



# THE CLARION



The Woman's Suffrage and Political Issues Chapter of the American Political Items Conservators

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## Editor's Notes

Our special thanks go out to Cary Demont, who has contributed several wonderful images to this issue. The first is that of the multi-color Shredded Wheat trolley ad that graces our front cover. For quite some time, cardboard ads used to be placed on overhead metal racks across trolley and subway cars. Suffragists took advantage of this form of advertising and created several innovative posters for display until their efforts were finally banned because they contained “political content.” To counter this censorship, activists would form groups walking up and down the cars hand-carrying signs that conveyed their messages. One of these suffragists was Rose O’Neill, originator of the Kewpies, who created some of her own art for the cause. Cary’s second contribution to this issue involves a two-sided broadside for the United States Government Church, an obscure feminist group from the 1870’s that rethought the nature of the Godhead into four component parts in which the female principle took precedence over the male.

We recently heard from Katherine Durack in response to our story in the last issue of *The Clarion* about Lou Rogers, Margaret Sanger, and *The Birth Control Review*. Katherine notes that one of Sanger’s young colleagues at *Birth Control Review* was Elizabeth Stuyvesant from Cincinnati. Stuyvesant had moved to NY to work in the settlement house movement and then joined Sanger. After a few months, Stuyvesant’s name disappears from credits on *Birth Control Review* -- she had moved to DC to work with Alice Paul’s National Woman’s Party (NWP) and was among the Silent Sentinels arrested there on July 4, 1917. Katherine has fashioned quilts from suffrage themes and has graciously contributed images of them to *The Clarion* in the past. Two of her more recent creations (with two more planned) are inspired by the arrests of the Sentinels.

A book recently appeared by Sophie-Marie Eve Riker with the confrontational title *Suffragette Bombs to Cancel Culture—Terrorism Never Changed*. I haven’t read the book for various reasons, but I am copying the author’s description below to give you some idea of the subject matter and its ideological slant:

“Equality died when feminism chose vengeance over virtue—here’s the evidence. Do you feel demonized for questioning the ‘patriarchy’ myth? Are you exhausted watching men’s lives get destroyed by courts, lies, and state-backed bias? Why does feminism blame men for everything... while demanding they die in wars, fund abortions, and stay silent? Inside this book: Expose the suffragettes’ violent extremism—and why schools still worship them. Debunk the ‘oppressed woman’ narrative with data feminists don’t want you to see. Discover how abortion became a billion-dollar industry built on male disenfranchisement. Unmask the courts’ anti-father bias: Legalized theft disguised as ‘equity.’ Shockproof yourself against emotional blackmail tactics used to silence dissent. Trace feminism’s roots to eugenics, Marxism, and state-controlled families. Fight back against the lies fueling male suicide epidemics and fatherless homes. Reclaim pride in masculinity—before activists erase it entirely. If you want to dismantle feminism’s toxic lies, protect your rights, and save the next generation from gender warfare... buy this book today.”

Riker’s book appears to be a diatribe against feminist activists in general, not only suffragists. However, there have also been a series of books and articles that have appeared recently attacking specifically the militant suffrage movement. These include Simon Webb’s *Suffragette Fascists* and *The Suffragette Bombers* and C. J. Bearman’s “Examination of Suffragette Violence” that appeared in *The English Historical Review*. One commentator in the *London Times Literary Review* saw parallels between Al Qaeda and the militant movement and execrated respectable suffrage scholars for downplaying “terrorist” activities. Some of these recent revisionist commentators do praise the non-militant tactics of the English National Union of Women’s Suffrage Societies, crediting them, not the WSPU, for bringing about the vote in the U.K. However, one senses in at least a few of these “studies” a general hostility towards woman suffrage in general, not only against the militants, and that their broadsides against the WSPU are *argumentum ad hominem* responses to the movement in its entirety. It is unfortunate that after so many years women suffragists are still under siege by some and that scholars still must defend the sincerity of their efforts.

We received a note from Bren Price regarding our feature about Shirley Chisholm in the last issue of *The Clarion*. Bren notes that Chisholm is a “Trailblazer” feature, along with Belva Lockwood, in the Buffalo,

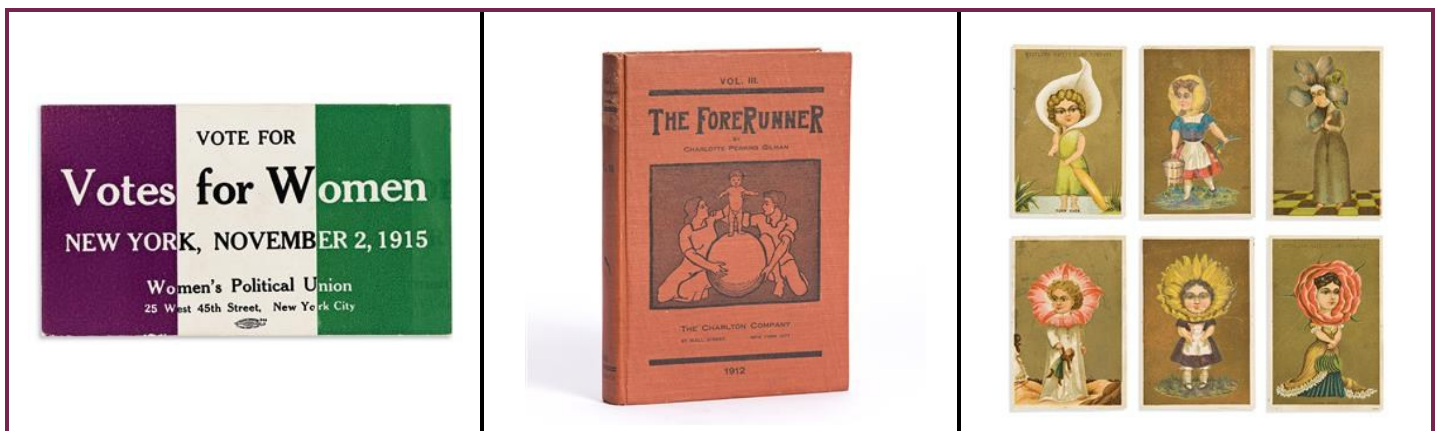
### ... Editor's Notes, cont'd.

New York Presidential Center. Although Chisholm was a congressperson from downstate, she was buried along with her second husband, who was a Buffalo native, at the Forest Lawn Cemetery in that city. Through the efforts of two local State Senators, funds were raised to commission a life-sized statue outside her final resting place. Bren is a trustee for the Center and provides us with a link to its home page, <https://www.buffalopresidentialcenter.org/>. You might want to give it a look as the Center's site provides several fascinating images of its over-all presidential collection.



## Swann's May 15 Auction

Major Auction Houses such as Bonham's of England and Sotheby's do on occasion feature items of interest for the collector of suffrage manuscript material and other memorabilia. On May 15, Swann Galleries of New York offered various suffrage related lots for sale as part of their annual "Focus on Women" series that typically includes first edition books, fine art, craft, photography, and other types of ephemera. Because these major houses appeal to a broader array of bidders than is generally found in smaller but more directed collector's auctions, the prices realized can, at times, be both interesting and startling. All final results listed below include a 30% buyer's premium. All images that appear here are with the Courtesy of Swann Galleries and cannot be reprinted without their permission.



There were many blotters produced during the suffrage period, some by women's organizations themselves, others by commercial vendors hoping to sell their products by connecting them in some way with the movement. The example on the left was issued by the Women's Political Union of New York in anticipation of the State Referendum on the franchise to be held on November 2, 1915. The founder of the WPU was Harriot Stanton Blatch, daughter of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who adapted both name and the colors purple, green, and white from Emmeline Pankhurst's militant English organization, the Women's Social and Political Union. The final price was \$1,690, a record by far for any woman suffrage blotter.

One of the more interesting lots in the auction consisted of 15 bound volumes of Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *The Forerunner* that she both wrote and published between 1909-1916. Sometimes characterized as a suffrage publication, it more accurately could be described as a vehicle for Gilman to publish her own novels and other fiction, poetry, and editorial comment on various social issues including the status of women. The lot included complete volumes from the years 1912, 1913, 1914, and 1916 with additional duplicate volumes. Although many volumes were damaged by stains and wormholes, what made this grouping particularly appealing was that it came from Gilman's estate. Gilman abandoned the journal after 7 years because it was not profitable. She had hoped to reach a circulation of at least 3,000 a month, but sales, apparently, reached only 1,000-1,300



### ... Swann, cont'd.

copies. The covers of these volumes included an illustrated frontis by Gilman's daughter, Katherine. The lot brought \$1,560.

In addition to being a writer and a lecturer, Gilman in her early career was also an artist. To supplement her income, she illustrated with the help of her cousin, Robert, a variety of trade or advertising cards for the Kendall Corporation, makers of Soapine soap. Advertising cards were quite popular and collectible in the 1880's and passed out gratis by manufacturers and merchants to enhance sales. The six cards auctioned by Swann's were generic in that various businesses could affix their own imprint on them. Some analysts see these cards as symbolic, representing three stages in the life of a woman along with appropriate flowers. The lot of 6 pictured above, the complete series on this subject, realized \$422.50, a healthy price.



The 17" x 27" banner with hand-painted text was created for the Hawthorne Suffrage League. While Swann's could not specifically identify the state from which the banner was from, it was probably a New Jersey piece where suffragists in the state were quite active preparing for a referendum on the ballot that was to take place on October 19, 1915. Suffrage items in cloth have become quite popular recently. This example realized \$1,430.

There has been a resurgent interest in Shirley Chisholm items of late. Chisholm was the first elected African American Congressperson and the first black to run for president on a major party ticket. The 14 ½" x 11 ½" piece, made by N.G. Slater of New York, is probably her most widely known and sought after poster, and a number have recently surfaced. With BP, it was gaveled off here at \$845.00.



... Swann, cont'd.

The three suffrage related newspapers listed in the auction are an interesting historical grouping. The first is from the *New-York Weekly Tribune* of August 5, 1848, which gave a brief report of the first Woman's Rights Convention that took place in Seneca Falls on July 19-20. Virtually all newspaper accounts of this convention were brief and tended to borrow from one another. They all, like this example, were published several weeks after the event. Guided at \$600-800, this example sold for \$422.50.

The Seneca Falls paper was followed by the August 19, 1920, issue of the *New York Sun*, which announced the ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment by Tennessee that made woman suffrage the law of the land. Not quite as rare as the former paper, it was guided at \$400-600 and did not receive a bid.

The third paper that was auctioned off was a single copy of Clara Bewick Colby's *The Woman's Tribune*. Born in England, Colby founded the *Journal* in Beatrice, Nebraska, moving it five years later to Washington, D.C., where it became one of the leading suffragist publications, second only to Lucy Stone's *Woman's Journal*. For a time, it was recognized as the official organ of the National Woman Suffrage Society prior to its merger with the American Woman Suffrage Society. It took a prize at the Paris Exposition in 1900 for its neatness and workman-like appearance. This issue of July 7, 1888, contained a letter by Susan Anthony, news of women's political activities throughout the country, and ads for other suffragist publications. It also did not receive a bid.



An interesting publication was this March 1869 issue of the *American Phrenological Journal and Life Illustrated* that pictured both Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony on its cover. Phrenology, the study of heads and their shapes in relation to personality and achievement, was a very popular pseudo-science of the late nineteenth century. The lead article attributes Stanton and Anthony's drive and personalities to how their heads are formed. What is historically significant is that this paper, which assumes the fame of the pair, was written a mere twenty years following the convention at Seneca Falls (which Anthony did not attend). Its final price was \$292.50.

The last item of suffrage interest was a 13 ½" x 16 ¼" photograph of a seated Susan B. Anthony by S. A. Taylor of Amsterdam, New York done circa 1880-1906. The piece was signed on the reverse of the mount by Emma A. Cranmer of Aberdeen, South Dakota, who was president of both the South Dakota Woman's Christian Temperance Union and the South Dakota Equal Suffrage Association. Apart from c.d.v.'s and cabinet photos, photographic images of Anthony are rare. This piece realized \$910.00.



## Bonhams Recent Auction

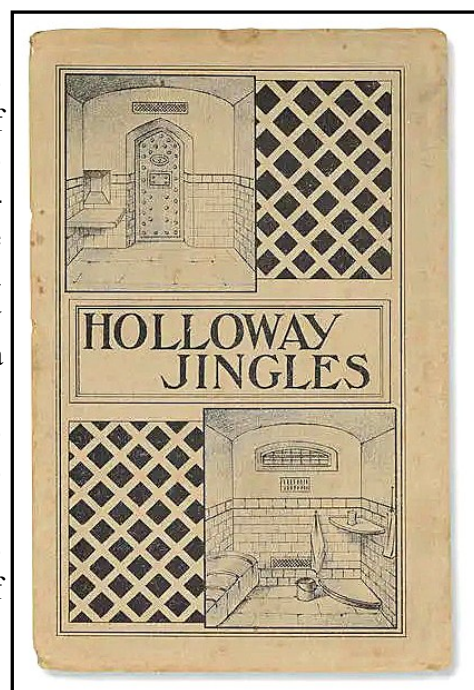
Bonhams most recent on-line auction of Fine Books and Manuscripts, which closed June 19, contained several historically important suffrage items of museum quality. The prices below reflect the buyer's premium. All images from this auction have been copyrighted by Bonhams and cannot be reproduced without their permission.



What was especially interesting was the fact that the auction included three hunger strike medals. These medals were awarded by the Women's Social and Political Union to those suffragist women imprisoned in Holloway who refused to take nourishment. The design of these medals generally involves the words "For Valour" engraved on the bar at the top, which supports a purple, green, and white ribbon from which a medallion is hung, reading "Hunger Strike" on one side and the recipient's name on the other. Each medal came in a box with a silk lining upon which presentation remarks were printed. The medals were made by Toye and Company, which made other medals and badges for the movement. They are very rare, one scholar estimated that no more than 100 were ever made, so it was quite unusual to see three of them appearing in the same auction. The first two were presented to the sisters Margaret and Frances McPhun, both suffragists from Scotland. Margaret was arrested for her participation in the March 1912 window smashing campaign and was sentenced to serve two months hard labor in Holloway Prison. Her younger sister Frances was also a participant in the March demonstration and received a similar sentence. The third medal here was awarded to Lizzie McKenzie, who was another suffragist who was arrested for her role in the March 1912 window smashing event. McKenzie was

connected to the Lewisham branch of the WSPU for which she served briefly as secretary in 1910. All three medals were in similar condition and had a guide price of US \$13,000 to \$20,000. The final price for all three, including buyer's premium, was \$25,789.74, \$27,502.90, and \$20,143.73 respectively.

The auction contained two copies of the item to the right, a small pamphlet entitled *Holloway Jingles*, a collection of poems smuggled out of Holloway, written by sixteen contributors. These include efforts by Emily Davison, the martyr of the cause, and "Laura Grey" (Lavender Guthrie), who later committed suicide suffering intense pain from being force fed while in prison. The collection was edited by Nancy A. John, a member of the Glasgow WSPU and one of the prisoners. The first copy was inscribed by Margaret McPhun to her Aunt Mary. Her poem "To a Fellow Prisoner" was dedicated to another suffragist prisoner, Janie Allan, a major figure in the Scottish suffrage movement. The first pamphlet was gaveled off at \$3,265.97. The second copy contained the signature of Margaret's sister, Frances, and brought \$2,578.40. Both examples had condition problems with the covers detached. This title is exceedingly rare, the WorldCat listing just 6 copies, three on each side of the Atlantic.

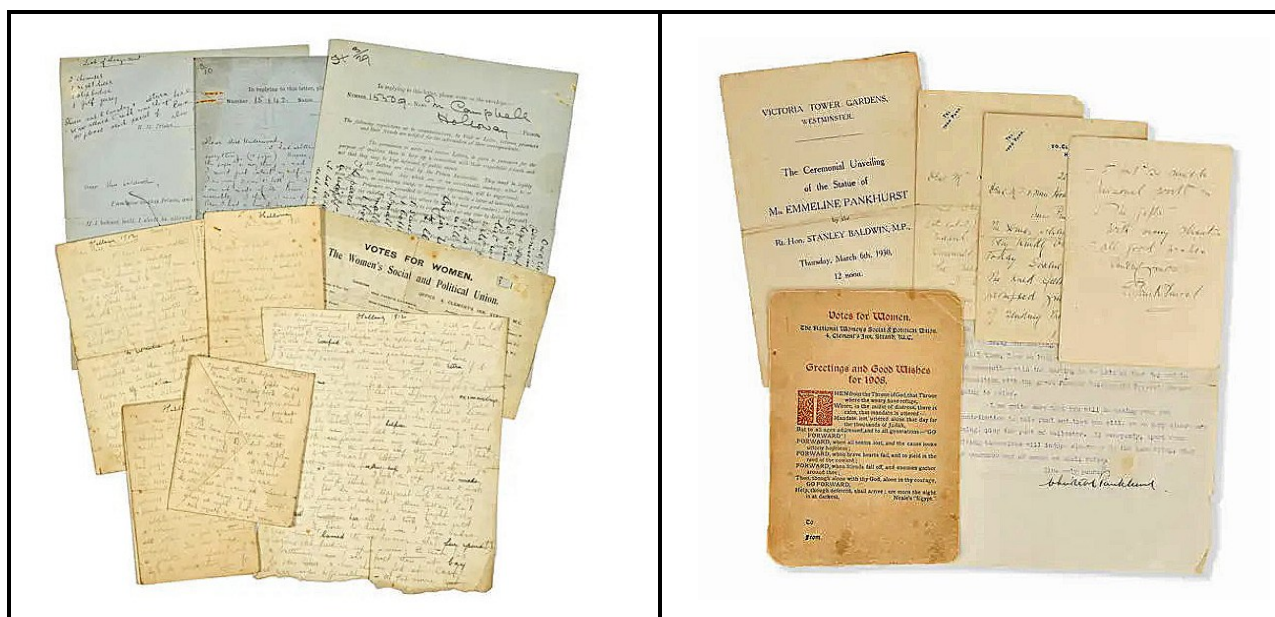




## ... Bonham's, cont'd.



The rarest lapel badge in the auction was the silver fob Scottish March medal from 1912. It was engraved on one side "Edinburgh/To/London/Nov. 16<sup>th</sup> 1912" on the central roundel and "400 Miles/of devoted work/for/Women's Suffrage/M.S." on the reverse. Bonhams speculates that the initials "M.S" could have stood for Maud Arncliffe Sennett (1862-1936) who coordinated the arrival of the women into London. The maker was Daniel George Collins. The medal commemorates a march by six women on October 12, 1912, to London that arrived on November 16. It was organized by Florence de Fonblanque. Along the way they were cheered on by huge crowds of suffragettes and their supporters. The marchers were known as "Brown Women" for their distinctive uniform. According to Leah Leneman in her *A Guid Cause: The Women's Suffrage Movement in Scotland*, only six medals were made to be given to the six original marchers. This scarce example and perhaps the only copy ever to appear in public auction realized \$6,875.73.



Of particular interest to original manuscript collectors are the two lots shown above. The first, item 191, was a collection of letters and papers relating to the two suffragist sisters, Margaret and Frances McPhun, whose Hunger Strike medals were also auctioned off. Some of these letters were smuggled out of Holloway Prison. The lot consisted of: (1) five autographed letters from Frances to a companion suffragist, Laura Underwood. These letters are particularly valuable in that they describe in graphic detail the horrors of force feeding that many of the suffragists, including Frances, were forced to endure; (2) two autograph letters from Margaret McPhun to her brother Robert that also describe her experiences in prison; (3) an autographed letter from Christabel Pankhurst to "Miss McPhun," (probably Margaret) apologizing for a mistake relating to her report printed in the *Suffragette*. (4) a collection of miscellaneous papers including manuscript biographies of the sisters, three related Real Photo postcards and a cabinet card of Margaret, Frances, and Nessie McPhun as children. This historic lot brought a final bid with buyer's premium of \$19,176.83.

Lot 193, shown to the right above, contained a group of autograph letters and other material related to Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst. These items included: (1) three ALS letters from Emmeline Pankhurst to Mrs. and Miss Hoar thanking them for Christmas presents, a cheque for clothes for the war time children who

... Bonham's, cont'd.

were then under her care, and for additional presents to both the babies and herself; (2) a typed letter from Christabel Pankhurst, who was then hiding out in Paris to avoid prosecution, to Mrs. Hoare expressing a desire to see her when she visited the city, and: (3) a Christmas card issued by the Women's Social and Political Union for 1908, which included a verse from Neale's *Egypt*. This card was the first ever issued by the WSPU for Christmas. Again, a historic assortment, the lot realized \$1,203.25.



## Women's Power

Cary Demont has called our attention to the 14" x 20" double-sided broadside pictured below called "Womens' [sic] Power" that was put out in 1876 by the United States Government Church or the United States Church of Women.

Very little is known about this organization formed in Chicago on July 15, 1868, apart from the information provided on the broadside itself, but what there is serves as a fascinating account of a group that can be considered radical, nativistic, and yet in some ways conservative in its attitude towards gender relationships,



marriage and "free love." Its leader was Mrs. A. Whittier Buffum "Commander-in-Chief," and its members took an oath of allegiance to declare themselves independent of traditional ecclesiastical authority and to establish a publishing house to disseminate their ethics and to draw new members to the cause. It claimed also to have superseded the Woman Suffrage movement

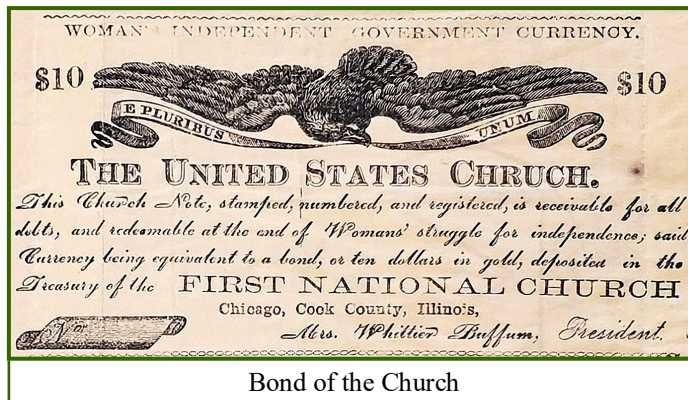
The United States Government Church (USGC) attacked the "Jewish Church, the Roman Church, and the whole Jesuitical Order" for their manipulation of the Bible to emphasize the concept of a ruling patriarchal Deity. The USGC saw instead a four-



fold concept of "Lord, the Mother, God, the Father, Christ the Son, and Soul, the Daughter," which, if anything, gave feminist primacy to the Mother, as seen in the Church seal pictured below. Mrs. Whittier, who claimed the poet John Greenleaf Whittier as cousin, wrote her own poem, the first two lines of which are "Dear Father God, thy era done,/ Aid Mother Lord, the coming one." The broadside further argues that "women want marriage within the church proper, sanctioned by a government of women, instead of the hierarchies of Rome and Jerusalem."



Seal of the USGC



Bond of the Church



### ... Women Power, cont'd.

The USGC developed a platform in which they proposed that women control the church and men the government: "Women shall be priests and men shall be Congressmen." Further, they demanded that women should have total control of all matters relating to creeds, faiths, and everything else pertaining to human salvation."

To finance their efforts, the USGC planned to issue \$10 bonds, payable at the "end of Woman's struggle for independence." Such a plan for redemption was like Victoria Woodhull's plan for her own bonds that she revealed in 1872 at the convention that nominated her for President. A large number of the USGC notes were printed up by Jerry Thompson, who, when he asked for reimbursement for his efforts, was told that payment would be forthcoming "whenever the United States Church had established its supremacy over the United States of America." When Thompson objected to the terms, he was told that if he was not satisfied with his own workmanship, that he ought to quit job printing.

Very little is known about Mrs. A. Whittier Buffum. She does turn up at the Convention of the National Society of Spiritualists [those who believe it possible to communicate with dead spirits] that took place in Chicago in September of 1873 about the time that the USGC was founded. At this convention Victoria Woodhull was elected President of the Organization. Buffum, who opposed Woodhull's election because of what she perceived to be her moral values, was supported "on either hand by her co-adjutors. They were all "dressed in deep mourning" over the events. Buffum was said to represent the feelings of the USGC for "Ten lost tribes of Israel in the hall below, who, by their ungodly free-loveism, had put themselves outside the pale of the new church, which recognizes motherhood as the creative and governing principle of the universe and has for its corner stones wedlock without divorce and no second marriage."

Adeline Mendum Whittier Burrum was born April 14, 1822 in Dover, Stratford New Hampshire to Joseph Whittier and Nancy Hall Locke. She married Albert C. Buffum on December 30, 1845 in Orono, Penobscot Maine, and died on January 10, 1888, in Joliet, Illinois. Adeline (Ada) filed for divorce from her husband in 1880, even though he had been very supportive of her efforts in her new church.

I am grateful to both Cary Demont for allowing *The Clarion* to reproduce Buffum's manifesto and to David Holcomb, who provided additional information about the USGC church.



## Lucifer the Light Bearer

The publication pictured to the right, *Lucifer the Light Bearer*, New Series, Vol. XI, No. 15, dated Friday, May 11, E.M. 294 (C.E. 1894), is technically not a true woman suffrage periodical although its various issues did give strong support to the concept of woman's rights and equality and targeted those institutions such as marriage and the church that the paper felt undermined the status of women.

The paper was created and published by Moses Harman (1830-1910) a former schoolteacher and anarchist, who rejected all forms of religion and government, including marriage, and was jailed several times under the Comstock Act (used also to prosecute Victoria Woodhull) for allegedly



... *Lucifer*, cont'd.

publishing obscene material and sending it through the mails. He also dealt constantly with lawsuits, ridicule, and charges of immorality.

The paper got its start when in 1881 Harman co-edited the *Valley Falls Liberal* and then later became its editor. He changed the name of the paper on August 24, 1883, to *Lucifer, the Light Bearer* to reflect his anti-church and anarchistic views. The title finally was changed again to *The American Journal of Eugenics*. Harman had become increasingly interested in the study of how to arrange reproduction within the human population to increase the occurrence of desirable characteristics and eliminate those that could be considered undesirable. Although the term and concept of eugenics were originally developed by Sir Francis Galton, Harman has sometimes been considered as one of the founders of the movement that later involved Victoria Woodhull.

Harman wrote much of the content for *Lucifer*, but he on occasion published other writers such as Lois Waisbrooker for her promotion of woman's rights. Waisbrooker was a noted feminist of the time, who contributed to the paper a declaration of independence for women. Harmon also promoted writer and activist Matilda Joslyn Gage, who argued that the church's influence over the state had created the societal chains upon women that bound them to an unjust system. She believed that the "charitable" acts of the church to care for abandoned children was necessary only because of pressures that the church had imposed on women.

Issues of *Lucifer* are hard to come by today, but the paper's obscurity should not blind us to the fact that there was radical thought throughout the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, and that some of this radicalism for the time such as the quest for woman's rights was after many struggles eventually to become mainstream thought.



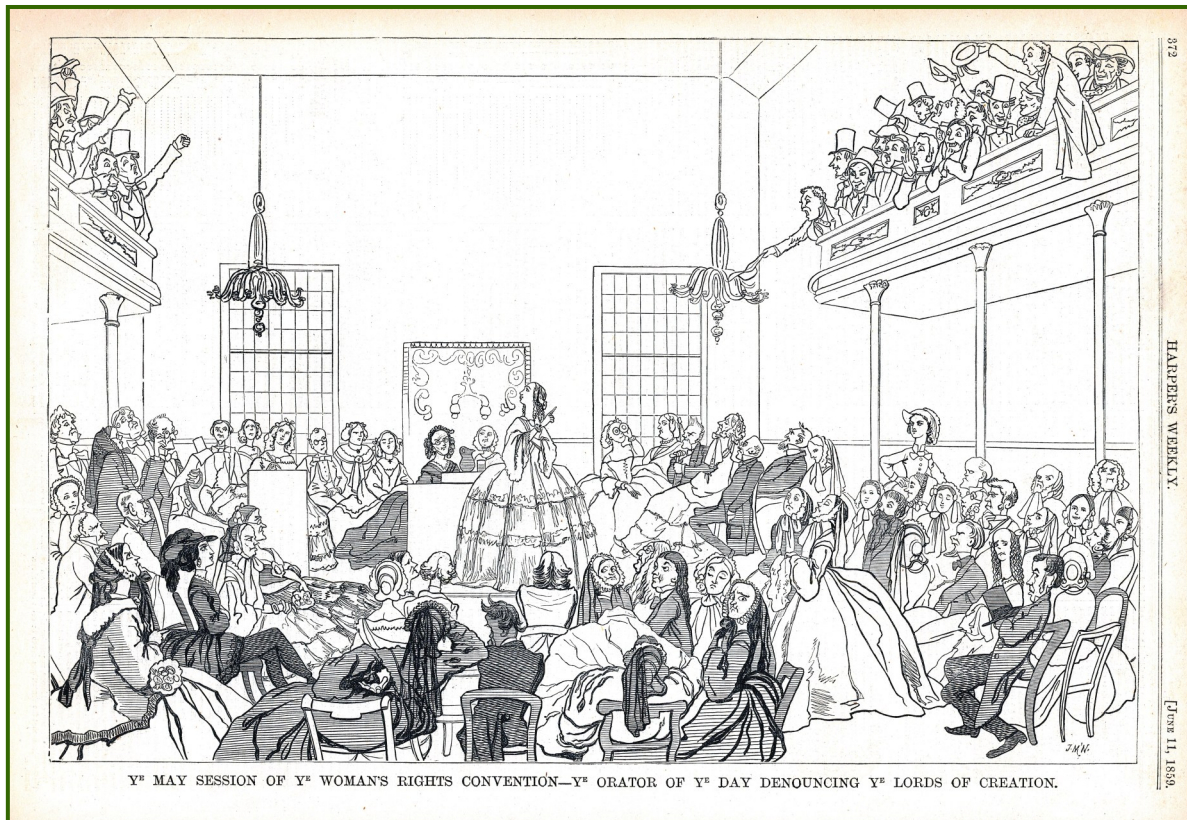
## 1859 National Woman's Rights Convention

The image shown on the next page appeared in the June 11, 1859, issue of *Harper's Weekly*, a heavily illustrated journal published in New York that featured news and commentary on local, national, and international events along with serializations of such novels as Charles Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities*. The illustration was printed without any explanatory text apart from its caption that alluded to a session of women's rights advocates where that day's suffragist orator denounced "the Lords of Creation."

The event depicted here was actually that of the 9<sup>th</sup> annual gathering of the National Woman's Rights Convention, generally regarded as the earliest national suffrage society, at Mozart Hall on Broadway in New York City on May 12. The NWRC had held its first gathering in Brinley Hall in Worcester, Massachusetts on October 23-24, 1850, following an organizational meeting scheduled after the May Convention of the New England Anti-Slavery Society. Thereafter, the Woman's Convention was held yearly in such cities as Cleveland, Cincinnati, Syracuse, and Philadelphia, before settling on New York in 1858. No Convention was held in 1857 following a disturbance at a smaller convention in the same year. Susan B. Anthony made her first appearance and speech on suffrage at the 1852 Convention after having been converted to the cause from remarks given by Lucy Stone at the 1850 Brinley Hall meeting that were later printed and distributed to the public.



## ... National Woman's Rights Convention, cont'd.



Although *Harper's* did not provide an account of the 1859 Convention, apart from the illustration, it was covered extensively by several New York papers, including *The New York Daily Herald* and *The New York Tribune*, both of which published two column accounts of the proceedings. The Convention was open to anyone from the general public who paid the 10-cent admission charge. The crowd was huge, and many were turned away. Some wanted to hear from famous abolitionists such as Wendell Phillips and William Lloyd Garrison who were invited to speak on women's rights. Some attendees were dedicated supporters of the cause that had captured the nation's attention a little over a decade earlier at Seneca Falls. And some were merely curious and came, at best, merely to observe the new phenomenon, and, at worst, to ridicule the aspirations of women and their attempt to move away from their traditionally restricted roles.

It was the latter group that caused the notoriety this and other such conventions were subject to and why later gatherings and organizations became severely restrictive regarding the roles that men were allowed to play including membership in various suffrage associations. The sub-headline of the *Daily Herald* read "Immense Audience-Turbulence Prevailing—The Speeches Interrupted—No Respect for the Ladies—Everybody Hissed, Etc."

Susan B. Anthony presided over this 1859 meeting pictured in the illustration. When Caroline Dole read some extracts from her lecture on Mary Wollstonecraft and Margaret Fuller, the crowd became so disruptive that Anthony suggested that Dole end her remarks, which she did. However, Dole left the stage "amid a storm of noise, hisses, groans, whistling, and boisterous laughter." When Lucretia Mott spoke, an on-site reporter wrote with racist commentary that he apparently considered to be part of the fun: "there was such hooting and yelling that no cannibal crew discussing boiled missionary on their midnight barbecues could have been less ferocious." The crowd wanted to hear Wendell Phillips speak immediately after Dole, but Anthony warned that there was an order of speeches to be followed, and that Phillips would not be heard until Antoinette Blackwell Brown had addressed the audience. When Brown began her talk, she was met with further laughter,



### ... National Woman's Rights Convention, cont'd.

hisses, and groans, despite Anthony's attempt to instill courteous behavior within the crowd.

If you look carefully again at the image that appears near the beginning of this article, you can see the crowd of men shouting and hooting from the two balconies above. Not all men in attendance participated in the derision, but enough did so to indicate that activist women in the mid-nineteenth century had to struggle significantly to be both heard and taken seriously. It wasn't only that many disagreed with the concept of Women's Rights but that they appeared to consider the topic too ridiculous to even listen to. Even the illustrator from *Harper's* appears here to be caught up in the merriment and derision.

*The Clarion* would like to thank John Koster, who pointed out the *Harper's* image to us.



## Another American Suffragist Martyr?

The most celebrated and by some accounts the only American suffrage martyr was Inez Boissevain Milholland who went on a speaking tour of the West in 1916 on behalf of the National Woman's Party, even though she was suffering from pernicious anemia. Her family, fearing for her health, advised against the trip, but she persisted, and tragically collapsed while giving a speech on October 23, 1916. Taken to a hospital, she was given repeated blood transfusions, but, nevertheless, died on November 25. Her bravery and devotion to the cause was inspiring to many suffragists, and posters, pins and other memorabilia were issued to recognize her martyrdom.

But there may have been another less well-known American woman, Frances Robertson Howard, who probably also died for the cause. The headline for the August 27, 1916, issue of the *Times Herald* proclaimed "'Good Samaritan of Marlinton' Dead; May Be First Woman Suffrage Martyr." The sub-headline read "Friend of Everyone in Little West Virginia Town Lies Slain, While Her Husband is in a Cell, Denying that He Killed Her."

While at the time there was controversy over the conclusions derived from the case, the following facts were undisputed. On Tuesday, August 16, Howard had attended a woman suffrage meeting and made what she had claimed to be "my first speech." On her way home, she stopped at a shop to purchase a bit of embroidery as a birthday gift for a six-year-old girl from Marlinton. She arrived at her apartments around 6:30 that evening, and her husband, Dr. Oliver Arnold

Howard, came home around 20 minutes later. After approximately 15 or 20 minutes had elapsed, her husband ran out of the building, calling for another doctor. He claimed that his wife had been rendered unconscious from the effects of a drug, and he wanted some strychnine (then sometimes given as a remedy) to revive her.

A Dr. Price soon arrived on the scene but found that she was dead. He noticed that her face "carried an expression of fear," that there were marks on the left side of her neck, and that her nose appeared bruised. An autopsy revealed that there were no marks of a hypodermic needle on the body, and it was argued that even if she had digested some drug, there was no time for it to have killed her before her husband arrived home. When the skin of her neck was drawn back, it revealed the imprint of a thumb and three fingers. A coroner's jury, after reflection, concluded that Frances Howard came to her death "probably by the hand of Oliver A. Howard." Howard subsequently was arrested and a trial date set for April of the following year.

In an article that appeared on August 27, 1916, in the Washington, D. C. *Times Herald*, the anonymous reporter appeared convinced that Frances Howard's death was the direct result of her husband's anger over her suffrage activities. He noted that if the tangled ends of circumstantial evidence weave together as authorities plan, a suitable epitaph for her would be: "Slain because she espoused the cause of the ballot for woman's suffrage."

### ... Martyr, cont'd.

The article noted that Frances Howard had become head nurse at the Marlinton Hospital six years prior to her death, and was noted for being “deft of hand, tender of heart, and with a smile for the convalescent and the seriously ill.” She married Dr. O. A. Howard, who had come to the hospital from Canada, but who had taken his medical degree at the University of Maryland.

The reporter noted that the marriage was anything but harmonious. Mrs. Howard on occasion appeared in public with a discolored eye, which she attributed to having “fallen down the steps,” a “run into a corner of the refrigerator,” or a “fall upon the railroad tracks.” According to neighbors, Dr. Howard began to appear more and more moody and suffering from the depths of melancholia. Frances Howard took up civic and club activities, which her husband “bitterly opposed and is said to have forbidden her to attend such meetings.” On the morning of August 16, the day of her death, she had an altercation with her husband on the street “presumably over her suffrage activities.” Dr. Howard later admitted to a reporter that “he was opposed to woman suffrage.”

Dr. Howard, proclaiming himself innocent, denied that the pair ever “had a quarrel in our life together ... I never laid a finger on the woman in my life.” De-

spite the notoriety of the death when it first was reported in the press, interest in it over the coming months died down, and there was very little recorded in newspapers about the trial itself, including information about the prosecution’s case or the defendant’s response. The case went to the jury on the night of April 18, 1917, and, after some disagreement, they returned a verdict of acquittal on the following day. Dr. Howard was then given his liberty.

While we can speculate, it is impossible to know precisely the reasoning behind the jury’s verdict. Did its 12 members consider Dr. Howard to be innocent? Did they believe that the prosecution had not made its case concretely enough? Was there anti-feminist and/or anti-suffrage bias in their conclusions? Early newspaper reports of the event suggested that Frances Howard was indeed murdered and that her husband had killed her in an anti-suffrage rage. Whether they were correct or not, their assumptions may have been based on a sense that there was a malicious bias against suffrage that could result in murder. If that was the case, then Frances Robertson Howard was, indeed, a martyr to the cause.



## Who Killed Mr. Crittenden?

On May 3, 1870, A. P. Crittenden, a prominent San Francisco lawyer and politician, was crossing the San Francisco Bay on a ferryboat, accompanied by his wife, Clara, and two of their seven children. Suddenly, a woman dressed in a waterproof coat and a brown veil appeared and reportedly cried out: “You son-of-a bitch, you are the very man I have been looking for.” She then took out a small pistol and shot him in the heart, killing him instantly. The assailant, Laura D. Fair, was arrested immediately, telling the police: “Yes, I did it. I don’t deny it, and I meant to kill him. He ruined both myself and my child.” Her subsequent trial in April, which lasted twenty-six days, became a focus of national attention, primarily because of Crittenden’s social position. However, there were several feminist issues that arose in part by virtue of Fair’s defense of temporary insanity, issues that were to resonate throughout the woman’s rights movement.



Laura D. Fair from Wikipedia

### ... Crittenden, cont'd.

Crittenden and Fair had begun their relationship seven years prior to his murder. At the time, he had professed to her that he was unmarried, but she quickly learned the truth, pressuring him to divorce his wife. Their relationship was quite passionate and well-known, with Crittenden's wife, Clara, and Fair even having met several times. Still, despite repeated promises and assurances to Fair that he would leave his wife for her, Crittenden stayed in his marriage. The local newspapers of the time and apparently the public as well had little sympathy for the argument put forth by the defense that Laura was not in her right mind at the time, that her passionate nature was exacerbated by the fact that she was experiencing a severely painful menstrual cycle. In editorials put forth, Fair was regarded as a fallen woman who had lured Crittenden into her bed and whose desire for both money and social stature dominated her behavior.

But despite the public sentiment against her, Fair did have supporters, primarily Emily Pitts Stevens (1841/4-1906) who headed a group of suffragists that monitored the trial and entered the courtroom whenever they were allowed. Stevens was an educator, a temperance leader, and an early suffrage supporter from San Francisco. She was both the editor and publisher of *The Pioneer*, ostensibly the first woman's suffrage journal on the West Coast. She was also the co-founder of the California Woman Suffrage Association.

Stevens' concern was that Laura Fair might not be receiving the full benefits of the law because of her sex. The jury was all male, presumably guided by patriarchal instincts that precluded any sort of feminist argument. This concern evolved partly out of the fact that the country had experienced many noted murder cases in which men had been tried and freed for killings while they were reportedly in the grip of passion. In an editorial in her paper, Stevens demanded to know: "May not a woman be allowed the same right to judge of her own wrongs, to avenge them according to her ideas of justice, and to be set free and travel the earth at her own pleasure? Will it not have a cowardly look for a masculine judge to arraign this woman under masculine-made laws, to be tried by a masculine jury, to be confused and bewildered by the conflicting array of masculine authorities good, bad, foolish, and indifferent, and finally condemned and executed under a legal, judicial, and executive system, in the shaping and directing of which she has had no more voice or influence than had the plantation slaves over the creation of those laws which took from them their personal liberty and property creations?"

Despite Stevens' impassioned plea, it took the jury less than 45 minutes to convict Laura Fair and condemn her to death. The subsequent death warrant appeared on June 10, which directed the sheriff to take her to the courtyard of the jail and hang her by the neck. Fortunately, Fair's lawyer prevailed upon the state supreme court to hear the case, and a stay of execution was issued. Because of perceived prejudice that had occurred at the first trial, the jury's verdict was overturned, and a second trial was ordered. Here the second jury was more sympathetic to her cause, and Fair was declared "Not Guilty" of the charges that had been leveled against her.

Stevens, though, was not the only suffragist leader to get involved in the trial. On July 9, the day before the stay of execution was issued, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony had arrived in the city to lecture both on "The Power of the Ballot" as well as on other matters with which they were both concerned. Stanton was taken to see Fair at the jail in which she had been imprisoned. The suffrage leader was later quoted by a reporter that: "I think that the treatment of this woman is an outrage and a disgrace to the city of San Francisco." Anthony said in her public lecture that: "If all men had protected all women as they would have their own wives and daughters protected, you would have no Laura Fair in your jail tonight."



Emily Pitts Stevens from Wikipedia



... Crittenden, cont'd.

Although there were cheers and applause to her comments, Anthony's speech was interrupted several times with loud hissing. Her defense of Fair had stirred up such resentment in the community that both she and Stanton cut short their speaking tour, and, pleading hoarseness, escaped on a trip to Yosemite.

After her acquittal, Fair went on to lead a relatively uneventful life, becoming a book agent in the San Francisco area.

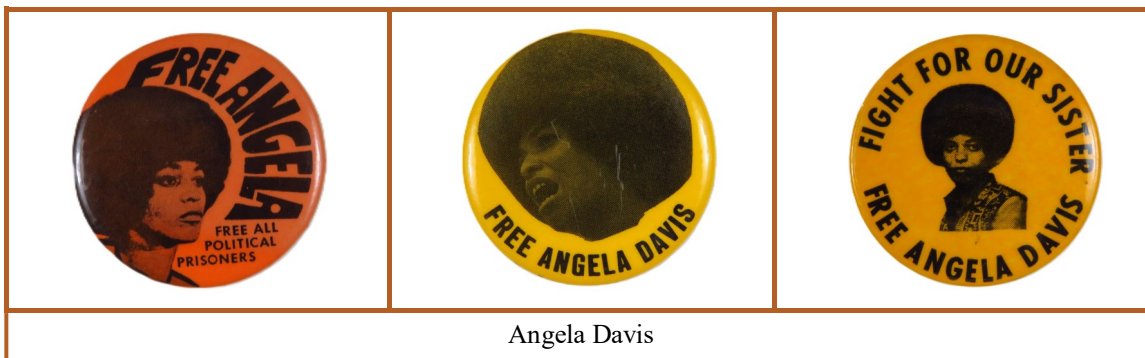
Laura Fair's trial, which has lost some of its earlier notoriety today, is still the subject of several books and scholarly papers, the earliest of which is Kenneth Lamott's *Who Killed Mr. Crittenden*, published in 1963 by David McKay and from which the title of this article is borrowed. A more recent volume is Carole Haber's study, *The Trials of Laura Fair: Sex, Murder, and Insanity in the Victorian West*, published in 2013 by UNC Press Books. Laura Fair's two trials, above and beyond the resolution of her fate, do provide an excellent context in which to view prevailing male attitudes in the 19<sup>th</sup> century towards women's roles in relationships and in society. And it is these attitudes that made it so difficult for women during this period to achieve both the right to vote as well as basic legal and social equality.



## Victimized and Activist Women of the 60's and 70's

In the last issue of *The Clarion*, we extended our scope to include the campaign buttons of Shirley Chisholm. In this issue, we would like to continue that extension by featuring political cause badges from the 1960's and 70's that focus on specific women, generally minority women, who were either movement activists or victims of rape or incarceration. The majority of these buttons are from the collection of Ronnie Lapinsky Sax, the first editor of *The Clarion*. They are not offered here as a complete collection but rather as a representative sampling of some of the women, many of whom were African American, and progressive issues that became popularized during this era. Again, if you have not commented previously, we would like to know your opinions about extending the parameters of this publication. If your reaction is positive, please be aware that our own areas of expertise are limited here and we need contributions from you both in terms of text and images.

### Angela Davis



Angela Davis

Angela Davis is a former member of the Communist party, a feminist political activist, academic, author, and one time fugitive from justice. In 1969 she was hired as an assistant professor in the philosophy department at UCLA, but was fired because of a system-wide policy against employing Communist teachers. Reinstated by a court ruling, she was again fired for her alleged use of inflammatory language. She obtained national notoriety in 1970 when guns belonging to Davis were used in a court room struggle to free the Soledad Brothers, who had been charged with the killing of a prison guard at Soledad Prison. In the ensuing melee and subsequent attempt at escape in a van, the judge at the trial and three of the black defendants were killed. Although she was not in the courtroom at the time of the shootings, Davis was, nevertheless, charged with kidnapping

### ... Victimized Women, cont'd.

and first-degree murder. She became a fugitive and featured on the FBI's most wanted list when she was finally captured. Partially as the result of nation-wide publicity and a highly organized, well-financed defense, she was, in 1971, found innocent at trial by an all-white jury. Upon release, she continued with her political activities, becoming the Communist Party's Vice-Presidential candidate under Gus Hall in both 1980 and 1984. There were more pieces of memorabilia such as buttons and badges manufactured for Davis than for any other woman in this article.

### Bessie Lou Cornett, Kathleen Cleaver, Linda Gill



Bessie Lou Cornett became famous for her involvement in the Brookside Mine Strike in Harlan County, Kentucky 1973-1974, which became the subject of a movie. Corbett faced a series of tragedies in her life. Her first marriage to a brutal husband turned disastrous when he tried to kill her, she lost her son through court order, and she became the object of the Ku Klux Klan Night Riders because of her union activities. She became involved in the Brookside coal strike because not only did she want union representation for the miners, but also because she believed the mine owners were simply a part of the oppressive system of capitalism. Workers at Brookside faced black lung and extreme safety problems within the mines. She later fought hard against a plan to build a highway through a black neighborhood.

Kathleen Cleaver is a law professor and political activist who was long associated with the Black Panther Party. While organizing a student conference at Fisk University in Nashville, she met Eldridge Cleaver, the Minister of Information for the Black Panthers and the author of the best seller, *Soul on Ice*. She followed him back to San Francisco, where she married him in 1967 and joined the Party. She became quite active with the Panthers, becoming their Communications Secretary, organizing demonstrations, writing pamphlets, holding press conferences, and speaking at rallies and on television. When her husband ran for President of the U.S. in 1968 as the candidate of the Peace and Freedom Party, she ran to represent California's 18<sup>th</sup> state assembly district on the same party ticket. She received 2,778 votes finishing third in a four- person race. She finally divorced Cleaver in 1987, following a series of incidents where Eldridge went into exile and was arrested on his return to America.

Linda Gill was a disabled and blind woman who lost custody of her three children to her ex-husband Whitney Codling in a contentious Michigan court case in 1977. In the fall of 1975, Gill had left the children in care of her mother while she went to California to "establish a safe and secure living situation for them." Codling immediately charged her with abandonment, and the Probate Court of Lansing, Michigan placed the children in foster care for two years until they finally awarded full parental rights to the father. Gill, who worked as a full-time volunteer for the Center for Independent Living, was helped with some funding from the CIL in her subsequent battle to regain custody. She became a symbol for many feminist organizations for disabled and/or Lesbian mothers who often could not afford to engage in costly court battles over custody rights and against accusations that they were "unfit mothers." Gill eventually gave up the fight and, along with Codling, allowed the state to put the children up for adoption.

... Victimized Women, cont'd.

## Inez Garcia, Jo Ann Handler, Stephanie Kline



Inez García was one of several women whose stories during the period of the late 60's and early 70's involved a murder after a rape or attempted rape. In 1971, she had moved to Soledad, California to be near her husband, Juan Garcia Cardenas, who had been imprisoned for a political bombing. While there, she shared an apartment with Fred Medrano, a drug dealer. On March 14, 1974, Louie Castillo and Miguel Jimenez came to the apartment allegedly to purchase cocaine from Medrano. The events that followed were somewhat murky. Castillo and Jimenez apparently beat Medrano and raped Garcia. Later that night, when Medrano and Garcia once again confronted the pair, Garcia shot and killed Jimenez, who brandished a knife against her. Garcia was tried and convicted for murder and served two years in prison before she was given a new trial and acquitted on the grounds of self-defense. Her trial was one of several in the period that was construed in legal circles as a ruling in favor of a woman's right to use deadly force against sexual assault

Jo Ann Handler was a popular African American teacher at City College of San Francisco whose unsuccessful attempts to have her contract renewed led to a call in March 1973 from Juan Galvin, the President of the Student Council, for a one-day strike. Many students had written in support of her, and believed that her dismissal was both racist and sexist. Handler was first hired in 1971 as a non-tenured instructor working on her doctorate, but a faculty committee criticized her for "emotional problems" and for "poor performance of duties."

Stephanie Kline was involved in two incidents related to a fatal explosion and armed robbery. On August 1972, she was arrested after a fragmentation bomb tore apart her car, which had been parked outside of a coffee shop. Tommy Davenport, a former member of the Black Panthers, was sitting inside the car and was killed. Kline was acquitted by an Alameda County Superior Court Jury on charges of possession of explosive devices in a public place with reckless and malicious intent. She then was arrested again in January of 1973 along with two other gun carrying women and one male after they fled from a robbery at a supermarket. Kline was one of several activist women of the period who were arrested for what was considered militant activity.

## Joann Little, Darlene Schmalzried, Assata Shakur (Joanne Chesimard)

Joann Little (pronounced "Jo Ann") was born and raised in rural North Carolina. She became a habitual runaway, at first escaping from her religious fanatic mother and then from the Dobbs Farm Training School in Kinston, North Carolina to which she had been sent. In the early 1970's she had an escalating set of scrapes with the law involving shop lifting, felony breaking and entering, and larceny. She stayed in the county jail awaiting the outcome of her appeal. On August 27, 1974, she escaped from her cell and the body of jailer Clarence Alligood was discovered on her bunk, having suffered stab wounds to his temple and heart area from an ice pick. Alligood was naked from the waist down with traces of semen on his leg. While Little did manage to escape, she, fearing that she would be shot, turned herself in to authorities. At her subsequent trial, she was charged with first-degree murder, a charge that would have resulted in the death penalty were she to be convicted. The proceedings became internationally famous, and large sums of money were contributed to her defense, led by several experienced lawyers. These lawyers were able to get the charges reduced to second degree murder, a reduction that had far less serious consequences for her. She was released from prison in 1979, and disappeared from public view after 1989. Her trial focused national attention on the lengths to which a woman is entitled to defend herself from rape and racial and sexual inequality in the justice system.



## ... Victimized Women, cont'd.

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|  |  |  |
| Joanne Little                                                                     | Darlene Schmalzried                                                               | Assata Shakur                                                                       |

Darlene Schmalzried's situation differs from that of many of the women represented here, for it did not involve physical violence or murder. On December 22, 1978, Schmalzried, a former White House employee, received \$10,000 in an out-of-court settlement for sex discrimination from the Justice Department. She had filed a \$30,000 suit against President Gerald Ford and his press secretary, Ron Nessen, for allegedly paying her less because of her sex. A lower court originally dismissed her case, but that decision was overturned by a higher court, who sent the case back. To avoid a lengthy court battle, the Justice Department agreed to settle the case. The settlement involved her receiving \$6,000 in back pay and \$4,000 in legal costs. While this was not the first case ever to come up that involved sex discrimination, it was one of the most publicized, and it was one of many such suits filed during the period that helped reduce but not eliminate the gender gap in pay between men and women.

Assata Olugbala Shakur (Joanne Chesimard) is an African American political activist who was a member of the Black Liberation Army. Between 1971 and 1973, she had been involved in several crimes, but the main event occurred in May 1973 when she and BLA members, Sundiata Acoli and Zayd Malik Shakur, were involved in a shoot-out on the New Jersey Turnpike with state troopers James Harper and Werner Foerster. Chesimard and officer James Harper were wounded but Werner Foerster was killed. In 1977 she was convicted for his murder and given a sentence of life imprisonment. She escaped imprisonment in 1979 from the Clinton Correctional Facility for Women with assistance from BLA supporters and members of the May 19 Communist Organization. She fled to Cuba, where she was granted political asylum in 1984. She has lived in Cuba ever since, despite efforts by the U. S. Government to have her returned. Currently the Government has offered a \$1 million reward for information leading to her capture with an additional \$1 million offered by the State of New Jersey. She has been on the FBI Most Wanted Terrorist list since 2013, the first woman ever to be so listed.

### Karen Silkwood and Judy White

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|  |  |
| Karen Silkwood                                                                      | Judy White                                                                           |

Karen Silkwood's story is as tragic as it is mysterious. It is alluded to in the song "We Almost Lost Detroit" on the 1977 music album *Bridges*, by Gil Scott-Heron and Brian Jackson, and the subject of a 1983 movie, *Silkwood*, based upon an original screenplay by Nora Ephron and Alice Arlen in which Meryl Streep received an academy award nomination for playing the title role. Silkwood (1946-1974) was a chemical technician and a labor union activist who worked at the Kerr-McGee Cimarron Fuel Fabrication Site in Crescent, Oklahoma that made plutonium pellets. Concerned about safety and health procedures at the plant, she testified before

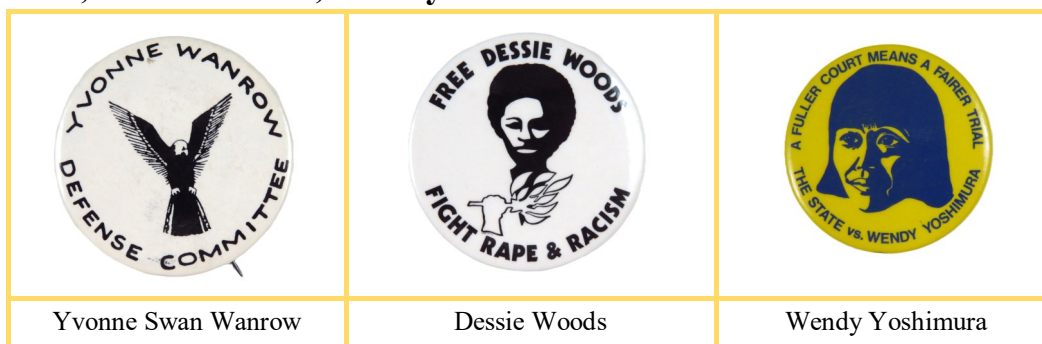
### ... Victimized Women, cont'd.

the Atomic Energy Commission about her concerns. After her appearance before the agency, she was found to have plutonium contamination throughout her body and her home. Gathering documentation about faulty procedures at the plant, she drove to a meeting with a reporter from *The New York Times* along with an official from her Union's National Office. Along the way, she was involved in a car crash, the circumstances behind which were never explained, and her documentation was missing, all of which led to the suspicion that she was murdered to keep her silent.

Judy White was a candidate for Governor of New York in 1966 on the Socialist Workers Party Ticket. Her candidacy caused such controversy that her campaign headquarters at 873 Broadway in New York City was firebombed, with four bombs causing extensive damage. After the election, New York State officials determined that she wasn't old enough to be governor even if she had won the election. She was only 28 at the time, old enough to be drafted if she were male and sent to Vietnam, but not old enough to hold that office. Consequently, in 1967 the legislature passed a law, signed by Governor Nelson Rockefeller, which was referred to as "the Anti-Judy White law," which barred under-age persons from even being nominated for public office and appearing on the ballot. Backers of the law pointed out that White had received 20,000 votes and, because she was ineligible to serve, those votes were wasted.

White's early activism related to her opposition to the Vietnam War. She was a founder of the Greater Boston Coordinating Committee Against the War that was organized in 1965. She moved to New York in 1966 as part of the "Bring the Troops Home Now" wing of the anti-war movement to join with the growing strength with the movement in the City.

### Yvonne Wanrow, Dessie Woods, Wendy Yoshimura



Yvonne Wanrow is an activist from the Colville Indian Reservation. She is known for her 1970's murder trial in the State of Washington after she shot and killed a white man who allegedly was attempting to rape her small son. She was found guilty and sentenced to 20 years in prison for second degree murder. Her appeal reduced the charge to manslaughter and her sentence to probation. As a result, she became a cause célèbre among feminists and the American Indian movement. The button pictured above matches the image found on her Defense Committee brochure.

Dessie Woods, later known as Rashida Muhammad, was a community activist who died of lung cancer in 2006. Her experiences were immortalized by Alice Walker in her collection of essays *Living by the Word*. Her story involving attempted rape and killing in self-defense can be found in *The Story of Dessie Woods*, first published in 1975 by the National Committee to Defend Bessie Woods. In June of 1975, Woods and a friend, Cheryl Todd, hitchhiked to Georgia's Reidsville Prison to see Todd's brother, who was seriously ill. Just outside of prison, Todd fainted because of the heat, and both she and Woods were imprisoned for public intoxication. In jail for three days, the impoverished pair attempted to hitchhike back to Atlanta, when they were picked up by Ronnie Horne, an insurance salesman. After hearing threats from Horne, Todd ran away from the car fearing rape and even worse. According to her Defense Committee, when Horne, with his gun, had attempted to pursue her, Woods wrestled away his weapon and shot him. The two women were caught the next day, and after a complicated trial involving charges of racist prosecution, Woods was sentenced to 10 to 15 years in prison. Her conviction was connected by activists to the stories of two other women, Inez Garcia and Yvonne Wanrow, who also were charged with murder in cases involving sexual violence.

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**... Victimized Women, cont'd.**

Wendy Yoshimura (born January 17, 1943) is an American painter. She was born in Manzanar, an internment camp for Japanese Americans in the WWII era who were forced out of their homes and businesses. Later she took up with Willie Brandt, who founded a militant group called the Revolutionary Army. In 1972, police found a massive weapons and explosives cache in a Berkeley garage that Yoshimura had rented along with notes detailing a plan to kidnap or assassinate former Defense Secretary, Robert McNamara. Brandt and two others were arrested in Berkeley on March 31, 1972 and subsequently convicted. Yoshimura evaded a police dragnet and fled California. She was captured in 1977, however, after becoming involved with Patty Hearst and the Symbionese Liberation Army and convicted of unlawful possession of explosives. Sentenced from one to fifteen years in prison, she was released on parole in September, 1980. Today she resides in California where she is a painter and teaches art from her studio.