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Through the Eyes of Pioneers: Accounts of the Women's Suffrage Movement in Dayton, Ohio (1890-1920)

By: Michelle Schweickart

"I believe in woman suffrage because I believe in fundamental democracy. There can be no fundamental democracy where half the population, being of sound mind, are compelled to obey laws in the making of which they have had no voice . . . But if I must say more, then I would say that women today need, and are asking for the ballot not because they wish to forsake their homes, but because they wish to make their homes better places to live in. Woman needs the ballot to protect her home and her children, now as always her first care . . ."

- Grace Isabel Colbron, "Why I Believe in Woman Suffrage," n.d. -

Introduction

This creative thesis project looks at the Women's Suffrage Movement in Dayton, Ohio between the years of 1890 and 1920, when the 19th Amendment passed. Research is presented to profile seven historical women who took part in the local Women's Suffrage Movement. This project presents these women as pioneers and activists. It looks at how they interacted with the larger national Women's Suffrage Movement, how it affected them and their actions, and how they in turn contributed to the larger movement. Profiles are on the following seven women: Hallie Q. Brown, Katharine Kennedy Brown, Martha McClellan Brown, Charlotte Reeve Conover, Jesse Leech Davisson, Louise Achey Kennedy and Katharine Wright (Haskell).

In the following section, I provide a brief background on each of these women. They are not well studied or well known like women involved in the national movement such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton or Susan B. Anthony; instead they were selected for the depth of local archival data available documenting their participation in the local Women's Suffrage Movement. This project is an opportunity to look at the larger topic of the Women's Suffrage Movement and its significance through a closer examination of these seven local women.¹

¹ Jean Baker in her "Introduction," states, "The leaders of the American suffrage movement have lost their private lives." She goes on to refer to them as "dehumanized saints" and "stiff icons of feminized democracy." (Baker, Jean. *Sisters: The Lives of America's Suffragists*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2005. 3. Print).

My interpretive goals are to be able to provide an educational project for middle school children to analyze and learn about the lives of the women profiled and local women's suffrage history. The Women's Suffrage Movement in Dayton, Ohio encompassed women of different races and societal backgrounds working to achieve the overall larger goal: the establishment of voting rights for women. Six of the seven women profiled a part of the same affluent social circles and together worked on the Women's Suffrage Movement; one was a distinguished African-American educator and orator; three of the seven were related or connected to each other through marriage where others interacted socially. The goal of voting rights for women, among other social and political issues, also linked these women together and yet racial separation seems to have created two separate social worlds and activist networks. The pursuit of women's suffrage would challenge them to overcome larger barriers for themselves, and ultimately, gave them the strength to become pivotal members in the Women's Suffrage Movement and the community here in Dayton, Ohio. These women contributed to a pivotal moment in American history and changed the path of not only the nation, but also of Dayton. By contributing to the achievement of women's suffrage, their role and status in society was elevated, and they were given a chance to help shape the future of their city.

When considering the range of topics for my creative thesis project, I chose to pursue the Women's Suffrage Movement because the idea of these women coming together to pursue change against societal adversity remains relevant even in the modern world. These women joined this movement because it had the potential to change their lives and gain them a more public role in society. It would allow them to make a difference in Dayton in ways unavailable to them in the past. Another reason that I chose this topic was because it would appeal to middle school children's interest in topics that deal with fairness and justice (Marjorie McLellan in discussion with the author, 17 July 2015). It also works within the boundaries of Piaget's cognitive development theory, specifically the concrete operational phase, school children from the ages of 7-11 would be the appropriate audience for a project that requires the use of an understanding of the moral concepts that are presented (Ginsburg and Opper, 152).

Going into this project, I realized that beyond my interest in the subject, I was very inspired by these women and their actions. I hope that others will be inspired by their stories and will see the relevance of these women's stories today. While women have since gained a considerable amount of ground since those times, battles for gender equality among the sexes

continue today. Other examples of battles for equality in modern times are the Wage Rights Movement and the Same Sex Marriage Movement. Young people will, I hope, find inspiration here to tackle their own goals and to overcome obstacles that they face in their personal lives.

Profiles of Dayton Suffragettes

Hallie Quinn Brown known as "Miss Hallie," was a world-renowned elocutionist and social activist. She was born to former slaves Thomas Arthur Brown and Frances Jane Scroggins on March 10, 1845 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Thomas Arthur Brown worked "as a steward and express agent on riverboats; the family also had real estate from before the Civil War that gave them financial stability," (Jackson and Givens, 66). Brown grew up in a home that "often served as a station on the Underground Railroad," (Jackson and Givens, 66). In 1864, due to Frances's declining health, the Browns relocated to Chatham, Ontario, Canada, where Thomas Arthur Brown became a farmer (Jackson and Givens, 66). They moved to Wilberforce, Ohio in 1870 so that Brown and her brother could continue their education at Wilberforce University. Her mother would become an occasional advisor and counselor to the students of Wilberforce University. Frances chose Wilberforce University because it was a college built to educate blacks, in contrast to the "racial prejudice and humiliation," (Jackson and Givens, 67) their children had faced in the past. Brown earned a Bachelor of Science degree, graduating from the university in 1873.

Brown became an educator, focusing on improving the literacy levels of children who had been denied the chance during slavery, especially in Mississippi and South Carolina. Hallie served as the "dean of Allen University in Columbia, South Carolina from 1885 to 1887," (Kates, 57). In 1886, she graduated from the Chautauqua Lecture School², which provided education and entertainment through lectures, concerts, and plays. This is where she expanded upon her elocution skills. From 1887 to 1891, she taught night school for African American adults in Dayton, Ohio. She served as "principal of the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama from 1892 to 1893, and then returned to the Miami Valley as a professor at Wilberforce University," (Jackson and Givens, 68). She later became a teacher in the Dayton Public School System and

² According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, Chautauqua means "any of the various traveling shows and local assemblies that flourished in the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, that provided popular education combined with entertainment in the form of lectures, concerts and plays, and that were modeled after activities at the Chautauqua Institution of western New York." (Merriam-Webster. "Chautauqua." *Merriam-Webster.com*. Encyclopedia Britannica. Web. 2 August 2015).

created an adult class for black migrant workers (Kates, 56). She would remain at Wilberforce University until it split from Central State University in the 1920s-1930s, ultimately choosing to move to Central State University (Jackson and Givens, 68)³.

Education was not her only passion, she also participated in multiple other social and political causes. The Women's Suffrage Movement was only one of her other interests. She founded the Colored Women's League of Washington D.C. and later helped with merging this organization with the National Association of Colored Women (BACW). She also belonged to the World's Women Christian Temperance Union, and the Ohio Council of Republican Women (Jackson and Givens, 71). She was also a well known lecturer and author, "speaking in the United States, England, Scotland and Wales," (Jackson and Givens, 69-70).

Brown got involved in the Women's Suffrage Movement through her work in other social-political movements and interests such as the Anti-slavery Movement, Temperance Movement and education reform. According to Jackson and Givens, "she recalled hearing Susan B. Anthony present her ideas about civil liberties for women to the students of the university [Wilberforce]. Anthony's convictions regarding women's suffrage led Brown to become an organizer and crusader in the women's Christian temperance movement," (71). Known primarily for her work to improve the education for freed slaves (as her parents were both freed slaves and her mother was involved in the education system too). As a highly respected orator, she was asked to speak on behalf of causes including temperance and women's suffrage in significant venues, especially for a woman of color. For example, she spoke at the International Women's Christian Temperance Union conference in London in 1895. She also performed for King George and Queen Mary of England in 1897 (Kates, 57). She would also be appointed as a "representative [for the United States] to the International Congress of Women in 1897," (Kates, 57) in London, England.

So why did Brown follow the career path that she did? According to Jackson and Givens, a parade her family attended when she was sixteen years old in honor of Queen Victoria of England while living in Canada was a source of inspiration, "that she recalled into adulthood,"

³ The program separation from Wilberforce University to what would become Central State University occurred several years before it's legal formation, according to Jackson and Givens. Hallie would have joined the program during this period of transition, working at what would ultimately become Central State University in legal status in 1947. (Jackson, Ronald L. and Sonja M. Brown Givens. "Chapter 3: Hallie Quinn Brown (1850-1949)." *Black Pioneers in Communication Research*. London: Sage Publications, Inc., 2006. 64-80. Web. 9 March 2015.

(66-67). In *Tales My Father Told, and Other Stories* (1925), she wrote:

The twenty-fourth day of May was Queen Victoria's birthday, and it was befittingly celebrated with pomp and splendor throughout the Dominion of Canada. On one such occasion our family went to Chatham to participate in the festivities. Soldiers in gorgeous uniform marched through the streets which were decorated with many fluttering flags. Bands bore a large banner upon which was imprinted the face of the Queen. My eyes were fastened on that banner and I was unable to banish the picture from my mind (15).

As Jackson and Givens say in *Black Pioneers in Communications Research* (2006):

To see a woman (of any race) held in such high regard was a first for young Brown. This event taught her that women could do much more than her immediate circumstances had shown. Brown was determined to enlighten others in much the same way as she had been on that day—yet for her it would occur from the podium (67).

Even though she was a well-respected speaker internationally, in her unpublished dissertation, *Hallie Quinn Brown: Black Woman Elocutionist* (1975), Annjennette McFarlin noted, "Although "Miss Hallie" as she was known by all, was recognized as one of the greatest elocutionists on two continents, Europe and America, she never made a history book, nor have any of her speeches ever appeared in any speech anthologies," (iv). This may have been true when McFarlin wrote her dissertation in 1975, since there has been more academic recognition of Hallie Q. Brown's contributions. For example, copies of her books have remained, as have memories noted by family, friends and colleagues over the years. Jackson and Given's book *Black Pioneers in Communication Research* features a chapter specifically on Brown's elocution skills, and articles by Evans, et. al., Kates and McFarlin highlight her contributions to the communications field. However, for someone as prominent as she was, it is surprising that there isn't more written on her.

What were Brown's views on the role of women in society? In her booklet entitled *Our Women Past, Present and Future* (1925), she says the following:

Ancient history regarded woman as in every way inferior to man, serving as minister to his necessities and appetites, useful as mothers, but unworthy of respect, confidence, or admiration, in fact, little less than a slave . . . In time the Home became **Sacred** and its holy ties elevated woman to a higher rank. Great progress was made in moral and social qualities and these attainments have become woman's field of power. Debarred from intellectual pursuits she became imperfectly developed. Strong in the moral and social mind; but mentally, deformed and weak. Her character and judgment lacked harmony, brought about by an unbalanced education, and her life, a few generations ago, was marked by the same discrepancy . . . (1).

This quote demonstrates both her strong opinions on the place of women in society, and her eloquence in the expression of these ideas. Brown approached women's rights from a different perspective than others of her day, due to her race and the fact that she was the daughter of freed slaves. In the quote below Brown distinguishes "our women" from those represented by white suffragists.

Lucy Stone, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony and Mary A. Livermore began their fight for liberty and equity, our women -- although humiliated and hampered, as members of an enslaved race, social outcasts, deprived of the commonest education, handicapped by poverty -- were in the field contending with the footmen . . . women have the greatest virtue when they engage in the affairs of their country, of humanity and of their God. That woman's cause is man's; they rise or sink together; dwarfed or Godlike, bond or free . . . We say to Our Women when discouragements come; when cruel prejudices chill your aspirations; when difficulties beset your pathway; **stand firm**, your courage and integrity will shine forth with an undimmed lustre . . . Our women have lighted a torch in the valley that shows the weakness and defects of the Castle on the Mount . . . (4).

Brown makes the case that while white women started the fight for liberty, it was just that black women to join in and carry it forward. The social and political world's of black and white suffragettes, as evidenced in these personal collections, rarely intersected—as a result of racial exclusion, African Americans created separate and distinct institutions in Dayton and elsewhere and the evidence suggests that the Women's Right Movement was no different. Her encouragement to “stand firm,” was an inclusive call that resonated with both white and black women. Once again her eloquence shines through. [A full transcription from page 8 of *Our Women Past, Present and Future* (1925) can be found in Appendix A.]

Brown never married or had children, but she remained close with her nieces and nephews (Jackson and Givens, 71). There is a great deal of correspondence and photographs exchanged between them over the years in her collection at the National Afro-American Museum and Cultural Center in Wilberforce, Ohio. She died on September 16, 1949 of coronary thrombosis at the age of 99 (Jackson and Givens, 72-73). Today there are two buildings in Wilberforce, Ohio named after her, the Hallie Q. Brown Memorial Library at Central State University and the Hallie Q. Brown Community Center in St. Paul, Minnesota. There is also a state historical marker honoring her and her work in Wilberforce, Ohio (Jackson and Givens, 73).

Katharine Kennedy Brown, like her parents, was a prominent member of Dayton's affluent society as well as a political activist. She was born on July 16, 1891 in Dayton, Ohio. Her parents, Grafton Claggett Kennedy and Louise Achey Kennedy, were prominent members of the social scene in Dayton, “owing their wealth and status largely due to her father's position as a prominent attorney and role as the U.S. Commissioner of Dayton for the Southern District of Ohio from 1883-94,” (MS-146 Finding Aid). She would travel with her parents in Europe as a child, and spent her summers in Nantucket, Massachusetts. Brown was educated by German and French governesses at home in her early life, and also attended Dayton Public Schools through the fifth grade, finishing her education at the boarding school Dana Hall in Wellesley, Massachusetts. She married Kleon Thaw Brown, the son of Martha McClellan Brown and her husband Reverend William Kennedy Brown on April 20, 1921; however their infant child passed away suddenly, and her husband died soon after on May 20, 1925. She never remarried (MS-146 Finding Aid; MS-404 Finding Aid).

Brown was involved with the Women's Suffrage Movement with her mother and mother-in-law, Louise Achey Kennedy and Martha McClellan Brown. While there was not much to be found on her involvement in the Women's Suffrage Movement, her collection mainly consisted of items related to her later political career, especially in relation to the Republican Party. She was a member of the Woman's Suffrage Party of Montgomery County. Among her suffrage activities in the Dayton area, Brown attended lectures on suffrage, writing, printing and distributing suffrage literature and pamphlets and other published materials, participating in parades and marches at both the local and state levels, attending suffrage dinners and luncheons to raise money and awareness for the cause and educated and polled others regarding women's suffrage. Given her involvement in the local movement, she most likely would have attended the first Woman's Suffrage Parade in Dayton on October 24, 1914⁴.

After the 19th amendment was ratified, her political career focused on the Republican Party. She was involved in politics at the local, state and national levels. Initially her male peers resented the intrusion of women into their political circles. According to her collection's finding aid, ". . . women were initially denied a place on the Montgomery County Republican Executive Committee," (MS-146 Finding Aid). In time however, she enlisted many of these men as allies in her efforts. She belonged to a group of activists that both fought for the equality of women in politics and used the rights gained by the amendment's passage to such an advantage, when she cast her first vote at 29 years old. According to her collection's finding aid it is said, "She decided that she was tired of being "given things" by men and determined to "take what was legally ours" (MS-146 Finding Aid). Her involvement in politics did not wane with the passage of the 19th Amendment; instead it was only the beginning of a long and prosperous political career.

After the loss of her infant child and husband, she became heavily involved in politics through her work with the Republican Party. She also became more involved in Dayton society. She also moved back home to live with her mother Louise Achey Kennedy to the family's beloved Duncarrick Mansion in downtown Dayton, Ohio⁵. Brown held multiple leadership

⁴ There are images from the first Woman's Suffrage Parade in Dayton on October 24, 1914 on The Battle for Suffrage in Ohio page of the website if you click on the PDF links to the *Dayton Daily News* articles on women's suffrage in Dayton.

⁵ To see images of the mansion from 2007, go to Wright State University archivist Lisa Pasquinelli Rickey's Flickr page. (Rickey, Lisa Pasquinelli. "Duncarrick Mansion, 2007." 2007. *Flickr*. Web. 28 August 2015 <https://www.flickr.com/photos/bellanox/sets/72157623002599568/>). The mansion was purchased and restored by

positions in organizations including: the Women’s Republican Club, the Junior League of Dayton, the Colonial Dames of America, and the Women’s Rights Movement. Following the passage of the 19th Amendment, she remained active in the political scene well into the early 1970s, with the most recent pieces in her collection documenting her work in the 1972 campaign of President Richard Nixon. The youngest of the seven Dayton suffragettes profiled here, Brown passed away on November 10, 1986, in Kettering, Ohio at the Kettering Convalescent Center. She was 95 years old. Brown and her family are interred at Woodland Cemetery in Dayton. (MS-146 Finding Aid; MS-404 Finding Aid).

Martha “Mattie” McClellan Brown was career social and political activist and the oldest of the seven Dayton suffragists. She was born on April 6, 1838 in Baltimore, Maryland, to David and Jane Haight McClellan. The family moved two years later to Cambridge, Ohio. Tragically, she lost both of her parents by the age of eight. Brown and her sister would be taken in and raised by a large family in their neighborhood.

At the age of twenty, she married Methodist Episcopal minister Rev. William Kennedy Brown. She and her husband shared interests in reform issues including the Temperance, Anti-Slavery and Women’s Suffrage Movements. In 1860 Mattie enrolled in the Pittsburgh Female College with her husband’s full support, graduating in 1862 at the top of her class. This was a unique situation because not many married women were able to attend college; it also demonstrates the support her husband gave to her pursuit of an education. They went on to have six children over the course of their marriage including: Orvon Graff, Westanna (Wessie), Charme, Richard McClellan, Marie, and Kleon Thaw, born between 1863 and 1886 (MS-147 Finding Aid).

Martha McClellan Brown got involved in the Women's Suffrage Movement through her work with other social-political movements such as the Temperance and Anti-slavery Movements, interests that she shared with her husband. While serving in the leadership of these other groups she and her husband both tried valiantly to get women’s suffrage added to the groups’ platforms without much success. These failures along with their racial policies led her to

the Kroc Foundation in 2007 and in 2010 opened the new Kroc Center run by the Salvation Army. To see updated photos go to the Kroc Center’s Picasa page. (“Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center, Dayton Dedication Weekend.” 8 May 2010. *Picasa*. Web. 28 August 2015. <https://picasaweb.google.com/102905558615205319859/KrocInteriors#5739899593617729122>).

leave those groups and focus more on the women's suffrage groups and clubs in the Cincinnati area. She attended lectures on the topic and also spoke at some meetings too. There were leaflets advertising lectures in her collection, along with a copy of her booklet *The Accident of Sex*. It was noted, "that the booklet was presented before the National Woman Suffrage Association in Tremont Temple, Boston, Mass. on May 27, 1881" (MS-147 Finding Aid). She also participated in marches at the local, state and national levels. Within her collection, correspondence indicated that she attended marches in Cleveland, Ohio and in Washington D. C. It is likely that she also attended the first Woman's Suffrage Parade in Dayton, Ohio on October 24, 1914. Her correspondence also indicated that she donated money to the cause and worked to raise money for it as well. Her suffrage activities were not just in the Dayton area. She moved around quite a bit due to her husband's career as a minister and her involvement in the Temperance Movement. She also lived and worked on the Suffrage Movement in Cincinnati, Ohio and in New York City, New York (MS-147 Finding Aid).

Being a mother of six did not halt her activism; in fact, at times she was away for long periods pursuing these causes while her husband cared for the children along with performing his ministerial duties. She spent most of a five-year period living in New York so that she could serve in the unpaid position as the Secretary of the National Prohibition Alliance while her family was in Pittsburgh (MS-147 Finding Aid). She held multiple leadership positions in organizations involved in the Temperance Movement such as the Independent Order of Good Templars (I.O.G.T.); the Women's Christian Temperance Union (W.C.T.U.); the Prohibition Party (she was named vice president of the party, as well as a member of the platform committee; she and her husband were largely responsible for adding the women's suffrage cause to the Prohibition Party platform)⁶; she was also involved in the Women's Suffrage and Women's Club Movements. There were archival materials relating to her involvement in both movements such as programs and directories (MS-147 Finding Aid).

In the early 1880's, Brown began to pursue her interests in the academic world. Her husband would become president of the Cincinnati Wesleyan Women's College in 1882, and she served the university by becoming vice-president as well as a professor of art, literature and

⁶ Brown would leave the Independent Order of Good Templars in 1876 due to their refusal to allow African Americans to join as well as their removal of Women's Suffrage issues from their agenda. She would aid in forming the Prohibition Party, encouraging open enrollment of women of multiple nationalities and ethnicities. Brown would later leave the Prohibition Party after the convention of 1896, when the party discarded their Women's Suffrage efforts and support. (MS-147 Finding Aid, 3).

philosophy. Her son Orvan would also become employed at the university as a science teacher. Reverend Brown also worked in various Methodist congregations in Cincinnati, Ohio. Following her work at the university, Brown became involved in Cincinnati philanthropic and civic affairs, and continued her work in the Woman Suffrage Movement and the Women's Club Movement. She continued to lecture and author articles on temperance and other topics. She would briefly resume her activity with the Good Templars in 1911, making a final lecture tour on their behalf, reinforcing their message to their English counterparts. Following the death of her husband in 1915, she returned to live with her son Kleon Thaw Brown until her death in 1916 at the age of seventy-eight. (Martha McClellan Brown Papers, MS-147).

Charlotte Reeve Conover was a prominent literary figure in Dayton as well as a political activist. Born in Dayton, Ohio to Dr. John Charles Reeve and Emma Barlow Reeve (Leonard, 200), she was educated in the Dayton Public School system, graduated from Central High School, and later attended the Universite de Geneve in Geneva, Switzerland (Leonard, 200). She married Frank Conover a prominent lawyer in Dayton on October 4, 1879 (Leonard, 200). He briefly served as the assistant city solicitor (F. Conover, 434). They had four children together: Elizabeth Dickson, John Charles Reeve, Wilbur and Charlotte Mary (F. Conover, 434).

Conover, a teacher by trade, taught literature, history, current events, French, music and drawing. She specialized in French lectures on Molière (Leonard, 200). She was also well known for her writings on local history. The other half of her career was her writing career. Her work was published in *Ladies Home Journal*, *Atlantic Monthly* and *Harper's*. She was also on the editorial staff of the *Dayton Journal* as a writer and editor of special articles (MS-004 Finding Aid).

Conover belonged to multiple clubs in the area including the Woman's Literary Club (the first woman's club in Dayton, formed in 1889), Dayton Woman's Club: Dayton Branch, League to Enforce Peace, Y.W.C.A., Greater Dayton Association and the Young Women's League of Dayton (MS-004 Finding Aid). These clubs were important to Conover and the other women of Dayton. In her book *Dayton, Ohio – An Intimate History* (1932) she says, “Those who assailed it [Women's Club Movement] at the time as a “fad” now know it as the lever that lifted Dayton women into a new life.” [Refer to Appendix B to read more on the importance of women's clubs in Dayton.]

Conover was one of the leaders of the Woman's Suffrage Party of Montgomery County. Her daughter Charlotte Mary Conover was also a member, and was voted in as the field secretary for the organization (MS-004 Finding Aid, 12). Conover contributed in large part through her writing on behalf of the cause, providing literature and information in articles such as *Thoughts of the Pax Meeting* (n.d.) (MS-004, 56). Conover, like many of her peers, attended lectures and spoke or presented her literature at lectures and meetings (MS-004 Finding Aid). In the *Importance for Women to Have Suffrage: An Address Before the Woman Suffrage Association* (n.d.), she wrote about her personal beliefs and convictions, that suffrage was important not only to the women to whom it was being denied, but as a fundamental right for the equality of the sexes and their interaction in the future of the country (MS-004, 45). Conover, is listed as a "worker for suffrage" in *Woman's Who's Who of America: A Biographical Dictionary of Contemporary Women of the United State and Canada, 1914-1915*, and is the only one of the seven women profiled to have been included in this comprehensive listing (Leonard, 200).

In her later years, she continued to write, and also taught current event classes up until her death in Monterey County, California in 1940, she wrote her article *On Being Eighty*, in 1935 after she had gone blind (*Monterey Peninsula Herald*). She is buried at Woodland Cemetery in Dayton (MS-004 Finding Aid). Upon her death, local newspapers paid tribute to Conover. A *Dayton Journal* editorial said, "Hers was a powerful life, a life stimulating to all with whom she came in contact. The candle of her learning shone strongly in Dayton and her death does not extinguish the candle (*Monterey Peninsula Herald*). The *Dayton Daily News* praised Conover as, "A remarkable galaxy of outstanding women have through a long past shed luster upon this community. No list of these would exclude Mrs. Charlotte Reeve Conover, whose death at a ripe old age has just occurred. The name and fame of this energetic, able and courageous woman spread long ago beyond the bounds of her home community or even her home state. Mrs. Conover was Dayton's outstanding historian. Her manifold writings about Dayton and its people have place on bookshelves far and wide ... She lived bravely, not easily, her pioneer mind always ahead of her time – an outstanding example of brilliant American womanhood," (*Monterey Peninsula Herald*).

Jesse Leech Davisson was a political leader and activist, became a founding member and president of the local Women's Suffrage Party of Montgomery County. She was born in 1859 in

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to Richard T. and Mary Ann Leech, who were residents of Dayton, Ohio where she was raised. She later married Oscar F. Davisson, a prominent Dayton lawyer in 1889, with whom she had two children, Richard and Marian (MS-004 Finding Aid). She served as the first president of this organization, from June 11, 1912 until the ratification of the 19th amendment in 1920.

There is no comprehensive collection on Davisson, but due to her extensive participation in the Women's Suffrage Movement locally, She appears frequently in the Dayton Metro Public Library's Woman's Suffrage Association and League of Women Voters Collection (MS-004). There is a large amount of official correspondence between Davisson and the state organizational leader Mrs. Harriet Taylor Upton, meeting minutes and diaries, and writings about the movement written by Davisson herself (MS-004). She appears in the Women's Club Records, the League of Women Voters Collection (MS-123), and the Wright Brother's Collection (MS-1) maintained by the Wright State University Special Collections and Archives. Davisson served as vice-president of the League of Women Voters. Milton Wright mentions Davisson in his diary as having visited Katharine Wright to discuss woman's suffrage (MS-123; MS-1).

Davisson was the main force in the Women's Suffrage Movement in Dayton, Ohio, and linked the local movement to the larger national movement through her work with leaders like Carrie Chapman Catt (MS-004, 11-12). She both attended and spoke at lectures and meetings on the subject. Davisson also wrote on the topic; her works "Would Have Women of Nations Work for Peace: Mrs. Frances G. Richards Says Real Sufferers of European Struggle Are Women and Children Who Are Left Behind; President, Mrs. Davisson, Submit Report" and "An Appreciation" showcase her efforts and actions in the Women's Suffrage movement (MS-004, 48; 54). She was president of the Woman's Suffrage Party of Montgomery County and had a role in coordinating the first Woman's Suffrage Parade in Dayton on October 24, 1914. Some of her other duties as president of the WSPMC were to write letters on behalf of the cause, arrange accommodations for meetings to be held, attend luncheons and other suffrage functions, organize meetings and the speakers to attend (also arrange for publicity for the meetings), and travel to other conventions and meetings out of state to represent Ohio. Davisson was "elected in 1912 as an Honorary Vice President, which made her a member of the Executive Committee of the State in the Ohio Woman's Suffrage Association," (MS-004, 28). As president of the WSPMC, she worked closely with state organizational leader Mrs. Harriet Taylor Upton (MS-004, 28-31).

(MS-004) note, “Mrs. Davisson was very highly respected, not only by Daytonians, but also by Mrs. Upton, who trusted her in many instances with secrets that she didn't reveal to the other members of the Executive Committee,” (10) Her suffrage activities were even mentioned in the *Dayton Daily News*, on September 24, 1914 she was mentioned as the head of a local delegation going to Cleveland, Ohio for a state suffrage parade planned for October 3, 1914 (MS-458 Finding Aid).

Davisson would aid in the formation of the Dayton chapter for the League of Women's Voters on 1921, following the passage of the 19th Amendment. She served as their first Vice President, and aid in the development, “of a number of programs such as citizenship schools, county reorganization projects, city budget surveys, relief surveys, consumer projects, questionnaires, lecture series, trained personnel projects and radio projects,” (MS-123 Finding Aid). There is no record of how long she maintained this office, but there exist multiple correspondences within the collection that indicate she was active with the Dayton League for many years. Davisson died on June 30, 1940 (MS-004 Finding Aid, 201).

Louise Achey Kennedy was a social matron and activist in the Dayton Suffrage Movement. She was born in Dayton, Ohio in 1860 to John Jacob Achey and Frances “Fanny” Sherwood Achey. She later married Grafton Claggett Kennedy, a prominent Dayton attorney. They had two children: Katharine Kennedy (Brown) born in 1891, who would become an advocate for women's suffrage in her own right and Graften Sherwood “Duke” Kennedy born in 1893 (MS-281 Finding Aid, 3). Within her collection, there are items relating to the Women's Suffrage Movement such as a cabinet card of Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, among other items indicating her involvement in other political and social organizations (MS-281 Finding Aid, 6). She was also involved with other groups in Dayton, such as the Jonathan Dayton Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR); she was a genealogical researcher both as a hobby and for the DAR (MS-281 Finding Aid, 3). Three of the other seven women were also involved in the DAR with Louise – including her daughter Katharine, Charlotte Reeve Conover and Jesse Leech Davisson (MS-244 Finding Aid, 2-3). Her daughter, Katharine Kennedy Brown, returned to live with her at the family's Duncarrick Mansion after the tragic death of her only child in infancy and shortly thereafter her husband as well. Louise Achey Kennedy's own mother lived with her after the death of her husband (MS-281 Finding Aid, 3).

She, like her daughter Katharine Kennedy Brown, was involved in the Women's Suffrage Movement and was active for many years in the social and political sphere (especially after the death of her child and husband). Brown also worked with her daughter's mother-in-law Martha McClellan Brown, a well know advocate for Anti-Slavery, Temperance and Women's Suffrage. There is not much documentation on the level of Kennedy's involvement, but the fact that she was so close to two women who were prominent in the movement, along with some of the memorabilia in her collection, show she too was a suffrage supporter. For example, her collection contains a cabinet card with pictures of and quotes from Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony. The cabinet card is attributed to belonging to her daughter's mother-in-law Martha McClellan Brown; however, the accuracy of this is unclear (MS-281, 6). An unsigned typed list of her attributes, describes her as possessing, "Straightforwardness, dependability, brusqueness, boldness, honesty, frankness, outspoken and truthful nature . . ." (MS-404, 6). She most likely would have attended lectures on the subject with her daughter and daughter's mother-in-law, and there were advertisements and pamphlets on lectures in Martha McClellan Brown's collection, which support this idea (MS-147, 9). It is also likely that she attended the first Woman's Suffrage Parade in Dayton held on October 24, 1914 due to her levels of activity within multiple Woman's Suffrage movements in the Dayton, Ohio area.

Katharine "Katie" Wright (Haskell) was a community activist and a member of the famous Wright family. She was born in 1874 in Dayton, Ohio to Bishop Milton Wright and Susan Koerner Wright of the United Brethren Church, and was sister to the famous Wright brothers Wilbur and Orville Wright. She had two other older brothers Reuchlin and Lorin Wright (KC263 Finding Aid, 1). At fifteen years old, Wright would lose her mother to tuberculosis. In order to cope with her grief, at her father's urging she "gathered as many different flowers as possible and pressed them into an album which she kept with her always," ("Katharine Wright"). Her mother's passing also forced her to step into a new role as both hostess and woman of the household for the Wright family, responsible for day to day operations and overseeing her staff while supervising her family's care. She ran the household while her father was away on church business, and often entertained his associates and church elders ("Katharine Wright"). In 1914, they moved to the home the Wright brothers designed for the family in Oakwood, Ohio. They named it Hawthorne Hill ("Katharine Wright"). Wright would graduate from Oberlin College of

Ohio in 1898 with a degree in teaching, the only Wright child to earn a college degree. In 1896, while attending Oberlin College, Wright became engaged to classmate Arthur Cunningham. They called it off not long after he left for medical school. Her father never knew she was engaged (“Katharine Wright”). After college she became a teacher at Steele High School in Dayton, teaching classes in the study of the Latin language (MFM-117, 1). After her brother Orville suffered severe injuries in a plane crash in 1908, she took a leave of absence. During this time she also helped her brothers with their "airplane experiment." She acted as their social secretary, helping them navigate the social world and its obligations (Dewey, “Katharine Wright’s Legacy”). While in Europe helping her brothers try to sell their airplane in 1909, she became the third woman in the world to fly after Teresa Peltier and Edith Berg. The French were extremely impressed with her, and they “awarded all three of them – Katharine included – the *Ordre national de la Légion d'honneur* (Legion of Honor). She remains one of the few American women to have received this award,” (“Katherine Wright”). She would retire from teaching in 1909, becoming more involved with her brothers’ work as they had been contacted by a German company regarding the license and production of their aircraft following their last European tour (“Katherine Wright”). Stories about Katharine’s level of involvement in her brother’s work were numerous. In 1922 she wrote, “I did not pioneer work in connection with the invention of the airplane. That pretty story was the outcome of someone’s imagination. I had the greatest interest in my brother’s work always, but that was all,” (Dewey, “Katharine Wright’s Legacy”). Wright “was invited to join the Board of Trustees of Oberlin College” (“Katherine Wright”), and found that the invitation increased contact with Henry “Harry” Haskell, whom she met at Oberlin College as a student. She became friends with Henry and his first wife Isabel Cummings. They made many visits to the Wright home over the years. A romance developed between her and Henry after the death of Isabel in 1923 (“Katharine Wright”).

The death of her brother Wilbur in 1912 devastated her and her family. Her father would write of the family’s loss, “Monday, June 3, 1912 – Wilbur is dead and buried! We are all stricken. It does not seem possible that he is gone. Probably Orville and Katherine felt his loss most. They say little. Many letters. Ezra Kuhns comes, reads Wilbur’s will, and leaves copies....” (M. Wright, 3 June 1912). Her father Bishop Milton Wright died a few years later in 1917 after a long illness. “Orville had become dependent upon his sister’s running of their home, especially after Wilbur’s death in 1912. Katharine was well aware that her brother depended

upon her in many ways and that her romantic relationship with Henry Haskell would greatly distress Orville. She kept the true nature of the involvement a secret from Orville and from most of their friends for some time,” (1) Although Orville would not attend their wedding or acknowledge it, she and Henry wed on November 20, 1926. She moved to Kansas City, Missouri where Henry was the editor for the Kansas City Star (MFM-117, 1). Orville refused to speak to Katharine for the next three years.

She was involved in social-political movements in Dayton and according to her letters she participated in the Women’s Suffrage Movement as well. In a letter to Oberlin College classmate and future husband Henry Haskell on November 11, 1924, she relates her views on women's suffrage (MFM-117, 2).

Yes, you did make yourself clear enough, about the widows. I didn’t misunderstand and think you were railing at women in general. I wondered if on to more general ground myself, because – well, because I think it is all some thing of the same piece. I get “het up” over living forever in a “man’s world,” with so much discussion about what kind of men women like, that it’s a good deal like the particular subject of woman suffrage used to be with me. Orv always teased me about that. **When we were working for it, he used to say that woman suffrage was like Rome in one respect: all roads led to it, with me.** No matter however where the conversation started. I always managed to switch it off on to the woman suffrage track. It wasn’t quite as bad as that but I was very much “in earnest” about it, to put it mildly, I know that’s settled and I look around for other worlds to conquer. But no man can ever know how some women, at least, felt about that . . . Public opinion has a lot to do with it. I don’t know what can be done but I know that already having the vote has done a lot toward making men take us seriously. It is laughable to see what a change has come about already . . .

This central line makes it clear that the Women's Suffrage Movement was important to Wright and that she discussed it openly with her family, and they saw her passion for the movement within her actions and words. In her own words, " . . . I was very much "in earnest" about it, to put it mildly . . ." Her suffragist activities were mentioned in the Dayton Daily News. In an

article from October 23, 1914, the day before the first Dayton Woman's Suffrage Parade organized in part by Katharine Wright, she is quoted as saying, "If it is the last thing I ever do. I will march in the suffrage parade." The article also mentions that her father Milton and brother Orville planned to march in the parade with her (DDN – October 24, 1914).

Katharine's father Bishop Milton Wright also wrote about her involvement with the suffrage movement in his diaries. Here are few excerpts from his diary from 1914:

***Tuesday, February 3** Katharine went to the Suffragette's supper.*

***Sunday, February 28** Mrs. O. H. Davison called at 4:00, to talk with Katharine on Suffrage. We have been here ten moths to-day. It is a cold but fair day.⁷*

***Thursday, September 24** Katharine went to the Woman's Suffragette supper and staid till after 10:00.*

***Wednesday, October 21** The folks went to hear Mrs. Catt, Susan B. Anthony's successor speak. They pronounced it the best speach [sic] they had heard this fall. The folks lunched at Rike's with Agnes Beck.*

***Friday, October 23** Katharine dines down town where she is busy aiding in planning for the Women's Suffrage March.*

***Saturday, October 24** At 3:30, we were in the 1300 march in town. There was Mrs. Bolton and other aged women, perhaps no older men than, I in the march. There were 44 College women, in the procession. Orville marched by my side. The sidewalks were lined by thousands of respectful spectators. (M. Wright, 3 February 1914 - 24 October 1914).*

According to the entries above, Wright attended suffrage dinners and luncheons, went to listen to speakers such as Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt and was one of the organizers for the first Dayton

⁷ This is probably Mrs. O.F. Davisson, aka Jesse Leech Davisson and was just misspelled by Milton. I checked in the Dayton Directory's for 1913-1915 and there is no O.H. Davison listed (MS-001; Dayton Directories 1913-1915).

Suffrage Parade held on October 24, 1914. According to a letter from her to Jesse Leech Davisson on March 3, 1914, she allowed the reservation of a meeting room in the Membership House for \$5.00 per month for the Women’s Suffrage Party of Montgomery County to hold regular meetings (MS-004 Finding Aid, 25).

When she fell ill “her brother Lorin sent word to Orville and told him ‘to dig himself out of his funk and get on a train to Kansas City.’ Orville arrived on March 2nd, the day before she died. Her husband Henry took Orville to see her and said, ‘Here is Orv Katharine. Do you recognize him?’ She replied, ‘Yes, of course,’” (“Katharine Wright”). Katharine Wright Haskell died in March of 1929 from complications of pneumonia. She is buried in Dayton, Ohio in Woodland Cemetery with the rest of her family. Her husband Henry would build a fountain at Oberlin College in her honor to commemorate her memory. It is a replica of the Fountain of Palazzo Vecchio in Florence, Italy that they had planned to see on an upcoming trip to Italy.⁸ (“Katharine Wright”).

National Women’s Suffrage Movement

When I began my research on the Women’s Suffrage movement in Dayton, Ohio, I had a moderate understanding of what the Women’s Suffrage Movement was on a national level; I was familiar with major figures, such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony. Many of these female activists felt overshadowed by their male counterparts and often were treated with disdain when engaging in activities viewed as outside of their established societal roles. It was a common theme that they felt they were treated and viewed as secondary citizens within their families. These women challenged their established societal roles and others expectations of them, providing inspiration for others to join their cause and demand to be viewed as equals and be given a chance to help shape the future of their country. In my research, I found my views of these women as trailblazers to be corroborated by multiple authors including Sara Evans, Heidi Hemming and Julie Hemming Savage and Ellen Carol DuBois.

According to Sara Evans in *Born for Liberty* (1997), “Modern America – urban, industrial, bureaucratic – came of age between 1890 and 1920. American women shaped that

⁸ The fountain is located on Oberlin’s campus in front of the Allen Memorial Art Museum. It bears the inscription, “To Katharine Wright Haskell 1874-1929.” The college had it restored to it’s original condition in 2007 (Wrightbrothers.org).

new order with a profusion of new voluntary associations, institutions, and social movements. The collective power of women, which had been building throughout the nineteenth century, reached its apex in a massive push for political reform and woman suffrage. At the same time, new currents eroded female solidarity. The old divisions of race remained deep despite the emergence of black female activism . . . Even the solidarity of the white middle class was beginning to be undermined by the growth of modern capitalist economy . . .” (145). Evans describes how the changes in society over the course of the end of the nineteenth and start of the twentieth centuries affected the suffrage movement and how women viewed themselves and their role in society. Women were able to move within both the private and public spheres in ways unavailable to them in the past. She attributes this in large part to the “modern capitalist economy” and women’s changing views of self. Heidi Hemming and Julie Hemming Savage in *Women Making America* write, “Throughout the nineteenth century, Americans debated what became known as “the woman question”: did women possess the same equal, inalienable rights as men? For most, the answer was clear – certainly not! The mere thought was dangerous. What might happen if women were allowed to vote, go to college, own their own property, or keep their wages? The belief that females were naturally less capable than males was so prevalent that most women believed it themselves. Indeed, few questioned their position in society,” (74). Hemming and Hemming Savage note that “the woman question” was a topic of debate throughout the nineteenth century in America. It challenged previously set societal roles and norms, which left many people (including women) unsure of what the long-term ramifications of such radical changes would bring. I found both Evans and Hemming and Hemming Savage’s work helpful in understanding the background of the national movement; and furthermore, the background of the activists themselves, including what they felt were the main issues that needed to be addressed and why they fought so hard for women’s suffrage.

Ellen Carol DuBois in her article “The Radicalism of the Women’s Suffrage Movement: Notes on the Reconstruction of Nineteenth-Century Feminism” wrote:

By the nineteenth century, this relationship between family and society had undergone considerable change. Although the family continued to perform many important social functions, it was no longer the sole unit around which the community was organized. The concept of the “individual” had emerged to rival it

. . . The emergence of a form of social organization not based on the family meant the emergence of social roles not defined by familial roles. This was equally true for women and men. But because women and men had different positions *within* the family, the existence of nonfamilial roles had different implications for the sexes. For women, the emergence of a public sphere held out the revolutionary possibility of a new way to relate to society not defined by their subordinate position within the family (43).

This allowed activists the opportunity to publicly challenge the lack of voting rights for women, and contributed to the formation of the Women's Suffrage Movement. She continues and writes,

Although suffragists accepted the peculiarly feminine character of the private sphere, their demand for the vote challenged the male monopoly of the public arena. This is what gave suffragism much of its feminist meaning. Suffragists accepted women's "special responsibility" for domestic activity but refused to concede that it prohibited them from participation in the public sphere. Moreover, unlike the demand that women be admitted to trades, professions, and education, the demand for citizenship applied to all women and it applied to them all of the time – to the housewife as much as to the single, self-supporting woman. By demanding a permanent, public role for all women, suffragists began to demolish the absolute, sexually defined barrier marking the public world of men off the form the private world of women . . . Thus, although she never criticized women's role in the family, Stanton was still able to write: 'One may as well talk of separate spheres for the two ends of the magnet as for man and woman; they may have separate duties in the same sphere, but their true place is together everywhere,' (Stanton, 58).

Suffragists' demand for a permanent, public role for all women allowed them to project a vision of female experience and action that went beyond the family and the subordination of women which the family upheld. Citizenship represented a relationship to the larger society that was entirely and explicitly outside the boundaries of women's familial relations. As citizens and voters,

women would participate directly in society as individuals, not indirectly through their subordinate positions as wives and mothers,” (Dubois, 44-45).

A central theme of the Women’s Suffrage Movement was one of empowerment, as these activists had to discover ways to encourage a largely ignored but very interested population to identify with the desire for equal voting rights. Stanton understood that she had to inspire women to want to expand their role outside of the home; and to view this expansion as a positive to embrace, not as a negative commentary on their current roles as wives, mothers and homemakers.

DuBois concludes this point within her work, noting, “Suffragists did not simply want political power, they wanted to be citizens, to stand in the same relation to civil government as men did,” (47). Realizing that the Women’s Suffrage Movement needed to have public leaders able to transcend the normal established societal expectations of women, DuBois notes that Stanton and other activists began to use their social clout to lead by example; showcasing their courage and providing inspiration for those with less favorable economic means and/or societal backgrounds. This allowed the common woman to identify with the suffragists on a personal level, as Dubois illustrates,

Yet suffrage remained a distinctly minority movement in the nineteenth century. The very thing that made suffragism the most radical aspect of nineteenth-century feminism – its focus on the public sphere and on a nonfamilial role for women – was the cause of its failure to establish a mass base. It was not that nineteenth-century women were content, or had no grievances, but that they understood their grievances in the context of the private sphere. The lives of most nineteenth-century women were overwhelmingly limited to the private realities of wifedom and motherhood, and they experienced their discontent in the context of those relations. The enormous success of the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), particularly as contrasted with the nineteenth-century suffrage movement, indicates the capacity for protest and activism among nineteenth-century women and the fact that this mass feminism was based in the private sphere. The WCTU commanded an army in the nineteenth century, while woman

suffrage remained a guerrilla force . . . Suffrage became a mass movement in the twentieth century under quite different conditions, when women's position vis-à-vis the public and private spheres had shifted considerably (48-49).

The Women's Suffrage Movement began in the United States long before the first formal petitions and organized movements that later came to be known as such, but it was mostly championed by a few individuals. The beginnings of the Women's Suffrage Movement can be traced to Rochester, New York, on June 29, 1848. Gerrit Smith would receive a presidential candidate nomination from the Liberty Party, and was first cousin to the later well known suffragist Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Their discourse on women's issues and the need to expand the role of women in society was well known, and his nomination represented a fundamental shift in politics to begin including the rights of women as a public political issue.

The National Liberty Convention was held June 14–15, 1848, in Buffalo, New York. Smith spoke on the topic of women's suffrage, "Neither here, nor in any other part of the world, is the right of suffrage allowed to extend beyond one of the sexes. This universal exclusion of woman... argues, conclusively, that, not as yet, is there one nation so far emerged from barbarism, and so far practically Christian, as to permit woman to rise up to the one level of the human family," (Wellman, 176). Smith's influence and political support for women's rights would also result in the nomination for Lucretia Mott to join the ballot as Smith's vice-president, and become the first woman in United States political history to be nominated for office at the federal level.⁹ Mott would go on to become a well known suffragist on the national level in her own right. Several years earlier, in London, England, Mott and Stanton had been present to speak at the World Anti-Slavery Conference, but Mott was denied the right to address the mostly male audience at that time despite being an official representative¹⁰; for her to be nominated as a potential Vice-Presidential candidate for a political party eight years later is indicative of how things were changing in the United States. Those pushing for equality had begun engaging in a larger social battle for recognition that would ultimately culminate in the Seneca Falls Convention and the *Declaration of Sentiments*.

From July 19–20, 1848, Lucretia Mott, Mary Ann M'Clintock and Elizabeth Cady

⁹ Wellman, Judith. *The Road to Seneca Falls*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2004. Print, 176.

¹⁰ Hallsall, Paul. *Modern History Sourcebook: Declaration of Sentiments, Seneca Falls Conference, 1848*. 1998. Web. 12 November 2014. <http://legacy.fordham.edu/hallsall/mod/senecafalls.asp>

Stanton hosted the Seneca Falls Convention on women's rights at the Wesleyan Chapel in Seneca Falls, New York. Three hundred people attended the convention, including Frederick Douglass, who stood up to speak in favor of women's suffrage.¹¹ The convention also adopted the now famous *Declaration of Sentiments*, providing a clear statement of a woman's right to protect her home and family. Based on the *Declaration of Independence*, it reads:

We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights governments are instituted, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of those who suffer from it to refuse allegiance to it, and to insist upon the institution of a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they were accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their duty to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of the women under this government, and such is now the necessity which constrains them to demand the equal station to which they are entitled.¹²

¹¹ Of the 300 people who attended, 100 signed. According to Hewitt, "At least one-fourth of the one hundred signers of the Declaration of Sentiments drafted at the 1848 meeting were members of the Society of Friends," (23) In (Hewitt, Nancy A. "Feminist Friends: Quakers and the Emergence of Woman's Rights in America," *U.S. Women in Struggle: A Feminist Studies Anthology*. Ed. Claire Goldberg Moses and Heidi Hartman. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995).

¹² Hallsall, Paul. *Modern History Sourcebook: Declaration of Sentiments, Seneca Falls Conference, 1848*. 1998. Web. 12 November 2014. <http://legacy.fordham.edu/hallsall/mod/senecafalls.asp>

Through a review of the *Declaration of Sentiments*, it becomes clear that these women were no longer happy with or accepting of the status quo. They felt that their basic human rights were being infringed upon, and thus chose the familiar format and wording of the Declaration of Independence to make their point. They were demanding to be heard and for changes to come about. Hemming and Savage wrote,

The first national convention in 1850 brought together for the first time many of those who had been working individually for women's rights. While conventions provided places where women could support each other, they also highlighted some of the challenges of unifying strongly opinionated leaders into one movement. Women's rights activists faced difficult questions. Should the movement include or exclude men? Who was to blame for women's inequality? What remedies should they seek? How could women best convince others of their need for equality? One goal, however, was clear. Attendees resolved to "secure for [woman] political, legal and social equality with man," giving her the opportunity to freely choose her sphere, (77).

Hemming and Savage provide an overview of the underlying emotion that ran throughout the movement: that it was long overdue that women be allowed to choose their impact and role in society, and that the opportunity to do so had been denied them long enough. It was enough to transcend even the conflict within the different elements at the onset of the Women's Suffrage Movement, and allowed women of multiple backgrounds to join together in the common cause that had clearly been identified.

Suffragists were not without opposition to their cause. Many whom supported the Women's Suffrage Movement also called for stricter laws on alcohol and other vices, and participated in other organizations like the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). As a result, "Opposition was to be found from those with liquor and saloon interests, recalcitrant foreigners, religious zealots and apathetic or outwardly antagonistic women. Suffrage also faced opposition from many upper class voters. Their largest opponent however remained the indifference of many to the cause," (MS-004, 10). The liquor and saloon interests feared women receiving the vote, because they assumed that it meant that prohibition would be a forgone

conclusion. Others who opposed women's suffrage simply did not want the status quo to change, as they felt that a woman's place was in the home as wife and mother and that she had no need to look beyond her front door. Goodier also notes,

The reasons women opposed suffrage are complex, but were intimately connected with their view of themselves as females, rather than as citizens. Anti-suffrage women were proud of what they considered to be women's unique importance to the polity; they did not want that uniqueness stifled by the addition of masculine political responsibilities. The anti-suffrage movement was a vibrant woman's movement, for anti-suffragists were convinced that they, like the suffragists, were fighting for women's rights (Abstract).

Women who did not want the suffragists to succeed for fear that it would compromise their role as wives and mothers joined anti-suffragist groups in speaking against the Women's Suffrage Movement. According to Ford in *Encyclopedia of Women and American Politics*,

Women "antis" drew large crowds when they speculated about a world where women voted: Women would ignore their families and household responsibilities, adopt masculine traits and habits, and bring chaos to the traditional family. Others argued that, once granted, the vote could not be restricted to white, well-educated women. This race-based campaign of fear was especially effective in states with high immigrant populations and in the South. In other cases, business and industry organized against women's suffrage, fearing the social reforms women advocated, including temperance, improved working conditions, and fair wages," (39).

Opposition preyed upon the feelings of uncertainty that many women faced in supporting the Women's Suffrage Movement, and the impact that their support would have on their personal lives and relationships.

This "campaign of fear" proved to be an effective tool by the opposition, especially following the uncertain times that the ending of the Civil War brought to many homes. Many women who had stepped up and volunteered their services in their country's time of need had

high hopes of being rewarded for their efforts in a public fashion. Hymowitz and Weissman write,

After the Civil War, many women activists expected to be given the right to vote in recognition for their service. When Republican Congressman proposed suffrage for the black men during Reconstruction, feminists demanded the same right for women . . . Republican Reconstructionists, however, cared little about equal rights for women or for blacks. The men who formulated Reconstruction policy were interested in their own political power. By giving black men the vote, Republicans hoped to control the South. They never seriously considered woman suffrage. This bias was clearly revealed in section two of the Fourteenth Amendment, which specifically referred to “male inhabitants” and “male citizens” in the section dealing with the right to vote. For the first time the Constitution contained the word “male” instead of speaking simply of “the people” or “citizens.” With that word the amendment introduced the principle of discrimination by sex into the Constitution, with the implication that women were not citizens (156).

While this could have been a devastating blow to the Women’s Suffrage Movement, it did little to stop the momentum that had been developing following the ending of the Civil War.

The next few decades would see suffragists attempt to use multiple tactics in their campaign for women’s suffrage. Suffragists at times used unconventional means to bring attention to and raise money for their cause. Schultz calls this “physical activism . . . the articulation of physical activity and political activism – striking simultaneous blows to the myths of women’s physical and political inferiority,” (1133). Schultz goes on to write, “In the first decades of the twentieth century, American women held swimming competitions, scaled mountains, piloted aeroplanes and staged large-scale parades in their quest for the right to vote. In effect, they spectacularized suffrage by positioning their bodies in the public sphere rather than confining their mission to the parlours and meeting-halls of their more conservative sisters,” (1133).

Schultz also discusses two suffrage hikes in the article, and outlines their impact on the movement by providing a view of the national spotlight they received. She states,

The first was the 12-day, 170-mile ‘Hike to Albany’ in 1912. The second hike involved the ‘army of Hudson’ march on Washington, DC, which departed from Newark, New Jersey in 1913. Thirteen women (joined intermittently by others who completed various segments of the journey) completed the entirety of the arduous, often treacherous 225-mile route in just 16 days. In the end, *Woman Voter* estimated that the hikes resulted in \$3 million worth of advertising for the cause and declared that ‘no propaganda work . . . had ever achieved such publicity,’” (Schultz, 1133).

In the 1870s suffragists tried several times to vote and filed suit when they were denied. In 1872, Susan B. Anthony actually managed to vote and was later arrested and found guilty at a highly publicized trial. This publicity led to revitalization and increased interest in the Women’s Suffrage Movement.

National women’s suffrage groups had begun to move towards unification, and in 1890, leaders Susan B. Anthony with Elizabeth Cady Stanton from the National Women’s Suffrage Movement, and Lucy Stone from the American Women’s Suffrage movement, merged to form the National American Women’s Suffrage Association (NAWSA).¹³ Farrell notes,

Although the nineteenth-century woman's movement was never exempt from internecine warfare, Susan B. Anthony, as editor and publisher of the *History of Woman Suffrage*, presented the movement as a grand narrative with a smooth surface. When the National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA) merged with the American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA), the twenty-year rupture between the organizations, the fierce opposition to the merger, and the stratagems involved in pushing it through go unmentioned in Anthony's official account,” (Abstract).

¹³ Dubois, Ellen Carol, ed. *The Elizabeth Cady Stanton-Susan B. Anthony Reader*. Boston: Northwestern University Press, 1992. 178-180. Print.

The merging of these organizations represented a significant shift in leadership and direction in the Women's Suffrage Movement, indicating growth within the organization to move away from political infighting and to shift focus onto the larger issues that needed to be addressed.

This would mark a new era of struggles suffragists faced from established governmental regulations. Many of these conflicts were minor debates and political skirmishes that resulted in little to report. However, as the years continued, so did the escalation of protesting and the critical response by the opposition to the movement. This would culminate on August 28 1917, as 10 members of the National Women's Party, a more radical and militant faction of the Women's Suffrage Movement led by Alice Paul, were arrested for protesting at the White House in Washington D.C.¹⁴ Many went to prison, and when they held a hunger strike were force fed and maltreated for their behavior and beliefs. President Woodrow Wilson, who had a political history of appeasing suffragists while opposing the platform, was appalled at the hunger strike and concerned about the negative publicity he would receive if it were allowed to continue. The protestors were released and their arrests declared unconstitutional, violating the protestors' Right To Free Speech that was guaranteed by the U.S. Bill of Rights. Wilson finally agreed to a suffrage amendment in January of 1918, coming out publicly in favor of the Women's Suffrage Movement.¹⁵ After two years of debate, Congress ratified the 19th Amendment and it became part of the U.S. Constitution on August 18, 1920. It reads, "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex," (U.S. Constitution).

Evans notes the impact of the amendment by showcasing it as a point of transformation for the American woman,

The irony of the vote is that what was won with a great collective effort permitted women to confront their newly attained citizenship in the solitude of the voting booth. The irony paralleled others in those same years as women – in the roles of

¹⁴ In 1917, more than 1,000 women from across the country would protest. From June through November 1917, "218 women from 26 states were arrested and charged with 'obstructing sidewalk traffic.' Of those arrested, 97 spent time in either the Occoquan Workhouse in Virginia or in the District of Columbia Jail," ("Today in History: August 28." *Library of Congress (LOC)*. 2011. Web. 16 August 2015. <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/today/aug28.html>)

¹⁵ "Today in History: August 28." *Library of Congress (LOC)*. 2011. Web. 16 August 2015. <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/today/aug28.html>

housewives, professionals, and sexual beings – entered the scientific age. From suffragist to citizen, for housewife to home economist, from volunteer to social worker, from silence to euphemism to Freudian psychology, in each case modernity brought both gains and losses eroding the female community that had flourished in Victorian America, (173).

The passage of the 19th Amendment would establish women as a political audience and as influential members of society. Through ratification women gained a voice in local and national politics, and forced recognition of their morals, viewpoints, and ideology by many who had been quick to dismiss their concerns or invalidate their claims in the past.

Local and State Women’s Suffrage Movement

This project looks at the Women’s Suffrage Movement in Dayton, Ohio at the turn of the century, up to the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920. It aims to tie the local (and state) movements in with the larger national movement. One notable local activist, Jesse Leech Davisson, was involved at the local, state and national levels within the movement. She served as the first president of the Woman’s Suffrage Party of Montgomery County from June 11, 1912 until 1920. It was associated with the national movement through The National American Woman’s Suffrage Association (NAWSA) (MS-004 Finding Aid, 11-12). In her involvement within her local movement Davisson was similar to women all over the country - they shared similar wants and needs, even if they came from different socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds. Although there were significant divisions and conflicts in the national movement, there is little documentation on any conflicts in regards to the local Dayton, Ohio movement. One of the few conflicts that was documented in the collection was a letter from Mrs. Harriet Taylor Upton and Ms. Elizabeth Hauser to Jesse Leech Davisson on February 26, 1918, addressing the concerns of a Mrs. Perkins who wrote, “the State Association was not much account, and that some members of the Executive Committee ought to be replaced,” (MS-004 Finding Aid, 28-29). In regards to minor incidents or conflict, the lack of clear documentation would indicate that these matters would have been handled internally and would not have been recorded for posterity. Unless they were large and of a fundamental nature, it seems that minor situations were often brushed aside and glossed over after they had been resolved (MS-004).

The local Women's Suffrage Movement first gained popularity in Ohio largely due to the second Woman's Rights Convention having been held in Salem, Ohio from April 19-20, 1850. It quickly gained momentum through groups such as the Ohio State Woman's Suffrage Association and the State Woman Suffrage Association formed in 1885; Mrs. Frances M. Casement and Mrs. Harriet Taylor Upton led these groups, respectively. The movement particularly in Ohio gained momentum out of the Temperance and Anti-slavery movements (MS-004 Finding Aid, 9). Many of the same advocates, both men and women, took to this new cause with the same vigor. These activists came from all different walks of life, and Ohio suffragists understood that these new supporters viewed the Women's Suffrage Movement as a new frontier in which to continue their movements for equal rights for all citizens. Their enthusiasm and varied backgrounds would prove to be increasingly useful for campaigning in Ohio, and the Ohio chapters of the Women's Suffrage Movement would prove to be progressive and unique in their acceptance of many people previously ostracized by the movement on the national level.

On January 12, 1869, the Woman's Suffrage Association was formed, and would last until 1874. This was the first women's suffrage group organized in Dayton, Ohio. Judge Samuel Boltin served as president (MS-004 Finding Aid, 9-10). Other groups such as the Dayton Equal Rights Association and the Woman's Suffrage Party of Montgomery County¹⁶ formed later and ran by women such as Dr. Madge Dickson and Mrs. Jesse Leech Davisson¹⁷ (MS-004 Finding Aid, 10). Many upper class women served on the executive committees for these organizations and played a prominent role in the community such as Mrs. James Robert, Mrs. Valentine Winters and Miss Electra C. Doren.¹⁸ These groups did not always last long; some such as the Dayton Equal Rights Association only lasted one year (MS-004 Finding Aid, 10). The Women's Suffrage Movement in Dayton faced the same problems the rest of the movement. According to Haper, "There was never any state-wide anti-suffrage association of women but only small groups in Cleveland, Cincinnati, Dayton and Columbus. Most were rich, well-situated, not familiar with organized reform work, and not knowing the viciousness of their associates," (511).

¹⁶ In 1912, it became known as The Woman's Suffrage Association of Dayton and Montgomery County. (MS-004 Finding Aid, 10).

¹⁷ Davisson served as president of the Women's Suffrage of Montgomery County from 1912 to 1920 (MS-004 Finding Aid, 10).

¹⁸ Doren is credited with acquiring much of the Dayton and Montgomery County Public Library's present collection on the Women's Suffrage Movement in Dayton, Ohio (MS-004 Finding Aid, 10).

Real opposition represented itself in the form of liquor supporters and interests. These supporters were known by various names, depending on the campaign, and were known as The Stability League, The Personal Liberty League or Home Rule Association (Harper, 511). Women also had to lobby for support among other resistant women, various immigrant groups, and religious factions despite rejection and indifference. Many of their opponents were politicians and affluent, wealthy citizens (MS-004 Finding Aid, 10). Of these, the biggest problem they faced was indifference. If they couldn't get people interested and passionate about the cause and involved in gaining more support for it, their mission would only prove more difficult to complete.

Some of the ways that suffragists tried to engage the public on the subject, was to hold parades or marches, bring in nationally known speakers like Carrie Chapman Catt for example, and to clarify the facts on suffrage in Ohio. They passed out handbills on their meetings and other literature. They placed placards on streetcars "with suffrage messages from well known Americans and the date of election and amendment number," (MS-004 Finding Aid, 86). They even had a booth set up at the Arcade where a woman was stationed to sell and give away large quantities of propaganda literature, some of which was presented to the women by John H. Patterson, president of NCR (MS-004 Finding Aid, 86). Patterson was an ardent supporter of Equal Suffrage and in a telegram from July 30, 1912 he wrote, "Woman's Suffrage is right and in the end must win," (MS-004 Finding Aid, 71). Later that year on August 17, 1912 he wrote in another telegram, "Woman's Suffrage is America's greatest opportunity for Moral, Mental, Physical, Financial and Social Betterment," (MS-004 Finding Aid, 71). He also sent \$1,500 to the Woman's Suffrage Association to help with the cost of their campaigns (MS-004 Finding Aid, 71). It was through donations and support from prominent citizens like Patterson as well as average citizens that made the difference in the campaign for suffrage in Dayton and Ohio at large. There are multiple *Dayton Daily News* articles that show how the suffrage campaign used the news media in Dayton, Ohio to their advantage. This was accomplished by supporters using ads for meetings and upcoming events with speakers such as Catt, insuring articles on their work for the Woman's Suffrage Parade received widespread media coverage and that important facts on suffrage were included in the paper. Entries from Bishop Milton Wright's diary from 1914 coincide with these articles. Here are two quotes from the week of the 1914 election:

Tuesday, November 3 *There was an animated – I might say excited – election throughout the states. Gov. J.M. Cox was beaten in Ohio, by Frank B. Willis; Geo. G. Harding was elected U.S. Senator by popular vote; most of the northern states went Republican; the Republicans almost overthrew the Democratic majority in Congress. The Roosevelt (progressive) party negligible (M. Wright, 3 November 1914).*

Wednesday, November 4 *Captain Bristol and Liet. Maxfield dined with us. News show that Penrose is re-elected Senator by Pennsi. Nich. Longworth is Congressman from Ohio and J.G. Cannon from Illinois. Home Rule prevails in Ohio, and Female Suffrage goes down with Prohibition. I wrote to Mrs. M.M. Harvey and sent ten dollars on salary (M. Wright, 4 November 1914).*

As a hotly debated platform point, suffragists would face continual opposition to their efforts to gain approval and passage of women's suffrage into law, as seen in the excerpts from Wright. His enthusiasm for politics is easy to note. The special mention of women's suffrage would indicate that it was an issue that he followed personally; whether because of his family involvement with the movement or simply personal interest remains an individual pursuit. Suffrage was often coupled with the prohibition issue in media to garner attention, which often harmed the suffrage initiatives. The perceived connections between the Women's Suffrage Movement and the Temperance Movement cost suffragists many votes over the years. In order to gain suffrage in Ohio, suffragists were forced to attempt multiple political maneuvers, some of which are detailed in the timeline below.

Ohio Women's Suffrage Campaign Timeline

In Harper's *A History of Women's Suffrage Vol. VI*, the author provides an overview of the women's suffrage campaign in Ohio between 1890 and 1920. It is important to note the chronological order of these events and how they contributed to the passage of the 19th amendment. While this is not a comprehensive look at all of the events that occurred leading towards the establishment of women's suffrage, it does provide a chronological look at some of the more noteworthy legislative events that transpired.

- **1894** – Women are granted the right to vote in board of education elections with the passage of a new law (Harper, 509).
- **1904 & 1905** – Suffragists requested “legislators to submit to the voters an amendment giving full suffrage to women. The resolution fails to report out of the committees,” (Harper, 509).
- **1908** – Suffragists try again to get an amendment providing full suffrage to women submitted to voters. It is reported, but no vote is taken (Harper, 509).
- **1910** – Suffragists attempt to get an amendment providing full suffrage to women submitted to voters. It is defeated on the floor (Harper, 509).
- **January 22, 1912** – An amendment providing full suffrage to women is submitted to voters. “A pro-hearing is held on February 8, 1912; an anti-hearing and public meeting is held on February 14, 1912; the measure is voted out 20-1 on February 15, 1912,” (Harper, 510).
- **March 7, 1912** – An amendment to the state constitution is put forth on March 7, 1912, seeking to “remove the words ‘white male from Section 1 Article V of the state constitution,” (Harper, 510). In response the anti’s propose taking the word “white” out of the same section and article of the state constitution. They did this “to alienate the negro vote from the suffrage amendment... negroes were told it was a shame they would be ‘tied to the women’s apron strings’” (Harper, 510). The amendment is number 23, which “is considered an unlucky number. The most illiterate could remember to vote against that ‘23.’ The anti-suffragist’s amendment is number 24,” (Harper, 510).
 - Suffragists spend \$40,000 on the campaign for the passage of Amendment 23 and bring in 50 workers from other areas (mainly from the east coast) for no reported compensation. “They work mainly in the cities. Women speak at picnics, county fairs, family reunions, circuses, beaches, institutes, labor meetings, at country stores, school houses and cross roads,” (Harper, 510).
 - William B. Kirkpatrick, serving as the Chairman of the Equal Suffrage Committee, champions the suffrage amendment (Harper, 510).
 - In comparison, liquor interests first spend \$500,000 and then add an additional \$120,000 to their budget to defeat the suffrage amendment (Harper, 510).

- Amendment 23 fails with a vote of 336,875 to 249,420; with a difference of 87,455 (Harper, 510).
- **February 17, 1914** – In order to get a referendum, suffragists need signatures from 10% of voters from the last election (equal to 130,000 signatures) for their petition to be considered. A petition is created in early 1913 and “the question of the validity of the petitions if circulated by women was raised and a ruling was asked for. The Secretary of State decided that women could circulate them and the Attorney General agreed,” (Harper 511). It successfully passed both initiative and referendum procedures. The referendum was signed by the Governor on February 17, 1914 (Harper 512).
- **July 30, 1914** – A petition with 131,271 signatures is filed with the Secretary of State by Ohio suffragists (Harper 512).
 - The referendum is defeated 518,295 to 335,390 with a difference of 182,905 (Harper 513).
 - During this part of the campaign, it becomes clear that liquor interest groups and anti-suffragist groups are working together. One tactic is to pass out leaflets on the Home Rule “Wet” Amendment and how to vote against women’s suffrage (Harper 513).
- **New Strategy:** Ohio suffragists realize that they need a new strategy in order to make progress in their battle for suffrage. They decide to seek municipal women's suffrage in charter cities. (Harper 513).
 - **1916** – East Cleveland – The matter is taken before both the Ohio and U.S. Supreme Courts; the vote is upheld on April 3, 1917, and thus constitutionality is established (Harper 514).
 - **1917** – Lakewood – A city adjoining Cleveland passes municipal women’s suffrage not long after the success in East Cleveland (Harper 514).
 - **1917** – Columbus also passes municipal women’s suffrage (Harper 514).
 - The measure is not successful in Sandusky, Ohio (Harper 514).
- **January 30, 1917** – A bill to “give women the right to vote for presidential electors is proposed on January 30, 1917,” (Harper 515).
 - Democratic Rep. James A. Reynolds of Cleveland takes up the cause for the Presidential Suffrage Bill. This represents a unique relationship because he is

an anti-prohibitionist, but feels it is his duty as a representative to support the measure. He continued to fight for it until Tennessee ratified the Federal Suffrage Amendment in 1920 (Harper 514).

- The measure passes 20 to 16 (Harper 515).
- Gov. James M. Cox signs it into law on February 21, 1917 (Harper 515).
- The liquor interests and anti-suffragists use underhanded tactics to get the law repealed. They falsified petitions and signatures in order to gain a referendum vote. Gaining most of those by posting them in saloons (in the saloons they offered free drinks for signatures) (MS-004 Finding Aid, 32). They went so far as, “to stop an article written by Mrs. Elizabeth Hauser from being published in the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, so there would be no publicity on the National Amendment in Ohio,” (MS-004 Finding Aid, 34). In response, suffragists file a lawsuit against them to get the signatures thrown out as fraudulent (MS-004 Finding Aid, 34). They are successful in 4 of 6 counties they filed suit in (Harper 516).
- “The petitions in Franklin County (Columbus), Lucas County (Toledo) and Montgomery County (Dayton) are fraudulent, but the election boards in these counties remain hostile to women’s suffrage and powerful with the courts” (Harper, 516). The courts within these counties refuse to allow the lawsuits to be filed. When suffrage leaders attempt to intervene the courts declare they have no jurisdiction (Harper, 516).
- The suffragists are able to have 17,000 signatures that were originally removed by a court judgment recertified by the Secretary of the State of Ohio in October 1917 (Harper 516). The problem is the wording of the referendum. It is, “hard for voters to understand and they are not clear on whether or not they should vote yes or no. Apparently the wording is such that voting ‘no’ in the referendum issue means rejecting the presidential suffrage measure,” (MS-004, 32) which many voters understood and became confused. This may be what causes the approval of the referendum (MS-004, 32).
- **November 1917** – The presidential election vote for women is repealed by the general vote, 568,382 to 422,262; 15 counties in Ohio uphold the law despite the official repeal

(Harper, 517).

- **New Tactic:** Ohio suffragists turn their attention to the national suffrage movement because they realize they cannot outspend the liquor interest groups. Focus turns to the passage of the Federal Suffrage Amendment (Harper, 517).
- **February 20, 1919** - An amendment is introduced “in the Senate that women should vote exactly as men now vote, slightly different than the previous version of the amendment” (MS-004, 37-38). This version of the amendment aims to gain the support of Southern supporters, as the question regarding the status of Negro voters has been resolved (MS-004, 37-38).
- **May 21, 1919** – Republican majority legislature endorse the Federal Suffrage Amendment. In the United States Senate the votes are 23 to 10; in the United States House of Representatives it is 79 to 31. (Harper, 517).
 - Only two Ohio members vote against it, “one a Democrat, Warren Gard of Hamilton, one a Republican, A. E. B. Stephens of Cincinnati” (Harper, 517).
- **June 16, 1919** – The bill is ratified by a final vote, and passes 76 to 6 in the House of Representatives; The Presidential Suffrage Bill passes 75 to 5. The Senate passes both measures 27 to 3. It is named the Reynolds-Fouts Bill after Rep. James A. Reynolds of Cleveland and his colleague Rep. C.H. Fouts who also championed it from the beginning. Miss Elizabeth Hauser, editor of The Bulletin (the official State Suffrage Association newspaper) wrote: *“We had just witnessed a perfect exhibition of team work and a demonstration of loyalty to a cause and to each other by members of opposing political parties that was heart warming. We had finished the suffrage fight in Ohio as Mrs. Upton had always wanted to finish it, with love, good will and harmony in our own ranks, and, so far as we were able to judge, with nothing but good will from the men whom we had worked since the present stage of the contest was inaugurated in 1912,”* (Harper, 518).
 - Contention to the amendment is almost immediate - liquor interests and anti-suffragists want a referendum. Harper writes, “In 1918 the Home Rule Association (the liquor interests) had initiated and carried at the November election an amendment to the State constitution providing that Federal amendments must be approved by the voters before the ratification of the

Legislature was effective. This was designed primarily to secure a reversal of prohibition in Ohio but also to prevent ratification of the suffrage amendment,” (518-519).

- Once again they use falsified petitions and signatures to do so. Suffragists take the matter to the Ohio and U.S. Supreme Courts with the help of George Hawk, a Cincinnati lawyer. The courts rule that, “the power to ratify a federal amendment rests with the legislature and cannot be passed on by voters,” (Harper, 518-519).
- **1920** – The Ohio Legislature meets in an adjourned session. Women obtain primary suffrage in an amendment to the Presidential Bill as a result of this session. This proves unnecessary because the Federal Suffrage Amendment passes in August 1920 (Harper, 519).
 - Mrs. Harriet Taylor Upton of the State Suffrage Association's last work on behalf of suffrage is “to help gain the 36th and final ratification of the Federal Suffrage Amendment from Tennessee in the summer of 1920. She travels to Nashville at the request of the Republican National Executive Committee (of which she is the Vice-chairman) in order to complete this work. While the victory may not take place in Ohio, it does involve an Ohio woman ,”(Harper, 519).

Seventy years after the struggle began, with the combined efforts of both women suffragists and their male supporters that aided them in the struggle, Ohio women obtain the right to vote from the federal government. (Harper, 519).

Dayton, Ohio – A Progressive Landscape for the Women’s Suffrage Movement

The Women’s Suffrage Movement was unique in Dayton, Ohio because of its inclusive and progressive nature. According to Wilkey, “Although white, middle-class, native-born women dominated the movement, especially at the national level, black, working-class, and immigrant supporters played a meaningful part in the eventual victory. Within the cities and states where suffragists fought daily and eventually won, issues of race, class, and ethnicity were not easily ignored,” (27). Wilkey argues that Dayton suffragists not only included, but “actively

sought support from the working-class, immigrant, and black segments of Dayton's population. Unlike their counterparts at the national level, Dayton suffragists realized that a broad base of support would be necessary for the suffrage amendment to pass and viewed cross-race, class, and ethnic support as an advantage and not a liability," (Wilkey, 27).

Consistent with Wilkey's analysis, the collections identified in this study represent separate silos—Brown's story is intertwined with collections in archives at historically black colleges and—although she spoke to more diverse audiences—her education and activism did not seem to carry her into the interlocking social circles of the affluent white women represented in other local archival collections. Working class and immigrant women's voices are also not represented in these collections—instead they are present largely as objects of affluent women's activism. [This may reflect patterns in the development of archival collections as well as the social distance between local groups at the time. Wilkey states that suffragists, in their approach to gaining women's suffrage, "...spent the majority of their time trying to convince the city's largest enfranchised group, white males, that woman suffrage was a desirable goal. They also devoted a significant amount of time to persuading white women, the city's largest disenfranchised group, that woman suffrage deserved passage . . . Perhaps political expediency was their only motivation, but even if so, their actions were unique because national suffrage leaders often saw working-class, immigrant, and especially black support as a disadvantage. Dayton's suffragists, in contrast, viewed any support as an asset and moved to court such groups," (28).

However, leaders of the national movement such as Carrie Chapman Catt did not see it this way. In 1894 Catt made a speech in Iowa, in which she said, "This government is menaced with a great danger . . . That danger lies in the votes possessed by the males in the slums of the cities and the ignorant foreign vote which was sought to be brought by each party, to make political success . . . There is but one way to avert the danger – cut off the vote of the slums and give to women," (qtd. in Hymowitz and Weissman, 273-274). The Dayton suffragists also faced opposition to their inclusiveness from the state level. In an undated letter to Jesse Leech Davisson, Mrs. Harriet Taylor Upton states, "I believe colored women should have the same rights as white women and colored men. But I do wish this crowd could have held off a little longer. There is no use of incensing Southern Senators. If they had held off we would have gotten it for all of us [;] now their pressing may make us lose it. The suffragist's row is a hard

one,” (qtd. in Wilkey, 32). Many suffragists feared that the inclusion of working class, foreign born and black women would prevent the passage of suffrage. According to Hymowitz and Weissman,

Suffragists seized the opportunity to suggest that the votes of native born women could counter the ‘foreign menace.’ First they repeatedly cited statistics to show that native-born women outnumbered foreign born men and women combined. Thus, even if all women were enfranchised, the votes of native-born women would outnumber the total immigrant vote. Next suffragists began suggesting that unfit voters be disenfranchised. An educational qualification for voting, they claimed, would insure rule by the native-born white portion of the population . . . Not all suffragists went along with this ill-disguised bigotry. Opposing voices argued that each class was entitled to speak for itself at the polls, that education did not necessarily instill a sense of justice, and that the concept of a privileged ruling class went against the basic tenets of American democracy,” (274-275).

Suffragists would provide information to the uninformed voters to counter these misconceptions, and worked hard to overcome the stigma with which they had become associated.

In Dayton, suffragists worked together to advance their common agenda, regardless of class or race. According to Wilkey, “A Mrs. Welliver, for example, “volunteered to work with the Hungarians,” and Rose Schneiderman, the famous union activist who had come to the state to help organize the campaign, “addressed factory workers.” Mrs. Thresher spoke before the “colored WCA” and the “NCR [National Cash Register] girls,” and Frau Von Klenze disappointed the suffragists by being “unable to deliver her speech in German.” Some of the city’s more prominent black women citizens, such as Mrs. Jewelia Higgins and Miss Hallie Q. Brown, conducted much of the work in Dayton’s small but vocal black community,” (29). While the foreign born women in Dayton were approached, Wilkey claims that, “Of all the groups that the DWSA [Dayton Women’s Suffrage Association] attempted to mobilize, immigrants received the least attention. Although 12 percent of Dayton’s population was foreign born in 1910, the city’s suffragists put far more energy into recruitment and mobilization of Dayton’s black and

working-class communities. The DWSA apparently concentrated most of its energy on the Hungarian and German population, the only groups specifically mentioned in the organization's records . . . Language was likely a barrier, because the suffragists expressed regret on two occasions at being unable to speak or publish suffrage literature in German," (29). Another reason Dayton suffragists struggled to gain support among foreign born women was due to "the perceived connection between woman suffrage and temperance . . ." (Wilkey, 29-30). More success was to be found with the working class women of Dayton. Wilkey states that, ". . . suffragists repeatedly argued the need for women workers to have a voice in the government. The suffragists issued broadsides that proclaimed, "[t]axpaying Women need the vote to protect their financial interests," and "[w]orking women need the vote to secure laws determining proper conditions and hours of labor . . . Dayton suffragist . . . were acutely aware of the difficult conditions that working women faced, and much of their propaganda presented woman suffrage as the answer to their plight" (30). Dayton Suffragists also had a productive relationship with the black leaders in the community. Wilkey writes, "The suffragists themselves worked closely with black leaders and had at least four black members active in the upper echelons of the DWSA. Also, their speeches and propaganda made clear that Dayton suffragists wanted the vote for all women. "All Women," declared one advertisement, "need the vote because it is the accepted method of self-expression in a democracy . . . The fact that black women ran the suffrage information booth in downtown Dayton independently one day per week represents more concrete evidence of interracial cooperation on suffrage," (31). According to Wilkey, "All of the black women involved in the DWSA were highly educated and middle-class, but regardless of their status, the ability of these women to unite, even if only for political expediency, indicates a willingness to ignore racial differences, perhaps in favor of class and gender similarities. Working-class women, on the other hand, although courted for support of suffrage, were never active participants in DWSA meetings," (32). Wilkey concludes that, "The eventual passage of woman suffrage was a local phenomenon. Had local communities not organized and convinced their state representatives to ratify the Nineteenth Amendment, the entire national movement would have been meaningless," (33).

In 1890 Dayton was approaching its centennial and while the women's suffrage topic was becoming more prominent, there was still a lot of opposition to the movement locally, as well as at the state and the national levels. These women's rights activists had a desire to begin to play a

more prominent role in society, and in order to do so they needed more political clout. Social power within society was not enough anymore to achieve the goals that they had for the city of Dayton and the country at large. While not a major suffragist, Ms. Mary Steele was a prominent citizen who supported the Women's Suffrage Movement in Dayton. Steele used her affluence to help bring about social change through her role in the selection of Dayton's first police matron, Louanda Bowman. The tale is chronicled in Charlotte Reeve Conover's *Some Dayton Saints and Prophets* (1907). As the excerpt below indicates, Dayton was in desperate need for a police matron (Refer to Appendix C to read the full story of Dayton's first police matron). Conover writes:

For years the entire police system of Dayton, as of other cities, had been in the hands of men. Young girls arrested on charges of loitering were taken in hand by policemen, locked up by policemen, often in the same cell with hardened women, who, by their conversation, soon finished the work of pollution begun on the street. Women prisoners were searched by the officers before being locked up. This was the law, and it sometimes bore as hard upon the officers as the prisoners. No woman, even if she be on the criminal road, likes to submit to such indignity . . . (65).

Steele recognized this need after hearing many stories of the injustices young women in the city faced at the hands of the male officers of the Dayton Police Department. She proceeded to assemble a committee of influential women from Dayton organizations to conduct research on police matrons in other cities and how the appointment of these matrons took place. At the conclusion of this research period, she and her committee proposed the appointment of the police matron for the city of Dayton. While originally blocked through financial concerns by the City Solicitor and Tax Commission, she persevered by opening the Revised Statutes of Ohio, and upon showing the City Solicitor the passage regarding the direction to appoint a female Police Matron as reading 'There Shall Be a Police Matron,' was reported to have stated, "My dear sir, the law does not say 'may,' it says 'shall'; are you going to obey it?" (qtd. in Conover, 69) in regards to his duty to enforce the code and appoint an official in the office. As a result of her tenacity regarding the enforcement of the law, Louanda Bowman would be appointed as the first

Police Matron of Dayton in 1893. Social change like this was progressive on multiple levels, indicating an increase for societal recognition in a changing landscape; it represented a huge success for female activists as their hard work had influenced change on a large scale and had been influential in affecting social change in Dayton.

In 1920 Daytonians faced the new challenge of adapting to the political and social ramifications of the ratification of the 19th amendment. Now that the battle for women's suffrage had been won, it was time to make sure that these new voters would be prepared to carry out their new civic duty. Many of the women's suffrage groups later changed focus and became women's voter groups to help "educate them in citizenship, public welfare, efficiency in government and international co-operation to prevent war," (MS-004 Finding Aid). They maintained their links with the larger state and national movements for the completion of this new mission, and was non-partisan in membership enrollment to engage women from all political backgrounds. For example, the local Women Voters of Dayton and Montgomery County came into being out of the Woman's Suffrage Association of Montgomery County. Some of its leaders were: President – Mrs. N.M. Stanley (1920-32), Vice President – Mrs. Jesse Leech Davisson, and Field Secretary – Miss Charlotte Mary Conover (daughter of Mrs. Charlotte Reeve Conover). It maintained its national links with Carrie Chapman Catt and her national voter group the League of Women Voters (MS-004 Finding Aid, 12). A new era of equal rights between the sexes had begun.

Looking to the Future

Once the 19th Amendment passed on August 18, 1920, suffragists now turned their collective focus towards the future and the continued development of their newly established rights. By having a political voice they could now try and improve the country they lived in through pushing for politicians to address issue important to them in order to become better wives, mothers and citizens. Williamson writes on their newfound hope to elicit change, stating that there "were issues such as better job opportunities, fairer wages, better education, sex education, and birth control, i.e. reproductive rights. They also wanted to have individual economic security, which could be fostered by fairer inheritance and divorce laws," (3). Grace Isabel Colbron in her "Why I Believe in Woman Suffrage" pamphlet says, "There is no home so safeguarded by wealth that in some insidious way the poison of wrong social conditions does not

creep into it. And hundreds of thousands of homes all over our own country, with its vaunted progress, are made unworthy the name home because of these conditions. Every one of these evils is directly due to the effect of laws made by the few for the few, at the expense of the many. And our women are wasting their best efforts striving to offset the evil by the futile palliatives of philanthropy, social welfare work and the like. It is time they should be allowed to discover what an intelligent use of the ballot would render many of these palliatives unnecessary,” (2).

Relevance Today

Some would argue that Women’s Suffrage no longer remains relevant, that this is a long since dead topic, and that while what they achieved is of great importance, it no longer holds any significance in the modern world. Everyone has the right to vote now, so what remains for the further and continued review of the movement? There remains an argument that it is still relevant in today’s world; while women have the right to vote and they have since achieved even greater equality and gained many of the rights that they continued to fight for after the passage of the 19th Amendment, the vision of the suffragists that had shifted forward to other issues of concern still provides inspiration and courage to address injustices in the modern world. A modern example of this continued battle for equality would be wage rights in the workplace. In the United States today, there is still what is often referred to as a “glass ceiling” for women in regards to their pay and how far up they can move within corporate America. While corporate America has been largely dismissive of these claims, and even in some cases had flat out denied their existence, the continued and determined attention of activists has allowed the issue to remain in the public spotlight. This continued attention would result in the passage of the Equal Pay Act in 1963, when it was revealed that women earned fifty-three cents to every dollar that was earned by their male counterparts. Though the passage of this Act into law was significant, the national average has only improved slightly, with women now being paid seventy-seven cents to every dollar that would be paid to a man. In recent years, The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009 was signed by President Barack Obama to begin to enforce the closing of the wage gap, and has asked for the assembly of a National Equal Pay Enforcement Task Force to aid in the efforts to properly enforce the changing of this standard (“Fact Sheet...”). The struggle and

success of the women's suffragists can be of inspiration to people involved in that battle and others. Their story serves as a reminder to persevere, for this was the key to their success.

Creative Project Description

The main part of the creative project is an online resource for middle school children and teachers. The site features a profile on each of the seven women mentioned above along with photos, a brief biography, a description of their involvement in the Women's Suffrage Movement, and a description of (and where possible) photos of archival materials relating to their involvement in the Women's Suffrage Movement. There are also pages that provide a brief historical overview of the Women's Suffrage Movement at the local, state and national levels, a collections page and an accompanying citations page, an educational links page, an about page and a bibliography page included. A PDF of this essay is on the "About" page of the website.

On the WordPress site, an educational links page provides teachers with resources to share the exhibit with their students in class. Although students may also visit the site on their own. Links to a detailed lesson plan for teachers with corresponding activities, quizzes and homework assignments to be used as educational guides as well as links to additional educational materials pertaining to the topic. It is geared towards a middle school age group, but could easily be modified to accommodate other age group's educational needs. I chose to present this information in the format of an online exhibit using WordPress because it is a unique way to share the information. Since it is intended to be an educational resource, engaging students' interest in multimedia was a great way to share this information with them. It also serves to break the information down into manageable pieces, so as not to be overwhelming to the students.

Museum Education and CORE Teaching Standards

I consulted the American Library Association website as a guide for assembling an interactive exhibit that would engage my target audience. I also reviewed the educational website references provided on their website for further guidance and to aid in my understanding of how to create a website that is both educational and entertaining for my target audience.¹⁹ Helen Adam's of the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford, England on "Writing Effective Museum

¹⁹ "Great websites for kids." *American Library Association*. Web. 9 February 2015.
<http://gws.ala.org/category/history-biography>

Text” online resource also helped me to think about how I wanted to present my topic to my audience. Utilizing her technique of charting out what the “big idea” is and then supporting that with additional information points helped me to organize my materials in a coherent and logical manner that would be easy for my audience to follow.

Utilizing the CORE teaching methods outlined in the website, I referenced and based the lesson plan and other educational materials on a model from the National Women’s History Museum that was available online. I learned what designs and requirements aided in materials becoming CORE standard certified and became familiar with the expectations of a CORE standard program. I used this information and adapted this model to my own material. It allowed me to follow CORE teaching standards and work to develop an engaging and informative project.²⁰

Website Design

The website was created using the content management system WordPress. I was able to use a theme called Bushwick. I chose it mainly for its aesthetics, but also because it was user friendly. Overall, I was pleased with the theme and would still choose to use it for my project. In the beginning stages of this project, my technical knowledge was not extensive by any means, and I wanted to use this project as an opportunity to learn more about using multimedia tools such as WordPress. During the design phase of the project I learned a lot simply by testing things out and seeing what worked and what did not. I am extremely grateful for the help page on WordPress.com which helped walk me through a lot of the steps in setting up my website in the beginning. Also, with the help and advice of others more versed in technology I was able to use other programs to my advantage. For example, in order to manage the amount of information I found in the archives (and to provide myself with a copy to reference later) I took photographs of the relevant items, photographs and documents on my cell phone. I was then able to use the Google Drive app on my phone to not only save and back them up in my Google Mail account, but to get them onto my laptop and then upload the relevant materials to the website.

At the onset of this project, I had a certain aesthetic in mind for how I wanted the website to appear and how I wanted to share the information with the users. I wanted the design to have an old-world feel to it so that it would complement the historical photos and materials I planned

²⁰ “In their footsteps: Woman’s Suffrage Historic Sites In Washington D.C.” *National Women’s History Museum*. Web. 9 February 2015. <https://www.nwhm.org/education-resources/activities/womans-suffrage-tours#>

to share on it. At the same time, I wanted it to be accessible and not overwhelming to the user in appearance or in the presentation of the text. With the topic of the Women's Suffrage Movement being so vast, I wanted to find a way to break the information down into manageable pieces. I feel that I have met both the design and aesthetic goals I set for myself in the beginning of this process.

Using WordPress for this project allows each student to explore and develop their own understanding of the material based on the flexibility of the website format. Print materials convey information in a linear format – with a starting and finishing point. I designed my website to, “. . . encourage readers to navigate their own paths through the information in a non-linear way that may be different than the path of other readers or the intended path of the author,” (Coiro, 459). It invites the reader to naturally progress from one topic to another. I wanted my website to be accessible to all middle school students, and take into account the fact that each child's learning abilities are unique to them. I did this by allowing the materials to be referenced based on each individual student's curiosity, and ultimately, to allow them to choose their own pathway through the material. According to Julie Coiro, “Never before has it been more necessary that children learn to read, write and think critically. It's not just point and click. It's point, read, think and click,” (459). I believe that using WordPress allowed me to do this by giving me the ability to create a website that remains both engaging yet informative, and which allows both teacher and student the ability to explore and satisfy their curiosity about the seven women profiled and the Women's Suffrage Movement in Dayton, Ohio.

For students with disabilities, the website should also be accessible through a variety of software platforms and programs that would allow them to engage with the materials. Using programs like Dragon NaturallySpeaking or Naturally Sounding Voices, the user would be able to listen to the material on the website. Spoken word commands available through both Macintosh and Windows platforms are compatible with the website, and allow the user to verbally navigate between the pages. Images can also be selected individually and opened in a new browser window to provide larger versions of each picture for closer study and allow the student to read the source materials as needed. For the visually impaired, the text-to-voice software would read the tagline of the photo. I provide a succinct tagline for each picture giving visually impaired students an understanding of the photograph and provide an Intervention

Specialist information to further translate the image into an appropriate format, such as a Braille printout.

Best Practices for Educational Websites for Middle School Children

In creating the website component of this project, I researched the best practices for educational websites for middle school aged children to figure out how I wanted to approach the task of creating the website. According to Chow et al., “While there is a growing body of literature on the cognitive, affective, and information seeking habits of children and adolescents, there is a scarcity of research on how to apply this information to the design of information portals for youth that are increasingly proliferating the web for social, educational, and entertainment purposes,” (91). The authors continue, stating, “Intermediate, preteen readers (age 9-12) are in the concrete operational stage where (intelligence is demonstrated through logical and systematic manipulation of symbols related to concrete objects) (Huitt & Hummel, 2003)” (qtd. in Chow et al., 90-91). Trial-and-error with physical not abstract objects is how children of this age understand the world and in the digital environment a ‘... list of alphabet citations may mean much less to children at this level than an electronic display of familiar book covers’ (Cooper, 2005, p. 288),” (qtd. in Chow et al., 90-91). While there has been some research conducted on the subject, technology is an ever-changing field with a constant influx of updates and new applications. This makes it difficult for researchers to determine what the best practices are for creating a website for middle school children (and other children in general), as a consensus of the research conducted has yet to be reached.

In my research, I did not find a list of best practices or criteria to be met, but there were four common points in the articles I read on creating age appropriate websites for middle school children. These four points were to: (1) write for your intended audience and do not assume knowledge they do not have (i.e. tackle the topic and design from their perspective, not an adult perspective)²¹, (2) remember that reading comprehension of online material is different than linear print (readers tend to skim rather than read)²², (3) keep things simple and easy to use (if

²¹ Adams, Helen. “Writing Effective Museum Text”. Web. 14 June 2015.
<http://www.slideshare.net/HelenHales/writing-effective-museum-text-8243677>

²² Coiro, Julie. “Exploring Literacy on the Internet: Reading Comprehension on the Internet: Expanding Our Understanding of Reading Comprehension to Encompass New Literacies.” *The Reading Teacher* 56.5 (2003): 458-464. Web. 18 July 2015.

visitors get frustrated they will move on)²³, (4) make the design visually pleasing, but not at the expense of the reader finding the information that they are looking for (this will only annoy them).²⁴ I utilized these guidelines in creating my website, insuring that my material was easy to read without becoming overwhelming or dry, and engaging the student by allowing independent navigation to dictate their website experience. I organized the titles of the pages to allow the user to easily understand the website layout, and provided clear instructions through notes on the individual webpages where needed. I kept in mind my target audience's solid foundation of website navigation and familiarity with technology. Dubroy states that, "In a study of 55 children, Nielsen (2002) actually found that children tended to have an easier time navigating websites for adults rather than children because children's sites oftentimes are "convoluted" but also would require some instruction as how to navigate an unfamiliar website. (2010)" (qtd. in Chow et al., 92). In addition to this research, I relied on Helen Adams' advice to write for your audience, not your peers, and to go from the specific to the general. She also recommends basing any explanation in what the reader is likely to already know, to always explain specialist or technical vocabulary, and to not think of using clear, straightforward language as 'dumbing it down,' (Adams, 2011).

Organization of Website

This website was organized with the above points in mind. How does it meet these criteria? (1) I kept my intended audience in mind at all times and not assume knowledge they do not have on the subject. (2) I had to remember that readers tend to skim rather than read the material in its entirety. I also used a design appealing enough and the story interesting enough to grab their attention and make them want to keep reading. (3) The template I chose allowed me to design a simple and easy to use website. In certain areas of the website where I thought the user might need further instruction, it allowed me to include notes to the user on how to proceed. (4) My goal was make the design visually pleasing, but not at the expense of the reader finding the information that they are looking for. I did not want the information to be lost in the aesthetics. Chow et al. describe, "In a study of 55 children, Nielsen (2002) actually found that children tended to have an easier time navigating websites for adults rather than children because

²³ Coiro, Julie.

²⁴ Chow, Anthony S., Smith, Kathelene M. and Katherine Sun. "Youth as Design Partners: Age Appropriate Websites for Middle and High School Students." *Educational Technology and Society* 15.4 (2012): 89-103. Web. 21 July 2015.

children's sites oftentimes are "convoluted" (Dubroy, 2010)," (qt. in, 92). I also often referred to Adam's tips on writing effective museum text to help me stay on track when writing the website text. It helped to think of it as exhibit text in narrative form. Using these techniques, I feel that I was able to create a website that is accessible for middle school children and that I met the above criteria.

Conclusion

The dream of women's suffrage brought these women together and connected them to a larger national sisterhood, and through hard work and perseverance they were able to achieve their common goal and the right to vote for women. They were visionary pioneers who helped foster a new age in Dayton, and gained national attention for their efforts. They will be forever memorialized by their actions on behalf of women everywhere, even if they are not all recognized by face or name. Their achievements paved the way for future generations of Dayton women to be influential in their city, regardless of class or societal standing.

Potential future research could be an examination into the transformation of the women's suffrage groups into voter education groups for women after the passage of the 19th Amendment. It would be interesting to see how many supporters of the Women's Suffrage Movement continued their work by helping to ease the social and political tensions surrounding the influx of new voters. It would also be interesting to look at how things changed for women after the passage of the 19th Amendment.

Another future research idea would be to examine what arguments the anti-suffrage movement used and the reasons behind why they felt this way. The topic could be expanded to also examine their interactions with the suffragists, including potential family division over the controversial topic if a source existed. Further research could reveal what thoughts and emotions drove the anti-suffragist movement, and engage in aiding the understanding of the reader as to the stiff opposition that the Women's Suffrage Movement faced.

The history of the Equal Rights Movement may also be an interesting topic to explore. You could also see what correlations can be found in the problems Wage Rights Movement workers face and the Woman's Suffrage Movement workers faced. The Women's Suffrage Movement is a rich topic that offers multiple future research possibilities.

Appendix A

Selection from *Our Women Past, Present and Future* (1925) by Hallie Q. Brown

This selection demonstrates Hallie Q. Brown's views on the suffrage and how they differed from those of other suffragists of her time.

Hospitals for the sick and dying. All have obstacles, but we must learn to surmount them.

An Obstacle

I was climbing up a mountain path
 With many things to do,
 Important business of my own
 And other people's too,
 When I ran against a prejudice

That quite cut off the view,
 So I sat before him helpless In an ecstasy of woe –
 The mountain mists were rising fast,
 The sun was sinking low –
 When a sudden inspiration came,
 As sudden winds do blow.
 I took my hat, I took my stick,
 My load I settled fair,
 I approached that awful incubus
 With an absent-minded air –
 And I walked directly through him,
 As if he wasn't there!

Our women are over-coming almost incomparable difficulties. They are cultivating their own

powers. Traverse the length and breadth of our land, note the splendid work of the women. Visit their clubs and federations, hear the deliberations and see the tangible proof of their advancement in things material; and feel the strength of their mental and spiritual power. On Cedar Hill, that noble height, stands The Douglass House, a monument to the energy and perseverance of the women of the Nation.

Has this been accomplished by ease and partial endeavor? Nay – like all great things it has been nurtured in hardship, prayed over in sorrow and watered in tears. These women were compelled to do this work – proving that necessity is a hard school-mistress, but a very excellent one. These institutions and projects do not represent moneys from a rich and favored class, but the hard earned pittances of a poor people. These efforts taken singly may be likened to the snow that silently falls, flake by flake; yet accumulated, these snow flakes form the mighty avalanche which sweeps all before it.

To the women of the country I would say, have a determined perseverance – cultivate that which you have so nobly begun. It is the last fight that wins the battle, the one march more that wins the campaign. Your force may not be as strong as another but continue it the longer, concentrate it more and you will be the conqueror.

Said a Spartan father to his son who complained that his sword was too short – “Add a step to it!”

Women, step forward! Grasp your opportunity, grapple at short range and the victory is yours.

Appendix B

Selection on the Women's Club Movement in Dayton, Ohio from Charlotte Reeve Conover's *Dayton, Ohio – An Intimate History* (1932)

This selection showcases the Women's Club Movement in Dayton, Ohio and the role that it played in women's lives and how it was a driving force in the local Women's Suffrage Movement.

In 1890 some husbands were not a little concerned over the question whether a woman's "club" could rally be perfectly respectable, that is in the sense of *comme il faut*. Newspaper editors knew from the beginning that it was a fateful experiment. In the first place women, they were sure, could have nothing really vital to discuss or contribute. In the second place there was no use for it. Women were not really citizens, they had no share in the public issues that affect men. If the curtains of the future could have been lifted to disclose women in business and politics, to disclose even nation-wide organizations of women's clubs composed entirely of business and professional women, neither they nor we would have believed that a bird of such a feather could ever be hatched.

In the early 'seventies Dayton, except for the Saturday Club, was commercial to the core and not much else. In the 'eighties the most we could say of ourselves was that we were undernourished intellectually and did not know it. Music had made a start but books and pictures did not come into our lives as bread and butter. The tone of society life was mid-Victorian, superficial, elementary. A few owned good pictures but there was no general wish to examine or buy them. Good private libraries there were, under Steele and Thresher roofs, and a few of us, according to family training and habit, were readers. But to have talked much about it would have raised a certain kind of alarm as a claim of super-intellectuality. To have boldly discussed a book, other than the latest best-seller novel, would have set one down as a poseur. Women came together in those blank years in one of two or three ways – church sociables, card parties and infrequent and formal evening receptions. To any wider outlook they were blind; to the large world interests in which their husbands were familiar they were indifferent.

I have gone at some length into the story of this atmosphere of dull but pleasant superficiality to note the remarkable change that came over the city in the last two decades of the century. Those who assailed it at the time as a "fad" now know it as the lever that lifted Dayton women into a new life.

James A. Robert came, with his wife, from New England to Dayton in the early 'seventies, he to act as principal of Cooper Seminary, then in its prime For the Roberts talked about the things that had nothing to do with business or personal gossip. They led at dinner tables in conversation that centered upon books or art or music The fame of his interpretations spread to the homes of his pupils where, to a proposal that he lead a weekly class for the mothers, the welcome was instantaneous. It was the only place in Dayton where adult women met with subjects outside of their own domestic duties and their church. Gradually it became the fashion to admit interest in serious things and when the class disbanded it was he who suggested that it be the nucleus for a larger group to call itself a "club."

So the club movement had its beginning in Dayton and to James Robert we own its inception and to Mary Steele its application Except for these it would have been a case of the blind leading the blind. But it was a procession fired with enthusiasm, for at last the women of Dayton, or some of them, found a better reason for existence than dressing, calling jelly-making, and gossip. It was on March 30, 1889, that a group met at Cooper Hotel (then under the management of Mr. and Mrs. Horace Fox and a center of social life) to make plans for what was to be known as "The Woman's Literary Club." They were Miss Carrie Brown, Mrs. James A. Marlay, Mrs. E. R. Stillwell, Mrs. A. D. Wilt, Miss Electra Doren, Mrs. James A. Robert, Mrs. Frank Conover. At a later meeting they were augmented by Mrs. J. B. Thresher, Miss Mary Reeve, Miss Anna Rogers, Miss Martha Perrine, Mrs. W. D. Bickham, Miss Florence Gebhart. The plan was to have four classes of study – art, history, general literature, and miscellaneous – with a chairman for each and the sections taking turns in the bi-monthly programs. Later these departments were given up and the club as a whole occupied itself with the study of the English authors and the classics. Looking back upon our ambitions one hardly knows when to smile and when to weep. Our first yearbooks were marvels in more ways than one. It was so remarkable to see our own names in print, and as purveyors of knowledge that, in a way, it went to our heads. The club became a saturnalia of culture. There was nothing too deep or too abstruse for us to attempt in the name of Literature, with a capital letter. Our aims were novel and we did take ourselves most seriously. . . . Self-culture was not the sole aim of the Literary Club; we mixed philanthropy and community service with it, agitating for summer band concerts, a juvenile court, public playgrounds, and vacation schools. We really carried through to completion the appointment of a police matron, an unheard of innovation for those years. In fact the Literary Club *opened doors*,

which is not a bad thing to do in any time or place. Presidents who have served the Literary Club in the past are: Jane B. Marlay, Agnes J. Robert, Salome K. Rike, Charlotte Reeve Conover, Sara B. Thresher, Mary M. Parrott, Mary Reeve Dexter, Mary M. Kumler, Mable S. Withoft, Marie J. Kumler, Elizabeth F. Peirce, Erminie G. Crawford, Nellie McCampbell, Elsie Castor Chisman, Anna Whittaker Roussel, Laura T. McCann, Mable M. Pierce, Minnie R. Millette, Justina M. Showers, Bertha B. Landis, Elizabeth P. Fenton . . . The Woman's Literary Club was not the only club in Dayton but it was the first. It set a fashion and other clubs began to spring up like mushrooms in the night.

Appendix C

Selection from Charlotte Reeve Conover's *Some Dayton Saints and Prophets* (1907)

This selection tells the story of how Dayton got its first police matron, Louanda Bowman. The significance of this story is that it demonstrates how the perseverance of a select committee of ladies under the leadership of Ms. Mary Steele led to real and needed change in the city.

"For years the entire police system of Dayton, as of other cities, had been in the hands of men. Young girls arrested on charges of loitering were taken in hand by policemen, locked up by policemen, often in the same cell with hardened women, who, by their conversation, soon finished the work of pollution begun on the street. Women prisoners were searched by the officers before being locked up. This was the law, and it sometimes bore as hard upon the officers as the prisoners. No woman, even if she be on the criminal road, likes to submit to such indignity . . . Little boys and girls came into these dreadful surroundings; there was no other place to put them. The unwisdom, to use a mild term, of this shocking situation was slow to be felt by the public. What do we know, sitting about our own firesides, of what goes on at the station house? The homesick cries of a lost child reach no further toward public ear than the ravings of a man in delirium tremens. But at last people did wake up to it, the women part of the people. Up to that year, 1893, the agitation which resulted in the appointment of police matrons had been begun and carried on entirely by women. Few cities had them, and in those cities the struggle was a long one, carried on by a few deadly earnest women against a lot of deadly stubborn or phlegmatically apathetic men. Sometimes the interest rose among the Christian Association workers, sometimes in the Christian Temperance Union, sometimes in a woman's club. This was the case in Dayton, where a winter's study of civic conditions and a looking into local affairs convinced the members that Dayton should no longer bear the shame of the absence of a matron in our police station. Mary Steele was one of the first to talk and then act. . . A joint committee was appointed with women representing different organizations and churches to confer and report. They were: Mrs. J.H. Winters, chairman; Mrs. J. H. Gorman, Mrs. Jos. R. Gebhart, Mrs. Frank Conover [Charlotte Reeve Conover], Mrs. O.M. Randall, Mrs. John G. Doren, Mrs. David Gebhart, Mrs. U. H. O'Dell, Mrs. J. A. Gilbert, and Mrs. W. J. Conklin. These ten women began under Mary Steele's direction by "reading up" the subject. They found what cities had police matrons, and how the system worked they looked into the station house, and found how the want of a kind sensible woman to look after things did not work. They then

began by interviewing public officials; here their troubles began. The tax commissioners were the first wall in the path of progress. They said there was "no money," and considered that the question was closed. When women want to do things that take money and men say there is no money, the matter generally stops there, that being one of the beautiful results of the economic dependence of women. But it did not stop here with this committee . . . Under her [Mary Steele] arm she had a copy of the Revised Statutes of Ohio, and with it she climbed the steep office stairs to show the City Solicitor what provision the State of Ohio had made for her delinquents. He was most polite, agreed with her on all questions; they all did; in fact, the unanimity of the Tax and Police Commission with the women, in theory, was beautiful to see, but it did not further the practice. The money had been "all paid in, all paid out," and no more coming until the next levy - a year or so off, when, if we cared to wait, they would "see about" the question of employing a police matron. But the waiting had gone on long enough. Miss Steele opened her authoritative volume to a certain page and said: "My dear sir, the law does not say 'may,' it says 'shall'; are you going to obey it?" Under the surface in official circles there was a feeling that things were well enough as they were and that a lot of women who ran about to offices trying to teach men what to do ought to be shut up at home or penally transported. A mass-meeting of women was then called to meet at the W.C.A. auditorium; not of women with political bees in their bonnets; not busy-bodies, minding everybody's affairs but their own, but the best representatives of cultivated Christian womanhood in Dayton; mothers of sons and daughters, who, for the sake of somebody else's less fortunate sons and daughters, would not let this disgraceful want go unprovided for. The Mayor was invited, as one having the appointing power, and given a seat on the platform. He was gallant, but nervous, and listened attentively. The subject was gone over as has been sketched . . . The law provided, and they desired it; a woman had been found who was entirely fitted for the position; would he appoint her if her salary was assured? He would. In another five or ten minutes the whole of the first year's salary was subscribed and the troubles of the committee appeared to be over. Miss [Louanda] Bowman was appointed, but, upon taking her place, some one in official circles discovered a mandatory law which seemed to put an end to the whole question. The statute said: "There shall be a Police Matron; it also said there "shall be" steel cells, tiled walls, and various other comforts and conveniences which everybody knows always have been lacking in the Dayton Station House, and it is to be feared always will be." The official interpretation of this law was, "No steel cells,

etcetera, no police matron," and it did look black. Besides, there was no place to put her. The committee again met, and with it Miss Bowman . . . In all these deliberations Mary Steele was our most optimistic inspirer. We visited the station house and we visited her. We reported the building neither roomy nor convenient; just the reverse; but there was a hallway which could be shut off at one end and a door put at the other. Miss Bowman looked at the narrow space, one window, dirty walls and floor, and said she could make herself comfortable. One of the committee remembered a bed she did not need, another a rug, and the next day the cell, for it was no better, was furnished and the Matron moved in. This has been a long story, but it would take longer to tell how Miss Bowman took her place in the Station House and then in the officer's hearts, and kept both. How she sheltered wandering girls on the verge of hideous wrong and got them back somehow to their mothers; how she took little lost boys to bed with her, borrowing a "nightie" from the neighbors, for their temporary needs; how she accompanied women prisoners into police court to speak for them to the judge; how she looked after things in and about the place, moral, spiritual, and physical. With her small hundred- pound weight she accomplished what the strong men on the force could not. Drunken furies gave up hidden knives or laudanum at her bidding and went to sleep without cursing. Many a secret had she heard that was told to no one else; many a prayer has she said by penitent bedsides; many a letter written to lost families or friends. Her influence persisted and controlled beyond the four miserable walls of the building she lived in. She kept friends with the girls she had befriended, and helped them back into safe, useful lives. After a few months in her position, the officers of the police force would not have done without her. The experiment had proved itself in Dayton as it had elsewhere. No committees of women are now needed to suggest a Police Matron. Every man in public municipal life knows it to be a first necessity to the ignorant and degraded waifs that drift upon the city shores . . ."

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WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

July 24, 2015

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS PROJECT PREPARED UNDER MY
SUPERVISION BY **Michelle Schweickart** ENTITLED **Through the Eyes of Pioneers:
Accounts of the Women's Suffrage Movement in Dayton, Ohio (1890-1920)** BE ACCEPTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER
OF HUMANITIES.

Marjorie McLellan, Ph.D.

Thesis Director

Valerie Stoker, Ph.D.

Director, Master of Humanities Program

Committee on Final Examination:

_____	Thesis/ Project Director	_____
Dr. Marjorie McLellan, Ph.D.		Date

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Dr. Jeanette Marchand, Ph.D.		Date

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Robert E.W. Fyffe, Ph.D. Dean, Graduate School		Date