for agricultural work and dealing with the small supply of seed potatoes.⁶⁷ In May 1917 The Michigan Suffragist ceased publication. There is no indication as to reason. Whether the end was related to the coming of the war or to the success in the legislature is unclear. Without the records of MESA it is hard to establish why.

One aspect of war work was to be sure that women were not discriminated against in wages and that protective legislation for women was not suspended or gutted as a war measure. Michigan had a Protection of Women's Work, Wages,

⁶⁶CCC to Madam President, 13 July 1917; An Open Letter to the Public, 13 July 1917, Correspondence-Suffrage Amendment Ratification, NAWSA Papers, RL-NYPL.

⁶⁷TMS, (April 1917) p. 3.

Hours and Condition Committee. Nellie Sawyer Clark of MESA chaired the group. Their slogan was Equal Pay for Equal work. Vigilance committees were urged to protect proper standards for health and well-being.⁶⁸ Women in war work usually did not receive equal pay for equal work. The limitations of protective legislation got less attention from the National War Labor Board than wages which got little enough. The men on the board were unable to think of women other than as "mothers of the race".⁶⁹

Federal amendment work went on by both NAWSA and NWP throughout 1917. In late January NWP members in Michigan were urged to write or telegraph Congress to keep woman suffrage a live issue in a time of crisis.⁷⁰ NWP members regularly interviewed members of Michigan delegation in Congress. A January report sheet described Representative Nichols as "cheerfully and unalterably opposed" while Representative Scott was described as open minded and intelligent. Letters from constituents were suggested to influence Scott toward support for suffrage. The April summary showed three of the 13 representatives opposed and

⁶⁸Michigan Protection of Women's Work, Wages, Hours and Conditions, 19 May no year, Folder M, National Defense Activities of Women, Correspondence, NAWSA Papers, RL-NYPL.

⁶⁹Valerie V. Conner, "The Mothers of the Race in World War I: The National War Labor Board and Women in Industry" Labor History 21 (Winter 1979-1980):34-35.

⁷⁰Mary L. Youngblood to LG, 1 February 1917, Correspondence, LG Papers, MHC-BHL.

both senators in favor of the federal amendment. An interview report indicated that the pickets antagonized and upset some supporters. Louis Cramton, who spoke for suffrage on the House floor in 1915, and Gilbert Currie both spoke directly on that point. By April 30, Representative James had shifted from favorable to opposed, citing Rep. Jeannette Rankin of Montana's behavior when she voted on the war resolution. The interviewers also noted those who were weak in their commitment or deeply opposed.⁷¹

In the summer of 1917, NWP White House pickets began to be arrested and imprisoned.⁷² Michigan NWP members and their families were uneasy about the picketing. In August Marjory Whittemore reported that the publicity was very bad in Michigan and that no one from Michigan was available to picket. She noted that the husbands of a

⁷¹Michigan Report, January 1917?; Latest Report on Michigan Representatives; Michigan, 18 April 1917 and 30 April 1917; Correspondence 1917, LG Papers, MHC-BHL.

⁷²Flexner, Century of Struggle, pp. 294-297. Haig A. Bosmajian discusses the free speech issues raised by the arrest of the pickets in "The Abrogation of the Suffragists First Amendment Rights" Western Speech 38 (Fall 1974) pp. 218-232. Janice Law Trecker discusses the prison and workhouse conditions and Wilson administration's attitudes regarding the suffrage prisoners in "The Suffrage Prisoners" The American Scholar 41 (Summer 1972):409-423.

number of women who might have gone were opposed because of the risk of imprisonment.⁷³

In public speeches on suffrage Michigan supporters stressed the two major arguments that had been used since the 1880s. Louis Cramton in a House of Representatives speech stressed natural rights and the importance of individual rights in the American tradition. In 1917, NWP, NAWSA, MESA, and the Wisconsin Woman's Suffrage Association thanked Cramton for copies of his speech.⁷⁴ Arthur J. Lacey focused on the need to incorporate women's special strengths and insights into government through woman's votes ⁷⁵

Michigan suffragists juggled suffrage work and war work in 1918. Reports indicate most suffrage organizations did not as organizations do war work, but most suffragists

⁷³Marjory Miller Whittemore to Alice Paul, 29 August 1917; Whittemore to Miss Calderhead 29 August 1917, NWP Papers-The Suffrage Years, MD-LC microfilm.

⁷⁴Louis Cramton, "Extending the Right of Suffrage to Women", 12 January 1915 (GPO, 1916) in Speeches 1915-1929; CU to Cramton, 10 February 1917; NAWSA to Cramton, 6 January 1917; MESA to Cramton, 12 January 1917; WWSA to Cramton, 23 January 1917, Louis Cramton Papers, MHC-BHL.

⁷⁵Speech of 9 March 1917 attached to letter Lacey to Frank Burzel 22 October 1918, Papers 1918, Arthur Jay Lacey Papers, MHC-BHL.

were individually very active.⁷⁶ Daisy Stilson of Vassar, Michigan noted that in her area very little overt suffrage work was done, but a great deal of Red Cross and other war work was. She noted the suffrage campaign was being waged quietly to save both time and money for the war effort. She noted that suffragists knit at their meetings.⁷⁷

Suffrage work involved both state referendum work and federal amendment work. Although the primary focus of NWP was the federal amendment, Alice Paul thought it well to cooperate with any suffrage activity that did not distract one from Congressional work. She suggested keeping people so busy on the amendment work that they would have little or no time for the state referendum work.⁷⁸ In 1918 NWP had activist contacts in seventy of Michigan's eighty-three counties.⁷⁹

In preparing for the 1918 suffrage referendum, MESA had the official cooperation of the Michigan WCTU.

⁷⁶Grace Vanhosen to Mary Ogden White, 20 May 1918; Alice B. Locke to Ida Porter Boyer 16 May 1918; Meral R. Patterson to Mary Ogden White 20 May 1918; Sarah W George to Ida Porter Boyer, 18 May 1918; Jennie H. Waltron to Mary Ogden White 16 May 1918, Michigan Folder, State Ratification Correspondence, NAWSA Papers, RL-NYPL.

⁷⁷Daisy W. Stilson to Mary Ogden White, no date, Michigan Folder, State Ratification Correspondence 1918-1919, NAWSA Papers, RL-NYPL.

⁷⁸Alice Paul to Dorothy Earle, 13 May 1918, NWP-The Suffrage Years, MD-LC microfilm.

⁷⁹1918 List County Chairmen, Papers 1917-1918, LG Papers, MHC-BHL.

The WCTU suggested that MESA take the lead but offered financial assistance in the campaign.⁸⁰ While the state WCTU supported suffrage, some local unions did not give it much attention. For example, the Twelfth District Union (the western upper peninsula) rarely appointed a franchise superintendent. The only direct mention of suffrage comes in the 1918 meeting, where the state executive committee is reported as expecting woman suffrage to pass.⁸¹

The Michigan campaign must have been very quiet. Little material has survived from the campaign. No manuscript collections contained for 1918 anything like the wealth of information found for 1912 and 1913. Mrs. Catt found MESA exasperating in 1918. She felt NAWSA had to badger the state association into working on the referendum. MESA members seemed to be doing only war work. Catt stressed to woman suffrage supporters that woman suffrage work was war work, since it was work to improve democracy in America. It was the right of self-government, one of the war aims.⁸² Handbills and slogans for the Michigan campaign reflect Catt's focus on woman suffrage as

⁸⁰Mrs. E. L. Calkins to CCC, 29 January 1917, B1F3, BB Papers, (MS77-119) State of Michigan Archives.

⁸¹Twelfth District Minutes Book, 27th Annual Meeting (1916) p. 5; 28th Annual Meeting (1917) pp. 9, 25, 28; 29th Annual Meeting (1918) pp. 41-43, Michigan WCTU Records, MHC-BHL.

⁸²CCC to All Field Workers, 12 June 1918, Correspondence re Suffrage Amendment Ratification, NAWSA Papers, RL-NYPL.

patriotic. One handbill describes woman suffrage as "First Aid to Patriotism."⁸³ Another contrasts the opposition to woman suffrage of the the undemocratic German Kaiser to the support given woman suffrage by American Presidents Wilson and Theodore Roosevelt.⁸⁴ Obviously, a freedom loving patriotic American would not vote to support a position of the undemocratic German Kaiser!

The Michigan referendum resulted in a victory for woman suffrage by a vote of 229,790 to 195,284. Regression analysis similar to that done in chapters 2 and 5 was done twice: once with the 1910 census figures for percentage of the population female (%FEM10) and percentage of the population foreign born (%FB10) and then with the 1920 census figures for those variables instead of the 1910 figures (%FEM20) AND (%FB20). Other independent variables in each equation included the percentage of the 1916 vote in favor of prohibition in the state wide referendum (%PRO16); the percentage of the vote for governor for each of the four major candidates, the Republican (%REPG), the Democrat (%DEMG), the Prohibitionist (%PROG) and the Socialist (%SOCG); and the liquor status (LS) wet or dry, of the county when state

⁸³"First Aid for Patriotism" in NAWSA Pamphlets and Broad sides, 1900-1920, MHC-BHL.

⁸⁴Poster/handbill, B1F19, BB Papers, (MS77-119) State of Michigan Archives.

wide prohibition went into effect in May of 1918; and the geographic variable, upper or lower peninsula (UP).

The R squared for the regression equation with the 1910 census data is .397, while that for the regression equation with the 1920 census data is .365. This points out that less than 40% of the woman suffrage yes vote can be explained by the independent variables in the equations. The same variables were significant in each equation. They were the 1916 percentage of the vote favoring prohibition (%PRO16), the percentage of the population female (%FEM), and the liquor status (LS) of the county just before state-wide prohibition. Table 6.2 (p. 266) summarizes the findings.

The negative sign for LS in both tables indicates that voters in dry counties supported woman suffrage more strongly than did voters in wet counties. All counties in Michigan had been dry since May 1918, but those which were wet until state-wide prohibition began contained voters who voted against woman suffrage with greater frequency. Figure 6.2 (p. 267) graphically illustrates the differences in the range of support for woman suffrage between wet and dry counties.

TABLE 6.2

1918 REFERENDUM REGRESSION RESULTS (1910 DATA)

VARIABLE	B	STANDARD ERROR	SIGNIFICANCE T
UP	2.104881	2.635893	.4271
%REPG	-0.150146	.165286	.3667
%PROG	-0.102577	1.854425	.9560
%PRO16	.476790	.108919	.0000***
%SOCG	.439974	.506091	.3875
LS	-3.550945	1.772887	.0489**
%FEM10	-1.205893	.402458	.0037**
%DEMG	-0.042612	.151463	.7792
%FB10	-0.015807	.131667	.9048
CONSTANT	97.010859	27.464347	.0007***

1918 REFERENDUM REGRESSION RESULTS (1920 DATA)

VARIABLE	B	STANDARD ERROR	SIGNIFICANCE T
UP	-0.427583	2.097002	.8390
%REPG	-0.047455	.167772	.7781
%PROG	.488141	1.875234	.7954
%PRO16	.470974	.116435	.0001***
%SOCG	.559815	.512929	.2787
%FEM20	-0.992806	.445010	.0288**
LS	-3.575105	1.596702	.0282**
%FB20	-0.040936	.139551	.7701
%DEMG	-0.012391	.155986	.9369
CONSTANT	81.834962	28.368839	.0051***

* denotes significant at the 10% level; **significant at the 5% level; ***significant at the 1% level

FIGURE 6.2

RANGE OF SUPPORT FOR WOMAN SUFFRAGE BY LIQUOR STATUS

WET COUNTIES

36.1%		60.2%
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DRY COUNTIES

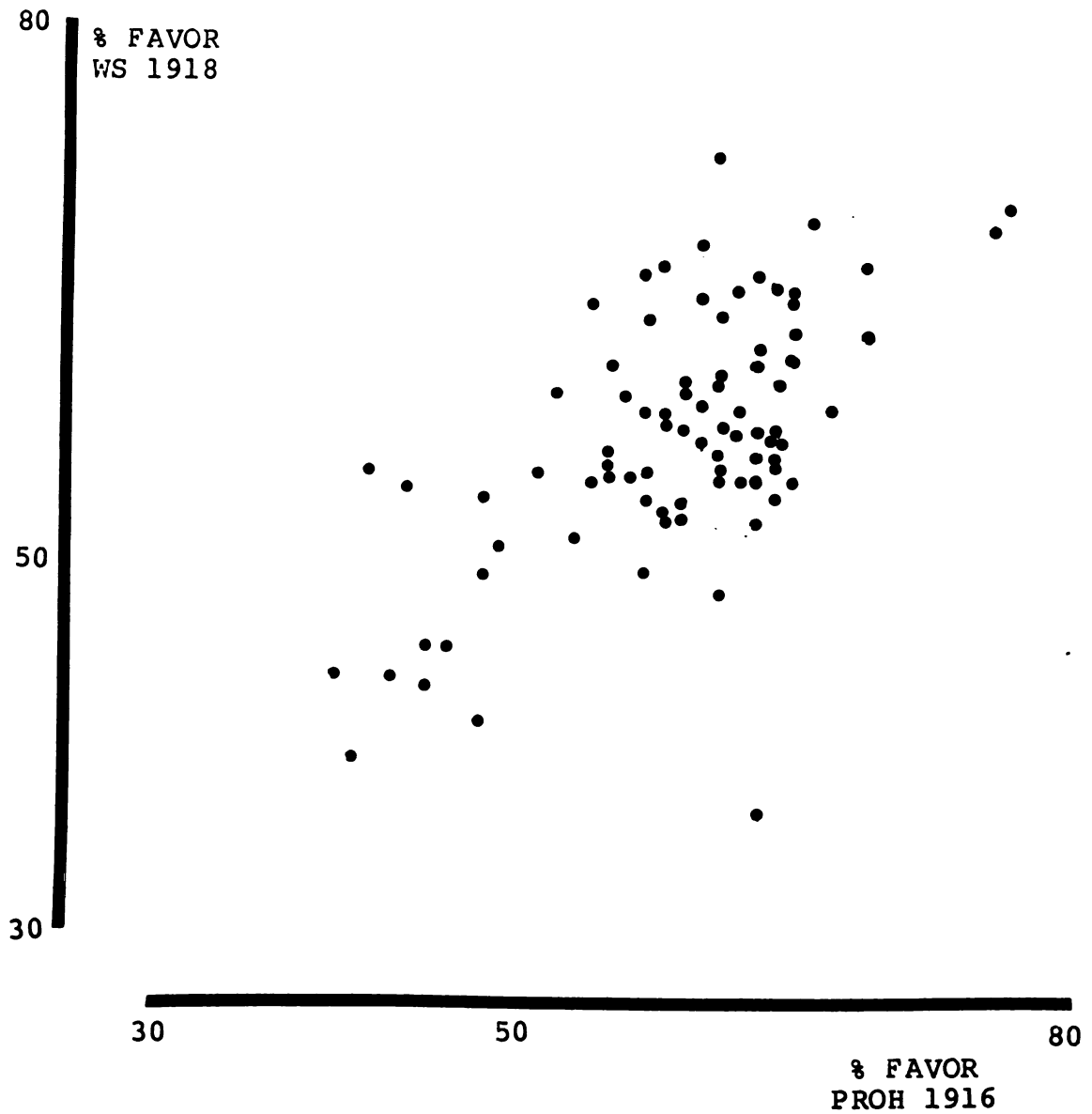
46.8%		72.2%
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Figure 6.3 (p. 268) illustrates the pattern of connection between the percentage favoring prohibition in 1916 and the percentage favoring woman suffrage in 1918 in all eighty-three counties. The general pattern is for counties which were strongly supportive of prohibition in 1916 to show strong support for woman suffrage in 1918. The greatest exception to this observation is Ottawa County where 63% of the vote favored prohibition but only 36% of the vote favored woman suffrage. Ottawa had a large Dutch population most of whom were members of the Christian Reformed Church which had vehemently opposed woman suffrage in 1913 but strongly supported prohibition.

What had changed between the 1913 defeat and the 1918 victory? presumably the existence of state-wide prohibition helped to defuse the liquor issue for suffragist supporters. The Scotts argue that the woman suffrage amendment successfully passed Congress only after passage of the prohibition amendment had un-coupled the

FIGURE 6.3

SCATTER DIAGRAM : % FAVORABLE VOTE, REFERENDA
WOMAN SUFFRAGE (WS) 1918 & PROHIBITION (PROH) 1916



issues.⁸⁵ While Michigan legislators behaved as if passage of state-wide prohibition by the initiative route uncoupled the issues, the voting pattern suggests the link remained in the voters minds. Counties where the prohibition amendment did poorly were also counties in which the voters were less apt to support woman suffrage.

This suggests, that the link between support for woman suffrage and opposition to the liquor interests were not linked directly but indirectly through a common set of concerns and values which included democracy, morality, and good government. Because woman suffrage challenged deeply embedded patriarchal political patterns, an emphasis on the dangers to home and family should women be allowed into the public area could dissolve the connections between support for woman suffrage and support for prohibition or local option. This is what the opponents of woman suffrage succeeded in doing in 1913.

In 1918 women's war work had made it clear that women, even without the vote, played an important public role in American life. This realization that women were already playing a public role, helped defuse the fear of women engaging in activities that obviously were not connected to the home. In addition, constant agitation by CU and NAWSA had made woman suffrage an major public issue.

⁸⁵Anne F. Scott and Andrew M. Scott, One Half of the People: The Fight for Woman Suffrage (Philadelphia, J. B. Lippincott Company, 1975) pp. 41-42.

The agitation had helped accustom voters to the idea of woman suffrage and educate them regarding why women wanted the vote. Further success in other states, especially New York in 1917 also helped. In addition, the stress of war propoganda on the war as a conflict between democracies and tyrannies gave woman suffrage advocates, using a variety of justice arguments, a punch they had not had before.

In Michigan, the biggest single factor which contributed to the change was the hard work MESA put into organization, education and agitation throughout the state between 1914 and the outbreak of the war. MESA in 1913 had not even had someone it could write to for information and scheduling help in every one of the eighty-three Michigan counties. Between 1914 and 1917 The Michigan Suffragist chronicles the development of county organizations in almost all Michigan counties. In addition, MESA expanded its group of activists, and actively reached out to both men and women with demonstrations, meetings, plays, contests and canvassing. In short MESA was a much stronger organization state-wide in 1918 than it had been in 1913, and that paid off even in a quiet campaign. At the state level both the Michigan Republicans and the Michigan Democrats endorsed the suffrage amendment⁸⁶

⁸⁶Clippings, BlF7, BB Papers, (MS77-119), State of Michigan Archives.

At the local level better and deeper organization made a difference in many counties. In Kent County, where voters in both 1912 and 1913 had rejected the amendment, it passed in 1918 with 52.7% of the vote. The Grand Rapids Equal Suffrage Association had campaigned from April until election day, beginning with the appointment of chairmen for each block of each precinct in the city in April, followed by a organizing and petitioning campaign in May, and the opening of headquarters and poster work in June. The summer was given over to canvassing, fund-raising, seeking endorsements from clergymen and preparing newspaper advertisements for October. September and October were marked by parades, county fair work, and public meetings until they were banned because of the influenza epidemic. In the last week the Association arranged for street car advertising, put up posters in 197 factories and rented thirty billboards. On election day, each of the city's forty-five precincts was covered by observer teams of two persons. There were three shifts of observers for each precinct making 270 election observers.⁸⁷

Saginaw women suffrage supporters worked especially hard on learning the election laws and making sure they were followed. They were convinced they had been counted out in 1912 because they did not know the laws and

⁸⁷Grace A. VanHoesen, "Why Grand Rapids Was Won", The Woman Citizen 30 November 1918, p. 530 in B1F14 BB Papers, (MS77-119), State of Michigan Archives.

had too few observers. In 1918 they used male challengers in the precincts and called in the police to enforce the election laws as needed. The challengers were sustained by box-lunches provided by the Saginaw Equal Suffrage Association.⁸⁸ Saginaw County suffragists failed to deliver Saginaw in the favorable column in November 1918, but the county did have a higher percentage of yes votes than in 1912 or 1913, 45.6% of the voters favored woman suffrage.

Neither county association had been able to mount the depth and strength of campaigning in 1912 or 1913 that it mounted in 1918. The pattern was similar in many other counties. In 1918 Michigan suffragists were better organized and better prepared. The years of organizing between 1914 and 1917 made the difference.

In early 1919 Michigan women began to prepare to vote. Several books were available to help the new voter acculturate herself to politics. What Every Woman Should Know was intended to help women learn the outlines of intelligent voting. Throughout, it assumed and advised women as if they would be altruistic voters rather than self-interested voters as men were.⁸⁹ "Preparing Women For

⁸⁸"Thermos Bottle Did It, But the Policewoman Helped Some", The Woman Citizen 30 November 1918, p. 558 in B1F14, BB Papers, (MS77-119), State of Michigan Archives.

⁸⁹Judson Grenell, What Every Woman Should Know about voting on local matters, state affairs, on national voting problems... (Waterford, Michigan; Waterford Publishing Co, 1919), BHC-DPL.

Citizenship noted that with the vote women became active citizens. Neither women or men had special training for voting, but because women were socialized to ignore public affairs, women needed some preparation. Women were urged to study issues, figure out what they wanted and organize to get it.⁹⁰

The Woman Voter's Manual resembled a government textbook. It had short chapters on citizenship, each branch and level of government, and discussions of parties, international relations, and taxes. It also dealt with political economy.⁹¹ For those who wanted a political science course there was the twelve volume The Woman Citizen's Library which included three volumes on political science, three volumes on practical politics, a volume on woman suffrage, one on woman and the law, three volumes on "larger citizenship" which focused on city housekeeping and the prevention of social waste, and one volume on woman and the home.⁹²

Women were urged to register and vote. In Grand Rapids the Americanization Society issued a flyer which

⁹⁰Helen Ring Robinson, Preparing Women for Citizenship (New York; Macmillan, 1918), BHC-DPL.

⁹¹S.E. Forman and Marjorie Shuler, The Woman Voter's Manual (New York, The Century Company, 1918) BHC-DPL.

⁹²Shailer Mathews, general editor, The Woman Citizen's Library, (Chicago, The Civics Society, 1913-1914). ALTB Papers, SL-RC.

told how to register. The society offered honor badges for the windows of those men and women who voted.⁹³ The first equal suffrage elections were the March 1919 primary and the April 1919 general election.

All women had to register regardless of whether they were registered as school or taxpayer voters or not. The registration rules caused some puzzles. Lawyer and just elected Congressman Earl Michener was consulted by at least two clients concerning registration rules. Another correspondent complained about the lack of information from male speakers. A fourth writer, trying to decide whether to be a Republican or a Democrat, complained about the partisanship of politics.⁹⁴

Seventy percent of those women eligible to register did so. Between 40% and 50% of the women in Michigan voted in the April election.⁹⁵

While Michigan women had equal suffrage after 1919, the federal amendment struggle continued. In 1919 when it began to look as if the federal amendment would go

⁹³Americanization Society "Women Make Good" Woman Suffrage Material folder, FMHR-GRPL.

⁹⁴Earl Cory Michener to Mrs. C. F. Sizer, 6 February 1919; to Mrs. Samuel Jackson 27 January 1919; Marna R. Osband(?) to Michener, 21 March 1919; Ida F. McFarland to Michener, 20 March 1919, Earl Cory Michener Papers, MHC-BHL.

⁹⁵NAWSA Press Department, Feature Service 22 May 1919 "League of Women Voters-Michigan Report", B1F7, BB Papers, (MS77-119) State of Michigan Archives.

to the states for ratification, NWP, NAWSA and their Michigan affiliates planned for ratification. When the Senate passed the amendment 5 June 1919, Michigan suffragists had already demanded a special session of the legislature at which Governor Sleeper would request ratification. NWP chair, Marjory Whittemore was described as having "camped on the Governor's trail". Belle Brotherton had written letters and solicited newspaper support for a special session to ratify.⁹⁶ Michigan ratified easily on 10 June 1919. When Tennessee became the thirty-sixth state to ratify in August 1920, the struggle for equal suffrage was won.

Alde L. T. Blake publicly said she was "...glad to see the completion of the Declaration of Independence, which was signed in 1776. It is at last the end of taxation without representation"⁹⁷

⁹⁶Report of the Political Department of NWP for 1919", Papers 1919, LG Papers, MHC-BH1; BB handwritten note, no date and BB to CCC, 10 June 1919, State Ratification Correspondence 1918-1919-Michigan, NAWSA Papers, RL-NYPL.

⁹⁷Clipping, Grand Rapids Herald, 19 August 1920, ALTB Scrapbook, Blake Family Papers, MHC-BHL.

CHAPTER 7
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Public advocacy of woman suffrage in Michigan began in 1849 with the Senate Constitutional Amendment Committee's report which urged woman suffrage as a natural right. The committee members felt that women should have the right to consent to government in the same way that men had. They were far ahead of their time. Woman suffrage was not mentioned in the suffrage debates of the Michigan Constitutional Convention of 1850.

Agitation for woman suffrage by women began in the 1850s in Michigan with sporadic and localized petitioning to the legislature. The most persistent group lived in Lenawee County from which there are petitions every legislative session from 1855 to 1861. Betsey Parker's name is near the top of the list each time.

In the context of the agitation over the rights of freedmen after the Civil War, woman suffrage became an issue that was noticed by more than extremists. A short but serious debate occurred at the Michigan Constitutional Convention in 1867 where woman suffrage was voted down. On the national scene three decades of shared work for women's rights and black rights sundered over the

issue of colored suffrage and the Fifteenth Amendment. Members of the American Equal Rights Association (AERA), long workers for both causes, split over the whether to insist on both woman and colored suffrage or settle for colored suffrage. Two woman suffrage groups, the NWSA and the AWSA were formed in 1869 when the AERA split.

When the Michigan State Woman Suffrage Association was formed in 1870, it carefully did not affiliate with either national association. Women in the Michigan association had with ties to each group. Catherine A. F. Stebbins had close ties to Susan B. Anthony of the NWSA, and Lucinda Hinsdale Stone had helped found the AWSA. The ability of people with ties to both suffrage organizations to work together for woman suffrage in Michigan suggests the split between the two groups at the national level may have been more personal and less issue or principle oriented than historians have been led to believe. Further examination of the relations between state associations and the two national associations might shed light on how serious the split was at the state level.

The Michigan association worked for a woman suffrage amendment to the state constitution. In 1874 the group obtained its wish as part of a general revision of the Constitution of 1850. The Constitutional Commission of 1873 had tied in voting on the issue of woman suffrage and made no recommendation. The Commission's recommendations had to be acted on by the state legislature in special

session. The suffragists were able to persuade the legislature to let Michigan men decide the issue.

Michigan suffragists rejoiced in the chance to campaign on the issue, and nationally known suffragists -- Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Lucy Stone -- all visited Michigan in connection with the campaign. Despite their efforts woman suffrage went down to a massive defeat. On a state-wide basis, only 23.1% of those voting favored woman suffrage. The state wide organization died after the defeat.

The two biggest obstacles against the victory of woman suffrage in 1874 were its radicalism which is discussed by Ellen Dubois¹ and the lack of a strong campaign organization. The MSWSA was in reality a few scattered individuals not a federation of suffrage societies. In a state that had just (1872) admitted women to the state university, the kind of public role for women that voting suggested was just too far from woman's role in the home to garner much support. The advocates of woman suffrage were urging a role for women that most people were unwilling to support. It is possible woman suffrage would not have become an important issue in the period immediately after the Civil War without the debate on

¹Ellen DuBois, "The Radicalism of the Woman Suffrage Movement: Notes Toward the Reconstruction of Nineteenth Century Feminism" Feminist Studies 3 (Fall 1975):63-71.

suffrage for blacks. The advocacy of a reform, in this case woman suffrage, in the context of the issue being discussed for another group, black suffrage, Richard Evans calls premature advocacy.²

Traditionally schools and the home were women's concerns, and while no clear record has been found to explain why school suffrage for women came into existence, school suffrage nevertheless, became possible under the school laws of 1867. In districts which came under the general law and still held annual school meetings, women with children in the schools or who paid taxes to support the schools could vote. In districts which no longer had a school meeting or were somehow outside the general school law, as were most urban unified districts, women had to obtain school suffrage by persuading the legislature to alter the charter of the municipality in which the schools operated.

Using the doctrine that the woman's sphere is the home and all that pertains to it, AWSA began to campaign for municipal suffrage for women in the 1880s. Many issues that affected the home were now municipal issues: examples included streets, sewers, pure water, pure food, garbage collection, and municipal lights. To defend her home and

²Richard Evans, The Feminists: Women's Emancipation Movements in Europe, America and Australia, 1840-1920. (New York, Barnes and Noble, 1977)

take care of it properly the woman needed the vote in municipal affairs to ensure that these issues were dealt with.

Persistent petitioning for municipal suffrage began in Michigan after the introduction of municipal suffrage legislation in 1883. Each legislative session was petitioned. The Michigan Equal Suffrage Association (MESA) came into existence in 1884. It tried to coordinate the work for municipal suffrage. MESA affiliated with AWSA, so that men could belong. (NWSA did not allow male members.) But there does not seem to be any deep antagonism toward the NWSA on the part of MESA. Indeed, reports of MESA meetings appear in The Woman's Tribune which was the official NWSA organ for a while. Again, the lack of antagonism regarding NWSA and AWSA at the state level needs to be explored. MESA was able to forge in the late 1880s a close tie with the state WCTU. WCTUs joined enthusiastically in petitioning the legislature for municipal suffrage. The WCTU people were particularly concerned that women be able to vote in local option elections.

In 1893 the Michigan legislature approved municipal suffrage for women. It also approved a constitutional amendment which provided that aliens who had declared their intention to become citizens would no longer be eligible to vote. They had to be naturalized first. Analysis of the roll call data for municipal suffrage and

for alien suffrage restriction suggests that the supporters were very much the same people. Alien suffrage restrictions plainly reflect nativist attitudes among the legislators. Support for woman suffrage from the same people suggests that municipal suffrage for women was seen as a way to increase the number of native or nativist voters at the municipal level. This finding buttresses Alan Grimes's perception of support for woman suffrage in the mid to late nineteenth century as a conservative position in the sense of conserving the traditional values of old-stock Americans. Grimes also found that party advantage influenced politicians' position on woman suffrage.³ There is also a party pattern in the House where woman suffrage and restricting the alien vote are plainly issues which Republicans tended to support and Democrats to oppose. The success of the Republicans in Detroit in mobilizing the women in Republican associations clearly indicates that, at least in Detroit, Republicans would have reaped a partisan advantage from women voting. The State Supreme Court found municipal suffrage unconstitutional. The court said the legislature could not create a class of voters for entities where the voter was defined constitutionally as those eligible to vote in township elections i.e., adult males.

³Alan P. Grimes, The Puritan Ethic and Woman Suffrage (New York, Oxford University Press, 1967), pp.99-118 for a discussion of connections between party affiliation and nativism and support for woman suffrage.

After this decision, Michigan suffragists resigned themselves to the constitutional amendment route. MESA settled down to a long grind of education, agitation, and organization, coupled with quest for alliances. Mary L. Doe of the association worked to build bridges with the working class through support of and exchange of ideas with labor unions both male and female. How much impact Doe's work had is difficult to assess, but in the 1910s in New York City similar efforts by the Women's Trade Union League and Lillian Wald would help persuade Tammany Hall to be neutral if not supportive of the 1917 state wide woman suffrage referendum.⁴ The WCTU and MESA continued to be the two state wide women's organizations concerned with suffrage until the state Federation of Woman's Clubs and the Lady Maccabees joined them in the early twentieth century.

By the time the 1908 Constitutional Convention held hearings on woman suffrage, MESA had developed a coalition of supporters for woman suffrage that included both male and female state wide organizations. The Grange, the WCTU, some labor unions, and several women's associations spoke for woman suffrage. In the debates on woman suffrage in the Convention, the advocates stressed natural rights. Opponents stressed the danger to the home

⁴John D. Buenker, "The Urban Political Machine and Woman Suffrage: A Study in Political Adaptability", The Historian 33 (February 1971):264-279.

and family. The purity of the justice argument in the Convention was surprising. Aileen Kraditor has argued that after 1890 the natural rights argument was eclipsed, if not replaced, by an argument for woman suffrage based on expediency.⁵ Under the expediency argument woman suffrage was defended on the basis that it would end corruption in public life, end the liquor problem, and counter the vote of black and immigrant males. The expediency arguments simply do not appear in the debates. They do appear elsewhere in scattered writings and speeches over the three referenda campaigns of the twentieth century, but the justice argument remains strong in Michigan throughout the period. This should not be surprising from a practical viewpoint as it was a position less likely to offend immigrant men who would have the opportunity to vote on a woman suffrage referendum. The 1908 Constitution did give women who were property holders the right to vote on tax and bond issues.

In 1912 Michigan suffragists were surprised when Governor Chase Osborn requested a woman suffrage amendment to the State Constitution and the state legislature complied. After a vigorous campaign woman suffrage lost by 760 votes. Strong circumstantial evidence suggests fraud

⁵Aileen S. Kraditor, The Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement, 1890-1920 (New York, Columbia University Press, 1965), pp. 43-74.

cost the suffragists victory. When resubmitted in April of 1913 woman suffrage lost by 78,000 votes.

The suffragists were hurt by several factors. The suffragists had hoped that the usual pattern of large turnouts in the rural areas and lower turnouts in the big cities would hold. It did not. While the opponents of woman suffrage had not mounted a strong campaign in 1912, they did in 1913. That campaign contributed heavily to the decline in support for woman suffrage of 61,000 votes and the increase of 16,000 in the opposition vote. The suffragists also pointed to the impact of the militants, particularly the English militants, as contributing to the loss of 1913. The opposition was in part financed by the liquor industry and the suffragists were able to supply good evidence for one specific advertisement.

Also contributing to the decline in support for woman suffrage were two factors the suffragists did not notice in their analysis of the county level returns, but regression analysis points to. One is the breakdown of the link between support for woman suffrage and support for local option. Much of the gain in opposition votes to woman suffrage came in the counties which in April of 1913 also had a local option election. While in 1912, the relationship between support for local option and support for woman suffrage had been clear, there is almost none in April of 1913. The suffragists had not noticed that areas which gave strong support to minority party candidates were

areas of strong support for woman suffrage. That pattern continued in 1913 but at a reduced figure. The suffragists suspected that support for Roosevelt, the National Progressive Party candidate for President was somehow linked to support for suffrage. The Progressives had endorsed woman suffrage in their 1912 platform. The regression equation indicates that areas which went strongly for Roosevelt were also areas where voters gave strong support to woman suffrage.

Between 1914 and the entry of the United States into World War I in the spring of 1917, MESA worked very hard at organization, education, agitation and political lobbying. A state newspaper, The Michigan Suffragists, published by MESA, provided a monthly link among the suffrage supporters. It chronicled the activities of local suffrage associations in Michigan, recruited volunteers for national efforts, and informed readers of the progress of woman suffrage throughout the world.

The final drive for suffrage in Michigan in the years after 1913 benefited from the revived federal amendment campaign initiated by CU and furthered by both NAWSA and CU-NWP. The militants' actions helped keep suffrage an issue. The planning, coordination and centralization that followed Carrie Chapman Catt's return to the NAWSA presidency harnessed the energies that had been building in the last years of Anna Howard Shaw's

presidency. In Michigan, MESA had already turned to greater organization and worked steadily at education and agitation. Nellie Sawyer Clark began central coordination efforts in 1914. These long slow years of work, 1914-1917 paid off in the end with a strong and deep state-wide organization. In 1917 the Michigan legislature provided for a woman suffrage referendum at the November 1918 election and for presidential woman suffrage.

The coming of the war helped suffrage in many ways. Women's war work blunted the argument that women had no role to play in public affairs, especially in defense matters. The war slogans which talked about democracy, made the absence of woman suffrage seem more glaringly unfair than it had before. Catt emphasized this and urged the state associations to stress it. Democracy meant consent of the governed: that meant woman suffrage.

The Michigan suffragists were seen as reluctant campaigners in 1918 by NAWSA President Carrie Chapman Catt. Reluctant or not the suffragists succeeded in November of 1918. The biggest single factor in their success was the ability to marshal a much larger number of supporters and more sustained campaign than they had in 1912 or 1913.

That they could do so while doing war work was a result of the years of organization, education and agitation that had been done between 1914 and mid-1917.

Michigan legislatures and constitutional conventions do not show a consistent pattern of



partisanship regarding woman suffrage. Roll-call analysis of the 1867 Constitutional Convention, the 1873 Constitutional Commission and the 1908 Constitutional Convention do not show a pattern of partisan support or opposition for woman suffrage among their members. Among the state legislative sessions, only the House in 1893 and 1913 showed a partisan pattern of support for woman suffrage. In 1893 Republicans supported municipal suffrage for women strongly. Republicans also strongly supported limiting alien suffrage. The Republican support for municipal suffrage may be linked to nativist attitudes. In 1913 House Republicans did not act as if woman suffrage was a partisan issue but Democrats and Progressives did. The Progressives voted in conformity to their party platform. What motivated the Democrats to oppose woman suffrage in 1913 in large numbers is unclear. Before 1916, neither major party took any position on the issue in a state party platform. The Michigan Senate did not show a strong partisan pattern at any time.

The general lack of partisanship regarding woman suffrage in the Michigan legislature was a surprise. David Morgan's study of the U.S. Congress had suggested a party pattern to support and opposition that the Michigan

data does not sustain.⁶ Many more state legislatures need to be examined for partisan voting patterns before historians know whether the pattern of Democratic opposition Morgan found in Congress is a matter of Democrats or simply Southerners who happen to be Democrats opposing woman suffrage. Did other states have a pattern similar to Michigan's?

On the question of "dry" support for woman suffrage, the Michigan data has few surprises. In the mid nineteenth century, no clear pattern of "dry" support for woman suffrage appears. In the Constitutional Convention of 1867 roll call analysis did not reveal any connection between opposition to liquor and support for woman suffrage. No connection appeared in the analysis of the votes in the 1873 Constitutional Commission either. In the Constitutional Convention of 1908 support for full woman suffrage came disproportionately from the "drys" while the "wets" appeared disproportionately among those opposed. The development of a clear "dry" support for woman suffrage may be a response to WCTU activities which began in the mid-1870s.

The legislatures of 1893, 1912, and 1913 all show the pattern of "drys" supporting woman suffrage strongly while "wets" strongly oppose it. While confirming the

⁶David Morgan, Suffragists and Democrats: The Politics of Woman Suffrage in America (East Lansing Michigan, Michigan State University Press, 1972).

prevailing interpretation, my study represents a breakthrough in that none of the studies I read did anyone else examine the voting patterns of the legislature.

In 1874, areas which supported the Prohibition candidate for governor were not so strongly supportive of woman suffrage as to be a significant variable in the regression equation for the 1874 referendum. Since the Prohibition party had first run candidates in the 1872 election and the WCTU organized in Michigan in 1873-1874, the possibility of the drys already showing high levels of support for woman suffrage was a possibility. A scatter diagram of the support for the prohibition candidate and the support for woman suffrage indicates no connection at all. The referenda of 1912 and 1918 do show that areas with strong support for prohibition were also the areas in which voters strongly supported woman suffrage. One possible interpretation of the lack of connection between support for local option and support for woman suffrage in the 1913 referendum is that the link between the two could be dissolved by stressing the dangers to the family if women participated in public life by voting. This is certainly what much of the opposition literature stressed in 1913 when support for local option has no pattern of association with support for woman suffrage.

Because of strong countervailing values or local conditions some counties did not following this pattern.

Eileen McDonagh and Douglas Price report on the basis of regression analysis of combined Michigan and Ohio referenda and census data that the Dutch were strongly opposed to woman suffrage.⁷ As political scientists they were not interested in the specific events that generated their data. Rev. Wishart in 1912 already knew the Dutch opposed suffrage when he complained that the Dutch had cost the suffragists a victory in Kent county.⁸ Yet the Dutch were strong supporters of prohibition in Michigan in 1916. Ottawa County, the most Dutch county in the state, was strongly for prohibition but returned the lowest percentage for woman suffrage of any county in the state in 1918. Many Dutch were members of the Christian Reformed Church which saw support for woman suffrage as almost heretical.

Thomas G. Ryan reports that in Iowa the areas that were strongly German reacted differently to woman suffrage depending on whether they were Catholic or Protestant Germans.⁹ Work with Michigan data focusing on the individual ethnic group rather than foreign born as a whole

⁷Eileen L. McDonagh and H. Douglas Price, "Woman Suffrage in the Progressive Era: Patterns of Opposition and Support in Referenda Voting, 1910-1918" American Political Science Review 79 (June 1985):415-435.

⁸A.W. to Mrs. Decker, 18, November 1912, Wishart Correspondence re 1912 vote, Recount of 1912, ALTB Papers, SL-RC.

⁹Thomas G. Ryan "Male Opponents and Supporters of Woman Suffrage, Iowa in 1916" Annals of Iowa series 3, 45 (Winter 1981):537-550.

might turn up similar data. I share his perception that detailed state analysis need to be done, down to the township level if possible. I used the percentage foreign born in my regression equations and the variable is significant at some level for four of the five equations. Equations for 1874, 1912, 1913 and 1918 with 1910 census data show a consistent pattern of areas with high percentages of foreign born in the population tend to give low levels of support for woman suffrage. I also examined whether a lower percentage of women in the population might be associated with support for woman suffrage. Again four of the five equations show a significant inverse relationship between the percentage of females in the population and support for woman suffrage. Only for the 1874 equation does the variable not appear statistically significant. There it just misses the 10% level of significance.

Ryan reports that in Iowa there was very little urban-rural difference in support for woman suffrage. The Michigan data needs to be examined more carefully on this point. I was more interested in the question did the upper peninsula have a distinctive voting pattern. Burnham's view that geography, particularly isolation or relative distance from communication lines such as railroads

sparked the idea.¹⁰ The upper peninsula is a great distance from the population centers of the lower peninsula. In winter, when the straits between the peninsulas freeze over or storms halt the ferry service transportation between the peninsulas halts and communications lessen. The suffragists worried in 1912 about canvassing the upper peninsula, because of its isolation and hard winters. In the equations for 1874, 1912, and 1913 the geographic variable is significant. In all three cases the upper peninsula voters show statistically significantly different and higher levels of support for woman suffrage. In 1918 the variable is not statistically significant.

There is much yet to be learned about women in political life after woman suffrage was won in Michigan and elsewhere. In Michigan a state wide coordinating group emerged to look after legislation for the general welfare in 1919. The Legislative Council of Michigan Women expected to play a role similar to that of the Women's Joint Congressional Committee on the federal level.¹¹ How long it lasted and what it did is unknown. The literature aimed at the new woman voter is unanalyzed. Careful analysis of it would yield nuances regarding expectations

¹⁰Walter Dean Burnham, Critical Elections and the Mainsprings of American Politics, (New York, W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1970) pp.42-44.

¹¹Constitution of the Legislative Council of Michigan Women, Papers undated, LG Papers, MHC-BHL.

about women voters and well as some measure of the kind and amount of civic education anyone had in the early years of the twentieth century. Regression analysis using ethnic groups rather than foreign born at the county or township level might reveal nuances of support and opposition to woman suffrage that would contribute to an understanding of group voting behavior in the early twentieth century.

Lastly historians need to use labels less and details more in seeing how those people who were first suffragists gradually persuaded others to join them so that an alliance in favor of woman suffrage was forged. This means more careful examination of all the varieties of woman's culture in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, not just the women's rights people and the social feminists, but those who came to accept the idea of women voting as appropriate even though they were not deeply committed to any cause in terms of using the women's vote to further that cause.¹²

People of today can take woman suffrage for granted because in the three generations from 1850 suffragists

¹²On woman's culture see "Politics and Culture in Women's History: A Symposium," Feminist Studies 6 (Spring 1980):26-64. Mary Kavanaugh Oldham Egel, ed., The Congress of Women held in the Woman's Building, World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, U.S.A., 1893, (Chicago: International Publishing Co., 1895) contains articles on all aspects of woman's culture and the woman question as they were known and discussed in the 1890s. On social feminism see William L. O'Neill, Everyone Was Brave: The Rise and Fall of Feminism in America (Chicago: Quadrangle, 1969).

struggled to obtain it. It was a long hard fight. Alde L. T. Blake had attended her first suffrage meetings in 1899 when NAWSA met in Grand Rapids, Michigan. She served as treasurer of MESA in its last decade. She wrote in her scrap book next to a clipping about the ratification of the federal amendment: "I feel so relieved that women can now give their undivided efforts to the great tasks which face them, unhampered by the lack of that most efficient tool -- the vote.¹³

¹³Handwritten note next to clipping Grand Rapids Herald, 19 August, 1920, ALTB Scrapbook, Blake Family Papers, MHC-BHL.

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