CONTINUITY IN NEW JERSEY WOMEN'S ACTIVISM FROM SUFFRAGE THROUGH WORLD WAR II

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ABSTRACT

Continuity in New Jersey Women's Activism from Suffrage through World War II

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This research demonstrates a continuity of New Jersey women's activism beginning after the suffrage victory and extending into World War II. With a long history of social reform organizations, community engagement and civic clubs, women's WWII activism in New Jersey was an extension of other aspects of civic responsibility traced back to suffrage activism and Progressive Era campaigns already in existence before the war. After the suffrage victory, the New Jersey League of Women Voters (NJLWV) and the Consumers League of New Jersey (CLNJ) emerged as the two most prominent women's activist groups in the Garden State.

The unprecedented nature of WWII on the home front and abroad did not suspend this pattern of social concern, but altered the ways these club women engaged in their activities. An examination of primary sources from prominent activist groups beginning in the early twentieth century shows parallels between Progressive Era networks of influence and the mobilization of women for wartime activism, including involvement in civilian defense and women's military branches. Early twentieth century activist networks provided the training ground for future generations of club women and helped lay the foundation for the enormous home front activism of WWII.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AAF	Army Air Force
AEF	American Expeditionary Force
ANC	Army Nurse Corps.
AWVS	American Women's Voluntary Services
CDC	Civil Defense Conditioning
ERA	Equal Rights Amendment
FDR	Franklin Delano Roosevelt
NNC	Navy Nurse Corps.
CL	Consumers League (used interchangeably with NCL)
CLNJ	Consumers League of New Jersey
LWV	League of Women Voters
SPAR	Semper Paratus Always Ready
NAWSA	National American Woman Suffrage Association
NCL	National Consumers League
NJWCTU	New Jersey Woman's Christian Temperance Union
NJSFWC	New Jersey State Federation of Women's Clubs
NJLWV	New Jersey League of Women Voters
NJWSA	New Jersey Woman Suffrage Association
NWP	National Women's Party
OCD	Office of Civilian Defense
OWI	Office of War Information
USO	United Service Organizations
WAC	Women's Army Corps.
WAAC	Women's Army Auxiliary Corps.
WASP	Women Air Force Service Pilots
WAVES	Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service
WVOCD	West Virginia State Office of Civilian Defense
WVS	Women's Voluntary Services
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association

INTRODUCTION

WWII has long been viewed by scholars as a watershed event in history. For women, the social changes brought on by the conflict, most notably the absence of men, presented a unique opportunity. Charissa Threat noted, "Many historians have found that the Second World War provided both the catalyst for long-term changes in the status of American women and the opportunity to strengthen civil rights activism because of the war's promise of democracy and equality for all."[1] A closer examination of women's WWII activism reveals motivations which go well beyond simple patriotism. A national spirit of social involvement already existed for women well before the government and businesses called upon their sense of patriotism to aid in the war effort. In fact, their sense of social responsibility provided the foundation for the ease with which they entered various volunteer, military or civil defense positions during WWII. The foundations of women's WWII activism can be clearly traced back to earlier suffrage efforts, and represent an unbroken continuum, challenging the traditional historical interpretation of Progressive Era and WWII women's activism as two separate and distinct movements.

Even after suffrage, American women formed new national organizations, notably the League of Women Voters (LWV) and the National Consumers' League (NCL), to continue their quest for gender equality and social reform. Individual states followed these examples by creating their own chapters and focusing on problems unique to each geographic area. Before WWII, New Jersey formed the epicenter of the suffrage

[1] Charissa J. Threat, "'The Hands that Might Save Them': Gender, Race and the Politics of Nursing in the United States during the Second World War," *Gender and History* 24, no. 2 (2012): 457.

battle, with leaders such as Alice Paul and Elizabeth Cady Stanton residing in the state.[2] With the coming of war, these clubs did not disappear or suspend their activities altogether, rather their priorities shifted to accommodate the crisis. The story of New Jersey women points to thriving networks of civic activism which continued after the battle for suffrage and morphed into new forms during wartime. Before WWII, women and girls in New Jersey were already involved in social reform clubs, community engagement organizations, church groups and more. A thorough exploration of these networks shows the unprecedented nature of WWII on the home front did not stop this pattern, but simply altered the ways these club women and other activists engaged in their activities. The unbroken continuum of women's activism in New Jersey, from the Progressive Era through WWII, challenges the traditional historical interpretation of Progressivism and WWII volunteerism as mutually exclusive, and is part of a continuing effort among historians to situate women's WWII experiences within a larger context of civic activism. The story of New Jersey women points to thriving networks of civic engagement which continued after the battle for suffrage and morphed into new forms in wartime, providing a model for the analysis of women's activism in other states and regions.

Since the Garden State became host to so many women's clubs and reform organizations in the early nineteenth century, the task of picking distinctive groups for this research was a difficult one. For the purposes of this study, the availability and detail of archival sources was one of the major factors in choosing the New Jersey League of

[2] Elizabeth Cady Stanton lived in Tenafly, NJ from 1868-1887 (http://www.nj.gov/dep/hpo/350th_NJ_History/theme_diversity.htm) Alice Paul was born in Mount Laurel, NJ in 1885 (http://www.alicepaul.org/who-was-alice-paul/).

Women Voters (NJLWV) and the Consumers League of New Jersey (CLNJ) as focal groups. Another benefit in choosing the CLNJ and the NJLWV is the measured influence, easily quantified through the legislative changes spurred by the campaigns of these groups. Since this research begins with the work of New Jersey suffragists, tracing a continuum of influence, the NJLWV, as the natural successor, and the CLNJ, a group which counted suffragists among their early members, were logical choices. Importantly, the NJLWV and the CLNJ exemplify the continuation of the ideals of suffragists who believed social reform could be achieved if only women obtained the right to vote. As Felice Gordon notes, "Unlike the suffragists of the nineteenth century, who demanded the vote because it was woman's natural right, their early twentieth century counterparts sought the ballot because of the good they thought it would accomplish."[3] Regrettably, New Jersey has a long list of activist groups which are beyond the scope of this research for various reasons. To narrow the focus of this research and most clearly reflect a continuity of influence from suffrage to WWII, I chose to omit many groups which all add value to the activist landscape of New Jersey's history.[4] Many other groups contributed to the struggle for suffrage locally, notably the women of the New Jersey State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs (NJSFCWC) which became associated with the New Jersey Woman Suffrage Association (NJWSA) in 1917.[5]

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[3] Felice Gordon, *After Winning: The Legacy of the New Jersey Suffragists, 1920-1947* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1986), 1.

[4] A brief listing of the women's reform groups active in New Jersey during this period include, but are not limited to: The New Jersey Federation of Business and Professional Clubs, The New Jersey State Federation of Women's Clubs, The New Jersey State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, The New Jersey Woman's Party, The New Jersey Women's Trade Union League, The Woman's Christian Temperance Union, and The Young Women's Christian Association.

[5] Gordon, 25.

The massive number of activist groups in the Garden State led Susan B. Anthony, a well-respected and outspoken suffragist, to remark, "New Jersey has so many associations of women that they have acted as a bar against the formation of suffragist clubs, women feeling that they had already too many meetings to attend."[6] While this comment was not meant to disparage the existing clubs, it serves as a testament to the sheer amount of social activity New Jersey women were involved in at the time. This setting led to a climate of activism or civic engagement, which is usefully defined as:

> individual and collective actions designed to identify and address issues of public concern…from individual voluntarism to organizational involvement to electoral participation. It can include efforts to directly address an issue, work with others in a community to solve a problem or interact with the institutions of representative democracy.[7]

Understanding this context helps situate women's WWII activism in New Jersey as part of a continuation of other aspects of civic responsibility and Progressive Era campaigns already in existence before the war. An examination of primary sources from prominent activist groups beginning in the early twentieth century shows parallels between suffragist and Progressive Era networks of influence and the mobilization of women for wartime activism, including involvement in civilian defense and women's military branches.

This work builds on the recent scholarship working to expand our consideration of the social impact of U.S. women's movements. As more than specific instances to be studied separately, movements such as women's suffrage, which for too long was placed

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[6] Susan B. Anthony and Ida Husted Harper, *History of Woman Suffrage: Volume 4, 1883-1900,* (New York: Fowler and Wells, 1902), 25.
[7] "Civic Engagement," *American Psychological Association* http://www.apa.org/education/undergrad/civic-engagement.aspx (accessed: December 10, 2014).

in a rigidly defined period of existence, are now being considered on a continuum of influence. Likewise, the Progressive Era has been treated as a time of flourishing activism which waned and eventually ceased with the conclusion of WWI. Several important works recognized the continuity of activism and bridged the gap between the end of suffrage and the New Deal Era. Progressive America was a period when social reform organizations sprang up in response to a wide range of social issues only rectified when citizens formed groups working towards common goals. However, the struggle to retain the legislation won over the years continued long after the end of the Progressive Era and was most threatened in the turbulent years of WWII.

This work expands on the increasing scholarship considering women's movements after suffrage as flourishing rather than stagnant. It seeks to correct the tendency, as per Kristi Anderson, to insist "that nothing very interesting happened, with regard to women and electoral politics until the 1970s."[8] However, as Anderson and others tend to stop with the New Deal Era, this research moves beyond that point, bridging the gap between suffrage and WWII. As a focal point, the narrative of New Jersey women's activism presents both a common and unique story. In some instances, the activities of clubwomen reflected their national counterparts, while in others they forged a different path, molding their initiatives with the unique characteristics of New Jersey's political, social and economic make-up. The well-documented history of New Jersey women's activism provides sufficient evidence of a continuity of influence which connected suffrage with WWII.

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[8] Kristi Anderson, *After Suffrage: Women in Partisan and Electoral Politics before the New Deal* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 1.

To show a continuum of civic engagement in New Jersey, this research focuses on the Consumers League of New Jersey (CLNJ) and the New Jersey League of Women Voters (NJLWV) as seminal groups. Along with the thorough archives available for each group, these organizations also represent the clearest path from suffrage to WWII. As the descendant of the New Jersey Woman Suffrage Association (NJWSA), the NJLWV formed an obvious, yet often ignored, link from suffrage to WWII.[9] As an organization originally intended to provide a temporary solution to prepare these new women voters to lead politically active lives, the NJLWV surpassed its original mandate and formed an influential group that still spurs legislative change today. In 1900, the CLNJ formed to fight against unfair employment practices, child labor, unsafe factory conditions, consumer rights and more.[10] Founded before the suffrage win, the records of the CLNJ form a timeline of legislative victories and social campaigns, easily traced from suffrage to WWII. The records of New Jersey women during WWII show the immediate influences of the NJLWV and the CLNJ on a continuum of activism, rather than as a separate instance.[11] Since the NJLWV and CLNJ worked with a variety of other

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[9] This research utilizes the archives of the NJLWV, 1920-1991, available in the Special Collections section of the Alexander Library of Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ. The Lena Anthony Robbins Papers, 1917-1945, also available in the Special Collections section of the Alexander Library of Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ provides insight into Robbins, a suffragist and officer in the NJLWV.
[10] Research on the CLNJ was conducted using the Consumers League of New Jersey Records, 1896-1988, available in the Special Collections section of the Alexander Library of Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ. The story of Mary Dyckman, a long-time activist and president of the CLNJ, serves as another important resource, available in the Mary Dyckman Papers, 1903-1982, in the Special Collections section of the Alexander Library of Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ. The Susanna Zwemer Papers, 1939-1948, in the Special Collections section of the Alexander Library of Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ provides insight into Zwemer, who served as president of the CLNJ.
[11] The research on New Jersey women during WWII utilizes several archives, including: The Betty H. Carter Woman Veteran's Historical Project, available online through the University of North Carolina, which includes interviews and resources from New Jersey women who relocated to North Carolina after the war, the Rosie the Riveter Project, available online through the County College of Morris, which includes interviews detailing the narratives of local civil defense workers, the Rutgers Oral History Archives, which includes interviews from New Jersey women involved in military branches, defense industry work and volunteer organizations, and the Veterans History Project, available online through the American Folklife

organizations, they illustrate the activism of other women affiliated with groups that are not as well-represented through the available resources. Also, women who participated in activism as individuals focused on specific issues, rather than working through membership in an established activist group, appear in the correspondence of the NJLWV and the CLNJ.

Chapter One offers a historiographical framework by detailing the intersections of secondary sources which ultimately contributed to this research. In the last several decades, new scholarship emerged to deal with women's civic engagement as a whole, along with many smaller pieces of the puzzle, as well. Some historians, like Nancy F. Cott, Felice Gordon and Kristi Anderson, chose to reinterpret the influence and meaning of suffrage by reconsidering the traditional narrative that placed suffrage in a confined box and presented evidence that women were truly active in different ways after the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment. Academic consideration of women during the Great Depression and WWII continued this story of activism, providing new insights into the scholarship on women's history, social history and labor history.

Chapter Two provides context for the WWII activism of women in New Jersey by considering the climate of social organizations which existed after the suffrage win with a specific focus on the New Jersey League of Women Voters. A long-ignored piece of the puzzle, the proliferation of already existing social networks created an atmosphere of activism that was both quickly utilized and easily sustained during the war years. A look at New Jersey women in the interwar period reveals a rich activist spirit evident in their involvement in social, religious and other community groups. A more comprehensive

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Center, Library of Congress, which includes interviews of women who were involved in the war effort in all branches of the military, nurses, volunteer organizations and defense industry workers.

look at primary sources such as the records of the Consumers League of New Jersey, the New Jersey League of Women Voters, the Susanna Zwemer Papers, the Anthony Lena Robbins Papers and the Rutgers University Oral History Project reveals a complex network of non-profit social and religious organizations that worked for change in twentieth century New Jersey. An analysis of correspondence and records reveals major female-led activist organizations working in New Jersey, both before and during WWII, coordinated their efforts on different occasions, most importantly on proposed legislation.

Chapter Three deals with the Consumers League of New Jersey from its creation until the beginning of American involvement in WWII. Rather than allowing WWI and the Great Depression to destroy their post-suffrage achievements, the CLNJ fought to keep their legislative victories protected, safeguarded the enforcement of labor laws and furthered their reform agenda. This section discusses the first three decades of the CLNJ, as the organization campaigned for changes in occupational health, workers compensation, child labor, factory safety, women's labor and industrial homework.[12]

Chapter Four analyzes the challenges and campaigns of the NJLWV and the CLNJ during WWII with a specific focus on how the networks of influence and activism cultivated in the period after suffrage were utilized to easily mobilize New Jersey women in various capacities during the war. Along with wartime mobilization, both the NJLWV and the CLNJ performed a new balancing act, shifting their priorities to help the war effort while holding true to their prewar concerns. For the NJLWV, wartime activity included educating the public on wartime service, pushing for constitutional reform, advocating for the protection of child laborers, ensuring children received adequate

[12] Report of the Executive Secretary, January 27, 1939, Consumers League of NJ, MC 1090, box 34, folder 31, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.

education and promoting peace. The CLNJ also pushed for a constitutional revision and protections for New Jersey workers and campaigned for the improvement of unsafe factory conditions, occupational health, workers compensation and migrant workers' rights.

Chapter Five deals specifically with the wartime involvement of New Jersey women, forming a clear picture of the continuity of civic engagement. During WWII, the U.S. government launched a propaganda campaign aimed at both businesses and individuals. On the one hand, businesses had to be convinced of the merit of employing women in the absence of men who were needed in the military. On the other hand, government advertisements aimed at women and their families attempted to convince them of their patriotic duty to enter the workforce. However, defense workers were only one piece of the puzzle. In New Jersey, women jumped into volunteer organizations like the USO and the Red Cross, volunteered for local civilian defense positions, joined new women's military branches and served both on the home front and abroad as nurses. This increase in civic engagement was not easily explained by patriotic fervor. Rather, this was the direct result of a history of activism in New Jersey, both familial and institutional, beginning with suffrage and continuing in the campaigns of the CLNJ and the NJLWV.

Despite the demands of war on the home front, New Jersey activists continued to make gains in various areas, notably in legislation and enforcement. For instance, on July 17, 1940, Mary L. Dyckman of the CLNJ wrote, "In a war saddened world it is good to be able to report to you what the League has accomplished this past year with the

money, time and volunteer effort you have contributed to it."[13] Dyckman then outlined the most recent legislative victories and made recommendations for further accomplishments. Labor shortages coupled with the need for wartime production threatened newly won legislation protecting the rights of children and women in the labor force. The work of the CLNJ did not end with the passing of protective legislation but continued in the defense of such laws. Dyckman recognized the possibility that new legislation might be suspended or ignored in the face of the impending crisis of war. In a letter written on July 1, 1941, she stated:

> This promises to be one of the busiest summers the League has had in many a year. Efforts to 'suspend' the laws regulating child labor, night work for women and similar measures, for which the League has worked for many years, continue to be made, only the excuse now is 'defense emergency.'…Again this is our part of the defense program, just as vitally important in summer as at any other time. We hope our contributors will help save the women and children of New Jersey from the aftermath of bad industrial practices which resulted from the last war.[14]

An examination of the archives of the CLNJ reveals interactions with social and religious organizations, government committees, private citizens, business owners, and even politicians. This also shows other activist groups who, during war, remained concerned about other issues, dispelling the myth of a one-track mind in relation to WWII on the home front.

This research clarifies the connections between the prewar activism of New Jersey women and the expansion of activity during WWII. In many ways, this research is an expansion of Felice Gordon's *After Winning: The Legacy of New Jersey Suffragists, 1920-1947,* and is part of a continuing effort among historians to situate women's WWII

[13] Mary L. Dyckman to League Members, July 17, 1940, Consumers' League of NJ, MC 1090, box 7, folder 1, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[14] Mary L. Dyckman to League Members, July 1, 1941, Consumers' League of NJ, MC 1090, box 7, folder 1, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.

experiences within the larger context of civic activism. Rather than viewing Progressivism and WWII volunteerism as mutually exclusive, the story of New Jersey women points to thriving networks of civic engagement which continued from the battle for suffrage and morphed into new forms during wartime. The story of women's activism in the Garden State offers insight into the historical records of other states and the nation.

CHAPTER 1:

HISTORIOGRAPHY

In 1928 Arthur Schlesinger questioned the notable absence of women from textbooks, writing, "An examination of the standard histories of the United States and of the history textbooks in use in our schools raises the pertinent question whether women have ever made any contributions to American national progress that are worthy of record."[15] This research builds on a number of secondary sources, combining relevant subfields to form a cohesive picture of New Jersey activism from the early twentieth century until the end of World War II. Since this work bridges the gap between prewar engagement and the WWII activism of women, seminal work on women's suffrage and civic engagement, particularly during the Progressive Era, is discussed. Lastly, influential scholarship on the contribution of women during WWII on a national level provides the historiographical context for a state-specific inquiry into the history of wartime New Jersey.

Early on, Alexis de Tocqueville "…pointed to the role of voluntary associations in the United States in tempering its citizens individualistic, anti-institutional proclivities…Americans early on found associational activity a source of socializing and psychological support."[16] Women's civic activism was present from the early days of the nation, in many cases even before the country was officially declared independent, with women engaging in boycotts of British products well before the American Revolution. Carol Berkin, author of *Revolutionary Mothers: Women in the Struggle for America's*

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[15] Eleanor Flexner, *Century of Struggle: The Women's Rights Movement in the United States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), xxxi.

[16] David S. Patterson, *The Search for a Negotiated Peace: Women's Activism and Citizen Diplomacy in World War I* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 3.

Independence, provides evidence of women's involvement in the boycotts of British goods as a representation of the earliest form of consumer activism. She observes, "Thus, the first political act of American women was to say 'No'…Their 'no's had an immediate effect, for women had become major consumers and purchasers by the mid-eighteenth century."[17] While the stories of prominent, even legendary, men during the American Revolution, became forever tied with the national mythology, the contributions of women during this time were left ignored by history until recently.[18] Episodes of collective social action, especially those tied to consumerism, form the foundation of women's activism from suffrage onward.

Similarly, Linda Kerber's *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* discusses the changing face of political engagement, beginning with boycotts against the British empire necessitating the involvement of women. Much like successive military conflicts, the American Revolution also accelerated women's participation in society and politics. By requiring a woman's participation "as a provider of essential services for troops, as a civilian source of food and shelter, as a contributor of funds and supplies, as a spy," the revolution pushed changes in gender roles.[19] After the conclusion of hostilities, the women who were so essential in winning were left out of equal citizenship in the newly ratified U.S. Constitution. Their power, more unofficial than not, came to be represented in what Kerber calls "Republican Motherhood" whereby a woman "integrated political values into her domestic life."[20] Kept out of the public

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[17] Ibid., 13-14.
[18] For a concise discussion on the lives of colonial women before the American Revolution, see Carol Berkin's *First Generations: Women in Colonial America* (1996).
[19] Linda Kerber, *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), 8-9.
[20] Ibid., 11.

realm of politics, American women formed social welfare organizations. For the most part, these groups were based on moral issues thought to be mere extensions of the ideals of "Republican Motherhood." As an essential point in the evolution of women's civic engagement, these pathways of social networking and influence provided the training ground for the suffrage movement and subsequent women's rights campaigns.

To further bridge the gap in women's civic activism and as a follow-up to *Women of the Republic*, Linda Kerber's volume *No Constitutional Right to be Ladies: Women and the Obligations of Citizenship* examines the historic debates on the nature of women's citizenship beginning in the post-Revolutionary period and moving into the present. She divides the concept of citizenship into rights and obligations, which are rarely balanced in the case of American women. By choosing several key areas of citizenship for closer examination, notably taxes, jury duty, military service, loyalty and avoiding vagrancy, Kerber analyzes differing and often contradictory notions of women's rights and responsibilities. These civic constraints on women were tied to old ideas of coverture which "excused married women from civic obligation *because* married women owed their primary obligation to their husbands."[21] As the slow crawl towards more political and social rights progressed, women navigated changing ideas of what constituted their obligations to state and family. The dynamic and varied interpretations of obligations and rights went on to affect subsequent women's movements in the United States, including First and Second Wave Feminism.

The battle for women's suffrage formed the most recognized and large-scale example of women's activism in America. The ever-growing literature on suffrage

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[21] Linda K. Kerber, *No Constitutional Right to be Ladies: Women and the Obligations of Citizenship* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1998), 304.

encompasses both the movement and its prominent leaders. Recently, more attention has been given to the women who supported the movement; those who were essential to the success of suffrage, yet relegated to the background of history. Early treatment of woman's suffrage consisted of work by women who were directly involved in the movement. This changed in the 1950s and 1960s with scholarly treatment focusing on ideological ruptures inside the movement. Within this tradition, Eleanor Flexner's seminal work, *Century of Struggle: The Woman's Rights Movement in the United States,* provides an early foundation for future studies. Beginning with a brief history of women's experiences during the first British colonial incursions into what would become the United States, she forms a cohesive narrative. She then moves along chronologically, detailing women's experiences during the Revolutionary Era, the Civil War and the long struggle for suffrage. She presents the tactical changes within the movement successfully, detailing the early struggles, largely based on the common ideal of women as the stewards of morality, and the gradual shift to organized campaigning based on specific issues.

Following this tradition, but also expanding on the historical treatment of the suffrage movement by considering factors of race, class, social, economic and political factors, Aileen Kraditor's *The Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement, 1890-1920,* first published in 1965, focuses on the intellectual history of prominent suffragists. She acknowledges the suffrage movement technically had no specific ideology, writing "Although they all agreed that women should have the right to vote, they disagreed on why they ought to have that right."[22] Importantly, hers was the first scholarly work

[22] Aileen S. Kraditor, *The Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement, 1890-1920* (New York: Norton and Company, 1981), xi.

specifying the ideology of suffragists and the counterarguments they formed to combat the anti-suffragists.[23] Through time, suffragists developed their own system of talking points and arguments designed to steer public opinion. Her work necessarily addresses the social changes brought on by American industrialization, a topic which was given little treatment in Flexnor's work.[24] According to Kraditor, while the suffrage win was undoubtedly accomplished through the movement, the movement was only accomplished through "social transformations that permitted women to participate outside their home in activities that inevitably led them into politics."[25] This multi-faceted consideration of suffrage ultimately influenced subsequent scholarship, leading to a more complete and interdisciplinary approach to women's history.

Beginning in the 1970s, traditional views concerning the lasting impact of the women's suffrage movement were challenged. In *Feminism and Suffrage: The Emergence of an Independent Women's Movement in America, 1848-1869,* first published in 1978, Ellen Carol DuBois analyzed the origins of American feminism through the lens of the women's rights movement and suffrage. Her main argument centers around the women's suffrage movement as more than simply a stopping point on

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[23] Ibid., xii.
[24] Many other authors dealt with the early suffragist movement, specifically the contributions of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony. Some notable secondary sources on the suffrage movement as a whole include: Allison Sneider's *Suffragists in an Imperial Age: U.S. Expansion and the Woman Question, 1870-1929* (2008)*,* Suzanne Marilley's *Woman Suffrage and the Origins of Liberal Feminism in the United States, 1820-1920* (1996)*,* Sara Hunter Graham's *Woman Suffrage and the New Democracy* (1996)*,* Maroula Joannou and June Purvis's edited volume *The Women's Suffrage Movement: New Feminist Perspectives* (1998) and Linda J. Lumsden's *Rampant Women: Suffragists and the Right of Assembly* (1999). Noteworthy work on key suffragists includes: *Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Correspondence, Writings, Speeches*, edited by Carol Ellen Dubois (1981), *Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Feminist as Thinker: A Reader in Documents and Essays*, edited by Carol Ellen DuBois and Richard Smith (2007), *The Political Thought of Elizabeth Cady Stanton: Women's Rights and the American Political Tradition* by Sue Davis (2008), *Susan B. Anthony: A Biography of a Singular Feminist* by Kathleen Barry (1988) and *The Woman who Dared to Vote: The Trial of Susan B. Anthony* by N. E. H. Hull (2012).
[25] Kraditor, *The Ideas of Woman Suffrage*, x.

the way to a more meaningful movement for female equality. Rather, she points out, the suffrage win began a long process of social reform, increased civic activism and political reorganization for women. In the years immediately succeeding woman's suffrage, advocates broke away from traditional social reformers by challenging outdated views of women as being relegated to the domestic sphere.[26] DuBois refutes any consideration of the suffrage movement as a "useless detour in women's struggle for liberation because the vote did not solve the problem of women's oppression."[27] Rather than viewing suffrage in isolation, DuBois sets the stage for subsequent analyses by forming a narrative which incorporates the ideology and tactics of the first wave of feminism into successive movements.[28] Similarly, Nancy F. Cott's *The Grounding of Modern Feminism* rallied against the dominant idea that the suffrage win represented a high point of achievement which ultimately led to the stagnation of women's activism in the 1920s and 1930s.

Following DuBois and Cott and building on previous work linking consumerism and women's activism, Margaret Finnegan's *Selling Suffrage: Consumer Culture and Votes for Women* uncovers parallels between suffrage, successive waves of feminism and consumer culture. Working under the premise of American consumerism as an influence in the campaigns of non-radical women's suffrage advocates, she argues suffragists used consumerism to elevate a woman's position as the prime shopper to a politically influential one. Until this point, the links between consumer culture and women's

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[26] Ellen Carol DuBois, *Feminism and Suffrage: The Emergence of an Independent Women's Movement in America, 1848-1869* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1978), 3.
[27] Ibid., 17.
[28] For a discussion on the campaigns and strategies of the National Woman's Party see Christine Lundardi's *From Equal Rights to Equal Suffrage: Alice Paul and the National Woman's Party, 1910-1928* (New York: New York University Press, 1986).

suffrage were largely ignored, despite the increasingly pervasive nature of consumerism in American society. She notes, "By acknowledging the overlapping boundaries between commercial and political culture, suffragists contributed to a growing public dialogue about American politics in an age of mass culture and consumerism."[29] Echoing Kraditor's treatment of suffrage, Finnegan points to the language of consumerism, eventually adopted by suffragists, as a key step in promoting their cause.

The next expansion of women's civic engagement research involved moving away from traditional views of the fight for women's suffrage as merely the story of middle-class white women and finding the narratives of marginalized groups. Again, Eleanor Flexner's work *Century of Struggle* presents an archetype by emphasizing the support of African American women as she detailed the role of the National Woman's Party in the struggle for equal rights after suffrage. This work relates the story of various struggles for social reform, political voice and feminism and looked through the eyes of both the privileged white women who headed the major movements and the African American women who were engaged in various campaigns. Although historians were slow to build on this work, eventually the 1990s saw an expansion of academic interest in the long-ignored contributions of African American women in the suffrage battle.[30]

Eventually, scholars turned towards a thorough analyses of African American women's activism. Among the most comprehensive of these works is *African American Women in the Struggle for the Vote, 1850-1920,* in which Rosalyn Terborg-Penn argues

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[29] Margaret Finnegan, *Selling Suffrage: Consumer Culture and Votes for Women* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 2.
[30] For a recent, concise history of women's movements in the United States, see *Feminism Unfinished: A Short, Surprising History of American Women's Movements* by Dorothy Sue Cobble, Linda Gordon and Astrid Henry (New York: Liveright Publishing, 2014).

the seventy-year struggle for suffrage presented different experiences for African American women. Due to an inherently racist society, economic and educational barriers and regional differences, African America women participated in civic engagement to varying degrees. Rather than discussing how the white suffragists viewed them, she finds the voices of the African American suffragists themselves. While the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment was a hollow victory for African American women who faced disenfranchisement immediately afterwards, their experiences also provided an opportunity to learn tactics for future social activism.[31] African American suffragists changed their strategies from a gender-specific to a more race-centered platform advocating anti-discrimination policies.[32]

With the social changes brought on by U.S. industrialization, many historians focused on women's activism during the Progressive Era. Largely due to the growth of the nation's industrial power and subsequent developments in urban areas, many new societal problems came to the forefront during this time. Alan Dawley writes, "The most enduring contribution of the progressive generation to American reform was the invention of a social conscience."[33] Social issues such as overcrowding in cities, mistreatment of workers, pollution, and unfair child labor were among the many areas reformers sought to change. The Progressive period encompassed a vast number of organizations and activists who dealt with various issues. During this time, women

[31] For a detailed discussion of the women's suffrage movement in the South, see Marjorie Spruill Wheeler's *New Women of the New South: The Leaders of the Woman Suffrage Movement in the Southern States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).
[32] For research on the politics of the Jim Crow system and the effect on African American women's civic activism, see Glenda Gilmore's *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1992).
[33] Alan Dawley, *Changing the World: American Progressives in War and Revolution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 43.

began to exercise more social and political power through their involvement in reform movements.

The beginning of the twentieth century was a turning point for industrial power. New technologies made vast improvements in the efficiency of manufacturing products. Cecelia Tichi succinctly described this time in America when she wrote, "The United States was physically metamorphosing as family farms gave way to factories, and villages and towns mushroomed overnight into cities."[34] The changing face of the workforce ultimately affected the entire structure of society, as low wages forced women and children out of the home and into the factories. In this atmosphere, opinions about immigration, poverty, labor and the rights of women and children shifted. The idea that it was acceptable for children to work to help support their families, led to many to find employment as newspaper boys, flower girls or delivery boys.[35] Before the market revolution of the 1820s, women were reliant on their fathers and then their husbands for financial security. However, once women secured employment outside the home, the cultural ideas of dependence began to change. During the Progressive Era, many women took their roles as moral leaders in the home and extended them to their communities, their states and in some cases to the entire country. Since American society traditionally looked to women to nurture the ethical welfare of their children and husbands, it was no coincidence that women's clubs and organizations continued to spring up during the Progressive Era, taking on issues from child labor to temperance.

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[34] Cecelia Tichi, *Civic Passions: Seven who Launched Progressive America (and What they Teach us)* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 7.
[35] Ibid., 128.

During the 1990s, a new wave of research thoroughly incorporated women into the story of Progressive reform. As with other academic work on women, this began with bibliographic sketches on prominent individuals. Kathryn Kish Skylar's *Florence Kelley and the Nation's Work* was a prime representation of this trend while presenting a detailed description of how Kelley utilized networks of influence and legislative pressure to spur social change. In 1998, Steven J. Diner wrote *A Very Different Age: Americans of the Progressive Era* as a broad analysis of Progressive reform. He analyzed the impact of reform on different groups such as immigrants, women, industrial workers, white-collar workers, African-Americans and business operators.[36] Similarly, in *Changing the World: American Progressives in War and Revolution,* Alan Dawley provided a concise examination of the American Progressive movement from 1900 until 1930 by examining the changing patterns of society and showing how reform movements arose in response.

Eventually, scholarship turned to women in Progressive reform. Robyn Muncy's formative work *Creating a Female Dominion in American Reform, 1890-1913*, focused on key organizations in what she calls "a female dominion in a mostly male empire of policymaking."[37] Focusing on middle-class women reformers who formed a bridge between the Progressive Era and the New Deal, Muncy argued women's organizations formed a network of female dominion in reform movements which influenced American legislation. As she analyzed female dominion through the lens of child welfare reform, she departed from the traditional view that Progressive activism stopped after WWI.

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[36] Steven J. Diner, *A Very Different Age: Americans of the Progressive Era* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1998), 5.

[37] Robyn Muncy, *Creating a Female Dominion in American Reform, 1890-1913* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), xii.

While women as a collective were realizing their social power, they were still limited in their political power. In *Gender, Class, Race and Reform in the Progressive Era*, Noralee Frankel and Nancy S. Dye present a collection of essays dealing with the societal changes which spurred Progressive reform. Rapid industrialization, the rise of corporations, changing work patterns and migrations into urban centers all had differing effects on society. Some themes covered in the essays include: African American women against segregation, working class consciousness, health reform, the anti-lynching campaign and class dynamics among women suffragists. Despite having limited political power, Progressive Era women exercised considerable local and statewide influence, especially through networking with like-minded women. By the early twentieth century, women gained a national voice through organizations such as the National Consumers League and the Women's Trade Union League. As industrialization continued to effect society, women began to realize their power as consumers and use this to push for social reforms "…redefining the relationship between the home and the community-the private sphere and the public."[38] Dye and Frankel propose the full extent of women's involvement in Progressive America has yet to be fully understood.

In *Women's Use of Public Relations for Progressive-Era Reform: Rousing the Conscience of a Nation,* editor Dulcie Murdock Straughan collects essays about the public relations strategies used by women's organizations during the Progressive-Era. This work effectively changes the traditional idea that public relations strategies were dominated and utilized only by the men of big business. Working on a continuum of activism, the authors draw parallels between suffrage and progressivism. For instance, in

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[38] Noralee Frankel and Nancy S. Dye, eds. *Gender, Class, Race and Reform in the Progressive Era* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 1991), 4.

Sarah Lynn Farmer's contribution, "Communicating Justice: The National American Woman Suffrage Association's use of Public Relations to Win the Right to Vote" she describes the women's suffrage campaign as one of the earliest and best examples of successful utilization of public relations tactics.[39] Through the use of public relations, women reformers launched educational campaigns, sent inspectors to review working conditions in factories and retail stores and partnered with colleges and universities to collect data.

With the continued interest in women's activism during the Progressive Era, another area captured scholarly attention. As American involvement in WWI shifted public attention to the war effort, scholarly focus on this period was also long overshadowed by the military history. Although still expanding, the literature finally began to focus on finding continuity between women's prewar activism and World War I, particularly in expanding definitions of citizenship and ultimately leading to the suffrage win. During this time, women entered the military in small numbers and within restricted parameters. However, as Kimberly Jensen points out, women "saw the wartime state as a responsive institution that they could reshape for the better by undertaking the obligations of citizenship."[40] Women who entered military service changed the "protector-protected" dynamic by insisting they too had an obligation to defend the country. The resulting scholarship situates suffrage within a broad historical context by considering women's

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[39] Sarah Lynn Farmer, "Communicating Justice: The National American Woman Suffrage Association's Use of Public Relations to Win the Right to Vote" in Dulcie Murdock Straughan, ed. *Women's Use of Public Relations for Progressive-Era Reform: Rousing the Conscience of a Nation* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2007), 35.
[40] Kimberly Jensen, *Mobilizing Minerva: American Women in the First World War* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 165.

activism as part of a continuum which persisted after the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment and carried forward into WWII.

Kimberly Jensen's *Mobilizing Minerva: American Women in the First World War* bridges the gap between prewar civic activism and identity and wartime home front mobilization. She insists:

> As the First World War approached there were two major competing arguments for civic identity and authority: the Progressive Era's emphasis on participatory and community-based citizenship, on the one hand, and emphasis on masculine military experience for citizenship and political authority, on the other…The war…raised the question of the meaning of women's citizenship in the martial context of wartime.[41]

During the Progressive Era, stress was placed on reforming society to keep up with the rapid changes brought on by industrialization. This activism, in its many forms, also focused on ideas of citizenship rights for women and immigrants. Suffragists recognized the significance of voting rights as the only way to achieve full participation as citizens.[42] By the time the U.S. officially entered WWI in 1917, women had gained voting rights in several states and the need for women to fill positions in the labor market pushed them further into the male domain of wage labor.[43] During WWI, "At peak strength in November 1918, 21,480 women were serving in the Army Nurse Corps, 10,660 of them with the American Expeditionary Force (AEF). Thousands worked as members of the Signal Corps. and were associated with the military as members of voluntary organizations such as the YWCA (Young Women's Christian Association), the Jewish Welfare Board, and the Red Cross.[44]

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[41] Ibid., 11.
[42] Ibid., 12.
[43] Ibid., 14.
[44] Ibid.

Other historians recognized suffrage as a training ground for women's participation during WWI. In *The Search for a Negotiated Peace: Women's Activism and Citizen Diplomacy in World War I,* David Patterson finds continuity between women's national activism and their participation in the war effort. He writes, "Before the outbreak of the First World War, most of these pioneering women had been engaged in various social reform movements or the women's suffrage campaign, including their international dimensions."[45] The transatlantic nature of their work put them in position to affectively "counter the belligerents' war propaganda and to initiate new programs seeking peace and international reform."[46] During WWI, American women were involved in both local reform and international politics. This legacy of global concern continued as a prominent feature displayed by many women's clubs active during WWII, as well.

With the focus of this research on the specific case of New Jersey activism, the scholarship on women's civic engagement in the Garden State is an essential part of the historiographical review. As part of a continuing effort among historians to situate women's WWII experiences within a larger context of civic activism, Felice Gordon's *After Winning: The Legacy of New Jersey Suffragists, 1920-1947* provides key insights into the suffragist groups that morphed into other organizations after the win. In many ways, this research is a continuation of Gordon's work. Rather than viewing Progressivism and WWII volunteerism and military enlistment as mutually exclusive, the

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[45] David S. Patterson, *The Search for a Negotiated Peace: Women's Activism and Citizen Diplomacy in World War I* (New York: Routledge, 2008), xv.
[46] Ibid.

story of New Jersey women points to thriving networks of civic activism that continued from the battle for suffrage and morphed into new forms during wartime.

Research on New Jersey activism necessarily begins with national activism. Significant work on the Progressive Era includes Alan Dawley's *Changing the World: American Progressives in War and Revolution.* Dawley provides a concise examination of the American Progressive movement from 1900 until 1930 and analyzes the changing patterns of society to show how reform movements arose in response. Similarly, Steven Diner's *A Very Different Age: Americans of the Progressive Era* deals with the same time, but divides chapters into social groups such as immigrants, women, industrial workers, white-collar workers, African-Americans and business operators.[47] In *American Women in the Progressive Era: 1900-1920,* Carl and Dorothy Schneider provide a description of women-centered campaigns such as suffrage, women's labor, and the search for equality.[48]

Joan Burstyn's *Past and Promise: Lives of New Jersey Women* chronicles the lives of hundreds of women who have influenced the history of New Jersey including Katherine Wiley, former executive secretary and director of the CLNJ. Wiley was also responsible for the campaign to receive compensation for the women who suffered from radium poisoning while working at the U.S. Radium Corporation in Orange, New Jersey. Furthermore, Claudia Clark's *Radium Girls*, *Women and Industrial Health Reform 1910-1935* provides a chronicle of the effect the acknowledgement of radium poisoning had on industrial health reform in New Jersey and the United States. Ross Mullner's *Deadly*

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[47] Steven J. Diner, *A Very Different Age: Americans of the Progressive Era* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1998), 5.

[48] Carl and Dorothy Schneider, *American Women in the Progressive Era: 1900-1920* (New York: Anchor Books, 1993), 10.

Glow: The Radium Dial Worker Tragedy tells the story with a greater focus on the medical effects of radium, detailing the story of New Jersey physician Harrison S. Martland, who carried out the clinical investigations of dial painters that led to the labeling of their symptoms as radium poisoning.[49]

In the interim between the wars, the Great Depression became another watershed event in history. Since the media focus and government response to the economic crisis was geared mostly towards men, the literature on women's experiences during this time was slow to appear. In *Daughters of the Great Depression: Women, Work and Fiction in the American 1930s,* Laura Hapke sought to correct the academic work on the Great Depression which focused solely on the struggles of men. Soon after the gains women enjoyed during WWI and the suffrage win, an ideological war to push them back into the home was spurred by the uncertainty of economic crisis. Even though approximately eleven million American women worked during this time, academia shied away from a truly comprehensive treatment of their experiences. Amidst hostility directed at wage-earning women accused of stealing men's jobs, female laborers continued to face discrimination in the forms of lower wages, poor treatment and gender-based job placement. Looking through the lens of 1930s fiction, Hapke analyzes trends in the depictions of these working women, providing an analysis of the ideology of "male radical writers devoted to the comrade wife ideal" who believed wage-earning women emasculated men and defeminized themselves.[50] As a useful tool of analysis, the fiction of the time represented "the era's conflict between traditional expectations and the

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[49] Ross Mullner, *Deadly Glow: The Radium Dial Worker Tragedy* (Washington: American Public Health Association, 1999), 15.
[50] Laura Hapke, *Daughters of the Great Depression: Women, Work and Fiction in the American 1930s* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1995), xv.

realities of feminine economic desperation, between the still-potent ideology of woman's separate sphere and her new roles as self-supporting or family breadwinner."[51] In short, fiction became a tool of social expression, providing commentary on the society-wide fears of the economic crisis, many of which materialized as animosity towards wage-earning women. Most fiction presented women as temporary "intruders" in the workforce and stressed the importance of domesticity.[52] This idea was echoed again in the propaganda directed at women during WWII. The overwhelming theme of fiction represented women's return to the domestic sphere as the path to a better society.

In another essential piece on women in the interwar period, *The Other Woman's Movement: Workplace Justice and Social Rights in Modern America,* by Dorothy Sue Cobble, focuses on class differences as a major, yet often ignored, division in women's political affiliations, labor patterns and desired reforms.[53] She writes:

> The labor feminists of the post-depression decades were the intellectual daughters and granddaughters of Progressive Era 'social feminists' like Florence Kelley, Rose Schneiderman, and Jane Addams. Like many of the earlier social feminists, they believed that women's disadvantages stemmed from multiple sources and that a range of social reforms was necessary to remedy women's secondary status.[54]

Cobble details the women involved in labor movements after the 1930s, seeking to remedy the tendency among academics to treat this activism as the exception rather than the rule.[55] She continues:

> Labor history of the post-depression era has yet to learn from this scholarship. It is still assumed that labor women didn't have the numbers or the positional leverage within postwar labor institutions to make much of a difference in

[51] Ibid., xx.
[52] Ibid., 221.
[53] Dorothy Sue Cobble, *The Other Woman's Movement: Workplace Justice and Social Rights in Modern America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 1.
[54] Ibid., 3-4.
[55] Ibid., 4.

> collective bargaining or in politics, and that the concerns they did articulate would not affect widespread change in the social or economic order. But these are the untested assumptions this book aims to undermine.[56]

While these activists focused on achieving "full industrial citizenship," some began to publicly question the sustainability of the double burdens of work and home.[57] In a 1925 issue of *Good Housekeeping,* Mary Anderson wrote, "The whole question, it seems to me, comes down to this: shall we let women continue working longer hours than men, for less pay than men, and continue doing two jobs to their husbands' one?"[58] On the eve of the second World War, the priorities of feminism continued to shift.

Katherine Ellickson, one of the most vocal proponents of wage-earning mothers, presented her concerns in an essay titled "Short-Time Work for Women." Within this concise commentary, she stressed the "double day" many working mothers were forced to endure. In other words, women doing paid labor by day were still responsible for unpaid labor necessary to run their homes and care for their families. According to Ellickson, the older generation of feminists fought for equality with men, but this did not effectively solve their problems. The new generation of feminists fought to "adapt the man's world to women."[59] Reducing a woman's workday to six hours and including childcare facilities on the job formed the concluding demand of her essay.[60] For this new generation, the unique demands of being a woman, particularly a mother, should yield different treatment in the workplace. While the burden of the "double day" alone cried

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[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid., 3-4.
[58] Ibid., 121.
[59] Ibid.
[60] Ibid.

for workplace reforms to help women cope, labor feminists of the postwar period focused on eventually ending this pattern altogether and pushing for increased wages overall.[61]

On a national level, secondary work on women in WWII, limited to a few narratives immediately following the conflict, provides a valuable foundation for state-specific inquiries. Many of these narratives, such as Julia Flikke's *Nurses in Action: The Story of the Army Nurse Corps*, published in 1943, focused on the experience of nurses as the epitome of women's wartime involvement. Early on, much public exposure to WWII women took the form of memoirs. Scholarship that sought to broaden our historical, economic and social understanding of women during WWII did not truly begin until the 1980s. Even after several seminal works emerged during this time, much work sought to "just add women and stir" rather than launch deeper inquiries into the social and cultural implications of women in WWII. Narratives of military service, such as Betty J. Morden's *The Women's Army Corps*, *1945-1978*, published in 1990, eventually paved the way for more thorough investigations of changing gender roles. Decades after the conclusion of hostilities in Europe and the Pacific, the historiography of American women in WWII finally emerged as a significant, interdisciplinary field.

One of the first areas of serious inquiry concerning the implications of women in WWII considered the intersections of gender roles and the family in American culture. Published in 1981, Karen Anderson's *Wartime Women: Sex Roles, Family Relations, and the Status of Women during World War II* presents a comprehensive analysis of the social status of women and the interplay between gender and prominent ideals of the American family. She concludes, despite the new inroads women made into the military and

[61] Ibid., 122.

industry, those wartime changes were short-lived. According to Anderson, the postwar return of many women to the home was the result of the wartime resistance to women's expanded roles. Because these gender stereotypes about the roles, emotional fortitude, and capabilities of women were so deeply ingrained into American society, the path of least resistance for women postwar was to simply return to the home.

Anderson followed this book with the article "Last Hired, First Fired: Black Women Workers during World War II" which detailed the plight of black women working in the defense industry. During this time, a severe shortage of workers, coupled with the president's executive order against discrimination based on race or gender, created new opportunities for black women. Much like the discussion on postwar gains for American women, the meaning of this change for black women in the postwar world is still a matter of contention for historians. Anderson believes the war led to increased mobility, changes in occupation and a general increase in income for black women. She writes, "In the long run, the greatest benefit of the wartime experience for black women workers derived from their movement in large numbers out of the poverty of the rural South to the possibilities provided by an urban, industrialized economy."[62] Labor statistics show a decreased engagement in domestic and farm labor for black women from 1940 to 1944.[63] Anderson cautions that it is a mistake to view this period as one of distinct improvement in conditions for black women, as discrimination continued despite presidential orders to the contrary. Often, black women performed the least desirable or

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[62] Karen Anderson, "Last Hired, First Fired: Black Women Workers during World War II," *The Journal of American History* 69, no. 1 (1982): 97.
[63] Ibid., 83.

most dangerous jobs in defense industry plants. It was not uncommon for white women to refuse to work alongside black women on the jobsite.[64]

The scholarship on women during WWII is still divided on the true meaning of increased workforce and military participation for women. Should the war be considered "as a time of continuity or of dramatic change in definitions of women's place?"[65] In *Creating Rosie the Riveter: Class, Gender and Propaganda during World War II*, Maureen Honey looks to wartime propaganda to answer this question. She accepts the contention that many factors converged after the war to impede the gains made by women in the workforce, including the refusal of many business owners to retain women after the war, the failure of any meaningful legislation to discourage gender-based discrimination in hiring and the lack of union support for women. An analysis of the propaganda focused on women in the civil defense industry is necessary in understanding how contradictory notions of women as both strong enough to take on the jobs of men during the war and subservient enough to revert to the home after the war, were used without causing too much confusion among the intended audience. For Honey, the war worker was presented as the "paragon of virtue, capable of shouldering any burden and meeting any challenge."[66] Women were to set aside individual aspirations and notions of career mobility after the war in favor of a collective responsibility towards the greater good of the nation. Women in wartime propaganda were "a complicated mixture of

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[64] Ibid., 86.
[65] Maureen Honey, *Creating Rosie the Riveter: Class, Gender and Propaganda during World War II* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1984), 2.
[66] Ibid., 6.

strength and dependence, competence and vulnerability, egalitarianism and conservativism."[67]

Honey analyzes the wartime propaganda of two major magazines, the *Saturday Evening Post,* whose readership consisted of middle-class women, and *True Story,* which catered to working-class women. Rather than dealing with issues of gender alone, her examination is steeped in class emphasis, as well.[68] Regardless of the different audiences, both magazines had the mandate of making civil defense positions look attractive to women.[69] Directed by the Office of War Information's Magazine Bureau, fictional stories emphasized the "…spiritual satisfaction of serving the common cause."[70] For Honey, the media failed to solidify a permanent change in female working patterns because the magazines directed at the working-class fell short of promoting egalitarian principles. Storylines which stressed the necessity and capability of women performing male tasks continued to represent women as subordinate to men on the job. They were never the leaders in fictional accounts of war work, only the followers. She writes, "…the real Rosie the Riveter found little affirmation in her ability to do a man's work in magazines aimed at her, nor did she see any indication that the war was a historical opportunity for escaping segregation into traditionally female occupations."[71] Propaganda directed at women pushed the ideology that their work was temporary, as needed in the emergency of war, and advocated a return to normalcy after the conflict.

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[67] Ibid., 7.
[68] Ibid., 675.
[69] Ibid., 677.
[70] Ibid., 678.
[71] Ibid., 686-87.

While the media encouraged the ability of women to do these male jobs, the post script always alluded to the uncanny nature of women in these jobs.

Honey's thorough treatment of propaganda sparked more interest in women's magazines during this time. In one of the earliest attempts to explain the postwar American woman, Betty Friedan recognized the imagery in women's magazines after WWII contained observable differences.[72] She considered the image of the postwar woman as, "young and frivolous, almost childlike; fluffy and feminine; passive; gaily content in a world of bedroom and kitchen, sex, babies, and home."[73] In contrast, the image of women in magazine fiction before WWII presented goal-oriented protagonists who were interested in personal growth. Why did this shift occur? According to Friedan, the social uncertainty brought on by the war years led to a search for normalcy which culminated in the return to a supposed simpler time.

Further analysis of propaganda was provided by Leila Rupp. In her research on German and American propaganda, she offered a disagreement to Friedan's assertion that the imagery of women changed so drastically after WWII. Instead, she stated, "Rosie the Riveter, like the flapper, was exotic in appearance, even perhaps in lifestyle. But the new image did not mean that the ideal American woman had changed beyond recognition. Beneath her begrimed exterior, she remained very much a traditional woman."[74] For Rupp, the changes of WWII did not lead to fundamental shifts in public attitudes towards women; nor did the dramatic move from the home to the workforce represent a sustained

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[72] Maureen Honey, Ed. *Bitter Fruit: African American Women in World War II* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1999), 3.
[73] Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1997), 36.
[74] Leila Rupp, *Mobilizing Women for War: German and American Propaganda, 1939-1945* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Legacy Library, 1978), 151.

alteration in society. The extremes of war created changes in the breadwinner/homemaker model that quickly reverted once the war concluded.

The next important wave in the scholarship on women in WWII involved branch-specific military narratives. Laurie Scrivener's "U.S. Military Women in World War II: The SPAR, WAC, WAVES, WASP, and Women Marines in U.S. Government Publications" offers an introduction to women in the U.S. military during WWII. While the purpose of this article was mainly to provide an annotated bibliography of government documents on women during the war, Scrivener also includes commentary on secondary sources. She provides a useful introduction to the subject of women's branches of the military but does little to expand on already existing research. Usefully, she acknowledges both the historical and social components of this subject, writing that "Historians have categorized the military, 'one of the last bastions of male exclusivity,' as 'among the most noted expansions of sex roles accompanying World War II.'"[75] This work paved the way for more detailed scholarship on the dynamics of the different women's branches.

In *Those Wonderful Women and their Flying Machines: The Unknown Heroines of World War II,* Sally Van Wagenen Keil provides a detailed account of the training and wartime responsibilities of Women Air Force Service Pilots (WASPs). Within this volume, she utilizes the individual narratives of pilots to create a more cohesive picture of the wartime experience of women serving in or with the military. For instance, Marion Hanrahan recalled skipping high school classes to sneak out to Bendix Field in

[75] Laurie Scrivener, "U.S. Military Women in World War II: The SPAR, WAC, WAVES, WASP, and Women Marines in U.S. Government Publications," *Journal of Government Information* 26, no. 4 (1999): 361.

Teterboro, New Jersey. Despite the fame of Amelia Earhart, who Hanrahan met at Bendix Field on occasion, professional flight was not a field open to women.[76] After flying in New Jersey for about nine years, she was finally accepted into the WASP at the age of twenty-three.[77] Stationed at Camp Davis, North Carolina, the WASPs there had the additional responsibility of the search and rescue of pilots who were forced to land in the surrounding swampland.[78] Throughout this work, Keil blends individual narratives into the historical context, creating a more complete picture of women pilots.

Dawn Letson discusses the WASPs who trained at Avenger Field in Sweetwater, Texas and provides one of the few inquiries into the dynamic between military towns and women. Her research deals exclusively with the questions: What impact did the WASPs have on the town of Sweetwater? What influence did Sweetwater have on the WASPs? As with other military branches during WWII, the Army Air Force reluctantly accepted the help of women when necessity dictated. Initially, the Commanding General of the Army Air Forces (AAF), Henry "Hap" Arnold was against the idea of using women as pilots. However, by 1942, the Air Force seemed to have few other options available. Reluctantly, the WASP training program, which hired women to work for the AAF as civilian pilots, began in 1943.[79]

Letson's analysis goes far beyond a mere narrative of the women who trained at Avenger Field. From an economic standpoint, the women had close ties with local businesses while on leave and from a social standpoint, some trainees, especially those

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[76] Sally Van Wagenen Keil, *Those Wonderful Women and their Flying Machines: The Unknown Heroines of World War II.* (New York: Four Directions Press, 2000), 16
[77] Ibid., 216.
[78] Ibid., 219.
[79] Dawn Letson, "Girl Pilots of Avenger Field: Sweetwater's Romance with the WASP of WWII," *Sound Historian: Journal of the Texas Oral History Association* 13 (2010): 35.

who arrived from big cities, described a culture shock. They immersed themselves in the town, even joining local churches and became an integral part of the war economy. The trainees were even granted a space in town nicknamed the Avengerette Club.[80] In November of 1943, the town held a parade in honor of the WASP. Mayor Norred said, "You have become part of the town. We are proud of you and want you to feel like citizens. So we are going to make you honorary citizens."[81] Through letters home and oral history interviews, Letson collects a picture of the economic, social, and military aspects of the WASPs and the town of Sweetwater. Importantly, this analysis highlights the value of a state-by-state and even base-by-base study of women's involvement in WWII.

With the emergence of studies focusing on specific military branches, the quest to include marginalized groups also took a serious turn. Since at least the end of the nineteenth century, the debate concerning the exclusion of non-white women and men in the field of professional nursing failed to gain headway until WWII. In "'The Hands that Might Save Them': Gender, Race and the Politics of Nursing in the United States during the Second World War," Charissa Threat analyzes the gender and racial barriers which reluctantly shifted during WWII. With shortages of Army and Navy nurses prevalent during this conflict, so much so that both Congress and FDR considered a nursing draft necessary, the question of who should be included in professional nursing was finally given public attention.[82] However drastic the need during WWII, postwar changes were not the cure-all many hoped for. While the desegregation of the military in 1945 also

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[80] Ibid., 38.
[81] Ibid., 40.
[82] Charissa J. Threat, "'The Hands that Might Save Them': Gender, Race and the Politics of Nursing in the United States during the Second World War," *Gender and History* 24, no. 2 (2012): 460.

affected the Army Nurse Corps. (ANC), the struggle to include men within their ranks continued to stall.[83] The reluctance to fully break gender and racial barriers postwar was largely a product of prewar job segregation which "…produced a hierarchy within the labour [sic] market that defined the jobs available to the American worker."[84] In her analysis of the exclusion of male nurses, Threat uncovers parallels which also explain the reluctance to integrate women into both the military and the job market after WWII. She finds much of this reluctance was based on the ideology "…that one's sex determined one's status as 'combatant' or 'noncombatant,' 'caregiver' or 'soldier.'"[85] Nursing remained an acceptable field for women because it expanded on their role as caregiver and the "helper" of men.[86] However, even within a profession considered socially acceptable, women faced discrimination of pay, rank and benefits. Although collectively, military nurses made some gains during WWII, they remained outside the establishment.[87]

Within the scholarship on individual military branches, work on social issues inherent in those organizations emerged. In "'Dykes' or 'whores': Sexuality and the Women's Army Corps in the United States during World War II," Michaela Hampf focused on an area previously overlooked; the implication of cultural ideals of sexuality and gender roles within the Women's Army Corps (WAC). As the ideal image of a woman war worker was constructed by government propaganda in the form of the iconic image of Rosie the Riveter; the female soldier was created using similar tactics. She was

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[83] Ibid., 456.
[84] Ibid., 457.
[85] Ibid., 458.
[86] Ibid.
[87] Ibid., 459.

to be moral, intelligent and strong but not masculine. Hampf's research aimed to, "understand how military culture and military power operate to construct and legitimate asymmetrical social positions and produce intelligible bodies and the fiction of binary categorical identities."[88] Hampf views the construction of the WAC woman as a combination of "gender, race, sexuality and class."[89]

As Hampf points out, gendered roles of men as the "protector" and women as the "protected" were reinforced throughout WWII. While the introduction of women into the military was viewed as a necessity, gender roles continued to be pushed in the media.[90] Government posters advertising for the WAC, WAVES, SPAR, or WASP offered images of attractive women, smiling and quite obviously wearing makeup. This served to quell fears concerning the masculinization of military women and the threat to the family unit. Questions of sexuality became most pressing when the rumors of immorality amongst army women began. In response, Oveta Culp Hobby, first director of the WAC, led a counter campaign.[91] With her own career experience as a newspaper publisher, Hobby put forth an image of the WAC program as highly regimented and professional. In reality, this image was very close to the truth because WACs had to maintain army discipline and obey a separate code of conduct.[92]

Jennifer Nichol Stewart maintains WWII was in fact a watershed event that forever altered the role of women in American society. She writes, "Much of this can be defined by the war itself. Total war requires total commitment. It requires complete

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[88] Michaela M. Hampf, "'Dykes' or 'whores': Sexuality and the Women's Army Corps in the United States during World War II," *Women's Studies International Forum* 27 (2004): 14.
[89] Ibid., 14.
[90] Ibid., 15.
[91] Ibid., 16.
[92] Ibid., 17.

mobilization, and that means women, as well as minorities."[93] According to Stewart, the war also meant a break from traditional social mores. For example, women in the WAC sometimes held the door open for people in a public setting. In what seems rather insignificant by today's standards, this was a major departure from the norm in the 1940s. Kay Somersby Morgan, an English woman serving in the military commented, "It may seem strange that on such an occasion I would hold the door, but it must be remembered that this is wartime and we were in uniform. Door holding, saluting and such were all part of that way of life."[94]

Pamela Edwards answers the call for more individualized research on a state-by-state basis in her article about the women of West Virginia during WWII. Her work is a useful guide to working on state history while placing it within the larger context of American involvement in the war effort. According to Edwards, the network of already existing volunteer and social organizations in West Virginia contributed to the success of wartime efforts on the home front.[95] Much like the story of New Jersey's wartime women, West Virginian women engaged in both paid opportunities, such as civil defense jobs, and unpaid opportunities such as the Red Cross or USO. In both states, African American women engaged in wartime activities with difficulty due to segregation and other discriminatory practices. By analyzing the papers of the West Virginia State Office of Civilian Defense (WVOCD), Edwards presents a clear picture of government efforts to recruit women into defense jobs during the war. Through oral history interviews,

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[93] Jennifer Nichol Stewart, "Wacky Times: An Analysis of the WAC in World War II and its Effects on Women," *International Social Science Review* 75, no. 1 and 2 (2000): 26.
[94] Ibid., 33.
[95] Pamela Edwards, "West Virginia Women in World War II: The Role of Gender, Class, and Race in Shaping Wartime Volunteer Efforts," *West Virginia History* 2, no. 1 (2008): 27.

newsletters and manuscripts, she places the activities of West Virginian women within the context of statewide home front mobilization efforts. The WVOCD recognized the importance of utilizing the network of women's organizations. Edwards writes, "Within the organizational framework and ideology of the OCD was a recognition that existing women's organizations-organizations women already belonged to-could be used to develop civilian defense programs."[96] The significance of women's organizations during WWII has not received appropriate attention by historians.[97] She continues, "Essential to women's volunteer efforts were their long-established volunteer activities in clubs, organizations, churches and less-formal associations, which provided a pre-existing system for communicating, networking and organizing when wartime volunteer needs developed."[98]

Scholarship on the effect of women's wartime involvement is still growing. Judy Barrett Litoff and David C. Smith wrote, "The well-known author and journalist, Max Lerner, concluded in early 1943 that "when the classic work on the history of women comes to be written, the biggest force for change in their lives will turn out to have been war, [which], curiously…produces more dislocations in the lives of women who stay at home than of men who go off to fight."[99] A common trend among historians concerned with women during WWII is that the social changes that occurred due to the necessity of wartime did not last. However, Litoff and Smith have a different thesis. Instead, they insist that, "by examining private rather than public records, the events of World War II

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[96] Ibid., 39.
[97] Ibid., 49.
[98] Ibid.
[99] Judy Barrett Litoff and David C. Smith, "U.S. Women on the Home Front in WWII," *The Historian* 57, no. 2 (1995): 349.

appear to have had a much more dramatic and far-reaching effect on U.S. women than has previously been thought."[100] Through an examination of personal letters and diaries, the authors conclude that some women went through far more personal and individualized transformations during and after WWII.

The inclusion of these personal stories within the context of WWII provides a more nuanced and accurate picture of women's roles. Litoff and Smith found that women expressed feelings of self-reliance, confidence and ambition. For many, overcoming the hardships of life on the home front gave them a new sense of purpose. For others, the war forced them to grow up quickly. Some women reported leading spoiled lives before the war. Women entering civil defense jobs often reported a sense of fulfillment. In 1945, Edith Speert wrote the following statement in a letter to her husband: "I must admit I'm not exactly the same girl you left-I'm twice as independent as I used to be and to top it off, I sometimes think I've become 'as hard as nails'-hardly anyone can evoke any sympathy in me."[101] Three weeks later, she wrote, "I get emotional satisfaction out of working; and I don't doubt that many a night you will cook the supper while I'm at a meeting."[102]

Not until recently has the story of minority women during WWII been given attention. In 1994, Grace Mary Gouveia worked to remedy this shortcoming with her article, "'We Also Serve': American Indian Women's Role in World War II." She presents research on the Native American women who took advantage of new opportunities afforded to them because of the war.[103] According to Gouveia, many of

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[100] Ibid., 349.
[101] Ibid., 354.
[102] Ibid., 545.
[103] Grace Mary Gouveia, "'We Also Serve': American Indian Women's Role in World War II,"

these changes were sustained in the postwar world. For example, many American Indian women kept their employment and opted to stay in urban centers.[104] However, the literature on these women is still incomplete and deserves a much closer analysis.

Brenda Moore also added to the growing scholarship on minority women in WWII, first in her 1996 book, *To Serve my Country, to Serve my Race,* which details the plight of black women serving as WACs overseas. According to Moore, WWII represented a major shift in the status of both women and minorities in the U.S. military. She writes, "The nature of the conflict challenged existing forms of social stratification in the Army, as well as in other American institutions."[105] In 2003, her book *Serving our Country: Japanese-American Women in the Military during World War II* dealt with the history of the citizen-soldier in the U.S. She writes, "For minorities, military service was viewed as an avenue of upward mobility."[106] She takes this premise and focuses on how the lives of Japanese-American women who served in the military changed both during and after WWII. Moore states, "Japanese Americans occupied an ambiguous position in the racial landscape, neither black nor white. This racially obscure position made it difficult for the U.S. War Department to classify Japanese American soldiers."[107]

Similarly, research into the contributions of Chinese American women has yet to be considered adequately. Xiaojian Zhao attempts to correct this deficiency by focusing on California's female defense workers in the article "Chinese American Women

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Michigan Historical Review 20, no. 2 (1994): 153.
[104] Ibid., 154.
[105] Brenda L. Moore, *To Serve my Country, to Serve my Race: The Story of the Only African-American WACs Stationed Overseas during World War II.* (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 1.
[106] Brenda L. Moore, *Serving our Country: Japanese-American Women in the Military during World War II* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2003), 1.
[107] Ibid., 4.

Defense Workers in World War II." For many Chinese American women, the war represented a way to integrate into American society even further.[108] While scholars have provided much analysis on Rosie the Riveter as an ideal, the real women who comprised defense industry workers during WWII are only recently being studied. Although scholars acknowledge the importance of WWII as a turning point in the lives of American women, few have dealt with what that meant for various groups. Since the lives of American women varied across race, class and sexuality, it follows that the changes brought on by war work also varied greatly.

Similarly, Katie Sutrina provides a detailed narrative of the women defense workers in Rockford, Illinois. Sutrina's focus is uncovering the real lives of women workers in contrast to the propaganda images of the time periods. Local newspapers continued this association, promoting the image of strong female defense workers needed to help the Allies win the war. However, those same newspapers contained conflicting imagery of women as feminine homemakers.[109] Although confusing at times, the goal of this propaganda was clear: to encourage women to fill the needs of wartime production but to recognize that these opportunities where only born out of necessity. They were to return to their normal lives once the war was over. A very small number of Rockford's defense industry women workers defied this ideal. Many were simply fired after the war or were pushed out of their industrial jobs. This ideal was reflected in an article in the *Rockford Labor News* that read, "A large percentage of the war workers, chiefly women, have been working to help ease the manpower shortage and will cheerfully go back to

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[108] Xiaojian Zhao, "Chinese American Women Defense Workers in World War II," *California History* 75, no. 2 (1996): 153.
[109] Ibid., 411.

their homes."[110] Regardless, Sutrina estimates that in 1950 about 17,000 of the 48,175 women in Rockford over age 14 were working.[111]

Another addition to the narrative history of women in WWII is Emily Yellin's book *Our Mothers' War: American Women at Home and at the Front during World War II.* While Yellin makes no new claims about the various roles of women during the war or about the post war impact for women, her work presents primary documents. She places these oral history interviews, letters, diaries, and other sources from women throughout the U.S. and places them within the context of the war. A recent trend considers the place of primary sources, particularly oral history interviews, within the context of women's narratives. According to Gary Y. Okihiro, oral history is, "…a theory of history which maintains that the common folk and the dispossessed have a history and that history must be written."[112] Kathleen Ryan discussed the tendency of women to diminish their contributions by using phrases like "I didn't do anything important." She writes, the women are "using the phrase as a way to acknowledge society's expectations."[113] Often, the women's words reflected the ideas pushed in recruitment propaganda for women's military branches. The idea of women "freeing men for combat" and being helpers but never in command positions influenced the ways some women viewed themselves long after the conflict. One veteran, Eileen Blakely, stated this idea perfectly in the following excerpt, "Who wants to hear my story? It's not that interesting…So for me to be able to share in such a way that you think my life is

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[110] Ibid., 422.
[111] Ibid., 423.
[112] Ibid.
[113] Kathleen Ryan, "'I Didn't do Anything Important': A Pragmatist Analysis of the Oral History Interview," *The Oral History Review* 36, no. 1 (2009): 25.

interesting is intimidating to me. Because I want to be interesting, but I don't think I am."[114]

In *Making War, Making Women: Femininity and Duty on the American Homefront, 1941-1945*, Melissa McEuen broadens the narrow scope of public imagery, both during American involvement in WWII and in popular modern perceptions, by breaking free of the stereotypes held concerning women's roles. Even our archetype of women's wartime work, Rosie the Riveter, was a narrow stereotype when faced with the broad spectrum of actual work women did during the conflict. In her own words, McEuen seeks to "restore a past that is more human than mythic."[115] While many women did work in very physical settings, others worked in laundries and offices. The War Production Board remained concerned for the psychiatric welfare of women workers. Told by psychiatrists that women needed to feel outwardly beautiful, some jobs offered complimentary make-up for their workers.[116] McEuen writes, "Between 1941 and 1945 the United States fostered a political culture where women's bodies and minds could be used in the service of the war effort."[117] Just as the women who lived, worked, volunteered and served had their identities and appearances forged by social forces, to a certain extent, our imagery of women in WWII has been shaped by popular culture.

Despite the considerable literature on women's civic engagement, specifically suffrage and the Progressive Era, coupled with a growing and significant body of work on women during WWII, a deficit remains in the scholarship bridging prewar women's

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[114] Ibid., 26.
[115] Melissa McEuen, *Making War, Making Women: Femininity and Duty on the American Homefront, 1941-1945* (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 2010), 4.
[116] Ibid., 6.
[117] Ibid., 214.

activism and wartime involvement. As a case study, New Jersey's already existing prewar social organizations present a narrative of the utilization of these networks of influence during U.S. involvement in WWII. By tracing the activism of New Jersey women and following the trail of primary sources, a clear picture emerges, painting WWII involvement, not as a simple explosion of patriotic fervor, but as a logical continuation of preexisting women's civic engagement. As this research shows, while some priorities shifted during the war, with many club women simply taking on additional responsibilities, the overall missions and concerns of activist groups were still intact. Considering many of the social organizations discussed also have national components, this state-specific research paves the way for a more thorough analysis of these trends throughout the country.

CHAPTER 2:

PRE-WWII ACTIVISM: SUFFRAGE, WOMEN'S CLUBS AND THE NEW JERSEY LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

"What is Suffrage? It is the prescribed method whereby, at a certain time and place, the will of the citizen is registered. It is the form in which the popular assent or dissent is indicated, in reference to principles, measures and men. The essence of suffrage is rational choice. It follows, therefore, under our theory of government, that every individual capable of independent rational choice is rightfully entitled to vote."[118] -Lucy Stone, 1867.

The implication of women's activism in New Jersey, and ultimately its continuation and influence during WWII, can only be understood through an analysis of the history of prominent women's clubs. While New Jersey women exercised influence, albeit restricted, during the American Revolution and through the Civil War, the battle for suffrage represented a period of intensification in the group dynamics of women seeking to reform society. Evidence suggests the ideals of suffrage and equality were passed down both through national movements and through word-of-mouth. Generational wisdom offered from mother-to-daughter remained an essential piece of the puzzle which eventually reemerged in WWII activism. In this spirit, early movements served as training grounds for the next generation, proving an essential continuity, which begins with suffrage, influences Progressive Era campaigns and reemerges in WWII engagement. During the formative years of suffrage, the Garden State formed an epicenter of reform activity with prominent leaders like Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Alice Paul and Lucy Stone as residents.

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[118] Lucy Stone to the New Jersey Legislature, March 6, 1867, Woman Suffrage in New Jersey, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.

On a national level, suffrage began with the Seneca Falls Convention of 1848, when Susan B. Anthony, Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton unveiled the Declaration of Sentiments, which called for suffrage, among other steps towards equality for U.S. women.[119] Echoing the Declaration of Independence, the authors assert, "The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her."[120] The list of complaints includes:

> He has compelled her to submit to laws, in the formation of which she had no voice…He has made her, if married, in the eye of the law, civilly dead…He closes against her all the avenues to wealth and distinction which he considers most honorable to himself. As a teacher of theology, medicine, or law, she is not known…He has endeavored, in every way that he could, to destroy her confidence in her own powers, to lessen her self-respect and to make her willing to lead a dependent and abject life.[121]

With these, and other declarations now brought into public awareness, suffrage organizations throughout the country sprang forth in solidarity.

Often unsung heroines, women in New Jersey were central to the struggle for women's equality. According to Felice Gordon, the suffrage crusade in New Jersey began in 1857:

> …in the State House in Trenton, when the Special Committee on the Equality of Women's Rights of the Assembly Committee on Judiciary heard a petition from a group of Monmouth residents, led by one Harriet M. Lafetra, that stated "men and women alike suffer many evils," and [requested] a revision of the statutes of New Jersey so as to remove "the various and grievous legal disabilities under which the latter are placed, and thereby establish the legal equality of women with men."[122]

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[119] Gordon, *After Winning*, 7.
[120] Stanton, Elizabeth Cady, Susan B. Anthony, and M.J. Cage, eds. *A History of Woman Suffrage, vol. 1* (Rochester, NY: Fowler and Wells, 1889), 70.
[121] Ibid.
[122] Gordon, *After Winning*, 6.

The men of the Assembly were not moved to change the statutes, citing both the difficulty in doing so and the biblical "fact" that men were supposed to rule over women.[123] The next incident, in December of 1858, was an act of defiance by Lucy Stone, a suffragist and abolitionist, who refused to pay her tax bill.[124] In a letter to the Orange, New Jersey tax collector, she wrote, "Enclosed I return my tax bill, without paying it. My reason for doing so is, that women suffer taxation, and yet have no representation, which is not only unjust to one-half of the adult population, but is contrary to our theory of government."[125] Several years later, in 1867, Stone became one of the founders of the New Jersey Woman Suffrage Association (NJWSA).[126] In her work, titled "Reasons why the Women of New Jersey should Vote," she states:

> The fact that she was deprived of this right from 1807 to 1840 by a legislative enactment, while the constitution secured it, proves that the power of the legislature, composed of representatives from the people, was considered at that early day to be above the State constitution. If, then, the legislature could abridge the suffrage, it must have the power to extend it, and all the women of this State should demand is an act of the legislature.[127]

In this excerpt, Stone refers to the New Jersey State Constitution of 1776, which used the term "inhabitants" when granting rights.[128] According to the original text of the document:

> That all inhabitants of this Colony, of full age, who are worth fifty pounds proclamation money, clear estate in the same, and have resided within the county in which they claim a vote for twelve months immediately preceding the election, shall be entitled to vote for Representatives in Council and Assembly; and also for

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[123] Ibid.
[124] Ibid.
[125] Ibid.
[126] Ibid., 7-8.
[127] Lucy Stone, ***To the Women of New Jersey***. *Why You Should Vote* (Vineland, NJ; The Executive Committee of the New Jersey State Woman Suffrage Association, March 1, 1868), 466.
[128] Gordon, *After Winning*, 8.

> all other public officers, that shall be elected by the people of the county at large.[129]

This unique wording allowed certain women of property to vote in New Jersey elections until 1807, when this exception was changed.[130] Stone maintains, up until that point, women voted in New Jersey without much fanfare until an instance of voter fraud brought undue attention on the semantics of the law. She writes:

> In the Spring of 1807, a special election was held in Essex County to decide upon the location of a Court House and Jail…Not only was every legal voter, man or woman, white or black, brought out, but on both sides gross frauds were practiced…It does not appear that either *women or negroes* were more especially implicated in these frauds than the white men. But the affair caused great scandal and they seem to have been made the scapegoats.[131]

In 1844, this change became permanent when it was adopted into the State Constitution.[132] Per Jan Ellen Lewis, "This piece of early American political, legal, and gender history was so exceptional that for many years historians wrote it off as an oversight or accident of wording."[133] The "New Jersey Exception," as historian Rosemarie Zaggari refers to it, presents the Garden State as a unique example of early suffrage for women.[134] While some contend this wording was merely an oversight, Lewis argues:

> One of the 1776 drafts used the word ―he to identify voters, but subsequent language was gender neutral. All of this, as Klinghoffer and Elkis argue, suggests strongly that the New Jersey legislators intentionally enfranchised property-owning single women, or, at the very least, made no efforts to disenfranchise them.[135]

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[129] The Avalon Project, "The Constitution of New Jersey, 1776," Yale Law School, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/nj15.asp (accessed January 6, 2017).
[130] Jan Ellen Lewis, "Rethinking Women's Suffrage in New Jersey, 1776-1807" *Rutgers Law Review* 63, 3 (2011): 1018.
[131] Lucy Stone, "Women and the Ballot in New Jersey," The Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/item/rbpe.10006800/ (accessed February 5, 2017).
[132] Gordon, *After Winning*, 9.
[133] Lewis, "Rethinking Women's Suffrage," 1017.
[134] Ibid., 1018.
[135] Ibid., 1019.

She goes on to state, "As Zagarri has noted, only five of the first state constitutions explicitly restricted the vote to men, but nowhere other than in New Jersey did women actually vote."[136] In 1807, voting rights in New Jersey were restricted to "free, white male, citizens."[137] The struggle for state constitutional reform was revisited years later, as one of the primary campaigns of the New Jersey League of Women Voters (NJLWV).

Lucy Stone remained an outspoken advocate against the disenfranchisement of women in New Jersey. In one of many addresses before the state legislature, she stated her purpose:

> Women ask you to submit to the people of New Jersey amendments to the Constitution of the State, striking out respectively the words "white" and "male" from Article 2, Section 1, thus enfranchising the women and the colored men, who jointly constitute a majority of our adult citizens. You will thereby establish a republican form of government.[138]

She went on, "If 'all political power is inherent in the people,' why have women, who are more than half the entire population of this State, no political existence? Is it because they are not people?"[139] Despite the restrictive wording, New Jersey women continued to vote. In 1867, Portia Kellogg Gage was believed to be one of the first New Jersey women to go to the polls as a form of protest. She wrote, "I was induced to offer a vote first, because I felt it a duty, and second, out of curiosity. I wanted to know how men did behave at the polls."[140] With her husband in tow, Gage attempted to vote in a local election in Vineland, New Jersey. She reported, the man whose job was to collect the

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[136] Ibid., 1020.
[137] Ibid., 1021.
[138] Stone, *Woman Suffrage in New Jersey*.
[139] Ibid.
[140] Portia Gage to C. B. Campbell, March 12, 1868, Women's Rights and Suffrage File, Collections of the Vineland Historical Society. http://www.njwomenshistory.org/discover/topics/activists/portia-gage-tries-vote-vineland/ (accessed January 19, 2017).

ballots asked her if she was registered to vote. Of course, Gage answered no. The man "returned the vote saying the law would not allow him to receive it as my name was not on the register."[141] Undeterred, Gage went on to explain, "next year if nothing happens to prevent it, I shall offer my name for registration."[142] In the November 1868 federal election, 172 women, including African American women, voted in Vineland with their own ballots and boxes.[143] In a local election in 1869, 182 women cast their votes in Vineland.[144] In 1870, 161 women cast votes in a local election in Vineland.[145] The records continue through 1873, with some New Jersey women reportedly successful at casting their votes in local and federal elections and some being turned away.[146] Ever passionate about gaining equality for women, Stone came into conflict with other suffragists, notably over the wording of the 14th and 15th amendments. The "use of 'male' divided the movement. Lucy Stone and her adherents were willing to wait until all black men were enfranchised, while Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton were not."[147]

In the meantime, women's suffrage continued to gain momentum, quickly becoming a political and social battleground both nationally and locally. While publicized letters and editorials remained common, the suffrage debate also played out in personal relationships. A frequently overlooked, yet essential part of the continuation of

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141 Ibid.
142 Ibid.
143 Ann D. Gordon, ed. "Names of Women Who Voted in Vineland, Nov. 3rd, 1868," Woman's Rights and Suffrage File, Prepared for the Selected Papers of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, vol. 2, Against an Aristocracy of Sex, 1866 to 1873, (New Brunswick, NJ, 2000), http://ecssba.rutgers.edu/resources/voters.html (accessed January 12, 2017).
144 Ibid.
145 Ibid.
146 Ibid.
147 Louise M. Young, *In the Public Interest: The League of Women Voters, 1920-1970* (New York: Praeger, 1989), 11.

activism, is the intergenerational aspect of discourse surrounding reform issues. For example, in the 1860s, Isabella Beecher Hooker was embroiled in a rather profound debate with her daughter over issues of women's suffrage. Eventually published by the Connecticut Woman Suffrage Association, this correspondence contains echoes of prominent arguments for women's suffrage and eventual equality. She writes to her daughter, "You ask me what I think of the modesty and sense of a woman who can insist, in these days, that she is not sufficiently cared for in public and in private, and who wishes to add the duties of a politician to those of a mother and housekeeper."[148] Hooker insists women are in the best possible position to be politicians because of their status as the moral voice of the home. She argues:

> In this country, certainly, the manners, the habits, the laws of a household are determined in great part by the mother; so much so that when we see lying and disobedient children, or course, untidy, and ill-manner ones, we instinctively make our comments on the mother of that brood, and declare her more or less incompetent to her place.[149]

Hooker goes on to laud the importance of civicmindedness in all women and reminds her daughter "no woman ought to be ignorant or unmindful of her relations to her government, or of her rights and duties under it."[150] Within her letters, she places the responsibility of education on the shoulders of her daughter, preparing her for a future where she will have the right to vote. She is confident in social and political progress:

> I come to this conclusion: that a national government, whose legislative and executive functions are performed by men alone, has not yet fully emerged from the barbarism of ancient times, and has before it a work of regeneration as serious as any that has marked its progress since the organization of nationalities. [151]

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[148] Isabella Beecher Hooker, "A Mother's Letters to her Daughter on Woman Suffrage" *Tracts of Connecticut Woman Suffrage Association* (Hartford: Press of Case, Lockwood and Brainard, 1870), 3.
[149] Ibid.
[150] Ibid., 4.
[151] Ibid., 12.

Before the organization of the LWV, whose ideology includes many of Hooker's own ideas, individual women prepared their daughters as future voters. She reasons, "the practical end of suffrage is, not *eligibility* to office merely, but a larger *use* of this privilege than most women have ever yet dreamed of much less desired."[152] Debates like this circulated more and more, both privately and publicly in the form of pamphlets and newspaper articles.

New Jersey became a significant battleground for the suffrage struggle, with suffrage societies in major areas like "Newark, Paterson, Passaic, Camden, New Brunswick, Rahway, Morristown, and Vineland."[153] During the suffrage campaign, New Jersey also contained many African American activist groups. Local minister, Florence Spearing Randolph, of Jersey City, was an advocate for social justice, specifically in the women's suffrage, equality and temperance movements. Born in Charleston, South Carolina in 1866, Randolph moved in with her sister in Jersey City, New Jersey in 1885. Her journey to activism began the following year at the Monmouth Street African Methodist Episcopal Church, where she served as a Sunday School teacher.[154] She became deeply concerned with social reform within her new community and eventually founded the New Jersey Federation of Colored Women's Clubs (NJSFCWC) in 1915.[155] With this experience, she became even more adamant about being a religious leader and enrolled in theological studies at Drew Seminary (now Drew University of Madison,

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[152] Ibid., 4.
[153] Gordon, *After Winning*, 9.
[154] Jessie Carney Smith, ed. *Notable Black American Women, Book II* (New York: Gale Research Group, 1996), 537.
[155] "New Jersey State Federation of Women's Clubs," NJ Women's History, http://www.njwomenshistory.org/discover/topics/african-american-women/florence-spearing-randolph/ (accessed February 21, 2017).

New Jersey).[156] Like other religious leaders, Randolph turned toward the temperance movement to curb public immorality and promote the welfare of the family.[157]

The New Jersey Woman's Christian Temperance Union (NJWCTU) decided their best chance to change the drinking laws was to enfranchise women. The group became a supporter of the NJWSA in the 1880s.[158] By the 1890s, the NJWSA set their sights on other legal issues regarding women's rights. On a smaller scale than full suffrage, they focused on restrictions to women voting in school elections.[159] The Committee on Laws Relating to Women in 1894, was created to address "Marriage, Divorce, and the guardianship of children."[160] With new leadership, Clara Schlee Laddey, the NJWSA entered a period of social action in 1908.[161] Laddey chose Plainfield, New Jersey resident Lillian Ford Feickert as enrollment chairman in 1910, who became president of the NJWSA in 1912 and embarked on an intense push to grow the suffrage groups.[162] After the suffrage win, Feickert helped organize the NJLWV and spurred debates on the future mandate of the organization. She remained active in the Republican Party and even ran for U.S. Senate in the election of 1928.[163]

Networking and grassroots activism became essential to the success of the suffrage movement as "the nation experienced a surge of volunteerism among middle-class women-activists in progressive causes, members of women's clubs and professional

[156] Smith, *Notable Black American Women*, 537.
[157] Ibid.
[158] Gordon, *After Winning*, 10.
[159] Ibid., 11.
[160] Ibid., 12.
[161] Ibid., 13.
[162] Ibid.
[163] Flyer "Lillian F. Feickert: Candidate for U.S. Senator" Newark, NJ, 1928, http://www.njwomenshistory.org/discover/topics/advertisements/lillian-ford-feickert/ (accessed January 19, 2017).

societies, temperance advocates, and participants in local civic and charity organizations."[164] While the NJWSA focused on state efforts to gain the right to vote, others remained convinced of the need for federal action. Of those women, Alice Paul, of Moorestown, New Jersey, became the most out-spoken and famous advocate. Inspired by the Pankhursts during her time as a student in England, Paul came back to New Jersey in 1912 determined to enact change. The following year, Paul became chairman of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA).[165] Born in 1885 in Mount Laurel, New Jersey, Paul grew up in a Quaker household.[166] She came from a long-line of family members involved in activism:

> Alice's great-grandfather, Charles Stokes, a committed Hicksite, [was] active in state politics. Among the visitors to the Stokes household was Lucretia Mott, a Quaker Minister, abolitionist, and pioneering suffragist, who helped Elizabeth Cady Stanton organize the 1848 Woman's Rights Convention and subsequently led 172 women in Vineland, NJ in a doomed effort to cast votes in the 1868 presidential election.[167]

Paul attended suffrage meetings with her mother, Tacie Paul, at their local Quaker meetinghouse back home.[168]

After graduating from Swarthmore College in 1905, Paul pursued social work as a profession, however, she was quickly dissuaded from continuing her efforts in that field. After a summer working with the Charity Organization Society in New York City, Paul realized, "I didn't know very much. I was thoroughly convinced of that."[169] She then enrolled in graduate school at the University of Pennsylvania, studying sociology,

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[164] "'I'm no Lady, I'm a Member of Congress' Women Pioneers on Capitol Hill, 1917-1934" *Women in Congress,* (2006), 3.
[165] Ibid., 15.
[166] Mary Walton, *A Woman's Crusade: Alice Paul and the Battle for the Ballot* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 5.
[167] Ibid., 7.
[168] Ibid., 12.
[169] Christine Lunardini, *Alice Paul: Equality for Women* (Boulder, CO Westview Press, 2013), 10.

economics and political science.[170] During her graduate work, Paul was offered a scholarship to study at the Woodbrook school in England.[171] This move offered Paul the chance to hear suffragist Christabel Pankhurst speak, an event which had a lasting impact on her.[172] Her stay in England further solidified ties to the suffragist movement as Paul began working with Lucy Gardner, a member of the Pankhursts' Women's Social and Political Union.[173] During the rest of Paul's stay in England, she participated in marches and other protests all geared towards raising awareness about the necessity of women's suffrage. It was at one such event Paul met Lucy Burns, an American who became her associate when they returned to the U.S.[174] In 1910, Paul finally travelled back to America.[175]

This passion for public reform came as a surprise to Paul's mother, Tacie. In 1909, her mother told the *New York Times* "I cannot understand how this all came about. Alice is such a mild-mannered girl."[176] Rather than making her docile, Paul believed her religious background prepared her for such a cause. In a speech to a gathering of Quakers, she said, "As we look at the placid, comfortable attitude with which Friends regard the social ills about them, it seems indeed a far cry to the aggressive vigor with which the early Friends challenged the evils of their time."[177] In this spirit, Paul launched the suffrage campaign into the national arena in a way that gained momentum and eventually led to its success.

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[170] Ibid., 11.
[171] Ibid., 12.
[172] Ibid., 13.
[173] Ibid., 14
[174] Ibid., 17.
[175] Ibid., 19.
[176] Ibid., 5.
[177] Walton, *A Woman's Crusade*, 39.

Paul's brand of militant activism and an increase in women's clubs and civic participation after the Civil War created a climate ripe for the success of suffrage. Christine Lunardini notes, "Suffrage, no longer an isolated vehicle for change, was now part of a larger women's movement."[178] Paul herself supported a federal amendment as the necessary vehicle of change and became more enamored with the tactics of militant suffragists like the Pankhursts. While her Quaker background called for a nonviolent solution, Paul openly defended her decision to use more brash strategies to gain the suffrage win.[179] On one occasion, she explained, "I attach no particular sanctity to a twenty-five-cent window pane because it is a means to an end."[180]

By 1913, Paul headed the Congressional Committee of the NAWSA.[181] One of her main focuses was gaining the support of President Woodrow Wilson.[182] According to Sally Hunter Graham:

> Paul's political theory was founded on a single premise: electoral survival determines political behavior. From that departure point, she reasoned that politicians could be convinced of the political expediency of suffrage in less time than it would take to convert each congressman to the principle of woman suffrage.[183]

In 1913, after a large suffrage parade which nearly turned into a riot, the public was increasingly aware of the significance of the campaign for women's right to vote. Wilson, however, preferred to ignore the issue for the moment.[184] Paul took to picketing the White House to pressure the president into considering a federal suffrage amendment.

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[178] Ibid., 25.
[179] Ibid., 32.
[180] Ibid.
[181] Ibid., 43.
[182] Ibid., 46.
[183] Sally Hunter Graham, "Woodrow Wilson, Alice Paul, and the Woman Suffrage Movement" *Political Science Quarterly* 98, no. 4 (Winter 1983-84): 666.
[184] Lunardini, *Alice Paul*, 58.

However, instead of making Wilson more amiable to suffrage, the U.S. entry into WWI created a rift. During the war years, Paul's strategy was to point out "the hypocrisy of waging a war for democracy abroad while denying the vote to women at home."[185] In June 1917, Paul herself wrote, "The responsibility, therefore, is with the government and not with the women of America, if the lack of democracy at home weakens the government in its fight for democracy 3000 miles away."[186] As Lunardini points out, "They were moving the battle out of the front parlors of Boise and Sacramento and away from the street corners of Philadelphia and Boston. From now on, their arena would be Washington, DC-specifically, the White House and the halls of Congress."[187]

With this change in venue and strategy, Paul and the NWP garnered media attention for suffrage. In an article published on November 7, 1917, the *New York Times* reported on Paul's hunger strike while serving a seven-month prison sentence for "picketing the White House."[188] The article outlined the poor conditions within the jail, reporting "Miss Paul said she was ill because of bad food, bad air, and no exercise."[189] The article concludes:

> Although the militants have announced they will not resume picketing the White House until Congress reconvenes in December, they consider that a hunger strike is a sufficient climax, for the present at least, to their efforts to force President Wilson to endorse woman suffrage by constitutional amendment.[190]

Though the *New York Times* was no friend to suffragists, often denigrating the picketing campaign, the paper latched on to the sensationalism of the arrests.[191] In a follow-up

[185] Graham, "Woodrow Wilson," 667.
[186] Ibid., 668.
[187] Lunardini, *Alice Paul*, 46.
[188] *New York Times* "Miss Alice Paul on Hunger Strike" November 7, 1917.
[189] Ibid.
[190] Ibid.
[191] Lunardini, *Alice Paul*, 115.

article published on November 9, 1917, the *New York Times* reported Paul had finally been force-fed after a 78-hour fast. Paul's sister, Miss Helen Paul asked:

> How can such a brutal thing be thought of when all she is asking is decent treatment for the others imprisoned with her? What has she done that she should be treated like a criminal and not even as well, for they are permitted exercise and visitors and can buy food at the jail canteen.[192]

By the end of the picketing campaign, "More than 500 women were arrested and 168 women actually served prison sentences, mostly in Occoquan Workhouse."[193] With WWI ending, the record of American women who sacrificed and served during the conflict weighed heavily on Wilson. On September 30, 1918, the president addressed Congress concerning his intention to grant women suffrage, asking, "We have made partners of the women in this war…Shall we admit them only to a partnership of suffering and sacrifice and toil and not to a partnership of privilege and right?"[194]

With the support of Wilson, the Senate finally passed a federal amendment granting women the right to vote in 1919.[195] New Jersey suffragists celebrated with a NJWSA Victory Convention held in April of 1920 in Newark. At this event, the suffrage organization was replaced with the New Jersey League of Women Voters (NJLWV).[196] After the ratification of the 19th Amendment, Paul continued working towards women's equality, refocusing her efforts on working against protective legislation for women. Lunardini summarizes this struggle, "Paul had to persuade other women's group, as well as state and federal legislatures, that protective legislation-though it may have been a

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[192] *New York Times* "Hunger Striker is Forcibly Fed" November 9, 1917.
[193] Ibid., 133.
[194] Global Women's Leadership Initiative Staff, "Woodrow Wilson and the Women's Suffrage Movement: A Reflection," Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/woodrow-wilson-and-the-womens-suffrage-movement-reflection (accessed May 5, 2017).
[195] Gordon, *After Winning*, 29.
[196] Ibid., 31.

necessary alternative in the past-would actually prevent women from achieving equal status in society."[197]

With the end of the suffrage movement, New Jersey women pushed forward, drawing on a long history of club activity. The enduring legacy of the suffragists continued to spur new generations of activists. In fact, at the funeral of Susan B. Anthony, who regrettably passed away before the suffrage amendment was ratified, the theme of continuity remerged. Reverend Anna Howard Shaw, who gave the eulogy at Anthony's funeral, said, "Her work will not be finished, nor will her last word be spoken while there remains a wrong to be righted, or a fettered life to be freed in all the earth."[198] Shaw went on to say:

> In our last conversation, when her prophetic soul saw what we dare not even think, she said: "I leave my work to you and to the others who have been so faithful—promise that you will never let it go down or lessen our demands. There is so much to be done. Think of it! I have struggled for sixty years for a little bit of justice and die without securing it."[199]

While often suffrage overshadows smaller activities, other New Jersey clubs provide a context for other forms of activism. Importantly, the NJLWV was not the only club training women to be more educated, active members of society. Jane "Jennie" Cunningham Croly believes, "The club, from the beginning, accomplished two purposes. It provided a means for the acquisition of knowledge, the training of power; and the working of a spirit of human solidarity, a comprehension of the continuity of life: its universal character and interdependence."[200] One of the earliest forms of organization

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[197] Lunardini, *Alice Paul*, 152.
[198] Anna Howard Shaw, "Eulogy at Susan B. Anthony's Funeral, Rochester, NY March 15, 1906" Rutgers University, http://ecssba.rutgers.edu/docs/shaw.html (accessed May 5, 2017).
[199] Ibid.
[200] Jane "Jennie" Cunningham Croly, *The History of the Woman's Club Movement in America* (New York: Henry G. Allen and Company, 1898), vii.

among American women grew from a tradition of religious involvement. Women, long viewed as the guardians of morality, despite their subservient positions within many church communities, found purpose in local religion.[201] In this restrictive society, "The woman's club was not an echo; it was not the mere banding together for a social and economic purpose, like the clubs of men. It became at once…a light-giving and seed-sowing centre (sic) of purely altruistic and democratic activity."[202] However, this idea was not shared by everyone.

Per Gwen Tarbox, "The largest obstacle confronted by the founders of the club movement was the fact that autonomous public activity on the part of women was long-viewed as an affront to the social order."[203] Clubwomen, including prominent suffragists, had to contend with a society which viewed women who tried to voice their opinions outside the home with disdain, suspicion and sometimes outright hostility. Quite often, suffragist leaders were ridiculed in the press when they dared to address crowds.[204] Importantly, as Tarbox points out, even Elizabeth Cady Stanton felt the shame of speaking in public. In a letter written to Susan B. Anthony in 1855, she explained that her own father threatened to disassociate from her if she continued her public campaign. She writes, "I never felt more keenly the degradation of my sex. To think that all in me of which my father would have felt a proper pride had I been a man, is deeply mortifying to him because I am a woman."[205] It was within this context that women formed relationships which evolved into the club movement. Tarbox writes, "Because women

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[201] Ibid., 3.
[202] Ibid., 13.
[203] Tarbox, *Clubwomen's Daughters*, 13.
[204] Ibid., 21.
[205] Ibid., 22.

spent the majority of their time physically and emotionally segregated from men, they formed many of their most significant bonds with female family members and friends."[206] Within these bonds, women found support and the confidence to become more vocal public figures.

Women themselves recognized the need to support each other. In this spirit, Sorosis, the first professional woman's club in America, was officially organized in New York City in 1868 by Jane Cunningham Croly.[207] Croly found the name while searching through a botanical dictionary. In her own words, she preferred the word for its "full, appropriate, signification, its unhackneyed character and sweet sound."[208] Others were less fond of the name, believing the term was too unfamiliar and would require an explanation in more cases than not.[209] Eventually, the popularity of Sorosis led the club to found the General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC) in March of 1890.[210] New Jersey's proliferation of separate clubs made the state an obvious choice for a blanket federation to unite the groups.

In 1894, the Woman's Club of Orange, New Jersey was the first in the state to consider the organization of a federation of already existing women's clubs.[211] Per Charlotte Emerson Brown, a former president of the General Federation, "A State Federation would awaken new interest, would multiply clubs, and double their

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[206] Ibid., 16-17.
[207] Croly, *Woman's Club Movement*, 16. The name "Sorosis," which means "aggregation" was the subject of much debate. (Croly, *Woman's Club Movement,* 24).
[208] Ibid.
[209] Ibid.
[210] Ibid., 838.
[211] Ibid., 825.

membership, just as the General Federation has done throughout the nation."[212] As it turns out, state organization in New Jersey did just that:

> The Woman's Club, of Orange, was the pioneer club of New Jersey, and had but few predecessors in the United States. It was founded by Mrs. Louisa Lord Riley, who, knowing something of the first organizations, believed it would be useful to the women of Orange to broaden their mental horizon, and introduce a simulating variety to their thought.[213]

The club's constitution states their purpose as, "the discussion of topics of social and general importance, for the purpose of awakening in its members a more vital interest in such topics."[214]

The first annual meeting of the New Jersey State Federation of Women's Clubs (NJSFWC), held in 1895, was a meeting of hundreds of delegates from varied member clubs throughout New Jersey. Themes presented during the convention gave a grand sampling of the diverse interests of clubwomen in the Garden State. A small list of the many topics discussed includes: "Travelling libraries," "Immortality," "State Charities," "Patriotic Societies," "Motherhood," "Evangelical Work Among Women" and "Women in Medicine."[215] The third annual meeting, held in Camden, New Jersey in 1897, led by Cecilia Gaines, discussed education, particularly the place of women in the improvement of public schools.[216] By the third meeting, there were reportedly seventy clubs registered in the State Federation.[217] Examples of well-known clubs that joined the State Federation include: the Woman's Literary Club of Bound Brook, the Monday Afternoon Club of

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[212] Ibid.
[213] Ibid., 835.
[214] Ibid.
[215] Ibid., 829.
[216] Ibid., 833.
[217] Ibid., 834.

Passaic, the Ray Palmer Club of Newark, the Jersey City Woman's Club, the Woman's Literary Union of Elizabeth and the Improvement Society of the Oranges [218]

In 1919, the LWV spawned as a support arm of the NAWSA.[219] With victory in the battle for women's suffrage looming on the horizon, prominent leaders of the NAWSA looked towards the future. How would women exercise their new right? For suffrage leaders, such as Carrie Chapman Catt, the most pressing issue was the preparation and education of these new women voters. Without leadership, this right could be wasted. Women were standing at the brink of a new world, where they had the power to either usher in tremendous change, or misuse their vote. The newly formed League, with "Its brand of intensive study, training for citizenship, and sophisticated political action shows one direction that women took in public life after they won the vote in 1920."[220] In the eyes of Catt, woman's struggle for social and political equality was far from over. At NAWSA's Jubilee Convention on March 24, 1919, Catt urged women to remain vigilant. In her eyes, the suffrage win was only the beginning and women should be careful not to squander this opportunity but to use it to usher in real social change. Having completed its mission, the NAWSA was dissolved and the LWV was created in its place.[221] The purpose of the LWV, in part, was to combat "illiteracy, social evils, and industrial evils" in a nonpartisan way.[222] Members would not allow the elation of victory to interfere with the work yet to come.

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[218] Ibid., 839-51.
[219] "LWV Records, Historical Sketch," Rutgers University Library, https://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/scua/league-of-women-voters-nj-1920-1991#history accessed January 3, 2017.
[220] Susan Ware, ed. "Papers of the League of Women Voters, 1918-1974" in *Research Collections in Women's Studies* (Frederick, MD: University Publications of America, 1986), xi.
[221] Young, *In the Public Interest*, 33.
[222] Ibid., 34.

With the final suffrage win in 1920, the LWV replaced the NAWSA, with state groups organizing shortly thereafter. Like the national chapter, the NJLWV formed to continue the work of the NJWSA in April of 1920.[223] The LWV became "among the longest enduring offspring of the suffrage movement."[224] Originally formed "to promote the political education of newly enfranchised women," the NJLWV still thrives as a source of social change, continuing the fight for equality.[225] Although the social issues of the League have evolved in the decades since its creation, common concerns such as the legal status of women and child welfare are still prominent on the modern agenda.[226]

As per the League website, members continue to abide by the motto "Educate. Advocate. Empower."[227] In keeping with their original vision, the NJLWV never lost sight of their mandate to help citizens register to vote, believing "the establishment of a modus vivendi with the political parties that would yield access to opportunities for women to take part in the governing."[228] Importantly, "League evolution encapsulates women's emergence from political subjection to a measure of freedom as politically relevant citizens."[229] The campaigns of the New Jersey League had far-reaching effects on the civic education of generations of women and its stress on education, particularly in knowing how the government works, provided the foundation for civic concern and reform. These lessons carried on in the generation of young women who formed the core

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[223] "LWV Records, Historical Sketch"
[224] Young, *In the Public Interest*, 1.
[225] Ibid., 2.
[226] "Women and Family Issues," League of Women Voters New Jersey, http://www.lwvnj.org/issues_womenfamily.html (accessed February 21, 2017).
[227] Ibid.
[228] Young, *In the Public Interest,* 2.
[229] Ibid., 3.

of participation in the military, volunteer organizations and other home front activities during WWII and set the stage for women's political and social activism in New Jersey.

As with other states, after the passage of the 19th amendment, New Jersey's suffrage groups either dissolved or converted into local LWV groups. According to Gordon, "As early as 1916, the NJWSA had reported that there were 215 suffrage societies in the state. Contrastingly, in October 1921 the state LWV chairman of organization reported the existence of twenty-six local leagues and six affiliates."[230] Overall, the earliest goal of the League was "persuading women, through political education, to register and vote in the coming fall election."[231] From the very first meeting of the NJLWV, the importance of collaboration with other organizations was stressed. From their experience with suffrage, early League leaders were well-aware of the significance of networking and education.

In a summary of the first directors' meeting held in Newark, New Jersey, on April 30, 1920, chairmen of the various committees were directed to "collect data in regard to their special subjects and, of course, to keep the League closely in touch with the various organizations specializing in the actual work of the subjects chosen for League Departments."[232] By this meeting, the different NJLWV departments included: American Citizenship, Citizenship Schools, Child Welfare, Social Hygiene, Fair Price, Unification of Laws Concerning Women and Children and Women in Industry.[233] By 1924, additional committees included: Efficient Government, Education, Law Enforcement,

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[230] Gordon, *After Winning*, 34.
[231] Ibid., 35.
[232] "NJLWV Regular Meeting, April 30, 1920," NJ Women's History, http://www.njwomenshistory.org/Period_4/minutes.htm (accessed January 18, 2017).
[233] Ibid.

International Cooperation, Editor of the Civic Pilot, Finance, Living Costs and Uniform Laws.[234]

One of the earliest initiatives was the *Anna Howard Shaw Memorial of the National American Woman Suffrage Association*, a funding drive in collaboration with the LWV in honor of Dr. Anna Howard Shaw, a prominent suffragist who died on July 2, 1919.[235] In correspondence from the NAWSA, the New Jersey League was urged to secure the proper permits to ask for donations for the memorial at the polls.[236] In a release from the Anna Howard Shaw Memorial Fund in 1920, the significance of the campaign was clear:

> Every woman in America, as she goes to the polls this November, will cast her ballot because there once existed in the world such a woman as Dr. Anna Howard Shaw. More than any other single individual, not even excepting Susan B. Anthony herself, the fight for woman suffrage was won by the little, gray-haired bundle of energetic womanhood, who wandered for years up and down the face of America, talking and fighting that the American woman should be politically free, most of all, inspiring other women to follow her example.[237]

The funds collected were split between Bryn Mawr College in PA, to start a Foundation in Politics and for a Foundation in Preventative Medicine at the Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania.[238]

With the suffrage win still fresh, the NJLWV was poised to launch several campaigns for change, many of which continued into WWII. In a letter from Florence Peshine Eagleton, then-New Jersey League president, to the membership on May 31,

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[234] "Officers and Directors of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey," 1924, New Jersey League of Women Voters Collection, MC 1082, box 25, folder 27, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[235] "Dr. Anna H. Shaw Suffragist, Dies," *New York Times*, July 3, 1919.
[236] Mrs. John O. Miller to the League Chairman, letter, Sept. 14, 1920, New Jersey League of Women Voters Collection, MC 1082, box 28, folder 8, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[237] Release from the Anna Howard Shaw Memorial Fund, 1920, New Jersey League of Women Voters Collection, MC 1082, box 28, folder 8, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[238] Ibid.

1922, she presents her intention to run for the office of president again. However, she also expresses her reluctance to place her name on the ballot with the belief that "a fresh mind and a fresh point of view" would better serve the future of the League. Eagleton places the decision in the hands of the members, wishing for their guidance in the matter, writing, "The League is now an established fact. It has weathered the dangers of its launching and the attacks of its enemies…It has won the respectful consideration of our citizens and holds a unique place in the community."[239] Eagleton insists on the importance of future work and increased member participation. With WWI still fresh in the minds of many, the necessity of preventing future wars was one of their main concerns. She also writes about the importance of collaboration between the League and local organizations, citing the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), which asked for the League's help in holding talks with parents about the wellbeing of their children. The Rotary Club of Newark cooperated with the League in starting a Junior Municipality in Newark, where League members held programs to spur the interest of local youth in matters of civic concern and politics in an "experiment in youthful self-government."[240]

The NJLWV expanded its area of social concern frequently from major educational pushes dedicated to creating informed voters to smaller initiatives such as concern for the inclusion of women in local police departments. For instance, on January 3, 1922, Mrs. C. Van Winkle of the D.C. Metropolitan Police Department responded to

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[239] Florence Peshine Eagleton to the NJ League, letter, May 31, 1922, New Jersey League of Women Voters Collection, MC 1082, box 25, folder 30, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[240] Ibid.

an inquiry by Florence P. Eagleton on the question of women's involvement in the police force. Van Winkle writes:

> I believe that you could have your Women's Bureau without legislation, just exactly as the Police Department has its school, Traffic Bureau, Detective Bureau, or any other unit. It is a most logical unit in a Police Department and don't let anyone discourage you as to the legality of the question. It has been held in many cities, too, that 'policemen' include policewomen, that when the law was written there was no idea of keeping women out of the service, and usually the law reads a 'a voter.' He has always been considered in the generic sense and covers both men and women.[241]

As her correspondence points out, Eagleton, then-president of the Newark League, was not shy about using her connections to research issues she deemed important. She herself represents a life of activism, as she also held membership in "the Contemporary Club of Newark, the New Jersey Historical Society…the New York Browning Society" and the executive board of the CLNJ.[242]

With the various committees established to investigate pressing issues, the constitution of the NJLWV called for designated members to investigate matters. After a thorough inquiry, using as many state resources as possible, each committee provided a report to present at the next convention. Members could then recommend further action, including possible legislative changes to push for.[243] These investigations led the NJLWV to begin a campaign called "Know your Towns and Counties" where it published informational reports on local communities.[244] This League education initiative, which gained momentum in the late 1930s, was

[241] Mrs. C. Van Winkle, D.C. Metro Police Dept. to Florence P. Eagleton, January 3, 1922, New Jersey League of Women Voters Collection, MC 1082, box 25, folder 30, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[242] Mrs. Wells P. Eagleton, president of the Newark League of Women Voters, New Jersey League of Women Voters Collection, MC 1082, box 25, folder 30, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[243] Gordon, *After Winning,* 35.
[244] "LWV Records, Historical Sketch.

spearheaded by the League's Department of Government and its Operation and involved the expansion of "Know your Town" and "Know your County" into a statewide venture. Mrs. Aaron Matheis, the Vice-Chairmen of this department, wrote, "We know only too well how difficult it is to secure such information. Only by an intensive search of dozens of sources are we able to get it. To have the complete set-up of your local and county government in just two pamphlets will indeed be an achievement."[245] The League was hopeful this knowledge might garner recommendations to improve local government and lead to new campaigns of reform in each county.[246] Per Mrs. Frank Robert, State Chairman of the Department of Government and Economic Welfare, "It is not enough to pass a law. We must know how it works, that it accomplishes what we intended it should. Eternal vigilance is the price of good laws and good government."[247]

While Catt stated the LWV should remain nonpartisan, she supported women who wished to be involved in party politics outside League activities.[248] Feickart, on the other hand, remained a vocal advocate for League women joining political parties as members.[249] In a letter to New Jersey League leaders in January of 1921, she stated, "I want to see the women well organized in both parties, so that we can work for the measures we believe in by the direct method instead of the indirect method."[250] Despite the policy discontent felt by some, the NJLWV remained nonpartisan while encouraging

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[245] Mrs. Aaron Matheis, "NJLWV Department of Government and its Operation: A State Project" October 1938, League of Women Voters of New Jersey Collection, MC 1082, box 11, folder 16, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[246] Ibid.
[247] Mrs. Frank Robert, Newark Release, 1940, New Jersey League of Women Voters Collection, MC 1082, box 21, folder 7, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[248] Gordon, *After Winning,* 36.
[249] Ibid.
[250] Ibid., 38.

members to pursue party activism outside the organization. The League preferred to focus on altering public opinion in favor of certain legislative changes, mostly in the areas of child welfare, women's rights and citizenship.[251] However, Feikhart was not through expressing her discontent with the League. In the same letter, she voiced her disapproval of League plans to continue past its three-year transition period. Her foremost objection was that this decision went against Catt's wishes for the League.[252] Catt herself responded in a letter to Miss Florence Halsey of the Newark League on October 3, 1922. Talking about Feikhart, she writes:

> I received a letter from you in which you asked me to make corrections of a statement made by some irresponsible woman who charged the League of Women Voters with some kind of sins not quite clear…As a matter of fact I thought the charge the woman made was too silly to require any answer. To begin with I am not and never have been a responsible member of the League. They did me the honor to make me Honorary President which means of course nothing as far as responsibility is concerned…the League has its own right to continue forever or disband when it pleases.[253]

The League continued well past this challenge, yet was not free of discontent within its membership. The Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), introduced by Alice Paul in 1923, was another area of discontent amongst League women.[254] The NJLWV and the CLNJ both opposed measures to create equal conditions for women, insisting that protective legislation for women was the only way to correct their disadvantaged position in society.[255] These organizations believed women needed "special protection under the law

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[251] Ibid., 42.
[252] Lillian F. Feikhart to the directors of the New Jersey League of Women Voters, letter, January 17, 1921, New Jersey League of Women Voters Collection, MC 1082, box 10, folder 33, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[253] Carrie Chapman Catt to Miss Florence Halsey, letter, October 3, 1922, New Jersey League of Women Voters Collection, MC 1082, box 10, folder 33, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[254] Roberta W. Francis, "The History behind the Equal Rights Amendment," Equal Rights Amendment, http://www.equalrightsamendment.org/history.htm (accessed May 18, 2017).
[255] Ibid.

and not equality."[256] According to Ethel Smith, "To be different from men and to have different needs is not to be inferior. Differentiation sometimes does, but often it does not mean discrimination."[257] In a NCL pamphlet, she argues against the ERA because of this assertion and is concerned about the uncertainties of the amendment. She states, "The blanket method of the proposed amendment is the basic objection to it in the minds of many critics. It attempts to cover in one short sentence the rights of women in all relationships of life."[258]

In the 1920s alone, the New Jersey League helped to pass many protective pieces of legislation. They supported the federal Sheppard-Towner Act, which provided funding for maternity leave and childcare.[259] During this time, American eugenicists formed institutions for the study of the so-called "feebleminded" and pushed for the intelligence-testing of immigrant communities.[260] Regretfully, the NJLWV also supported a Sterilization Bill to prevent "the chronic feeble-minded, chronic insane or habitual criminals who are mentally defective" from reproducing.[261] With the shadow of WWI still visible, League efforts also focused on world peace. With this goal in mind, the League created the Committee on the Limitation of Armaments in 1921.[262] The NJLWV established a Committee on the Legal Status of Women which "studied marriage

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[256] Gordon, *After Winning*, 42.
[257] Ethel Smith, "Toward Equal Rights for Men and Women," March 1938, New Jersey League of Women Voters Collection, MC 1082, box 28, folder 21, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[258] Ibid.
[259] "The Sheppard-Towner Maternity and Infancy Act," History, Art and Archives: United States House of Representatives, http://history.house.gov/Historical-Highlights/1901-1950/The-Sheppard%E2%80%93Towner-Maternity-and-Infancy-Act/ (accessed January 21, 2017).
[260] Nancy Ordover, *American Eugenics: Race, Queer Anatomy and the Science of Nationalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 37. For a collection of work on the political and historical facets of eugenics, see Diane B. Paul's *The Politics of Heredity: Essays Eugenics, Biomedicine, and the Nature-Nurture Debate* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1998).
[261] Gordon, *After Winning*, 44.
[262] Ibid., 45.

and divorce laws, property rights, women's employment, the care of women offenders and many other issues."[263] Of these committee priorities, women's employment became a point of contention after the Stock Market crash of 1929.

In the 1930s, the Great Depression caused a shift in society. With the economic well-being of many Americans threatened, the crisis endangered the financial backing of the League and created a precarious situation for many of their hard-fought advances in legislative reform. Despite their successful first decade of activism, "The year 1930 marked a low point in the League's life. The general economic collapse after 1929 had dried up most of its private sources of funds and cost it thousands of members."[264] In 1934, with the Great Depression still unfolding, the League, asked: "How much or how little should a government be asked to protect or regulate economic activities? Where should the dividing line be between private enterprise and public concern?"[265] In response to the economic desperation felt locally and nationally, the League started new campaigns inspired by the changing times.[266] New League projects included: the investigation of low-cost housing, the support of the Wagner-Ellenbogen Housing Bill, which was housing reform legislation, support of legislation which offered mandatory unemployment and old age compensation, and the support of a Civil Service Commission to combat unfair hiring practices in the government.[267]

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[263] "Issued Forth: The Legacy in New Jersey of the Women's Rights Convention at Seneca Falls, 1840-1920" in *The Pivotal Right: Commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the Women's Rights Convention at Seneca Falls*, (Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ, 1998), 15.
[264] Young, *In the Public Interest,* 98.
[265] Ibid., 103.
[266] "Early League History," League of Women Voters New Jersey, http://www.lwvnj.org/about_history.html (accessed January 21, 2017).
[267] Ibid.

Another release from the Newark League in 1936 dealt with the need for reform in the New Jersey Parole system. This topic was also the subject of a State League Conference, which Robbins presided over. Steelman opened the conference by stating, "The function of parole in government and its importance to society can hardly be over-estimated since a large proportion of the population of prisons and reformatories is returned to the community life by way of parole."[268] She asks whether parole reform is possible or is a new system necessary to truly help offenders readjust to society?[269]

The NJLWV educational drives expanded in the 1930s, as well. Mrs. Lenard (Lena) H. Robbins, of Montclair, then-president of the New Jersey League, was "a veteran of the old fight for women's suffrage" and "as a member of the League since the day it was born, and as a leader in the recent victory for decent government in Montclair, Mrs. Robbins knows what she is talking about."[270] Under her leadership, the League "never takes a position on any question without painstaking study."[271] In 1936, the Newark League spearheaded a drive to hold Jury Schools to provide guidance to those who serve. As per Robbins: "Schools for Jurors have been held to assist jurors in a better understanding of the important part they play in the administration of justice."[272] As of that year, the school was opened to both men and women and open to the public. Robbins maintained, "Many of the states have not yet passed laws permitting women to be called for jury service. Women in New Jersey are more fortunate, however, since there

[268] Ibid.
[269] Mrs. Steelman, Newark League of Women Voters, 1936, New Jersey League of Women Voters Collection, MC 1082, box 21, folder 7, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[270] "Could Women Rule New Jersey?" *New Jersey Voter,* June 1940, New Jersey League of Women Voters Collection, MC 1082, box 25, folder 27, 5, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[271] Ibid.
[272] Mrs. Robbins, 1936, New Jersey League of Women Voters Collection, MC 1082, box 21, folder 7, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.

is a permissive law in this state. They have been called for jury service in all the county courts in this state, except Essex County."[273] Seton Hall University acted as a co-sponsor of the Jury School.[274]

On March 25, 1938, the amending process became the focus of an informational drive. In a letter from Katharine Greenough to the Government and its Operation Chairman, she expressed the need to use education and research to prepare to address the amending process at the next National Convention. She writes, once gathered, members must "see to it that this information is spread as far as possible in the League, so that whatever convention action is taken will be predicated on the declarations of delegates well informed on the subject."[275] Also in March 1938, Greenough suggested to Mrs. Edwin Bebout, of the New Jersey League's Department of Government and its Operation, a discussion of a unicameral (one house) legislature was necessary and asks that states which completed research on the subject be contacted for information.[276] This is in line with the league's quest for legislative reform and exemplifies the cooperation between state leagues. Bebout pushed to have new voting machines installed in various counties. Greenough recognized the importance in a letter written to Bebout in February 1938. She writes, "It is grand news to learn that you are getting some places equipped with machines. I do think you will have to think about mass education in the use of machines in those places which have installed them as your next step."[277]

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[273] Ibid.
[274] Ibid.
[275] Mrs. Katharine Greenough to the Government and its Operation Chairman, letter, March 25, 1938, New Jersey League of Women Voters Collection, MC 1082, box 25, folder 29, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[276] Mrs. Katharine Greenough to Mrs. Edwin Bebout, letter, March 3, 1938, New Jersey League of Women Voters Collection, MC 1082, box 25, folder 29, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[277] Katharine Greenough to Mrs. Edwin Bebout, letter, February 4, 1938, New Jersey League of Women Voters Collection, MC 1082, box 25, folder 29, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.

With the increasing variation of National campaigns, a letter from the NCL to state league presidents on January 28, 1938, addresses the magnitude of work to be done. In trying to simplify the plight of the state Leagues, the NCL uses the analogy of a dinner menu to explain the national versus state agendas. According to the letter, one must pick and choose which campaigns make the most sense for their areas:

> An a la carte menu of a large restaurant for instance contains hundreds of dishes, but the dinner one orders and eats and pays for consists of only a few dishes chosen from that list. The choice represents a nice balance between what one has appetite for and what one can afford to pay. Such a menu is the National Program. The dinner ordered is the State Program of Work.[278]

With a watchful eye on the political and social situation in Europe, the League closed the 1930s with a flurry of varying campaigns, all commonly directed at preparing Garden State citizens for possible U.S. involvement in war. On June 22, 1939, mere months before Hitler invaded Poland, the League was poised to launch a "National League Expansion Program" which involved:

> a campaign of increased prestige, membership and money for the entire League-recognizing as we all do, that the League has as its main object the maintenance of our American democracy and moreover has a definite and well-established method for working toward that goal; and that therefore, the League has a plain duty to make every effort to increase its service to the common welfare at this critical time.[279]

With fascism taking hold in Europe, League leaders recognized the need for increased vigilance, involvement and funding. The NJLWV kept a rigorous campaign agenda in the years preceding American involvement in WWII and, in 1939, thirty-two state Leagues were active in:

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[278] The National League to State League Presidents, letter, January 28, 1938, New Jersey League of Women Voters Collection, MC 1082, box 25, folder 29, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[279] Jane Barus, "National League Expansion Program," June 22, 1939, New Jersey League of Women Voters Collection, MC 1082, box 11, folder 9, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.

> Asbury Park, Bergen County, Camden County, Elizabeth, Fair Lawn Borough, Hoboken, Hudson County, Long Branch, Maplewood, Millville, Monmouth Beach, Montclair, Morris County, Newark Leagues (Clinton Hall, Forest Hill, Vailsburg, Weequahic), New Brunswick Regional, Nutley, Oranges, Passaic, Paterson, Plainfield, Polish League, Pompton Plains, Princeton, Shore League, Somerset County, Summit, Trenton, West Essex, Westfield.[280]

With financial concerns and democratic values threatened, the issue of poll tax disenfranchisement, also a national concern, was added to the state agenda. As per Mrs. William T. Gayle Jr., "There is no doubt in my mind, or in yours I believe, that they should recognize the tremendous implications for our national representative form of government-and should stress these."[281] The NJLWV also viewed judicial reform as essential in ensuring "The survival of democratic government."[282] With German rearmament and aggression finally pushing the Europe into war in September 1939, the NJLWV once again stood at the precipice of a major shift in American society.

From the suffrage struggle to the beginning of American involvement in WWII, women activists in New Jersey turned their attention to various political, social and economic issues. While suffragists continued their activism, albeit in differing forms after the 19th amendment was ratified, new activists joined in, as well. As the older generation of suffragists prepared for the next step, metaphorically passing the torch, the NJLWV stood ready to use their newly acquired right to vote to usher in social change. The first few decades in the history of the NJLWV were marked by a multitude of campaigns and struggles, yet persisted through early growing pains and formed a strong and influential

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[280] "Presidents of Local Leagues," June 1939, New Jersey League of Women Voters Collection, MC 1082, box 25, folder 36, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[281] Mrs. William T. Gayle Jr to Mrs. Edwin Bebout, letter, Sept. 30, 1940, New Jersey League of Women Voters Collection, MC 1082, box 25, folder 29, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[282] Lena Robbins, Newark Release 1940, New Jersey League of Women Voters Collection, MC 1082, box 21, folder 7, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.

network of influence into WWII and beyond. As Greenough notes, “How anyone can think we will not always need a League of Women Voters is beyond me. Our work is never done.”[283] The WWII years gave new meaning to her statement, as the NJLWV saw an increased need for activism in a society mobilized for another war.

[283] Katharine Greenough to Mrs. Edwin Bebout, letter, February 4, 1938, New Jersey League of Women Voters Collection, MC 1082, box 25, folder 29, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.

Figure 1

Alice Paul: Circa 1915. Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/resource/mnwp.155017.

Figure 2

“Suffrage Campaign Days in New Jersey”: NJ Suffragists Hang a Sign Advertising an Event with Anna Howard Shaw, Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/item/2011647804/.

CHAPTER 3:

THE CONSUMERS LEAGUE OF NEW JERSEY BEFORE WORLD WAR II

"To live means to buy, to buy means to have power, to have power means to have responsibility."[284]

While historians identify the Progressive Era, 1890 to 1920, as a time of heightened social activism, especially regarding women's reform groups, the spirit of activism which existed beginning with suffrage continued to thread through subsequent reform movements. For the Consumers League of New Jersey (CLNJ) especially, the social reverberations of change continued, notably in the utilization of research tactics, especially by using factory inspections and launching public information campaigns designed to harness the power of the consumer to help the workers of New Jersey. As Leila Rupp and Verta Taylor note in *Survival in the Doldrums: The American Women's Rights Movement, 1945 to the 1960s*, "we knew that feminist activity had continued throughout the interwar years, and we were curious about the fate of women who had, during World War II, worked for what they termed 'full citizenship' for women."[285] Research into the CLNJ reveals social reform campaigns continued in the interwar period. This chapter frames the pre-WWII reform work of the CLNJ within the context of the Progressive Era, analyzing the work of the CLNJ from its founding in 1900 to 1941, the beginning of American involvement in WWII, with attention to several post-WWI initiatives, including special protections for women workers and industrial health

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[284] This quote, by Florence Kelley, founder and first General Secretary of the National Consumers' League, is still found on the organization's website. http://www.nclnet.org/history.
[285] Leila J. Rupp and Verta Taylor, *Survival in the Doldrums: The American Women's Rights Movement, 1945 to the 1960s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 6.

and occupational disease reform, illustrating the continuation of CLNJ work during WWII.

The American Progressive Era, 1890-1914, was a "period of political, social, and economic reform."[286] While suffragists campaigned for political changes, many other issues found champions in men and women who saw the need for social transformation. Reformers faced many problems such as deficiencies in industrial regulations and a lack of economic protection for workers injured on the job. Some activists focused on food regulations and honest labeling while others preferred to lessen the plight of child laborers. Beginning in 1890, "Americans identified major social problems, called for an expanded role for the state, and pursued a more active regulatory government."[287] American industrialization led to unprecedented problems which were only rectified when citizens formed organizations working towards common goals.[288] Cecilia Tichi described this time in America as a period when "The United States was physically metamorphosing as family farms gave way to factories, and villages and towns mushroomed overnight into cities."[289] American industrialization, marked by "a sharp increase in immigration" and "the growth of large cities," is defined by Jonathan Rees as

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[286] Lewis L. Gould, *America in the Progressive Era, 1890-1914* (New York: Routledge, 2001), ix.
[287] Ibid., 3.
[288] Major works on the Progressive Era include: Clarke A. Chambers, *Seedtime of Reform: American Social Service and Social Action, 1918-1933* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1963), Alan Dawley, *Changing the World: American Progressives in War and Revolution*. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), Steven J. Diner, *A Very Different Age: Americans of the Progressive Era.* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1998), Ellen Fitzpatrick, *Endless Crusade: Women Social Scientists and Progressive Reform*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), Noralee Frankel and Nancy S. Dye. eds. *Gender, Class, Race and Reform in the Progressive Era*. (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1991), Lewis L. Gould, *America in the Progressive Era, 1890-1914.* (New York: Routledge, 2001), Dulcie Murdock Straughan, ed. *Women's Use of Public Relations for Progressive-Era Reform: Rousing the Conscience of a Nation*. (Lewiston, NY: Edward Mellon Press, 2007), Cecelia Tichi, *Civic Passions: Seven who Launched Progressive America (and What They Teach us).* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2009).
[289] Cecilia Tichi, *Civic Passions: Seven who Launched Progressive America (and What They Teach us)* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 7.

the processes of "mechanization and the division of labor."[290] According to David Meyer, "As late as 1840, agriculture employed most of the nation's workers," but "between 1840 and 1860 manufacturing employment tripled, and production soared almost fivefold."[291] The changing face of the workforce affected the structure of society, as low wages forced women and children out of the home and into industries. Inevitably, these swift social and economic changes caused new problems in occupational safety, as technology moved ahead with little regard for worker protections. Other issues related to industrialization include fair wages, unemployment insurance, restrictions on child labor, special protection for women workers, compensation for industrial diseases and more.

The National Consumers League (NCL), an organization whose membership was dominated by white middle- and upper-class women and formed as a response to the need for reform, increased their efforts both in the interwar period and during WWII. While suffragists joined groups serving both the Republican and Democratic Parties, those who joined the CLNJ formed the backbone of nonpartisan activism in New Jersey from the early twentieth century onward. The education campaigns, legislative changes and labor investigations the CLNJ initiated from 1900 did not cease during WWII.[292] Rather, the CLNJ fought to keep their legislative victories secure, ensured continued vigilance in the enforcement of labor laws and added new concerns to their reform agenda. In the first three decades of its existence, the CLNJ launched campaigns in occupational health,

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[290] Jonathan Rees, *Industrialization and the Transformation of American Life: A Brief Introduction* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2013), xi, xii.
[291] David R. Meyer, *The Roots of American Industrialization* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 2
[292] For a detailed discussion of the use of public relations strategies such as educational campaigns, investigations and data collection, in Progressive Era women's reform, see Dulcie Murdock Straughan's edited volume, *Women's Use of Public Relations for Progressive-Era Reform: Rousing the Conscience of a Nation* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2003).

workers compensation, child labor, factory safety, women's labor, industrial homework, the messenger service, school attendance and more.[293]

According to Landon Storrs the NCL "seemed to agree that women had a particular aptitude and responsibility for civilizing capitalism."[294] Formed as a response to workers' issues in New York City in 1891 and headed by Josephine Baker, the organization spread to other states by 1899.[295] The New Jersey branch was not far behind the National League as Juliet Cushing founded the CLNJ in East Orange, New Jersey in 1900.[296] Since then, the organization actively worked for the interests of working women, children and men.[297] Felice Gordon notes, the CLNJ, along with the New Jersey League of Women Voters (NJLWV), the State Federation of Women's Clubs, and others, formed the core areas of reform influence as "suffragists also sought to maximize the effectiveness of their newly won right to vote."[298] Since many New Jersey women held memberships in numerous reform organizations, they interacted with each other, often sharing goals. New Jersey "Clubwomen expressed an eagerness to become good citizens, to learn about governmental operations, and to take their voting responsibilities seriously."[299] Many suffragists continued their civic activism in the CLNJ, effectively demonstrating a continuity of engagement which continued into WWII. Among the most

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[293] Report of the Executive Secretary, January 27, 1939, Consumers League of NJ MC 1090, box 34, folder 31, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[294] Landon R. Y. Storrs, *Civilizing Capitalism: The National Consumers' League, Women's Activism, and Labor Standards in the New Deal Era* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 14.
[295] Ibid.
[296] Juliet Cushing, founder of the CLNJ, also served as president from 1900-1930 (Issued Forth, 16).
[297] Fernanda Perrone and Ferris Olin, "Issued Forth: The Legacy in New Jersey of the Women's Rights Convention at Seneca Falls, 1840-1920" in *The Pivotal Right: Commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the Women's Rights Convention at Seneca Falls,* Rutgers University Libraries, 1998, 16. In 1922, the CLNJ reached the height of its membership at 675 women (Gordon, *After Winning*, 60).
[298] Gordon, *After Winning*, 52.
[299] Ibid., 56.

prominent of these women were Lena Anthony Robbins, Florence Eagleton, Melinda Scott, Helena Simmons and Florence Halsey.[300]

As with other state branches, the leadership of the CLNJ worked closely with the NCL. During her long tenure as president of the NCL, founder Florence Kelley remained concerned about the success of state leagues. The leadership of the CLNJ stayed faithful to the ideology and tactics of the NCL throughout its early period.[301] As Clarke Chambers noted, the NCL "relied equally on education and moral exhortation" to further reform agendas and "placed its faith in the intelligence and good will of the American people and their desire to right social wrongs."[302] Kelley stated, "The prime responsibility of the consuming public is its own ignorance…The principal task of the League is, therefore, to enlighten men and women who are eager to do right if they can but know what right is."[303] The NCL motto "investigate, agitate, legislate" trickled down to state leagues, the CLNJ included, and "(w)ithin five years the NCL included sixty-four branches in twenty states."[304] As a remnant of the suffrage struggle, the prominent ideology of women as moral guardians permeated early CLNJ work which focused on factory conditions, retail workers, legislation for families and much more. According to Gordon, mutual concern for women working in industry was the most cohesive element between the CLNJ and the NJLWV.[305] For decades, Juliet Cushing forged a link between

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[300] Ibid., 55, 58.
[301] In 1909, Florence Kelley contributed to the organization of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) (Kelley, Florence, Social Welfare History Project, Virginia Commonwealth University, https://socialwelfare.library.vcu.edu/people/kelley-florence/).
[302] Clarke A. Chambers, *Seedtime of Reform: American Social Service and Social Action, 1918-1933* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1963), 4.
[303] Florence Kelley, "The Responsibility of the Consumer," *American Academy of Political and Social Science* 32 (1908): 108.
[304] Storrs, *Civilizing Capitalism*, 15.
[305] Gordon, *After Winning*, 59.

the CLNJ and the NJLWV. Cushing, who served as president of the CLNJ for thirty years, was also chairman for the NJLWV's Committee on Women in Industry.[306]

With Cushing at the helm, the CLNJ focused their efforts on improving the conditions for working children and women. One of their earliest efforts was the organization of the New Jersey Child Labor Committee in 1904. Chaired by Cushing herself, this committee fought for school attendance laws and investigated factories and farms where children worked.[307] In 1905, League investigators turned their attention to the plight of women factory workers, both those who worked onsite and those who engaged in industrial homework.[308] Elizabeth Butler, then-Executive Secretary of the CLNJ, found women being paid less, working exhaustive hours and in disease-ridden environments.[309] In the meantime, the CLNJ launched campaigns to shorten Christmas shopping times in department stores and encourage factory owners to comply with existing hourly regulations on women's work.[310] Notably, the CLNJ fought to allow shop assistants to sit down during their shifts, culminating in a bill, passed in 1911, which required seats in stores.[311] During the so-called "powder puff scandal" the CLNJ discovered sanitary puffs were being manufactured in unsanitary conditions by children living in slums in Orange, New Jersey. Because of this information, League investigation

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[306] Gordon, *After Winning*, 59. For a biographical sketch of Juliet Cushing (1845-1934), see John James Scannell, ed. *Scannell's New Jersey's First Citizen's and State Guide: 1919-1920 (Vol. II)* (Paterson, NJ.: J. J. Scannell, 1919).
[307] Burstyn, *Past and Promise*, 120.
[308] During this time, the NJLWV operated on the idea that women needed special protective legislation. For a more complete discussion of the debate between full equality for women versus protective legislation, see Felice Gordon's *After Winning: The Legacy of New Jersey Suffragists, 1920-1947* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1986).
[309] Susanna P. Zwemer, "History of Consumers League of New Jersey" (unpublished manuscript, Rutgers University Collections, 1950), 12-14.
[310] Gordon, *After Winning*, 59.
[311] Ibid., 7-8.

and pressure on state legislatures led to the passage of the Industrial Homework Bill in 1917.[312] Other early League successes included: the Law Requiring Seats for Women in Commercial Employment (1909), the Law Regulating Hours for Minors in Messenger Service (1911), the Child Labor Law (1914), the Compulsory Education Law (1914) and the Law Requiring Age and Schooling Certificates for Child Workers (1914).[313]

Archival evidence detailing the operations of the CLNJ in the 1930s reveals a continuation of activity which contradicts the notion that the years between suffrage and the feminism of the 1960s were stagnant. The protection of working children formed a cornerstone of CLNJ initiative in the 1930s. In a CLNJ informational pamphlet titled "Shall Children be Exploited in New Jersey," the organization explains the benefits of the passage of Assembly Bill A22 which applied to both resident and non-resident children working in the Garden State.[314] Under this new bill, children under sixteen were prohibited from any paid employment during school hours with their parents or legal guardians subject to a fine between $50-1000 or imprisonment.[315] According to this pamphlet, the need for regulation was pressing because "existing school attendance and child labor laws do not apply to non-resident children" and "the work done by these children frequently involves fatigue and strain."[316] In some cases, even Wiley herself attempted to uncover the conditions New Jersey's child laborers endured. For instance, in 1931, Wiley exchanged correspondence with the Peerless Tube Company in

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[312] Burstyn, *Past and Promise*, 120.
[313] Letter from Susanna P. Zwemer to Stevenson, January 28, 1941, Consumers' League of New Jersey., MC 1090, box 7, folder 1, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[314] "Shall Children be Exploited in New Jersey?" CLNJ Pamphlet on Child Labor Legislation, 1929-1930, New Jersey Digital Highway, Accessed September 5, 2017, http://www.njdigitalhighway.org/lesson/child_labor/struggle_for_reform.
[315] Ibid.
[316] Ibid.

Bloomfield, New Jersey, asking for support of protective legislation for minor workers. Seemingly reluctant to lend his support, on October 7, 1931, Frederic Remington, President of the company, wrote, "there is no necessity for putting in such a bill to clutter up the already heavily legislative statute books."[317] Finally, in 1940, the revised New Jersey Child Labor Law banned children aged sixteen and under from wage labor unless employment was completed "outside school hours and during school vacations but not in or for a factory or in any occupation otherwise prohibited by law."[318]

The CLNJ focused on the conditions of women working in factories, eventually culminating in the successful passage of the Night Work Bill of 1923, which barred women from working between 10pm and 6am.[319] Also in 1923, the problem of low wages for women prompted the Department of Labor to enlist the help of the CLNJ in investigating the cost of living for these workers. League investigators found women's wages were insufficient to support themselves, let alone their families. This prompted the introduction of a state minimum wage law which was finally passed by the New Jersey Legislature in 1933.[320]

The shortening of the work day for women was another significant initiative. In a letter to the editor of the *New York Times*, Anna Rochester, Stella G.S. Perry and Alice Jaynes of the CLNJ wrote in support of the ten-hour cap on the workday for women and girls. Calling for the support of all citizens, they pleaded, "Is a ten-hour day too short for our young girls and women? Do our citizens really believe that after working from 7a.m.

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[317] Frederic Remington to Katherine Wiley, letter, October 7, 1931, New Jersey Digital Highway, Accessed September 5, 2017, http://www.njdigitalhighway.org/lesson/child_labor/struggle_for_reform.
[318] New Jersey Child Labor Laws, Chapter 153, Approved June 35, 1940, http://dspace.njstatelib.org:8080/xmlui/handle/10929/32698.
[319] Ibid., 7-8.
[320] Ibid., 9-11.

to 6 p.m. women should have no time for home life, no time for their families-husbands, parents, and children- no time for rest or pleasure, no time for self-improvement?"[321] In a letter dated March 3, 1933, Helena Simmons, then-Chairman of the Women in Industry Committee of the CLNJ, wrote to the NJLWV about changes proposed to a Senate Bill 103, which would shorten the workweek. The feeling on the part of the CLNJ was that a language change on the bill from a cap of eight hours per day and 44 hours per week should be augmented to nine hours per day and 48 hours per week to increase the likelihood of support.[322] Simmons wrote, "favorable legislative action at the present time on an 8 hours day and 44 hours week seems doubtful."[323] League agitation worked, and in 1912, Senator Walter Edge sponsored a "Ten Hour Law" which placed a limit on the workday for women in New Jersey.[324]

Everyone, however, did not agree with special protections for women workers. Alice Paul and the NWP advocated full equality for men and women. Because of this disagreement, the ERA, first proposed to Congress in 1923, caused a rift between the CLNJ and the NWP.[325] Members in the hierarchy of the CLNJ believed working women needed special protection under the law, not full equality.[326]

> Fearing that it would invalidate the protective legislation for which they had worked so hard, the majority of women's organizations, including the Consumers League of New Jersey, the League of Women Voters of New Jersey, the State Federation of Women' s Clubs, and the New Jersey Women's Trade Union League, opposed the Equal Rights Amendment. These groups argued pragmatically that because women workers were already at a disadvantage,

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[321] Alice Jaynes, Stella G. S. Perry, and Anna Rochester, "New Jersey Women's Ten-Hour Bill," *New York Times,* February 9, 1912.

[322] Helena N. Simmons to the New Jersey League of Women Voters, letter, March 3, 1933, Consumers' League of New Jersey, MC 1090, box 7, folder 20, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.

[323] Ibid.

[324] Burstyn, *Past and Promise*, 120.

[325] Gordon, *After Winning*, 62.

[326] Ibid.

> protective legislation just made a bad situation a little better. Women's organizations supporting the Amendment included the State Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, the Women's State Republican Club, and the New Jersey Women Lawyers' Club. The two camps disagreed bitterly over the issue throughout the 1920s and 1930s.[327]

During this time, disagreements about the ERA led to discontent between some individual members. In one case, Mrs. R. A. Irving, a League member from Haddonfield, New Jersey was asked to resign her position on the CLNJ Executive Committee, because of her supportive statements about the ERA. Mrs. Irving responded to this criticism with her belief that the ERA was the "quickest and surest way of securing rights for women."[328] Ultimately, Irving resigned, believing in the ERA and wishing to work actively for its passage.[329] This case was merely one example of discontent about the ERA, which was not as simple as CLNJ versus NWP. As Mrs. Irving exemplifies, the CLNJ did not present a completely unified front against the ERA.[330]

Over the next few years, the contention between the NWP and the CLNJ gradually abated and the League refocused much effort on industrial health issues and cooperation with "other women's organizations interested in legislative and other matters relating to women and children."[331] Among others, the State Federation of Women's Clubs and the Industrial Departments of the YWCA were prominent.[332] Investigations of women workers suffering under unfair wages and unhealthy conditions remained in the forefront of League concerns. The CLNJ proposed further inquiries into the conditions in

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[327] Perrone and Olin, "Issued Forth," 16.
[328] Isabel L. Taylor, Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting of the CLNJ, June 2, 1922, Consumers League of New Jersey, MC 1090, box 1, folder 1, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[329] Ibid.
[330] Ibid.
[331] Isabel L. Taylor, Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting of the CLNJ, February 20, 1923, Consumers League of New Jersey MC 1090, box 1, folder 1, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[332] Ibid.

New Jersey factories and an educational campaign to inform women workers about existing wage laws.[333]

Executive Secretary Katherine Wiley was at the forefront of this push for greater accountability for business owners. The most famous case involved women workers who painted dials at the U.S. Radium Corporation of Orange, New Jersey. As Claudia Clarke notes:

> Painting luminous numbers on watch faces and other dials in 'dialpainting studios' was sex-typed as women's work, and, like most white women who worked outside the home, the majority of dialpainters were young women, from their mid-teens to their early twenties, single or newly married and childless.[334]

However, when these women began suffering mysterious illnesses, they became suspicious of the factory where they all worked. Clarke writes, "radium, the ingredient in the paint that produced the energy required for luminosity, had been ingested from paintbrushes brought to a point between the lips."[335] From brittle bones to infections of the jaw and gums and even cancer, the young dialpainters suffered many different symptoms in the 1920s and 1930s.[336]

Katherine Schaub, one of the dialpainters wrote, "The United States had just entered the World War. There were great demands for workers in every field of industry. Although I was only 15 years old at the time of this industrial boom, I went to work."[337] As a former watch dial painter for the U.S. Radium Corporation in Orange, New Jersey, Schaub wrote:

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[333] Isabel L. Taylor, Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting of the CLNJ, December 2, 1922, Consumers League of NJ MC 1090, box 1, folder 1, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[334] Claudia Clarke, *Radium Girls: Women and Industrial Health Reform*, Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 1.
[335] Ibid.
[336] Ibid.
[337] Katherine Schaub, "Radium" *The Survey* May 1, 1932, Consumers League of New Jersey, MC 1090, box 34, folder 29, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ, 138.

> Each girl was given a tray containing forty-eight watches, together with a small bottle of luminous material in powder form. The luminous powder was mixed in a small porcelain crucible about twice the size of a thimble, with a sticky paste as an adhesive base. Water was added and the three ingredients were stirred with a small glass rod. A small 'double O' brush was used in the process of painting. The method of pointing the brush with the lips was taught to us, to give the brush an exceedingly fine point. [338]

After completion, and with the dial worker present, watches were inspected in the dark room, where "one could see evidences of the luminous paint everywhere on the worker. There was a dab here and there, on her clothes, in the eyebrows, on the face and lips, on her hands…they fairly shone in the dark."[339] Schaub first experienced trouble with her teeth in November 1923.[340] While the cause of Schaub's illness remained unknown, Leonora Young, a health officer in Orange, New Jersey "became suspicious when she discovered among her records death certificates of several radium workers who showed like symptoms."[341]

In March 1924, Young began working with Katherine Wiley and the CLNJ. At that point, the deaths included: Amelia Maggia, Helen Quinlan and Irene Rudolph with Hazel Kuser, Marguerite Carlough, Sarah Maillifer and Grace Fryer ill.[342] Along with the New Jersey state investigation into the radium cases, in June 1925, the United States Department of Labor also launched an inquiry. An article published by *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, quoted Dr. Harrison Martland, Essex County, New Jersey Chief Medical Examiner, as follows:

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[338] Ibid.
[339] Ibid.
[340] Ibid.
[341] Ibid., 139.
[342] Statement by Katherine Wiley, 1924, Consumers League of NJ MC 1090, box 34, folder 29, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ. For a more complete discussion of the "Radium Girls" testimonies held before the Superior Court of New Jersey (Chancery Court Division), see Claudia Clarke's *Radium Girls: Women and Industrial Health Reform, 1910-1935* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997).

> I have learned that within the past two or three years there were at least four other deaths from what seems to be the same cause. Of course, I have nothing more than my suspicions now…I am not going to make the statement that commercial "radium poisoning" actually exists, however, until I can prove it.[343]

During his investigations, Martland consulted with Dr. Sabin Arnold von Sochocky, one of the founders of the U.S. Radium Corp. and the inventor of luminous paint.[344]

The paint, called "Undark," was viewed as safe at the time. While little was understood about radioactivity, "radium was being hailed as the wonder substance of the new 20th century, and was ascribed the power to cure everything from arthritis to cancer."[345] During WWI, the luminescent paint was applied to watches and instruments used by the military, causing a boom in factories like the U.S. Radium Corp.[346] Young women, unaware of the hazardous material they used to paint the dials, staffed these factories during the war. While scientists took precautions around the radium, the dialpainters often painted their nails and teeth with Undark.[347] Grace Fryer, who only worked for the U.S. Radium Corp. for approximately three years, experienced jaw problems years after she left. Along with pain in her jaw, her teeth started falling out. After years of unsuccessful medical consultations, a doctor suspected her work as a dialpainter was to blame.[348]

As with other campaigns, the CLNJ served as "the fact collector, the exposer, the enlightener" in the radium case.[349] Wiley wasted little time in launching a fact-finding

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[343] "U.S. Starts Probe of Radium Poison Deaths in New Jersey," *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, June 19, 1925, 1.

[344] Daniel Lang, "A Most Valuable Accident," *The New Yorker,* May 2, 1959, 49. Dr. von Sochocky died from exposure to radium in May 1928 ("Radium Paint Takes its Inventor's Life," November 15, 1928, *The New York Times* November 15, 1928).

[345] Laura Lee Carter, "Glow in the Dark Tragedy" *American History* (October 2007): 33.

[346] Ibid., 34.

[347] Ibid., 34.

[348] Ibid.

[349] Gordon, *After Winning*, 60.

campaign, beginning with a request for help from the state. In a letter to Dr. McBride, the New Jersey Commissioner of Labor, on May 19, 1924, she wrote, "Former employees of the U.S. Radium Corporation have reported to the Consumers' League of N.J. the illness which they believe was contracted from their work of illuminating watch faces."[350] She went on to ask the Labor Department "to make an investigation of the health hazard in illuminating watch faces as carried on in the U.S. Radium Corporation."[351] Wiley also wanted to know if the workers were "warned against putting the brushes in their mouths."[352] She contacted the president of the U.S. Radium Corporation's Orange factory, Arthur Roeder, as well. His correspondence reflects disinterest in launching a true investigation into the claims of radium poisoning. In a reply to Wiley on January 9, 1925, he wrote, "If a common cause exists, we are convinced that it lies outside our Plant and that this is not an occupational disease…The material handled is not phosphorus and contains no phosphorus and the amount of radium is very small."[353]

In the meantime, Wiley also communicated with Dr. Frederick Hoffman. He wrote to Wiley about the importance of social advocacy:

> There is always a tendency towards a lowering of accepted standards, in that everyone assumes things are working well, once that laws, rules and regulations have been passed. It requires continuous supervision, re-investigation and reconsideration, to make sure that matters are as well as they can be.[354]

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[350] Letter from Katherine Wiley to Dr. McBride, May 19, 1924, Consumers League of New Jersey MC 1090, box 34, folder 32, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[351] Ibid.
[352] Ibid.
[353] Letter from Arthur Roeder to Katherine Wiley, January 9, 1925, Consumers League of New Jersey MC 1090, box 34, folder 32, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[354] Letter from Dr. Frederick Hoffman to Katherine Wiley, April 19, 1924, Consumers League of New Jersey MC 1090, box 34, folder 29, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.

However, Hoffman did not agree radium was to blame, rather, he insisted the women suffered from exposure to mesothorium, a radioactive isotope found in radium.[355] Despite his doubt as to whether the radium was truly the cause, Hoffman believed the sickness originated in the U.S. Radium Corporation's Orange, New Jersey factory. With Hoffman's insistence, Wiley continued her correspondence with Roeder, citing Hoffman's belief "that the cases had their origin in the condition of work at your (Roeder's) plant."[356] She told Roeder, Hoffman believed the radium paint was to blame for the sickness exhibited by the dialpainters. This sparked a dismissive, even hostile response from Roeder. In a letter to Wiley on March 3, 1925, Roeder stated, "I cannot visualize the situation you describe because it is hard to believe a man of Dr. Hoffman's standing would make a public address on any subject without complete knowledge."[357] He continued, "Since you have expressed such an unusual interest in the matter, I should be very happy of an opportunity to discuss it with you."[358] With Hoffman's interest piqued, he accompanied Wiley as she visited several of the women complaining of illness and spoke with the dentists who examined them. As per Wiley, Hoffman "concluded that it was an occupational disease and determined to study it, helped me with advice as to how I might secure an official investigation."[359] Roeder continued suppressing

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[355] Letter from Dr. Frederick Hoffman to Florence Kelley, June 10, 1926, Consumers League of New Jersey, MC 1090, box 34, folder 29, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[356] Letter from Dr. Frederick Hoffman to Katherine Wiley, January 6, 1925, Consumers League of New Jersey, MC 1090, box 34, folder 29, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[357] Letter from Arthur Roeder to Katherine Wiley, March 3, 1925, Consumers League of New Jersey, MC 1090, box 34, folder 29, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[358] Letter from Arthur Roeder to Katherine Wiley, March 3, 1925, Consumers League of New Jersey, MC 1090, box 34, folder 29, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[359] Statement by Katherine Wiley, submitted to the U.S. Department of Labor, May 1926, Consumers League of New Jersey, MC 1090, box 34, folder 19, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.

information, notably the report made by the Drinkers.[360] Since the Drinkers concluded the dial painters were likely ill because of the luminous paint used at the U.S. Radium Corp., Roeder opted to keep the findings from the public.[361]

Dr. Alice Hamilton, the first female professor of the Harvard Medical School, was involved in the radium case from early on.[362] Through written correspondence, she made the Drinkers aware Roeder had submitted their report to the New Jersey Department of Labor, with seemingly altered findings, indicating the dialpainters were in good health. This knowledge prompted the Drinkers to publish their report.[363] In a letter to Wiley on January 30, 1925, Hamilton agreed to take a more active role in the radium investigation. She wrote, "From what I can hear of the attitude of the Company [U.S. Radium Corp] it is pretty callous and the refusal to consider itself responsible for these deaths and the cases of illness does not lead one to expect they will make serious efforts to safeguard the girls now working for them."[364] Hamilton then volunteered to investigate the known victims and compile data to help the CLNJ make a case. Her expertise proved invaluable, as she offered both medical advice and research expertise. In direct correspondence with Wiley, Hamilton urged her to pursue litigation with the U.S. Radium Corp. On March 16, 1925 she wrote, "…I have read the Drinker report and you

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[360] "The Drinkers" refers to: Cecil Drinker, a physiology professor from Harvard University and his wife, Katherine Drinker, Ph.D., source: Richard B. Gunderman and Angela S. Gonda, "Radium Girls" *Radiology* vol. 272, no 2 (February 2015): 314-18, 315-16.
[361] Ibid.
[362] For a sample of Alice Hamilton's correspondence, see Barbara Sicherman's *Alice Hamilton: A Life in Letters* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2003). For more information on Hamilton's life and her work with occupational diseases, see Alice Hamilton, *Exploring the Dangerous Trades: The Autobiography of Alice Hamilton* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1943).
[363] Amy Roeder, "Deadly Occupation, Forged Report," 2013, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/news/magazine/centennial-radium-forged-report/
[364] Letter from Dr. Alice Hamilton to Katherine Wiley, January 30, 1925, Consumers League of New Jersey, MC 1090, box 34, folder 29, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.

can assure Mr. Kalisch that if he should subpoena Dr. Drinker the evidence would be overwhelming that the necrosis of the jaw in the girls working with radium was caused by the radium."[365]

With factories using radium paint outside of New Jersey, the NCL involved itself in inquiries into the dangers of radium as an occupational health hazard. Florence Kelley herself began writing to various government departments in a fact-finding mission. In a response letter to Kelley (who originally inquired about the formula used in the luminous paint), Ethelbert Stewart, then-Commissioner of Labor Statistics for the U.S. Department of Labor wrote, "At the time our investigation was made the two companies manufacturing luminous paint did not use the same formula. The base in both cases was zinc sulphide but the radioactive elements used were not the same."[366] As was customary for the League, an informational pamphlet on "radium necrosis" was distributed to the public. In a strongly-worded letter to Florence Kelley on June 10, 1926, Hoffman complained about the inaccuracy of the leaflet, blaming the "unsanitary habits on the part of the employees."[367] Referring to the dial painters at the Orange, New Jersey plant, Hoffman claimed radium workers at other plants did not suffer any ill effects because they were more cautious. He blamed the New Jersey dial painters for their own plight, writing that the women in other factories "are intelligent American women who take no needless chances."[368] In response, Kelley wrote, "If the leaflets were inaccurate and

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[365] Letter from Dr. Alice Hamilton to Katherine Wiley, March 16, 1925, Consumers League of New Jersey, MC 1090, box 34, folder 29, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[366] Letter from Ethelbert Stewart to Florence Kelley, April 21, 1926, Consumers League of New Jersey, MC 1090, box 34, folder 31, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[367] Letter from Dr. Frederick Hoffman to Florence Kelley, June 10, 1926, Consumers League of New Jersey, MC 1090, box 33, folder 24, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[368] Ibid.

misleading we should gladly withdraw them from circulation because we exist for the purpose of presenting facts as they are."[369] She continued, "Education of the public obviously must, however, precede any adequate enactment and enforcement of industrial laws and to awaken public interest in the problem is part of our program."[370]

The involvement of Dr. Frederick Flynn presented another hurdle for the CLNJ.[371] Hamilton was at the forefront of this struggle, as well. In a letter to Wiley on June 8, 1927, she wrote, "I am glad you sent me the extract from the Scientific American, for it should be answered and corrected. The article by Dr. Flynn was purely negative and the fact that he did not succeed in finding radium poisoning in the other plants does not prove that it was not present in the plant studied by the Drinkers."[372] The CLNJ questioned the credibility of Flynn and set out to uncover his academic background. To that end, the CLNJ corresponded with Columbia University and discovered Flynn did not hold a medical degree.[373] Rather, Flynn held a Bachelor of Arts degree from Johns Hopkins University, and a Ph.D. in physiology from Columbia.[374]

In May 1927, five dial painters, Katherine Schaub, Edna Hussman, Grace Fryer, Albina Larice and Quinta McDonald, filed suit in New Jersey.[375] Local media published articles about the radium cases, launching the "Radium Girls" into the public conscious

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[369] Letter from Florence Kelley to Dr. Frederick Hoffman, June 16, 1926, Consumers League of New Jersey, MC 1090, box 33, folder 24, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[370] Ibid.
[371] Frederick Flynn, of Columbia University, alternatively spelled Flinn in some League correspondence.
[372] Letter from Dr. Alice Hamilton to Katherine Wiley, June 8, 1927, Consumers League of New Jersey, MC 1090, box 34, folder 31, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[373] Charles B. Kelley to Edward L. Katzenbach, March 7, 1928, Consumers League of New Jersey, MC 1090, box 34, folder 31, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[374] Clark, *Radium Girls*, 106.
[375] Carter, "Glow in the Dark," 34. The case of the five "Radium Girls" was tried in the Superior Court of New Jersey, Chancery Court. For more primary sources on the radium cases, see "Radiation Poisoning Files, 1923-1979," Consumers League of New Jersey, MC 1090, box 33-34, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.

and raising questions about the safety of radium. For instance, the *Newark Ledger* reported:

> Fryer and the others bravely tried to keep smiling, but friends and spectators in the courtroom wept. Edna Hussman told the court about the financial troubles the medical bills were causing: "I cannot even keep my little home, our bungalow. I know I will not live much longer, for now I cannot sleep at night for the pains."[376]

The dial painters involved in the suit were labeled "the Five Doomed Women" by the media.[377] Stories were not limited to local newspapers, as the story of the radium victims spread throughout the country. Discussing the possibility of scientific advancement and the hope of preventative measures, *The Bee*, a newspaper printed in Danville, Virginia, published the headline "Two of Women Radium Victims offer Selves for Test While Still Alive" on May 29, 1928.[378] The press also helped break the story of Dr. Flynn's unethical conduct in relation to his "examination" of several dial painters. Flynn was under contract with the U.S. Radium Corp.; despite this, he examined possible radium victims and gave them clean bills of health.[379] He claimed the women's symptoms were caused by their nerves.[380] Once the trial commenced, Hamilton continued to offer advice to Wiley, stating "be perfectly cool and never let the lawyers of the other side bully you or get you confused, which is what they all try to do."[381] Spurred on by the suffering of the dialpainters, Hamilton recognized the need for thorough study of radium, writing, "It

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[376] "5 Women Smile, Fearing Death, in Radium Case" *Newark Ledger*, January 12, 1928.
[377] Kenneth A. DeVille and Mark E. Steiner, "New Jersey Radium Dial Workers and the Dynamics of Occupational Disease Litigation in the Early Twentieth Century" *Missouri Law Review* 62, no. 2 (1997): 285.
[378] James Kilgallen, "Two of Women Radium Victims offer Selves for Test While Still Alive," *The Bee,* May, 29, 1928, 3.
[379] Ibid. 292.
[380] Ibid.
[381] Letter from Dr. Alice Hamilton to Katherine Wiley, December 16, 1927, Consumers League of New Jersey, MC 1090, box 34, folder 31, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.

is a great pity not only that these women should be neglected but that such unusual material should not be thoroughly studied."[382]

The five dialpainters won a settlement from the U.S. Radium Corp. of $10,000 up front, an additional $600 each year they displayed symptoms of radium poisoning, and all medical expenses paid.[383] However, restitution was only the beginning, as this legal battle spawned a serious inquiry into other issues relating to the dangers of radioactive materials. As Clarke points out, "Their illnesses drove medical scientists to examine the effects of radioactivity on living tissues, yielding a new field of scientific study, human radiobiology, or health physics."[384] With the economic power and influence of the U.S. Radium Corporation fighting against the dialpainters, the CLNJ needed to find experts willing to lend their testimony to the case. This case was representative of the collaborative efforts of members of the CLNJ, medical professionals and experts, state labor workers and more. However, according to Clarke, social connections extended beyond those advocating on behalf of the radium victims, as "the dialpainters drew on family and community connections to identify radium poisoning and to fight for its recognition, compensation, and prevention."[385] Because the dialpainters were not in a labor union, their only hope was through the connections of the CLNJ and their allies.[386]

Industrial health and occupational disease formed the defining fight and more enduring legacy in the first few decades of the CLNJ's existence. If not for the persistence of the CLNJ, it is unclear how long radium poisoning would have gone

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[382] Letter from Dr. Alice Hamilton to Katherine Wiley, December 12, 1927, Consumers League of New Jersey, MC 1090, box 34, folder 31, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[383] Schaub, "Radium," 140.
[384] Clarke, *Radium Girls*, 2.
[385] Ibid., 5.
[386] Ibid, 6.

unrecognized as an occupational disease.[387] The publicity of the radium girls case caused a domino effect in the investigation of radium poisoning. In February 1929, Dr. Harrison Stanford Martland published an article in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* in support of the radium victims, with specific reference to the New Jersey cases. His first point, concerning the importance of recognizing this occupational disease, was the sheer number of women exposed to radium in the U.S. Radium Corporation's Orange, New Jersey facility alone. According to Martland, "from 1917 to 1924, an accumulative total of 800 girls were employed." [388] Importantly, he disputes the main defense used by the U.S. Radium Corp., that more workers would be ill if the origins of their illness were traced to the luminous paint. This conclusion, Martland insists, is flawed because of other factors such as "carelessness in handling poisons, individual susceptibility, individual resistance, habits and length of exposure."[389]

The problem with worker's compensation laws in New Jersey, as they related to the radium cases, was only select illnesses were covered.[390] At the time, radium poisoning did not fall under any protective category.[391] The difficulties in securing legal representation for the dial painters were also caused by the disease itself, as it was not understood at the time and difficult to diagnose. As DeVille and Steiner explain, "The symptoms of radiation poisoning, then a relatively unknown and ill-defined occupational

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[387] Ibid., 205.
[388] Harrison S. Martland, "Occupational Poisoning in Manufacture of Luminous Watch Dials: General Review of Hazards Caused by Luminous Paint, with Especial Reference to the New Jersey Cases" *Journal of the American Medical Association* (February 9, 1929): 466.
[389] Ibid.
[390] Before radium and mesothorium poisoning were added, the illnesses covered be Worker's Compensation in New Jersey were: anthrax, Caissan disease and poisonings resulting from lead, mercury, arsenic, phosphorus, benzene, wood alcohol and chrome ("Compensate All Occupational Diseases Pamphlet" box 34, folder 36).
[391] Ibid.

disease, were indistinct, inconsistent, and characterized by long-latency periods."[392] Thus, the court settlement and the media publicity surrounding it spurred future medical research and led to breakthroughs in understanding radium poisoning and preventing future exposure.

After the radium trial win, the CLNJ focused its efforts on issues related to the Great Depression. While this economic crisis did not stop the activities of prominent New Jersey reform organizations, the uncertain economic climate was of concern to both the NJLWV and the CLNJ who viewed the desperate situation as a gateway to the disintegration of their hard-fought legislative victories for workers, families and children.[393] The changing social and economic climate and the CLNJ's desire to protect women workers "from a new type of sweat shop and fly-by-night employer" seeking to exploit the desperation of the Great Depression prompted the CLNJ to create the Industrial Standards Committee in 1932.[394] Both the CLNJ and the NJLWV supported legislation offering more protection for women workers and children in the 1930s, notably in the passage of the Night Work Bill (1933), the Minimum Wage Law (1933) which set-up wage boards to determine industry-specific rates and the Child Labor Amendment (1934).[395] The CLNJ also supported the New Deal National Recovery Act which set wages, prices and production goals for various industries.[396]

As the executive secretary position of the CLNJ was passed from Wiley to Helena Simmons in 1935, the continued decline of the U.S. economy became the League's

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392 DeVille and Steiner, "New Jersey Radium Dial Workers," 281.
393 Gordon, *After Winning*, 144.
394 Ibid., 151.
395 Perrone and Olin, "Issued Forth," 18 and Gordon, *After Winning*, 154.
396 Minutes of the Executive Board, Consumers League of New Jersey, MC 1090, box 1, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.

foremost concern.[397] Simmons herself forged a bridge between the Great Depression activities of the CLNJ and WWII. She began her activism as a New Jersey suffragist in 1915 and continued her involvement in various organizations until her death in 1942.[398] Among her affiliations, Simmons was a member of the NJLWV, the Elizabeth Equal Suffrage League, the Elizabeth Consumers League, the Elizabethtown Red Cross, the Democratic Woman's Executive Committee, the Democratic Women's Luncheon Club, the World Court Committee, the Consumer Interests Committee and the Council of National Defense.[399] Her interests reflected the shifting priorities of New Jersey reform organizations and individual women. As with Simmons, while many organizations, the CLNJ and the NJLWV included, remained concerned for the issues plaguing their state from 1900 to 1940, they also displayed malleability in choosing new areas for reform. In a letter to a Miss Stevenson on January 28, 1941, Zwemer wrote, "They saw the steady growth of night work for women, the longer hours, the expansion of industrial homework at starvation wages, and from that experience came a demand for much of the legislation the League has sponsored."[400]

From the Progressive era onward, New Jersey women's activism formed around the basic ideology of women as custodians of morality. While the NJLWV was a direct descendant of the suffragists, the CLNJ became the largest consumer activist organization in New Jersey. Though the CLNJ preferred to focus its efforts on reforming conditions for the workers of New Jersey, it's early campaigns were diverse. Prominent campaigns

[397] Ibid., 151.
[398] Ibid., 124.
[399] Ibid., 125-126.
[400] Susanna P. Zwemer to Stevenson, letter, January 28, 1941, box 7, folder 1, Consumers League of New Jersey, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.

launched during its first three decades of existence include protective legislation for working women and children, investigation of living wages, consumer initiatives to stop the holiday work of retail employees, and court battles to recognize and compensate new occupational diseases.[401] The Progressive Era tactics of "investigate, agitate, legislate" continued, unbroken, throughout the 1920s and 30s, into WWII.[402]

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[401] Helena Simmons to Senator William Albright, letter, March 1933, Consumers League of New Jersey, MC 1090, box 2, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[402] Storrs, *Civilizing Capitalism*, 15.

CHAPTER 4:

THE NEW JERSEY LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS AND THE CONSUMERS LEAGUE OF NEW JERSEY DURING WWII

"The League of Women Voters has been created to fulfill a great mission in the social and political life of our country. To those women who regard their citizenship as a public trust, its appeal should be irresistible. To have the privilege of helping to work out its inspiring program, is, I earnestly believe, the greatest single contribution an intelligent woman can offer her nation and therefore to humanity, for the foundation of civilization is government."[403]

New Jersey women's activism from suffrage to the U.S. entry into WWII formed a network of mobilization which was easily channeled into new campaigns. Far more than simple patriotic fervor, the women of New Jersey built on decades of activism to help the war effort. During this time, the New Jersey League of Women Voters (NJLWV) pursued different campaigns and fought to ensure old protections were not lost during the emergency of war. Once the U.S. joined the Allied war effort, activism increased in certain areas. While some women simply added to their pre-war civic activism, others completely shifted their focus to efforts viewed as directly influential to winning the war. While the NJLWV recognized the need to change some priorities during this time, they were also reluctant to abandon their pre-war values and concerns. While both groups focused on common wartime issues like informing citizens of their new responsibilities, which included rationing, buying war bonds and volunteering, each also focused on specific campaigns related to their prewar interests. During this time, the NJLWV pushed for constitutional reform, foreign aid, the creation of the United Nations and child education while the Consumers League of New Jersey (CLNJ) focused on occupational diseases,

[403] Florence Eagleton to membership, letter, May 31, 1922, League of Women Voters of New Jersey Collection, MC 1082, box 25, folder 30, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.

worker's compensation, child labor and the rights of migrant workers. The WWII activism of both the NJLWV and the CLNJ was a balancing act between keeping the momentum and influence they garnered after suffrage and rising to the new challenges faced by wartime society.

Throughout this time, the need for constitutional reform in New Jersey was a pressing issue for members of the NJLWV. The League refused to put their concerns on hold during the conflict, believing, "We-the people-have been given the run-around. Instead of running our government in New Jersey, we've been run by it."[404] The League's dedication to achieving the ideals of American democracy made the war effort an obvious choice for activism. In the 1940s, the NJLWV advocated for municipal government reform, culminating in the Optional Charter Bill of 1950, promoted peace by supporting the United Nations and advocated for economic aid to struggling foreign powers.[405] Throughout their existence, regardless of the social tumult surrounding them, the League never strayed from their commitment to civic activism. As Elizabeth Theiss-Morris and John R. Hibbing write, "Active participation in society presumably encourages citizens to participate further, boosts their knowledge of society and its issues, and makes them more tolerant of and attached to their fellow citizens."[406] The voluntary activism of pre-WWII women naturally transformed into concern for their home front communities and allies abroad. For members of the NJLWV, the need to protect democratic principles overseas increased the necessity of constitutional reform at home.

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[404] League Press Release, April 4, 1943, League of Women Voters of New Jersey Collection, MC 1082, box 11, folder 56, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.

[405] Fernanda Perrone and Ferris Olin, "Issued Forth: The Legacy in New Jersey of the Women's Rights Convention at Seneca Falls, 1840-1920" in *The Pivotal Right: Commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the Women's Rights Convention at Seneca Falls,* Rutgers University Libraries, 1998, 15, 26.

[406] Elizabeth Theiss-Morris and John R. Hibbing, "Citizenship and Civic Engagement" Annual Review in Politics 8 (2005): 227.

The pre-war work of these clubwomen supports the assertion "that voluntary association involvement not only improves attitudes but also enhances political behavior."[407] Even with wartime rationing, the absence of male family members for military service, and more to contend with as individuals, the NJLWV continued to function and make influential changes to New Jersey legislation during WWII.

As much as the membership remained invaluable during the war years, League leadership was instrumental in both focusing efforts and finding new paths to deal with wartime challenges. Perhaps the most steadfast proponent of constitutional reform was Lena Anthony Robbins, a resident of Montclair, New Jersey and president of the League from 1935 to 1942.[408] Born in Nebraska in 1879, Robbins moved to New Jersey with her husband Leonard, who worked as a writer for the *New York Times*. With her husband's salary capable of providing a comfortable lifestyle, Robbins dedicated herself to the Garden State's already budding activist scene.[409] Beginning her involvement with the Women's Political Union of Newark, Robbins went on to serve three years as legislative chairman for the State Federation of Women's Clubs. In 1935, she began her tenure as president of the NJLWV.[410] With a background in campaigning for legislative reform, Robbins recognized the pressing need for a constitutional revision in New Jersey:

> For several years now it has been our experience that we get just about so far with certain items on our program, and then we find ourselves in a dead end; owing to the unworkableness of the State Constitution. Time after time, needed legislation is stalled because some antiquated provision of the 1844 Constitution stands in the way.[411]

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[407] Theiss-Morris and Hibbing, 231.
[408] Perrone and Olin, "Issued Forth," 15.
[409] Ibid.
[410] Ibid.
[411] Lena Robbins, League Bulletin, April 1941, New Jersey League of Women Voters Collection, MC 1082, box 8, folder 22, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, N.J.

In the eyes of the League, true reform would never be possible with the archaic constraints of the State Constitution still in place. Viewed as an obstacle which, if removed, would open the floodgates for necessary legislative reform, the League focused much of their efforts on educating the public on the need to call a Constitutional Convention. A 1941 NJLWV Bulletin emphasized, "Many other organizations and individuals feel as we do. They have asked us to take the lead in a state-wide campaign of education for such a Convention."[412] By January 1941, the NJLWV organized the "New Jersey Committee for Constitutional Convention" with Robbins as chairman.[413] The organizations represented at the initial meeting included:

> The league, the CL [Consumers League], the SFWC [State Federation of Women's Clubs], the WTUL [Women's Trade Union League], the American Association of University Women, the NJFBPWC [New Jersey Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs], the NJWLC [New Jersey Women Lawyers Club], the New Jersey State Chamber of Commerce, the New Jersey Education Association, the Democratic Women's luncheon Club, the Non-Partisan League (CIO), and the New Jersey Taxpayers Association.[414]

With the NJLWV taking the lead in the campaign for a constitutional revision, vice-president Florence Eagleton and advisor Louise Steelman were instrumental in providing direction.[415] As per Gordon, "Here was the league's greatest opportunity to render nonpartisan service to the citizens of New Jersey."[416] However, despite the promising support of other women's groups, wartime society was not easily convinced of the pressing need for this change.

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[412] Ibid.
[413] "League of Women Voters: Historical Sketch" Rutgers University Libraries, (accessed July 21, 2017) https://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/scua/league-of-women-voters-nj-1920-1991#history.
[414] Gordon, *After Winning*, 175-176.
[415] Ibid., 175.
[416] Ibid.

Although no facet of New Jersey society remained untouched by the war effort, the NJLWV remained undeterred by the ever-increasing demands of war. Instead, the chaos of WWII reinforced the need for the reform of New Jersey's government. In a NJLWV press release, distributed in February 1943, Mrs. Stuart L. Henderson, then-League secretary, said:

> In a period when of necessity, war seems to make government less responsive to the will of the people…as the people listen to their governor they will realize that an improved constitution for New jersey could lessen the continuance of boss rule and decrease the wastefulness, which must characterize our state government until this change is made.[417]

The NJLWV used the war as the catalyst for showing the importance of a working democracy for the citizens of New Jersey. Significantly, they used the idea of curbing wasteful spending to bridge the language of wartime propaganda with their own reform agenda. With citizens facing a constant barrage of ideology against wasting materials, money and time, this language created the appearance of cohesion with the war effort. In many cases, the NJLWV wrote explicitly on the correlation between WWII and constitutional reform. For instance, on October 15, 1943, Shirley Farnum, Public Relations Chairman of the New Jersey League, wrote:

> Do we need a new constitution now, when the boys are away and we at home are so busy with the war? The answer of the majority of thoughtful people is again YES, as soon as possible…How do the boys and girls in the military service feel about our voting for a better government to be set up at home while they are away...They leave it to us to guard Democracy on the homefront…Voting YES on the referendum is like buying a War Bond.[418]

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[417] Mrs. Stuart Henderson, League Press Release, February 10, 1943, New Jersey League of Women Voters Collection, MC 1082, box 11, folder 56, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[418] Shirley Farnum, October 15, 1943, Rutgers League of Women Voters of New Jersey Collection, MC 1082, box 11, folder 56, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.

While the social and political implications of war presented an opportunity for constitutional revision, the conflict proved to be an obstacle, as well. The NJLWV persisted, pursuing the merits of a new constitution in their "Know your Government" pamphlets. Using language similar to the Consumers League motto "investigate, agitate, legislate,"[419] in February 1944, the League insisted, "The New Jersey State League of Women Voters, seeing the need for a modern system of State Government, had begun to organize, to agitate and to proselytize on behalf of constitutional reform."[420] In November 1942, the NJLWV started the New Jersey Constitution Foundation, with the primary focus on educating the citizens of New Jersey on the issues and benefits of a new constitutional convention.[421] With hundreds of League members participating in public speaking campaigns throughout the state, the NJLWV spearheaded the push for revision and, "was from the beginning the most active and effective single civic organization in the revision campaign."[422]

After educational campaigns, speaking engagements and the support of many reform organizations, the new constitutional referendum was voted on in 1944.[423] Criticism of the proposed revisions included the absence of an equal rights amendment and temporarily stalled progress.[424] Although the 1944 referendum failed, Governor

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[419] Landon R. Y. Storrs, *Civilizing Capitalism*: *The National Consumers' League Women's Activism and Labor Standards in the New Deal Era,* 15.
[420] Know Your Government, February 1944, League of Women Voters of New Jersey Collection, MC 1082, box 11, folder 56, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[421] "History of the Movement for Revision of the New Jersey Constitution: With Special Emphasis on the Role of the league of Women Voters," December 1943, League of Women Voters of New Jersey Collection, MC 1082, box 25, folder 42, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[422] Ibid.
[423] "1947 State Constitution," New Jersey Department of State, (accessed July 22, 2017), http://www.nj.gov/state/archives/docconst47.html.
[424] Fernanda Perrone, "Early League History and Mission," League of Women Voters of New Jersey, (accessed July 24, 2017), http://lwvnj.org/about_history.html. For a more complete discussion on the criticisms of the state constitution revisions, including the inclusion of an ERA, see Felice Gordon's After

Alfred Driscoll asked for another vote on revision in 1947.[425] Per Bebout and Harrison, "In 1947, the people of New Jersey adopted what is widely held to be one of the best state constitutions in the country."[426] The revised state constitution began, "All persons are by nature free and independent, and have certain natural and unalienable rights."[427] While women were technically considered equal to men in the revision, the League recognized true equality was far from reality.[428]

Aside from the struggle for constitutional reform, the wartime narrative of the NJLWV includes an often-unrecognized part in mobilizing citizens for the war effort. In her article, "West Virginia Women in World War II: The Role of Gender, Class, and Race in Shaping Wartime Volunteer Efforts," Pamela Edwards discusses the importance of already existing women's civic organizations in the mobilization of West Virginia during WWII. The West Virginia State Office of Civilian Defense (OCD) utilized these networks of activism to promote women's volunteerism, conservation and bond purchasing.[429] According to Edwards, "Within the organizational framework and ideology of the OCD was a recognition that existing women's organizations-organizations women already belonged to-could be used to develop civilian defense programs."[430] Though Edwards did not deal with other states in her research, she suspected similar parallels existed. In New Jersey, civic groups

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Winning: The Legacy of the New Jersey Suffragists, 1920-1947 (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1986).
[425] Ibid.
[426] John E. Bebout and Joseph Harrison, "The Working of the New Jersey Constitution of 1947," *William and Mary Law Review* 10, no. 2 (1968): 337.
[427] Gordon, *After Winning*, 188.
[428] Ibid.
[429] Pamela Edwards, "West Virginia Women in World War II: The Role of Gender, Class, and Race in Shaping Wartime Volunteer Efforts," *West Virginia History* 2, no. 1 (2008): 27.
[430] Ibid., 39.

like the NJLWV and the CLNJ helped wartime mobilization efforts while continuing their pre-existing campaigns. Besides educational initiatives preparing citizens to mobilize for war, membership in the League had personal effects on individual women and their confidence, which lent themselves to WWII service. In February 1943, Mrs. S. B. Ingram of Newark, New Jersey wrote:

> If somebody said "MEMBERSHIP" to you out of a clear sky what would be the first thing that popped into your head? Would you think of that shy little woman who was definitely not League material…who turned out to be one of your best department chairmen after a year or so of exposure to League program and tactics?[431]

The NJLWV gave members a voice and the knowledge to confidently push for non-partisan reform, thus giving many the assurance to engage in wartime roles with fervor, as well.

The uncertainty of war required strong leadership within the NJLWV. In a 1941 League Bulletin, Lena Robbins provided inspiration and guidance to members looking to the future with apprehension. She wrote:

> although we want nothing to do with this war, we know that we are in its path, and that it will come to us if it is not stopped. We know that our way of life cannot hope to survive in a world ruled by terror…We are ready for the duties and sacrifices the future may require. We believe it is vital for the defense of America that the American way shall be worth defending. We shall go on with our program of building democracy, strengthening it from within, making it truly democratic, making it mean more to more people.[432]

During WWII, the National League also provided guidance to state members. In anticipation of American involvement in the war effort, Marguerite Wells, National

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[431] Mrs. S. B. Ingram, February 26, 1943, League of Women Voters of New Jersey Collection, MC 1082, box 11, folder 27, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[432] Lena Robbins, League Bulletin, April 1941, League of Women Voters of New Jersey Collection, MC 1082, box 8, folder 22, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.

League president, saw this as a potential crisis for production and for the League. As per Fernanda Perrone:

> In 1942, National League President Marguerite Wells and the National Board, impatient with the unwieldiness of the League's structure in the face of national emergency, sought sweeping changes in the bylaws, eliminating the state leagues and standing committees. At the 1944 national convention, the delegates from New Jersey and other state leagues, who opposed the reforms, organized to nominate an alternative slate of candidates to that proposed by Wells.[433]

Despite these organizational challenges, Wells pushed on in her attempt to sway public opinion in favor of participation in production and away from isolationism. She launched an initiative called the "Battle of Production" in June of 1941, roughly six months before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.[434] After December 1941, Wells called a meeting of state League leaders to determine the course forward. She discussed key ideas which she believed were vital, notably, "the need for higher taxes to finance the war effort, and for rationing and price controls, the importance of guarding against threats to civil liberties, and the necessity-once the war ended-for both a worldwide reconstruction program and an international organization to preserve the peace."[435] With Robbins at the helm, the NJLWV positioned itself to guide the citizens of New Jersey in directions which would greatly benefit the wartime mobilization of the home front.

Even before official U.S. involvement in WWII, the NJLWV expressed concern for foreign policy and aid. According to Mrs. Sprout, Chairman of the New Jersey League's Government and Foreign Policy Committee, the impending U.S. involvement in WWII shifted much focus to concern over national defense, especially, "the problem of aid to Britain, the problem of political and economic unity in the Western Hemisphere,

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[433] Fernanda Perrone "Early League History and Mission" http://www.lwvnj.org/about_history.html.
[434] Louise M. Young, 134.
[435] Ibid., 135.

and the problem of American policy in the Far East."[436] The League gave their support to the Lend-Lease bill, more formally referred to as "An Act to Promote the Defense of the United States," which offered supplies to France, Britain and other Allied nations to aid in their fight against the Axis Powers.[437] As per the League Annual Report of 1940-41, "It seems clear from our survey that in the event of a peace without victory, or in case of a German victory, the United States must be prepared, not only to meet the threat of arms, but, much more dangerous, to meet the threat of totalitarian trade and ideology in South America."[438]

More than patriotic duty, the League viewed WWII as an opportunity for civic activism and increased political participation. For instance, the "Wartime Service Project" represented a single-purpose campaign all members were encouraged to join.[439] As per usual, the League began with a public information campaign, publishing pamphlets, posters and other materials designed to encourage participation in the war effort and "in mid-1943 she [Wells] sent a memorandum to the national board outlining a plan to 'stop isolationism now'"[440] She pushed League leaders forward, urging them to reach out to their communities. Seeing the supposed lack of initiative by some state leaders, in 1942, Wells proposed a revision which would "bring League members directly within the embrace of the national leadership."[441] For Wells, the time for U.S. isolation was over and she dedicated much League manpower to pushing that agenda. As with

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[436] "League Annual Report," 1940-41, League of Women Voters of New Jersey Collection, MC 1082, box 8, folder 22, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[437] Ibid.
[438] "League Annual Report," 1940-41, League of Women Voters of New Jersey Collection, MC 1082, box 8, folder 22, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[439] Young, 135.
[440] Ibid., 136.
[441] Ibid., 137.

concern over local issues, the NJLWV felt New Jersey women should extend their reach beyond their homes and into global issues.

Though Wells advocated for improved wartime production, the NJLWV recognized the danger production drives posed to workers, specifically children, and continued advancing guidelines for the protection of child workers. On September 1, 1940, New Jersey law required a minimum working age of 16 during the school year. Some more specific provisions included: all children between the ages of seven and 16 must attend school regularly barring a physical or mental disability which prevents such attendance; no child under 18 could work over six consecutive days, more than 40 hours per week or more than eight hours per day; minors could not work before 7am or after 6 pm. There were special provisions for minors employed in agriculture, including a lower minimum age of twelve and longer working hours. The legislation also included restrictions on certain types of employment. For instance, minors were barred from working in pool halls, taverns and any other establishment that involved the sale of liquor.[442]

Regarding child labor laws, the NJLWV adopted a policy of watchfulness during WWII. They recognized war shifted social priorities and in a 1943 bulletin, acknowledged, "In wartime it is so easy to say, 'We are too busy.' That is, it is easy for those who do not really understand that we cannot have a democracy without paying for it."[443] Concerning revisions to existing child labor laws, the League warned, suggestions to relax the laws were already proposed in Trenton, New Jersey and "a bill has become

[442] "Regulation of Child Labor in New Jersey," May 1941, League of Women Voters of New Jersey Collection, MC 1082 box 8, folder 24, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[443] League Bulletin, May 1943, League of Women Voters of New Jersey Collection, MC 1082, box 8, folder 24, Coll. MC 1082, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.

law which allows any essential war industry to petition the Commissioner of Labor for the right to extend the hours."[444] Because of the severe labor shortages in certain industries, the increased use of children and women in essential businesses became necessary. Rather than completely suspending New Jersey child labor laws, the League was in favor of adjustments which would fall away with the conclusion of WWII.[445] The NJLWV maintained, "Relaxing the law under carefully controlled conditions is obviously to be preferred to the wholesale letting down of bars which would have been certain to come about otherwise."[446]

In a report on Government and Education, chairman Jean Kempson, outlined the League's continued efforts to ensure children were adequately educated during the war. Among the many problems facing New Jersey children were the shortage of teachers, the restriction of spending for education, and changes due to expanded military involvement. Due to the changes brought on by war mobilization, the fight to balance adult classes concerning vocational skills for defense industry jobs and academic education was of concern to local Leagues.[447] Once again, League members looked towards the future, maintaining the importance of an educated postwar citizenry. In another area, the League continued to fight to uphold the standards of compulsory education for minors. During WWII, the extreme labor shortage in agriculture created a manpower crisis on the home front. By 1940, children of age 14 and older were utilized to help curtail this problem.[448]

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[444] Ibid.
[445] "Child Labor Adjusts to War," May 1944, MC 1082, box 69, folder 2, New Jersey League of Women Voters Collection, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[446] "League Annual Report," May 1943, League of Women Voters of New Jersey Collection, MC 1082, box 8, folder 24, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[447] Jean Kempson, Report on Government and Education, MC 1082, box 11, folder 56, New Jersey League of Women Voters Collection, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[448] Ibid.

Another wartime concern for the NJLWV was the proper allotment of government resources, especially finances. While the U.S. government itself urged frugality and conservation from citizens, the NJLWV supported similar measures. In a press release for Newark newspapers on December 16, 1941, the NJLWV issued a response to a legislative grant of $5 million of highway funding passed by the House Assembly. Signed by League president Mrs. Stuart Henderson and Mrs. Edwin Bebout, Chairman of the Committee of Government and its Operation, the release read:

> The Nation is at war and no one can foresee what emergencies the future holds. This is a time for the State carefully to conserve its resources in order that we may be prepared to meet sudden and unforeseen demands which may be made upon us at any moment. As women, we are vitally interested in a sound program of preparedness keyed to the realities of the war situation. It is essential that the State be prepared to do everything necessary to protect the lives and homes of New Jersey citizens. This requires that State finances be maintained upon a sound and secure basis.[449]

With increased wartime demands on women, the NCL faced the prospect of spreading itself too thin. In a memorandum to State League presidents, on December 3, 1943, Wells addressed their "policy on cooperation."[450] She wrote:

> Local Leagues seem at this time to be bombarded with requests for cooperation of one sort or another, some seemingly furthering objectives of the League and others not necessarily related…the established policy of the League is not to lend its name or deflect its energies to the use of other organizations.[451]

She concludes with the order that no State League should take any action that contradicts the policies of the National League.[452] During this time, new by-laws concentrating more power in the National League were proposed. The NJLWV opposed this idea and

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[449] League Press Release, Dec. 16, 1941, New Jersey League of Women Voters Collection, MC 1082, box 21, folder 7, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[450] Miss Marguerite M. Wells to State League Presidents, December 3, 1943, League of Women Voters of New Jersey Collection, MC 1082, box 11, folder 20, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[451] Ibid.
[452] Ibid.

insisted the concentration of power in the National Board undermined the states. The New Jersey League stated, "we believe that the proposed structure would have concentrated undue power in the National Board…we believe that the independence and healthy differences of opinion which have made the League the live organization it is now would have been lost under such a system."[453] Despite this disagreement, the NJLWV continued their wartime campaigns, using their experience as New Jersey citizens to inform their decisions concerning what best served the state.

Throughout WWII, the public relations tactics of the NJLWV did not wane and the Radio Committee became an integral part of New Jersey League activity. The organization's Leaguesboro program urged civic participation in wartime activities including scrapping and conserving gasoline.[454] The radio programs also spurred interest in increased political activity, an agenda that did not fall by the wayside during WWII. Even in 1942, Mrs. William Rowe, a League member from Basking Ridge, New Jersey stated, "It is our pride that we maintain a year-round interest, actively, in our government and all its fields, and that we want all women to do so."[455] One of the important talking subjects of these radio programs dealt with the effect of women war workers on their children and proposed solutions for the care of their children.[456] As another venue for pushing social change, wartime radio was essential for the NJLWV. The desirability of including League programs in radio broadcasts is clear in the following letter from Grace

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[453] The Bulletin of the New Jersey League of Women Voters, May 1944, MC 1082, box 69, folder 2, New Jersey League of Women Voters Collection, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[454] Fernanda Perrone, "League History," League of Women Voters of New Jersey, http://lwvnj.org/about_history.html.
[455] Mrs. William Rowe to Adelaide Hawley, letter, Oct. 13, 1942, New Jersey League of Women Voters Collection, MC 1082, box 21, folder 1, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[456] Ibid.

M. Johnson, Director Women's Activities for the Blue Network Radio Company to Mrs. Stuart Henderson, President of the Ridgewood League of Women Voters:

> Won't you cooperate with us in making a new woman's program the type of program you and your organization most desire? We need your help in the selection of the Woman of the Week who will be chosen from each community for some particularly worthwhile accomplishment either within your organization or in your immediate area-the woman who has given the most in time or effort to further the prosecution of the war, of performed the greatest service for the community.[457]

The program mentioned in the above excerpt, titled *Woman's Exchange* with Alma Kitchell, was broadcasted five days per week on station WJZ. Recognizing the importance of League knowledge and community influence, Johnson concluded the letter with, "You and your members can help make this program YOUR program by your criticisms and suggestions for its improvement."[458] This radio program exemplifies the necessity of networking in enacting change. As the NJLWV exercised their influence, they bridged the gap between women's activism and public information.

Although radio programs and other publications showcased NJLWV support for the war effort, the League's involvement in wartime mobilization was by no means an endorsement for militarism. On the contrary, peace activism remained an important agenda for both the NCL and the CLNJ. With the outbreak of WWII in Europe in September of 1939, many club women turned their focus to peace efforts, opposing U.S. involvement.[459] At the 1940 League Convention in New York City, the NCL "reaffirmed

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[457] Grace M. Johnson to Mrs. Stuart Henderson, letter, June 17, 1943, New Jersey League of Women Voters Collection, MC 1082, box 21, folder, 2, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[458] Ibid.
[459] Gordon, *After Winning*, 157.

a demand for a policy of non-belligerence that permitted the United States to discriminate against aggressors and aid countries under attack."[460]

With the massive social and economic changes brought on by WWII, many activists saw the end of hostilities as a time for transformation. Since the victors would hold responsibility for the postwar world, the possibility to direct real change for the betterment of humanity could fall on the Allies. Several New Jersey activist organizations recognized this possibility and set to work to create a favorable climate for the elusive quest for world peace. According to Mrs. H. Durand Taylor, Vice President of the New Jersey Branch of the Commission to Study the Organization of Peace, "With great power goes great responsibility. We are no longer a nation alone. We have unlimited power and therefore must exercise commensurate responsibility."[461] With League activists looking to the future, the organization busied itself with efforts to promote peace and build strong international relations in the post-war world. The League's Department of Government and Foreign Policy worked on essential campaigns geared towards ensuring economic and democratic policies that would facilitate peace in the aftermath of WWII. The long-term objectives for Leagues throughout the country, as defined at the Chicago convention the previous April, include "plans for world-wide reconstruction and for post-war organization for peace which will eventually include all peoples, regardless of race, religion, or political persuasion."[462] To this end, the League

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[460] Young, *In the Public Interest*, 131.
[461] Mrs. H. Durand Taylor, Press Release, League of Women Voters of New Jersey Collection, MC 1082, box 11, folder 57, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[462] Margaret Sprout, Annual Report, 1942-43, League of Women Voters of New Jersey Collection, MC 1082, box 11, folder 56, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.

began a public education campaign focused on electing congressional candidates most likely to carry out these aims.

In the aftermath of WWII, the League campaigned for the creation of the United Nations.[463] According to Susan Ware, "Without a doubt, the issue to which the League of Women Voters gave the most attention in the postwar world was the United Nations, which it had supported since 1942."[464] In the article "Women on the March" published in the *Asbury Park Evening Press* on February 1, 1941, Theron McCampbell wrote, "The League of Women Voters holds out more hope for our political salvation than any other established organization independent of political parties and governments."[465] He continued, "Our troubles today, our town, country, state, national and world troubles, are due to laws made and executed by men and not to laws made and executed by women."[466] He noted the non-partisan campaigns of the NJLWV, writing that members serve "without the selfishness that is attached to political party organizations whose zeal for public service ends at the ballot box."[467]

As with the NJLWV, the CLNJ played an active, yet often overlooked part in the war effort. Their concern for working families and industrial standards particularly evident in the factory inspections and investigations into industrial homework, positioned the CLNJ to address the new issues arising from American involvement in WWII. Although CLNJ investigations and public information campaigns before WWII made some progress towards improving working conditions for New Jersey families, the

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[463] Fernanda Perrone http://www.lwvnj.org/about_history.html
[464] Susan Ware, xii.
[465] Theron McCampbell, "Women on the March" *Asbury Park Evening Press,* February 1, 1941, League of Women Voters of New Jersey Collection, MC 1082, box 12, folder 5, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[466] Ibid.
[467] Ibid.

enforcement of labor legislation still left much to be desired. Since the CLNJ was created from the tumult wrought on society during the Second Industrial Revolution, it was no small step for the organization to address the growing issues of war on the home front. In a telling address to members of the CLNJ on December 29, 1941, Zwemer wrote, "Faced with continued threats to hard-won labor standards, we in the Consumers' League have stressed the need for careful planning to secure the greatest efficiency of production. We have reiterated our belief that a tired worker is like a broken down machine- neither produces enough."[468] Even on the precipice of war, "No adequate health protection exists for one half the workers in New Jersey and those in the small plants. The Labor Department has no money for the prevention of industrial diseases; the Health Department is helping some of the plants from the funds, but there is no cooperation between the two departments."[469]

The problems of a war economy presented disastrous possibilities for the workers of New Jersey. At the dawn of American military involvement in WWII, the impending crisis for the CLNJ was the possible suspension of several hard-won legislative victories. The need for more production, outlined most famously in President Franklin D. Roosevelt's "Arsenal of Democracy Speech" on December 29, 1940, was a call for, "…more ships, more guns, more planes-more of everything."[470] Years later, the need for workers to staff these defense factories became a national emergency. In 1943, U.S. Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson, stated, "The War Department must fully utilize,

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[468] Susanna P. Zwemer, December 29, 1941, MC 1090, box 7, folder 1, Consumers League of NJ Records, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[469] Ibid.
[470] Franklin D. Roosevelt: "Fireside Chat," December 29, 1940. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=15917

immediately and effectively, the largest and potentially the finest single source of labor available today-the vast reserve of woman power."[471] While the CLNJ did not reject this need, they were concerned about protections for this new source of workers. On July 1, 1941, Mary L. Dyckman, who served on the Executive Board of the CLNJ in 1938 and as president from 1944-1956, wrote:

> This promises to be one of the busiest summers the League has had in many a year. Efforts to 'suspend' the laws regulating child labor, night work for women and similar measures, for which the League has worked for many years, continue to be made, only the excuse now is 'defense emergency.' These attacks promise to go right on all summer, so we plan to go right on fighting them as long as it is necessary.[472]

Throughout WWII, a common concern shared by both the NJLWV and the CLNJ was child labor regulation. Mere months after the Pearl Harbor attack, Dyckman insisted:

> Twenty-five years ago in the other World War, the United States Secretary of War, Newton D. Baker, sent us this message— "Now the duty of the Consumer's League is to set its face resolutely against everything that on any pretext seeks to break down those barriers which we have set up throughout the years of patient labor against the enervation and dissipation of the child-life and the woman-life and the man-life of this country." Again this is our part of the defense program, just as vitally important in summer as at any other time. We hope our contributors will help save the women and children of New Jersey from the aftermath of bad industrial practices which resulted from the last war.[473]

Before the U.S. entered WWII, the child labor laws in New Jersey were amended to protect against certain labor deemed dangerous and include criteria for educational

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[471] U.S. War Department "You're Going to Employ Women" pamphlet (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office) 27, Women in Industry, National Archives, Washington, D.C.
[472] Mary L. Dyckman to members and friends, letter, July 1, 1941, Consumers League of New Jersey Records, MC 1090, box 7, folder 1, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[473] Mary L. Dyckman to members and friends, letter, July 1, 1941, Consumers League of New Jersey Records, MC 1090, box 7, folder 1, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.

opportunities. The revisions also include "all children who work here, migrants as well as residents, and covers farm labor (away from home)."[474]

During WWII, labor issues of concern to the CLNJ included the rights of migrant workers and their children, as well.[475] Zwemer wrote the following to Mr. Verne A. Zimmer (Director of the Division of Labor Standards, Washington, D.C.), on December 15, 1943: "The Consumer's League of New Jersey is very much interested in the protection of the working men and we therefore, would like very much to use our influence in securing better Compensation laws for them."[476] In the meantime, the CLNJ fought for better minimum wage standards for "the clothing industry, cleaners and dyers and a group known as the light manufacturing industry."[477] As of 1940, beauty shops were next on the agenda.[478]

Wartime propaganda about patriotism never fully quelled complaints about working conditions in New Jersey factories. With the public aware of the informational campaigns sponsored by the CLNJ, including the "White Label Campaign" originated by the NCL, women workers relied on their continued support.[479] On December 7, 1942, the one-year anniversary of the Pearl Harbor attack, Elizabeth J. Whillis, a war worker and

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[474] Mary L. Dyckman to members and friends of the CL, letter, July 17, 1940, Consumers League of New Jersey Records, MC 1090, box 7, folder 1, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[475] Fernanda Perrone, "Historical Sketch" Inventory to the Consumers League of New Jersey Records, 1896-1988, http://www2.scc.rutgers.edu/ead/manuscripts/consumers_leaguef.html.
[476] Suzanna Zwemer to Mr. Verne A. Zimmer, letter, December 15, 1943, Consumers League of New Jersey Records, MC 1090, box 34, folder 34, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[477] Mary L. Dyckman to members and friends of the CL, letter, July 17, 1940, Consumers League of New Jersey Records, MC 1090, box 7, folder 1, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[478] Mary L. Dyckman to members and friends of the CL, letter, July 17, 1940, Consumers League of New Jersey Records, MC 1090, box 7, folder 1, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[479] The "White Label Campaign" was an initiative of the NCL which, through factory inspections, made a list of companies that provided a safe and healthy working environment for their employees. (Matthew Hilton and Martin Daulton, "Material Politics: An Introduction," in *The Politics of Consumption: Material Culture and Citizenship in Europe and America*, eds. Matthew Hilton and Martin Daulton (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2001), 13.

contributor to the CLNJ wrote, "I am one of the war workers…one of my pet peeves is bad ventilation…I only ask that the windows could be opened to let some of the manufacturing fumes out."[480] With feedback such as this, the CLNJ continued information-gathering initiatives during the war. During WWII, the Picatinny Arsenal in Dever, New Jersey stood out as "the only military installation in the nation capable of producing anything larger than small arms ammunition."[481] Necessity propelled the arsenal into an important wartime position as employees "trained 8,000 men and women in the techniques of mass-producing munitions ranging from artillery shells and bombs to rockets."[482]

Despite this essential wartime function, the Picatinny Arsenal was the subject of complaints from some employees, which prompted the CLNJ to investigate. In a report written on April 22, 1942, an anonymous worker told a league investigator, "Some of the buildings are back on 10-hour shift. It is very hard. We who lived in this neighborhood who went up with our drivers had to be away from home 14 hours a day."[483] The same report indicated the workers received no vacations and only a 15-minute lunch break. The bathroom facilities were inadequate for the new influx of workers.[484] However, even with these discoveries, there was no indication that any changes were made at the arsenal during WWII.

During WWII, the CLNJ remained concerned about different, and in some cases unknown, occupational diseases. In a CLNJ pamphlet titled "Some Reasons for Urging

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[480] Elizabeth J. Whillis to Mrs. Webb, letter, December 7, 1942, Consumers League of New Jersey Records, MC 1090, box 34, folder 36, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[481] John W. Rae, *Picatinny Arsenal: Images of America* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 1999), 7.
[482] Ibid., 8.
[483] "Report of Worker in Pickitinny (sic) Arsenal, Dever, NJ," April 22, 1942, Consumers League of New Jersey Records, MC 1090, box 34, folder 36, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[484] Ibid.

the Complete Coverage of Occupational Diseases," the group recognized the urgency of passing legislation during WWII. They reasoned:

> A wartime reason for urging such legislation is the presence of large numbers of workers in war-production establishments in states which do not now have an occupational disease law. These workers, if disabled by occupational disease, will be unable to get worker's compensation benefits."[485]

According to the pamphlet, as of December 1942, only 25 states covered occupational diseases under worker's compensation.[486] The CLNJ, often in contact with other state leagues, utilized data on existing worker's compensation programs as a guideline for improvements in New Jersey law. In a paper presented before the Kansas Medical Society Institute of Wartime Health, Voyta Wrabetz, discussed "The Control of Occupational Diseases" in June 1943.[487] Wrabetz insisted, "The great need for a high level of production on our home front, of necessity focuses our attention on those conditions which interfere with the maintenance of full manpower on the job."[488] He claimed, to control industrial hazards, such as accidents and working with hazardous material, adequate worker's compensation laws were necessary.[489] He also stressed the importance of restoring the injured worker to the best health possible by providing sufficient care.[490] Wrabetz wrote, "It is to be noted that silicosis has been the major factor in occupational disease costs, causing 53.3 per cent of the total payments for such

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[485] CLNJ pamphlet, "Some Reasons for Urging the Complete Coverage of Occupational Diseases," Consumers League of New Jersey Records, MC 1090, box 34, folder 34, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[486] Ibid.
[487] Voyta Wrabetz, "The Control of Occupational Diseases," June 3-4, 1943, Consumers League of New Jersey Records, MC 1090, box 34, folder 36, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[488] Ibid.
[489] Ibid.
[490] Ibid.

diseases."[491] With this data from Wisconsin, Zwemer was even more determined to change New Jersey laws. In a letter written to Zwemer in December 1943, Verne Zimmer, director of the Division of Labor Standards, said, "I favored covering all occupational diseases without exception. Anything short of this does not give adequate protection to the workmen…In this connection, I cited the example of Wisconsin, which has operated under complete occupational disease coverage for more than 25 years."[492] He recommended reform for New Jersey and encouraged lobbying to change the existing worker's compensation legislation from being optional to mandatory.[493]

Despite many gains in worker's rights, the textile industry continued to present a problem during WWII. In 1919, Florence Kelley authored an article titled "Wage-Earning Women in Wartime: The Textile Industry" which deals with the impact of wartime work during WWI. For Kelley and her constituents, concern that the coming of WWII would cause the worsening of conditions for working women, or the suspension of already achieved progress in labor reform, was rooted in observations of deplorable conditions women toiled under during WWI. According to Kelley, in Philadelphia alone, "Women were working in the most primitive fashion, seated on old barrel staves, on makeshift stools, or on the floor with odious piles around them…unutterable filth was everywhere, dust flying from the rags. The toilets were repulsive."[494] Kelley continued,

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[491] Wrabetz, "Control of Occupational Disease." According to the American Lung Association, "Silicosis is a lung disease caused by breathing in tiny bits of silica, a mineral that is part of sand, rock, and mineral ores such as quartz. It mostly affects workers exposed to silica dust in occupations such mining, glass manufacturing, and foundry work. Over time, exposure to silica particles causes scarring in the lungs, which can harm your ability to breathe." "Silicosis" http://www.lung.org/lung-health-and-diseases/lung-disease-lookup/silicosis/ (accessed June 16, 2017).

[492] Verne A. Zimmer to Suzanna Zwemer, letter, December 21, 1943, Consumers League of New Jersey Records, MC 1090, box 34, folder 34, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.

[493] Ibid.

[494] Florence Kelley, "Wage-Earning Women in Wartime: The Textile Industry" *The Journal of Industrial Hygiene* vol. 1, no. 6 (October 1919): 264.

"The largest, and in some respects, the worst textile mill was in New Jersey. In it were employed 5,516 people, more than one-third of the whole number included in this study. Of these, 230 were children under 16 years of age."[495] Furthermore, "There were no dressing rooms, and the investigator watched women and girls changing to their street clothes in the workroom where men were constantly walking about."[496] Many of the mills inspected failed to even provide seats for workers.[497] Other findings were that women in textile mills suffered from poor ventilation, irregular sleeping and eating habits, and eye strain.[498] During WWII, Zwemer inherited these problems and, in a letter to a Miss Stevenson on January 28, 1941, she wrote, "They saw the steady growth of night work for women, the longer hours, the expansion of industrial homework at starvation wages, and from that experience came a demand for much of the legislation the League has sponsored."[499]

In New Jersey, the clubwomen's movement provided the foundation for a continuum of activism which contributed to the volunteerism, civil defense work and military participation during WWII. As per Gordon, "The suffrage victory established a climate in which New Jersey legislators and political leaders accepted the fact that women were entering the public realm."[500] Both the NJLWV and the CLNJ advocated for the increased civic involvement of women. Much like the suffrage win, clubwomen viewed WWII as another opportunity to push society, and women's participation, forward. During WWII, women's groups in New Jersey did not suspend activities to aid

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[495] Ibid, 266.
[496] Ibid.
[497] Ibid, 268.
[498] Ibid, 277.
[499] Susanna P. Zwemer to Stevenson, letter, January 28, 1941, MC 1090, box 7, folder 1, Consumers League of NJ Records, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ.
[500] Gordon, *After Winning*, 199.

in the war effort, but refocused their mandates to accommodate new social and political necessities. For the NJLWV, constitutional reform, foreign aid, the creation of the United Nations, child education, and wartime mobilization formed the basis for WWII initiatives. The CLNJ focused on occupational diseases, worker's compensation, child labor, factory conditions and the rights of migrant workers during the war.

CHAPTER 5:

NEW JERSEY WOMEN DURING WORLD WAR II

The participation of New Jersey women during WWII encompassed a vast array of activities. Not only were women moving into paid positions in civil defense, but they joined new military branches created to free men for combat and served as nurses. However, paid positions were only part of the story. Volunteerism was a significant, even integral part of the war effort, both on the home front and abroad. Women dedicated their time to the United Service Organizations (USO), the American Red Cross, civilian defense groups, the American Women's Voluntary Services (AWVS) and more. While the origin of this surge in civic participation during WWII is often viewed as an outgrowth of patriotism, and truly that played a part, a closer look at primary sources reveals a long history of women's engagement which simply found new outlets during the conflict. The existence of strong social networks in the interwar period, most importantly the New Jersey League of Women Voters (NJLWV) and the Consumers League of new Jersey (CLNJ), created an atmosphere of activism that was both swiftly utilized and easily sustained during the war years. Many New Jersey women who chose to volunteer for the war effort were already involved in a social group beforehand. For many women coming of age during WWII, youth organizations such as the Girl Scouts forged their first entry into civic engagement. For New Jersey women of college age, Douglass College was a gateway to WWII activity. Through past civic activism, women and girls learned how to organize in the emergency of conflict and often used the same tactics learned during suffrage and the Progressive Era. The significance of activities other than the NJLWV and CLNJ can all be traced back to post-suffrage education

campaigns that spurred the civic engagement of women. According to the American Psychological Association, "civic engagement" is defined as:

> individual and collective actions designed to identify and address issues of public concern. Civic engagement can take many forms, from individual voluntarism to organizational involvement to electoral participation. It can include efforts to directly address an issue, work with others in a community to solve a problem or interact with the institutions of representative democracy. Civic engagement encompasses a range of specific activities such as working in a soup kitchen, serving on a neighborhood association, writing a letter to an elected official or voting.[501]

Martyn Barrett and Bruna Zani insist "civic engagement is used to denote the engagement of an individual with the interests, goals, concerns and common good of a community."[502] By this definition, any war work, despite economic motivations, was civic engagement. In looking at the WWII participation of New Jersey women, an expanded view of civic participation as including "work which is undertaken either alone (e.g. helping an elderly neighbor, boycotting a product on environmental grounds) or in cooperation with others (e.g. attending a community meeting about an issue of concern, helping to construct a children's playground)" is necessary.[503] With years of preparation through NJLWV citizenship schools and legislative education drives, clubwomen formed the foundation for WWII activism in the Garden State.

The ideology of women as caretakers and guardians of morality influenced WWII volunteerism, as well. Although the introduction of women into occupations traditionally considered off limits to them based on their gender caused friction, most volunteer

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[501] "Civic Engagement," American Psychological Association, accessed: July 1, 2017, http://www.apa.org/education/undergrad/civic-engagement.aspx.
[502] Martyn Barrett and Bruna Zani, "Political and Civic Engagement: Theoretical Understandings, Evidence and Policies" in *Political and Civic Engagement: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, edited by Martyn Barrett and Bruna Zani (New York: Routledge, 2015), 4.
[503] Ibid., 5.

activities fell firmly within the caretaker category. Thomas Rotolo and John Wilson explain further, "Women's family roles are linked to volunteer work in a number of ways. Much of the time they devote to volunteer work can be seen as an extension of those roles, or as being limited by those roles."[504] The Progressive Era increased the influence of women's groups. As Alan Dawley insists, "The most enduring contribution of the progressive generation to American reform was the invention of a social conscience."[505] In the tumultuous era of WWII, the social concern of New Jersey women did not wane, but found new outlets.

The wartime record of New Jersey women provides considerable evidence "Civic participation lessens the likelihood of ignoring societal problems."[506] During WWII, volunteer organizations active in the Garden State were not only limited to adults, but utilized the Girl Scouts and other youth groups to help in scrap and bond drives. In many ways, the activism of New Jersey residents during WWII was a continuation of gendered volunteerism in league with the social reform of the suffragists. Particularly, the women volunteers of the American Red Cross and the United Service Organizations, more commonly called the USO, represented the continuance of activities long viewed as normal for women. If perceived gender norms were continued, women engaging in wartime activities faced little social resistance. Other areas of activism, notably war industry work and entry into women's military branches, required a break from accepted gender roles and were thus viewed with more skepticism and greeted with both covert

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[504] Thomas Rotolo and John Wilson, "What Happened to the 'Long Civic Generation'? Explaining Cohort Differences in Volunteerism," *Social Forces* 82, no. 3 (March 2004): 1097.
[505] Alan Dawley, *Changing the World: American Progressives in War and Revolution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 43.
[506] Sean Richey, "Civic Engagement and Patriotism," *Social Science Quarterly* 92, no. 4 (December 2011): 1053.

and open hostility. Meghan K. Winchell notes, "At the same time that opportunities were growing for women in industry and in the armed services, many middle-class women continued to find their niche in volunteerism."[507] In subtle ways, USO volunteers changed the public perception of the value of women's work during wartime. Winchell observes:

> Although mending shirts, baking cookies, and 'listening' were hardly revolutionary undertakings for middle-class women in the early 1940s in the same way that working in factories or joining the Women's Army Corps were, USO senior hostesses transformed these activities ordinarily performed daily at home into public fulfillment of their obligations to the wartime state.[508]

She continues:

> Historical scholarship has shown how the state and media mobilized women into 'men's' roles…during World War II, but little work has been done on the ways in which quasi-state organizations such as the USO mobilized them to perform 'women's' work that did not challenge gender norms.[509]

President Roosevelt himself spurred the creation of the USO with the belief, "Entertainment is always a national asset. Invaluable in time of peace, it is indispensable in wartime."[510]

Consequently, the formation of the USO represented this spirit of cooperation as "the Salvation Army, Young Men's Christian Association, Young Women's Christian Association, National Catholic Community Services, National Travelers Aid Association and the National Jewish Welfare Board" came together to form the organization.[511]

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[507] Meghan K. Winchell, "'To Make the Boys Feel at Home': USO Senior Hostesses and Gendered Citizenship," *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 25, no. 1 (2004): 192.
[508] Ibid., 190.
[509] Meghan K. Winchell, *Good Girls, Good Food, Good Fun: The Story of USO Hostesses during World War II* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 1.
[510] Tom Wolf, "American Music goes to War," The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, accessed May 20, 2017, https://www.gilderlehrman.org/history-by-era/art-music-and-film/resources/american-music-goes-war.
[511] "The Organization," The USO, accessed May 20, 2017, https://www.uso.org/about.

Eleanor Roosevelt also spoke publicly about the need for improved national morality. In November 1941, her response to a reader's question about the morale of the military was:

> There are many things, of course, which can be done to raise Army morale. One is to make sure that the families at home are well cared for by the communities in which they live. Another is to see that the communities near the camps take an interest in the boys in camp and give them some kind of home atmosphere.[512]

The social correlation between women and morality, essentially charging them as keepers of the ethics of America, found new significance during the turbulent war years. With shifting gender norms, the appearance of normalcy represented by nurturing women volunteers was more important than ever. Elizabeth Luce Moore, USO National Women's Committee chair, stressed, "Americans should not ignore the need for preservation of the national spirit. That is women's biggest duty now, to prove in every way that we are united behind our fighting men."[513] Senior hostesses were charged with keeping young troops on a moral path by encouraging them to frequent USO clubs instead of taverns. With the Salvation Army, a well-known temperance group, as one of the member organizations, the USO stressed the dangers of drinking.[514] The USO frequently used the idea of surrogate mothers to promote morality amongst enlisted men. Winchell notes, "Every time a senior hostess distributed a sandwich or a cookie to a male soldier, she was tacitly reminding him that 'mom' was watching, and she would be disappointed if her son disrespected her by drinking in a tavern or soliciting a prostitute."[515]

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[512] Eleanor Roosevelt, "If you ask me," *Ladies' Home Journal,* November 1941, George Washington University, accessed May 23, 2017, https://www2.gwu.edu/~erpapers/iyam/iyam_1941_11.cfm.
[513] Winchell, "To Make the Boys Feel at Home," 192.
[514] Ibid., 199.
[515] Ibid.

As with the suffrage movement, WWII volunteerism was also divided along racial lines. With segregation still legal in the U.S., women's military branches, workplaces and volunteer groups like the USO kept separate, yet unequal facilities for African American women during WWII. The USO also developed a "circuit of black performers who would entertain the black troops."[516] Winchell notes, "Lack of government funding for African American servicemen's recreation, in particular, hindered the development of positive morale among black troops…For example, in Washington, D.C., 400 black soldiers shared one dayroom, one ping pong table, and a radio at Fort Meade."[517] She goes on to explain, "The USO's policy was to offer assistance and include black servicemen in all programs but not to break the barriers of racial segregation and limit discrimination."[518] During WWII, New Jersey's USO clubs were no exception, as they followed along with the national policies of segregation.

New Jersey USO chapters were vital to the war effort on both the home front and abroad, with the Millville USO as one of the more active chapters in the state. Patricia "Pat" Witt, a high school student who lived in Millville, New Jersey during WWII, joined the organization as a junior hostess.[519] For Witt, hostesses did much more than dance with the troops. She recalled, "Our job was to keep up their morale. Sometimes they wanted to talk about their families."[520] Witt described her mother's influence on her wartime activities, "My mother became an airplane spotter…The women were trained to

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[516] Emily Yellin, *Our Mothers' War: American Women at Home and at the Front during World War II*. (New York: Free Press, 2004), 218.
[517] Meghan Winchell, *Good Food, Good Fun, and Good Girls: USO Hostesses and World War Two*, Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Arizona, 3107052, 2003, 30.
[518] Winchell, *Good Girls*, 9.
[519] Junior hostesses were single women between 17 and 25 years of age (Lessa Scherrer, "There's no Place Like Home: An Overview of the USO in World War II" *Homefront Digest* 1, no. 6 (November 2001) http://www.ww2homefront.com/junkie6.html accessed: July 12, 2017.
[520] Patricia Witt (former USO volunteer) in discussion with author, September 28, 2014.

identify any plane that would go over. They would have four hour shifts these women. My mother was a school teacher and she was a volunteer to do this."[521] As with the clubwomen before them, who refocused their civic concern on issues wrought by rapid industrialization and the social changes that went with it, the women volunteers of WWII found new purpose in the shifting priorities of wartime. It was not uncommon for women of either time to balance paid labor and home duties with volunteer activities.

In many cases, the creation of Douglass College itself fashioned a ready pool of volunteers during WWII. Edna M. Newby, who lived in Palisades Park, New Jersey, enrolled at Douglass College because her mother "was a member of the Women's Clubs in Leonia, the Federation of Women's Clubs."[522] Newby recalled, "Mother came home from this meeting, where Mrs. Douglass had spoken, and she said, 'I know where you're going to go to college. You're going to go to that place down in New Brunswick, that New Jersey College for Women.'"[523] In college, Newby was a member of the YWCA and the International Relations Club.[524] During the war, she volunteered at the New Brunswick USO.[525] After some time as a USO volunteer, she went to New York City to apply for a paying job with the organization and trained in Jacksonville, North Carolina, then went to Lexington, North Carolina, to start and direct a USO chapter there.[526]

The continuity of activism existed from one organization to the next, with suffrage groups yielding Progressive Era activism, which culminated in WWII

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[521] Ibid.

[522] Newby, Edna M. Oral History Interview, February 21, 1997, by G. Kurt Piehler and Barbara Tomblin, Page 6, Rutgers Oral History Archives. Online: http://oralhistory.rutgers.edu/interviewees/1140-newby-edna (Last Accessed: July 22, 2017).
[523] Ibid., 7.
[524] Ibid., 9.
[525] Ibid., 22.
[526] Ibid., 27-28.

participation. However, on a smaller scale, this continuity of civic engagement was evident within families, as well. Catherine Ballantine, who moved to Ridgewood, New Jersey in 1929, was also a USO volunteer during WWII. [527] Ballantine's mother played her part in the war effort, too, volunteering with the Red Cross and working in the cafeteria of the Wright Aeronautical Company.[528] In high school, Ballantine was involved in the German Club and, once the war started, she volunteered to knit items to send to the British.[529] She stated, "We did balaclavas, scarves, mittens and vests and through them I got pen pals. I wrote to one man who was in the navy, starting in high school. I wrote to him for several years and I also wrote to a man who was in the British tank corps, for about a year and then I stopped hearing from him."[530] She attended Douglass College, where her wartime involvement and volunteerism continued. Each summer break, she either worked or volunteered, remembering, "Between sophomore and junior year I worked at DuPont Explosives in Pompton Lakes. I was in the explosive rivet department, and they were using those for making airplanes."[531] The following summer, she worked as a dietician at a Girl Scout camp in Binghamton, New York.[532] After the Pearl Harbor attack, Douglass College offered voluntary "war courses" to foster skills deemed useful towards the war effort.[533] Ballantine took "Leadership in

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[527] Ballantine, Catherine Oral History Interview, March 2, 1999, by Tara Kraenzlin and Michael Bino, Page 2, Rutgers Oral History Archives. Online: http://oralhistory.rutgers.edu/interviewees/775-ballantine-catherine (Last Accessed: May 23, 2017).
[528] Ibid.
[529] Ibid., 4.
[530] Ibid.
[531] Ibid., 5.
[532] Ibid.
[533] Ibid., 12.

Recreation," which helped young women interested in volunteer work, especially as USO hostesses.[534]

According to Winchell, "Senior hostesses[535] reinforced their primary peacetime roles as mothers and caregivers, and made their services as such available to the military, thereby performing a gendered form of citizenship."[536] However, junior hostesses also performed gendered tasks, as their work trained them for their adult roles as caregivers. Janice L. Karesh, who grew up in Newark, New Jersey, served as a hostess during WWII.[537] While at Douglass College, Karesh volunteered with the New Brunswick USO and went to events at least once every week. She recalled, "we saw a lot of really young men who probably had never been away from home before and who that cup of coffee and the cookie and a little conversation with someone female seemed to help."[538] With few exceptions, the difficulty in quantifying the benefit of volunteer work has stagnated any serious historical inquiry of this work.

Until recently, historians bypassed a thorough analysis of the contributions of USO hostesses during WWII. According to Winchell, "Senior hostesses completed work for servicemen and women in the USO clubs that women had always done, and this helped to erase its historical significance."[539] However, the USO did not accept every volunteer. To recruit senior hostesses, "They wanted middle class, mostly white women

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[534] Ibid.
[535] Per Winchell, senior USO hostesses were usually over 35 years old and married. They served as chaperones, counselors for the soldiers, sewed uniforms and performed other duties as necessary (Winchell, Good Girls, Good Food, Good Fun: The Story of the USO, 12).
[536] Winchell, "To Make the Boys Feel at Home," 191.
[537] Karesh, Janice Oral History Interview, June 2, 2000, by Sean Harvey and Sandra Stewart Holyoak, Page 3-4, Rutgers Oral History Archives. Online: http://oralhistory.rutgers.edu/interviewees/1019-karesh-janice (Last Accessed: May 23, 2017).
[538] Ibid., 16.
[539] Winchell, "To Make the Boys Feel at Home," 191.

who were considered sexually respectable. The USO knew women mattered to morale—the men needed the company of women. [But] they didn't want them having sex."[540] The importance of previous activism, notably participation in women's clubs, as an indication of desirable volunteers was recognized by the USO. In recruiting for senior hostess positions, the USO advised members to look to "those organizations that were dominated by middle-class women, such as 'women's clubs, business and professional groups, and school and college faculties.'…churches, community groups, and 'other responsible organizations' might provide senior volunteers."[541] Women already engaged in pre-war civic engagement were actively sought as ideal USO volunteers.[542]

As with membership in reform organizations and committees, many New Jersey women active during WWII juggled different wartime activities with the USO as only one part of their contributions. As with the women standing on the precipice of the suffrage win, activist women viewed the social changes of war as an opportunity to win advancements which could continue in the post-war era if cultivated properly. For instance, Alice Jennings Archibald, who was raised by her aunt, Gertrude Titus, was taught the value of local activism and church involvement. In the interwar period, Titus was a Red Cross volunteer and, according to Archibald, "formed a black history club so that students coming out of high school and college would be honored or recognized for their achievement."[543] During WWII, Archibald worked as a completion clerk at the

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[540] Winchell quoted in Terese Schlachter "In the USO's Early Years, Hostesses Provided a Wholesome Morale Boost" Thursday, Feb 4, 2016 https://www.uso.org/stories/149-in-the-uso-s-early-years-hostesses-provided-a-wholesome-morale-boost (accessed: June 8, 2017).
[541] Winchell, "To Make the Boys Feel at Home," 193.
[542] Ibid.
[543] Archibald, Alice Jennings Oral History Interview, March 14, 1997, by G. Kurt Piehler and Eve Snyder, Page 18, Rutgers Oral History Archives. Online: http://oralhistory.rutgers.edu/images/PDFs/archibald_alice_jennings.pdf (Last Accessed: 6/16/16).

Raritan Arsenal and participated in USO events after work. She recalled, "Well, Camp Kilmer really had a great impact on the area…We had a number of students who did that, and, of course, you had the USO in town, and I belonged to church groups that used to go to USO weekly and entertain the fellows."[544] Her activism continued after WWII when she became involved in the New Brunswick Urban League as assistant to the executive director in June 1946. As per Archibald, "The Jewish women, the League of Women Voters and the YWCA were involved with the formation of the New Brunswick Urban League."[545] The Urban League was concerned with helping African Americans in various ways:

> There were a lot of people who needed housing, coming out of the war and what not…a lot of people needed jobs, a lot of people needed education, so forth. So the Urban League was instrumental in getting the first colored person hired at J and J [Johnson & Johnson].[546]

The Urban League also pushed local schools to hire African American women and, once Douglass College allowed women to stay in the dormitories, the group campaigned to allow African American women to stay, as well.[547]

As the NJLWV tried to instill the importance of political knowledge and participation in women through their early education programs, this training provided the foundation for WWII activism and work. Many pre-war committees of the NJLWV, notably Efficient Government, Social Hygiene, International Cooperation, Women in Industry, Child Welfare and Living Costs, found new meaning during WWII.[548] As

[544] Ibid., 21.
[545] Ibid., 23.
[546] Ibid., 25.
[547] Ibid., 26.
[548] "Officers and Director of the LWV of New Jersey," 1924 New Jersey League of Women Voters Collection, MC 1082, box 25, folder 27, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, N.J.

individual women, already aware of these issues because of League pamphlets, educational programs and other methods, moved into WWII volunteerism, work or the military, they brought this knowledge into their new wartime positions. Annette Greenblatt, who moved to Vineland, New Jersey with her family at age eight, was raised in a politically active and civic minded family.[549] Before WWII, her parents were both involved in community organizations and politics. In Vineland, her father became president of the Chamber of Commerce and served on the School Board, while her mother was involved in volunteer work and fundraising for local Jewish groups. Both of her parents were involved in their local synagogue.[550] During WWII, Greenblatt was enrolled in Douglass College and served as a Red Cross volunteer, where she took a bus to Atlantic City to entertain the troops at the Thomas England General Hospital.[551] She also rolled bandages at Johnson and Johnson in New Brunswick. In an interview for Rutgers University, she said, "they [Johnson and Johnson] would send a bus in the morning at six o'clock, and pick us up, and bring us back at nine o'clock for classes, and I felt so noble."[552] After the war, she remained active in various organizations including the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and she served as South Jersey chairman for the Women's Conservation Organization.[553]

As with many other New Jersey women, June McCormick Moon's activism started as a Girl Scout. During WWII, she helped to roll bandages for the Red Cross and

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[549] Greenblatt, Annette Oral History Interview, October 6, 1999, by Shaun Illingworth and Stephanie Katz, 4-5, Rutgers Oral History Archives. Online: http://oralhistory.rutgers.edu/images/PDFs/greenblatt_annette.pdf (Last Accessed: 6/19/16).
[550] Ibid., 8.
[551] Ibid., 21.
[552] Ibid., 16.
[553] Ibid., 24.

volunteered as a plane spotter.[554] Mary Lou Norton Busch, a New Jersey resident since the age of six, lived in Englewood, New Jersey until she left for Douglass College.[555] As a war worker at Johnson and Johnson, she packed bandages.[556] In her interview, she traced the evolution of her volunteerism as such:

> Well, I started out with volunteer work in the church, you know, teaching Sunday school, and then, ... Girl Scouts, because my Girl Scouts, we always had to have projects…I got into church work, outside the local church, into Presbytery, and that was also [going] into senior citizen homes and stuff like that.[557]

For Busch, volunteerism started in her youth, with already existing civic groups paving the way for her WWII activism.

Gwen Tarbox stressed the move away from a time where "autonomous public activity on the part of women was long viewed as an affront to the social order."[558] Focus on collectivist action built upon the clubwomen's movement and continued to grow during WWII. In New Jersey and throughout the nation, this spirit was evident in large, publicized groups like the USO, AWVS and the Red Cross, but also in less-prestigious efforts like knitting and civilian defense posts. Marie Anderson Borberly, who was married to a Marine Corps. officer during WWII and spent a portion of the war in a military community, exemplified this community spirit. She recalled, "Well, just, you know, you'd do the knitting and that kind of stuff. ... Everybody was knitting scarves and things for the servicemen, because the winter months were on us and you did

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[554] June McCormack Moon, Oral History Interview, October 20, 2003, by Sandra Stewart Holyoak and Eliza Davino, Page 4, Rutgers Oral History Archives. Online: http://oralhistory.rutgers.edu/social-and-cultural-history/31-interviewees/1126-moon-june-mccormack. (Last Accessed: January 11, 2015).
[555] Mary Lou Norton Busch, Oral History Interview, August 17, 2007, by Shaun Illingworth, Matthew Lawrence and Jessica Thomson Illingworth, Page 2, Rutgers Oral History Archives. Online: http://oralhistory.rutgers.edu/images/PDFs/busch_mary_lou_norton.pdf (Last Accessed: 6/17/16).
[556] Ibid., 19.
[557] Ibid., 34-35.
[558] Gwen Tarbox, *The Clubwomen's Daughters: Collectivist Impulses in Progressive-Era Girls' Fiction, 1890-1940* (New York: Garland Publishing, 2000), 13.

whatever you could."[559] Dorothy M. Field was born in Chester, New York but went to Douglass College during WWII. During WWI, her Father served in the Medical Corps. and her mother volunteered with the Red Cross.[560] Field herself was in the Girl Scouts as a child and, during WWII, she wrapped bandages at Johnson and Johnson and visited Camp Kilmer as part of Civilian Defense Conditioning (CDC) training offered at the college.[561] Catharine Ballantine, another New Jersey native, learned the joys of activism from her mother, who volunteered with the Red Cross during the war.[562] Although she was only in high school when America joined the Allied war effort, Ballentine and a few other classmates "started a group of girls, who met regularly and knitted for the British."[563]

Judith Harper Hassert, of New Brunswick, New Jersey, attended Douglass College with a scholarship from the State Federation of Women's Clubs.[564] During WWII, she worked as a librarian for the Army.[565] Her mother was a suffragist and active in the New Brunswick LWV. She recalled, "Legislation interested her very much. She was on the national board of the Reformed Church, for legislative affairs, 'cause she always kept up with the reading and knew all that kind of stuff."[566] At Douglass, Hassert

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[559] Marie Anderson Borberly, Oral History Interview, October 19, 2009, by Shaun Illingworth and Victoria Raab, Page 25, Rutgers Oral History Archives. Online: http://oralhistory.rutgers.edu/images/PDFs/borbely_marie.pdf (Last Accessed: 6/17/16).
[560] Field, Dorothy M. Oral History Interview, March 27, 2006, by Sandra Stewart Holyoak and Melissa Falk, Page 2, Rutgers Oral History Archives. Online: http://oralhistory.rutgers.edu/images/PDFs/field_dorothy.pdf (Last Accessed: 6/18/16).
[561] Ibid., 8, 15.
[562] Ballantine, Catherine Oral History Interview, March 2, 1999, by Tara Kraenzlin and Michael Bino, Page 2, Rutgers Oral History Archives. Online: http://oralhistory.rutgers.edu/images/PDFs/ballantine_catherine.pdf (Last Accessed: 6/16/16).
[563] Ibid., 4.
[564] Hassert, Judith Harper Oral History Interview, February 4, 1997, by G. Kurt Piehler and Barbara Tomblin, Page 15, Rutgers Oral History Archives. Online: http://oralhistory.rutgers.edu/interviewees/975-hassert-judith-harper (Last Accessed: July 4, 2017).
[565] Ibid., 18.
[566] Ibid., 5.

remembered the introduction of war courses with the U.S. entry into WWII. The young women enrolled in auto mechanics and nursing.[567]

Although the USO was one of the most well-known volunteer organizations during WWII, the American Women's Voluntary Services (AWVS) also formed an important basis for home front activism. Mrs. Gustav Ketterer, Chairman of National Defense for the General Federation of Women's Clubs, wrote about the necessity of club women in January 1942:

> Every club woman should be willing to volunteer, whether it be in rural program work, aircraft warning service, office work, the motor corps, the nurses' aide program, air raid patrol centers, nutrition, house registration, checking citizenship records, education programs, home gardening, first aid, or home nursing.[568]

Founded by Alice T. McLean[569] in January 1940 and inspired by a British organization called the Women's Voluntary Services (WVS), the AWVS began as an emergency aid group.[570] One of the most active AWVS groups in the state was the Atlantic County chapter. As with the USO, the morale of the troops was an essential part of the campaigns of the AWVS. For instance, the Atlantic County AWVS gifted musical instruments to injured soldiers recovering at the Thomas England General Hospital in Atlantic City, New Jersey. Other gifts included "looms and wool for weaving, books, magazines, games, cross-word puzzles, phonograph records, card tables and a piano."[571] Conservation was another key factor in the AWVS and as with the NJLWV, much of

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[567] Ibid., 34.
[568] Mrs. Gustav Ketterer, "Women and National Defense," January 1942, National Women's History Museum, https://www.nwhm.org/media/category/exhibits/partners/women%20and%20nat%20def%20page.jpg (accessed: May 24, 2017).
[569] Mary Furlong Moore, ed. "Two Great Ladies Pose for our June Cover," *The National Bulletin of the American Women's Voluntary Services*, June-July 1944, 2.
[570] Yellin, *Our Mothers' War*, 172.
[571] Mary Furlong Moore, ed. "Convalescents who will soon be giving out with hot Jive," *The National Bulletin of the American Women's Voluntary Services*, June-July 1944, 2.

their campaigns focused on educating the public. The AWVS published articles in their national bulletin, local newspapers and books, urging American women to "cut down and remake their own garments for children."[572] The group insisted, "Each home should be an individual arsenal of democracy. Each thing conserved or repaired is another bit for victory. Each wasted item; each foolish expenditure is a help to the enemy."[573] In this spirit, and with the endorsement of Eleanor Roosevelt, the AWVS began a "Clothing Conservation Campaign" in May of 1944. Along with fashion shows displaying repurposed clothing, education centers were set up to teach women how to sew and work with patterns.[574]

Red Cross women served both on the home front and overseas, many coming close to combat in the process.[575] Franklin D. Roosevelt himself recognized, "wherever our fighting men are-all over the world-the American Red Cross is by their side, extending always the arm of helpfulness and comfort."[576] An estimated 3.5 million American women volunteered for the Red Cross in some capacity during WWII.[577] In New Jersey, Red Cross volunteers frequented the Thomas England General Hospital in Atlantic City. Since the war brought Atlantic City tourism to a stop, economic necessity prompted the area to contract with the U.S. Army. Earning the nickname "Camp

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[572] Betty Smith, "There are a Thousand ways you can Help," *The National Bulletin of the American Women's Voluntary Services*, June-July 1944, 3.
[573] Ibid.
[574] Mary Furlong Moore, ed., "America's First Lady Initiates AWVS Clothing Conservation Campaign," *The National Bulletin of the American Women's Voluntary Services*, June-July 1944, 5.
[575] The American Red Cross was founded by Clara Barton in May 1881 ("Our History" The American Red Cross http://www.redcross.org/about-us/who-we-are/history). Approximately 7,000 Red Cross women served overseas during WWII (Emily Yellin, *Our Mothers' War: American Women at Home and at the Front during World War II*. New York: Free Press, 2004), 167.
[576] Franklin D. Roosevelt, "Statement Opening the Red Cross Fund Drive," February 28, 1943, *The American Presidency Project*, accessed July 15, 2017, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=16370.
[577] Yellin, *Our Mothers' War*, 168.

Boardwalk," Atlantic City was an epicenter of training and troop rehabilitation. The Thomas England combined five major hotels, "Haddon Hall, Chalfonte, Traymore, Dennis and Colton" and was "The largest hospital of its kind in the United States…and has a capacity for 4,760 patients."[578] With this influx of wounded soldiers, New Jersey nurses and Red Cross volunteers also flocked to the area, offering medical support and often emotional support in the form of recreational activities and friendly conversation.[579]

The Red Cross had different divisions, all with varying responsibilities. During WWII, the Nurse's Aide group was one of the most recognized as they were accountable for assisting medical staff in military and civilian hospitals.[580] Marie Griffin, of Hillsdale, New Jersey, volunteered as a Red Cross Aide during WWII. Even for volunteers who did not perform medical procedures, training was a time-consuming process. For Griffin, Red Cross training took six weeks and was completed with what little time she had after her paying job was completed. Once her training was over, she volunteered at "the Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center hospital two nights and one weekend day."[581] Griffin remembered, "So that was time consuming. It was also interesting. I learned to do a lot of nursing routines. As Red Cross Nurse's Aides, we did all nursing chores, but were not permitted to dispense medicines."[582] Though these women were relegated to certain non-technical tasks, they directly and indirectly contribution to the welfare of the wounded soldiers, as support staff to medical personnel and by providing comfort to soldiers.

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[578] Theodore Laymon, "Army Dedicates its big Hospital at Atlantic City," *New York Herald Tribune*, Saturday April 29, 1944.
[579] Ibid.
[580] Yellin, *Our Mothers' War*, 168.
[581] Griffin, Marie Oral History Interview, March 16, 1996, by Kathleen Plunkett, Page 8, Rutgers Oral History Archives. Online: http://oralhistory.rutgers.edu/interviewees/959-griffin-marie (July 8, 2017).
[582] Ibid., 8.

For many of the women who engaged in WWII volunteerism, civil defense work, or military involvement, a background in some form of community, church or school group was common. In New Jersey, the Girl Scouts was a common organization. For instance, Anne Bartholomew held wartime jobs at both Turner Tubes in Highland Park, New Jersey and Richardson Battery in New Brunswick, New Jersey.[583] As with many other New Jersey women, her wartime activities included both a paid job and volunteerism. She was also a blackout warden, a volunteer post with the local Office of Civilian Defense.[584] Adaline Bloom worked for the Office of War Information (OWI) during WWII, yet also traced her civic engagement back to her time as a Girl Scout.[585] She recalled, "they had very active groups in New Brunswick that, it wasn't only USO centers, but there were churches and synagogues and other organizations that provided, you know, activities for these soldiers."[586] Importantly, New Jersey's civil defense workers balanced the responsibilities of family, work and community, with each individual worker's story slightly different.

While many civil defense workers were motivated by economic opportunity, their additional volunteerism points to a civic mindedness, as well. For some, economic necessity pushed them towards wartime wage work and away from lower-paid military positions. According to Dorothy Sue Cobble:

> The majority of "Rosies" who entered nontraditional jobs during wartime were not middle-class housewives leaving home for a stint in the work world. Most were low-income women who were moving from waitressing, domestic service,

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[583] Bartholomew, Anne Oral History Interview, July 27, 2007, by Sandra Stewart Holyoak, Page 4, Rutgers Oral History Archives. Online: http://oralhistory.rutgers.edu/interviewees/777-bartholomew-anne (Last Accessed: July 15, 2017).
[584] Ibid., 12.
[585] Bloom, Adaline Glasser Oral History Interview, November 18, 1996, by G. Kurt Piehler and Lara Fletcher and Barbara Tomblin, Page 9, Rutgers Oral History Archives. Online: http://oralhistory.rutgers.edu/interviewees/809-bloom-adaline (Last Accessed: June 6, 2017).
[586] Ibid., 32.

> or other women's jobs into higher paying men's jobs or who were entering market work for the first time.[587]

However, patriotism cannot be discounted as a motivating factor, especially considering the tendency for women to engage in volunteerism, as well. The U.S. government itself, more specifically the War Department, pushed this popular ideology of patriotism as the major motivating factor for American women in civil defense positions. A 1943 War Department pamphlet titled "You're going to Employ Women" insisted:

> In some respects, women workers are superior to men. Properly hired, properly trained, properly handled, new women employees are splendidly efficient workers. The desire of a new woman worker to help win the war—to shorten it even by a minute—gives her an enthusiasm that more than offsets industrial inexperience.[588]

Spurred on by more than patriotism, the working women of WWII also engaged in activism to promote gender equality in the labor market. In much the same way as the suffrage win signaled the dawn of a new era for women's rights, the new opportunities brought on by the necessity of war could be another seismic social shift for the advancement of women if utilized correctly.

While the struggle for equal pay was far from novel before WWII, the mobilization of women workers offered a new hope. In a 1925 issue of *Good Housekeeping,* Mary Anderson wrote, "The whole question, it seems to me, comes down to this: shall we let women continue working longer hours than men, for less pay than men, and continue doing two jobs to their husbands' one?"[589] On the eve of the second World War, the priorities of feminism continued to shift. Katherine Ellickson, one of the

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[587] Dorothy Sue Cobble, *The Other Women's Movement: Workplace Justice and Social Rights in Modern America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 13.
[588] U.S. War Department, "You're going to Employ Women" Washington, D.C. 1943.
[589] Cobble, *The Other Women's Movement,* 121.

more vocal proponents of wage-earning mothers, presented her concerns in an essay titled "Short-time Work for Women." Within this concise commentary, she stressed the "double day" many working mothers were forced to endure. In other words, women doing paid labor by day were still responsible for the unpaid labor necessary to run their homes and care for their families. According to Ellickson, the older generation of feminists fought for equality with men but this did not effectively solve their problems. The new generation of feminists must fight to "adapt the man's world to women."[590] Reducing a woman's workday to six hours and including childcare facilities on the job formed the concluding demand of her essay.[591] For this new generation, the unique demands of being a woman, particularly a mother, should yield different treatment in the workplace. While the burden of the "double day" alone cried for workplace reforms to help women cope, labor feminists of the postwar period focused on eventually ending the double day altogether and pushing for increased wages overall.[592] For Cobble, "Labor feminists wanted government and employer policies that would help women combine wage work and family life and would not penalize women for childbearing and childrearing."[593]

According to Ruth Milkman, since women's paid work was modelled on their domestic tasks, "Whatever their jobs, women workers are ideologically defined not as workers, but as women who happen to be working."[594] Alice Kessler-Harris discussed the devaluation of women workers in *A Woman's Wage: Historical Meanings and Social*

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[590] Ibid., 121.
[591] Ibid.
[592] Ibid., 122.
[593] Ibid., 144.
[594] Ruth Milkman, *Gender at Work: The Dynamics of Job Segregation by Sex during World War II* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 4.

Consequences. She wrote, "If the wage is, as most economists readily acknowledge, simultaneously a set of ideas about how people can and should live and a marker of social status, then it contains within it a set of social messages and a system of meanings that influence the way women and men behave."[595] The war worker was presented as the "paragon of virtue, capable of shouldering any burden and meeting any challenge."[596] Indeed, women workers were eased into these new "male" jobs by stressing the similarities between their household roles and factory work. The U.S. government advised factory managers to "Relate her job training to past experience-interpret machinery operation in terms of household and kitchen appliances."[597] Supervisors, as wartime propaganda insisted, should "Remember, a woman worker is not a man; in many jobs she is a substitute-like plastics instead of metal-she has special characteristics that lend themselves to new and sometimes much superior uses."[598]

Although government propaganda was certainly instrumental in gaining women war workers, women's reform groups, notably the NJLWV, also played their part. Mere months before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Marguerite Wells, state NJLWV president, launched an initiative called the "Battle for Production" which focused on changing public opinion away from isolationism.[599] For the women workers of New Jersey, a history of community engagement motivated a continuation of activism during WWII. Nancy Christensen, a war worker from Newark, New Jersey, was active in women's civic engagement, beginning, like so many others, with her involvement in the

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[595] Alice Kessler-Harris, *A Woman's Wage: Historical Meanings and Social Consequences* (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 1990), 7.
[596] Maureen Honey, ed. *Bitter Fruit: African American Women in World War II* (Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1999), 6.
[597] U.S. War Department, "You're going to Employ Women" Washington, D.C. 1943.
[598] Ibid.
[599] Young, *In the Public Interest*, 134.

Girls Scouts.[600] During the war years, Christensen worked on IBM's punch card machines.[601] In Cranford, New Jersey, she was involved with the LWV after WWII. She helped start a chapter of the League and served as the first president and she was vice president of the College Women's Club board member of the Visiting Home Health Services of Union County for 20 years.[602]

Jean Comeforo was a student at Douglass College, a war worker and a volunteer during WWII. Her mother worked at the Raritan Arsenal during WWII and remained very active in their local church. Comeforo's family activism influenced her throughout the war. She recalled, "My mother was in the Eastern Star, very active. She became district deputy, and what else, my father was very busy with the Boy Scouts."[603] At Douglass "A lot of things were curtailed. The classes, ... our whole attitude changed, it became much more serious."[604] While shifting her college life to accommodate new home front activities, she volunteered to wrap bandages at Johnson and Johnson.[605]

The Eastern Aircraft Division of General Motors formed a significant wartime production facility with plants in Trenton, Linden and Bloomfield, New Jersey. Women were involved in the manufacture of Wildcat fighters at the Linden facility, Avenger Bombers in Trenton and various electrical items and decals at Bloomfield.[606] Kathryn

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[600] Christensen, Nancy Squire Oral History Interview, November 7, 2008, by Shaun Illingworth and Ellie MacPherson, Page 6, Rutgers Oral History Archives. Online: http://oralhistory.rutgers.edu/images/PDFs/christensen_nancy.pdf (Last Accessed: 6/18/16).
[601] Ibid., 20.
[602] Ibid., 22-23.
[603] Comeforo, Jean C. Oral History Interview, April 10, 1996, by G. Kurt Piehler, Maria Mazzone and Melanie Cooper, Page 12, Rutgers Oral History Archives. Online: http://oralhistory.rutgers.edu/images/PDFs/comeforo_jean.pdf (Last Accessed: 6/18/16).
[604] Ibid., 18.
[605] Ibid., 19.
[606] Bill Yenne, *The American Aircraft Factory in World War II* (Minneapolis, MN: MBI Publishing, 2010), 59.

Barber De Mott worked as a draftsperson at the Trenton factory.[607] As with others mentioned in this chapter, she was also involved in the Girl Scouts in Clinton, New Jersey, where she and the other members rolled bandages.[608] De Mott said:

> In my junior year, I sort of felt I wasn't doing anything for the war effort and so many of my friends, particularly the boys, were in service in the South Pacific and in Europe. Well, I could write them letters. That was one thing I did, but I didn't think I was doing very much, and so, I talked to my dad about it. I said, you know, "I think that I'm not helping and so many people are giving their lives and their time."[609]

Eastern Aircraft sent De Mott to a program called "junior engineering," offered in conjunction with Rutgers University.[610] After three months of coursework, De Mott started her work at Eastern and worked there approximately one year before the plant closed.[611]

Another Eastern worker, Irene Klalo, worked as an aircraft metal filer, rivet packer and drill press operator at the Linden plant.[612] According to Klalo, "Actually, I could have had a scholarship, an art scholarship, but there was a war on, and everyone was very patriotic at the time, and I felt I had to work for the war effort, and went to work for General Motors, and worked shifts, three shifts, changed every month."[613] At Eastern, Klalo first worked as a metal filer.[614] After that, she stamped numbers on parts, worked on a drill press and packed frozen rivets in the stockroom.[615] For Klalo, her

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[607] De Mott, Kathryn Barber Oral History Interview, June 9, 2003, by Sandra Stewart Holyoak and Jared Kosch, Page 12, Rutgers Oral History Archives. Online: http://oralhistory.rutgers.edu/interviewees/879-de-mott-kathryn-barber (Last Accessed: July 11, 2017).
[608] Ibid., 7.
[609] Ibid., 14.
[610] Ibid.
[611] Ibid., 16.
[612] Irene Klalo interview, June 29, 2006, Interviewed by Ann Kelsey, County College of Morris, Learning Resource Center, Randolph, New Jersey, Rosie the Riveter Project. Transcribed by Jardee Transcription, Tucson, Arizona, 1.
[613] Ibid., 2.
[614] Ibid., 8.
[615] Ibid., 9.

wartime work proved the abilities of women workers and successfully helped the war effort. Decades later, she stated, "Well, I think people realized then that women were not just homemakers, that we could do other things. And we worked, and I think we made a big difference."[616]

During WWII, private factories were not the only source of war production in New Jersey. Arsenals employed women workers in various occupations. At the Picatinny Arsenal in Morris County, New Jersey, Harriet Buono worked as an ordnance explosives operator.[617] The advertisements lauding the patriotism of women workers and the promise of better pay helped push her towards war work.[618] However, her sense of civic duty played a role as well, and Buono described feeling as though she was "(h)elping *some* soldier or *some* airman—and I think what I was working on was more airmen—to end the war faster."[619] However, women war workers were not the only ones to cite the possibility of ending the war more expediently as a motivation. The mandate of newly created women's military branches was also to help end the conflict by freeing a man for combat.

In December 1941, George C. Marshall said, "There are innumerable duties now being performed by soldiers that can actually be done better by women."[620] Recognizing the imminent need for women to fill military positions vacated by men, Massachusetts Congresswoman Edith Nourse Rogers introduced a bill to establish a women's auxiliary

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[616] Ibid., 35.
[617] Harriet Buono interview, May 9, 2006, Interviewed by Ann Kelsey, For the County College of Morris, Learning Resource Center, Randolph, New Jersey, Rosie the Riveter Project, Transcribed by Jardee Transcription, Tucson, Arizona, http://archive.ccm.edu/Rosie/HBuono.htm (accessed: July 11, 2017), 1.
[618] Ibid., 8.
[619] Ibid., 11.
[620] Mary Rasa, "The Women's Army Corps." *Garden State Legacy* (March 2014): 1.

of the army.[621] The bill, first presented in May 1941, faced congressional resistance.[622] However, with Marshall's support, the bill establishing the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps. (WAAC) was passed in May of 1942.[623] Marshall wasted no time in appointing the first WAAC director, Oveta Culp Hobby to initiate the recruitment process.[624] With the initial success of the program and the pressing need for manpower, the WAAC became the Women's Army Corps. (WAC) in September 1943.[625] Soon, other military branches followed suit, clamoring to start their own women's branches. The Coast Guard established the SPAR (Semper Paratus Always Ready) in November 1942.[626] In July 1942, the Navy created the WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service).[627] Finally, in January 1943, the Marine Corps. Women's Reserve (MCWR) was established.[628] The women pilots of WWII, reorganized as the WASPS (Women Air Force Service Pilots) in August 1943, were the only branch considered civilians working with the military instead of as active members.[629]

With many New Jersey women flocking to join newly created women's branches as recruits, several prominent Garden State women served as directors. For instance, Joy Bright Hancock, born in Wildwood, New Jersey in 1898, served as the third director of the WAVES.[630] Bright came from a progressive family, with both parents supporting a

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[621] Yellin, 113.
[622] Ibid.
[623] Ibid., 114.
[624] Ibid.
[625] Ibid., 116.
[626] Ibid., 142.
[627] Ibid., 137.
[628] Mary V. Stremlow, "Free a Marine to Fight: Women Marines in World War II" in *In Defense of a Nation: Servicewomen of World War II*, Jeanne M. Holm and Judith Bellafaire, eds. (Arlington, Virginia: Vandamere Press, 1998), 77.
[629] Yellin, 152.
[630] Karen L. Schnitzspahn, *Remarkable Women of the New Jersey Shore: Clam Shuckers, Social Reformers and Summer Sojourners* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2015), 73.

woman's right to vote. In fact, Priscilla Bright, Joy's mother, was a suffragist.[631] Hancock graduated from Wildwood High School in 1916, joining the Navy as a yeoman two years later. She served as one of just 10,000 women enlisted as yeoman during WWI.[632] On growing up in Wildwood, Hancock writes, "Our social life was centered in church and school."[633] Her father, William Henry Bright, was born in Michigan in 1863.[634] Eventually, he found a passion for politics which involved serving in many local appointments. In 1912, he was a delegate to the National Nominating Convention, where he supported Theodore Roosevelt and the Progressives. "My father's political interests involved us all, and mother, a leader in the women's suffrage movements, regularly served as his campaign manager."[635] While her parents were away campaigning, Hancock was left in charge of their real estate and insurance businesses.[636] Her father's political ambitions created opportunities for his daughter Eloise, as well. When he was elected lieutenant governor, Eloise served as his executive secretary. Hancock writes:

> No woman had ever held such a position but, as many of the senators agreed, she carried out her duties efficiently and Harry Bright thus demonstrated what a woman could do in such a responsible post. Mother, in her work for women's participation in government, often cited Eloise as an example of women's political capabilities.[637]

On the eve of U.S. entry into WWI, Hancock was eager to join the war effort. However, opportunities for women were few, "Women's suffrage not yet having become the law of the land, the men were firmly in command and intended to stay there."[638]

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[631] Ibid., 74.
[632] Joy Bright Hancock and Arthur W. Radford, *Lady in the Navy: A Personal Reminiscence* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1972), vii.
[633] Ibid., 10.
[634] Ibid., 5.
[635] Ibid., 18.
[636] Ibid.
[637] Ibid., 19.
[638] Ibid., 22.

Ruth Cheney Streeter, born in Brookline, Massachusetts and living in Morristown, New Jersey during WWII, was chosen as the first director of the Women's Marine Reserve in 1943.[639] With her family moving to Morristown in 1922, Streeter soon volunteered with the local LWV, the New Jersey Women's Republican Club and the Junior League of Morristown.[640] Streeter was active in several civic groups before the war, including the New Jersey Board of Children's Guardians, the New Jersey State Relief Council and the New Jersey Commission on Interstate Cooperation.[641] Inspired to join the war effort, she earned her commercial pilot's license and joined the New Jersey Civil Air Patrol.[642] However, Streeter was frustrated when she learned, as a woman, she would not be permitted to fly. She stated, "The men told me I could come down to the hangar to make coffee. I was absolutely furious. I was more qualified than they were. I said 'The hell with them.'"[643] Not long after this disappointment, Streeter began her career in the Marines, successfully guiding the women's branch through WWII. She retired from the service in 1945.[644] After WWII, Cheney continued her activism with membership on the New Jersey Veterans Council, the U.S. Defense Advisory Council for Women in the Service the New Jersey Historical Society and the New Jersey Historical Sites Council.[645]

During WWII, many New Jersey women found the military suited their desire to help the war effort. Rhoda R. Safran Conrad, a First-Class Pharmacist's Mate in the

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[639] "Ruth C. Streeter, 94, Ex-Leader of Women Reserves in Marines" *The New York Times*, October 2, 1990.
[640] Susan Ware, ed. *Notable American Women: A Biographical Dictionary Completing the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, M.A.: Harvard University Press, 2004), 621.
[641] "Ruth C. Streeter, 94, Ex-Leader of Women Reserves in Marines."
[642] Susan Ware, *Notable American Women*, 621.
[643] Burstyn, *Past and Promise*, 401.
[644] Ibid.
[645] Susan Ware, *Notable American Women,* 621.

WAVES, joined in March 1942. Conrad said, "I saw no reason why I shouldn't go in just because I was a woman."[646] Although she held progressive views concerning the capabilities of women, she was also sheltered. Before the Navy, Conrad "really wasn't aware much of the outside world."[647] Though she cited patriotism as one motivation, she remained against war throughout her life. Recently, scholars interested in peace studies have stressed the link between feminist values and antimilitarism. According to Pamela Johnson Conover and Virginia Sapiro, "it is the feminist critique of society, and not only a commitment to liberal values, that forges the link between feminism and antimilitarism."[648] Conover echoed this sentiment, stating, "At that time, I was patriotic and I thought that was the place to be…since then, I just can't see the wars were a solution to anything. If there were more women in power solutions would be different, they'd know how to compromise."[649]

While women joining the military sometimes faced social and family pressure, others found their parents were more than supportive. At just 20 years old, Jane S. Frankman joined the WAC and volunteered with the Red Cross, quickly discovering she "loved hospital work."[650] Though Frankman was not eager to join the army, her parents insisted she do something more.[651] She recalled, "My mother used to say, 'I'd go if I could.'"[652] Though she was already selling war bonds and working at the hospital, her

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[646] Rhoda R. Safran Conrad Collection (AFC/2001/001/06409), Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress. https://memory.loc.gov/diglib/vhp/bib/loc.natlib.afc2001001.06409.
[647] Ibid.
[648] Pamela Johnson Conover and Virginia Sapiro, "Gender, Feminist Consciousness and War" *American Journal of Political Science* 37, no. 4 (1993): 1082.
[649] Rhoda Safran.
[650] Jane S. Frankman Collection (AFC/2001/001/21816), Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, accessed July 15, 2017, https://memory.loc.gov/diglib/vhp/bib/loc.natlib.afc2001001.21816.
[651] Ibid.
[652] Ibid.

mother refused to "feed someone who wouldn't serve."[653] She finally decided to join after hearing her college education would be paid for if she enlisted. She became a medical technician and was sent to Tilton General Hospital in Fort Dix, New Jersey. She describes the shock of being on her own. In one instance, when she had a weekend leave, she just stayed in her barracks. She recalled, "I didn't know how to use a bus. I didn't know how to go home."[654] However, she soon found her confidence and once she started working in a medical ward, she found she loved the work so much she often continued after her shift ended.[655]

Theresa C. Capozzi Italiano, joined the Navy Nurse Corps. Before the war, she worked as a charge nurse in St. Mary's Hospital in Orange, New Jersey. She was inspired to join the Navy by a movie, *The White Parade,* which showed nurses taking care of Marines. Her parents were supportive and "didn't seem to be worried."[656] After basic training, she served in California for one year and then went to Guam. She recalled, "When the casualties came in we worked 18-hour shifts."[657] The heat was intense. The ambulances were just regular vans and the roads were bumpy. "It was so bad we used to wear high shoes because of the muddy roads."[658] While some parents were supportive, others were apprehensive or even vehemently against their daughters joining the military. Betty Tosti Leiding, of Ridgewood, New Jersey served as a Storekeeper First Class with

[653] Ibid.
[654] Ibid.
[655] Ibid.
[656] Theresa C. Capozzi Italiano Collection,
(AFC/2001/001/08990), Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, accessed July 15, 2017, http://memory.loc.gov/diglib/vhp/story/loc.natlib.afc2001001.08990/.
[657] Ibid.
[658] Ibid.

the SPAR.[659] She recalled "feeling very patriotic" and decided to join the Coast Guard. After talking to a recruiter, she went home to ask her parents to sign a permission slip. Her father said, "No. Absolutely not. No daughter of mine is going into the service."[660] However, she only needed one parental signature, so her mother signed. Although she was frightened of leaving home, her time in the SPAR impacted her life. She insisted, "it's made a very adventurous life…I think it's very important, but I think because of this experience I've met a lot of interesting people, saw different parts of the country, and it was a great experience."[661]

During WWII, the U.S. military was in desperate need of nurses. Although the Army and Navy Nurse Corps. were not inventions of WWII, the number of women serving expanded during this conflict.[662] By the end of WWII, approximately 59,000 nurses served with the Army and 11,000 served with the Navy.[663] Nurses served in home front hospitals, as flight nurses, in evacuation hospitals overseas and more. Many served at the frontlines, putting themselves at great personal risk. Some were even taken as POWs.[664] Though these nurses worked with the military, they faced little public backlash because their work fit neatly into what was viewed as socially permissible for women at the time. Leonora Porreca Whildin joined the Cadet Nurse Corps., remembering the influence of propaganda. "Yes. Well, they had posters all over the place. I think I saw

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[659] Betty Tosti Leiding Collection, (AFC/2001/001/02546), Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, accessed July 15, 2017, https://memory.loc.gov/diglib/vhp-stories/loc.natlib.afc2001001.02546/.
[660] Ibid.
[661] Ibid.
[662] The Army Nurse Corps. was established in 1901 and the Navy Nurse Corps. was established in 1908 ("Nurses Corps." National Women's History Museum, https://www.nwhm.org/online-exhibits/partners/4.htm).
[663] Ibid.
[664] Evelyn Monahan and Rosemary Neidel-Greenlee, *And if I Perish: Frontline U.S. Army Nurses in World War II* (New York: Anchor Books, 2004), 6.

the Cadet Nurse Corps one in a post office."[665] "Even my mother worked at that time, and she worked in what's now Haviland Chocolates. It was Miller and Hollis. And they used to make some of the candy for the servicemen…My older sister was a WAC, she served in the army. The next sister was the one who worked at Hood Rubber and had the baby…My sister next to me was in Washington, doing secretarial work."[666]

Jessie Watt McIntyre, a young woman from Collingswood, New Jersey, served in the Army Nurse Corps. After completing basic training, which involved instruction in digging foxholes, setting up tents and washing their hands in their helmets, she left for an overseas assignment with the 131st Evacuation Hospital. McIntyre was part of the unit that liberated Camp Gusen, a sub-camp of the Mauthausen Concentration Camp in Austria. She recalled, the camp, "was pretty bad…the army seemed to feel that we might be upset if we went in with the male personnel…By the time we got there a week later, they had already made a cemetery."[667] The nurses tried to treat the Holocaust survivors, although, McIntyre recalls "most of them were dying. I mean they were dying of malnutrition, tuberculosis so it was not at all like a civilian hospital in the U.S."[668] McIntyre achieved the rank of First Lieutenant and, upon ending her WWII service, continued working as a civilian nurse.[669]

Bernice "Bee" Falk Haydu, of Monmouth County, New Jersey was one of a select few women who completed WASP training. In her book, *Letters Home, 1944-1945*, she

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[665] Leonora Porreca Whildin Collection
(AFC/2001/001/57711), Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, accessed July 15, 2017, http://memory.loc.gov/diglib/vhp/story/loc.natlib.afc2001001.57711/transcript?ID=mv0001.
[666] Ibid.
[667] Jessie Emma Watt McIntyre Collection,
(AFC/2001/001/97796), Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, https://memory.loc.gov/diglib/vhp/bib/loc.natlib.afc2001001.58134.
[668] Ibid.
[669] Ibid.

wrote, "On my first solo cross-country I had an emergency landing at the airport where I was supposed to land. It was quite exciting."[670] Bee often wrote excitedly about her WWII assignments. In a letter to her mother, she wrote, "We started night flying and I soloed much to my surprise! We do landings with and without lights. It really is quite an experience flying at night."[671] Once the war ended, Haydu found it difficult to continue her flying career. Years later, she said, "I started writing to companies and airlines, trying to get a job as a pilot and I never heard 'no' said in so many different ways. I finally realized if I was going to stay in flying and make a living at it, I'd have to do it myself."[672] She started a ferrying business with her husband for economic stability but her passion for activism never waned. Haydu was instrumental in gaining recognition for the WASP. In 1975, she was elected president of the Order of Fifanella, the WASP organization.[673] With Haydu and others campaigning on their behalf, the WASP finally received military status in 1977.[674]

All told, the women of New Jersey faced WWII with ingenuity, bravery and selflessness. The impressive participation of Garden State women was clearly represented in military, civil defense and volunteerism. Despite an attempted return to normalcy after WWII, the experiences of these women sent ripples through new generations, as well. According to Marie Anderson Borberly:

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670 Bernice Falk Haydu, *Letters Home: 1944-1945,* (Alberta, Canada: Topline Printing, 2010), 72.
671 Ibid., 80.
672 Shannon Collins, "WASP Pursued Love of Flying, Fought for Women Vets' Recognition" *U.S. Department of Defense*, March 9, 2016, https://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/689318/wasp-pursued-love-of-flying-fought-for-women-vets-recognition/.
673 Fifanella, a female gremlin designed and donated by the Walt Disney Company, was the mascot of the WASP (Shannon Collins, "WASP Pursued Love of Flying, Fought for Women Vets' Recognition" *U.S. Department of Defense*, March 9, 2016, https://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/689318/wasp-pursued-love-of-flying-fought-for-women-vets-recognition/).
674 Ibid.

> Well, it was a different kind of war…it certainly made women stronger, because they were doing so much that men had done and they were able to assert themselves…I certainly felt that my education and my attitude, also, my father's attitude, that women should go ahead and be what they can be...I certainly think I contributed to my children in many, many ways because of that.[675]

It is estimated that 560,500 New Jersey residents served in the military during WWII. Of those, approximately 10,000 were women.[676] At the end of the conflict, the record of women serving in the military prompted Eisenhower himself to comment, "I think it is a mistake to put [the women] on a Reserve basis rather than a Regular. I think they should be an integrated regular part of the Army. I think the Air Forces feel the same way. We need them."[677] The military was not the only area where women excelled. New Jersey received $12 billion in wartime contracts, with Garden State women doing their fair share of production.[678] With Curtiss-Wright manufacturing airplane engines, Eastern Aircraft making Avenger bombers and Wildcat fighters, Campbell Soup producing meals for troops, Merck and Company making DDT and more, New Jersey was truly an epicenter of production.[679]

While the participation of New Jersey women during WWII is often viewed as a show of patriotic fervor, repeated throughout the nation, evidence suggests this outgrowth of civic activism was part of a process which started with the suffrage movement and continued through the Progressive Era and beyond. With the suffrage win, national organizations like the LWV and the NCL formed state groups which cultivated an activist atmosphere where women finally took a prominent role in pushing for social change. In

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[675] Marie Anderson Borberly, 26-27.
[676] G. Kurt. Piehler, "World War II" in Maxine N. Lurie and Marc Mappen, eds., *The Encyclopedia of New Jersey*, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2004), 255-256.
[677] Bettie J. Morden, *The Women's Army Corps, 1945-1978*, (Washington, D.C.: Center for Military History, 2000), 66.
[678] Piehler, "World War II," 256.
[679] Ibid.

New Jersey, the NJLWV and the CLNJ served to train future generations in successful civic engagement, fostering networks of influence which were easily mobilized during wartime. For young women coming of age during WWII, civic groups like the Girl Scouts formed early pathways to community engagement and many college-age women found camaraderie and activism through associations and courses at Douglass College. New Jersey's rich history of activism, with the NJLWV and the CLNJ forming the most prominent groups, formed the foundation for the WWII participation of women.

Figure 3

WACs at Fort Hancock, 1943: A member of the WAC paints out the extra “A” representing “Auxiliary.” National Park Service Gateway Museum

Figure 4

WACs at a Mess Hall in Fort Hancock, 1943: WACs eat at a mess hall in Fort Hancock. National Park Service Gateway Museum.

Figure 5

WAVES at Lakehurst: WAVES Elaine Olsen and Ted Snow study aircraft mechanics. National Archives.

Figure 6

Beth Dillihay, WAAC: WAAC Portrait. Atlantic City Free Public Library.

Figure 7

Red Cross Women: Members of the Atlantic County Red Cross Motor Corps. Atlantic City Free Public Library.

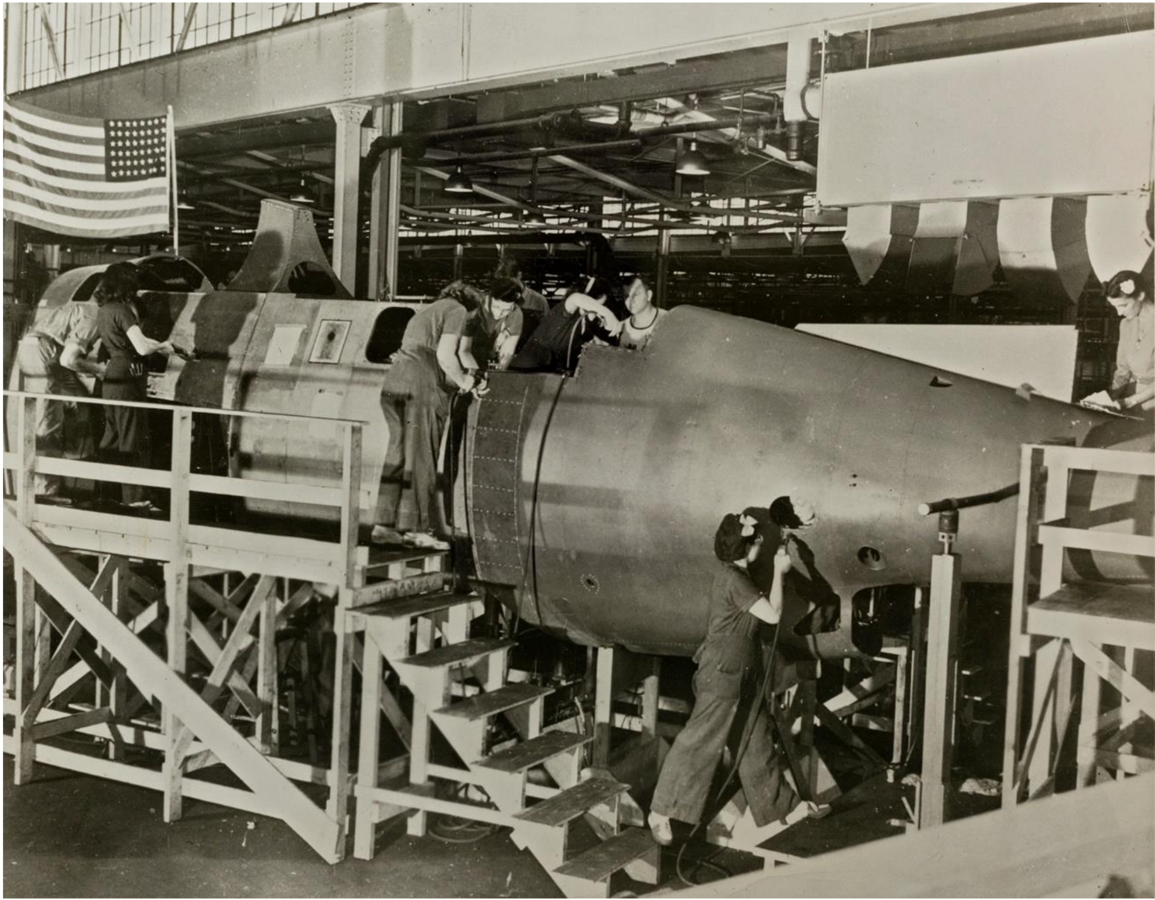
Figure 8

Nurses in Atlantic City: Nurses at Thomas England General Hospital, Atlantic City, NJ. Atlantic City Free Public Library.

Figure 9

Sewing Moms: Soldiers and local sewing moms, Atlantic City, NJ. Atlantic City Free Public Library.

Figure 10



Riveters Work on a Torpedo Bomber: War workers in Ewing, NJ. Joseph Bilby.

Figure 11

Basketball at Fort Hancock: WACs play basketball in their free time at Fort Hancock, NJ. National Park Service Gateway Museum.

CONCLUSION

This research demonstrates a continuation of activism in New Jersey beginning with the suffragists, moving into the surge in reform activity during the Progressive Era, continuing through the 1920s and the Great Depression, and influencing both home front and overseas activism during WWII. With the end of suffrage, women stood at the precipice of a new society. Although the elation of victory was fresh immediately after the ratification of the nineteenth amendment, much work was yet to be done. The activist climate created in New Jersey, which continued past the suffrage win and into the Progressive Era and ultimately WWII, prepared the foundation for wartime activism as women shifted into public roles. As suffragists stood at the edge of victory, they formed non-partisan groups to educate these new women voters. The New Jersey League of Women Voters (NJLWV) was a direct descendent of the suffragists, while the Consumers League of New Jersey (CLNJ) was founded explicitly to utilize the power of the consumer to usher in social change. In the interwar years, these two organizations launched initiatives covering a vast spectrum of social problems, from child labor and women's night work to factory conditions, occupational health and constitutional reform. While the flurry of WWII activity on the home front and abroad overshadowed the work and influence of reform organizations, particularly the CLNJ and the NJLWV, it did not stop their activism. For both groups, the war years included new challenges and the reemergence of old issues, as New Jersey's women utilized the lessons learned since suffrage to mobilize the home front.

Although WWII is often considered the impetus for the increased presence of women in the workforce and in public life, suffrage itself created a seedbed of activism

which prepared women for wartime involvement. According to Felice Gordon, the suffrage victory in New Jersey led to increased social activism for women and improved the acceptance of women in public areas throughout the Progressive era and beyond.[680] The lessons New Jersey clubwomen learned about organization, education and networking were all easily utilized to promote necessary civic participation during WWII. Throughout this national emergency, New Jersey clubwomen shifted their focus to support the war effort, augmenting their pre-war concerns, rather than replacing them. In the interwar period, the continuation of women's activism in New Jersey, from suffrage onward, is represented in the legislative campaigns and educational programs of the NJLWV and the CLNJ. For members of the NJLWV, concern for democratic principles and equality before the law was merely reinforced by wartime hostilities, which culminated in the reform of the New Jersey state constitution and provided a key point of cohesion in the efforts of both the NJLWV and the CLNJ.

This continuum of activism is evidenced in the civic engagement of both the NJLWV and the CLNJ in the Depression Era. Even with the desperate economic situation of the 1930s, the NJLWV expanded its "Know Your Town and Counties" initiative. Importantly, this campaign's information-gathering and distribution fostered voters who were better prepared to cast ballots. Since these published pamphlets identified areas of inefficiency in local governments, they ultimately led to an increase in reform campaigns as well. As with the rest of the country, the NJLWV was affected by the economic crisis. With funding at an all-time-low, the League continued pushing for economic regulation, housing reform and mandatory unemployment and old age

[680] Gordon, *After Winning*, 199.

insurance. NJLWV education drives also increased in the 1930s, with jury schools on the forefront, promoting civic education among New Jersey women.

During the Great Depression, the CLNJ continued their activism with new campaigns and revitalized old ones. In the 1930s, the protection of New Jersey's children took precedence, especially those engaged in work. Notably, the CLNJ sponsored the passage of a bill to fine or imprison parents or legal guardians who allowed any child in their care to work during regular school hours. Although the CLNJ focused on women and children during this time, they had a considerable impact on all laborers as well, helping to pass a state minimum wage law in 1933. Thrust into public awareness by the case of the "Radium Girls," the CLNJ spearheaded a push for occupational health standards and compensation in the 1920s and 1930s. The uncertainty and fear of the Great Depression, coupled with the concern for adequate safety measures in the workplace, led the CLNJ to form the Industrial Standards Committee in 1932.

During WWII, the NJLWV also focused on wartime service projects which educated New Jersey citizens about their responsibilities on the home front, including conserving fuel and other materials, rationing, buying war bonds and more. Although the NJLWV was strictly anti-militaristic, they supported the Allied war effort, seeking a speedy end to hostilities and a successful peace agreement afterwards. Other initiatives, continuing from the Progressive Era into WWII included child labor protections and occupational safety. With the emergency of war, society shifted as necessity dictated changes in working patterns. Factories with war production contracts faced a labor shortage which was only filled when women stepped into roles formerly closed to them. However, both the NJLWV and the CLNJ recognized the dangers of exploiting the labor

force under the guise of patriotic duty. During WWII, both groups fought to keep the labor standards for men, women and children in effect throughout the duration of the conflict.

Often, the specialized concerns of the CLNJ brought them into direct conflict with the new demands for war production. As Susanna Zwemer stated, "Now that we are in the war, new and greater risks lie ahead."[681] With the growth of the defense industry, the CLNJ struggled to ensure their hard-won legislative victories were not lost. During the war years, the proposed suspension of standards put in place to protect workers, including women and children, prompted the CLNJ to relaunch public information campaigns to stop these changes. The threat of occupational diseases and unsafe working conditions remained a focus of the CLNJ. Despite increased wages for women war workers, the CLNJ continued to fight for industry-wide pay standards during WWII. Additionally, with wartime production quotas instituted in many New Jersey industries, the CLNJ continued their factory inspections during this time.

While patriotism cannot be ignored as a motivation for WWII activism, the pre-existing atmosphere of women's civic engagement in New Jersey provides a more convincing explanation. Although women in the Garden State certainly engaged in civic groups before suffrage, the organized campaigns for women's right to vote served to both push these women into the public eye and form future activist groups, most notably the NJLWV. As a state with a strong activist foundation, New Jersey's history includes numerous civic, religious and social clubs dominated by women. The enormous activist spirit present in the area prompted the founding of the New Jersey State Federation of

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[681] Zwemer, December 29, 1941, box 7, folder 1, New Jersey Consumers' League Papers.

Women's Clubs in 1894 to provide an organizational structure. Several years later, with the ratification of the nineteenth amendment, activist women stood on the precipice of a new era of political and social influence. In New Jersey, the NJLWV and the CLNJ formed the most influential groups pushing for legislative change. While these organizations created better conditions for the citizens of New Jersey, they also served as training institutions for future generations of activist women. In many cases, the public information put forth by the CLNJ and the NJLWV during WWII echoed the initiatives of the federal and state government and local civil defense groups.

Traditionally, scholarly treatment of women's involvement in WWII tends to focus on patriotism as an all-encompassing motivation for the surge in wartime activism. While this is certainly a significant factor, other elements of pre-existing civic engagement are often ignored. Defining civic engagement as "the engagement of an individual with the interests, goals, concerns and common good of a community," places women's involvement in WWII mobilization firmly within those boundaries.[682] Through the consideration of WWII activism as part of a continuum of historical civic engagement, the seedbed of club activity in New Jersey, with suffrage as the connecting force, forms a more thorough explanation. The gendered forms of volunteerism, notably the USO and the Red Cross, were viewed as natural extensions of women's volunteerism. The more women strayed from this tradition, as with defense industry work and military enlistment, the more social resistance they faced. The networks of influence and civic training offered to young women formed the necessary foundation for quick and effective mobilization during WWII, both within and beyond traditional women's arenas.

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[682] Barrett and Zani, "Political and Civic Engagement," 4.

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