RECOUNTING THE PAST

A Student Journal of Historical Studies at Illinois State University

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A Radical Activist: Alice Paul and Her Fight for Equal Suffrage: 1910-1920

Kim Shehron-Martin

"The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex."

Susan B. Anthony Amendment

I. Woman's Suffrage

The woman's suffrage movement began in 1848 when an organized group of women declared their right to full citizenship, including the right to suffrage, at the Seneca Falls Convention in Seneca Falls, New York.[1] However, the struggle for suffrage had barely gotten off of the ground when it took a backseat to the abolitionist work of the Civil War. Thus, it was not until 1878, thirty years after the suffrage movement had first organized, that Senator A. A. Sargent of California, a friend of Susan B. Anthony and the woman's suffrage movement, introduced the Susan B. Anthony Amendment in the Senate.[2] Although it was a simple amendment consisting of only twenty-eight words, the Susan B. Anthony Amendment was powerful enough to divide the citizens of the United States for the next forty-two years. This division pitted the suffragists against the anti-suffragists and the women of the United States against the established, patriarchal institutions of business and government. With the entrance of Alice Paul into the suffrage debate in 1910, the contention surrounding the Susan B. Anthony Amendment grew more complicated and further pitted suffragist against suffragist. At the same time, Paul's radical activism pushed the suffrage issue to the forefront of the national political scene, a strategic maneuver which eventually paid off with the passage of the Federal Suffrage Amendment.

II. Alice Paul

Alice Paul was a controversial woman whose radical ideas and style of leadership would greatly influence the woman's suffrage debate in the United States. Paul was born in 1885, seven years after the Susan B. Anthony amendment was first introduced into Congress.[3] Paul's radical thoughts about the rights of women and the tactics she utilized to attain those rights were significantly influenced by three factors: her Quaker upbringing and education, her feminist mother, and her experiences with the Woman's Social and Political Union (WSPU) of Great Britain.

Alice Paul was the oldest of four children in a family that was strongly affiliated with the Hicksite Quakers, a sect which promoted individual liberty of conscience as well as the equality of men and women. It was also a sect which affirmed the notion that young women were educable, productive members of society.[4] These values followed Paul throughout each level of her Quaker-based education and instilled in her a distinct sense of right and wrong. They also provided the foundation for her personal philosophy that as a woman, she was entitled, and even obliged, to address social problems. The fact that an ancestor was imprisoned in England because of his Quaker beliefs was also a major motivator for Paul in her work for the rights of women. Because her ancestor had suffered because of his beliefs, Paul found the courage and determination to defend her beliefs no matter how controversial and no matter what the consequences.[5]

Paul's steadfast beliefs in the rights of women and her strong leadership capabilities were also shaped by her mother. Educated at the Quaker-founded Swarthmore College, Paul's mother was an active member of the Society of Friends, serving on the School Committee which was the governing board of Alice's Quaker-based Moorestown Friends Academy in New Jersey, and holding a leadership role as Clerk of the Committee.[6] Because of her mother's involvement and leadership in the Quaker community, Paul received, at a young age, a strong message about the rights of women and their roles in the community.

Upon graduation from high school, Paul followed in the footsteps of her mother and attended Swarthmore College, graduating in 1905. After graduation, she earned a graduate degree in Social Work from the New York College Settlement School of Philanthropy, later Columbia, and then accepted an offer to continue her graduate work at the Quaker Study Center for Public Service and Theology in Woodbrooke, England, where she studied social work from 1907-1910.[7]

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[1]Sara M. Evans, *Born for Liberty: A History of Women in America* (New York: Free Press, 1989), 95.

[2]Eleanor Flexner, *Century of Struggle: The Woman's Rights Movement in the United States*, 2d ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1975), 176.

[3]Miriam Feyerherm, "Alice Paul: New Jersey's Quintessential Suffragist," *New Jersey Folklife* 15 (1990): 32.

[4]Feyerherm, "Alice Paul," 32-33

[5]Feyerherm, "Alice Paul," 32.

[6]Feyerherm, "Alice Paul," 32.

[7]Linda G. Ford, *Iron-Jawed Angels: The Suffrage Militancy of the National Woman's Party 1912-1920* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1991), 18.

Shortly after her arrival in England, Paul was introduced to the Pankhurst family--a family of fervent proponents of militant activism as a means of attaining woman's suffrage in Great Britain. Paul soon became actively involved in their Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) and began utilizing its direct-action tactics of handing out papers, speaking at protest meetings, and interrupting speeches.[8] In 1909 Alice made a conscious decision to become actively militant in the suffrage movement by joining a deputation to Prime Minister Asquith. The deputation ended with rock throwing and the arrest of Paul and several other WSPU members. This incident marked the first of six times that she would be arrested in her work for suffrage only to invoke the resistance strategy of the hunger-strike and eventually to be force-fed by prison officials.[9] The repeated arrests, force-feeding sessions, and other instances of violence that Paul experienced as a member of the WSPU made her even more radical, more militant, and more dedicated in her work for woman's suffrage.

III. Alice Paul and the NAWSA Congressional Committee, 1910-1913

In 1910 Alice Paul returned to the United States determined to utilize the direct-action tactics she had learned in Great Britain's struggle for suffrage to press for woman's suffrage in America. Her first step was to join the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), a suffrage organization that was created in 1890 when the National Woman Suffrage Association and the American Woman Suffrage Association merged. The goal of NAWSA was to agitate for woman's suffrage on a state by state basis.[10] Her second step was to begin pressing for the Susan B. Anthony Amendment, arguing that the NAWSA's conservative stance of relying on a state's rights philosophy of attaining suffrage was much too costly and, more importantly, much too slow. She therefore argued that the NAWSA should create a Congressional Committee whose sole function would be to continually fight for the federal suffrage amendment in Congress.[11]

After substantial debate, the NAWSA board finally agreed upon the necessity of creating a Congressional Committee. On January 2, 1913, the committee was created with Alice Paul as Chair.[12] Paul immediately began her work of agitating for a Federal Suffrage Amendment by utilizing the direct-action techniques that she had learned as a member of the WSPU. The Congressional Committee organized deputations to newly-elected President Woodrow Wilson, created a press service for the sole purpose of distributing suffrage literature, and organized meetings throughout Washington, D.C.[13] The Committee also engaged in organized activities that drew the attention of the American public to the cause of suffrage. For example, Alice Paul organized a huge woman's suffrage parade in Washington, D.C. on the eve of President-Elect Woodrow Wilson's inauguration. The public was so mesmerized by this activity that they lined the streets of the city to watch the spectacle and the riot that unfortunately ensued when rowdy observers angrily mobbed the parade participants. Because everyone was watching the parade, there was no one at Union Station to welcome Woodrow Wilson upon his arrival. Bewildered, Wilson was quoted as saying, "Where are the people?"[14] He should have taken this event as a signal of the suffrage battles he would fight during his administration.

The Congressional Committee, under the direction of Alice Paul and her cohort, Lucy Burns, brought fresh life into the stagnant Federal Suffrage Amendment. Although the two women were quite controversial with the older members of the NAWSA, one member was quoted as saying that Paul and Burns had gotten "our old guard half roused from its comatose state."[15] Radical events such as the suffrage parade on the eve of Wilson's inaugural allowed the Congressional Committee to focus the attention of the American people on the necessity of granting women suffrage. In addition, Alice Paul's capabilities as a political strategist and leader meant that the Congressional Committee was able to organize effectively to press for the passage of the suffrage amendment. As a result, on April 7, 1913, the Congressional Committee was able to reintroduce, for the first time in almost a decade, the Susan B. Anthony Amendment in both the House and Senate.[16]

The Congressional Committee learned quickly, however, that such political activities were not without a price. In turn, the Congressional Union for Woman's Suffrage was created as an auxiliary of the NAWSA to raise the sums of money needed by the Congressional Committee both to operate their headquarters and engage in their direct-action activities.[17] As Chair of the Congressional Union, Alice Paul immediately held a select membership drive to recruit only those women who believed that woman's suffrage was "fundamental to all democratic

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[8]Christine A. Lunardini, *From Equal Suffrage to Equal Rights: Alice Paul and the National Woman's Party, 1912-1928* (New York: New York University Press, 1986), 14.

[9]Ford, *Iron-Jawed*, 29. See also, Doris Stevens, *Jailed for Freedom* (n.p.: Boni & Liveright, Inc., 1920; repr., Freeport, New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1971), 366.

[10]Evans, *Born for Liberty*, 153.

[11]Loretta E. Zimmerman, "Alice Paul and the National Woman's Party, 1912-1920" (Ph. D. diss., Tulane University, 1964), 38-39.

[12]Zimmerman, "Alice Paul," 40.

[13]Zimmerman, "Alice Paul," 41.

[14]Stevens, *Jailed for Freedom*, 21.

[15]Zimmerman, "Alice Paul," 8.

[16]Zimmerman, "Alice Paul," 40.

[17]Zimmerman, "Alice Paul," 48-49.

progress" and who considered suffrage to be "the main issue in the field of national politic[18]

IV. Congressional Union for Woman's Suffrage, 1913-1916

Within a year, philosophical differences between the NAWSA and the Congressional Union on how suffrage should be won led to a split which pitted against one another, the conservative, mostly older members of NAWSA and the more radical and sometimes militant members of the Congressional Union, in the larger battle to win woman's suffrage.[19] Although the NAWSA and the Congressional Union tried to negotiate their differences, the Congressional Union had become an independent suffrage organization by the spring of 1914.[20] Paul's first step as chair of the newly independent organization was to recruit suffragists of national prominence to the Congressional Union so as to add an aura of credibility to the organization.[21] Her next task, organizing members to press for the Federal Suffrage Amendment, proved more difficult. The members of the Congressional Union envisioned the organization as one where members had voting privileges as well as a voice in the election of officers. Paul's vision of the Congressional Union, however, was that of a small organization of which she was chair and in which the members were totally loyal both to her and to the agenda of the Congressional Union. She did not want a democratic organization in which members would have voting privileges and in which she had to account for the money the Congressional Union received or spent.[22] To Paul, these measures simply wasted precious time and resources that could be otherwise utilized in the battle for suffrage. Those who could not accept her terms were not welcome in the organization.

As an independent suffrage organization, the Congressional Union set as its only goal to "secure an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, enfranchising women."[23] As a means of achieving this goal, the Congressional Union quickly established a lobby on Capitol Hill which worked fervently to encourage the House to create a Woman's Suffrage Committee as such a committee would greatly increase the chance of the Federal Suffrage Amendment reaching the floor and passing. Unfortunately, the attempts to create such a committee were unsuccessful.[24] As a result, the Congressional Union began to adhere in earnest to the policy established by the Congressional Committee in 1913. This policy stipulated that the party in power, in this case the Democrats, would be held responsible for Congress's failure to advance the Federal Suffrage Amendment.[25]

By 1915, women in twelve Western states, including Illinois, had won either full or partial right to suffrage.[26] This fact played into the political strategy of the Congressional Union as Alice Paul's next plan was to make suffrage a party issue by organizing women in states such as Wyoming and Illinois where women had either full or partial suffrage and who could theoretically influence elections.[27] In order to organize the women in an effective manner, Paul began to coordinate state branches of the Congressional Union. She personally chose the women who would chair each state association because she believed that these women had to be excellent speakers, possess executive and financial ability, be loyal to the cause, and be willing to sacrifice personal comforts for a principle.[28] The chairs of the state branches were primarily responsible for the progress of the Federal Suffrage Amendment in their state. To increase support for the amendment, they were to select competent women throughout the state who would serve as congressional district chairs and who would disseminate information, recruit new members, raise funds, lobby their legislators, and increase the circulation of the *Suffragist*, the national organ of the Congressional Union.[29] Although opposition to these branches was great, the Congressional Union had branches in all forty-eight states within two years.[30]

Despite the efforts of Alice Paul and the state branches of the Congressional Union to influence individual politicians, the Susan B. Anthony Amendment failed in 1915 in the Sixty-Third

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[18]Gertrude Lynde Crocker to Hazle Buck Ewing, 15 June 1915. Ewing Papers, University Archives. Box 26-3-4. University Archives, Illinois State University, Normal, IL. The Papers of Hazle Buck Ewing include the following items: correspondence regarding woman's suffrage, 1915-1918; newsclippings, programs, brochures, and flyers relating to national, state, and local woman's suffrage events; three volumes of *The Suffragist*, (2/20/15, 6/17/16, 4/22/16); one volume of *The Woman Citizen*, (7/7/17); newsclippings regarding woman's registration activities during World War I; tri-colored banner of The Woman's Party and button from The Woman's Party; and correspondence, brochures, and flyers relating to Equal Rights. Hereafter, University Archives, Illinois State University cited as UAISU.

[19]Evans, *Born for Liberty*, 166.

[20]Zimmerman, "Alice Paul," 92.

[21]Zimmerman, "Alice Paul," 105.

[22] Zimmerman, "Alice Paul," 97.

[23]Gertrude Lynde Crocker to Hazle Buck Ewing, 15 June 1915, Ewing Papers, UAISU.

[24]Zimmerman, "Alice Paul," 126.

[25]Zimmerman, "Alice Paul," 77.

[26]Congressional Union handbill entitled, "Suffrage in the Next Election," 1915, Ewing Papers, UAISU.

[27]Flexner, *Century of Struggle*, 163.

[28]Zimmerman, "Alice Paul," 182.

[29]Josephine Kempt Linton to Hazle Buck Ewing, 22 March 1916, Ewing Papers, UAISU.

[30]Zimmerman, "Alice Paul," 189.

Congress by eleven votes in the Senate.[31] Support for a Federal Suffrage Amendment did not exist in the executive branch of the federal government in 1915 either. Since his inauguration in 1913, suffragists had looked to President Woodrow Wilson for leadership in the Democratic party on the issue of a Federal Suffrage Amendment. Wilson, however, was a fervent believer in states' rights on the issue of woman's suffrage. This point was made clear in a press release dated October 6, 1915, in which he said that the issue of woman's suffrage "should be settled by the states and not by the national government, and that in no circumstances should it be made a party question." He then made it known that he was going to vote for the woman's suffrage referendum in his home state of New Jersey, not as the leader of the Democratic Party, but as a voting citizen from the state of New Jersey.[32] A Federal Suffrage Amendment was clearly not a part of President Wilson's political agenda in 1915.

The fact that President Wilson was going to vote for woman's suffrage in his home state of New Jersey did not help the women of that state win suffrage in the 1915 election. In fact, referenda on woman's suffrage failed not only in New Jersey, but in New York, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts as well. These failures were added to a long list of state referenda on woman's suffrage. Between 1870 and 1910, 480 suffrage campaigns were organized in thirty-three states. Unfortunately, only seventeen referenda were held on the issue of suffrage with success savored only in Colorado and Idaho.[33] The loses of 1915 were further proof to the Congressional Union that the only way to attain suffrage at any point soon was through the passage of the Federal Suffrage Amendment.

The failure of the woman's suffrage referenda in 1915 led to a further change in strategy on the part of the Congressional Union. In a letter to members written shortly after the election, Alice Paul argued that "we must realize the wisdom of concentrating our strength upon the national government rather than dissipating it in many state referendums."[34] A fuller hint of the strategy which was to be adopted can be seen in a letter sent on behalf of the Congressional Union in 1915 in which Lucy Burns remarked that, "The President in his official capacity will never have full claim to our allegiance until women are enfranchised. As it is, women are not included in our constitutional arrangements and they must feel estranged from a government which does not recognize them."[35]

Although the suffrage movement did not gain any political victories in 1915, it did gain the recognition that it needed to keep its momentum. By 1916, the woman's suffrage movement was fashionable, especially in larger cities such as Chicago. Power came with this newfound popularity and in 1916, a presidential and congressional election year, this power could be used to influence elections at the national level. Thus, the Congressional Union formed its newest political strategy around the principle that voting women had power and could influence elections. The new year, however, found President Wilson reiterating his states' rights belief on the suffrage issue. In a speech made to a delegation from the Congressional Union, Wilson argued that "those things were most solidly built that were built piece by piece" and that he felt "the genius of our political development in this country lay in the processes of our states and in the very clear definition of the difference of sphere between the state and federal government."[36]

Wilson's insistence on the state-by-state method of attaining equal suffrage did not stop the Congressional Union from attempting to pass the Susan B. Anthony Amendment through Congress in 1916. A letter from the Congressional Union informed members that the House Judiciary Committee had set March 28 as the day for reconsideration of the Federal Suffrage Amendment and encouraged them to contact the eleven members of the Judiciary Committee who had previously consented to vote for a report on the amendment because "the absence of any of the supporters could mean defeat for the amendment."[37]

Despite the organized efforts of the Congressional Union, the Federal Suffrage Amendment did not pass through Congress in the Spring of 1916. In an attempt to effect rapid political change, the Congressional Union, under a new Constitution drafted by Alice Paul which allowed for the creation of a national voting organization, began to organize more intensely at the national level. In the spring of 1916, members of the Advisory Council of State and National Officers of the Congressional Union from unenfranchised states met at the National Headquarters in Washington, D.C., to discuss the political strategy they should follow to pass the Federal Suffrage Amendment through Congress in 1916. The leaders decided that the best strategy would be to convince Congress that the Congressional Union and the woman suffrage movement had such support among the voting women of the West that they would be a

[31]Alice Paul to Hazle Buck Ewing, 25 November 1915, Ewing Papers, UAISU.

[32]Arthur S. Link, ed., *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson, 68 vols* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966-1993), 35: 28.

[33]Flexner, *Century of Struggle*, 225.

[34]Alice Paul to Hazle Buck Ewing, 25 November 1915, Ewing Papers, UAISU.

[35]Lucy Burns to Hazle Buck Ewing, 5 June 1915, Ewing Papers, UAISU.

[36]Link, *Papers of Wilson*, 36:3.

[37]Edith Abbott, Florence King, and Lola Maverick Lloyd to Hazle Buck Ewing, February, 1916, Ewing Papers, UAISU.

factor in the upcoming fall elections if the amendment were not passed. Thus, the immediate task faced by the Congressional Union was to organize the support needed to demonstrate to Congress and the President that, as a voting block, Western women were indeed formidable. In order to make this strategy a reality, a delegation of women from the East was sent West to make personal appeals to the women voters to vote in their states to urge immediate action in favor of the Susan B. Anthony Amendment.[38]

The Illinois Branch of the Congressional Union planned a two-day demonstration in Chicago in honor of the Westward bound delegation to which suffragists from throughout Illinois were invited. On April 10, the delegation of thirty-six unenfranchised women including Harriot Stanton Blatch, daughter of the famed suffragist Elizabeth Cady Stanton, arrived in Chicago.[39] Handbills distributed to the voting women at the demonstration voiced the urgent pleas from the unenfranchised women of the East: "You have POLITICAL power and that power may be made A DECISIVE FACTOR IN OUR STRUGGLE," "See to it that the Republican party puts woman suffrage and the Susan B. Anthony amendment into its platform at the Chicago convention next June," and "We, therefore, appeal to all Western voting Civil Service women to use their political power NOW on members in Congress to pass the Susan B. Anthony amendment at this session."[40]

Energized by the pleas of the Eastern women to make suffrage a reality for all women, members of the Congressional Union returned to Chicago in June of 1916 for a convention to organize the women from the twelve states with presidential suffrage into a National Woman's Party which would work for the defeat of President Wilson in the fall election.[41] Activities included several days of meetings, luncheons, and lectures which were intended to inform women of the political situation in Washington, D.C., as well as to further enlighten them in their understanding of politics. The speeches included Mrs. Harriot Stanton Blatch's "Appeal from the East to the West;" Miss Ida Finney Mackville's "Party Government and Responsibility;" Miss Lucy Burns's "Legislative Situation in Congress;" and Mrs. William Kent, Mrs. Grace Wilbur Trout, and Mrs. Sarah Bard Field's "The Political Power of Women."[42]

At the same time, the Republican Party was in Chicago holding its national convention. Members of the newly organized Woman's Party, eager to flex their political muscle, attended the Republican Convention to give input on the party plank with respect to suffrage. The Woman's Party also held a forum on June 6 at the Blackstone Theater where representatives of the major political parties were given the opportunity to "address the claim of their party to the support of women voters."[43] The Woman's Party Convention ended with a bang on June 8 when over 5,000 women marched along Michigan Avenue in a rainstorm demanding that both the Republican and Democratic Parties endorse the Susan B. Anthony Amendment as part of their party platforms. In the mile and a half march, the women carried signs which read: "Women, the De-Voted Mothers of the Country," "A Republic that is Half Free Cannot Endure," and "The United States Means Us as Well as You."[44]

The march in Chicago in June was not the first attempt made by the Congressional Union to influence the platforms of the major parties. In early April, the suffragists had started to work on persuading both the Democratic and Republican Parties to include an endorsement of woman's suffrage in their party platforms. Despite the suggestions of both the Congressional Union and the increasingly politically active NAWSA, the party plank as adopted by the Democratic party on June 16 read: "We recommend the extension of the franchise to the women of the country by the states upon the same terms as to men."[45] Thus, the Democratic platform reflected Wilson's states' rights view on suffrage.

The suffragists immediately made known their disappointment with the Democrats' adoption of a states' rights plank regarding suffrage. In a letter to President Wilson dated July 7, Sara Bard Field, a member of both the Congressional Union and the Woman's Party, wrote that she and "hundreds of thousands of voting women of the West" disapproved of the party platform. Hinting at the potential political power of the voting women in the West and the influence that they could have in the upcoming election, Bard also wrote that as a Democratic woman she hoped that Wilson would not "allow any menace [sic] to the democratic party in the fall election" because of his unwillingness to act upon a Federal Suffrage Amendment.[46] Bard's letter also hinted at the political strategy of the Congressional Union of holding the party in power responsible for the failure or success of the Federal Suffrage Amendment.

The Woman's Party adopted the Congressional Union's political tactic of holding the party in power responsible for the success of the Federal Suffrage

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[38]Mrs. Bertram Sippy to Hazle Buck Ewing, April, 1916, Ewing Papers, UAISU.

[39]Mellie (last name unknown) to Hazle Buck Ewing, 11 April 1916, Ewing Papers, UAISU.

[40]Congressional Union handbill entitled, "Voting Women Help Us!," April, 1916, Ewing Papers, UAISU.

[41]Virginia Arnold to Hazle Buck Ewing, 27 May 1916, Ewing Papers, UAISU.

[42]National Woman's Party Convention handbill, June, 1916, Ewing Papers, UAISU.

[43]National Woman's Party Convention handbill, June, 1916, Ewing Papers, UAISU.

[44]*Chicago Daily Tribune*, 8 June 1916.

[45]Link, *Papers of Wilson*, 37:199.

[46]Link, *Papers of Wilson*, 48:375-376.

Amendment in August of 1916 at a conference held in Colorado. In a letter to President Wilson dated August 11, Anne Martin and Mabel Vernon, both officers of the Woman's Party, put forth the resolutions as adopted at the Woman's Party conference:

> Whereas, the present Administration under President Wilson and the democratic party, have persistently opposed the passage of a national suffrage amendment. . . . Resolved, That the National Woman's Party pledges itself to use its best efforts in the twelve states where women vote for President to defeat the democratic candidate for President and in the eleven states where women vote for members of Congress to defeat the candidates of the democratic party for Congress.[47]

Determined to work against all Democratic leaders because of their failure to further the suffrage cause with the Wilson administration, the Woman's Party pledged its support for the Republican Charles Evans Hughes in the presidential race.[48] Although the Woman's Party expressed their support for Hughes not because he was a Republican but because he was "nailed to the suffrage plank," the Woman's Party was quickly becoming a wing of the Republican Party in the eyes of many.[49]

As a result, the Woman's Party hurriedly organized between August and November at all levels, federal, state, and local, for the defeat of President Wilson and the Democratic members of Congress in the states in which women could vote. Nevertheless, President Wilson was re-elected in the election of 1916, losing in only two states where women had full or partial suffrage, Oregon and Illinois.[50] Wilson's success in the election revealed to the Woman's Party that their Western bloc strategy failed because it did not take into account that the enfranchised women of the West were already voting along party and special interest lines.[51] The failure of the strategy did not signify defeat for the members of the Woman's Party. Within days of the election, the state branches of the Woman's Party were organizing deputations in each congressional district throughout the nation to inform each congressman that women were interested in the actions they took on the Federal Suffrage Amendment.[52]

V. The National Woman's Party, 1917-1918

Since June of 1916, the Woman's Party and the Congressional Union had been collaborating at the national level to try to pass the Federal Suffrage Amendment. Because most of the women that were involved in the Woman's Party were also members of the Congressional Union, Alice Paul, as Chair of both organizations, put forth a resolution that the two organizations should merge to utilize more effectively their resources and to avoid a duplication of services. Although there was some opposition to such a plan, the Woman's Party and the Congressional Union merged to form the National Woman's Party on March 4, 1917.[53]

After a disappointing year of no major political gains, the Woman's Party adopted a new, more militant strategy to gain support for woman's suffrage in 1916. For several months Alice Paul had considered picketing the White House, but had decided not to put her plan into action. However, when President Wilson informed a deputation of Congressional Union members that he could do nothing for suffrage until they obtained "concrete public opinion" for their cause, the idea of picketing the White House seemed to Paul to be the surest means of success in the shortest amount of time.[54] Thus, on January 9, 1917, a news report announced that the Woman's Party would post women pickets about the White House grounds so that President Wilson would not be able to enter or leave without encountering a plea for the suffrage cause.[55] The next day the pickets, known as the "silent sentinels," took up positions around the White House carrying banners that read: "Mr. President, how long must women wait for liberty;" "Governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed;" and "I don't wish to sit down and let any man take care of me without my having at least a voice in it; and if he doesn't listen to my advice, I am going to make it as unpleasant for him as I can"--ironically, a quote from Woodrow Wilson himself.[56]

The pickets continued surrounding the White House peacefully until April, 1917. Once the United States entered the war in Europe, the pickets were viewed as unpatriotic, especially since some of their banners referred to President Wilson as "Kaiser Wilson," and the respect that they had once enjoyed turned into riots in front of the White House as angry military personnel and then civilians attacked the picketers.[57] Even though they were physically assaulted by young men, the women nonetheless continued to picket the White House with banners that reflected the impact of the war on the suffrage issue: "Russia and England are enfranchising their women in war time," and "It is unjust to deny women a voice in their government when the government is drafting

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[47]Link, *Papers of Wilson*, 38:28.

[48]*The Pantagraph* (Blomington, Il), 6 September 1916.

[49]Stevens, *Jailed for Freedom*, 16.

[50]Flexner, *Century of Struggle*, 287.

[51]Stevens, *Jailed for Freedom*, xx.

[52]Mrs. Bertram Sippy to Hazle Buck Ewing, 14 November 1916, Ewing Papers, UAISU.

[53]Inez Haynes Irwin, *The Story of Alice Paul and The National Woman's Party* (Fairfax, VA: Denlinger's Publishers, LTD., 1977), 205.

[54]Zimmerman, "Alice Paul," 223.

[55]Link, *Papers of Wilson*, 40:426-427.

[56]Untitled, typed essay in the files of Hazle Buck Ewing, Ewing Papers, UAISU.

[57]Zimmerman, "Alice Paul," 226.

their sons."[58] On June 22, 1917, police began arresting the pickets. Although the grounds for the arrests were never really known, the women were most often charged with "obstructing traffic." Even though the women were often physically assaulted by unruly men, only the women pickets and those men who attempted to defend them were arrested.[59]

Despite the reality that they could be arrested for their activities, the women of the Woman's Party kept their cause alive by picketing the White House for the next year and a half.[60] During that time, many prominent women, including Alice Paul, were arrested, sentenced, and given the preference of serving their sentences or paying a fine of $10. Most women preferred the sentence for the good of the cause and were sent to the Occoquan Workhouse in Virginia where they experienced harsh conditions such as worms in their food, filth, and cockroaches.[61] While in jail, Paul went on a hunger strike, similar to those in which she engaged while a member of the WSPU, in an attempt to win concessions from the government. Instead of gaining concessions, however, Paul was placed in a psychiatric ward where she was submitted to psychological testing and force fed.[62] The continued militancy of the women who were arrested, including that of Alice Paul, led to an increase in the severity of the treatment experienced by the pickets on the streets, in the courts, and in the jails.[63]

While the picketing annoyed President Wilson and caused many membership cancellations for the Woman's Party, Alice Paul's strategy succeeded in bringing the issue before the public, especially since it led to a Congressional investigation of the suffragist jailings. The strategy also led to sizeable financial contributions to the Woman's Party and attracted some of the ablest, dedicated women in the nation to the suffrage cause.[64] Alice Paul also credited the picketing for several positive gains in the suffrage movement during 1917, namely the creation of a Woman's Suffrage Committee in the House, the Senate's favorable report on the amendment, and the suffrage referendum victory in the state of New York.[65]

The response of the conservative NAWSA to the picketing was far from positive. In a letter to a suffrage supporter, Dr. Anna Howard Shaw, former president of the NAWSA, distanced her organization from the Woman's Party by writing, "this little branch of Suffragists do not belong to the National Association and never will so long as they keep up their semi-militant practice."[66] While the NAWSA openly scorned the practices of the Woman's Party and denied Alice Paul's claims that the picketing caused the victory in New York, the picket strategy of the Woman's Party helped to advance the woman's suffrage movement in two ways. First, the pickets kept suffrage in the public eye while the country was at war. Second, the confrontational tactics of the Woman's Party made the gentle persuasion and tact of the increasingly politicized NAWSA appealing to those in government. Thus, though it was not intended to play out in such a manner, the picketing of the White House by the Woman's Party made it easier for NAWSA to approach President Wilson and to work with him to advance the suffrage cause.

According to President Wilson, the United States became involved in World War I to bring democracy to the entire world. The suffragists, however, reminded Wilson on a daily basis that while he was fighting for democracy for the world, he was at the same time "denying justice to 20,000,000 women" by not supporting the Federal Suffrage Amendment.[67] This political contradiction became a powerful arguing point in the woman's suffrage movement. In meeting halls throughout the nation, women gathered and accused President Wilson of hypocrisy and displayed large banners that echoed Wilson's April 2 war message to Congress in large black letters, "We shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts, for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in the government."[68]

With the nation at war, most suffragists were careful not to speak out publicly against the war because they felt such actions would bring increased charges of disloyalty that would hamper the suffrage movement. Thus, a large number of the suffragists temporarily diverted their suffrage work to contribute to the war effort, even though many suffragists were members of the Woman's Peace Party. Members of the NAWSA, for example, supported a French hospital, knitted socks, grew food, and worked for the Red Cross.[69]

On the other hand, suffrage work came before war work for Alice Paul and her Quaker background supported her opposition to war. Paul had studied the history of the movement and did not want to make the same mistake Susan B. Anthony had made more than fifty years earlier, by putting her suffrage work to the

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[58]Untitled, typed essay in the files of Hazle Buck Ewing, Ewing Papers, UAISU.

[59]Untitled, typed essay in the files of Hazle Buck Ewing, Ewing Papers, UAISU.

[60]Zimmerman, "Alice Paul," 240.

[61]*Examiner* (Chicago), 9 October 1917. UAISU.

[62]Zimmerman, "Alice Paul," 230

[63]Dorothy Schneider and Carl J. Schneider, *American Women in the Progressive Era, 1900-1920* (New York: Anchor Books, 1993), 185.

[64]Stevens, *Jailed for Freedom*, xxvi.

[65]Zimmerman, "Alice Paul," 240.

[66]Link, *Papers of Wilson*, 41:400.

[67]*Pantagraph* (Bloomington, IL), 19 July 1917, UAISU.

[68]*Daily Bulletin* (Bloomington, IL), 8 October 1917, UAISU.

[69]Evans, *Born for Liberty*, 171.

side to engage in the work of abolition. She believed that such a diversion on the behalf of the National Woman's Party would surely reverse the momentum the organization had gained in the fight for suffrage. Thus, the National Woman's Party voted to continue with the work of suffrage. Individual members, however, could do as much war work as they desired.[70]

The suffragists did not let their work or the sacrifices they made for the war go unnoticed. The personal letters sent to President Wilson and the speeches made by suffrage leaders continually reminded Wilson that the women of the nation were selling Liberty Bonds, enrolling for the Hoover Food Campaign, doing Red Cross work, as well as working in the factories and in the fields.[71] Carrie Chapman Catt, the President of NAWSA, wrote to President Wilson in May of 1917 suggesting that he endorse woman's suffrage as a war measure because she was sure that being equipped with the ballot "would add to our enthusiasm and usefulness during the war." She further hoped that the willingness of women "to serve our country even only half armed would appeal to the men with whom you and we must deal in Congress as a good and sufficient reason for our enfranchisement."[72] Unfortunately, Wilson's response to Ms. Catt was that he did not think it was "the opportune time to press the claims of our women upon the Congress."[73]

The fact that women continued to agitate for suffrage during the war may have swayed President Wilson's view of suffrage because half of the nation's resources could not be diverted to the promotion of another cause if the United States was to win the war. Although he never endorsed the enfranchisement of women as a war measure and maintained his state's rights strategy, Wilson began a proactive campaign of supporting woman's suffrage by sending messages of support to state suffrage campaign organizers. For example, Wilson sent a letter to Deborah Knox Livingston, Chair of the Maine State Suffrage Campaign, in which he pledged his support for their campaign and urged all Democrats to do the same.[74]

VI. The End is in Sight, 1918-1920

By the end of 1917, President Wilson realized that his vision of democracy abroad would never work without democracy at home, and he began to speak of suffrage with a sense of increased urgency. In an address to the New York Woman Suffrage Party, Wilson pledged his full support for woman's suffrage as he believed it "time for the states of his union to take action" because suffrage was "one of the fundamental questions of democracy."[75] On January 9, 1918, twelve Democratic members of the House, presumably confused because of their leader's apparent reversal on the suffrage issue, met with Wilson at the White House for his advice on the position they should take on the suffrage amendment scheduled to be voted upon on January 10. After a forty-minute meeting, the delegation made public that President Wilson had "earnestly advised" them to vote for the Federal Suffrage Amendment "as an act of right and justice to the women of the country and of the world." They continued by confirming that Wilson still believed suffrage should be won by the action of the states, but that "in view of conditions existing in the United States and the world generally, he felt free to advise submission of a federal amendment to the states."[76] This instance marked the first time President Wilson fully placed his support behind a Federal Suffrage Amendment.

With the President firmly behind the Susan B. Anthony Amendment, the National Woman's Party lobby began to work in earnest in Congress and "outside of the antisaloon organization," maintained "the greatest lobbying system ever known in Washington" according to the *Christian Science Monitor*.[77] Despite President Wilson's support and the intense lobbying on behalf of the National Woman's Party, the amendment was once again defeated in the Senate.[78] Given Wilson's long opposition to the Federal Suffrage Amendment, it is not surprising that Senators ignored Wilson's initial plea for votes.

Although the suffragists finally had the support of President Wilson on the Federal Suffrage Amendment, they still had to address the formidable institutional forces that were working against woman's suffrage. In the South, for example, leaders feared that the vote of black women would strengthen attempts to overthrow the system of Jim Crow restrictions which, despite the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution, had virtually disenfranchised black men.[79] The liquor industries of the Mid-West pledged large sums of money to the anti-suffrage camp because they too had a stake in making sure that women did not win equal suffrage since they believed the newly franchised women would vote in favor of prohibition.[80] In the East, the "machine" men were not supportive of woman's suffrage as they believed, with good reason, that women would be bent on reform and cleaning up politics.[81]

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[70]Zimmerman, "Alice Paul," 248.
[71]Link, *Papers of Wilson*, 44:440.
[72]Link, *Papers of Wilson*, 42:237.
[73]Link, *Papers of Wilson*, 241.
[74]Link, *Papers of Wilson*, 44:144-145.
[75]Link, *Papers of Wilson*, 44:441-442.
[76]*Pantagraph* (Bloomington, IL), 10 January 1918, UAISU.
[77]Zimmerman, "Alice Paul," 268.
[78]Flexner, *Century of Struggle*, 303.
[79]Flexner, *Century of Struggle*, 305.
[80]Flexner, *Century of Struggle*, 231.
[81]Flexner, *Century of Struggle*, 305.

Even as President Wilson spent most of 1918 actively fighting for the passage of the suffrage amendment, the National Woman's Party continued to hold open meetings and demonstrations throughout Washington, D.C., for the sole purpose of criticizing Wilson and his failure to advance the suffrage amendment.[82] When the elections of 1918 failed to change the balance of votes in the Senate on the Federal Suffrage Amendment, the National Woman's Party reinstituted their picketing on a smaller scale in front of the Senate.[83] In response, Wilson began to use his influence as the leader of the Democratic Party to sway Democratic Senators to vote for the Federal Suffrage Amendment. In a letter to Senator Josiah Oliver Wolcott of Delaware, Wilson was straight forward in his request when he asked, "Will you forgive the leader of your party if he begs that you will vote for the Suffrage Amendment?"[84] In a letter to Senator John K. Shield of Tennessee, an opponent of woman's suffrage, Wilson pleaded the case of democracy in an attempt to gain his vote in the Senate. In this letter Wilson wrote that:

> The morale of this country and of the world, and not a little of the faith which the rest of the world will repose in our sincere adherence to democratic principles, will depend upon the action which the Senate takes in this now critically important matter.[85]

In a speech made to Congress on September 30, 1918, Wilson, speaking as Commander-in-Chief, urged for the passage of the suffrage amendment as a war measure because he believed it would encourage women in their war work. Aside from their war work, Wilson also argued in his speech that women should be granted equal suffrage because their vote would be good for the country as women's "moral sense to preserve what is right and fine and worthy in our system of life as well as to discover just what it is that ought to be purified and reformed."[86]

Nevertheless, the combined efforts of President Wilson, the Woman's Party, and the NAWSA to pass the amendment through Congress before it adjourned in the later half of 1918 were unsuccessful as it failed in the Senate on October 1, two votes short of the necessary 2/3 majority.[87] Discouraged because of the stagnation of the Federal Suffrage Amendment in Congress, Alice Paul determined the need to dramatize further the suffrage issue. Thus, Paul organized several events which would meet her objective early in 1919. The "jailbird special," launched in January, was one such event. Twenty-six women dressed in prison garb similar to that from the Occoquan Workhouse and travelled the country proclaiming President Wilson as the person responsible for the delay in woman's suffrage.[88] January also found Woman's Party members igniting watchfires in front of the White House into which they tossed copies of Wilson's speeches on Democracy.[89] Although the suffragists were arrested for setting the watchfires, Paul determined that the demonstrations should become even more militant. Thus, on February 9, the eve of the next Senate vote on the Federal Suffrage Amendment, thirty-six suffragists marched to the White House where they burned Wilson in effigy.[90]

On February 10, the Susan B. Anthony Amendment once again failed in the Senate, this time by only one vote.[91] Alice Paul argued successfully for re-introduction of the amendment, but the Senate refused to consider the issue. At this point, Paul reversed her philosophy of blaming the Democrats for the failure of the amendment and instead blamed the Republicans for the defeat saying that they would not cooperate because they did not want the Democrats to get the credit for passing the Federal Suffrage Amendment.[92] Sensing that victory was right around the corner, Paul successfully convinced President Wilson to call a special session of the Sixty-Sixth Congress so that the Susan B. Anthony Amendment could be reintroduced in the House of Representatives and in the Senate. On May 21, 1919, the House once again passed the amendment nearly a year-and-a-half after it had been passed in the House for the first time.[93] At the urging of President Wilson, the Senate finally passed the amendment on June 4, 1919.[94]

After a forty-two year battle for equal suffrage, the suffragists were one step away from attaining their goal. However, before the Federal Suffrage Amendment could be made an amendment to the Federal Constitution, it had to be ratified by thirty-six of the forty-eight states. Just six days after the amendment had passed through the Senate, Wisconsin and Michigan became the first states to ratify the amendment. By the end of the year, twenty-two of the required thirty-six states had ratified the amendment. On August 18, 1920, Tennessee became the final state to ratify the suffrage amendment.[95] The long battle for equal suffrage came to an end on August 26, 1920, when the Susan B. Anthony Amendment became the Twentieth Amendment to the Federal Constitution.[96] After years of fighting for equal suffrage, Alice Paul and the other dedicated suffragists could at last rejoice.

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[82]Zimmerman, "Alice Paul," 273.
[83]Zimmerman, "Alice Paul," 282.
[84]Link, *Papers of Wilson*, 47:577.
[85]Link, *Papers of Wilson*, 48:371.
[86]Link, *Papers of Wilson*, 51:161.
[87]Stevens, *Jailed for Freedom*, 348.
[88]Zimmerman, "Alice Paul," 293.
[89]Zimmerman, "Alice Paul," 287.
[90]Zimmerman, "Alice Paul," 291.
[91]Link, *Papers of Wilson*, 55:94.
[92]Zimmerman, "Alice Paul," 294-295.
[93]Stevens, *Jailed for Freedom*, 348.
[94]Link, *Papers of Wilson*, 60:155.
[95]Stevens, *Jailed for Freedom*, 349.
[96]Zimmerman, "Alice Paul," 322.

They were finally recognized as full citizens by their government. But Paul's work was not complete.

Although the suffrage victory was a huge achievement for women, Alice Paul wanted equality for women in other spheres of life as well. Thus, on February 10, 1920, Paul handed down a dictum that the Woman's Party would sponsor a federal Equal Rights Amendment which would guarantee women equality in all of their life endeavors.[97] She continued her work for women's equality by using her power and influence to advance the legal status of women worldwide. For instance, she organized a World Woman's Party in Geneva, Switzerland in 1938. In addition, she was influential in the passage of the Equal Nationality Act in 1934, as well as the incorporation of the Equal Rights Statement in the United Nations Charter in 1945. She was also a major player in the creation of Title VII in the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which outlawed "discrimination in employment on the basis of sex." With Paul's death on July 7, 1977, the world lost a tireless advocate for the equality of women.[98]

Alice Paul's contribution to the fight for woman suffrage cannot be underestimated. With her return from England and consequent entrance on the suffrage scene, Paul revived the notion of a Federal Suffrage Amendment that had died with the passing of Susan B. Anthony. Paul's political leadership, radical tactics, and talent in organizing and drawing bright, hard-working women to her cause placed the Woman's Party at the forefront of the fight for woman suffrage. While the radical tactics of Paul and the Woman's Party undoubtedly made many politicians skeptical about the wisdom of granting women the vote, her tenacity on the issue certainly played a large part in winning the seventy-five year-old battle for woman suffrage.

[97]Zimmerman, "Alice Paul," 325.
[98]Feyerherm, "Alice Paul," 36.

People vs. Lauer et al: Violence in the Coal Fields of Spring Valley, Illinois

Mary Jane Tonozzi

For eight days in July, 1894, the small town of Spring Valley, Illinois, 120 miles southwest of Chicago, made news in Chicago. The news focused on two incidents -- the assault on William Pinkerton on June 26, 1894, by vengeful coal miners for his alleged rape of a Lithuanian woman and the looting of the coal company store. Taken singly, the incidents had little relevance beyond the lives and confines of Spring Valley. However, questions about what happened in the small mining town cannot be interpreted solely within the local context.

It was a popular conception of the time that radical labor activism meant violence, violence meant anarchy, and anarchy meant involvement by foreigners. The case of *People v. Lauer* (1894) contained elements, real or imagined, of all three. Events in Spring Valley seemed to replicate in microcosm events as they were unfolding in Chicago and elsewhere. Framed *by* the larger world, local episodes in Spring Valley assumed a magnified meaning *for* the larger world represented by the Chicago daily press. Thus the trial of *People v. Lauer* came to signify far more than the facts of the case themselves. It assumed a significance defined largely by the Chicago press rather than solely on local perspective.

Labor unrest hit an all-time high in the United States in 1894. The national economy was in a slump and the Chicago *Herald* termed the year "troublous." More workers joined strikes in 1894 than in any previous year.[1] It was not unusual, then, that the

[1]*Daily Inter-Ocean* (Chicago), 28 July 1894, 2. The annual coal report of Illinois for 1893 stated that Illinois miners earned an average of thirty-five dollars per month when they worked. The report based is estimate on an average seventy-one cents per ton of coal dug. Miners received less per ton of coal during the warm months than they did the rest of the year. The average rent was five dollars and seventy-five cents a month. Miners never knew from day to day if there would be work for them on the morrow. Their lives revolved around the company whistle. One blast meant no work the next day. Two blasts meant a half day of work, and three signified a full day's work upcoming. The miners worked four days a week, on the

local miners went out on a strike that began nationally on April 21, 1894. The goal of the work stoppage was to end a coal glut and force coal prices up in the hope that operators would raise wages up to the old rate. The men were so desperate that, union or not, Spring Valley miners walked away from the shafts on April 24 along with 125,000 miners nationwide.[2] A Bureau County Board member suggested that the men take the pay cut and go on relief, but a reply to all who gave such advice appeared in the *Mine Workers Journal*:

> If after toiling . . . sweating . . . fuming, digging . . . shoveling, sawing, smothering, gasping, scraping, in water, mud, bad air, foul stenches, dangerous caves, treacherous rocks, pushing, heaving, twisting, hammering, lifting, prying, boring, wedging, sometimes in spaces not sufficient for full-grown rats, sometimes where the earth is open like a vast toothed dome whose teeth are hanging in the shape of jagged stones and ready at any minute to crash down and kill...a public officer, tells those men that if they, after doing all this from ten to thirteen hours a day, and after having exhausted every nerve and muscle and vein in their body, have not earned enough to pay for supper, the county will help them--that is, they will sup poorhouse fare after toiling like galley slaves.[3]

The miners would take their chances and aim for victory.

Most of the miners of Spring Valley were foreign-born. The entrepreneurs who founded the town in 1885 purposefully recruited in Europe for workers to come to their "Magic City."[4] Soon Spring Valley was home to Germans, Belgians, Irish, English, Scots, Welsh, Italians, Austrians, Poles, Lithuanians, Jews, and Lebanese. Estimates set the foreign-born population at between eighty and ninety percent of its six thousand inhabitants.[5] In this respect Spring Valley was very different from Princeton, the most important town in Bureau County and the county seat.

Princeton was the domain of the first Anglo-American pioneers to settle Bureau County. They were the Daughters of the American Revolution. They were predominantly Republican and Protestant. Princeton sat amidst the rich agricultural splendor of the Illinois prairie and lived life in harmony with the agricultural year rather than with the demands of the mine shaft. The *Bureau County Republican*, the principal weekly paper published there, generally supported the policies of the county's coal companies. Samuel Dalzell, the resident manager of the Spring Valley Coal Company and one of its Directors, seemed to embody the differences between the two towns.[6]

Spring Valley's single raison d'être was its access to coal. It had only a handful of English-speaking people. Spring Valley tended to be Democratic and Catholic. The *Republican* routinely referred in its

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average, and two hundred and twenty nine days in a year. See *Bureau County Republican*, 2 August 1894, 1.

[2]Jeremy Brecher, *Strike!* (San Francisco: Straight Arrow Books, 1972), 69. Peter Way suggests that historiographers of American ethnicity and class do not appropriately interpret labor unrest because they focus on paradigms of class, agency and community instead of analysis of material influences on strike motivation. Increased debts and impending winter are examples of motives overlooked. Peter Way, "Labour's Love Lost: Observations on the Historiography of Class and Ethnicity in the Nineteenth Century," *Journal of American Studies* 28 (April 1994), 1.

[3]Elsie Gluck, *John Mitchell, Miner: Labor's Bargain with the Gilded Age* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1969), 23. John Mitchell, who later became a famous president of the UMWA, was living in Spring Valley at the time of the strike. He made a name for himself as a leader in the miners' local when he led the Spring Valley miners in a strike against the Spring Valley Coal company in 1897.

[4]Henry D. Lloyd, *A Strike of Millionaires Against Miners* (Chicago: Belford-Clarke Co., Publishers, 1890), 29. Spring Valley coal miners had gone on strike several times before the strike of 1894 which is described in this paper. The strike of 1894 had disastrous effects; the miners gained nothing. The miners of Spring Valley went back to work in August, 1894. The Spring Valley miners, led by John Mitchell, went out against Dalzell again in 1897. Racial violence marked this strike.

Spring Valley won the appellation "Magic City" because its developers, Charles Devlin and other officials of the Spring Valley Coal Company, believed in town planning. They laid out broad streets, parks, schools, housing, a business district -- all the amenities, including an opera house--which seemed to transform a mining camp into a full-blown town in a year.

[5]*Directory of Bureau County* (Princeton, IL: J.C. Kelly & Co., 1897-1898), 156. Samuel Dalzell, the manager of the Coal Company, testified that he employed an estimated twelve or fourteen hundred miners of these nationalities, and that a majority of them did not speak English.

[6]*The Biographical Record of Bureau, Marshall, and Putnam Counties, Illinois* (Chicago: The S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1896), 113. Samuel M. Dalzell replaced Charles Devlin, an Irish Catholic, as general manager because the Directors of the company considered him too soft. Devlin allowed miners striking in 1889 to elect their own checkweighmen to guarantee an honest weight. Dalzell was an Ulsterman of Scottish origin and Congregational Church affiliation. He was also a Director of the Spring Valley Coal Company. By August 11, 1894, the coal companies of the surrounding towns of Ladd, LaSalle, and Seatonville had recognized the miner's unions and those miners had returned to work. Dalzell continued to refuse recognition, so the Spring Valley miners voted unanimously not to resume work. See also *Chicago Times*, 12 August 1894, 3.

articles to the immigrant miners as the "lower classes" to distinguish them from the "better classes" or "English speaking classes" of local denizens.[7] The *Bureau County Directory* lamented that Spring Valley's population was composed chiefly of a "migratory class of foreigners and others here of questionable and lawless character."[8]

When the great Railway Strike began on June 26, 1894, ARU President Eugene V. Debs (1855-1926) enjoined all strikers against the use of violence, for he hoped in that way to keep control over the boycott and to avoid the extremism which antagonized public opinion against labor. Minor violence did occur, but it was nothing that civil authorities could not handle. Nevertheless, Federal District Attorney Thomas Milchrist, contrary to the facts, telegraphed Washington that conditions in Chicago were so bad that special deputies were needed. The press then unleashed one of the great bugbears which held Americans in thrall in the 1890s, the association of labor activism with anarchism, meaning lawlessness.[9]

Recent events in Europe showed that danger from violence-prone anarchists was real, and Chicago remembered the 1886 Haymarket Square affair. Anarchists in France and Spain threw bombs into an opera house, a police station, a church, and government offices. Innocent bystanders died in all these attacks.[10] French President Sadi Carnot was assassinated by a professed anarchist, an Italian known as Sig. Santo, on June 24, a mere two days before the Railway Strike began.[11] News of it and Carnot's funeral filled column after column of the *Herald*, the *Times*, the *Tribune*, and the *Inter-Ocean*. Ministers and politicians inveighed against the "Anarchist [as a] savage in a civilized country who is trying to turn civilization into barbarism."[12] Hence, the bomb-throwing foreigner epitomized terror.

Sensational rhetoric bombarded the reading public in front-page headlines. The press defined the strike in graphic but singular terms. The Chicago *Tribune* of June 30 read, "Mob Is In Control" and "Law Is Trampled On" while another headline conveyed that "Through the lawless acts of Dictator Debs' strikers the lives of thousands of Chicago citizens were endangered yesterday."[13] The *Chicago Herald* said that the railroads absolutely must defeat the strike, for "[yielding one point would] show fatal weakness."[14] There was perhaps no better way to becloud the efforts of organized labor than to raise the cry of anarchy, its unwanted epithet.

President Cleveland lent a hand in inflaming the situation when he ordered federal troops to Chicago on July 2, even before serious violence had broken out. His conservative advisors believed that a show of force was essential to break the strike, which they equated with anarchy. Governor Altgeld strongly protested this step not only as unnecessary but also as unconstitutional. The *Inter-Ocean* roundly denounced his "soft" attitude toward anarchists.[15] Debs predicted that the presence of troops would invite confrontation. Widespread violence broke out in Chicago on July 3, the day federal troops arrived there. It hit a peak on July 6, confirming everyone's worst fears. Thirteen people died, and over seven hundred freight cars burned. More than 4200 militiamen rushed into Chicago to suppress the

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[7]*Bureau County Republican*, 9 August 1894, 1; 23 August 1894, 1; and 6 September 1894, 1. The paper will be referred to as the *BCR* hereafter.

[8]*Directory of Bureau County*, 156. In a case that went up to the Appellate Court of Illinois following the looting of the truck store of the Spring Valley Coal Company, Attorney Owen Lovejoy was careful to point out that ". . .from the evidence in this case, the English speaking miners employed by the coal company--the Irish, Scotch, English, Welsh and American--took no part in looting the . . .store. Had the coal company employed only such kind of labor there would have been no looting. It chose to employ vicious and lawless offscouring, and why should it not bear the consequences of its conduct?" See *Spring Valley Coal Company v. City of Spring Valley, Ill.*, App. 65 (1895), 587.

[9]Ray Ginger, *The Bending Cross* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1949), 123.

[10]Bernard A. Weisberger, "Terrorism Revisited," *American Heritage* 44 (November 1993), 25.

[11]*Inter Ocean*, 25 June 1894, 1. The *Inter-Ocean* devoted the first three pages of its publication of June 25, 1894, with articles on anarchism. One of them stated the "principles" of anarchism which guided men like Santo to be "war against capital, against privileges of all kinds, destruction of frontiers and the abolition of the state, of all authority....There were two phases only in enunciation of the anarchist affirmative doctrine--"Do what you wish," and "Everything is everybody's."

[12]Ginger, *The Bending Cross*, 130.

[13]*Chicago Tribune*, 30 June 1894, 1.

[14]*Chicago Herald*, 30 June1894. All the articles from the *Herald* were taken from clippings from 1894 that are part of Criminal File 3634. No page numbers are visible.

[15]*Daily Inter-Ocean*, 7 July 1894, 4. Olney may have used the threat of anarchy in order to state his case for the need for federal troops in the strongest language. Mayor Hopkins did not request them, and Governor Altgeld felt that Olney far exceeded his powers by not requesting troops via the governor. Altgeld published an outspoken article denouncing President Cleveland's authorization to send troops to Illinois without the Governor's request for them. Altgeld was severely chastised in the press for his position. Olney may have thought of Altgeld as soft on anarchists since he pardoned the last three of the original eight men convicted of the Haymarket killings in 1886. See Gerald G. Eggert, *Railroad Labor Disputes* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1967), 172-173.

violence. The next day, the militia and the mob clashed. Four rioters died; several troops and rioters were hurt.[16] To some, it appeared to be Armageddon.

Headlines in the Chicago papers fed that fear. "Anarchy Is Rampant," "Shops May Burn," "Mobs Apply the Torch," "Infantry, Cavalry, and Artillery Camp on Lake Front," and "First Regiment Surrounded By Rioters" were typical of the rhetoric that appeared on the first page of a single issue of the *Daily Inter-Ocean*.[17] The press supported Cleveland's precedent --"Anarchy Is Doomed," "The President Sees Something Like Rebellion at Chicago," "Every Rifle in the Nation Will Be Used If Necessary," "Threat of Armed Men," and "May Be Bullets Now." "Cannon for the Mob" --recalled the Napoleonic "whiff of grapeshot."[18] Chicago was an armed camp.

The people in Bureau County read these headlines the same days Chicagoans did. The Chicago dailies arrived by mail trains in Bureau County by eight-thirty in the morning on the day of issuance. They sold for two cents per copy. Local editors were able to wire news directly to the newsrooms of the big dailies, so county residents might see their news days before it ever appeared in a local weekly. That was how Bureau County first learned of the so-called Pinkerton Riot on June 27, 1894.

Billy Pinkerton worked as a guard for the Spring Valley Coal Company. One evening in June he apprehended a man who, seemingly, was about to toss a large stone into the engine house. The man, a Lithuanian miner, went to jail, but Pinkerton thought the miner would bear him a grudge. Not long afterward, the Chicago Rock Island and Pacific Railroad hired Pinkerton as a railroad guard. At seven o'clock the night of June 22, Pinkerton reported for his first shift and met his partner, Michael Bohan.[19]

Anna Brozowska, a Lithuanian immigrant and a miner's wife, remembered the events of June 22 differently. She later testified that she and a male relative took a walk down to the Illinois River on that night to look for her husband Frank Brozowski, who was there fishing. On their way back up to town they came upon two men on the tracks near the river bridge. Mrs. Brozowska claimed that the two men raped her while holding her companion at gunpoint. The men threatened the pair with death unless they kept their mouths shut.[20] The next day, June 23, the police arrested Pinkerton and Bohan for rape.

Pinkerton and Bohan were in Justice of the Peace White's second story courtroom on Tuesday, June 26, for their arraignment when disturbances broke out.[21] Anna Brozowska gave her testimony in a courtroom packed with "foreigners." Mrs. Brozowska told her story through an interpreter, but she told it so graphically that the room filled with cries of "kill him, kill him" in broken English as the crowd, now a raging mob, surged forward. Furniture filled the air. Pinkerton escaped with his life by jumping out the window and running for shaft Number One of the Spring Valley Coal Company. He presumed there would be rifles there since he had recently worked as a mine guard.

The mob ran after him, dragged him out of his hiding place, and threw bricks, rocks, and other objects at him. Men and women kicked and stomped him. Anna Brozowska, at the mob's urging, hit him on the head until she thought he was dead and then left. The Chicago *Times* reported that the mob left Pinkerton lying on the ground in the hot sun as if dead for hours. When doctors finally got a look at him, they expected that he would not live through the night.[22] No arrests were made at this time, however.

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[16]Eggert, *Railroad Labor Disputes*, 174.

[17]*Daily Inter-Ocean*, 7 July 1894, 1. Literally speaking, anarchists stood for the abolition of all government by violence, if need be, in order to establish a perfect society, but sometimes the term was used to mean anyone who questioned or challenged the status quo, especially if he or she was foreign born. The term anarchist appeared with regularity in news releases involving labor unrest, immigrants, and violence. Spring Valley actually achieved some notoriety as a hotbed of anarchism, and its Prosperity Club was allegedly an anarchist society.

[18]*Daily Inter-Ocean*, 5 July 1894, 1.

[19]*Bureau County Tribune*, 20 July 1894, 1. This article was attached to the Affidavit of William Kershaw, People v. Lauer et al, August Term 1894, Circuit Court of Bureau County, Illinois, Criminal drawer 3705, Criminal file 3634, October 18, 1894. Kershaw was the editor of the *Tribune*. Kershaw swore under oath that the information in the news article was based wholly on his interview with William Pinkerton and reported accurately and exactly what Pinkerton told him. It is the only known surviving information from Pinkerton himself and appears to have been used as an exhibit during the ensuing trial.

[20]*BCR*, 27 September 1894, 5. Anna Brozowska's companion is never named. He was reported to be either the brother-in-law or the nephew of her husband. The court records do list a Peter Brozowski subpoenaed as a witness. See Term Subpoena to Sheriff, People v. Lauer et al, August Term 1894, September 17, 1894, Circuit Court of Bureau County, Illinois, Criminal drawer 3705, Criminal file 3634.

[21]*Bureau County Tribune*, 20 July 1894, 1. Pinkerton speculated that this was the same man whom he had arrested at the mine a few weeks beforehand.

[22]*Bureau County Tribune*, 20 July 1894, 1; *Chicago Times*, 27 June 1894, 5. The story appeared under the headline "In the Hands of a Mob" and "Two Prisoners Are Attacked by Infuriated Lithuanians." The headlines on Spring Valley were

Residents of Spring Valley barely had time to sift through the Brozowska-Pinkerton affair before more trouble erupted. The coal strike moved into its third month. Under no pressure to redress the grievances of the miners, Dalzell obstinately refused to talk to them.[23] On the Fourth of July, three hundred miners pledged themselves to an ironclad contract--voluntary servitude without pay if Dalzell would promise to feed, clothe, and house their families adequately.[24] On July 6, perhaps recalling earlier advice, several Lithuanians tried to persuade J.B. Nelson, a member of the County Board, to get the county to issue relief orders to the miners. Nelson refused to discuss it.

The *Daily Inter-Ocean* for July 8 claimed that Nelson's refusal triggered the next sequence of events. The miners of Spring Valley decided to take what they needed by force. Spring Valley police notified the manager of the company store that the Lithuanians were rounding up Poles and Italians in local saloons for an attack on the store that night. A mob began to gather near the store at about half past eight that evening as three clerks locked up the store and left. Immediately rocks shattered all the windows, the doors gave way, and the men rushed in to take whatever was at hand. Guns and ammunition disappeared with the rest.[25]

As soon as the looting began, Mr. Dalzell telephoned Sheriff Cox to request a posse. Cox said he could not raise a force equal to the task. Following the precedent, Dalzell's son then pressured the sheriff to wire for state troops. Their plea stated that a mob of five or six hundred men had pillaged the company store and would most likely sack the town. Altgeld's reply was not the one they anticipated:

> You have not only done nothing at all yourself to enforce the law, but it is apparent that you personally know nothing about the situation at Spring Valley, as you telegraphed from Princeton. That is at a distance of twelve miles or more from the scene of the trouble, and without even a personal investigation you throw up your hands and ask for troops...We will furnish you arms at once if you want them, and I am satisfied that a moderate force of special deputies with arms can easily preserve law and order in Spring Valley. The probabilities are that the trouble is all over. The store that was looted is...run by the company, and at which it is alleged the company forces its employees to buy their goods at very exorbitant prices, in consequence of which a kind of personal hostility against it exists in the community. Examine the situation at once and wire me if you want arms and...where you want them sent.[26]

Cox received seventy-five rifles and ten rounds of ammunition apiece. They arrived in Spring Valley on July 8, at noon. The miners, so far, had never fired a shot.

July 8 was a replay of the previous day. The outbreak of public hysteria continued as men gathered in knots on the main street. With its conventional oversimplification, the *Republican* identified them as anarchists from neighboring communities drifting into Spring Valley to support their brotherhood. Miners demanded free meat and got it at one store; some proprietors sent them packing. Women trailed in the wake of their menfolk demanding free groceries and sundries. The men continued their foraging in the saloons. They packed each one, sent up a cry for a free keg of beer, and would not leave until they got one.[27]

That same afternoon Mayor Jack of Spring Valley called a special meeting of the city council. City police and such deputies as could be secured in the town were placed at Cox's disposal, and a home guard was organized to protect the town during the night. Seventy men volunteered for this service but only a handful showed up for actual duty. Those who did guarded the homes of Samuel Dalzell and others connected with the coal company. During the night, though, the truck store in nearby Ladd was destroyed.

The press immediately attributed the deed to twelve hundred anarchist-led miners, mostly from Spring Valley.[28] An aura of siege warfare gripped

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every bit as inflammatory as those on the Pullman Strike and other labor violence.

[23]John H. Keiser, *Building for the Centuries: Illinois, 1865 to 1898* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1977), 246.

[24]Gluck, *John Mitchell, Miner*, 25.

[25]*BCR*, 12 July 1894, 4. The Bureau County official whom the miners quoted when they turned down the offer of relief in lieu of their strike was Owen Lovejoy. Mr. Lovejoy represented the City of Spring Valley when it fought against the coal company's claims for restitution for the looting. He referred, in his appellate brief, to the immigrant miners of Spring Valley as "the ignorant and lawless offscourings of Europe...[they] are numbered and tagged by their masters like beasts, and they are little, if any, above the quadrupeds in intelligence and below the latter in docility....They are utterly foreign to our body politic, and they create disorder and disturbance, both industrial and governmental...they scourge every community upon which they descend." See *Spring Valley Coal Company v. City of Spring Valley*, IL. App. 65 (1895), 585.

[26]*BCR*, 12 July 1894, 4. In this instance, the headlines read, "Blood Flows," "Rioting and Pillaging on the East Side of Bureau County," "Federal Troops Stoned and Shoot into the Howling Rabble."

[27]*BCR*, 8 July 1894, 1.

[28]*Chicago Times*, 8 July 1894, 3; *Daily Inter-Ocean*, 9 July 1894, 3; *BCR*, 12 July 1894, 4. Again, the headlines echoed the imagery of anarchistic revolution: "Pillaged by Miners;" "Lowest Class of Foreigners Unite to Commit Deeds

three counties as Chicago headlines prophesied "May Sack the Town" and "Spring Valley Anarchists Said to Contemplate a Raid."[29] Neighboring counties of Putnam and LaSalle went on armed alert. Chicago papers trumpeted the "Reign of Terror" in Bureau County.[30] Women and children evacuated their homes for safer abodes and took family valuables with them as "English-Speaking Citizens Desert Their Homes Through Fear of the Foreigners."[31] The county's banks removed their deposits under armed guard to Ottawa, Illinois. Stores boarded their windows and locked their doors. The management of the coal company expected that the miners would burn the mine shafts.

Miners were said to be carrying bombs and dynamite, and rumors told that "anarchist-aliens" from Spring Valley would soon sack the towns west of Hall Township to drive out all the English-speaking people. No atrocity seemed beyond their capabilities. Preparations for the defense of Princeton itself raised caution there to panic. Cox raced back to establish a defense perimeter and to send an advance force of eight deputies armed with rifles and shotguns to try to confine the violence to Hall Township. They pressed on to Spring Valley expecting to be re-enforced very soon.[32] Trouble in Spring Valley assumed crisis proportions on an area-wide scale.

Princeton girded itself for an assault of the four hundred to four thousand crazed miners thought to be enroute. The townspeople hastily formed a home guard of one hundred and twenty-five men. In less than twenty-four hours, Princeton itself had at least two hundred and sixty men under arms. Other communities near Spring Valley did the same. Peru positioned a line of two hundred sharpshooters along its western boundary. LaSalle County Sheriff W. W. Taylor sent a desperate wire to Governor Altgeld stating that he could not possibly defend Peru without militia. Almost as he was speaking telegraph lines and telephone lines went down between Spring Valley and Princeton. All the telegraphers had already fled and none could be induced to man the keys anyway.[33]

On July 8, two companies of state troops came to Spring Valley with orders to enforce the law and maintain order there, and to assist the sheriff of LaSalle County should that become necessary. Together with two hundred special deputies, they patrolled the railroad tracks and guarded the mine shafts. The miners' wives and children heckled them constantly. The "better classes" remained locked in their homes. The "conspiracy" of the "lowest class of foreigners" ground normal life to a halt.[34]

On Tuesday, July 10, cars carrying fifty United Stated regular troops and twenty-six United States Marshals pulled into the Rock Island depot on their way to Chicago. Papers reported that a mob of Italians, Poles, Lithuanians, and Belgians had "taken possession" of a hillside along the tracks. A volley of rocks and hoots greeted the engineer and the firemen as they pulled into the station. No injuries or damages resulted. For reasons unknown the captain ordered his men out onto the station platform, drawing a round of jeers from the men on the hillside. The papers speculated that the mob outnumbered the troops ten to one. More rocks flew. The captain ordered his men to fire into the crowd. Two men fell and the rioters dispersed.[35]

Law enforcers feared that anarchist forces would retaliate. News of the two deaths caused new waves of pandemonium in Bureau county. One hundred fresh deputies rushed to Spring Valley at midnight to support their beleaguered comrades, but the funeral of the pair went by without incident on Wednesday, July 11. Two thousand men, two hundred and thirty women, forty carriages, four brass bands, one drum crops, and the regalia of the miner's union accompanied the coffins to their final resting place.

The orderliness of the funeral made citizens bold enough to insist that Cox arrest the looters. He included the arrests of the Pinkerton criminals in his sweep. The erstwhile thieves began voluntarily to turn over their loot; carloads of goods were recovered in this way. The last of the infamous July days was July 19, the day that Cox released his deputies and the militia left town.[36] Coincidentally, the railway strike ended the previous day with the arrest of Eugene V. Debs.

The Chicago newspapers of July 13, 1894, were the first explicitly to link the Pinkerton case directly to all the other occurrences. The *Inter-Ocean's* theory was that Peter Lauer and his codefendants assaulted Pinkerton "for the purpose of terrorizing the

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of Mob Violence;" "Strikers Seize Spring Valley;" "Anarchistic Aliens Riot and Revel."

[29]*Daily Inter-Ocean*, 9 July 1894, 2.

[30]*Chicago Times*, 9 July 1894, 1.

[31]*Daily Inter-Ocean*, 10 July 1894, 2.

[32]*Daily Inter-Ocean*, 10 July 1894, 2.

[33]*Chicago Herald*, 11 July 1894; *Chicago Times*, 9 July 1894, 3.

[34]*Daily Inter-Ocean*, 11 July 1894, 1.

[35]*Chicago Herald*, 11 July 1894;. *Daily-Inter-Ocean*, 11 July 1894, 1; *Chicago Times*, 11 July 1894, 2; *BCR*, 12 July 1894, 4. *Daily Inter-Ocean*, 14 July 1894, 3. The two men were Dominic Barlmore and John Sololi. The newspapers stated that both men were Italian.

[36]*BCR*, 23 August 1894, 1. Most of the recovered goods were donated by the coal company to the Sisters of Charity for distribution among the "deserving" poor. One speculates that poor miners did not qualify.

local authorities and arousing the anarchists." It cited as proof, incorrectly, that the Pinkerton defendants had been charged with plotting the raid on the company store and the general disorder which followed it.[37] The anarchist idea fell on fertile ground. The *Republican* boasted:

> The news of the capture of the anarchist leaders and conspirators was an occasion for general rejoicing. The anarchistic element is confined to the mining regions in the eastern part of the county and the people of the central and western parts are determined to either subdue them or drive them out of the county limits. The block in which the jail is located is guarded by forty deputies.[38]

Determination to suppress anarchy continued to give shape to public opinion even though the routines of the justice system were now in operation. The withdrawal of the deputies and the militia may have signaled the end of the so-called "anarchist conspiracy," but the residue of hard feelings recently engendered was not as easily set aside. The ultimate disposition of *People v. Lauer* suggests that the forthcoming trial was influenced by inflamed perceptions of events as much as it was related to the facts surrounding the actions of the five defendants.

The Grand Jury indicted the Pinkerton criminals -- Peter Lauer, Peter Klimek, John Gutson, and Frank and Anna Brozowski--on three counts of conspiracy to harm William Pinkerton with intent to murder and one count of riot.[39] Apparently Lauer and Klimek tried to have Pinkerton and Bohan indicted for the rape of Mrs. Brozowska, but the Grand Jury did not believe their story and brought in a no-bill. The *Republican* recommended that Lauer and the others prepare to face the music with no expectation of mercy, for they had shown none.[40]

The trial of *People of the State of Illinois v. Peter Lauer et al* lasted from September 18 to October 5, 1894, the Honorable George Stipp of Princeton presiding. The jury returned a verdict of guilty against each defendant on the count of riot. All but Gutson were found guilty of assault with intent to murder Pinkerton. The jury assessed penitentiary sentences of eighteen months in the penitentiary at Joliet for Lauer and Klimek and twelve months for the Brozowski's.[41] The *Republican* applauded the verdicts but criticized the light sentences, considering the anguish Princetonians had suffered. It was confident that the verdict fully exonerated Pinkerton and Bohan from any wrongdoing.[42] This was a fair indication of the view that the Pinkerton case actually represented all of the incidents which had accrued to it in the public mind.

Judge Stipp shocked the county by granting the defendants a new trial. He ruled that each defendant was innocent insofar as the testimony against them was concerned and concluded that the verdict was unjust and incorrect. Judge Blanchard subsequently granted the defense's Petition on Motion for Change of Venue from the other circuit judges--Dibell and himself--who might have been assigned the trial. Blanchard and Dibell were from Joliet, but the defense maintained that the notoriety of the defendants carried beyond Bureau County by virtue of the articles from the Chicago papers, which they offered as exhibits in their petition.

People v. Lauer never again came up for trial. Court records show that Peter Klimek and Frank Brozowski waived their right to a trial by jury on January 29, 1896. Anna Brozowska's name disappeared from all records, so it is possible that the charges against her were dropped. The State's Attorney's Term Report for the August Term, 1896, show that Brozowski paid a ten dollar fine and ten dollars in costs for riot; Peter Klimek paid a fine of twenty-five dollars plus ten dollars in costs for riot.[43] Peter Lauer did not come home from a trip to Germany in time to appear in court; his bondsmen posted his thousand dollar bond for him.[44]

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[37]*Daily Inter-Ocean*, 13 July 1894, 3. This issue was the last in 1894 to make any mention of Spring Valley or the Pinkerton case. As order returned to Chicago and Bureau County, the case lost its appeal. The *Inter-Ocean* for July 20 reported "War Feared at Peru" when a hundred of the striking miners planned to return to work while six hundred refused to do so. The article goes on to say that a general meeting would be held in the park. "Spring Valley...and Ladd will be represented in force, which may mean serious trouble!" Peru is three miles east of Spring Valley. In typical fashion, the city formed a home guard armed with repeating rifles to handle violence from the miners.

[38]*Daily Inter-Ocean*, 13 July 1894, 3.

[39] True Bill, People v. Lauer et al, August Term 1894, Circuit Court of Bureau County, Illinois, Criminal drawer 3705, Criminal file 3634.

[40]*BCR*, 6 September 1894, 8.

[41]*BCR*, 11 October 1894, 4.

[42]*BCR*, 18 October 1894, 1.

[43]State's Attorney's Report to the Circuit Court, August Term 1896, Circuit Court of Bureau County, Illinois, Drawer 171.

[44]*BCR*, 30 January 1896, 1. This was the final mention of People v. Lauer et al to appear in the *Republican*. It is not unlikely that Judge Stipp did in essence resolve the case in October of 1894. By granting the new trial and pointing out in detail the unreliability of the testimony of the prosecution witnesses, Stipp may well have been signaling the end of the case. He obviously did not think much of the State's case. If Stipp thought so little of the case, the defense may reasonably have concluded that he would not impose a stiff penalty when it came up again for trial. That might explain the defense's earnest

On the basis of what is available, it is impossible to know fully what actually happened those fifteen days in 1894. For example, the *Republican* appears to be the only one of about a dozen local newspapers to have survived on microfilm or hard copy. Pinkerton's interview with the *Bureau County Tribune* is part of File 3634, but the newspapers themselves appear to be lost. No similar document from the defendants was kept, if in fact they had ever been interviewed. One consequence is that much of what happened is seen and interpreted from the perspective of the Bureau County "establishment," or the English-speaking people.[45]

Since *People v. Lauer* is a story that is incompletely told by the evidence at hand, it raises numerous points for speculation. For all intents and purposes, justice was probably not served. If William Pinkerton and Michael Bohan did rape Anna Brozowska, then the failure to bring them to justice was a travesty. On the other hand, for the mob to act as punishing angels did not serve justice either. In fact, Pinkerton's beating diverted attention away from the charge of rape against him and seemed to vindicate the county's worst impressions of the miners as being "of questionable and lawless character."

As the focus of blame fell on the alleged conspirators for their vigilantism, the erstwhile accusers became the accused. The result was that the rape case was lost in the ensuing hue and cry of riot and was never properly handled by the courts. When the Grand Jury refused to take up the charge of rape against Pinkerton and Bohan, it fulfilled the implied accusation that, unless the miners punished the offenders themselves, the rapists would go free. Thus the local courts appeared to participate in a cover-up, and the miners could point to the handling of the rape as symptomatic of the prejudices which bore upon them in general. Ultimately, the disposition of the rape charge was much like the ultimate disposition of the murder charges at the trial- - nothing came of it in the courts. This may have been supreme justice, after all.

At the same time, if the defendants actually did conspire to kill Pinkerton and Bohan, then justice was not done when Judge Stipp overturned the verdict. The only ones who may have derived any sense of satisfaction from the experience were Frank and Anna Brozowski, who felt justified in hitting Pinkerton at the mine, although one hesitates to equate revenge with justice.

Several subcurrents continually underlay *People v. Lauer*. One is the conflicting interests of the local miners and the coal company in general. They probably lay somewhere at the heart of the matter. The Pinkerton affair clearly illustrated the confrontational nature of the local factions. The miners may have used the rape to discredit the pro-coal company faction, and the pro-company faction used it against the striking miners. In this light, the rape could have been a fiction created by Peter Lauer and his associates. Were they expressing righteous indignation over the rape of a local woman, or were they out to "get Pinkerton" for some personal reason? Was Pinkerton's recent association with the coal company and the railroad enough reason to target him as the rapist? Had Pinkerton been the sort of man who bullied the miners when he worked for the Spring Valley Coal Company?

Another current was the implied personal antagonism between Peter Lauer and the Spring Valley Coal Company. The source of it is never stated, but the *Republican* referred to it often. The *Republican* liberally used terms like "socialist," "anarchist," and "agitator" in its commentary on Lauer before, during, and after his trial. It is insistent that a dividing line existed between Lauer and the forces of "respectable people."[46] The *Minutes of the Spring Valley City Council* also testify to a power struggle within the council between the pro-coal company and anti-coal company factions, and they indicate that Lauer, the fourth ward alderman, took the side which successfully ousted T.B. Jack, the mayor of Spring Valley during the Pinkerton Affair and the trial, from office. During the final week of his trial for intent to murder Pinkerton, Lauer was elected by council members to be mayor pro tempore.

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attempt to bypass Judges Dibell and Blanchard..One may speculate that there was some bad feeling between State's Attorney Watts Johnson and Judge Stipp, which may have influenced Stipp's overturning the verdict.

[45]Insightful analysis of the characteristics of historiographical narrative and the rhetorical aspects of it may be found in several works. Allan Megill's sense that narratives set patterns of sequence which establish consequences has many applications and implications for the legal documents used in this research as well as for the texts of the news articles. See Allen Megill, "Recounting the Past: Description, Explanation, and Narrative in Historiography." *The American Historical Review* 94 (1989), 627-653. Hayden White's theories on the rhetorical qualities of historical narrative speak to the selection of specific facts from the historical field which historians use to construct plausible narratives. See Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), 1-80. Timely considerations on the nature and uses of evidence appear in James Chandler, Arnold Davidson, and Harry Harootunian, eds., *Questions of Evidence: Proof, Practice, and Persuasion Across the Disciplines* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 1994.

[46]*BCR*, 13 September 1894, 1.

He ran for regular election in April, 1895, but lost his bid by eight votes.[47]

It is possible that Lauer and others wanted to find a sure blueprint for increasing the troubles of the coal company. Among miners already restless because of the strike and sensitive to mistreatment by mine management, the charge of rape against one of "their" women had incendiary potential and was sure to generate the ire of the immigrant mining community against mine management. The June 26 hearing in Justice of the Peace court certainly set the events of the Pinkerton Riot in motion.

Nevertheless, as sensational as those events were, it cannot be concluded, as the prosecutors suggested, that the lootings of the company stores were extensions of the Pinkerton Riot. The destitution and desperation of the miners could have been provocation enough to lead to the looting. The lootings, however, enabled the residents of western Bureau County to believe the worst about the undesirable immigrant element without having to come to grips with the true plight of the miners and their legitimate grievances. The lootings only served to muddy further the waters for those who intently held that a rape had been committed.

The indictments by the Grand Jury stated that the defendants were on trial for intent to murder Pinkerton and Bohan and for riot. By the time of the trial, riot probably meant the disruption in Justice White's courtroom, Pinkerton's beating by the miners, the looting of the truck stores, and the miners' gatherings such as the one which resulted in the shootings of the two men. By implication, the defendants were as much on trial because they were foreign riffraff, anarchists, and conspirators as they were because of any decisions made by the Grand Jury. And still the alleged rape of Mrs. Brozowski went unattended. The prosecution and the *Republican* seemed to believe that by finding the defendants guilty of the charges against them, the jury had also extended a verdict of "not guilty" against the spectre of Pinkerton's rape accusation.[48] In the end, if the rape had been a political ploy to ensnare the Coal Company in general and Pinkerton in particular, it failed miserably. If bypassing the rape to get at the more serious target -- anarchism -- was a political ploy used by the "better classes," it also failed when Judge Stipp overturned the verdicts, because, in light of said extension, Pinkerton could not be deemed free of the accusation.

This much is known. The Chicago press lost interest in Bureau County when life there began to return to normal. Once the two "anarchists" were buried without incident and Cox started rounding up the looters, Spring Valley ceased to be "news." Within days, Debs himself was arrested. At the local level, the *Republican* pretty much ceased its coverage after Judge Stipp overturned the verdicts in October. The case received cursory mention in the *Republican's* court calendar, but as it was continued from term to term, it passed into obscurity. Mrs. Brozowski's name disappeared from the court files so it is impossible to determine if the charges against her were dropped or if files are lost. What is left are traces of labor conflicts, ethnic tensions, and the suspicions that many parties may have manipulated to suit their various agendas.

A case such as *People v. Lauer* shows how small subjects are connected to many other, bigger stories. Spring Valley was embedded in the larger contexts of labor struggles, a particular strike, and contemporary perceptions of immigrants. The connection of the five defendants to these larger contexts rendered them significant. The inflammatory rhetoric of the press demonstrated how, in this instance, a virtual reality was created that not only described events but bestowed its own interpretations on what really happened.

Ultimately, if anyone believed the defendants were truly anarchists, they had become anarchists who no longer mattered. Criminal file 3634 depicted the experiences of ordinary people writ large for a moment. Explosive events which once had people fleeing from their homes ended with the proverbial whimper.

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[47]*Minutes of the Spring Valley City Council*, Volume II (4 May 1894 - 31 October 1894), 2 -51. Volume I was reported "missing or burnt" by City Clerk Charles Fay before he lost his job, shortly before Jack was ousted.

[48]*BCR*, 11 October 1894, 4.

A Historiographical Account of Rape as an Institution in Slavery and the Old South

Renée Serino

Rape and the threat of rape has been a widely commented on and analyzed subject in history, yet given very little attention in academic circles. The virtual invisibility of rape and its effects on women was given little attention until Susan Brownmiller's ground breaking book *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape* appeared in 1975. Although its existence had never been contested, it had also never been directly addressed. Rape in regards to women living under a system of slavery was also given little attention, although many speculated about its occurrence. Just as the issue of rape was openly discussed and debated, so were issues surrounding the sexuality of African-American women on the plantation.

One of the most remarked upon but least analyzed themes in the history of the southern black women deals with black women's sexual vulnerability and powerlessness as victims of rape and domestic violence. [1]

In my paper, I will be examining the system of slavery in the Old South, in regard to the black woman, her role, expectations, and treatment under white patriarchal rule. In particular I examine the use of systematic sexual assault in the form of rape, the importance that is linked to these acts being random and unpredictable, and how a system of sexual terrorism, one that is largely institutionalized in our country, served to benefit the white southern patriarchy (as well as all men to a varying degree), because it served to subordinate slave women, at the same time keeping them dependent on the plantation for survival.

Rape on the plantation, as instigated by the white plantation owner, served to reinforce sexual, social, and racial power imbalances that existed on the plantation. As will be explored throughout my paper, southern white women were not exempt from the threat of rape or sexual exploitation, and frequently the brunt of the burden was placed on their shoulders, with little to no power to dictate change, to elevate their status, or to protect slave women from the well known and frequent sexual exploits of the white plantation owner, the hired overseer, and even black male slaves.

The life of a slave does not bring to mind happy accounts of daily life nor pleasant times laboring in the fields. Especially in the deep south, where the weather was hot and the work back-breaking, slave life conjures up a mental picture of intense labor, with the threat of physical and mental torment by a relentless slave driver if production in the field slowed to an unproductive pace. The threat of harsh punishment was always in the back of slaves' minds, and retribution was sought for a variety of circumstances. For example, if slaves were late to the fields, or even if slave women did not bear children on a frequent and steady basis, the fear associated with the threat was what commonly brought slaves to cooperate with the ways of the"peculiar institution".

The exploitation of slave women on the plantation has been documented by numerous historians, and personal testimonies attest that slave women were treated brutally in many areas of their life. Southern black women on the plantation were employed as field hands, cotton pickers, wet nurses, breeders, cooks, maids, seamstresses, as well as mothers, and wives, or "pseudo" wives, since southern law did not honor slave marriages. In addition to the hard work that women were exposed to on the plantation, women were also targets of unwanted sexual harassment and attack which often resulted in rape or the potential threat of rape.

Female bondage was more severe than male bondage because these women had to bear children and cope with sexual abuse in addition to doing the work assigned to them, work that was often similar in type and quantity to that of male slaves. When it was profitable to exploit women as if they were men in the work force, slave holders regarded female slaves, in effect as genderless. But when they could be exploited in ways designed only for women, they were exclusively female-subordinate and unequal to all men. Bondwomen realized the white patriarch had the *power* to force them to mate with whomever he chose, to reproduce or suffer the consequences, to limit the time spent with their children, and even to sell them and their children.[2]

Jennings argues that the sexual exploitation of slave women resulted primarily from economic advancement, and recognizes the power imbalance between sexes and races. However, Jennings's article, "Us Colored Women Had To Go Through A Plenty: Sexual Exploitation of African-American

[1]Darlene Clark Hine, "Rape and the Inner Lives of Southern Black Women: Thoughts on the Culture of Dissemblance," in *Southern Women: Histories and Identities*, ed. Virginia Bernhard, Betty Brandon, Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, and Theda Perdue (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1992), 177.

[2]Thelma Jennings, "Us Colored Women Had To Go Through A Plenty: Sexual Exploitation of African-American Slave Women," *Journal of Women's History* 1 (1990), 46.

Slave Women" concludes that slave women faced hard trials while under a slave system and "undoubtedly, they experienced both mental anguish and physical pain as a result of the selfish desires of the white patriarch, but they just went "on hopin' that things" wouldn't "be that way always".[3]

The seriousness associated with female sexual subordination under a system of slavery focuses on the conscious act of rape, performed by a male individual on a female individual to assert power, control and domination. At this point we need to examine the history of rape as an institution, as applied to black slave women in the plantation south.

Rape has long been part of our history as evidenced by its existence in war times, slavery, and social interactions among friends as well as enemies. Brownmiller, the author of *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape,* argues that rape has always existed in our society, and is mainly used as a tool to maintain and perpetuate male dominance and female subordination. She writes, in regard to the existence of rape in prehistoric times,

> The dim perception that had entered prehistoric woman's consciousness must have had an equal but opposite reaction in the mind of the male assailant. For if the first rape was an unexpected battle founded on the first woman's refusal, the second rape was indubitably planned. Indeed, one of the earliest forms of male bonding must have been the gang rape of one woman by a band of marauding men. This accomplished, rape became not only a male prerogative, but man's basic weapon of force against woman, the principal agent of his will and her fear. His forcible entry into her body, despite physical protestations and struggle, became the vehicle of his victorious conquest over her being, the ultimate test of his superior strength, the triumph of his manhood.[4]

Thus, the above written account sets the stage for male aggression. Although there are no recorded sources for the existence of rape in prehistoric times, it can be assured that if a patriarchal culture existed (where males were regarded as superior, powerful and aggressive), rape was institutionalized to elicit control and ensure power. Random and unpredictable acts of rape as well as sexual harassment and assault ensured male dominance and the control of women in order to maintain sexual access to women by eliciting fear.

Brownmiller suggests that the act of rape along with its physical aspects (forced penetration of the woman by the man) helped solidify its practice in society, and that eventually led to its acceptance as a "normal" occurrence.

"Man's discovery that his genitalia could serve as a weapon to generate fear must rank as one of the most important discoveries,"[5] Brownmiller writes. The rape culture that exists in the late Twentieth-Century, existed for slave and non-slave women in the Old South, as it had existed for the prehistoric woman struggling for her own survival. "From prehistoric times to the present, I believe, rape has played a critical function. It is nothing more or less than a conscious process of intimidation by which *all men* keep *all women* in a state of fear."[6]

It is the institution of rape itself, and the fear it generates in women that served to keep women, especially southern slave women, dependent on the plantation, and thus on the white plantation owner. I will argue and seek to prove that the political and social consequences of the act itself provided far more benefits than the act itself, or the economic gain that followed from the conception of a child who would eventually become the property of the slave holder.

Using a radical feminist approach to the study of the rape, it becomes evident that some important factors and theories need to be enunciated before my historiographic analysis of several bodies of work can take place. Let's start with the concept of male as protector, and the protection racket analysis that follows this concept.

It is commonly thought that women need men around for protection, that someone or something will invariably hurt or harm a woman if she is without a male sponsor or protector. Therefore, the idea is set that women are incapable of taking care of themselves, and since they need to be protected from men with lusty and insatiable sexual appetites, they need some man, either a husband, boyfriend, brother or father to ensure protection. This theory can bring about trouble, because at the same time that women are told to secure a male protector for protection from other males, the man that is assigned to protect the female is ensured adequate access to the female, and can also dominate the woman that he is supposed to be protecting. This was exactly the case for the slave woman. Since slaves were unable to marry legally, thus lacking a husband, she had no male protector except the plantation owner. Being her protector, he had complete access to her in every way possible, and sexual assault in the form of rape was a common occurrence. Therefore, the idea of the male protector only instilled more fear in the slave woman because the man who was supposed to protect her could rape her.

The protection racket analysis also ensures that only two sexes will exist in society, one being male, the other being female, and that their interaction will be in heterosexual form. When this is achieved, people can be sex role stereotyped into their appropriate categories. This has positive

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[3]Jennings, "Us Colored Women Had To Go Through A Plenty," 66.

[4]Susan Brownmiller, *Against Our Will: Men, Women, and Rape* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1975), 14.

[5]Brownmiller, *Against Our Will*, 15.

[6]Brownmiller, *Against Our Will*, 15.

consequences for the patriarchy and negative ones for the women subjected to patriarchal control because of expected societal norms of men being aggressive and dominant, while women are supposed to be passive and submissive. The male traits associated with sex-role stereotyping are viewed in a positive light; aggressive and dominant men have an elevated sense of status. However, sex-role stereotypes for women are viewed in a negative light since passivity and submission are not valued traits in an aggressive society. Oddly enough, at the same time that a passive woman is a burden on the male, she also serves to reinforce the masculine ideal of male as sponsor and protector.

In the plantation south, white patriarchs had complete and total control over everyday life, from the buying and selling of slaves, to managing the plantation, as well as in political and social affairs. Although the white women they were married to seemed to benefit at least by their skin color, they were also relegated to the social norms expected of them, their duties as southern wives, mothers, and most importantly their duties as plantation mistresses. They did not escape the protection analysis because they were white and wealthy, for their slave holding husbands were there to ensure total protection from outsiders, strangers, but most importantly the sexual appetites of the black male slaves on the plantation.

The myth of the black male rapist is important since it doubled the subordination of the black man on the plantation. In addition to the fact that this increased the black male slaves' oppression, it had a dual role of protecting the white patriarchy since it shifted blame from the powerful perpetrator, mainly the white slave owner, to the powerless black slave.

The myth of the black rapist of white women is the twin of the myth of the bad black woman-both designed to apologize for and facilitate the continued exploitation of black men and women.[7]

Male slaves on the plantation lacked their own agency as well. Often ridiculed and verbally harassed, they were often helpless in defending female slaves from the plantation owner. Since oppressed people commonly oppress each other, there is no doubt in my mind that black slave men raped black slave women.

Information on the abuse some female slaves suffered at the hands of slave men is likely to remain elusive. While there were slave women raped by black men, this abuse is overshadowed by white male exploitation of black women, and it is overlooked because it hardly ever turned up in court since there was no legal injunction against it. When George, a Mississippi slave, was convicted and sentenced to death in 1859 for the rape of a ten-year-old female slave, Judge Harris reversed the decision and released George. According to Harris the original indictment could not be sustained under common law or under the statutes of Mississippi because it charges no offence known to either system...There is no act which embraces either the attempted or actual commission of a rape by a slave on a female slave. In 1860, the Mississippi state legislature passed an act making it a crime, punishable by death or whipping, for a black man to rape or attempt to rape a black female under twelve years old. Because the black female had to be so young in order to have a black perpetrator punished, this exception proved the rule of the black female vulnerability to rape by black men.[8]

The American historical account of slavery serves as a perfect viewing ground of institutional rape, for the black woman's sexual integrity was deliberately crushed in order that slavery might profitably endure.[9] The patriarchal institution of American slavery took the ominous form of male over female, or more specifically, of white male over black female.[10] Not only was the black woman forced into economic exploitation through intense labor, but she was also forced into reproductive labor, as she did not own her own body and was subjected at will to sexual exploitation, conception, and often the selling of her babies. Her body, her mind, the entire essence of her being belonged to her white master, because she was considered personal property.

Systematic sexual exploitation resulted in economic advancement for the white slave holder since he reaped a hefty profit off of fertile women and their offspring. Economic advancement through the selling of slaves was a small incentive for the plantation owner to maintain sexual dominance over female slaves. The psychological advantages that the slave master received from his covert acts of sexual violence on his "property" need to be addressed. The slave owner held a privilege on two accounts, one was his skin color, and the other his sex. Having political clout and wealth gave him an edge of sorts, but his biologically determined sex held an incredible advantage. Because of their subordinate position on the plantation, most slave women were afraid to voice their objections to the sexual advancements made toward them by their masters. The fear of harsh retribution existed in many forms for the slave woman if she accused her master of rape.

Throughout the history of this country, Black women have manifested a collective consciousness of their sexual victimization. They have also understood that they could not adequately resist the sexual abuses they suffered without simultaneously attacking the fraudulent rape charge as a pretext

[7]Angela Y. Davis, *Women, Race and Class* (New York: Vintage Books, 1981), 174.

[8]Deborah Gray White, *Ar'n't I A Woman? Female Slaves in the Plantation South* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1985), 152-53.

[9]Brownmiller, *Against Our Will*, 153.

[10]Brownmiller, *Against Our Will*, 153.

for lynching. The reliance on rape as an instrument of white-supremacist terror predates by several centuries the institution of lynching. During slavery, the lynching of Black people did not occur extensively, for the simple reason that slaveowners were reluctant to destroy their valuable property. Flogging, yes, but lynching, no. Together with flogging, rape was a terribly efficient method of keeping Black women and men alike in check. It was a routine arm of repression.[11]

In Deborah Gray White's book *Ar'n't I a Woman? Female Slaves in the Plantation South*, rape is given little coverage since she writes about the incidents of female slavery with a Blassingamian approach. This approach brings White to write with the conviction that female slaves formed their own unique communities and were therefore shielded from the monstrosities of slave life. White approaches the subject of rape as if the existence of a strong female community relieves any suffering females in the plantation south were subjected to. Strong communities among the female slaves on plantations were necessary for survival in many respects. From child rearing responsibilities to survival tactics, female networks were essential because they offered varying degrees of stability in a very unstable environment.

However, White devotes four pages of her book to the rape of slave women, and it is obvious to conclude that White glosses over the seriousness of this systematic exploitation, and its consequential effects. I have a problem with White's indifferent treatment to rape in her otherwise interesting historical account of female slavery. White makes the claim that since black women were an "amorphous group" it is hard to determine individual self-concepts of slave women. She goes on to state that "certain variables affected their collective consciousness."[12] The collective consciousness that White is talking about is the certain degree of autonomy that slave women received from slave marriages.

The nature of plantation life required that marital relationships allow slave women a large degree of autonomy. Marriage did not bring the traditional benefits to female slaves. As we have seen, slave women could not depend on their husbands for protection against whippings or sexual exploitation. Slave couples had no property to share, and essential needs like food, clothing, and shelter were not provided by slave husbands. Thus slave men could not use the provision of subsistence goods as leverage in the exercise of authority over women. In almost all societies where men consistently dominate women, their control is based on male ownership and distribution of property and/or control of certain culturally valued subsistence goods. The absence of such mechanism in slave society probably contributed to female slave independence from slave men.[13]

White is wrong with her contention that female slaves were independent from slave men because they lacked ownership rights to material objects. I highly doubt that black male slaves did not try to possess black females because of the very fact that they had no material objects to call their own. The fact that material objects were not afforded to slaves, either male or female, resulted in an increased sense of ownership as applied to partners. Since partners often were not selected freely, it would make sense to claim that once a partner was assigned, all power would go towards the possession, protection, or dominance of that person since that was the only temporary claim slaves could make toward ownership. I use the word temporary since partners were often sold away at the owner's discretion. White fails to realize that her reasoning is flawed in regards to property ownership and slaves since slaves *were* property they could not own property, including themselves or their partners.

I agree with White's comment on marriage and that the autonomy that it afforded did result in the lack of a male protector, hence White's agreement with concepts of the protection racket. Even if slave women could depend on their husbands for protection, the occurrence of systematic sexual exploitation would not have disappeared or diminished at all. Even if their husbands were given the title of protector, this alone would have granted them access to rape the woman they were supposed to be protecting. As suggested before, systematic exploitation *had* to occur in order to protect the patriarchy, and this in turn established fear among the women, which resulted in their obedience and submission to a certain extent. In this case, the role as protector belonged to the white plantation owner, who claimed to protect, but ultimately took advantage because of the power imbalance between master and slave.

Catherine Clinton's essay, "Southern Dishonor: Flesh, Blood, Race, and Bondage," focuses on the political and social implications of the white male privilege of institutionalized rape on the plantation. Her article also discusses the sexual realities in slavery for men and women, what they entailed, who benefitted from the relationships, as well as the social and political consequences in regards to interracial sexual relations.

In colonial America, where this system rooted and flourished as the invading populations conquered and thrived, if slaveowners and slaves refrained from sexual contacts, men of property might insure the smooth transfer of wealth. But sexual trespass and illegitimate offspring were part of every society, and slaveowners felt the need of rigid regulation within their own fragile system. Thus, colonial America witnessed a legislative

[11]Davis, *Women, Race and Class*, 183.
[12]White, *Ar'n't I A Woman?*, 153.
[13]White, *Ar'n't I A Woman?*, 153.

frenzy, an attempt to monitor sexual behavior, to institute the male will of the master class.[14]

Clinton applies radical feminist theory to her claim that "the systematic sexual exploitation of slaves was a crucial component of the system...because the political and social consequences of this activity were more significant than economic profit."[15] In her article a radical feminist approach can be argued because the existence of rape is attributed to the institutionalization of white male dominance, in the form of the patriarchy. Male control of sexuality, of both white and black women, benefitted the patriarchy because a male standard was set for female sexual and social conduct, thus giving absolute power *over* women to men.

Clinton goes on to argue that the patriarchal south dictated sexual and social control through the sexual double standard, which had different meanings for men and for women, and was also contingent upon race.

White women who lost status when they cohabited with African-Americans were victims by today's standards, as well as perpetrators of Southern dishonor by those of their own day. Honor was wholly a male domain-a man's to bestow and a man's to withdraw. Even if the occasional woman might exert influence that produced a definable difference, women as socially constructed persons remained imprisoned within secondary-status boundaries...Furthermore, an assault upon a white woman, especially by an African-American, was tantamount to a full-scale attack upon social order-a blow directed at white males below the belt. Pollution of the symbol of cultural purity-a white woman's body-threatened white supremacy. This created a bond among white men and a form of social bondage for white women. This protection racket was a deeply embedded tenet of Southern honor.[16]

The sexual double standard that Clinton mentions gives men agency as well as access to female sexuality-primarily because of sex-typed roles that men are supposed to be sexually aggressive, dominant, and active. One way to prove virility is to have many sexual partners, and this is one way in which the patriarchy extends benefits to men because it ensures that they can and will have unlimited access to as many females as they like, with no regard to race or class. If they fail to achieve the standard that is set for all men, they are not real men and are a disgrace to the whole male race.

Women, on the other hand, are supposed to be submissive because this is society's sex-typed role for them. They are not supposed to be aggressive in bed, and the only sexual pleasure they are to receive is from pleasing men by being available for them at their disposal. However, if they show any signs of being sexually aggressive, or sexually active with more than one man, they are systematically labeled a whore, and suffer grave consequences. The whore label is important because it reinforces women's sex-typed role as a submissive female. If a woman steps outside the bounds of the label, she loses the protection of her male sponsors. Therefore, if she is raped, she is to blame and probably "deserved" it. Victim blaming reinforces the patriarchy because it shifts the blame for the crime to the victim and not to the perpetrator where it rightfully belongs. Victim blaming also turns women against each other because women are in competition for a male protector. Victim blaming is often employed to take the heat off of the guilty and to shift the blame to the one who is being victimized. Clinton addresses the use of victim blaming and how slave owners frequently employed this practice to protect their reputations.

Southern honor's propaganda denies the fact of sexual exploitation by slaveowners and once exploitation is discovered claims it was rare. When evidence piles up, the 'blame the victim' syndrome and the 'blame the neighbor' strategy are trotted out. White antebellum Southerners struggled to escape blame, and their descendants often remain defensive.[17]

In Clinton's essay southern male power and privilege, in this case over women, stemmed from the act of rape because men had exclusive access to women's sexuality, including all of their female dependants. This male power and privilege guaranteed access to all females, and as a result females were kept in a perpetual state of fear. The rape of women is a crucial and important component of Clinton's argument, and one that I agree with entirely. Clinton writes:

In most western societies, patriarchy's tenacious hold exerted the legal rights of the alleged father over those of the biological mother. Children inherited names, property, and status through their fathers. Yet in slave societies and within many colonial contexts, the extension of the slaveowner's or conqueror's will superseded the natural father's, and a hierarchy of male power emerged. With the slaveowner's world, the sexual supremacy of dominant males subsumed the interests of all women and the men of the subordinate nation, race, and class.[18]

Sexuality is the linchpin of women's oppression , and the southern patriarchy offered protection for women. They were looked upon as weak and in need of protection. At the same time that southern males

[14]Catherine Clinton, "Southern Dishonor: Flesh, Blood, Race and Bondage" in *In Joy And In Sorrow: Women, Family and Marriage in the Victorian South, 1830-1900*, Selected Essays from the Fort Hill Conference, ed. Carol Bleser (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 55.

[15]Clinton, "Southern Dishonor," 58.

[16]Clinton, "Southern Dishonor," 58-9.

[17]Clinton, "Southern Dishonor," 67.

[18]Clinton, "Southern Dishonor," 55.

provided protection for their women, they also held exclusive rights to dominate women in regard to their sexuality. Women's sexuality had a direct reflection on male honor and status in society. As long as women were pure and virginal and solicited male protection, male protection was extended to women. In regards to honor, Clinton claims that honor truly did not exist, and because of all the horrible acts that occurred at the hands of whites, it should aptly be renamed southern dishonor as the title of her essay contests.

To compare Clinton's essay to Bertram Wyatt-Brown's argument concerning honor and violence in the Old South, we need to look at various aspects of the concept of southern honor. First, Wyatt-Brown's argument stems from the theory that honor in the south is competitive in nature, subject to flux, and is contingent on day-to-day public behavior. Honor in the south is based on power and control and can be summed up as a constant struggle to be perceived as being "better than the next guy." The south, in terms of interaction, can be seen as a war for social standing, which involves the constant act of having to prove oneself through violent interaction with the person who is challenging one's authority. In a sense southern women's virtue had no direct effect on the women themselves. Their social status had a direct reflection on the men in their lives. It became necessary for women to conform to set social standards of "appropriate" female behavior for the sake of the men in their lives. Punishment for failing to meet these standards was often the revocation of protection by a male counterpart.

> What was at stake in the promiscuity of a dependent woman was her protector's status, without which he could not remain an effective member of society. The unchaste wife or daughter did not betray herself alone. She exposed her male family members to public censure. The inner life of the family was inseparable from its public appearance. Since there was little recognition of a morality apart from community custom, the erring woman had to be condemned along with the husband, father, or brother who was unable or unwilling to control her or to avenge the seducer or rapist.[19]

This competitive and hostile environment, involving honor and respect, is subject to flux and thus means that there is also a constant challenge to prove oneself since one's reputation is dependent on other's opinions. The protection of honor is seen as most important and becomes central above all else. Therefore, southern society can be viewed as a war zone where individuals battled over authority and respect.

Bertram Wyatt-Brown's views on rape relate indirectly to his thesis of the south as a war zone in constant combat. Although he does not place much importance on the violence the white patriarchy asserted through systematic sexual assault, he does bring some interesting connections to the concept of the south as a war zone, as well as the power attributed to women's sexuality.

Through Wyatt-Brown's writings on honor and violence, it can be concluded that his views on rape tie into southern violence, and the act itself is an extension of that violence. His book has good groundings in what the white southern patriarchy was all about, how it demanded control, and power through violent acts with the intent to ensure ultimate domination over everyone, except itself.

The power associated with women's sexuality was negative, as women could only use it to destroy or defame males. A double standard existed for those also, because if a woman actually used her powers, retribution against her was sure to happen. Since women's sexuality was seen as negative, it can be concluded that men, who were concerned with reputation and status, would consciously use the act of rape to control or subdue something or someone they thought was bad. It may seem as if I am stretching Wyatt-Brown's point on southern violence in regard to rape, but when violence is the key to control, the rape of women is sure to follow.

The view of the double standard as seen by Wyatt-Brown is:

> It might seem paradoxical that men should make demands for sexual restraint on their female relatives, when giving themselves a right to license. But to the traditional mind there was no "double standard" of morality. The sexes differed. They lived separate lives-one in the world, the other in the home, one in exterior circumstances, the other in the inner sanctuary that required vigilant safeguarding.[20]

To understand that violence is the same as power, or a channel of exerting power, is to understand why men wanted to control and subdue women's sexuality. If women were given the same sexual license as men, then women would be on equal footing with men, and this would greatly discredit the patriarchy and lessen its much needed power to exist.

In *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape* Brownmiller gets to the heart of male dominance by shedding light on the act of rape and how it was, and still is, used as a tool of control by eliciting fear in women. As applied to slave women, it was an effective tool of oppression to silence women and reduce them to the status of property.

The disheartening factor seems to be that a strong ruling patriarchy goes hand in hand with violence against women, with the most violent act

[19]Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Honor and Violence in the Old South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 37.

[20]Wyatt-Brown, *Honor and Violence in the Old South*, 37.

being the rape of women. Rape, and the fear associated with the threat of rape on the plantation, was a horrible occurrence. The brutality that slave women faced in the patriarchal south is quite shocking, and the fact that light has been shed on this subject can be attributed to recent historical accounts that bring to light descriptive accounts of life under a system of slavery and also serve to turn the patriarchy on its head.

Recent feminist scholarship has documented history in a new light- a history that now gives women a voice, but also an accurate interpretation from a feminine and feminist point of view. It is my hope through this paper that I have uncovered a different aspect about the "peculiar institution," how it exerted and maintained its power through a very personal yet political force, and how the threat of sexual violence as viewed many years ago still affects the women of today. Not only are the memories and stories recorded in our history, but the act of rape in today's society has not been eradicated like most would hope to believe.

Even though the institution of slavery has ceased to exist for over a century, women still face the threat of rape and fear men because they possess the power. It is the fear that maintains male privilege, along with the actual threats of violence that still keep women under control and in subservient positions in society. When men take conscious actions to stop the violence, and when the patriarchy is finally turned on its head, women will be free from the fear and terror that men possess.

Islamic Mysticism and Gender Identity

Leonard E. Hudson

> My Lord, eyes are at rest, the stars are setting, hushed are the movements of the birds in their nests, of the monsters in the deep. And Thou art the Just who knoweth no change, the Equity that swerveth not, the Everlasting that passeth not away. The doors of kings are locked and guarded by their henchmen. But Thy door is open to whoso calleth on Thee. My Lord, each lover is now alone with his beloved. And I am alone with Thee.[1]

These are the words of a prayer, spoken by an eighth century Islamic mystic, an early Sufi saint known as Rabi'a al-Adawiyya (712 or 717-801). They are indicative of a central theme in Sufism, that of *Divine Love*. The Sufis pursue the love of God in the same manner that one person, enflamed with the fires of passion, pursues another. It is therefore of no great surprise that Sufi literature often takes the form of love poems.[2] What is surprising, however, is the fact that--despite the mysogynistic tradition of orthodox Islam, and the typical attitude of Muslim theologians that women possess, "little capacity for thought, and less for religion"[3]--many of the greatest Islamic mystics have been women. In what follows, I intend to investigate--through the life of Rabi'a al-Adawiyya and her colleagues, as well as the mystical notion of Divine Love--the Sufi concept of gender, and how it has allowed Muslim women to be accepted as equals in this marginalized branch of Islam.

However, before we begin to investigate the lives of these Sufi saints and the lofty ideal that Divine Love expresses, it is important that we have an understanding of some of the basic tenets of Sufism. Sufism had its origins primarily in the eighth century and came about mostly as a result of

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[1]William Stoddart, *Sufism: The Mystical Doctrines and Methods of Islam* (Northamptonshire: Thorson Publishers, 1976), 82-83. The verse is attributed to Rabi'a al-Adawiyya.

[2]Stoddart, *Sufism*, 74-76.

[3]Margaret Smith, *Rabi'a the Mystic and Her Fellow-Saints in Islam* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), xiii, 133.

extremely pious men and women, who, being fearful of Hell and the afterlife, "devoted themselves as much as possible to nightly vigils...extended their fast far beyond the prescribed times" and avoided not only all things that were prohibited, but also everything in life which was merely of, "doubtful merit" as well.[4] Eventually, the Sufis developed the concept of *fana*, "the nullification of the mystic in the divine presence."[5] The attainment of this divine union is a process of many stages. Margaret Smith, who has published extensively on Islamic mysticism, mentions stages such as

> Penitence (*tawba*), Patience (*sabr*), Gratitude (*shukr*), Hope (*raja*), Holy Fear (*khawf*), voluntary Poverty (*faqr*), Asceticism (*zuhd*)...abnegation of the personal will in the Will of God (*tawhid*), complete Dependence upon God (*tawakkul*), and finally Love (*mahabba*), including in this last, passionate longing for God (*shawq*), intimacy with Him (*uns*), and Satisfaction (*rida*) . . .[6]

The result of one undergoing and participating in these stages is that the *self* is destroyed and the mystic is then in the presence of God alone. Smith further states that God and man are separated "by the illusion of self and only by Love can self be overcome and the mystic attain to...Union with Him and so become one with the Real Being, the True Beloved."[7] Once *fana* is attained, the mystic may find *baqa*, "'duration, remaining with God'" or "a new life in God."[8] It seems that Love, because it encompasses so much, is the final and most important stage in attaining *fana* and *baqa*. It is even suggested by the great Sufi Mansur al-Hallaj (858-922), that Love is of greater importance than faith.[9] The key to the Sufi brand of mysticism, therefore, is the pure Love of God and only God, which is only attained through the renunciation of the (illusory) material world and the self.

It is this unique combination of mysticism, divine union, and Love that leads us to Rabi'a al-Adawiyya. She, along with Ja'far as-Sadiq (ca. 702-765), the sixth Shia imam, are considered to be the founders of Divine Love.[10] Rabi'a is also credited with having composed some of the earliest mystical Love verses.[11] By Sufi standards, Rabi'a's life was a paragon of perfection. She is considered "the saint par excellence" and the Sufis themselves accord her the first place among the earliest Islamic mystics, i.e., she was the first true mystic.[12]

Little is known of her early years, save that she was born sometime between 712-717 to a poor family in the city of Basra (located in what is now Iraq), spent her youth as a slave, and was later freed.[13] What we do know of her, however, is that throughout her life, her asceticism was absolute and unwavering, as was her Love of God. Poverty and self-denial were Rabi'a's constant companions. For example, her typical possessions are said to have been a broken jug from which she drank, an old rush mat to sit upon, and a brick for a pillow.[14] She spent each night in prayer and often chided herself for sleeping, as it prevented her constant contemplation and active Love of God. She rebuked all offers of marriage--of which there were many[15]--because she had no room for anything in her life that might distract her from complete devotion to God. Indeed, in this same manner she "rebuffed anything that could distract her" from the *Beloved*, i.e., God.[16] More interesting than her absolute asceticism, however, is the actual concept of Divine Love that Rabi'a introduced. She was the first to introduce the idea that God should be loved for God's own sake,

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[4]Annemarie Schimmel, *Islam: An Introduction* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1992), 102.

[5]Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1975), 144. *Fana* is comparable to some Eastern mystical concepts in that both entail the annihilation of the self. However, Schimmel notes that, although similar, *fana* differs from the Hindu and Buddhist concept of *nirvana* in that the Sufi view "lacks the idea of karma and accepts the reality of the individual soul."

[6]Smith, *Rabi'a the Mystic*, 51. Cf. Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions*, p. 132, who adds proximity (*qurb*) as an element of Love.

[7]Margaret Smith, comp., *The Sufi Path of Love: An Anthology of Sufism* (London: Luzac, 1954), ix.

[8]Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, 59 and 129.

[9]Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions*, 138.

[10]Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions*, 38-41.

[11]Annemarie Schimmel, *As Through a Veil: Mystical Poetry in Islam* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 15, 17-18.

[12]Smith, *Rabi'a the Mystic*, 3. Smith herself is quoting L. Massignon's *Textes Inedits Relatifs á la Mystique Musulmane*. See also Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, 426.

[13]Smith, *Rabi'a the Mystic*, 7. Rabi'a was freed after her master noticed the "cloud of glory" of a Muslim saint (comparable to the "nimbus" of a Christian saint).

[14]Charis Waddy, *Women in Muslim History* (New York: Longman Group Ltd., 1980), 57.

[15]A.J. Arberry, *Sufism: An Account of the Mystics of Islam* (London: Unwin Paperbacks, 1979), 42. Rabi'a is said to have been an extremely beautiful woman. See also Meher Baba, *Hazrat Babajan: The Emperor of the Spiritual Realm of Her Time* (Poona: Meher Era, 1981), 17-22.

[16]Waddy, *Women in Muslim History*, 63.

not out of fear--as earlier Sufis had done.[17] For example, she is reported to have walked the streets of Basra, a flaming torch in one hand, and a bucket of water in the other. When her intentions were questioned, Rabi'a replied:

> I want to pour water into Hell and set fire to Paradise so that these two veils disappear and nobody worships God out of fear of Hell or hope for Paradise, but only for the sake of His eternal beauty.[18]

These words express exactly the kind of love that Rabi'a professed. It is absolute Love of God, not because God threatens the believer with Hell, or promises Paradise, but because God is himself worthy of Love. Verily, this has become one of the central themes of Islamic mysticism.

It was such extraordinary devotion to God that earned Rabi'a the respect of not only later Sufis and historians, but also of her own peers. Hasan of Basra (d. 728), a founder of Sufism, is said to have discussed matters of God with Rabi'a on a regular basis. Indeed, on at least two occasions, Rabi'a is said to have rebuked Hasan for his egotism and lack of devotion.[19] It is clear that Rabi'a was the foremost Sufi of her day and remains one of the most ecstatic mystics in history.

Yet, as a woman, she is not necessarily unique in the history of Islamic mysticism. For example, Rabi'a bint Isma'il (a predecessor of Rabi'a al-Adawiyya who died ca. 660--the fact that they shared the same first name has often caused some historians to confuse one with the other, or to think that the two women were actually only one person) was an early Sufi who, although not considered a *saint*, was highly respected by the Sufis of her time and regarded an expert concerning mystic states.[20] A third excellent example of a woman Sufi-saint is Sayyidah Nafisa (761-824), a great-great-granddaughter of the fourth Khalif 'Ali (ca. 600-661). Her knowledge is said to have been so vast that even Al-Shafi'i (768-820), who founded one of the four great schools of Islamic law, came to speak with her often about religion and relied on her knowledge of Islamic traditions.[21]

These three, Rabi'a al-Adawiyya, Rabi'a bint Isma'il, and Sayyidah Nafisah, provide excellent examples of women who overcame the misogynistic traditions of the Classical Age of Islam--an age when orthodox Islam's most rigid prescription, gender relations, was in full effect, and women were truly considered to be mere objects, "consumable entities" as Leila Ahmed, an Islamic feminist, writes.[22] Though some may claim, perhaps rightfully so, that it was merely the extraordinary qualities of these Sufi women that eclipsed the fact that they were still "just" women, there may exist an additional factor. These women were undoubtedly aided by the fundamental nature of Islamic mysticism; in Sufism, *there is no gender identity*.

We have already discussed how the ultimate goal of Sufism is union with the Beloved, through the annihilation of the self. In the process of annihilation, *fana*, all traces of identity--including that of gender--are removed until only God exists. That is to say, the annihilation of the self entails the annihilation of gender identity since the latter is merely a facet of the former. The behavior and literature of the Sufis themselves supports this claim. As Leila Ahmed writes; "Biology and gender, Sufi tales about Rabi'a implicitly declare, are neither the only nor the chief basis of male/female relations; nor is gender to any degree a significant human qualifier."[23] Fitting with this, are the words of Hasan of Basra regarding his relationship with Rabi'a. It is recorded that he said;

> I passed one whole night and day with Rabi'a speaking of the Way and the Truth, and it never passed through my mind that I was a man nor did it occur to her that she was a woman, and at the end when I looked at her, I saw myself a bankrupt [i.e., spiritually worth nothing], and Rabi'a as truly sincere.[24]

Furthermore, Farid al-Din 'Attar (d. 1230), the thirteenth-century biographer of Islamic saints and mystics--and himself a Sufi--felt compelled to support his inclusion of women in his work, entitled *Tadhkirat al-Awliya* (Memorial of the Saints), by calling upon a *hadith*, i.e., a saying attributed to the Prophet Muhammad (ca. 570-632) that is generally considered to be a pillar of the *Shari'a*, the Islamic law. Farid al-Din 'attar claimed that, "...the Prophet himself said, 'God does not regard your outward

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[17] Annemarie Schimmel, *The Triumphal Sun* (London: East-West Publications, 1980), 4, 199. See also Schimmel, *Gabriel's Wing: A Study Into the Religious Ideas of Sir Muhammad Iqbal* (Netherlands: E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1963), 342; and Leila Ahmed, "Feminism and Cross-Cultural Inquiry: The Terms of Discourse in Islam," in Elizabeth Weed, ed., *Coming to Terms: Feminism, Politics, Theory* (New York: Routledge, 1984), 199.

[18] Schimmel, *Islam: An introduction*, 105.

[19] Smith, *Rabia the Mystic*, 14-15, 35-36.

[20] Smith, *Rabia the Mystic*, 143. Despite the fact that Rabi'a bint Isma'il died more than fifty years prior to the birth of Rabi'a al-Adawiyya, the two were often confused by early Muslim historians, such as Farid al-Din 'attar.

[21] Waddy, *Women in Muslim History*, 101.

[22] Ahmed, "Feminism and Cross-Cultural Inquiry," 146, 150.

[23] Ahmed, "Feminism and Cross-Cultural Inquiry," 147.

[24] Smith, *Rabia the Mystic*, 14.

forms.'"[25] Given these attitudes, we can conclude that because there exists no concept of gender identity in Islamic mysticism, women could generally be accepted as saints, as could their capacities for religion be so accepted; albeit in both cases it seems that the issue requires defense of some sort.[26]

This inherent transcendence of gender served to socially empower female mystics--though they were certainly unconcerned with such worldly matters. Nonetheless, it is this same empowerment that allowed woman Sufis to pursue Divine Love and attain mystical union with the Beloved. Furthermore, this empowerment, derived from "gender-transcendence," allowed Rabi'a, and those other women like her, to participate in free intellectual discussions with men and women alike, and to make their own decisions regarding interaction with the world. Of Rabi'a, Leila Ahmed writes,

> Sufi presentations...portray a woman pursuing spirituality and socially a life other than that prescribed or permitted for women in the dominant society...She retains full control and legal autonomy with respect to herself in that she is neither wife, nor slave, nor under any male authority, in a way...which would have been impossible had she not withdrawn to the alternative mental and spiritual space of Sufism.[27]

Had Rabi'a not had this degree of independence, she would not have been able to pursue her Love of God as she did. She would most likely have been married off, borne children, and given other such worldly responsibilities. These responsibilities become distractions that are entirely undesirable for a mystic, such as Rabi'a, wholly devoted to the Love of God. For such responsibilities could serve only to draw the mystic away from his or her complete devotion to God. Furthermore, in some cases an additional effect of this gender-transcendent ideal was the lack of importance placed upon the *hijab*, the veil that Muslim women are required to wear whenever in the presence of "forbidden" men, i.e., men not of the immediate family, who may potentially marry the woman--regardless of her current marital status. There is for example, a woman by the name of Fatima of Nishapur (d.849), who was the mentor of her husband, Ahmad Khidruya (d. 854), as well as the companion of Bayezid Bistami (d. 874) of Iran and Dhu`n-Nun (d. 859) of Egypt, both great mystical leaders of the ninth century. It is said that, while discussing the mystical with Bayezid Bistami, Fatima would frequently lift her veil without restriction.[28] This apparently occurred despite the fact that Fatima should have been enjoined by the *Shari'a* to wear the veil whenever in Bistami's presence. Given this and the previous examples, it is obvious that the Sufi tradition is one which--just as surely as it has transcended the material world--has transcended the culturally imposed limitations of gender.

One might wonder then, why there is not a mass embracing of Sufism and mysticism by modern Muslim women, or why Islamic feminists have not advocated, at least on some level, such an alternative. It has been shown that the life of a Sufi permits the Muslim woman a great degree of autonomy, perhaps equaling that of men, in both personal and social realms. Now, this is not to say that there is a deficit of women in the scope of mysticism, for as Annemarie Schimmel relates, "in modern times Sufi teaching is, to a large extent, carried on by women..."[29] However, the complete life of a mystic is perhaps somewhat problematic when considered as a solution to current gender issues. First, the life of a Sufi is extremely demanding, and it is rather doubtful that many, whether they be women or men, would be able to lead such an existence. There is little that can be said about this concern, for a solution is of little use if it is not realistically attainable. A second objection might go something like this: why would women who seek to better their position in the material world advocate Sufism, which emphasizes the afterlife and renounces this world? This objection is certainly easier to address than the first. The answer is that the Sufi view, while emphasizing mysticism and the afterlife, coincidentally improves the status of women in *this* world. This is evidenced clearly in the cases mentioned earlier, especially those of Rabi'a al-Adawiyya and Fatima of Nishapur. Unfortunately, it seems that traditional Islamic society has made an attempt to ensure that these saintly women remain in the past. With education in Islamic societies being geared towards learning of "dancing slave girls salvaged from *Arabian Nights*, films and comic books," heroines such as Rabi'a al-Adawiyya have little place in education, if at all.[30]

If it is a wonder that Islamic feminists are not advocating Sufism, it is even more surprising that an Islamic feminist would attack the genderlessness nature of Sufism and mysticism. Yet Fedwa Malti-Douglas, author of *Woman's Body, Woman's Word* (a work on gender and Islamic literature), does just that. She claims that a central current of Sufism is its "strongly anti-female nature," which, as we have just

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[25]Farid al-Din Attar, *Muslim Saints and Mystics*, trans. A.J. Arberry (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1966), 40.

[26]Waddy, *Women in Muslim History*, 59. See also Schimmel, *The Triumphal Sun*, 256.

[27]Ahmed, "Feminism and Cross-Cultural Inquiry," 149.

[28]Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, 427.

[29]Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, 427.

[30]Naila Minai, *Women in Islam: Tradition and Transition in the Middle East* (New York: Seaview Books, 1981), 89.

seen, is clearly not the case.[31] Malti-Douglas argues that the world of a (male) Sufi-mystic is problematic in that does not include women. What Malti-Douglas seems to miss is that the life of a Sufi is completely fulfilled by attaining the state of *baqa*, the mystical union with God that comes about as a result of *fana* and Divine Love. Given the unquestionable "success" of Rabi'a al-Adawiyya's life, one cannot help but to wonder if Malti-Douglas would make a similar criticism of Rabi'a's world.

Malti-Douglas does, however, touch on an idea that--while certainly not "anti-female"--does indeed have an interesting implication for the Sufi "gender-transcendent" ideal. Let us assume, for example, two young Islamic mystics, both of whom are men. Each of them is well on the way to attaining union with God, having passed through many of stages necessary to attain *fana*. They have very nearly annihilated the self and along with it all sense of gender. However, neither mystic has quite yet completely renounced worldly matters. The fellows meet one day and become fast friends. Furthermore, having removed any notion of gender, the two find themselves drawn together in what Malti-Douglas refers to as a "homosocial" relationship.[32] The relationship between the two mystics is not really homosexual in nature since sexuality and gender play absolutely no role whatsoever.

Yet, there seems to remain some sense of eroticism, resembling to some degree that expressed in the Sufi poetry about the notion of Divine Love and the Beloved, i.e., God. A perfect example of this situation can be found in the case of Jalaluddin Rumi (1207-1273), a Sufi of the thirteenth century and perhaps the tradition's greatest poet. In 1244 Jalaluddin met a fellow mystic, Shamsuddin of Tabriz (d. 1248), who introduced him to the concept of Divine Love.[33] The two became steadfast friends and, consequently, Rumi soon took to viewing Shamsuddin as his Beloved. Annemarie Schimmel relates that Rumi and Shamsuddin were constant companions for at least six months, and during that time Rumi ignored his friends, family, and classes. He was completely absorbed in the company of Shamsuddin.[34] Unfortunately for Rumi, Shamsuddin was driven away by members of Rumi's family, who were extremely jealous of the close relationship the two mystics shared. As a result, Jalaluddin suffered a case of extreme depression due to his "broken heart." A few years after being driven away, Shamsuddin returned to Rumi, but was assassinated by Rumi's other companions, who kept the act secret from Rumi. Rumi spent many years searching for Shamsuddin and, when unable to find him in the physical world, turned to mysticism once again. Much of the mystical Love poetry later written by Jalaluddin Rumi is quite ambiguous. It is not clear to whom the term *Beloved* applies, God or Rumi's onetime companion Shamsuddin. This entire episode is due to both mystics' transcendence of gender and its irrelevance to their multi-layered interactions.

This notion of mysticism and gender is fascinating in that it contradicts the common opinion, held by many traditional Muslims, that "Islamic feminism" is a product of the Western world. Those who support the tradition of misogyny--and what could easily be called "injustices against women (and other groups)...in the name of 'Islam'"[35]--are quick to subscribe to the idea that, due to apparently arbitrary cultural constraints, movements such as Islamic feminism could only have emerged as a result of the incredible influence of the immoral West. However, the ideas expressed by Sufism show that this is not necessarily the case. Islamic mysticism arose in the Classical Age of Islam, a time when Islamic society was free of Western influence. Yet, the same contestation of the misogynistic practices found in orthodox Islam that is presently attributed to the influence of the West, arose along with Sufism in the eighth century. If Sufism was able to contest the traditional concept of gender in the eighth century, in the absence of Western influence, how then can the opponents of Islamic feminism claim that the movement is necessarily a product of the West? The answer, simply, is that they cannot. Sufism, therefore, serves to validate the Islamic nature of movements such as Islamic feminism.

Perhaps, however, Sufism can do more than validate feminism. Perhaps the transgender ideal could be imported into orthodox Islam without necessitating the need for a life wholly devoted to mysticism, creating a new concept of gender within orthodox Islam. This new concept, while perhaps not completely satisfying to feminist ideology, is by no means misogynistic. In Islamic societies, there exist primarily two types of relationships: that with God

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[31]Fedwa Malti-Douglas, *Woman's Body, Woman's Word: Gender and Discourse in Arabo-Islamic Writing* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 109. See also Ibn Tufail, *The Journey of the Soul* (London: Octagon Press, 1982). It is this philosophical treatise of Ibn Tufail's that is criticized by Malti-Douglas.

[32]Malti-Douglas uses this term throughout her work, *Woman's Body, Woman's Word.* Cf. Eve Sedgwick, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), who loosely defines "homosocial" as a sort of intra-sexual desire that, while gender-irrelevant, is not necessarily lacking in eroticism.

[33]Schimmel, *Islam: An Introduction*, 117.

[34]Schimmel, *The Triumphal Sun*, 18-25

[35]Ahmed, "Feminism and Cross-Cultural Inquiry," 150-151.

and that with other humans. The gender-transcendent nature of Sufism, if adopted as a mainstream concept, would redefine the nature of these two relationships, such that both would benefit.

In consideration of this claim, perhaps the most important aspect of the gender-transcendent ideal is that it is indeed Islamic! As previously noted, it cannot be claimed that this view is a result of Western influence. Indeed, Sufism expresses the very theme of Islam, that of *surrendering* one's will completely to the will of God. The Sufis are merely an example of having this idea incorporated into every aspect of daily life. Everything in the Sufi path is a part of fulfilling that idea of *surrender*, including the idea of gender-transcendence. That is to say, the assumption of a gender-irrelevant identity is merely a stage in surrendering one's will to the will of God. If the Sufi concept of gender-transcendence were somehow to become the mainstream view, the end result would not only be that gender relations would improve immeasurably, as evidenced in the lives of earlier Sufis, but the entire *umma*, or Islamic society, would take a step closer to God

The lives of earlier Sufis indicate that such a step is possible. Furthermore, the lives of respected Sufi saints have shown that gender-transcendence promotes sex relations in a manner acceptable to all. That is, the place of women is bettered in a manner acceptable both to other Muslims (since the concept is Islamic) and God as well. Rather than living under the misogynistic, questionable, *human* interpretations of divine law, Muslims could share equally in the divine presence of the Beloved.

Gendered Imagination: Women's Resistance to Islamist Discourse*

Lea Wood

I. Introduction

The difficulty in writing about women's political resistance stems from the realization that there is no "single" mechanism of women's oppression. An obvious point, perhaps, but one that divides women as a category, forcing any examination of "women's" oppression and political resistance into a specific local context. However, by contextualizing women's struggles we need not be prevented from connecting local political struggles to the larger global contestation over gender's meaning.

In this paper I will examine women's resistance in the context of the political strategies utilized by women living in Muslim societies. My concern is with two strategies in particular: feminist reinterpretations of sacred narratives and the formation of political "coalitions." Both critique essentialist Islamist discourses that posit Muslim women's identities as fixed and their positions as subordinate to men. These two strategies work in different ways to dispel the idea that women's behavior is divinely prescribed and that women living in Muslim societies passively perform "proper" female Muslim behavior. At the same time, reinterpretation and "coalition" building strategies inform each other, working together, to reveal and refute the discourses, social practices and institutions that mutually reinforce the oppression of women.

Comparing modes of resistance will help us to further understand how women have responded in particular to Islamist discourses.[1] It is not enough to ask *how* Islaimists' imagine women and what Islamist campaigns *do* to women. Instead, we must ask: what are women *doing to* fundamentalism? How are women challenging sexist traditions? What are the

*I am thankful to Jason Hammel, Lisa Prothers, Dr. Alison Bailey, and Dr. Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi for their helpful comments.

[1]I use Islamist discourse to refer to the general themes which underlie fundamentalist ideology, particularly the way that fundamentalist ideologies view women. Seeing women as valuable possessions, cultural repositories, bearers of future generations, vulnerable to moral corruption and exploitation-possible traitors, and prone to assimilation. Islamists use the terms westernized or westoxicated, which means infected by the West, to refer to women who transgress prescribed gender roles.

consequences of women's political activities? What kind of an impact do women's resistance strategies have on Muslim women's lives?

II. Narrating Gender: Islamist Discourses

The oppression against which women's movements fight is informed by patriarchal interpretations of Islamic religious texts. Patriarchal readings of those texts rationalize the subordinate status of Muslim women.[2] Gender hierarchies are at once constructed, legitimated, challenged, and maintained utilizing those same sacred narratives that provide the foundation for Islamists' gendered discourses. Reaffirming women's "proper place," religious texts are used to create an "ideal" woman whose identity is inseparable from her subordinate status. As I will argue, the links between Islamists' ideals and politics, between women's realities and Islamists' imaginations, and between culture and gender have created a gendered class of people who are marginalized from the center of power.

A separation of the sexes is an essential component of patriarchal Islamist discourse. This separation marks women's inferiority.[3] Preoccupied with drawing boundaries between the sexes and establishing a male-versus-female symbolic order, Islamists' claim that women are physically and morally weak and thus inferior to men.[4] Here a paradox surfaces; first, Muslim women are considered dangerous and immoral; and second, they serve as symbols of purity and as transmitters of Islamic identity. Although contradictory, these two depiction's serve male Islamists well: when women resist prescribed gender roles they are called heretical and weak, but when they conform to Islamists' gender prescriptions, they are deemed strong and virtuous, "true Muslim women." This construction of the "ideal" Muslim woman paradoxically couples women's strength with their willful submission to Muslim men.[5]

Islamists define their societies as male and female, strong and weak, orthodox and heretical. As both the transmitters of identity and the internal enemy, women lie at the center of Islamist discourses. Fatna Sabbah illustrates a patriarchal strategy of dichotimization that saturates Islamist discourses; she asserts that women serve a dual function both as "omnisexual" heretics and as pious, obedient repositories of culture. According to Sabbah, women's bodies and identities are inscribed by a patriarchal discourse marking the female body as both sacred and inferior.[6]

Islamists justify the devaluation and oppression of women, by using specific interpretations of the Hadith: the sayings and deeds of the Prophet Mohammed, and verses in the Qur'an.[7] One verse in particular has been cited as a divine mandate for the use of physical violence in cases where women disobey men, particularly their husbands:

> Men have authority over women because God has made the one superior to the other, and because they spend their wealth to maintain them. Good women are obedient. They guard their unseen parts because God has guarded them. As for those from whom you fear disobedience, admonish them and send them to beds apart and beat them.[8]

It is important to note that verse 4:34 illustrates the paradox previously discussed. Pious Muslim women hide their sexual parts from the eyes of men and Muslim men are granted divine authority to punish women who defy doctrine. Power according to this structure flows from God to men, who have the authority to discipline women. Part of a doctrine that imagines women's sexuality as dangerous, this verse. is intimately connected to the ways women's bodies are interpreted by Islamists discourses.

If Islamic laws and customs are intregal to Muslim woman's identity, then questioning the law is equated with challenging God. If women are subordinate to men by divine mandate, then questioning the injustice and abuse of women is heresy, disobedience-nashuz, and therefore punishable.[9] Proper female behavior has been interpreted in ways that deem women's subordination "properly Islamic."[10] Verses like 4:34 have been challenged and dismissed by scholars and feminists who instead cite the Qur'anic, verse 2:229 which states, "Women shall with justice have rights similar to those exercised against them. . ."[11] Here the orthodox assertion that gender specific violence is permissible according to the Qur'an is challenged. By

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[2]On gender's political importance and historical variation see Joan Wallach Scott, "Introduction," in *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 2.

[3]John S. Hawley and Wayne Proudfoot, eds. "Introduction," in *Fundamentalism and Gender* (New York: Oxford Press, 1994), 26.

[4]Hawley and Proudfoot, "Introduction," 30.

[5]Fatna Sabbah, "Introduction," in *Woman in the Muslim Unconscious* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1984).

[6]Sabbah, *Woman in the Muslim Unconscious*, 25.

[7]For a valuable study of women in Islamic religious law, see John Esposito in *Woman in Muslim Family Law* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1982).

[8]Qur'an, Women, 4:34.

[9]According to Fatima Mernissi nashuz is used to describe the female Muslim's disobedience, specifically towards her husband. Literally nashuz refers to a rebellion by women who refuse to obey their husbands where sex is concerned. On nashuz, see Fatima Mernissi in *The Veil and the Male Elite* (New York: Addison-Wesley Publishing, 1992), 156, 158, 193.

[10]On betrayal complex in identity politics see, Marie Aimee Helie-Lucas "The Preferential Symbol for Islamic Identity: Women and Muslim Personal Laws," in *Identity Politics and Women*, ed. Valentine Moghadam (Boulder: Westview Press 1994), 399.

[11]Qur'an, The Cow, 2:229.

finding and highlighting competing verses in the Qur'an, the justifications for misogynist practices are revoked, thereby giving Muslim women an opportunity to change patriarchal interpretations on Qur'anic grounds. The reinterpretation of texts has been important in challenging Islamist notions of proper female behavior. A reinterpretation of religious doctrine challenges Islamists within the Islamic tradition, dispelling the idea that orthodox readings are the *only* valid interpretation of religious doctrine.

That women's subordination is intimately connected to their Muslim identities disguises the fact that ideas, institutions and social relations also reinforce gender roles. Coercive, often violent tactics are used to intimidate women into conformity with Islamists' prescribed gender roles. Women's appearances, movements, and choices are politicized, and serve as visible symbols of Islamists' power. For example, in Iran's Islamic Revolution (1978-1979) the mandatory veiling of women took on a new meaning. Veils became a discernible cue. marking women's inferiority and their prescribed place in the New Islamic Republic. The veiled woman was a symbol of conformity; she indicated the successful implementation and acceptance of Islamist power.[12]

When women step out of their prescribed gender roles, Islamists react with hostility.[13] The transgression of gender roles are considered heretical by Islamists, so ideological arguments are waged regarding the "proper" behavior, appearance, and place of Muslim women. Deemed politically important, women's bodies and behaviors become the sites of a cultural battle.[14] As Islamists gain power and their constructions of an "ideal" Muslim woman gain public authority, contestation over the meaning of gender erupts. Within this context Muslim women's roles, dress, and bodies become the battleground for a contestation involving states, Islamists, and Muslim women.[15]

III. Resistant Readings

Although men have predominantly led Islamization campaigns, women have also contributed to these religious-political movements. Participating in Islamist movements provides a radically different strategy for women living in Muslim societies, allowing them an opportunity to shape fundamentalism from the inside. Women-Islamists have utilized a discourse of authenticity to make effective and positive changes in fundamentalism's discourse on women.[16] Women who are Islamists escape the accusations that they are Westernized or heretic. Using a discourse of authenticity, fundamentalist feminists escape the accusations that they are heretical. Unlike their secular feminist counterparts, Islamist women do not refute the implementation of Islamic law; instead they argue that the implementation of particular misogynist verses or traditions are anti-Islamic. By joining Islamist movements these women assert power, gaining political influence in a predominantly male sphere.

Demonstrating their deeply rooted religious beliefs, Islamist feminists perform vital functions. As theologians and scholars Islamist women provide reinterpretations of Islamic tradition that support women's equality with men. By reinterpreting Islamic texts and traditions these feminists bring into question misogynist laws and traditions that are detrimental to women.[17]

The Creation story is an important component of the Islamic tradition and the narrative is frequently used by Islamists who claim women are inferior to men because in the Creation narrative woman came from man, making man the first human. Feminist scholar Riffat Hassan offers a reinterpretation that contests the "naturalness" of women's inferiority. Hassan turned to the Qur'an as a primary text for the assertion of gender equality. She challenged the belief that Adam was the first human being and that from him Eve (Hawwa) was created. Since Hawwa is presumed to have been created from Adam's rib, it had traditionally been asserted that woman is inferior to man, and her inferior status was the will of God.[18] Going back to the Qur'anic verses on Creation, Hassan not only refutes arguments that Hawwa came

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[12]On women's physical appearances and their connections to Iranian Islamists' power, see Hanah Papenek, "The Ideal Woman and the Ideal Society: Control and Autonomy in the Construction of Identity," in *Identity Politics and Women*, 63-64. For more on the veil's history as an "Islamic" tradition see Fatima Mernissi, *The Veil and the Male Elite*, chpt. 5, 85-101.

[13]On revivalist backlash, see Women Living Under Muslim Laws, "Alert for Action Newsletter," (Montpellier, France: Women Living Under Muslim Laws) 7/27/94.

[14]On the increasing politicization of Muslim women's identities during the late twentieth century, see Valentine Moghadam, "Introduction," in *Identity Politics and Women*, 7.

[15]Valentine Moghadam, *Modernizing Women: Gender and Social Change in the Middle-East* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1993), 143.

[16]Feminist scholars and theologians work with the same texts as Islamists but provide radically different interpretations of Islamic history. The scholarship of these women is considered Islamic because the texts they draw upon are seen as Islam's "real" or "authentic" history. Therefore, these feminist scholars are using a discourse of authenticity which validates their work, firmly grounding them within the Islamic tradition.

[17]For an example of feminist reinterpretations, see Riffat Hassan, "The Issue of Woman-Man Equality in the Islamic Tradition," *Women's and Men's liberation: Testimonies of Spirit*, Leonard Grob, Riffat Hassan, and Haim Gordon, eds. (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 65-82.

[18]According to Hassan the Creation story provides a base for the oppression of women. Hassan claims the belief Eve (Hawwa) was created from man's rib is derived from the Bible. For more on the Islamic creation story, see Hassan, "The Issue of Woman-Man Equality in the Islamic Tradition," 65-82.

from Adam's rib but reinterprets the creation story in a way that promotes equality between the sexes. According to various Qur'anic verses, Adam and Hawwa were created simultaneously from a single soul, thus any law that does not give women equal status to men is not only illegal but anti-Islamic, because it would contradict the intent of God at the moment of creation.[19] Returning to the same texts used to justify women's subordinate status, Hassan manages to work within the boundaries of tradition, thereby proving her loyalty to Islam while simultaneously questioning male interpretations of Islamic texts. For Hassan and her feminist counterparts, working within the frame of Islam to challenge the authenticity of misogynist interpretations is an empowering way to counter the "naturalness" of women's subordination to men.

Participating actively in a political refashioning of Islam, Islamist women radically redefine gender identities and politics. The violence committed against women in the name of Islam cannot be justified as tradition when texts and traditions are reinterpreted in ways that are favorable to women. With the scholarship of Islamist feminist scholars, a distinction has been made between violence and tradition, injustice and the will of God. For example Islamist women refute verses like 24:8 from the Qur'an which are frequently used in cases where women have been accused of adultery:

> If any of your women commit fornication, call in four witnesses from among yourselves against them; if they testify to their guilt confine them to their houses till death overtakes them or till God finds another way for them.[20]

Feminist Islamists' claim that verse 4:15 is countered by verse 24:8. According to verse 24:8 a woman's word is more trustworthy than a man's:

> If a man accuses his wife but has no witnesses except himself, he shall swear four times by God that his charge is true, calling down upon himself the curse of God if he is lying. But if his wife swears four times by God that his charge is false and calls down His curse upon herself if it be true, she shall receive no punishment.[21]

If verse 24:8 is highlighted, then the value of a woman's word outweighs that of a man's, and her oath is taken as truth in spite of the accusations. The reinterpretations by feminists asserts that God's plan for humankind includes a divine mandate for equality between the sexes and in no way gives Muslim men a license to punish women for unfounded suspicions.

[19]Hassan, "The Issue of Woman-Man Equality," 80-81, also see Qur'an, Women, 4:1.

[20]Qur'an, Women, 4:14.

[21]Qur'an, Light, 24:8.

IV. Transgressing Customs and Law

Islamist discourses are contested by women at several levels. The feminist theologian is not just arguing against orthodox interpretations of text but against the prescribed behaviors by which women are forced to abide. Local women who challenge these gendered notions transgress customs and threaten to halt Islamists' campaigns for power. The very act of transgression defies the Islamist assertion that women's identities are fixed. When transgressions are visible, it is evident that there is not one Islam, or one Muslim woman identity. Therefore misogynist laws and customs that claim to be Islamic are in fact the results of local, economic, political and cultural factors.

The heterogeneity of Muslim women's identities becomes evident when women's lives are closely examined and compared. In Sri Lanka "a significant proportion of the female Muslim population travels, has a passport in their own name, leav[ing] their homes and even their families. . .[to work abroad]."[22] The Sri Lankan economy must export a mass of female labor to keep families out of poverty, so the ideal Sri Lankan Muslim woman is expected to work abroad, sending money home to feed her family and to fuel the domestic economy. The ideal Sri Lankan woman not only sends money home to her family but she is expected to leave Sri Lanka to work in potentially dangerous environments where her physical labor and sexuality are exploited without governmental protections.

The identities and lives of Muslim women in Sri Lanka are markedly different than those of other Muslim women. Comparisons between Muslim women's lives reveals that the experiences and identities of women differ, there is not one "ideal" model of Muslim womanhood. The "ideal" is a construct that is historical and political, an identity that is mediated by the economy, religion, the family, and the government.

Increasingly governments have been pressured by Islamists to pass religious laws that codify women's behavior. But women have resisted Islamic laws and their resistance has created a backlash. In 1984 three women in Algeria were accused of publicly criticizing the government. These women were arrested and jailed for seven months as a direct consequence of having public political discussions on whether the Algerian state should have the right to restrict women's autonomy by adopting a rigid Islamic family code.[23] Following their release the

[22]Helie-Lucas, "Women's Struggles and Strategies and the Rise of Fundamentalism in the Muslim World: From Entryism to Internationalism," in *Women in the Middle East: Perceptions, Realities, and Struggles* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 218.

[23]Family laws or codes, according to John Esposito, are laws that include such important areas as marriage, divorce and

new Algerian family codes were adopted, which severely limited the autonomy of Algeria's female citizens.[24] Women in Algeria lost their rights to marry freely, and they now must be given in marriage by a wali or guardian.[25] They also lost divorce rights, parental custody of their children, and equal shares of inheritance. These laws were further reinforced by Algerian men's right to polygamy and repudiation.[26] The jailed feminists were used as an example of what happens to Muslim women when they voice discontent. As a result Algerian feminists ability to respond to these sweeping changes was severely retarded.

The growing influence of Islamists can be seen in the case of Shah Bano in India. In 1985, only a year after the events in Algeria, a petition was filed with the Indian Supreme Court in which a Muslim woman who had been deserted by her husband, claimed that a husband's refusal to provide adequate maintenance or nafaqah[27] for his ex-wife was in direct violation of India's section 125 of the legal code.[28]

The Indian Supreme Court argued that Shah Bano had the same rights as Hindu women under Indian Civil Law: therefore Bano could demand her husband pay her maintenance. This decision caused a conflict between the secular Indian government, whose majority is Hindu, and the Muslim minority, who felt they were being forced to obey secular laws that countered Islamic law. Responding to Islamist pressure, the Indian government created a Muslim Woman's Bill which gives Muslim women radically different legal rights in the private sphere than those given to non-Muslim Indian women. The Muslim Woman's Bill also absolves Muslim men from their marital responsibilities while burdening the Muslim community with the responsibility for divorced or deserted Muslim women.[29]

What is most alarming about the Shah Bano decision is that it set a precedent for the application of special minority laws where Muslim women's rights were concerned.[30] These Islamic laws refuse women equal treatment as citizens based on their religious and gender identities.[31] As illustrated in the above cases, Islamists have been able to put pressure on governments extracting concessions from seemingly democratic secular states.[32]

Using narrow interpretations of Islamic Law, Islamists have pressured states into codifying their gendered prescriptions into law. The codification of "proper" female behavior makes any transgression illegal and therefore Islamists are allowed to use violent measures to silence the uncooperative female subject. However, it is important to remember that Islamization movements, like the women they target, are multiple. Although Islamization campaigns are diverse they produce identical effects differently: the oppression and exclusion of woman as "Other." Islamization campaigns share a similar structure of organization, oppressing women as a class, organizing differences according to gender, a structure that posits women subordinate. Because of their structural similarities, Islamization as a movement has been responsible for a backlash against women's rights and the women's movement in the Islamic world.[33] It was within this environment, one particularly hostile towards women, that another strategy of resistance emerged.

V. Coalition Politics

Interventions where laws and customs threaten the safety of Muslim women are performed by coalitions, organized political groups who connect local oppression to the global contestation over gender's meaning. Using coalitions Muslim feminists have adopted strategies that include information sharing, political protest, and the visible transgression of traditional gender roles.

Networks such as Women Living Under Muslim Laws were formed in response to the Shah Bano case and the jailing of women in Algeria. These networks initiate letter writing campaigns and draw attention to

succession. Specifically Islamic Family Codes affect women because these laws identify the proper roles and responsibilities of family members. Hence, Islamist interpretations of Family Law typically subordinate women to men and prescribe behaviors and values to women that are then enforced by the codification of female behavior in laws considered divine or the word of God. On the definition of Islamic Family Law, its origins, interpretations and effects, see Esposito, *Women and Muslim Family Law*, 13-48.

[24]Farida Shaheed, "Controlled or Autonomous: Identity and the Experience of the Network, Women Living Under Muslim Laws," *Signs* 19 (1994), 1004.

[25]On walis in the Algerian Family code, see Helie-Lucas, "The Preferential Symbol for Islamic Identity: Women and Muslim Personal Laws," 396-397.

[26] Helie-Lucas "The Preferential Symbol for Islamic Identity: Women and Muslim Personal Laws," 398.

[27]Maintenance or nafaqah is traditionally defined as the husband's obligation to provide the wife with food, clothing, and lodging. unless she is disobedient or nashizah-nachuz refusing him conjugal relations or is otherwise disobedient. If she has been faithful and obedient yet he refuses to pay her she has the right to sue him for maintenance. On nafaqah see Esposito, *Women in Muslim Family Law*, 26.

[28]On Shah Bano, see Rhada Kumar, "The Indian Feminist Movement," in *Identity Politics and Women*, 275.

[29]On the Muslim Women's Bill, see Peter Awn, "Indian Islam: the Shah Bano Affair," in *Fundamentalism and Gender*, 74, also see Radha Kumar, "The Indian Feminist Movement," 280-281.

[30]On the willingness of states to pacify Islamists on gender issues, see Helie-Lucas "The Preferential Symbol for Islamic Identity: Women and Muslim Personal Laws," 397-98.

[31] Awn, "Indian Islam," 75.

[32] Awn, "Indian Islam," 63.

[33]Awn, "Indian Islam," 75.

the persecution of women who defy Islamists' gendered ideologies.[34] Although women are being oppressed in the name of Islam, the Network recognizes that this oppression is not manifest in one form across Muslim societies. Therefore, a Network does not have to universalize and erase differences between women to become a powerful political actor. On the contrary, Women Living Under Muslim Laws gains strength by acknowledging difference. More women are willing to participate in an organization that does not force them to choose between their Muslim identities and their legal rights. For example, a woman living in Iran who believes mandatory veiling is part of being a "true" Muslim woman may still argue that forced marriage is un-Islamic and immoral. Thus, the Iranian woman might take issue with forced marriage when it occurs in her own country and the rest of the Muslim world. The key is not to force women to choose between their religious or national identities and feminism, but instead to fashion a women's rights organization as a way to build coalitions across boundaries. What these women do have in common is a shared experience with male authority, a context where the meaning of their gender is in a site of contestation and a mediating factor in their lives and communities. Coalition building requires that feminism be sensitive to the application of locally informed strategies of resistance.

Women Living Under Muslim Laws highlights the diverse experiences of women living in Muslim societies. Information sharing, newsletters, and "Alerts For Action" amplify local women's voices and shape new understandings of women's experiences. Women Living Under Muslim Laws issues "Alerts For Action" to the international community with the purpose of communicating the struggles women are currently waging in response to oppressive patriarchal forces. In contrast to other social movements that represent Muslim women, Women Living Under Muslim Laws uses locally initiated information networks which function in a way that the women themselves become visible actors who describe their specific situations to a global audience. Local women typically describe their own struggle or issues in a letter to the Network (WLUML). The Network then distributes the information to its global connections that include Amnesty International, United Nations branches like UNICEF, and local women's organizations.

In November of 1995, Mina Fazlollai and Marjam-Banco escaped from Iran and fled to Turkey. These women had been imprisoned in the Islamic Republic of Iran for their feminist political activities. They were detained while attempting to leave Turkey and imprisoned in Bayrampasa prison.[35] The Turkish government refused these women status as political refugees and contemplated sending them back to Iran where they would most likely be killed. Women Living Under Muslim Laws initiated a letter writing campaign calling for international political action to halt the deportation and execution of the political refugees, Fazlollai and Banco.[36]

Ultimately networks like Women Living Under Muslim Laws expose the injustice inflicted on women by exposing the oppressive conditions under which these women live. Historically women's movements have been plagued by the tendency to silence the voices of women who do not conform to a movements ideology, for example a Muslim woman who does not believe that polygamy is oppressive. This poses a problem for women's coalitions: how to pursue and define social justice without universalizing women's experiences and desires. Women's networks solve this problem by encouraging alternative views within the coalition and validating the knowledge and experiences of local women. The Network has been able to reveal Muslim women's diverse identities and realities without creating rifts between groups within the coalition.

Only in special cases, like that of Fazlollai and Banco, does the Network appeal to the international community on the women's behalf. In the case of the Iranian political refugees in Turkey, neither woman was in a position where she could ask for help. Since these women were threatened with deportation and execution, the Network decided the case should be documented and distributed internationally.[37] Women Living Under Muslim Laws encouraged organizations, groups and individuals around the

[34]Women Living Under Muslim Laws initiates letter writing campaigns by sending out bulletins, also called "Alerts for Action." These Alerts are sometimes initiated by women who are unjustly persecuted by their government or religious groups. "Alerts" are also intitated by and for women who have received unequal treatment before the law with regards to adultery, rape and divorce cases. Once the woman or women send a letter to the Network (WLUML), the Network distributes a bulletin to its links around the world, including NGO's like Amnesty International, and local women's organizations. Often the "Alerts" call for a letter writing campaign for the women in question.

[35]Women Living Under Muslim Laws, "Alert For Action," 11/8/95.

[36]Only when the women themselves cannot initiate a campaign does the Network (WLUML) initiate a letter writing campaign on the woman's behalf. In some cases it would be dangerous for an outside organization to step in when the women being persecuted are accused of betraying their Muslim identities. Since the Network is secular (it does not take an ideological or religious position as an organization), it could be detrimental to the woman's case if she were viewed as having a connection to a secular group.

[37]The Network is extremely careful when it comes to initiating a campaign on a woman's behalf, usually only doing so when the woman is in immediate danger. For more on WLUML's guidelines for campaign initiation, see Helie-Lucas, "Women's Struggles and Strategies," 225-226.

world to place pressure on governments like Turkey, ensuring social justice for women. Both Muslim and non-Muslim women have responded to the Network's campaigns, contributing international support.[38]

Another incident taken up by Women Living Under Muslim Laws took place in the United Arab Emirates, where a sixteen year old Filipino girl named Sarah[39] was sentenced to death for killing her employer after he brutally raped her.[40] The court decided under Shariah-Islamic law that Sarah was to be executed. The Shariah, as interpreted by the UAE, necessitates that all rape cases have "four eye witnesses, all male Muslims of good repute who saw the act of penetration."[41] The cruel irony of this law is that women have been jailed and stoned to death for admitting to having illicit sex even when that sex was forced by rape. Because of the stringent laws regarding rape, women are found guilty of adultery when sex was non-consensual. Women Living Under Muslim Laws responded to Sarah's case and called for a protest in three steps: preventing the execution, demanding the UAE government amend laws which discriminate against women, and changing the rape laws where the onus of truth is on the rape victim.[42] The case is still pending. In a similar case which occurred in Abu Dhabi, a campaign was instigated by the Network on behalf of a pregnant woman who was sentenced to be stoned to death for adultery two months after giving birth. Following an intense letter writing campaign which publicly documented the case, the woman in question was repatriated to her home country, Sri Lanka.[43]

Countering the growing power of Islamization, the Network has provided alliances for women living in Muslim societies where their struggles inform each other. Essentially the Network enabled the transcendence of local instances of oppression and opened up an international dialogue. The Network has provided a sphere where women can articulate their needs, desires, and identities without fear of persecution. At the local level these networks have connected the injustices perpetrated against a woman to a larger oppressive framework: the global subordination of women as a class, a group of de-facto citizens without "real" legal rights.

When Hannan Afsotti, an Egyptian Muslim woman, was detained by Egyptian police then kidnapped and beaten by members of her family, Women Living Under Muslim Laws initiated a campaign for action in 1994. This incident was particularly striking because though she had committed no crime, Hannan Afsotti was detained by Egyptian police at the airport. Apparently, the Egyptian police were compelled to halt Afsotti's departure for Europe, where she was to meet her Christian fiancé. The illegal way in which Hannan Afsotti was held by the Egyptian police was justified because her family and the police interpreted Hannan's conversion to Christianity and engagement to a Christian man as a betrayal of her Muslim identity.[44] It is important to note that Egypt is not an Islamic Republic and under Egyptian law Afsotti had the right to leave Egypt and marry whom she chose. The Afsotti case, like the Shah Bano case, illustrates the power of Islamist discourses, and the way these discourses inform institutions and social practices.

In Indonesia, Women Living Under Muslim Laws initiated a political campaign against the Indonesian government after a violent attack upon an Indonesian woman which resulted in her death. In 1994, Mersinah,[45] a female labor activist, was tortured, gang raped, and murdered by Indonesian police.[46] Stepping outside of women's prescribed gender role, Mersinah's activities in Indonesia's labor movement were interpreted as subversive and heretical. Perceived as a threat and a dangerous role model for other Indonesian women, Mersinah was considered an immoral Muslim woman who did not know her "proper" place. The violent assault and murder of Mersinah were consequences of being a politically visible Muslim woman, whom Islamists interpret as rebellious, and disobedient.

When compared, the cases of Shah Bano in India, Fazlollai and Banco in Turkey, Afsotti in Egypt, Sarah in the UAE, and Mersinah in Indonesia, unveil the complexities women's oppression. Muslim women from different countries and backgrounds experience patriarchal oppression in multiple ways. All these cases illustrate the variety of injustices which Muslim women have been subjected to in the name of Islam. For Hannan Afsotti, Mersinah, and Sarah, the meaning of gender was inscribed onto their bodies through physical violence justified by patriarchal interpretations of Islamic female identity. These women become symbols of Islamist power, which

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[38]For more on "Alerts," see Shaheed, "Controlled or Autonomous," 1010-1013

[39]In Sarah's case the Alert for Action did not reveal her last name. Whether for her own protection or her family's, Sarah remains somewhat anonymous. In other cases the Network repeats the first name only policy.

[40]On the case of Sarah in the UAE, see Women Living Under Muslim Laws, "Alert for Action," 10/17/95.

[41]Women Living Under Muslim Laws, "Alert for Action," 10/17/95.

[42]Women Living Under Muslim Laws, "Alert for Action," 10/17/95.

[43]Shaheed, "Controlled or Autonomous," 997.

[44] Women Living Under Muslim Laws, "Alert for Action," 7/29/94.

[45]Once again the first name of the woman, Mersinah, was the only part of her name given. Like the case of Sarah in the UAE, I suspect that her anonyminity protected members of her family residing in Indonesia.

[46]Women Living Under Muslim Laws, "Alert for Action," 7/29/94.

limits women's autonomy by claiming that subversive political activity, in the cases of Mina Fazlollai, Marjam Banco and Mersinah or disobedience, in the case of Sarah and Hannan Afsotti, is heretical. In all the cases Women Living Under Muslim Laws has provided a cross-cultural comparison to highlight Muslim women's immediate struggles.

The Network, Women Living Under Muslim Laws, combines the efforts of feminist scholars and local women in their coalition politics. Welcoming women from different ethnic, linguistic, and religious backgrounds, the Network promotes cooperation amongst women involved in the cultural battle over "proper" gender roles. The Network has been successful in several areas that include relocating young women threatened with forced marriage as well as retrieving children kidnapped by their fathers and taken across international borders into Muslim countries.[47] In other cases Women Living Under Muslim Laws has initiated letter writing campaigns that resulted in the pardoning of Muslim women accused of adultery and of crimes against the state (discussing women's rights in public).[48]

To arrest Islamists' discourses growing influence in countries like Algeria, India, and Egypt, the Network publicizes the effects of their gendered discourse. Working in cooperation with feminist theologians the Network subverts patriarchal traditions, exposing women's experiences with Islamization as diverse yet similar in effect. Rather than creating an alternative discourse that posits women as the victims of misogynist laws and traditions, Women Living Under Muslim Laws highlights the many ways in which women have resisted Islamists' gender roles

Women's multiple identities within various Muslim societies have been an obstacle for women's movements. This multiplicity makes the following questions important: how can a coalition build links between local women and non-governmental organizations without alienating some members? How does a coalition function to promote women's rights without offending members of the coalition who may not think veiling or arranged marriages are detrimental to women? The Network avoids dogmatism and essentialism because it does not try to "represent" all Muslim women. Instead Women Living Under Muslim Laws encourages self-representation with the aid of Network resources.

Links between power, culture, and gender are complex, but the links between inscribed female identity, Muslim women's experiences and acts of resistance are being explored through a network of coalition politics. The "Alerts For Action" and information sharing facilitated by the Network are positive steps which demonstrate how women's oppression in the Muslim world has been justified by Islamist interpretations of tradition.[49] This praise for the Network is not intended to undermine the very important work of feminist theologians and scholars working within an Islamist framework. Both strategies are intregal to women's struggles. Combining the efforts of all women working to change Islam, coalition politics combines pressure inside Muslim society as well as international pressure from outside. The projects and political campaigns initiated by Women Living Under Muslim Laws have resulted in a clearer understanding of Muslim women's divergent realities.

VI. Conclusion

From these new movements, whether fundamentalist-feminist or coalitions, the political nature of women's oppression has been revealed. Connections have been made between power, culture, and gender, and between fundamentalist discourse, patriarchal authority, and the politicization of women's identities. Connecting local women's experiences to the broader cultural contestation politicizes the lives of Muslim women, taking them outside of their imagined boundaries and linking them to a larger contestation over gender. By making themselves visible as political actors, women have created a dialogue that expands the parameters of the political and cultural struggle. Analyzing oppression cross-culturally, Muslim women have been pro-active on multiple fronts, addressing the concerns of Shah Bano to those of Hannan Afsotti. Women's resistance movements are subverting the authority of those discourses which produce and reproduce women's subordination.

To contest the oppressive ideology of Islamists, women must act on multiple fronts. Women must reinterpret narratives in a way that favors women's freedom; they must defy Islamists' notions of Muslim womanhood by contesting at the local level; and, lastly, they must form coalitions which publicize the influence of Islamist ideology on women.

The challenge that feminists concerned with Islam have faced is a problem of cooperation and coordination. Networks like Women Living Under Muslim Laws connect the activities of fundamentalist

[47]On the accomplishments of the Network, see Shaheed, "Controlled or Autonomous," 1014.

[48]On the Network's campaign in Abu Dhabi where a pregnant woman was accused of adultery and sentenced to be stoned to death, see Shaheed, "Controlled or Autonomous," in Signs, 997. On the Network's involvement in the campaign to release Algerian women accused of crimes against the state for discussing the proposed new family codes, see Shaheed, "Controlled or Autonomous," 1004.

[49]For more regarding Islamic traditions connection to misogynist traditions see Fatima Mernissi in *The Veil and the Male Elite*, chapts. 3 and 4.

feminists and secular feminists. Linking women's struggles at every level, the Network exposes the rape of Sarah in the UAE and the imprisonment of Marjam Fazlollai and Mina Banco in Iran and Turkey as related incidents. These cases are part of a pervasive pattern of misogyny supported by the agents of Islamization.

Strategies of resistance that appear radically different are similar in that they focus on *what* patriarchal discourses are doing to women and model *how* women might subvert these discourses. Both feminist readings texts and coalition building involve an interpretive praxis, reading and making visible the discourses that inform women's oppression. Resistance strategies intervene on the sites of Islamist discourses revealing the discursivity of Islamists gender roles. Once visible the constructed nature of these discourses becomes apparent. Islamists' prescriptions are no longer divine, and therefore, women are able to subvert the authority of discourses which produce and reproduce their subordination.

The Burtons of Pilot Grove

Anita R. Revelle

This paper is part of a research attempt that started with approximately thirty Civil War letters written by one young man, Alex Burton of Pilot Grove, Illinois, during his three years of service in the Union Army. As the letters are read, we become more and more immersed in Alex's life and the circumstances of his regiment, the 35th Illinois Infantry, and his company "I". There is very little research complied on this unit. So many of the questions that need to be answered will have to be researched through military records, census records, or local and family histories. When completed, the thesis will give a detailed account of Alex's army life and the skirmishes and battles he was engaged in. It will also provide the reader with some information about his family and friends that remained at home on the prairies of Illinois.

After transcribing and beginning to research these letters, there seemed to be a void in this story. What seems to be lacking is the portion of Alex's life that could give the reader a description of the type of young man Alex Burton was. Alex seemed to be a patriotic man. He felt the cause of saving the Union was worth fighting for. But questions arise, as to why he answered the call so soon, to take up arms and reunite the divided union? What made him leave home before it was necessary and set out on this dangerous road? After much researching and exploring, the answer seems to lie with his family.

He was an adventurous man like his father, one who stood up for a cause, a man who knew right from wrong, and knew the risks involved in this perilous undertaking. This paper will take a look at the start of Alex's immediate family and examine why his parents moved to the relatively new state of Illinois. It will also explore and try to reconstruct Alex's childhood and his entry into manhood. Maybe after uncovering these issues, it can be determined what made this man give up his life for his country.

Alex Burton's father was Ragin Burton. In the 1830 US Census we can place him in Lawrence County, Indiana living by himself. He was within the census district known as Newland, named for the man who took the census, John Newland. Newland and others would later turn up in Vermilion County,

Illinois with Ragin Burton. In this district there were many Burtons listed, but at this time no connection can be made between families. Also listed is a William Hall, a married man with eleven people living in his house. The 1830 census does not give substantial information, only the total number of males or females by age living in the household. So from this record we cannot surmise who might have been living with Hall at this time.

William Hall is mentioned here because in 1829 Ragin Burton and Hall purchased 80 acres from a David Makemson in Vermilion County, Illinois. The question that stems from this purchase is why did they come to Vermilion County? From an article in *The Heritage*, a Vermilion County Historical publication, probably taken from family lore, we find that Ragin was first in the area in 1834 with a hunting party from Indiana. The article stated that:

> Young Ragin Burton a boy of sixteen who had earlier come from Tennessee, was brought along as camp boy. It was his duty to do the cooking and look after the camp while the hunters were out searching for game. The wild and rugged country just east of Newtown so impressed the young man that he decided someday it would be his home.[1]

From information procured in the Index of Deeds in Vermilion County, Burton and Hall purchased land for a period of five years. In 1834 they purchased 80 acres of original land from the State of Illinois, and later Burton would sell his part to an Elijah Hall, probably a relative of William Hall. Ragin Burton would continue in the land selling or speculation business for the next forty years until he died in 1873.

As was noted before, there is not much information at present to connect Ragin Burton with his ancestors, but this man could be classified as an early Illinois settler. He probably saw the potential for increasing his wealth in Vermilion County, and decided it would be a good place to live and raise a family. It could be contended by the land sales that by 1832, Burton and Hall were residing in the area. Speculation would be that William Hall had brought his family with him.

Ragin, being the bachelor of the day, would later find his true love, in the daughter of a man to whom he sold land. Here again it is hard to link this relationship with his future father-in-law, Henson Vinson. Vinson was residing in Park County, Indiana at the time of the 1830 US. Census. The question would be, what brought him to Vermilion County Illinois? Probably land, but it cannot be validated that he owned any before 1841. Land records show that at this time he purchased some land from Elija Hall, Elza Hoskins, and Milton Lesley, probably over 400 acres. He and his sons would purchase additional acres from Ragin Burton and his wife Cordeila who was their sister. From the amount of land purchased and later divided up in wills, it can be speculated that the Vinsons were a well-to-do family that came to Illinois to become one of the prominent families in the Pilot Township area.

It is hard to trace where Ragin found his new bride. Did he know her before residing in Illinois, or did they meet because of the land deals between Ragin and her father? A marriage certificate in Vermilion County dated October 17, 1839, can be found, so we do know that they were married in Illinois. They are also listed in the 1840 US Census living in Vermilion County near her parents, Henson and Abagail McDowell Vinson.

Living in the Vinson household were ten other people ranging in age from under 5 to 80 years old. Four of this family were listed as working in agriculture and four could read and write. From Lottie Jones' *History of Vermilion County*, we get a glimpse of this pioneer family, especially mother Abagail, known in the area as "Grandma Vinson," the neighborhood health care giver, who lived to the advanced age of 102. It probably was a comfort for her daughter Cordelia to have her mother close by for so many years.

Ragin and Cordelia's wedding would have been a time for celebration in this new community. It not only joined a new couple, but it also brought the newlyweds into the neighborhood. Like many early settlements, life in Illinois at this time would consist of community like networks. These networks were a necessary part of life on this prairie. They enabled the settlers to rely on their neighbors when times were hard or trouble came upon the family. These difficult times might include childbirth experiences, building a new barn, or just harvesting the crop.

Like many new brides who came to this vast prairie, Cordeila might have found herself in a log cabin, or a small two-room wooden house. There would have been a door and maybe a window or two and, if she were was lucky, a wooden floor. One of the most civilized traits a woman would want for her home, was a floor she could scrub. If her first house was a log cabin that had been constructed before Ragin purchased the property, there was probably a fireplace instead of a stove. She would bring her meager furnishings that might consist of a bedstead, table and some chairs, a bureau, and maybe some other luxuries, such as a spinning wheel, and a cupboard. If they did not have this much, Ragin would have built some shelves along one wall for her to display her things. Eliza Farnham, in her book *Life in Prairie Land*, recorded that women on this new prairie might not have had much, but they tried to bring civilization to the area; a white table cloth

[1]Mrs. Carl Grening, "Newtown," *The Heritage* (Summer 1965), 15.

when company came and a tea service for the ladies sometimes were standard fare.

Cordelia Burton seemed to fit the mold of a pioneer woman. According to John Faragher's book *Sugar Creek*, the average age of a woman when married was twenty-one; Cordelia was nineteen when she married Ragin. Most women would bear their first child within the first year of marriage and their last around the age of forty. Cordelia had her first son Alexander thirteen months after they were married, and her last birth was that of twins Henson and Ragin in August of 1860 at the age of forty-two. Another statistic from the era is that most women averaged eight children and that they were usually twenty-six to thirty months apart because of the mother's breast feeding the child. Cordelia had nine children; two she would lose as infants. Examination of the birth records indicates that she had them from two to three years apart.

In the 1840 U. S. Census Ragin Burton listed himself as employed in manufacturing and trades, but by 1850 he was classified as a farmer. The 180 acres that we know he farmed around the time of 1867 were not purchased until 1841.

Another approach to explore concerning his occupation in 1840, is a contract that Ragin witnessed between three of his neighbors concerning the financing and building of an "AIR SHIP". The contract was dated October 14, 1840, and stated that three of his neighbors, Hugh Newell, Jesse Liggate and Benjamine Coddington, would raise one million dollars for a "Flying Car or Machien to soar through the air propelled upon the principal which the Fowls of the air propel themselves."[2] Mr. Newell was the brains behind this research, Coddington was the village of Newtown's blacksmith, and the article states that "Jesse Liggate furnished the materials and financed the venture."[3] Maybe there were more investors than the contract stated and maybe Burton and others helped in the undertaking. The machine was patterned after the form of a bird and probably resembled a mono-plane of today. They tried to push it off the top of a hill around Mr. Newell's house, and it crashed with Newell receiving a broken arm. To satisfy your curiosity, did it fly? No, it was too heavy, and it is recalled that the broken parts of this "machine" would be stockpiled in the Newell's yard for years. Mr. Newell would later leave the area, but he was always classified as "Crazy Hugh Newell."[4]

By the 1850 US Census Ragin Burton's occupation was that of a farmer. Vermilion County at this time would have been an average agricultural center. From data taken from the *Agriculture Census of the United States*, farming was the largest occupation in the state of Illinois with over 140,000 men engaged in it. In the 1850 *Agricultural Census*, there were 11,759 acres of improved land in Vermilion County compared to 135,623 acres of unimproved; only 12.5% of the land was workable. By 1860 over 64% of the farming ground in Vermilion County would be improved. This increase in cultivated farm land, can be explained by the additional sales of land and by the drainage of swamp land in the area. The cash value of farming in 1850 was over two million dollars; by 1860, it would rise to $6,900,813. In 1850, there were 5,982 horses, 82 asses and mules, 1,274 working oxen, 5,121 milch (milk) cows, and 15, 868 other cattle in Vermilion County. There were also 23,586 sheep and 30, 835 swine for a total cash value of livestock in the county of $538,110. By 1860, there were increases in horses, asses and mules, milch (milk) cows and swine, but there were declines in oxen, sheep and cattle. The latter two could be attributed to the increase in improved acreage which would decrease the amount of pasture for these animals.

From the census information we can assume that Ragin and his family were farming mainly Indian corn, not as a cash crop, but as feed for their livestock. Wheat would have been one of their primary cash crops, and if they had sheep, they would rely on wool for additional income. Another source of cash income would have been milk or butter from their cows, along with meat from the beef cattle they raised. Oats and hay were also raised, but again this would not be for sale, but for feed for the livestock. Other products that might have been grown would have been garden produce, flax, and maple sugar, which seemed to be an extraordinarily large crop in Vermilion County in 1850, and third in the state of Illinois with 23,990 pounds of sugar. By 1860, the amount of maple sugar declined, probably due to the fact that many trees had been felled, but we do see an increase in sorghum molasses.

From the agricultural census information in 1850, it can be estimated that Ragin was easily farming 21 acres, that is 12% of his land had been improved. For a family such as the Burtons, with young children not capable of helping with much of the farming labor, this acreage would have been easy to maintain. By the 1860 census the number of acres had increased to 120. Farming this number of acres would have been an easy task with three sons helping Ragin with the crop and animal production.

Many farm families during this time would rely on their children for the extra help needed on the farm. As was stated before, Alex Burton had eight siblings. The first to arrive after him was his brother Denison who lived only a year. Then Willard was born four years after Alex, and Caswell arrived three years later. It can be theorized that these three brothers were close, since many of the letters that

[2] "The First Airship," *Illiana Genealogist* 19 (1965), 62.
[3] "The First Airship," 63.
[4] "The First Airship," 61.

Alex wrote home from the war were addressed completely or in some part to them. In his letters he rarely greeted his sisters, of whom he had three. The first one was Syrilda who died as an infant in 1852. Then the two following her were Mary in 1854 and Alice in 1857. As was stated earlier, his mother would give birth to twins Ragan and Henson on August 1, 1860.

Their life was probably that of a typical rural family. The boys were in school by the time they were six, verified by the 1850 Census in which Alex age eight and Willard age six were listed as attending school. Free schools, that is tax-supported schools, did not enter into the picture in Illinois until 1855. Prior to this the schools were classified as "subscription schools, in which each parent or patron paid for what schooling was furnished."[5] These subscription schools would have limited the number of children attending. Free schools would allow all children the opportunity to attend school, but many children were still kept at home mainly for the labor that they provided. Even if the children were enrolled in school, certain times of the year would limit their attendance. As the boys grew older, both planting and harvesting times would have affected their ability to study, and they might have been kept out of school for a short time. From the 1860 Census we can tell that Alex's sister Mary was enrolled at the age of six in school. Since their mother was able to read and write, she probably encouraged her children's school attendance. Another piece of evidence indicating that the Burtons were pro education, would be the fact that they sold a piece of property to the local school system in 1866 for $25.00.[6]

Like many children of that era, the Burton boys probably helped around the farmstead. At early ages they would tend the livestock and help their father in some of the field work, maybe planting and weeding. As they aged, more responsibility fell upon these young men. Their sisters would have helped with chores around the house, washing, preserving, and tending the garden. One of the main responsibilities that these young girls would have been given would be the care of the young twins in 1860, which would have been a constant chore for the girls during the Civil War.

But life for these children was probably not hard. This can be justified by the value listed in the 1860 Census for their father Ragin. He had real estate valued at $2,500 compared to $700 in 1850, and personal property of $1,400. There was probably money for entertainment for these boys during this time. Eliza Farnham in her book *Life in Prairie Land*, talked about the "Zoological Institute and Grand Corps of Equestrian Shows," coming to Illinois in the 1850's.[7] This can be classified as an early circus, where the children would set up a tent and people would come for the day to enjoy the entertainment, consisting of elephants, monkeys, trained horses, and acrobatic acts.

Another means of entertainment for the children of this family might have been the Catlin Fair. From an article in a Vermilion County Historical Journal *The Heritage*, it is noted that the first fair was held in October of 1852 in the river bottoms near what is now Danville. "It lasted two days, and monetary awards were given for livestock judging, the highest being $5 for the best stallion."[8]

Later in the fall of 1854, the fair was moved to what is now Catlin Township. The awards presented for the first few years were paid in silverware and china. At the Catlin Fair not only was livestock exhibited, but also ladies' needlework and races were run. For the sum of one dollar the whole family could gain admittance to the fair. The fair seemed to be looking for additional attractions, and "the first side show came in 1857 and exhibited an alleged representation of Christ and the Twelve Apostles in wax. The next year the first swing or merry go-round delighted the multitude." It was a primitive affair formed of two wooden beams crossing at the center at right angles, at the ends of which baskets were suspended for the riders. "It was run by hand, and four could ride at one time." [9] Another account of the fair in 1858 can be discovered from the diary of a young man who lived in the area. Walter Tillotson wrote about what was shown at the fair, which included not only livestock and grain, but farm machinery as well as quilts. "There were even horse races with ladies doing the riding."[10]

When their chores were done, the boys probably enjoyed playing and exploring the countryside around their rural home. From the 1867 *Vermilion County Plat Book*, it is noted that they were living in both worlds, that of the forest or timber and on the edge of the great prairie. They could enjoy the fruits of the forest and explore the beauty and risks of the prairie.

A diary written by Walter B. Tillotson, during his 17th, 18th and 19th years, gives a fairly good picture of what Alex's last years at home might have been like. Young Tillotson was a year older than Alex Burton and lived about four miles west of the

[5]Charles B. Johnson MD, *Illinois in the Fifties; or, a Decade of Development, 1851-1860* (Champaign: Flanigan-Pearson Co., 1918), 101.

[6]Vermilion County, IL, *Index of Deeds 1826-1928* (n.p., taken from 12 September 1866).

[7]Eliza W. Farnham, *Life in Prairie Land (1855)* (Nieuwkoop: DeGraaf, 1972), 92.

[8]"The Catlin Fair - First in Area," *The Heritage* (Fall 1977), 17.

[9]"The Catlin Fair - First in Area," 18.

[10]"The Catlin Fair - First in Area," 18.

Burtons, also in Pilot Township, Vermilion County. From the diary we see that the better part of his time was spent helping his father and brothers with farm work. He mentioned working for others, probably a way to earn some additional money, and would hire himself out to help plant and harvest the crop, along with digging wells, and cutting and hauling rails for other farmers. The pay seemed meager, but $1.00 a day wage or $1.00 per hundred rails was probably a fortune for these young men. Sometimes these young people would have to decide if the extra money was worth not going to school. It must have been hard for these young men, who were at uncertain times in their lives, wanting independence but confined to the family home because of lack of money. Some would talk of leaving to explore the great frontier like their fathers, and others would try only to have their fathers come after them. The Civil War for many would be their way of escaping to an adventurous life.

From Tillotson's diary we get a glimpse of what the social life of a young man might have been like. He not only attended the fairs and balls, but corn-cuttings and quiltings at the neighbors' houses and hoe-downs which were held every week. Still other ways that these young people might enjoy themselves were hunting for ducks and other animals, fishing, or picking berries around the groves.

Walter wrote about his enjoyment of purchasing magazines and papers to read which coincides with his eagerness for an education. Like many young men in their transitional years, who were required to help on the farmstead but wanted to learn, they attended school during the winter months and special sessions in the evening. It could be said that these young people knew that to improve their way of life they needed an education.

Parties were another way these young men and women would enjoy their lives. From the writings you do not get a sense of dating as we know it, but more of a camaraderie. A Leap Year party, which seemed to be organized by local girls, was held in 1859, with a wagon full of girls picking up young men and setting off for someone's house for eating and dancing the night away. For most of the night the man would be preoccupied with the lady that was keeping him company. But these parties were not always for amusement; they would discuss serious issues such as "whether capital punishment ought to be abolished or not, and who had the most right to complain, the Negro slave or the Indian."[11]

Another fun event for the young was to have a "Shevo" or Shivery, a party to surprise a newly married couple. It was usually held either on the wedding night or soon after, and much noise and merriment was made till the new couple came out and fed the revelers. "Candy Parties" were held when a few of the young folks purchased candy and charged admission into the party. The idea was to break even or make some money, but usually they would go in the hole. It was another fun way to stay up till all hours of the night.

Church was another aspect of young Alex's life. From Lottie Jones' *The History of Vermilion County*, one of the first churches in the county was built in 1835 or 1836 and called "Old Bethel," a log cabin of sorts, in the neighborhood where the Burtons lived. Another way we can see religion entering into Alex's life is when he writes home about going to preaching on Sundays during the war. From what is known of the Vinson family and because Cordelia's brother John was a part-time minister, we can surmise that religion was definitely a part of this family's way of life.

As was stated before, Alex Burton enlisted in the 35th Illinois Volunteer Infantry on July 3, 1861, in answer to President Lincoln's call for men early that spring. By the date of enlistment, one can assume that this was done in conjunction with the 4th of July celebration. From the *Adjutant Generals Report*, which lists the date of enlistment, along with the day of departure, we see that Alex had about a month at home before marching off to war. One can imagine that this was a trying time for all in the family, especially his mother who had two small children.

Leaving home was probably an adventure for Alex. Many of his local friends around the Pilot area enlisted with him and formed Company "I" of the regiment. Still others in the company came from the surrounding towns of Catlin, Higginsville, and Fairmount. He would be marching with men like Joseph Daniels, age 21, William Harper 18, George Lesher 19, John McVicar 18, William Melvin 19, and the Webster boys, Wiliam age 21, Asa age 19, and Algernon age 23, along with Ralph Wilson 18 years old, all from the Pilot area. These young men would have been schoolmates and chums of Alex, and their attitude was one of saving the union and having a good time doing it.

The company left Decatur, Illinois on August 4 1861, and headed for Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, an army camp outside of St. Louis. For the first year most of their days were spent marching. While in Missouri part of the regiment would be engaged in one of the well known battles of the time, Pea Ridge, in northwest Arkansas. After their time in Missouri they headed for the western part of the Confederacy and fought battles and skirmishes in Kentucky, such as the battle of Perryville, and then to Tennessee where they engaged in the battles of Stones River and Chickamagua and then on the Atlanta Campaign with Sherman.

[11]Walter B. Tillotson, "Diary of Young Pioneer," trans. Donald G. Richter, *The Heritage* (Summer 1985), 13.

During the three years that Alex served, he wrote letters home informing his family of his whereabouts and health. Taking a brief look at these letters and the information that he wrote about, Alex was constantly aware of his family and what they were doing. He addressed letters to his parents, as they wrote to him, and wrote his brothers, usually Willard, encouraging him to learn to read and write so they could correspond. There are only a few times he addressed one of his sisters, but he never talked about the younger children of the family, especially the twins who were recently born.

He wrote one of his first letters home in September 1861 and told his mother "that she must quit crying for him."[12] He always opened his letters telling them that he was in good health and then usually commented about what had been happening to him or what and where his company had been. For the first six months in Missouri, he did not believe that it would be wise to come home for leave, as the war would be over by spring.[13]

Alex did ask in his letters for a few things to be sent from home, such as scissors and stamps, until he learned that he could frank a letter, that is send it and have the postage paid back home. Later when they were in Tennessee, he wrote home for fish hooks since they were camped near a river, but by the time he received the fish hooks, his unit was on the march and the hooks were of no use to him. He did receive some food from home, but by November 1863, he wrote that it was not worth sending too much to him.[14] Part of this could stem from the fact that many times it took weeks for his mail to reach him after his unit moved on.

Another matter that was covered in some of the letters was the pay he sent home. Sometimes he made specific requests, such as to purchase cattle, or even lots in the newly platted town of Newtown. In fact in a letter dated December 29, 1863, he wanted his father to buy a lot for his brother Willard with some of the money.

As time went by, especially the first summer, he even sent some coats and clothes home so he would not have to carry them. He probably regretted that decision many times the following winter when they had to abandon all their gear and march into battle. Letters during 1862 and 1863 mentioned the cold weather and the need for more clothes.

Another aspect of Alex's letters was telling his brother Willard of his doing with the "sesesh ladies," that is women in the conquered territories who had southern sympathies. With all the rhetoric about his time with the ladies, one has to wonder if he wasn't the ladies' man back home. He mentioned only a few women in his letters. One was Mary Edens, of whom he would like a picture. A Mary Eaton can be found in the 1850 Census, but she was about five years older than Alex. Another time a woman is mentioned was when he inquired into how Ann Wilkins came into possession of one of his miniatures, probably photos, which he had sent home with Captain Lewis, his commanding officer.

His correspondence sometimes told his family to let others in the community know that their boys were fine. At times he even wrote letters home for other soldiers who probably could not read or write. Alex seemed to have relatives that drifted in and out of his life in the army. His mother's brothers, Uncle Levi Vinson, a captain, and John E. Vinson, a second lieutenant, who were in the 125th Illinois Infantry, and a cousin James Burlingham crossed his path at different times and places during the war and were mentioned in letters sent back home.

The men of his unit did take leave and head for home, and carried with them letters written by others in the regiment. On the round trip from home they might bring items for the boys in camp. Alex received some mittens the first winter he was gone, and rumor had it that these might have been brought from home by one of the other Pilot men. As the years progressed, these men seemed to use their visits home to keep in touch not only with their families, but with those of others in the regiment. In a letter dated July 7, 1862, Alex wrote that he wouldn't be home before the war was over, and the ironic part of this story is that in all his three years, Alex never seemed to be able to make it home on leave.

Most of his letters asked about home life and told his family where and what his unit had been doing. He commented on the crops that were growing in the area he was marching through or the abundant amount of fruit that could be found in some places. But, every once in awhile Alex got on a soapbox and made some political exchanges. At one point he was upset when he found out the secessionists were giving speeches back home, and he felt that "no one would fight for the honor of the men that had been fighting."[15]

In a letter dated August 24, 1863, his brother Willard had written about the Copperheads causing trouble, and Alex remarked, "that they should be hung, the rebellion has been handled long enough with gloves."[16]

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[12]Alex Burton, Otterville, Mo., to [Burton family, Catlin Township, IL.], ALS, September 1861, possession of Burton family.

[13]Alex Burton to, [Burton family, Catlin Township, IL.], ALS, 18 October 1861, possession of Burton family.

[14]Alex Burton to [Burton family, Catlin Township, IL.], ALS, 5 November 1863, possession of Burton family.

[15]Alex Burton, Otterville, Mo., to [Burton family, Catlin Township, IL.], ALS, 16 June 1862, possession of Burton family.

[16]Alex Burton, Otterville, Mo., to [Burton family, Catlin

Still another time when the Emancipation Proclamation was signed, he seemed dissatisfied. This attitude could stem from the idea that Alex, like many Northerners, thought the war was being fought to preserve the Union, not to free the slaves. Alex in his letter of July 17, 1863, blamed the Emancipation Proclamation on the Copperheads, men in the north that opposed the war and wanted to negotiate a peace. He felt "that punishment will befall them."[17] From this it can be perceived that Alex was not really fighting to end slavery, but for the reunification of the country. This can be again detected in that at one point he was asked by the army if he would like to sit for tests to become an officer in command of a colored regiment; he did not take the test and never really explained the reason.

At times he seemed so discouraged, sometimes with the generals who were leading these brave men and still other times with the hardships that the men had been through in the last two years. Here again he could not keep his thoughts to himself. In a letter dated July 17, 1863, he wrote to his parents, "I now think the darkest clouds is past, we will perhaps yet have Rivers to wade and battle to fight but I think future victories will go in favor of the just and the brave."[18] As times got better and battles were won, his last letters seemed to demonstrate that his patriotic spirit had returned.

It must have been hard on his mother and father and other members of the family to read some of his letters telling of the horrible conditions that he had to endure. After the battle of Chickamagua in the fall of 1863, his regiment was down to quarter rations and were sleeping in small pup tents, many times with no blankets as they had left their supplies behind. Throughout the next few months he wrote about making the best of a bad situation by building shanties with fireplaces in them when they were camped in one place for a long period of time. They went on "excursions" and came back to camp with items of food. The best time for this was in the summer when they could get "roasting" ears of corn and peaches from the trees along with an occasional animal, be it wild or tame.

In one of his letters, he explained to his brother Willard, who wanted to enlist at the age of seventeen, "it is not necessary, as there is not need for more men." [19] Later when Willard asks again he tells him "to make sure that father can do with out you."[20] He gives him instructions on how to make connections with his unit and to bring letters from home for the boys. He expounded on the position that "he has never regretted it."[21] In a letter dated April 4, 1864, he wrote that his father was concerned that he would re-enlist, but he said he "had no notion. I admire a man for his patriotism to reenlist, but not just to get to go home."[22] At the time the army must have been giving leaves home if a man would re-up.

Alex's brothers Willard and Caswell did enlist in the 135th Illinois Infantry in June of 1864 for 100 days. President Lincoln in the spring of 1864 had called for "a volunteer force of 85,000 one-hundred day men, to relieve the veteran soldiers from guard duty at our forts, arsenals and elsewhere."[23] Their unit was commanded by their uncle John E. Vinson. After their 100-day stint, Caswell the younger of the two re-enlisted in the 150th Illinois Infantry for a period of one year and would end up mustering out in Atlanta, Georgia in 1866.

The question that arises is did Alex's younger brothers take up the call because they were needed by the Union, or was this a reaction to finding out that their brother had been captured by the rebel forces in May of 1864 during a skirmish at Picketts Mills, Georgia?

This family would have to rely on hope and prayers for their son and brother to survive a rebel prison. Not much will be written here about the conditions of the Andersonville Prison. Life had to have been a nightmare, with unsanitary living conditions, little food or water, and inferior or no medical treatment. Story has it from family lore that Alex was to be released two days prior to his death on November 6, 1864. This story can be confirmed from a letter that was written to Ragin Burton from Anared Harper, a fellow prisonmate of Alex's. Harper wrote on March 30, 1865, and was inquiring as to whether Alex and Jake Shide had gotten home yet. If they had not, he wanted Mr. Burton to know that the last day he saw them, sometime in November, they were both well.[24] From this letter it can be surmised that Alex was due to be released, but

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Township, IL.], ALS, 24 August 1863, possession of Burton family.

[17]Alex Burton, Otterville, Mo., to [Burton family, Catlin Township, IL.], ALS, 17 July 1863, possession of Burton family.

[18]Alex Burton, Otterville, Mo., to [Burton family, Catlin Township, IL.], ALS, 17 July 1863, possession of Burton family.

[19]Alex Burton, Otterville, Mo., to [Burton family, Catlin Township, IL.], ALS, 8 June 1862, possession of Burton family.

[20]Alex Burton, Otterville, Mo., to [Burton family, Catlin Township, IL.], ALS, 7 August 1862, possession of Burton family.

[21]Alex Burton, Otterville, Mo., to [Burton family, Catlin Township, IL.], ALS, 7 August 1862, possession of Burton family.

[22]Alex Burton, Otterville, Mo., to [Burton family, Catlin Township, IL.], ALS, 25 April 1864, possession of Burton family.

[23]Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Illinois.

[24]Anared Harper, Lookout Mountain, TN to [Ragin Burton, Catlin Township, IL.], ALS, 30 March 1865, possession of Burton family.

the question is why wasn't he? Harper must have been from the area, as he also asked Mr. Burton if he had seen or heard from his father's family.[25]

The Civil War came to an end April 9, 1865, at Appomattox Courthouse, near Clover Hill, Virginia. But for the Burton family it might never have ended, as their once aspiring and youthful son and brother did not come home.

Life did seem to go on without Alex. The brothers Caswell and Willard came home from their tours of duty and farmed with their father. In 1869 Willard was the first to marry and started farming on some 40 acres of land he purchased just down the road from Ragin. By the 1870 U. S. Census, Ragin and Caswell were farming the original homestead, and the twins were ten years old and had never known their older brother Alex.

During and after the war Ragin Burton continued to purchase and sell land. When he died in 1872, most of his land was left to his widow Cordelia and the lots that he had purchased in Newtown were bequeathed to his children. Today there are still Burtons living in the Vermilion County area, and a relative is still living on one of the original lots that Ragin purchased for Alex during the Civil War.

After looking at the information that has been gathered, we get a small glimpse of what life was like for this early Illinois family. There was happiness and gratification for the new life that they chose, which brought them strength to deal with the hardships that would be inflicted on them. The most important fact that can be obtained from this information is that theirs was truly a notable American pioneer family.

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[25]Anared Harper, Lookout Mountain, TN to [Ragin Burton, Catlin Township, IL.], ALS, 30 March 1865, possession of Burton family.

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