

UNDERSTANDING THE ANTI-SUFFRAGISTS AS  
CHRISTIANS: THE BELIEFS OF THE MEN AND  
WOMEN OPPOSED TO WOMAN’S SUFFRAGE  
FROM A RELIGIOUS POINT OF VIEW

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*Abstract:* This article analyzes the anti-suffrage movement from a Christian point of view. Most analyses of this movement have looked to its political aspects and the class interests of the anti-suffragists for answers; indeed, many historians have drawn the conclusion that anti-suffragists’ motivations were largely class-based. If historians mention religion at all, it normally occupies a very marginal role in their analysis. This article illustrates the fact that many of the anti-suffragists’ opinions concerning men’s and women’s roles, the nature of the family unit, and even economics may be traced to Christian traditions and were common to Christians during the time period in which most organized anti-suffragist activity occurred (which was roughly from 1880-1920). The article specifically looks at Catholic, Presbyterian, and Episcopalian anti-suffragists.

*Keywords:* Christianity, women’s suffrage, American religion, Protestant history, feminism

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The story of woman's suffrage in America is probably somewhat familiar to many students of history. Beginning in the nineteenth-century, supporters of woman's suffrage lobbied, marched, and engaged in picketing and hunger strikes as part of a long campaign to win the vote for women. Some of the suffragists pursued state ratification; they were able to obtain full suffrage for women in more than a dozen states and partial suffrage in others before the nineteenth amendment was passed by the House and Senate. Then, of course, thirty-six states ratified the amendment; at this point, at least theoretically, women everywhere in America could vote, or so it would seem.<sup>2</sup> The whole process took place over a span of some eighty years, and more than a little bit of ink has been spilt discussing the time and the depth of this struggle. However, perhaps in their zeal to emphasize the efforts of the suffragists, some have failed to contemplate at least one of the reasons for the protracted battle: a fairly large number of people were not on board with woman's suffrage until the final days of the fight, and some were not on board even after the fight was over.

These were the anti-suffragists, or remonstrants, as they were often called—protectors, they believed, of traditional motherhood, hearth, and home. Remonstrants disagreed with the suffrage movement for many reasons, but protection of the home and motherhood loomed large in their arguments. However, even though there have been several well-written histories covering the anti-suffrage movement, some historians seem to have quickly passed over the roots that undergirded these beliefs. Perhaps this is because these roots were often religiously oriented. Indeed, most of the primary anti-suffrage arguments from this time period, as one might

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<sup>2</sup> Of course, many African American women, the poor, and some other groups were often disenfranchised long after 1920. See Sara M. Evans, *Born for Liberty: A History of Women in America* (New York: Free Press Paperbacks, 1997), 169-72; 270-1.

imagine, were theological or religious in nature, or, perhaps more specifically, Christian. Their proponents claimed that

God had ordained man and woman to perform different functions in the state as well as in the home, or that he had intended woman for the home and man for the world.<sup>3</sup>

Yet, in many of the histories of anti-suffrage, the Christian religion’s role in the movement is treated very superficially—if it is discussed at all.<sup>4</sup>

However, since the “primary” arguments for the anti-suffragists’ positions came from Christianity, a more detailed assessment of the origins of these ideologies seems relevant and necessary.<sup>5</sup> It also seems necessary given the fact that various explanations for the anti-suffragists’ sentiments appear to fall short in many ways. It has often been argued, for example, that the protection of class interests played a primary role in the position these groups and their leaders held with regard to suffrage; if suffrage was voted in, these people, who were the leading philanthropists and the business and agricultural elites of their day, would be replaced by professional social workers. They would no longer be necessary to society, and, of course, other reforms, such as child labor and perhaps higher wages for workers, would affect their economic interests as proprietors. Some have also simply labeled these people as “Republicans,” which is questionable as well. For one, white southern anti-suffragists would have been Democrats. Secondly, while the ideologies of the antis may have resembled modern Republicanism in some ways, one must remember that

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<sup>3</sup> Aileen S. Kraditor, *The Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement: 1890-1920* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1981), 16.

<sup>4</sup> The same is true for the treatment of religion in the history of feminist thought. This habitual ignorance of religion and theology’s role is highlighted in Jamin Andreas Hübner’s review of Rosemarie Tong and Tina Botts, *Feminist Thought: A More Comprehensive Introduction*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: Westview Press, 2018) in *Priscilla Papers* 32:3 (2018): 29-30.

<sup>5</sup> Kraditor, *Ideas*, 15.

at this time, northern Republicans did support some reform movements, so anti-suffragism would not have completely fit into this paradigm.

Of course, many historians, like Susan Marshall, have pointed out that the anti-suffragists' beliefs stemmed from "separate spheres"—the ideology that posited that men best functioned in the public sphere, which includes the political realm, while women best functioned in the private, domestic sphere.<sup>6</sup> One of the biggest promoters of separate spheres, Catharine Beecher, claimed that woman must "take a subordinate station" and assume a domestic role for the good of society; indeed, these ideas appear to be at the very heart of the anti-suffragists' beliefs and values.<sup>7</sup> However, even the doctrine of separate spheres does not explain the anti-suffragists' positions concerning economics, which were overwhelmingly laissez-faire. It may be argued that even though there may not have been a system or ideology that provided a basis for all of the anti-suffragists' beliefs, there may be an explanation that accounts for their economic ideas and even, to an extent, for separate spheres. Even though they may have campaigned against suffrage partly due to their economic interests, white, Christian anti-suffragists also disparaged suffrage because they sincerely believed it to be out of step with God's design for women and the family.

Additionally, many late-nineteenth and early twentieth century Christians tended to believe in laissez-faire economics (or a system in which the government did not intervene in the economic market) and disparaged socialism. One could reasonably expect Christian anti-suffragists to maintain similar beliefs. Such sentiments were not just common fare for the wealthy; they were commonplace among most believers at this time.

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<sup>6</sup> Susan Marshall, *Splintered Sisterhood: Gender and Class in the Campaign Against Woman Suffrage* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1997), 109.

<sup>7</sup> Catharine Beecher, *Treatise on Domestic Economy for the Use of Young Ladies at Home and at School* (Boston: T.H. Webb and Co., 1843), 26; see also Kathryn Kish Sklar, *Catharine Beecher: A Study in Domestic Economy* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1976), 158.

Religious arguments, then, appear to have informed some of the ideologies antis had concerning women’s roles and the family unit, as well as their rhetoric and beliefs about socialism, philanthropy, social welfare, and the care of the poor—subjects that suffragists thought they could affect by holding the ballot. Some of the arguments and activities of some of the members of three of the largest Christian groups that opposed suffrage—Catholics, Presbyterians, and Episcopalians—bear this out.

## II. ROMAN CATHOLIC THEOLOGY AND WOMEN’S ROLES

Historian Thomas J. Jablonsky claims that Roman Catholics were the most unified national religious body of anti-suffragists. They were also, quite possibly, the most dogmatic when it came to their ideologies concerning women’s roles.<sup>8</sup> According to Aileen Kraditor, the underpinnings of most anti-suffragists’ ideologies were theological, biological, and sociological.<sup>9</sup> This is a fair and useful way to classify anti-suffrage arguments, so it will sometimes be mentioned here. However, with Catholicism, as with other forms of Christianity, it should be understood that there are deep doctrinal beliefs that undergird these ideologies.

The Church’s hostility toward woman’s suffrage was deeply rooted in its history and theology, going back to Augustine.<sup>10</sup> Although disputed

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<sup>8</sup> Thomas J. Jablonsky, *The Home, Heaven, and Mother Party: Female Anti-Suffragists in the United States, 1868-1920* (New York: Carlson, 1994), 54; see also Lois Banner, *Women in Modern America: A Brief History*, 3rd ed. (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1995), 88.

<sup>9</sup> Since Kraditor’s *Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement*, other scholars such as Susan E. Marshall and Jeanne Howard have created alternative categories and even subcategories for these arguments. Elna Green claims she prefers the simplicity of Kraditor’s classification system; indeed, this system appears to be the simplest and the most concise. See Elna C. Green, *Southern Strategies: Southern Women and the Woman Suffrage Question* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1997), 225.

<sup>10</sup> Rosemary Radford Reuther, “Contraception, Religion in Public Policy, Essay,” in *Conscience Magazine* (May 2006), accessed July 6, 2017. [http://www.catholicsforchoice.org/issues\\_publications/women-reproductive-rights-and-the-church-2/](http://www.catholicsforchoice.org/issues_publications/women-reproductive-rights-and-the-church-2/).

by some modern feminists, certain Catholic commentators such as Fr. Edmund Hill argue that while Augustine believed that women were created in God's image, the early church father also held that men's and women's bodies symbolized different phenomena. According to Hill, Augustine believed that since God could only create men and women in a bodily form, He created them to image the human mind, which has two functions: males represented rationality or the contemplation of the eternal; women represented the body and the material world, or the management of temporal affairs.<sup>11</sup> Males and females also played different roles, with men as tillers of the soil and women as "helpers" to men through the bearing of children.<sup>12</sup> In 1880, Leo XIII declared in the encyclical *Arcanum* that the husband was the "ruler of the family and the head of the wife."<sup>13</sup> The "husband ruling," Leo's encyclical declared, "represents the image of Christ and the wife obedient the image of the Church" with "Divine love at all times setting the standard of duty."<sup>14</sup> The Catholic Church has declared that it has "always" maintained this position, which Leo repeatedly emphasized during the 1880s, and the Church adheres to this position today.<sup>15</sup>

Catholic priests were some of the first to articulate theological, biological, and sociological arguments per their doctrine concerning women and voting—although they usually claimed that the Catholic Church took no position regarding politics. As James J. Kenneally

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<sup>11</sup> Fr. Edmund Hill, O.P. "Talk given at the Robert Hugh Benson Graduate Society at Fisher House" (Cambridge: MA, 1994), accessed July 26, 2017.

<https://www.its.caltech.edu/~nmcenter/women-cp/augustin.html>; see also St. Augustine, *The Literal Meaning of Genesis*, Johannes Quasten, ed., trans. John Hammond Taylor, S.J., *Ancient Christian Writers*, Vol. I (New York, Newman Press, 1982), 98-9.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Leo XIII, quoted in Augustin Rossler and William Fanning, "Woman," in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, New Advent (New York: Robert Appleton Company) accessed July 27, 2017, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15687b.htm>

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

explains, John J. Williams, the Archbishop of Boston, commented on the suffrage issue to the *Boston Advertiser* in 1885, foreshadowing the position of the Catholic attitude toward suffrage “for the next thirty-five years.”<sup>16</sup> While the Church, Williams claimed, did not involve itself in political questions, since he was being asked for his opinion on the matter, the archbishop asserted that “women should not take part in politics.”<sup>17</sup> Williams added that there were “two distinct spheres of activity, one for each sex. That of woman centered around her position in perpetuating the race” and as the nucleus of the “society of the family.” He continues: “This was a system designed by God, revealed by a Pauline interpretation of scripture and the natural law, re-enforced by biological differences, and supported by a historical tradition which proclaimed the political supremacy of man.”<sup>18</sup> Adding the “sociological” argument, Williams proclaimed that the participation of either sex in activities which properly belonged to the other sex was “unnatural, a threat to universal order.”<sup>19</sup>

Other priests’ and bishops’ arguments were similar. In Cincinnati, Cardinal Gibbons, like Williams, asserted that he did not take a position regarding suffrage, but claimed that woman’s “proper sphere” was in the home.<sup>20</sup> Christianity, he averred, had exalted her to this, setting her as the equal peer of man. If a woman were to participate in politics, the cardinal warned, she might neglect her children—and her husband would suffer from her absence.<sup>21</sup> Even worse, he lamented, she would surely “carry

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<sup>16</sup> James J. Kenneally, “Catholicism and Woman Suffrage in Massachusetts,” *The Catholic Historical Review*, vol. 53:1 (Apr., 1967): 43-57.

<sup>17</sup> Interview of Williams in the *Boston Advertiser*, quoted in Katherine E. Conway and Mabel W. Cameron, *Charles Francis Donnelly, a Memoir* (New York, 1909), 30.

<sup>18</sup> This is Kenneally’s summary of the position as described in the *Massachusetts Catholic press*; see Kenneally, 43.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

away on her some of the mud and dirt of political contact.”<sup>22</sup> William O’Connell of Maryland took a similar position, as did the Reverend J.P. Bodfish, a priest from Canton, Massachusetts. Most Catholic priests also took the opinion that although some women’s success in the working world was not necessarily wrong, professionalism was the province of the exceptional woman. Katherine E. Conway, a Catholic novelist, apparently agreed with this opinion concerning herself.<sup>23</sup>

According to Kenneally, the Boston clergy’s attitudes were more aggressive than many others in their profession. But they were reflective of the typical American Catholic sentiment of the time.<sup>24</sup> As late as 1900, the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) could list only six Catholic clergymen who supported woman suffrage. Elizabeth Cady Stanton listed the persuasion of Catholic women to the cause of suffrage as one of her organization’s most important tasks.<sup>25</sup>

### III. CATHOLICS, SUFFRAGE, AND ETHNICITY: STILL ABOUT RELIGION

Some historians have pointed to cultural reasons for Catholics’ aversion towards suffrage, such as the protection of ethnicity by mostly Catholic immigrant groups, like the Polish, the Irish, and the Italians.

Indeed, according to Jablonsky, some of these immigrants saw suffragists as “dangerous radicals” who threatened to destroy their

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<sup>22</sup> Cardinal Gibbons, quoted in Victoria Pruin DeFrancisco and Catherine Helen, *Communicating Gender Diversity: A Critical Approach* (Sage Publishing: University of Northern Iowa, 2007), 42.

<sup>23</sup> Kathleen Sprows Cummings, *New Women of the Old Faith: Gender and American Catholicism in the Progressive Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2009), 170.

<sup>24</sup> Kenneally, 47; see also Lois B. Merk, “Massachusetts and the Woman-Suffrage Movement” (PhD dissertation, Radcliffe, 1961), 184.

<sup>25</sup> Kenneally, 47; see also Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Matilda Joslyn Gage, *History of Woman Suffrage*, Vol. IV (New York: Source Book Press, 1970), 1079-80.



customs and the traditional family unit.<sup>26</sup> However, Jablonsky also asserts that this angst was rooted in these peoples’ identities as Catholics, not so much in their identities as immigrants.<sup>27</sup> Kathleen Sprows Cummings claims that particularly after 1900, as more people of Irish or Italian heritage, for example, came to be born in the United States rather than in their native homelands, these people’s identities became religious in nature, not ethnic as much.<sup>28</sup> This is, among other things, evident in the writings of Katherine Conway and Margaret Buchanan Sullivan, an Irish nationalist. The terms “Irish” and “Catholic,” in other words, came to be at least convertible in nature.<sup>29</sup> It should also be noted that, according to some research done by Eileen McDonagh and H. Douglas Price, the Irish were apparently only opposed to suffrage to a certain degree; with Italian Catholics, there was apparently no significant opposition.<sup>30</sup> It would appear, then, that many of these people were organizing to protect their religious interests, or that at least their ethnic identity had become intertwined with their religious identity.<sup>31</sup> As a case in point, many Protestant women apparently campaigned for the vote as an effort to limit the voting potential of *Catholics*, not so much immigrant groups per se.<sup>32</sup>

Germans appear to have been an exception: they did, indeed see woman’s suffrage as a threat not only to their religious identity, but to their ethnic identity as well. In a study of Nebraska Catholics, Laura McKee Hickman claims that those of German heritage in Nebraska saw suffragists as a threat to their culture—particularly those suffragists who advocated prohibition. Many German immigrants carried on traditions

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<sup>26</sup> Jablonsky, *The Home*, 66.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 45.

<sup>28</sup> Cummings, *New Women*, 168.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> Eileen McDonagh and H. Douglas Price, “Woman Suffrage in the Progressive Era: Patterns of Opposition and Support in Referenda Voting, 1910-1918,” *The American Political Science Review* 79:2 (June, 1985): 430.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> Mary E. Blake, “The Trouble in Boston Schools,” *Catholic World*, XLVIII (1888-89), 501-09.

such as brewing beer at home and often operated successful breweries; Marshall notes that the German-American Alliance worked with brewery organizations to actively campaign against prohibition—and woman’s suffrage.<sup>33</sup> However, some Nebraska German Catholics apparently voted against woman’s suffrage for religious reasons as well; many of them joined the national Central-Verein, an organization which sought to undermine the Americanization of the Catholic Church.<sup>34</sup> For Nebraska Germans, be they Catholic or not, suffrage was part and parcel of the Americanization of their culture. Besides fighting to protect their right to consume, produce, and sell alcohol, Germans wanted to preserve their language, which they campaigned to have included in public school instruction.<sup>35</sup> They also felt that suffrage threatened German family values, which championed domestic roles for women.<sup>36</sup> According to Hickman, Germans made up more than fifty-four percent of Nebraska’s foreign-born population; in 1882, in precincts that were fifty percent or more German, when the time came to vote concerning woman’s suffrage, they voted it down ten to one.<sup>37</sup>

Besides Catholics’ conservative views regarding the roles of women, they organized against the suffrage movement for other causes that similarly stemmed from their religious beliefs. For one, Catholics attacked suffrage and feminism as allies of socialism. In 1891, Pope Leo XIII denounced socialism as a great evil in the encyclical *Rerum Novarum*. Socialism, he claimed, gives credence to the material world only, punishes the virtue of thrift, advocates a government-sanctioned theft of private

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<sup>33</sup> Marshall, *Splintered Sisterhood*, 68-9.

<sup>34</sup> See Laura McKee Hickman, “Thou Shalt Not Vote: Anti-Suffrage in Nebraska: 1914-1920” Nebraska State Historical Society, accessed July 8, 2017. <http://www.nebraskahistory.org/publish/publicat/history/full-text/NH1999Anti-Suffrage.pdf>.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

property, and can even promote a type of class warfare.<sup>38</sup> All of this is antithetical to biblical teaching concerning the laws of God and nature; man has a right to the fruits of his own labor and to the private property he gains from it.<sup>39</sup> To the extent that Catholics were listening to their Pope at this time, socialism was out of the question as an economic system. The Pope implied that besides seeking to equalize people’s labor, including the labor of men and women, socialism has also sought to displace the family as the central unit of society. Government or the community would act as the father, the natural provider for the family, according to Pope Leo; this was unnatural—and wrong.<sup>40</sup> Socialism was, therefore, also out of the question for Catholics since it was often an ally of woman’s suffrage and the feminist movement.<sup>41</sup>

Some Catholic writers saw this connection and pointed it out. During the Nebraska campaign, a woman named Mary Nash Crofoot declared in a pamphlet she circulated entitled “Lest Catholic Men Be Misled” that socialists are unanimous for woman suffrage, “because they hope by the women’s vote to help themselves politically.”<sup>42</sup> That suffrage would help women, she concluded, was a fallacy; only danger would ensue if suffrage passed. She also went on to say that socialists “are opposed to anything

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<sup>38</sup> Pope Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum*, Papal Encyclicals Online, May 15, 1891, accessed July 24, 2017, <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Leo13/113rerum.htm>.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid; in *The History of Woman’s Suffrage*, the writers admit that the socialists were always ‘steadfastly for woman’s suffrage’ and that the suffrage issue was always in their platforms. See *History of Woman Suffrage*, Vol. V, 362; Anne Myra Benjamin also admits that the Socialist Party was the only party to admit women into membership and to elect them as leaders. See Anne Myra Benjamin, *A History of the Anti-Suffrage Movement in the United States from 1895-1920* (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1991), 161. The “moderate” WCTU leader, Frances Willard, was also a socialist, and campaigned for suffrage partly for this reason. See Frances Willard, *Let Something Good Be Said: Speeches and Writings of Frances E. Willard*, eds. Carolyn de Swarte Gifford and Amy R. Slagell (Urbana: University of Illinois, 2007), 166.

<sup>42</sup> Crofoot, quoted in Hickman, 59, accessed July 8, 2017.

Christian” and “they bitterly hate and attack Catholics.”<sup>43</sup> Caroline Corbin, a Catholic novelist and a longtime member of the Illinois Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage, invariably linked suffrage with socialism. If passed, suffrage would result in socialism and subsequently the destruction of private property, the loosening of the bonds of marriage, and the destruction of the home.<sup>44</sup> The Bishop of Fall River Massachusetts, William Stang, agreed: woman trying to become man’s “equal” under suffrage and socialism was a mistake and would only reduce woman to the barbarism she lived under before Christianity elevated her to the queenly duties of mother and homemaker.<sup>45</sup>

According to Kenneally, Catholics also often opposed suffrage because they associated it with the birth control movement. Due in part to the efforts of the Massachusetts Association Opposed to the Further Extension of Suffrage to Women (MAOFESW), birth control became conflated with the suffrage movement. The MAOFESW was established by a group of women who had originally organized as remonstrants against the introduction of women’s municipal suffrage in Boston. Although it was not established by Catholics, some Catholics were persuaded and joined its ranks.<sup>46</sup> It is true that Margaret Sanger, the founder of the modern Planned Parenthood, supported suffrage herself, believing it might lead to changes in the laws in states that prohibited birth control; some suffragists, apparently, returned the favor by supporting Sanger’s National Birth Control League.<sup>47</sup>

Mary Ware Dennett, one of the organizers and the president of the League in 1915, had formerly been a field secretary of the Massachusetts

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Caroline Corbin, *Woman Under Socialism* (Chicago: The Truth Society, 1903), 7, 18; see also James Kenneally, *The History of American Catholic Women* (New York: Crossroad, 1990), 133-4.

<sup>45</sup> William Stang, *Socialism and Christianity* (New York: Benzinger Bros., 1905), 20, 178.

<sup>46</sup> A gentlemen’s group of remonstrants, Massachusetts Man Suffrage, formed at the same time and cooperated with the women’s group. See Marshall, *Splintered Sisterhood*, 23, 25.

<sup>47</sup> Kenneally, “Catholicism and Woman Suffrage,” 44.

Woman Suffrage Association and later a corresponding secretary of NAWSA.<sup>48</sup> The MAOFESW alerted the public to the “sinister association” between these two groups.<sup>49</sup> The MAOFESW claimed that birth control was being taught to young factory girls, and successfully prevented suffragists from holding a birth control meeting in the Medford library.<sup>50</sup>

It should not come as a surprise, then, that some Catholics conflated suffrage with the birth control movement and that Sanger was heckled publicly for the first time at a meeting in Boston by David Goldstein, a convert to Catholicism and an anti-suffragist.<sup>51</sup>

There are many other examples from the time period in which Catholic leaders and lay people sought to influence the political process regarding suffrage. In 1871, women’s anti-suffrage mobilization officially began when

nineteen women published a petition to the U.S. Congress remonstrating against votes for women in the editorial pages of the popular Godey’s *Lady’s Book and Magazine*.<sup>52</sup>

At least two of the signers, Ellen Ewing Sherman (wife of Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman) and Madeline Vinton Dahlgren, the reputed author of the petition, were Catholics.<sup>53</sup> John Boyle O’Reilly, editor of the Boston Catholic newspaper the *Pilot* and the Reverend Joshua P. Bodfish, chancellor of the Archdiocese of Boston, were among some of the signatories to the first male anti-woman suffrage petition.<sup>54</sup> In 1886, the

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> See Margaret Sanger, *My Fight for Birth Control* (New York: Farrar-Rinehart, 1931), 73, 103-4.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 45.

<sup>51</sup> Kenneally, “Catholicism and Woman Suffrage,” 45.

<sup>52</sup> Marshall, *Splintered Sisterhood*, 19-20

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Kenneally, “Catholicism and Woman Suffrage,” 45; see also *The Boston Herald*, February 15, 1885.

opponents of woman suffrage prepared a pamphlet which they distributed to every member of the Massachusetts legislature; they then circulated these throughout the state.<sup>55</sup> One of Bodfish's sermons and an appeal by O'Reilly was included.<sup>56</sup> In 1895, both sexes were given the opportunity to express their opinions regarding the desirability of woman's suffrage; opponents established the Man Suffrage Association so that a large "no" vote might be obtained.<sup>57</sup> Some of the members of this group included Bodfish, Charles F. Donnelly, a Catholic legal counselor, and John F. Fitzgerald, a Congressman whose grandson would later become the president of the United States.<sup>58</sup> The *Pilot* frequently espoused anti-suffrage sentiment with O'Reilly as editor; he was succeeded by James Jeffrey Roche, an Irish Catholic poet and journalist. He was subsequently succeeded by Conway, who frequently used her pen to attack suffrage. Conway also disparaged suffrage in the *Boston Globe*, and the *Catholic World*, as well as in her own book, *The Christian Gentlewoman and the Social Apostolate*.<sup>59</sup>

#### IV. PRESBYTERIANS AND EPISCOPALIANS: OLD STOCK AMERICAN PROTESTANT ANTI-SUFFRAGISTS AND BELIEVERS IN "VOLUNTARY" REFORM

Like Catholics, many Presbyterians and Episcopalians tended to be anti-suffrage. However, unlike Catholics, who were usually coming from a marginal position (often as recent immigrants and as non-Protestants), these mainline Protestants hailed from mainstream America.

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<sup>55</sup> Kenneally, "Catholicism and Woman Suffrage," 46.

<sup>56</sup> The Rev. J.P. Bodfish, "Woman Suffrage, Unnatural and Inexpedient," (Boston: MAOFESW, 1886), 26.

<sup>57</sup> Kenneally, "Catholicism and Woman Suffrage," 46.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> See Conway, *Boston Globe*, February 17, 1907; see also Conway, "Symposium—Woman Question Among Catholics," *Catholic World*, LVII (1893): 669-84; see also Conway, *The Christian Gentlewoman and the Social Apostolate* (Boston, 1904), 14, 25.

Interestingly, most Protestant anti-suffragists wanted little to do with Catholics, even though most of their Roman neighbors were often also anti-suffragists. Protestant “antis” tolerated such Catholics, according to Jablonsky, much like “dirty-faced urchins.”<sup>60</sup> Most of the Presbyterian and Episcopalian anti-suffragists were, according to Elna Green and Jablonsky, of old “Anglo-Saxon” stock, with roots taking them back to the British Isles.<sup>61</sup> Also, even though, as a Mrs. John Balch, the president of the Massachusetts Association claimed, “authors, doctors, lawyers, teachers, librarians, newspaper writers, stenographers...cooks, housemaids” and “nurses”<sup>62</sup> could be named among those opposed to suffrage, the typical anti-suffragist *leader* came from “a segment of the population with strong ties to patterns of behavior that...provided them with status and security.”<sup>63</sup>

This was the case with anti-suffragists everywhere, apparently. Most of the remonstrant women did not work; their husbands and remonstrant men typically dominated professions like large scale farming and the textile mill and railroad businesses in the south; northern male remonstrants and remonstrant husbands typically were in business, banking, or politics.<sup>64</sup> It certainly could be argued that their affiliations with the Presbyterian and the Episcopalian churches, normally the religions of choice or family heritage for wealthier, more landed Protestants, are incidental—a byproduct of their class status and ethnic affinity.<sup>65</sup> Green, Marshall, and Jablonsky point to these people’s class

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<sup>60</sup> Jablonsky, *The Home*, 69.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.

<sup>62</sup> Mrs. John Balch, “Who the Massachusetts Anti-Suffragists Are,” in *Anti-suffrage Essays by Massachusetts Women*, ed. Ernest Bernbaum (Boston: Forum Publications of Boston, 1916), 22; see also Jablonsky, *The Home*, 53.

<sup>63</sup> Jablonsky, *The Home*, 54.

<sup>64</sup> See Green, *Southern Strategies*, 38-40.

<sup>65</sup> Elizabeth Hayes Turner appears to take this opinion concerning Episcopalian women in Galveston. Among the women who participated in reform from about 1870-1920, Turner has noted that it was usually Episcopalian women who were the most predominant and who

status, claiming that southern anti-suffragists feared women's suffrage could result in other reforms that might take away some of the wealth and power from the privileged. Green also claims that the introduction of black women's suffrage and the degradation of states' rights also loomed large in southern anti-suffragists' minds.<sup>66</sup> Northerners feared the radicalism and socialism that they believed woman's suffrage might bring; after 1915, according to Green and Jablonsky, possibly out of desperation, northeastern anti-suffragists began to attack suffragists as "Bolsheviks, and unpatriotic German sympathizers."<sup>67</sup> However, these factors do not entirely inform these individuals' aversion to suffrage. Basically, the anti-suffragists trembled at the thought that suffrage might alter the world in which they lived permanently, particularly if the family unit, what they considered to be the "cell" of a healthy civil society, was toppled by socialism and a welfare state.

Religiously, it may be well to note briefly, perhaps, not just what these people were, but what they were not. Jablonsky claims that both of these groups, unlike Methodists, Quakers, or Unitarians, for example, did not engage in reform as much as some others in the nineteenth century.<sup>68</sup> Generally, religiously-oriented people who engaged more in "reforms," like Methodists, for example, believed that the individual could affect social progress for him or herself by making good choices. Part of the origin of this ideology came from the Second Great Awakening. Due to

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held the highest positions of leadership in community endeavors, whether those activities were politically oriented or not. Presbyterian women were second in number. Turner concludes that, even though they were greater in number in Galveston, Lutherans, Methodists, and Baptists assumed fewer and "lesser" positions of leadership in community improvement activities due to their decidedly middle class status. See Elizabeth Hayes Turner, "Episcopal Women as Community Leaders: Galveston, 1900-1989," in *Episcopal Women: Gender, Spirituality, and Commitment in an American Mainline Denomination*, Catherine Prelinger, ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 75-82.

<sup>66</sup> Green, *Southern Strategies*, 90; see also Jablonsky, *The Home*, 66.

<sup>67</sup> Green, *Southern Strategies*, 90; see also Jablonsky, *The Home*, 100.

<sup>68</sup> Jablonsky, *The Home*, 53.



this religious revival, many cast aside the old Calvinist ideas concerning total depravity and predestination for a more optimistic view.<sup>69</sup>

It would appear that the religious groups that the antis belonged to did not take this attitude as much—although it may be argued that some began to champion reform more in the late nineteenth century when their denominations began to embrace liberal theology.<sup>70</sup> Along these lines, the northeastern Protestant antis’ aversion to reform, particularly, also cannot be attributed to the fact that they tended to be Republicans. Although Republicans normally did not support women’s rights, or abolitionism in the early days, some Republicans did participate in reforms, such as temperance and education during the antebellum years and after the Civil War; indeed, there were “progressive Republicans.” A direct tie from these antis’ religious beliefs to their aversion to “reform” is not clear. However, what is clear is that most of the Protestant anti-suffragists, regardless of their political affiliation, participated in voluntary organizations like ladies’ clubs, patriotic clubs such as the Daughters of the American Revolution or the Daughters of the Confederacy, or church organizations.<sup>71</sup> Unlike their evangelical neighbors, they were probably not attempting to change the “inside” of the individual; historian Elizabeth Hayes Turner claims that as sacramentalists, most Episcopalian women, for example, had the attitude that evangelism was the job of the clergy, although many did participate in church work.<sup>72</sup> Outside of their church activities, Episcopalian and Presbyterian women generally appear to have been more interested in clubs to better themselves, not necessarily society. When they did seek to better society, they did it voluntarily.<sup>73</sup> This

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<sup>69</sup> See Herman Belz, *A New Birth of Freedom: The Republican Party and Freedmen’s Rights, 1861 to 1866* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1976); see also William E. Gienapp, *The Origins of the Republican Party, 1852–1856* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 163.

<sup>70</sup> Ferenc Morton Szasz, *The Divided Mind of Protestant America, 1880-1930* (Alabama University: University of Alabama Press, 1982), 46.

<sup>71</sup> Marshall, *Splintered Sisterhood*, 47.

<sup>72</sup> Turner, “Episcopal Women,” 85.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

type of activity fits more closely with the general mood of both denominations at the time.

Presbyterians, according to Wayne Flynt, generally saw the church as being of a “spiritual” nature; the church, they believed, should primarily concern itself with preaching the gospel and saving souls.<sup>74</sup> Therefore, any engagement with politics was inappropriate. This included involvement with the temperance movement and even with some of the reforms associated with the “Social Gospel,” such as the elimination of child labor.<sup>75</sup> However, Flynt concedes that even some Presbyterians in the ultra-conservative Presbyterian Church in the United States, or PCUS,<sup>76</sup> “rankled under this doctrine” when it came to “demon rum;” some supported Prohibition while others did not.<sup>77</sup> By the 1910s, Presbyterians had opted for some evangelical educational institutions, opening schools for African American students, immigrants, American Indians, and mountain children.<sup>78</sup> It is apparent, though, that even these ventures were controversial to many Presbyterians.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> The title of Flynt’s book indicates that he is primarily addressing southern Presbyterian churches; however, on this point, as well as on some others, he appears to be talking about American Presbyterians across the board. Wayne Flynt, *Southern Religion and Christian Diversity in the Twentieth Century* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2016), 100-01.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 103.

<sup>76</sup> The PCUS was originally the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America, from 1861-1983. In 1983, it merged with the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (UPCUSA) to form the Presbyterian Church USA (PCUSA). The PCUSA is today the largest Presbyterian denomination and one of the big-three “mainline Protestant denominations” of the U.S. (the other two being the United Methodist Church and the United Church of Christ). See Randall Balmer and John R. Fitzmier, eds., *The Presbyterians, Denominations in America*, no. 5, Henry Warner Bowden, series ed. (Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 1993), 254-5.

<sup>77</sup> Flynt claims that Presbyterians were very divided concerning this doctrine, as when the Synod of Alabama endorsed statewide Prohibition in 1909—and then the Synod of Virginia angrily condemned the endorsement shortly thereafter. See Flynt, *Southern Religion*, 101.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 105.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 100-106.

## V. PRESBYTERIAN CONSERVATISM AND WOMEN’S ROLES

In fact, Elna Green, Ruth Tucker, Walter Liefeld, Lois Boyd, and R. Douglas Brackenridge all appear to maintain that Presbyterian churches everywhere in the United States were some of the most conservative regarding women during the nineteenth century.<sup>80</sup>

As late as the 1870s, most Presbyterian churches still accepted John Calvin’s dictum that the female *imago dei* was “in the second degree,” or “under the dominion of males” via God’s creation ordinance.<sup>81</sup> Women preachers and even the speaking of women in Presbyterian churches was still controversial in 1876. (When the Rev. Isaac M. See invited two women from the WCTU to speak in a New Jersey church, another minister, the Rev. Elijah R. Craven, attacked See in the general assembly for four hours, charging him with “disobedience to divine ordinance.”<sup>82</sup> See was then advised by the presbytery of New Jersey to “abstain” from the practice “in the future.”<sup>83</sup>) Flint claims that southern Presbyterians were extremely conservative, particularly the PCUS church. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, for example, they explicitly rejected higher criticism; this may not seem too conservative to some, but the PCUS was even squeamish about women’s missionary societies.<sup>84</sup> As late as the 1880s, when most other denominations supported women’s boards of home and foreign missions, the PCUS did not.<sup>85</sup> They eventually did, at the behest of their women.

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<sup>80</sup> See Green, *Southern Strategies*; Ruth Tucker and Walter Liefeld, *Daughters of the Church: Women in Ministry from New Testament Times to the Present* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1987), 283; Lois Boyd and R. Douglas Brackenridge, *Presbyterian Women in America: Two Centuries of a Quest for Status*, 2nd ed. (London: Presbyterian Historical Society), 94-110.

<sup>81</sup> John Calvin in his Genesis commentary, quoted in Flynt, *Southern Religion*, 93.

<sup>82</sup> Elijah R. Craven, quoted in Boyd and Brackenridge, *Presbyterian Women*, 98.

<sup>83</sup> The Presbytery of New Jersey, quoted *ibid.*, 99.

<sup>84</sup> Boyd and Brackenridge, *Presbyterian Women*, 100.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

## VI. PRESBYTERIANS AND WOMAN'S SUFFRAGE: SUFFRAGE NOT A RIGHT, DETRIMENTAL TO THE FAMILY, AND A STATIST PROPOSITION

More than a few Presbyterian writers attacked suffrage in many of the same ways Catholics had, but with some of their own emphases. Perhaps one of the most vocal opponents to woman's suffrage was the PCUS Rev. Robert Lewis Dabney. Dabney, a professor at Union Theological Seminary, proclaimed that women and men had been given different callings by God.

Women were not to take on leadership roles in the church, nor should they preach—or vote—and he saw these two as being related to one another. In two of his articles on this subject, “The Public Preaching of Women” and “Women’s Rights Women,” Dabney never spoke of Calvin, but the reformer’s fingerprints are seemingly all over the pages. Dabney asserted that God had assigned to the “stronger” man “the domestic government” and to the “weaker” woman the “obedience of love.” “On this order,” he claimed, “all social order depends.”<sup>86</sup> Dabney believed that the demand for women’s preaching and woman’s suffrage were “synchronous,” being derived from distorted ideas concerning total equality from the *Declaration of Independence*.<sup>87</sup> The founding fathers, Dabney asserted, in declaring all men equal, only meant that all people have a common origin in God, with the rights and privileges granted a group by law falling “equally to each person within the group”—but not all groups of people receive the same rights.<sup>88</sup> Women, Dabney claimed, have not been and should not be given the same rights as men because

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<sup>86</sup> Calvin once spoke of a woman’s governance as being a “monstrous” thing. See John Calvin, *Commentary on Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, Christian Classics Ethereal Library, Grand Rapids, MI, accessed May 20, 2018.

<https://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/calcom43.iii.iv.iv.html>; see also Robert Lewis Dabney, “The Public Preaching of Women,” *The Southern Presbyterian Review* (October, 1879), 111.

<sup>87</sup> Dabney, “The Public Preaching,” 115.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid*, 116.

they are biologically constituted differently and because their divinely appointed role is properly in the home; entering into politics would be an unnecessary burden upon women that would ultimately change and corrupt them.<sup>89</sup> Apparently, the General Assembly agreed: in 1916, it proclaimed in a report on women’s position in the church that “Authority is invested in man....This is the regulative principle of government in the family and in every other sphere.”<sup>90</sup> Although the report does not explicitly say so, the implication is clear: women should not preach, enter into politics, or, presumably, vote.

In a pamphlet printed by the Woman’s Anti-Suffrage Association of the 3rd Judicial District of the State of New York entitled “Shall Women Be Burdened with the Ballot?” the Rev. Theodore Cuyler, pastor of the Park Presbyterian Church in Brooklyn, agreed with Dabney that suffrage was not a Divine right; it was a privilege granted by the *Constitution* to certain people under prescriptive conditions.<sup>91</sup> Cuyler, like Dabney,

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<sup>89</sup> Robert Lewis Dabney, “Women’s Rights Women,” *The Southern Magazine*, March, 1871, 322-334. Cf. the comments of Dabney’s Dutch Reformed contemporary Abraham Kuyper, *De Eerepositie der Vrouw* (Kampen: Kok, 1932), trans. Irene Konyndyk (1990), 19-20, 28: “The private and public life form two separate spheres, each with their own way of existing, with their own task ... And it is on the basis of this state of affairs, which has not been invented by us, but which God himself has imposed on us, that in public life the woman does not stand equally with the man. Nor more that it can be said of the man that he has been called to achieve in the family that which is achieved by the woman....for which the man is the appointed worker [the public domain], she will never be able to fulfill anything but a subordinate role, in which her inferiority would soon come to light anyway.” Contrast with Kuyper’s successor, Herman Bavinck, who did not object to women’s suffrage.

<sup>90</sup> *Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States* (Wilmington, N. C.: Jackson and Bell, 1880), 55. One should note the role of “regulative principle” terminology in Reformed theology: it often refers to what is explicitly stated in scripture. See for example, the “regulative principle of worship” in the *Westminster Confession of Faith*.

<sup>91</sup> See Theodore Cuyler, “Shall Women be Burdened with the Ballot?” in *Pamphlets Printed and Distributed by the Woman’s Anti-Suffrage Association of the 3rd Judicial District of the State of New York* (Albany, 1905), no page given; Cuyler was considered by many to be one of the best religious writers around; some of his comments, in fact, were submitted by the MAOFESW at the Hearings before the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of

believed that God had ordained men to rule in the political realm and women in the home. Women also were not men and men were not women; one attempting to be like the other was, as Cuyler quoted the Rev. Horace Bushnell as saying, ‘against nature.’<sup>92</sup> Cuyler, like some Catholic ministers, also addressed the linkage between woman’s suffrage and the probability of new social welfare laws.<sup>93</sup> If women got the vote, Cuyler warned, reforms like Prohibition would not work; it would merely send the drunkards from the saloons and into the street.<sup>94</sup> Also, once instigated, like most reforms, he implied, there would be no revoking it. Additionally, Cuyler added, “depraved” women would have the right to vote, along with the decent ones.<sup>95</sup> Of course, current readers would see Cuyler as speaking about recent immigrants, and they might be correct, since Cuyler later disparages the “foreign” voter.<sup>96</sup> Yet, it should be remembered that many of the suffragists also feared “foreign” voters and recent immigrants, and it is fairly certain that Cuyler was also talking about people who were, indeed, per the original meaning of “depraved,” unscrupulous or unprincipled—in a word, *bad*.

The Rev. Charles H. Parkhurst of New York City’s Madison Square Presbyterian Church, who regularly attacked suffragists in a monthly column in the *Ladies’ Home Journal* that he authored, added that giving woman the ballot might take her out of the home, away from her primary duty of service to her family; the family, he added, in words that sounded an awful lot like Cardinal Williams,’ was the cell of society.<sup>97</sup> Parkhurst proclaimed that the mother’s role and the family unit were critical; the family was like a mini-state—only here might a child learn how to interact

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Representatives, on March 13, 1912. See *Hearings Before the Committee on the Judiciary, House of Representatives, Woman’s Suffrage*, 62d Congress, 2d session, March 13, 1912, 98.

<sup>92</sup> Horace Bushnell, quoted in Cuyler, no page given.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>97</sup> Charles Parkhurst, “The Unit of Society,” *Ladies’ Home Journal* (March, 1895), 13.

with others, how to obey, and how to be a responsible citizen and fulfill his or her obligations.<sup>98</sup> Parkhurst also claimed, in another article, that substitutes for divinely sanctioned laws bore little success; although he does not mention “socialism” or the state, it seems clear that this is what he meant.<sup>99</sup> Parkhurst intimated that, ultimately, socialistic laws and socialistic substitutes for the family would not help anyone, including the poor, because many of those who might be seen as benefitting from the new laws were not wretched because they were poor, *they were poor because they were wretched*.<sup>100</sup> Corrupt conditions in society were only what the “character of the individual families” constituted them to be.<sup>101</sup> Woman’s suffrage might be voted in, but ultimately, problems of a sociological nature could not be voted out. While those discussing the issues went on with their discussion, improper people would only be “going to the devil faster and faster.”<sup>102</sup> As an example to his readers, he referred to a group of forty women in a neighborhood in eastern New York City who had earnestly worked for years to try to ameliorate the problems of the very poor. These women, Parkhurst claimed, had experienced some success because they sought to improve family relations, which were at the core of the well-being of civil society. New laws would not be any more effective in ridding society of the ills many of the suffragists thought the ballot might help them to vote in; there were enough laws on the books already, Parkhurst asserted.<sup>103</sup>

Essentially, what Parkhurst and Cuyler were expressing here, at least to a degree, was an aspect of the particular belief system common to Protestants at this time. Personal responsibility, anti-statist, anti-socialist beliefs, and the idea of the family as the “unit” or the “foundation” of

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> See Charles Parkhurst, “Women Without the Ballot,” *Ladies’ Home Journal* (June, 1895), 15.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> See Charles Parkhurst, “The True Mission of Woman,” *Ladies’ Home Journal* (March 1895), 15; see also Parkhurst, “Women Without the Ballot,” *Ladies’ Home Journal*, (June, 1895), 15.

society were all trademarks of typical nineteenth-century Protestantism. Some have argued that such notions regarding the family originated with Puritanism; others, like Margo Dodd, claim they originated with humanist writers such as Aristotle.<sup>104</sup> Nevertheless, they appear to have been prominent in nineteenth-century American Protestantism.<sup>105</sup> To many nineteenth-century American Protestants, the family was much better equipped for raising children than was the state; they also appear to have believed that if an individual, a family, or even a segment of society continued to experience poverty, this was primarily the consequence of poor choices on the part of those individuals; low wages were determined by supply and demand and could not be changed by any bargaining or laws.<sup>106</sup> According to Henry F. May, these kinds of beliefs were also common in the so-called “low” churches. Methodists, May asserts, did not begin to adopt social liberalism and contribute to the Social Gospel until after the turn of the twentieth century because the church had championed John Wesley’s injunctions to work hard and participate in charity.<sup>107</sup> Methodists also believed that sin was the “sufficient explanation” for all social evils.<sup>108</sup> Baptists, May claims, have traditionally been hostile to statism and suspicious of any efforts to build society in any kind of “worldly” manner.<sup>109</sup>

In sum, Protestant anti-suffragists’ aversion to socialism and changes in wages, or any suggestion that poverty was the result of anything but vice was typical for many American Protestants at least until around the

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<sup>104</sup> Margo Dodd, *Christian Humanism and the Social Order* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 5.

<sup>105</sup> Colleen McDannell, *The Christian Home in Victorian America, 1840-1900* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), 24.

<sup>106</sup> Jaynes Thayer Addison, *The Episcopal Church in the United States, 1789-1931* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1951), 283.

<sup>107</sup> Henry F. May, *Protestant Churches and Industrial America* (New York: Harper and Bros. Publishers, 1949), 189.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, 190.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*



turn of the twentieth century.<sup>110</sup> When Protestants did begin to champion social liberalism, according to May, a large number of them were still consistently conservative regarding their solutions to social problems. The result of this was that they tended to advocate the amelioration of ills, rather than to participate in social reconstruction.<sup>111</sup>

## VII. HELEN JOHNSON’S *WOMAN AND THE REPUBLIC*: AN APOLOGETIC WRITING FOR CHRISTIANITY’S EXONERATION OF WOMEN

Female Presbyterian anti-suffragists, like the male ones, also wrote anti-suffrage materials. One of these writers’ articles is worth mentioning; the other deserves some further explanation.

In her “Talk to Women on the Suffrage Question,” Emily Bissell chided suffragists for promoting individualism, and encouraging divorce and selfishness, to the neglect of the family; like many of the Christian male anti-suffragists, Bissell disparaged suffragists for promoting ideas that appeared to assault the home and the community.<sup>112</sup> However, from a Christian perspective, Helen Johnson’s *Woman and the Republic* is perhaps one of the most important philosophical anti-suffrage writings (1897).<sup>113</sup> In the book, Johnson took the controversial and perhaps questionable position that women should not vote due to their inability to defend the country during times of war.<sup>114</sup> Perhaps more importantly, though, she also argued for the traditional role of women, for educating

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<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., 163.

<sup>112</sup> Emily Bissell, “Talk to Women on the Suffrage Question,” in the *Debaters’ Handbook Series: Woman Suffrage: Selected Articles on Woman Suffrage*, Edith Phelps, ed. (New York: H.W. Wilson Co., 1916), 148.

<sup>113</sup> Susan Goodier, *No Votes for Women: The New York State Anti-Suffrage Movement* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2013), 54-5.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 54-5.

women differently from men, and for the Bible and the Church as the sources from which women's "rights" flowed in the first place.

Johnson began by declaring that women's primary role of raising and educating children was essential to the maintenance of the Republic; for this, women did not need the vote.<sup>115</sup> Johnson deplored the loss of the power of the church in recent years, and castigated suffragists like Elizabeth Cady Stanton for declaring the church an enemy of woman. This was sheer folly, she declared, asserting that more than a few women have been educated by church-supported schools; she also claimed that many successful women's colleges, like Vassar, Smith College, and Troy Seminary, were founded on the belief that women required their own unique style of education tailored to their distinctly feminine mental processes—a far different attitude than that advocated by those who would try to make the sexes "equal" in all things. Johnson further claimed that in disparaging the Bible and creating the new "suffragist" Bible—Elizabeth Cady Stanton's *Woman's Bible* commentary—suffragists only betrayed their ignorance on the subject.

Perhaps most significantly, Johnson points out that the suffragists seem to be very confused concerning whether or not Scripture actually teaches woman's subordination to man—particularly in the first and second chapters of Genesis. For example, Johnson asserts that Elizabeth Cady Stanton declares in her introduction that Christianity and the Church have taught the subordination of women since time immemorial.<sup>116</sup> However, as we read in Johnson, Stanton claims in her commentary on Creation that "In the great work of Creation, the crowning glory was realized when man and woman were evolved on the sixth day...How then is it possible to make woman an afterthought...No lesson

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<sup>115</sup> Helen Kendrick Johnson, *Women and the Republic: A Survey of the Woman-Suffrage Movement in the United States and a Discussion of the Claims and Arguments of Its Foremost Advocates*. Project Gutenberg: 2005, accessed July 23, 2017.

<http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/7300/pg7300-images.html>.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*

of woman’s subjection can be fairly drawn from the first chapter of the Old Testament.”<sup>117</sup> Johnson then notes that Ellen Battelle Dietrick, one of the other commentators, claims that the Creation story in the second chapter of Genesis, which has been seen to teach woman’s subordination because woman is created after man, was “manipulated by some wily Jew in order to give ‘heavenly authority’ for requiring a woman to obey the man she married.”<sup>118</sup> Another commentator, Lillie Devereux Blake, Johnson observes, then asserts that Genesis 2 lists the created beings “in a gradually ascending series” with “‘Creeping things’” first, and finally “the crowning glory of the whole,” woman, listed last.<sup>119</sup> “It cannot be maintained,” Blake concludes, “that woman was inferior to man, even if, as asserted in chapter ii, she was created after him, without at once admitting that man is inferior to the creeping things because created after them.”<sup>120</sup> Stanton then sums up the commentaries by declaring that the second chapter of Genesis still leaves woman as an “afterthought” by having her arrive at the end of all created beings.<sup>121</sup> It is not clear whether Johnson was poking fun more at the “theology” of the commentators or the logic of their conclusions. Nevertheless, she claims, it is interesting that the women who spurn the Bible as the source of woman’s degradation also find in it their “highest warrant” for believing in the equal position of woman to man.<sup>122</sup> Perhaps, Johnson concludes, the “wily Jew” has been outsmarted after all.<sup>123</sup>

Perhaps when seen as an argument for limited voting, *Woman and the Republic* may be lacking. However, when seen as a sort of apologetic for Christianity’s support of the rights of women, it seems to take on a wholly different character. Some, like Johnson, would probably argue that the

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

innate value of women is something that may only be unfolded from a religious perspective. *Woman and the Republic* was lauded as containing some of the most analytical, unbiased arguments against suffrage. Johnson became somewhat of a celebrity for it and was frequently interviewed by newspapers.<sup>124</sup>

Female Presbyterian anti-suffragists also did the bulk of the organizing against suffrage; they, like their male counterparts, also championed the public and private spheres for men and women, respectively, and the value of personal responsibility. They also disparaged the efficacy of regulation and more laws to the end of a better society. The founder of the National Association Opposed to Woman's Suffrage (NAOWS), Josephine Dodge, illustrates these principles well. Dodge, a Presbyterian, organized the National Association Opposed to Woman's Suffrage in her Park Avenue home in November, 1911, along with some remonstrants from eight anti-suffrage clubs when the referendum for suffrage in California passed.<sup>125</sup> In keeping with the anti-public/private philosophy, Mrs. Dodge believed the primary task of the NAOWS to be defensive in nature; when the suffragists charged disfranchisement, the NAOWS would counter. This position would keep the group from looking like they were trying to usurp the male prerogative of engaging in the political process, she believed.<sup>126</sup> Dodge was not shy, however, about expressing her opinions to news reporters, particularly concerning morality and the efficacy of the law. All the laws in the world, Dodge averred, would not create better morals or people, nor would they help women.<sup>127</sup> Presbyterian women were usually the second largest group of Protestants who served in anti-suffrage

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<sup>124</sup> Benjamin, *A History*, 127.

<sup>125</sup> Jablonsky, *The Home*, 84.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>127</sup> See, for example, "Low Cut Gowns and High Morals, Suffrage and Sex," *The Courier* (Harrisburg, PA), May 11, 1913; see also "Woman's Suffrage Battle Opens in New Jersey as Antis Unlimber Big Guns," *The Chatham Press* (Chatham, NJ), May 29, 1915.

organizations; besides Dodge, Bissell, and Johnson, Alice Wadsworth also played an important role, taking over the national group’s presidency after Dodge resigned after six years.<sup>128</sup>

### VIII. EPISCOPALIANS: NOT SO “LIBERAL” ABOUT WOMAN’S SUFFRAGE

Episcopalian churches now often have the reputation of being “liberal” theologically and otherwise. During the early 1900s, however, most Episcopalian leaders and churches, much like Catholic and Presbyterian leaders and churches, appear to have held to very conservative opinions concerning the roles of women—and they attacked suffrage, naturally, seeing it as an attack on the family, traditional gender roles, and Christianity.

The Rev. John Williams of St. Barnabas Episcopal Church in Nebraska claimed that although he saw a difference between the mainstream suffragists and the more radical ones, the mainstream ones had failed to suppress the radicals; as a result, the movement was “subversive to Christian morality, marriage, and home life.”<sup>129</sup> Bishop Arthur Cleveland Coxe of New York denounced the suffragists as trying to emancipate themselves, not just from the home, but from religion altogether.<sup>130</sup> These statements are similar to many of the ones propagated by other conservative ministers from the time period. Apparently, Williams was also correct: it would seem that when the suffrage movement purged itself of its radicals, as Aileen Kraditor has pointed out, more conservative women came on board.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> Hickman, accessed July 26, 2017.

<sup>130</sup> “The New Woman and Bishops Doane and Coxe,” *The Literary Digest: A Repository of Contemporaneous Thought and Research*, 11:8 (New York: Funk and Wagnalls: June 22, 1895), 215.

<sup>131</sup> Kraditor, *The Ideas*, 85.

Similar in sentiment but not so much in execution were the opinions of perhaps one of the most outspoken Episcopal bishops, the Rev. William Croswell Doane of Albany, New York. Doane was a personal friend of Anna Pruyne, the president of the Albany anti-suffragists; he openly encouraged the group in its ventures, and his wife served on its executive committee.<sup>132</sup> Doane, like many of his contemporaries, obviously felt that suffrage for women was out of step with their divinely ordered place in society; at an 1895 address to the graduates of the St. Agnes School he established in Albany in 1870, Doane made his opinions known, fairly causing a firestorm among some of the women's rights activists and in the local papers.<sup>133</sup> Doane asserted that many a "cowardly representative" simply folds at a woman's request for rights.<sup>134</sup> He then declared that "the aggravated miseries of an enlarged, unqualified suffrage...in its universality of male voters, is our most threatening danger today." God might yet save the country from its ills, he went on, but this could only happen via some type of divine punishment.<sup>135</sup> Constitutions having been changed, and the Bible having been altered into a "new" Bible, and "motherhood" having been replaced with "mannishness," the United States would "reap in tears" the effects of woman being made out to be man's equal.<sup>136</sup> Not only was Doane probably taking a jab at higher criticism and perhaps at Elizabeth Cady Stanton's *Woman's Bible*, he was obviously calling the men who supported suffrage "cowards" and the women who supported it "mannish." The reaction to his words was

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<sup>132</sup> Goodier, *No Votes*, 47.

<sup>133</sup> Doane produced other writings, such as his "Why Women do not Want the Ballot," an essay that the anti-suffragists circulated with their tracts and which appeared in the prestigious *North American Review*. Doane's remarks at the St. Agnes ceremony are included here. See William Croswell Doane, "Why Women do not Want the Ballot," *North American Review* 161"466 (September, 1895): 257-67.

<sup>134</sup> Doane, quoted in "The New Woman and Bishops Doane and Coxe" in *The Literary Digest*, 215.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*

instant; Stanton herself reportedly heard of Doane’s diatribe and was reported by the *Literary Digest* to have called the bishop’s words “utter rot.”<sup>137</sup>

Doane was a very powerful man with a large diocese and many wealthy benefactors, like J. P. Morgan; he obviously did not fear the effects of his words.<sup>138</sup> The *New York Herald* claimed that Doane’s “address before the graduates of St. Agnes School in Albany on June 6 [1895] created more discussion than any other woman suffrage utterance of the year”; this was obviously true because besides drawing the ire of Stanton, Doane’s words motivated another suffragist, Ellen Dietrich (one of the commentators for Stanton’s *Woman’s Bible*) to write a book entitled *Women in the Early Christian Ministry: A Reply to Bishop Doane, and Others* (1897). In her book, Dietrich offered a refutation of Christian teachings that she felt relegated women to second-class status.<sup>139</sup> Doane obviously stirred up controversy on this topic; however, one does not have to wonder where he stood. Nothing close to “liberal theology” can be found in his anti-suffrage rhetoric, or in his stance concerning the “new woman,” whom he denounced as a “freak.”<sup>140</sup>

## IX. EPISCOPALIANS AND THE SOCIAL GOSPEL

It is true that some Episcopalians, like some Presbyterians, did embrace social liberalism by participating in the Social Gospel, a movement which applied Christian ethics to social problems. However, according to David

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<sup>137</sup> Stanton, quoted in “The New Woman and Bishops Doane and Coxe” in *The Literary Digest*, 216.

<sup>138</sup> George Lynde Richardson, “William Crosswell Doane, First Bishop of Albany,” (Hartford, CN: Church Missions Publishing, 1933), *Project Canterbury*, accessed July 27, 2017, <http://anglicanhistory.org/usa/wcdoane/glrichardson.html>.

<sup>139</sup> Ellen Dietrich, *Women in the Early Christian Ministry: A Reply to Bishop Doane, and Others* (Philadelphia: Alfred Ferris, 1897).

<sup>140</sup> *The New York Herald*, June 7, 1895; see also “New Womanhood Denounced,” *New York Times*, June 9, 1909.

L. Holmes, the move toward this type of action was slow and activism was definitely not the case everywhere. New York Bishop Henry C. Potter, for example, mediated strikes for some coal and steel laborers; bishop Charles D. Williams of Michigan was a persistent critic of the automobile business.<sup>141</sup> Caleb S. Henry, first a priest and then a professor of philosophy and history at New York University, espoused the right to apply religion to politics.<sup>142</sup> Some Episcopal churches in New York also established the Church Association for the Advancement of the Interests of Labor (CAIL) to study the problems of working men and women, partly so that it might offer plans to mediate workers' strikes.<sup>143</sup> However, according to Holmes, this type of activism came from the "broad wing" of the Episcopal church, a movement which emphasized reason as a mediator to religious truth, as well as moral living and social justice; most Episcopalians' participation in anything approaching the Social Gospel appears to have been conservative in nature, amounting to the amelioration of ills, not necessarily to the curing of them.<sup>144</sup> This was particularly the case with women. An analysis of at least a couple of churches bears this out.

#### **X. EPISCOPAL WOMEN AND THE SOCIAL GOSPEL: SOCIAL CONCERN AND CHARITABLE GIVING**

According to Elizabeth Hayes Turner, who has studied Episcopal women in Galveston, these groups operated from the standpoint of the ideology of the priest and spokesman for the Episcopal Church in Galveston, Edgar Gardner Murphy. Murphy may be considered, as author Hugh Bailey has called him, a "gentle Progressive," since the priest advocated better race

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<sup>141</sup> David L. Holmes, *A Brief History of the Episcopal Church* (Valley Forge: Trinity Press, 1993), 128.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, 127.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, 109.



relations, the end of child labor, and better education in the South.<sup>145</sup> For charitable enterprises, Murphy counselled Episcopalians to operate under the auspices of “social concern.”<sup>146</sup> Those who are privileged, Murphy preached, should prioritize service and sacrifice to the good of the community. The wealthy, Murphy believed, should carefully distribute resources so as to ameliorate suffering.<sup>147</sup> It would appear, then, that, at least in Galveston, these women’s disdain for political reforms was informed, at least in part, by a religiously defined notion of charity via a spirit of “social concern.”

This was not just the case with southern Episcopalian churches, which were probably more conservative. At the St. James Episcopal church in Chicago, for example, according to Rima Lunin Schultz, most of the women from 1880-1920 who worked in charitable enterprises adopted a service-oriented model and accepted the patriarchal system along with a subordinate position to the male clergy.<sup>148</sup> Schultz claims that most “women’s work” was done by women in the Woman’s Auxiliary and might best be called “social Christianity”; the women of the St. James, Grace, and Trinity parishes in Chicago “pioneered mission Sunday School classes, mothers’ meetings, infant creche schools, and sewing and industrial classes and...distributed aid to the sick and indigent.”<sup>149</sup> The Oxford movement, an Anglican phenomenon which began in the mid-nineteenth century and brought some Roman elements back into the Anglican and Episcopal churches, opened up a couple of new venues for service to some particularly dedicated women in the Chicago diocese; deaconesses and sisters also participated heavily in service. Deaconesses

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<sup>145</sup> Turner, “Episcopal Women,” 80; see also Hugh Bailey, *Edgar Gardner Murphy, Gentle Progressive* (Miami: University of Miami Press), 1968.

<sup>146</sup> Turner, “Episcopal Women,” 80.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>148</sup> Rima Lunin Schultz, “Women’s Work and Women’s Calling in the Episcopal Church, 1880-1989,” in *Episcopal Women: Gender, Spirituality, and Commitment in an American Mainline Denomination*, 24.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

worked within the church community (which could mean, of course, sometimes physically leaving the church) as nurses and social workers, and visited inmates in prisons and the sick in hospitals. Their vows were not considered permanent, although many of them thought of themselves that way. Sisters took lifetime vows and, along with charitable work, operated educational institutions. The Woman's Auxiliary, which was mostly made up of women of means, financially supported these groups.<sup>150</sup>

Schultz makes it clear that these women moved into these roles not as feminists, but as "True Women."<sup>151</sup> The Auxiliary women, according to Schultz, were well aware of the ministrations of Jane Addams and her "hull houses," but they did not, like Addams and her followers, move into the city's slums—they supported the educational, social, and charitable enterprises of the church. Their rationale for reform, if it could be called that, was motivated by their Christian convictions; they were to feed the poor and hungry, spread the gospel, and, they had come to believe, build institutions via the church—such as orphanages—to make the world better. As might befit Episcopalian women, the Auxiliary women's meetings always began with prayer, and many Episcopalian churches of the time erected "Lady" chapels dominated by Marian statuary and candles.<sup>152</sup>

Auxiliary women, like many other Episcopalian women of means at the time, also looked at charitable giving through the eyes of simple Christian stewardship. Louise Bowen, an Episcopalian and a member of the late nineteenth century Chicago elite, wrote in her diary that she knew she would one day inherit a fortune, and that God would hold her accountable for what she did with it.<sup>153</sup> Bowen gave freely of her time and money for years, and although she eventually, according to Schultz,

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<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

became a Progressive reformer, most of the elite women helped pay for the bishop’s programs “but never used the money to challenge the status quo.”<sup>154</sup> Even if some of these women’s ventures might be considered the beginnings of “Social Gospel” work, all of the women—deaconesses, sisters, and auxiliary women—looked to the hierarchy of the Church for their authority and to its teachings for guidance concerning charity and finances.<sup>155</sup>

Many Episcopalian women wrote for and actively engaged in anti-suffrage organizations. Their words and actions were not always preserved for posterity, but the ones that are available often bear out a conservative stance towards gender, finances, personal responsibility, and the efficacy of the law. In an article entitled “Why I Oppose Woman Suffrage,” a Mrs. Horace Brock chided the suffragists for naively believing they could reform society by changing laws.<sup>156</sup> Alice George, who regularly spoke for the Massachusetts organization, said the same, claiming that the suffragists would be better off looking to the ‘power of character’ to change humanity rather than the “power of the law.”<sup>157</sup> George also frequently asserted that woman’s suffrage would “unsex” women, making women like men and men like women, weakening the country. Elizabeth Crannell, who addressed the members of the Committee on Resolutions at the Republican national convention in 1896, claimed that “women were already protected by existing laws, that supply and demand and not the ballot determined wages” and that the ballot was meaningless without the military force behind it “to insure compliance with the law.”<sup>158</sup> Crannell’s words were not original, but they were highly applauded by the press, including the *St. Louis Star*.<sup>159</sup> Anne Myra

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<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, 45.

<sup>156</sup> Benjamin, *A History*, 191.

<sup>157</sup> Alice George, quoted in *ibid.*, 192.

<sup>158</sup> Crannell, quoted in *ibid.*, 30.

<sup>159</sup> Benjamin, *A History*, 31.

Benjamin claims that Crannell did not “convert” the Republican Party to the antis’ views; she did, however, corroborate their opposition to suffrage.<sup>160</sup> According to Susan Goodier, neither the Republican nor the Democratic parties particularly supported woman’s suffrage.<sup>161</sup> Shortly after Crannell’s speech, the Republican party claimed that it was “mindful of the rights and interests of women” and that it welcomed women’s “co-operation in rescuing the country from Democratic mismanagement and Populist rule.”<sup>162</sup> This was the only “trifle” allowed into the Republican Party platform concerning women at the time.<sup>163</sup>

Episcopalians appear to have been the largest group of organized Protestant Christian remonstrants. For example, Green claims that in North Carolina, the majority of the anti-suffrage leaders were members of Episcopalian churches—some sixty percent of the women and some forty-two percent of the men.<sup>164</sup> Although many anti-suffrage organizations already existed, one in North Carolina began very late in the fight for suffrage—in 1920 as the Nineteenth Amendment, having passed through Congress, went to the states for ratification.<sup>165</sup> Its officers were drawn from many of the “notable” citizens in Raleigh. One of the vice presidents of the group was Anna Lay, the wife of an Episcopal minister; another was Elizabeth Cheshire, the wife of the Episcopal bishop Joseph Blount Cheshire.<sup>166</sup> Bishop Cheshire was on the advisory board.<sup>167</sup> Interestingly, according to Green, a large number of Episcopalians appears to have been common in many southern anti-suffrage groups. For example, Green claims that in Texas, more than one-fourth of the anti-suffrage women

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<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

<sup>161</sup> Goodier, *No Votes*, 70.

<sup>162</sup> *Republican Party Platform*, quoted in Benjamin, 31.

<sup>163</sup> Benjamin, *A History*, 31.

<sup>164</sup> Elna C. Green, “Those Opposed: The Antisuffragists in North Carolina, 1900-1920,” *The North Carolina Historical Review* 67:3 (July 1990): 326.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, 322.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*

“were members of Episcopal churches”; in Tennessee, she asserts, “the number was more than one-third.”<sup>168</sup> In the northern groups, this may have also been the case; Susan Goodier notes that many of the anti-suffragists in her study of the anti-suffrage movement in New York had ties to the Episcopal church.<sup>169</sup> This appears to have also been true of Presbyterians.<sup>170</sup> Apparently, some of the anti-suffragists were related and lived very close to one another, often in prestigious neighborhoods.<sup>171</sup> Could it be that at least some of the anti-suffragists joined together against the changes they saw taking place in society—not just because of their class status and family ties—but because of their shared church membership and their strongly held values and religious beliefs? Green intimates that many of the folks in Raleigh, North Carolina did indeed worship together in local Episcopalian churches.<sup>172</sup> Goodier claims that Bishop Doane supported and encouraged the Albany antis, some of whom were his personal friends and family members.<sup>173</sup>

This was probably the case with many of the other anti-suffragists.<sup>174</sup> It may be that the wealthier antis had the time, the status, and the means to engage in and to assume leadership roles in the anti-suffrage movement, perhaps more so than their middle class and working class counterparts. This does not mean, however, that their only motivation for doing so was class-based or even entirely political.

## XI. FINAL CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, historians are to be commended for finally recognizing the important contributions of the anti-suffragists and, particularly, the

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<sup>168</sup> Green, *Southern Strategies*, 73.

<sup>169</sup> Goodier, *No Votes*, 150.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>171</sup> Green, “Those Opposed,” 332.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>173</sup> Goodier, *No Votes*, 46.

<sup>174</sup> Green, “Those Opposed,” 332.

agency of the “anti” women in conjunction with the “anti” men in recent years. However, the religious beliefs that in all probability undergirded—at least in part—the antis’ actions and ideologies, have not been given enough credit. It does appear likely that some of the antis certainly had class-based interests and fought to protect themselves against social encroachments. However, class interests do not explain everything.

It may be argued that the antis’ Christian-based beliefs concerning gender and the traditional family were commonplace at the time to antis and suffragists, although the suffragists championed more egalitarian male and female roles. As Jean Bethke Elshtain has pointed out, the suffragists believed that the mantle of private morality could be thrown over the public sphere; this having been done, a better, more utopian America would be the result.<sup>175</sup> The antis, however, apparently did not believe that this was possible. Character and personal responsibility were the traits and practices that paved the road to a better life, and the centralization of state power and socialism were great evils to be avoided at all costs. These beliefs were common, not just to upper class Americans and northeastern Republicans, but to many American Catholic and Protestant Christians in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Included in this group were members of the so-called “low” churches, many of whom were middle and working class, such as Baptists and Methodists.<sup>176</sup>

Additionally, one is left to ponder the merit of some of the antis’ predictions, whether they were religiously conceived or not. The antis’ insistence that women do not belong in politics, or their fear that suffrage would undermine the traditional family may be ideas that are open to question; however, the anti-suffragists also predicted that suffrage would not purify politics, nor would it usher in some kind of a utopian age. It

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<sup>175</sup> Jean Bethke Elshtain, “Aristotle, the Public-Private Split, and the Case of the Suffragists,” in *The Family in Political Thought*, Jean Bethke Elshtain, ed. (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1982), 58.

<sup>176</sup> See May, 153, 163; 188-190.

certainly did not, and neither did Prohibition or the many other reforms that many of the suffragists promoted. As Christians, many of the anti-suffragists did not believe that reliance on the state was the way to improve one’s lot; hard work, personal responsibility, good character, and reliance on God were the things that ultimately secured a good life. Additional laws and regulations would also most likely undermine a free market economy and, as Cuyler had previously intimated, would be difficult to repeal once voted in.<sup>177</sup> One should not wonder, then, that the antis questioned the efficacy of suffrage, or its long-term effects. Evidently, they did not believe legislation was a solution to many of the problems unique to women, or to many other problems, for that matter. Ultimately, they also did not apparently believe that a utopian existence was possible—at least, not while on this earth.

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<sup>177</sup> Cuyler, “Shall Women be Burdened,” no page given.