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"The Shrieking Sisterhood":
A Comparative Analysis of the Suffrage Movement in the United States and New Zealand.

Philippa Ruth Fogarty

A Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Masters of Arts in American Studies

University of Canterbury
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ABSTRACT

The intention of this thesis is to draw attention to a much neglected part of women's suffrage history - that is, a comparative analysis of the suffrage movements in New Zealand and the United States. Historians have dismissed any suggestion of similarities between the two groups because of the obvious differences in size and the time taken to gain the vote. However, this study reveals parallels between the two movements in terms of membership, leadership, ideologies and opposition. This is particularly highlighted in the comparison with Wyoming. These similarities, together with New Zealand women's new found 'prestige' after having won the vote, led to close relations between women of the two countries, as revealed in personal correspondence. By the late 1890s United States suffragists had changed direction in both their tactics and arguments for suffrage and this, together with distance and a lack of time and money, meant that New Zealand suffragists aid was confined to emotional support rather than practical assistance.

This study was, to a certain degree, limited by the lack of availability of United States primary sources. However, the Kate Sheppard Collection contains a wealth of correspondence between the New Zealand and United States suffragists and provides ample information to support the thesis.

Prior to the examination of the interaction of the suffrage movements in New Zealand and the United States, we will first of all begin by considering the broader context of women's role in society. This is will be followed with a study of the historiography of women's suffrage in Wyoming and New Zealand. We will then proceed to a comparative analysis of the leaders and supporters of the two movements. In New Zealand the women's suffrage and women's temperance organizations were inseparably linked, hence the comparative natured analysis dictates that points for comparison should be made in relation to the temperance origins of suffrage in the United States and New Zealand and to leaders with temperance links.
This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my grandmother, Kate Kilmartin, whose courage, faith and independence has inspired this work.
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Compared with the United States, where it took almost three-quarters of a century to enfranchise women, the suffrage campaign in New Zealand was astonishingly easy.¹

This quote from William O'Neill typifies the comparative analysis given to the suffrage movements in the United States and New Zealand. Historians have confined their comments to a short, generalized paragraph which highlights the differences between the two movements and dismisses any suggestion of similarities. This study, while acknowledging the differences between the two movements, will attempt to show that there were significant similarities in terms of membership, leadership and opposition.

The presence of women in historical studies has been, until recently, virtually non-existent. Traditional history has concentrated on elites and those in power (mostly men) while information on women has been confined to a few 'outstanding' individuals. In 1928, the renowned American scholar Arthur Schlesinger berated fellow American historians for their failure to acknowledge women's contribution to American history. He described women's fight for greater rights as "one of the noblest chapters in the history of American Democracy"² and urged historians to acknowledge its significance. Almost twenty years later, the pioneering historian of women, Mary Beard, criticised historians in her study, Woman as a Force in History, for failing to act on Schlesinger's advice. While acknowledging that the rising trend in social history had meant a shift away from "man-made" history, she protested that historians were merely "bringing in women here and there as if they were not really an integral part of all history."³
Beard concluded that "the conventional view of women as negligible or nothing or helplessly subject to men in the long past continued largely to direct research, thinking and writing about American history."^6

In both the United States and New Zealand, historians have largely confined their mention of women to the women's suffrage movement. While American historians have been forced to acknowledge women's suffrage when dealing with amendments to the United States Constitution, most have chosen to portray women's fight for greater individual and political rights as a merely quaint and somewhat comical episode. Indeed, many historians have referred to women in a derogatory manner. Thomas Bailey in The American Pageant, for example continually referred to women as 'petticoats' and 'the softer sex'.^5 New Zealand historians, meanwhile, have paid reference to women's suffrage when dealing with the radical legislation introduced by the Liberal government. These historians are largely responsible for perpetrating the myth that women's suffrage was a 'gift' from a paternal government. It has only been in recent times that New Zealand women have finally won deserved recognition of their fight for the vote.^6 In fact, it was not until the 1960s that there was a significant development of 'women's history' and since that time the field has flourished into a sub-genre, as it were, with gender becoming a major category of analysis.

The development of New Zealand women's history has followed a similar pattern to that in the United States. New Zealand historians have acknowledged women's role in the private sphere and made reference to the 'petticoat pioneers' who toiled beside their husband in colonial times.^7 However, women's significant political and economic contribution to the development of New Zealand society has
still been largely ignored. Keith Sinclair's authoritative text *A History of New Zealand*, makes only fleeting reference to the fight for, and introduction of, women's suffrage in New Zealand. The growth in New Zealand women's history has paralleled that of the United States and, by the late 1960s, a small but increasing number of books and articles began to appear.

Despite this recent growth in women's history comparative studies on women's movements are still relatively rare. Richard J Evans has been one of the first historians to undertake a major comparative study of feminist movements in Europe, America and Australasia. Evans' use of a wide range of countries leads to somewhat broad and not always accurate generalisations. Another British historian, Olive Banks, in *Faces of Feminism* has compared the feminist movements in Britain and America. Her choice of only two countries for comparative purposes allows a greater depth of analysis. Comparisons between New Zealand suffragists and their British or American counterparts are few and far between. There is the occasional reference, for example, to the common Liberal traditions shared by New Zealand and British suffragists. Richard Evan's discussion of the New Zealand movement is presented almost as an afterthought to his statements about Australian women's suffrage, and the overall place of Australasia in his comparative study serves more to obscure the significance of the efforts of New Zealand women suffragists than to acknowledge the fact that New Zealand women won the vote a quarter of a century earlier than women in Britain and the United States. With an extraordinary demonstration of oversight he concludes:

"Feminism . . . never really succeeded in striking roots in Australasian society. It gained its objectives (including the vote) very early, thus providing its envious European"
counterparts with an inspiration and example. Then it faded away. 10

What is then missing from the historiography is an in depth analysis of the relationship between the women's suffrage movement in New Zealand and its international counterparts. In an attempt to fill this gap, this thesis is a comparative study of the women's suffrage in New Zealand and the United States. The scope of the investigation does not permit a broader-based examination that would include other countries. Preference has been given, instead, to providing an in-depth analysis of women's suffrage in two countries which allows for a comparative discussion of the wider context of the women's movement and a detailed examination of the interaction between American and New Zealand feminists.

In undertaking this study, problems in obtaining primary and secondary sources were encountered. There is now a significantly large number of books written on American suffragists, the majority of which can be obtained from New Zealand libraries, but primary sources, such as papers relating to the introduction of suffrage in Wyoming, were not available. However, these initial difficulties were overcome by the fact that a growing number of works written by suffragists as well as contemporary comment on the suffrage issue have now been published in collective works. 11 These sources are sufficient in number to justify this research study. In the case of New Zealand sources the opposite situation occurs. Although New Zealand was the first country in the world to win women's suffrage, the numbers of works covering the subject remain surprisingly few. 12 There is, nevertheless, a diverse range of primary sources, from political correspondence and records of the National Council of Women, to newspapers and magazines, such as The White Ribbon. The most valuable
source for the purpose of this study is the Kate Sheppard Collection. Kate Sheppard was the leader of the New Zealand suffrage forces and her personal correspondence from politicians and leaders of the suffrage movements throughout the world provides a wealth of information. Secondary sources have been used to demonstrate the similarities and differences between New Zealand and the United States (with particular reference to Wyoming) while the primary sources have been used mainly to illustrate how these similarities and differences led to interaction between suffragists in the two countries.

In 1869 the territorial legislature of Wyoming granted the vote to women. It was the first place in the world to do so and the event provided renewed hope for those who had been working for women's suffrage throughout America. The Wyoming precedent was also greeted with enthusiasm by women's groups throughout the world, including New Zealand. When the suffrage debate reached a peak in New Zealand almost twenty years later, Wyoming provided an invaluable example of how women's suffrage could be 'safely' enacted without resulting in drastic effects upon society. While Wyoming had an important impact on New Zealand, in turn New Zealand had an influence on the United States when women were enfranchised in 1893. In an effort to learn from each country's experience, the women's suffrage movement developed strong international links. Members from organizations in each country visited each other in order to exchange methods and strategies. International conferences enabled women from different countries to keep up to date with the progress of feminism. On a personal level, individuals exchanged letters of support, sympathy and encouragement. In this respect, the international women's suffrage movement functioned in a manner similar to other reform movements. Abolitionist organizations in Britain and America, for example,
developed strong ties of interaction and support. The slogan, "My country is the world and my countrymen are all mankind", was popular among abolitionists and members of British and American anti-slavery organisations often corresponded and visited one another. Women's contribution to reform societies was welcome, as long as they kept to their 'proper sphere' of moral support and left the area of organisation and action to men. The temperance reform movement held a similar view towards women, which led to the establishment of a own separate women's organization. Women reformers often participated in more than one reform movement. Susan B. Anthony and Kate Sheppard, for example, both began their public careers in the temperance movement before concentrating their energies on women's rights. The tactics learnt in one society were then applied to others, so that a certain pattern is discernible in the strategies and events across the various organizations. The international nature of the suffrage movement can therefore be seen as part of this pattern while still acknowledging its importance in giving women suffragists a feeling of strength and 'sisterhood'.

As part of the English-speaking world and western society, New Zealand the United States held common ties in the nineteenth century. Direct links between the two countries, however, were not strong. The major common bond between the two countries was, of course, their British heritage. This heritage played a strong role for New Zealander's who looked to 'Mother England' for direction and cultural leadership. Americans, having developed a greater awareness of their own national identity by the late nineteenth century used Britain for the purpose of comparison rather than imitation. Despite the coincidental nature of this common bond, New Zealand and the United States did hold some political and economic links.
New Zealand shared similar historical patterns with the United States. Peter Coleman used the Turner Thesis as a framework to analyze the development of the New Zealand frontier and highlight the similar evolution of New Zealand and the United States.

With certain exceptions . . . New Zealand paralleled the evolution of the United States. Its growth occurred in a series of stages not unlike America's - there were trading, missionary, agricultural, pastoral, and mining frontiers, for example - with results that are remarkably similar. 14

In conjunction with these similar historical patterns, the United States and New Zealand shared a strongly democratic political system, although New Zealand's firm links with the 'mother country' inevitably led to an inheriting of the British political system. Nevertheless, the structure of the American political system held much interest for New Zealander's. This was especially the case when the abolition of New Zealand's provincial government was debated in the 1870s. New Zealand's physical geography and communication problems had combined to produce isolated and independent communities, each with its own governing body. Those favouring the continuation of provincial government pointed to the benefits of the United States state legislature system. Provincial government ended in 1876, but, "before the final decision was proclaimed, New Zealanders had been treated to a lengthy debate on the merits and demerits of American democratic federalism." 15 The other main link between the two countries was of an economic nature. Early shipping registers, for example, record a significantly high number of New England whalers in New Zealand waters and James Clendon's appointment as first United States consul to New Zealand in 1838 was designed to protect America's increasing economic interests. The introduction of favourable trade terms for Britain after the Treaty of Waitangi led to a drastic decline in American whaling. Whaling had been the dominant commercial
factor between the two countries and its decline led to a weakening in economic relations as a whole. Therefore, although New Zealand and the United States did have some links, their respective ties with Britain were stronger than with each other.

With regard to suffrage, however, the United States inevitably replaced Britain as the traditional figurehead. In 1848, Elizabeth Cady Stanton organized a meeting at Seneca Falls, New York. Discussions were held on women's rights, and resolutions were passed, the most controversial being the call for votes for women. This event is traditionally regarded as the beginning of the women's suffrage movement with Stanton and Susan B. Anthony being considered its 'founders'. The United States women continued to lead the world in the fight for women's suffrage and the victory in Wyoming in 1869 further enhanced their position of leadership. The focal point of suffrage was temporarily transferred to New Zealand in the 1890s and the suffrage victory of 1893 earned New Zealand the place of the 'leading light' in the women's suffrage movement. This study will demonstrate that the dual leadership led to significant relationships and alliances between the women's movement in the United States and New Zealand. Prior to the examination of the interaction, we will first of all begin by considering the broader context of women's role in society, particularly as there is considerable sympathy in the expansion of women's public profile with education and access to the professions. This will be followed with a study of the historiography of women's suffrage in Wyoming and New Zealand in an attempt to demonstrate that the writings have been sparse and at times, factually incorrect. We will then proceed to a comparative analysis of the leaders and supporters in the two movements and their opponents. In New Zealand, the women's suffrage and women's temperance organisations
were inseparably linked, hence the comparative natured analysis
dictates that points for comparison should be made in relation to the
temperance origins of suffrage in the United States and New Zealand
and to leaders with temperance links.

Kate Sheppard, the leader of the New Zealand suffrage movement
was dismayed at how quickly the fight for suffrage in all parts of the
world was forgotten. She wrote:

We the mothers of the present, need to impress upon our
children's mind how the women of the past wrestled and
fought, suffered and wept, prayed and believed, agonised and
won for them the freedom they enjoy today.16

It is hoped that this thesis will serve as an acknowledgement of this
struggle.
FOOTNOTES


4. Ibid.


9. See for example, Patricia Grimshaw, *Women's Suffrage in New Zealand*.


CHAPTER TWO
EMPOWERED IF NOT POWERFUL:
THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN UNITED STATES AND NEW ZEALAND SOCIETIES

The campaign for women's suffrage grew out of a broader-based women's rights movement in both New Zealand and the United States and the demand for the vote needs to be seen within the context of the growing discontent amongst women about their position in society. In order to compare and contrast the two suffragist movements, then, it is first necessary to begin with an examination of the ideologies concerning women's role in the respective societies. The discussion centers mainly on white middle-class women and the explanation for this lies in the type of membership of the women's suffrage movement. In both countries the movement was dominated by white, middle-class and educated women. Afro-American/Maori and working-class women played only a marginal role and, with regard to the United States, Kraditor states that the reason for this was that these women had their "own sense of priorities." It was their perception that the main basis for discrimination and oppression they experienced were racial or class factors. For these women:

The demand for woman's suffrage necessarily seemed less important than the demand for security of person or for a living wage, and the request for admission to colleges had to appear irrelevant to a mother whose children left school to work in a factory or field.

In addition to this, the suffrage organizations in both the United States and New Zealand did very little to actively encourage working-class and minority women to join their ranks. American suffragists were, in fact, often guilty of racist remarks and turned their attentions to working-class women only after realising the need and value of their support. In New Zealand, Harriet Morrison was
active in organizing working-class women to fight for the vote, however, the majority of New Zealand suffragists confined their attention to the middle class.

The rise of social history, coupled with the increased interest in women's role in history, has led to a historical debate about the ideology of women's role in society and women's reaction to this. It was believed that men and women were born with opposite characteristics. Men were considered to be strong and active but at the same time were guilty of immoral and lascivious thoughts and deeds. Women were said to be weak and passive although moral and pure. These 'natural characteristics' were associated with the body. Woman's 'natural' role was that of reproduction, therefore her life was to be confined to the domestic or private sphere, while man's 'natural' role of provider and protector meant that his duties lay in the public sphere. Barbara Welter was the first to take an in depth look at the ideology behind the notion of women's sphere, labelling it 'The Cult of True Womanhood'. Welter constructed this concept from her study of the prescriptive literature written between 1820 and 1860 and argued that 'True Womanhood' consisted of four virtues: piety, purity, submissiveness and domesticity. All women were considered to have been born with an in-built moral superiority and it was their role to counter the inherently immoral male. Welter argues that religion served two useful purposes. On the one hand, it acted as a kind of 'tranquillizer' for any woman who began to question her role, for she was warned that it was safer to "pray than think". On the other hand, it confined her to her 'separate sphere', as religious duties were considered to be of a domestic and passive nature and therefore suitable for women. Secondly, women were said to be inherently pure. This virtue was essential for society, as it tamed
the more 'animalistic' nature of man. It was woman's duty to ensure that the relationship between men and women was kept to the highest level of purity possible. While it was inevitable that man would sometimes challenge this purity, any lapse by a woman could prove disastrous. In women's magazines and novels the woman who lost her virtue immediately fell into a state of mental and physical deterioration and death was greeted as the only suitable fate for the 'fallen woman'. As Welter comments: "The frequency with which derangement follows loss of virtue suggests the exquisite sensibility of a woman, and the possibility that, in the woman's magazines at least, her intellect was geared to her hymen, not her brain."5

Thirdly, submission was an essential virtue of women. Man was the provider and as such, it was woman's duty to passively submit to his actions. While woman may have possessed moral superiority, she was ultimately inferior to man. As Mrs. Sandford wrote in her book Woman and Her Social and Domestic Character: "A really sensible woman feels her dependence. She does what she can, but she is conscious of inferiority, and therefore grateful for support."6 The final virtue was domesticity, for it was in the home that the woman, as daughter, sister, wife or mother could practise all her moral virtues. It was woman's duty to make the home a warm, comforting and cheerful environment for the man in order to ensure that he would not go elsewhere to seek refuge. While moral virtues were an essential part of true womanhood, domestic duties played an equally important role and number of books were written to help women cope with the 'complex' nature of household management.

Glenda Riley also examined magazine literature in order to demonstrate how the role of moral guardian was imposed on women. Unlike Welter, however, Riley chose not to focus on the repressive,
negative aspects of enforced morality, but instead argued that women
used their new role as moral guardian to their own positive advantage.
Prior to the 1820s women had been perceived as "passive members of
society" but their new role transformed them into "influential members
of the community". Women began to advocate greater access to
education in order that they may improve upon their virtues and spread
their influence not just within the family but on society as a whole.
Carroll Smith Rosenberg, in her seminal article, "The Female World of
Love and Ritual," studied personal correspondence written between
women in the nineteenth century and has shown that the enforcement of
separate spheres created a 'sub-culture' among women. Mothers,
daughters, sisters and friends developed strong ties of friendship and
intimate relationships. Nancy Cott has expanded on this theme to
demonstrate that the 'bonds' of womanhood did not necessarily tie
women down. Instead, it provided a sisterly strength and at the same
time advanced women's role in society as it signalled the breaking
down of the traditional male hierarchy. On initial examination it
would appear that 'True Womanhood' forced women into an inferior and
subordinate position. However, the conceptualisation of women's role
in the domestic, private sphere as a complement to men's public role
was effectively the first recognition that women had an important
contribution to make to society, as Riley states:

This was the first time that any power had been attributed
to women and its implications were tremendous. The
assignment of women to the role of moral keepers of society
was the key that would eventually open every imaginable
field of endeavour, influence and control to them.
EDUCATION

As early as the mid nineteenth century women began to take positive steps in a effort to improve their position in society. Education was to be one of the few stepping stones able to provide access to an improved status in society, hence it was an early focus point in the attempt to advance women's rights. Pioneering efforts in women's education, however, concentrated not on freeing the woman from her separate sphere but rather on increasing the professionalization of that sphere. The first women's colleges established by Emma Hart Willard in 1821 and Catharine Beecher in 1823 stressed moral and domestic training rather than a gaining of intellectual knowledge. Both Willard and Beecher restricted women's "teaching role to the moral guidance of the young" and insisted that "politics, theology and philosophy were the unquestioned concerns of men."¹¹ While Beecher and Willard's heavy emphasis on the ideology of 'True Womanhood' served to place limits on the type of education received by women, they were effective in improving women's status within the private sphere. Girls were trained in the "talents of industry, order, neatness, punctuality and constant care"¹² and all such knowledge could be used to increase their expertise in domestic life. Beecher advocated widening women's sphere so that their morality could reach the wider society and she thought it necessary for women to use their education, albeit for a short period:

"And as a system of right and moral education gains its appropriate influence, as women are more and more educated to understand and value the importance of their influence in society, and their peculiar duties, more young females will pursue their education with the expectation that, unless paramount private duties forbid, they are to employ their time and talents in the duties of a teacher; until they assume the responsibilities of domestic life. Females will cease to feel that they are educated just to enjoy themselves in future life, and realize the obligations imposed by heaven to live to do good."¹³
Mother, teacher or missionary - all three options were open to the woman graduate, "all three being agents of moral regeneration through female influence." Thus, the girls' colleges first started in the 1820's posed no direct challenge to woman's proper sphere. Rather, they attempted to glorify this sphere by stressing the importance of the role and the need to educate those who were to assume it. While boys were taught the importance of independence and ambition, "Girls were told to limit their aspiration to marriage and motherhood and to cultivate the modesty and malleability appropriate to a dependent role."  

By the 1870s there was increasing dissatisfaction with the Beecher/ Willard school of domestication. The 'New Woman' was no longer satisfied with the limited domestic education received by her mother, and she turned to coeducation in an attempt to gain a balance of knowledge equal to that of men's. Women were no longer seeking education for the sole purpose of becoming a well-educated wife, instead many women now viewed education as "an opportunity for intellectual self - fulfilment and for an autonomous role outside the patriarchal family." Oberlin was one of the first colleges to open its doors to both men and women and its reasons for doing so demonstrate that women were not liberated by the coeducation experience. Emphasis was placed on what coeducation could do for the minds of men rather than women. The administration believed that women, with their moral purity and natural humanity, would have a "civilizing and humanizing effect on the male student." The education of these 'female appendages' (as they were referred to) appeared to be a side issue. In addition to providing moral guardianship, the women students of Oberlin fulfilled the need for a domestic workforce.  

"Every day of the week women students cooked, served meals and waited
on tables, thus duplicating in the college environment the conventional role of the female.\textsuperscript{17}

The need for women's education to become competitive rather than compensatory led to the establishment of a 'new breed' of women's colleges in the 1880's. One of the most notable of these was Bryn Mawr College. Under the leadership of M. Carey Thomas, Bryn Mawr established a rigorous curriculum of languages, philosophy, science and other traditional 'masculine' subjects. All forms of domestic training were abandoned and Thomas aimed to establish an institution "... which would equip women for service in the world and which would endow them with the knowledge, skills and prestige previously reserved for men."\textsuperscript{18} The move to educate women for roles other than that of domesticity caused widespread alarm and medical 'expertise' was employed to demonstrate that domestic training was the only suitable type of education for women. College education for women must be stopped, warned scientists and medical experts, or drastic affects would occur. These affects would be threefold. Firstly, women's health would be seriously damaged. Her frail, delicate body, unsuitable for the strains of study would show drastic signs of adverse reaction: "Her breasts might shrivel, her menses become irregular or cease altogether. Sterility could ensue, facial hair might develop."\textsuperscript{19} These physiological effects would be accompanied by psychological disorders: "Her overstimulated brain would become morbidly introspective. Neurasthenia, hysteria, and insanity would follow."\textsuperscript{20} And, perhaps most tragically, she would speak her mind, thus destroying the veil of feminine mystery.\textsuperscript{21} Secondly, women's education could drastically reduce the chances of race survival, for studying was affecting menstruation and damaging reproductive organs. Woman's overstimulated brain was drawing too much blood from the
reproductive organs, leaving them shrivelled and sterile.\textsuperscript{22} Thirdly, women's sterility would halt the continued progress of the species and Dr Clarke predicted that if women insisted on continuing with education the next generation of men would have to import wives to ensure the progression of the race. Such scientific reasonings became widespread and accepted, with universities, such as the University of Wisconsin, using them to justify their decision not to admit women:

"Education is greatly desired . . . but it is better that the future matrons of the state should be without a university training than that it should be produced at the fearful expense of ruined health, better that the future mothers of the state should be robust, hearty, healthy women than that, by over study, they entail upon their descendants the germs of disease."\textsuperscript{23}

By the turn of the century, the emphasis on the importance of the child and the necessity for scientific management in all matters meant a return to domestic economics in girls' school. This move towards domestics was welcomed by those advocating separate spheres in education. At the college level women were taught how to be efficient wives and mothers and an injection of twentieth-century science gave the subject a tone of importance. In 1905 there were 213 home economic students at college level, by 1916 this number had leapt to 17,778. America's swing back to domestic education lasted several decades, almost destroying the goal of equal education that individuals, such as Thomas, had strived for. It was also to have an effect in New Zealand where proponents of domestic education eagerly spoke of America's bold move to replace education back in its separate sphere.

\* \* \*
Patricia Grimshaw has stated that in New Zealand "the education of girls was the primary achievement of the nineteenth century feminist impulse" and the comparatively early inclusion of women in New Zealand universities would appear at first to justify such a claim. When proposals were first made for the establishment of a university at Otago in 1871, Miss Learmonth Dalrymple, a strong advocate of education for girls at all levels, organized a petition to allow the inclusion of women. Some feared that women would turn the university into a 'ladies' sewing circle' while others quoted overseas experts' warnings of the dire consequences of equal education. The university council dismissed such arguments and women were accepted into the newly founded institutions. The numbers of women entering university were initially low and women were subjected to hostility from male students who referred to them as 'blue stockings' and 'hyaenas in petticoats'. However, the number of women attending university increased and the removal of their novelty status led to a decrease in hostility. In 1877 Kate Milligan Edgar became the first women in New Zealand to hold a university degree and, by 1893, women made up over half the number of university students in New Zealand. Such figures, while undeniably impressive can be misleading. Women may have constituted half the number of university students but the student population represented only a small minority of privileged students. The Society for Research on Women recently interviewed older women living in Wellington and found that only a minority of the women had gained access to higher education. As Daphne (aged 74) recalled: "In those days it was taken for granted that girls would leave school at the end of Standard VI and stay home till they got married and help in the house. It was only rarely there were exceptions." In addition to this, although women were given equal
access to the universities, they were often actively discouraged from doing subjects other than the arts. Marjory (aged 82) spoke of the difficulties she had in trying to complete a degree in chemistry: "I was very keen really to major in chemistry. The professor, who was pretty near retiring age, was terribly conservative and he just did not like women and he put me off and the reasons he gave were that there would be a great deal of standing in senior class and various other equally fatuous things."27 She managed to stay in the chemistry class for two years and won the chemistry prize. However, continual pressure forced her to switch to botany - a subject deemed more suitable for a lady.

Those women who were accepted to the universities had suffered numerous disadvantages at the primary and secondary school level. In 1877 girls made up only 38 per cent of the total primary school population and it was not until 1893 that all New Zealand girls received a primary education. Parents were reluctant to send their daughters to school as they believed they could receive all the necessary training for life in the home environment. Girls' attendance at primary school was lower than that of boys as they were often kept at home in order to help with domestic chores and childminding. Despite this lower attendance rate statistical evidence shows that "girls did slightly better, on average, than boys at primary school."28

While coeducation had been introduced at university level, many fought to maintain the separate spheres of education at the secondary level. Professor Macmillan Brown, while supporting equal education for girls, was a strong opponent of coeducational secondary schools. "The boys", he stated, "should be dealt with by masculine will and masculine methods, whilst at the dawn of sexual consciousness and the
turning point of character, the girl should have the woman teacher's
instinct to guide and influence her."²⁹ On the whole, secondary
education remained a strictly segregated affair. Girls' schools
received less funding and in 1912, Mary McLean, Principal of the
Girls' College, Wellington, complained that this lack of equal funding
was having a serious effect on girls education. "The deficiency lies,
in the first place, in the early neglect to provide sufficient
endowments, owing to delay in recognizing the importance to the
country of women being as well educated as men."³⁰ In addition to
this, female teachers were paid less than their male colleagues. In
1912 the average salary for a male teacher was 201 pounds compared to
123 pounds for a female teacher.³¹ Charles Dorey Hardie, Inspector
with the North Canterbury Education Board, attempted to justify the
unequal pay levels by stating: "A man usually has to look after the
interests of a good many more than himself, while a woman generally
looks to marriage as the consummation of her life's work."³² By the
late nineteenth century it was still slightly unusual for girls to
attend secondary school. In her autobiography, a former mistress of
Timaru Girls' High School recalled: "Few girls went onto the high
school in 1892 . . . my primary school classmates . . . thought it a
very snobbish and unnecessary step to take, and even hinted that the
money to be paid in fees might well be spent more profitably."³³ Ruth
Fry argues in her recent study that those willing to allow their
daughters to proceed to secondary school only did so in order that
they may receive specialized training in moral guardianship and
domestic education. In keeping with this idea, girls were taught only
those subjects deemed necessary to turn them into 'young ladies'.
English was considered to be of special importance as it trained girls
for their "special task of moral influence" and "much of the
literature selected (or expurgated) was intended to have an uplifting quality.\textsuperscript{34} History was also considered to be genteel enough in nature to be taught to girls. In the later half of the nineteenth century, British history dominated the New Zealand school curriculum and textbooks made only fleeting references to the occasional historical female figure. These comments were often derogatory in tone, as seen in the following description of Queen Anne: "She herself was almost the most stupidest of women in her dominion but she was a good and kindly soul, devoted to the Church of England and generally had the sense to leave affairs of state to her ministers."\textsuperscript{35} By the twentieth century, books on New Zealand history began to appear in schools but there was still a marked absence to any references on women's role in history. The Citizen Reader (1907), in discussing the ballot system stated that both boys and girls could look forward to voting. However, no references were made on how women fought for and won the vote and all illustrations and examples given were of men voting.\textsuperscript{36} Mathematics was considered to be only suitable for the masculine mind and was rarely taught in girls' secondary schools. Statements by overseas experts on the dire consequences of teaching girls 'unsuitable' subjects received publicity in New Zealand and parents, "were easy prey to the fear that too much mental exertion on mathematics would be mentally and physically debilitating and possibly de-sexing."\textsuperscript{37} The 'science' taught in girls' schools differed dramatically from that taught to boys. Girls' scientific knowledge was restricted to what could be usefully employed in the home. Marjory (aged 82) recalls the home science that she and many others were taught as being "a very shallow hotchpotch of a very little chemistry, a very little physics, a bit of food chemistry and things like that.\textsuperscript{38}
Despite suffering under such disadvantages, girls continued to achieve results equal to those of boys and an increasing number of girls chose to further their education. This rise in the number of women seeking higher education coupled with women's increasing presence in the workforce led many to fear that the line between the separate spheres was becoming dangerously blurred. Evidence of such fears can be found in the transcripts of the 1912 Commission on Education. The Commission travelled the country listening to the submissions by various experts on the problems facing the education system. George George, Director of Technical and Manual training in the Auckland District warned that the increasing 'equal' education being offered to girls was one of the fundamental dangers facing the country: "... we have largely lost sight of the fact that the natural function of every girl is to become a wife and a mother. Her education should be largely along the lines that are calculated to bring that about in the most efficient ways ... We want to alter our curriculum, taking away many of the subjects that are taught to girls, and introducing much more domestic work". 39 Medical 'experts' offered evidence to illustrate the dangers involved in offering girls equal education. Dr Truby King, a mental health specialist informed the commission that equal education placed a threat to the very survival of the race. Drawing heavily on works by American experts, King asserted that 'high-pressure' education of girls during puberty often led to 'menstrual derangements', sterility and nervous disorders. Quoting Professor Ashton of Philadelphia, King pronounced: "If woman is to be thus stunted and deformed to meet the ambitious demands of the day, if her health is to be sacrificed upon the altar of education, the time may come when, to renew the worn-out stock of this Republic, it will be needful for our own young men to make
matrimonial incursions into lands where educational theories are unknown.⁴⁰ King believed that the only solution was to educate women "primarily and chiefly for womanhood" and advocated an American scheme whereby a nurse or a doctor brought a young child into the classroom of girls. This would relieve the girls of their 'mental drudgery' and at the same time awaken their 'maternal instincts'. Using similar arguments as Doctors in the United States, King warned of the dangers that would ensure if higher education for girls continued: "the frame and bodily organs are liable to be more or less starved, and the development of the higher and more specially womanly qualities are found to suffer still more - qualities which are the glory of motherhood - qualities which stand highest in the whole range of human faculty and sentiment - the "eternal womanly" of Goethe - the higher affections, tenderness, helpfulness, devotion to the family, home and friends: in a word unselfishness and altruism in their most natural and beneficent practical expression."⁴¹ In 1917 the New Zealand Board of Education, in an effort to re-emphasize woman's 'natural' role of homemaker, ordered compulsory domestic training of girls in secondary schools. Domestic training facilities were introduced in an increasing number of schools. Some schools even followed the example first used by Beecher at Hartford by having a 'practice house' attached to the domestic science department.⁴² This heavy emphasis on domestic education was to effect girls' career options drastically, for, as Margaret Tennant has explained, the introduction of compulsory domestic science, "meant not only an education for home-life and maternity, but, more subtly, an education in mathematical, scientific and technical ineptitude, and a lasting constraint on girls' choice of future lifestyles."⁴³ The admission of women to the newly-founded universities can be seen as a victory for the nineteenth-century
feminists. However, closer examination reveals the victory to have been somewhat limited. The strictly segregated education for boys and girls at secondary level meant that university and career options for women remained restricted to the arts.

* * * *

PROFESSIONS

An increase in the number of women receiving a higher education inevitably led to a rise in the number of middle-class women entering the workforce. The mainly domestic training received by women in the early colleges meant a limited number of career options were open to them. By the 1870's a new type of woman graduate was beginning to emerge. She had received a training equal to that of the college male, thus widening the range of her career choices. Despite these changes women continued to build, "their idea of a proper professional role for women around the systematic development of what they regarded as a biologically determined nurturing female temperament."44

For the early women graduates in both the United States and New Zealand, teaching was seen as the most suitable of professions, because it was here that women could extend their natural talents for childcare and moral instruction. Their innate virtues of gentleness and patience were considered invaluable for the formulation of a child's character.45 School boards welcomed the employment of women as teachers for they were not only morally virtuous but also economically viable. In 1850 Catharine Beecher justified the employment of women as teachers by emphasizing their economic attractiveness:

"To make education universal it must be at a moderate expense, and women can afford to teach for one-half or even
less, the salary which men ask, because the female teacher only has to sustain herself; she does not look forward to the duty of supporting a family, should she marry, nor has she the ambitions to amass a fortune.  

In 1888 90 per cent of the United States teachers were female, however, top administration positions continued to be held by men. A similar situation existed in New Zealand and in 1920 only four per cent of secondary school principals were women. Women were considered unsuitable candidates for authority as administrative skills were thought to be solely a male domain.

Nursing was another profession that was considered 'acceptable' for women as it, "allowed them to take care for others, work hard, and to take orders." While Florence Nightengale's efforts may have helped improve the standard of nursing hygiene it did little to improve the conditions for those employed in the profession. The belief that women would be prepared to sacrifice their own needs for the sake of others hindered efforts to gain better training, pay and conditions for the nurses. The New Zealand nurse, Grace Neill, was responsible for much of the lobbying that eventually led to the passing of the Nurses Registration Act in 1901 -making New Zealand the first country in the world to enact such legislation. American nurses had to wait for another twenty years before they gained the same training and conditions won by New Zealand nurses. The next eight years saw advances in the field of New Zealand nursing with the registration of midwives in 1904, the publication of the Nursing Journal in 1908 and the establishment of the nursing association a year later. In 1905 an attempt to establish a diploma in nursing failed and it was not until 1973 that the idea of higher education for nurses was accepted.

The domination of women in the fields of nursing and teaching led to the belief that these jobs required a "feminine" caring nature
plus an acceptable level of general knowledge, and by the 1880's women had not only been accepted into these professions, they were now rapidly being considered as the only persons suitable for the job.

The new generation of women graduates emerging in the 1870's no longer accepted nursing and teaching as the only suitable careers. Their education enabled them to specialize further and they began to enter the male-dominated professions. Many perceived this to be a danger to society, particularly as so few of the first generation women graduates married. Women were no longer merely widening their sphere, they were now threatening to abandon it altogether. Pseudo-scientific and medical arguments were employed in an effort to demonstrate that women were biologically inept for the more 'demanding' professions in contrast to teaching and nursing. The American psychologist, G. Stanley Hall, stated that man tends, "by nature to expertise" and women "were less prone to specialization." 49

Opposition to women entering the medical profession was particularly strong for at least two reasons. Firstly, concern was expressed for the mental and physical health of any woman wishing to expose herself to the 'horrors' of medical training and enter a profession that was unsuitable to the refined and modest nature of women. An example of such 'concern' can be found in the Harvard Medical School students reaction to the acceptance of Harriot Hunt's application for medical school. Writing as a unanimous body, the male medical students informed the administrative board of their objections:

"Resolved, That we object to having the company of any female forced upon us, who is disposed to unsex herself and to sacrifice her modesty, by appearing with men in the medical lecture room.
Resolved, That we are not opposed to allowing women her rights, but do protest against her appearing in places where her presence is calculated to destroy our respect for the modesty and delicacy of her sex." 50
Secondly and perhaps most importantly, the male medical profession objected to female physicians as they feared the threat of competition. By the mid-nineteenth century the demand for women medical practitioners was becoming so apparent that even women with traditional views on true womanhood had begun to advocate the training of female practitioners. Arguments for such a need began to appear in the most 'respectable' of women's magazines and books. For example, Godsey's Lady Book advocated women doctors for the following reasons:

"Female physicians will produce an era in the history of women . . . . We would in all defence, suggest that, first of all, there will be candour in the patient to the female physician, which could not be expected when a sense of native delicacy and modesty existed to the extent of preferring to suffer rather than divulge the symptoms." 51

Elizabeth Blackwell was one of the first woman doctors in America and her attraction to the profession was moral rather than medical. Blackwell and the newly qualified women doctors that were to follow her were hostile to the male medical professions treatment of women patients. The female patient was often submitted to such treatments as "manual investigation," "leeching," "injections," and "cauterization". 52 Some male medical practitioners also used the method of 'mental psychology' which involved isolating their female patient in a darkened room and speaking to her in a loud and dominating manner until she showed signs of submission. Cures, argued women practitioners, were often worse than disease. In 1900 there were approximately 5,000 trained women doctors in the United States, by 1909 this number had increased to 7,399. Male medical physicians either tried to ignore the presence of their female colleagues (with the American Medical Association refusing to admit women physicians until 1915) or malign their professional record by creating myths, such as women could not perform surgery while menstruating. 53
Women pioneers in the New Zealand medical field experienced a similar pattern of problems. The first woman to enter the Otago medical school in 1884 had to leave due to a 'cool reception' and Emily Stiedeberg, the first woman medical graduate in New Zealand did not enter until 1891. On hearing of Stiedeberg's wish to enter medical school, one doctor exclaimed: "Why should a woman unsex herself by giving way to a morbid craving, which by its very popularity can only be likened to an epidemic of insanity?" Stiedeberg successfully completed her medical training despite suffering under such handicaps as having human flesh thrown at her during dissection class and a ban on attendance of anatomy classes. Doris Gordon's autobiography, Backblocks Baby Doctor, illustrates how prejudice amongst the medical profession towards women was still strong in the early twentieth century:

Our group of five women students had appeared at the college just as the authorities thought the craze for women studying medicine had gone. Five years earlier the last of the women pioneers had completed their degrees - those ten New Zealand women who had paved the way for us in what had been a man's world. Not one of them was left to give us advice or help. What was worse in the eyes of the male students, three of us - three women - had topped the histology exam. A fragment of male conversation had been overheard in the corridors; "Just wait till we get those women students in the dissecting room..."

Gordon, like many of the early women medical practitioners was attracted to the profession for moral rather than medical reasons. Gordon was largely responsible for modernizing the primitive conditions of New Zealand's maternity care, yet in her autobiography she tends to downplay her impressive medical career and concentrate on her 'true profession' - motherhood. After witnessing a painful childbirth Gordon wrote:

"Within me a new voice was saying, "Chase all the careers you like, tell yourself you are best serving God by remaining single, but you'll die a disappointed woman unless you marry"
and go down this awful, painful, glorious road of suffering that new life may come from you." 56

The new graduates continued to believe in their seemingly biological necessity to nurture, whether it be through their career or ultimately motherhood.

* * * * *

By the 1880s the requests of the 'True Woman' had been replaced by the demands of the 'New Woman'. Limited domestic training was no longer acceptable and women sought to gain access to equal education. By confining their careers to the fields of teaching and nursing, the 'True Woman' had complied with ideology. The 'New Woman' was now placing direct challenges to the ideology by demanding equal access to the traditionally male dominated professions.

Women's changing perceptions on their role in society inevitably led to a parallel development in the demands for suffrage. From the 1860s to 1890s American women (especially those in the Western States) asked that they may be given the vote in order that they may spread their moral influence into wider society. New Zealand women also played heavily on their role of 'moral guardians' in order that they may gain the vote. By the mid 1890s such tactics were abandoned by many American suffragists. The suffragists became strident in their demand for the vote which was no longer seen as a gift but rather a logical step in their natural right to equality. Hence New Zealand suffragists proved to be of little help to the American suffragists, for their ideas and methods were now considered 'outdated' by the 'New Woman'. My views on the changing attitudes of the suffrage movement are in direct contradiction to those of the historian Aileen Kraditor, however, I believe my position is justified. In her book, *Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement, 1890 - 1920* Kraditor divides the
arguments used by American suffragists into two different types. The first she labels as "justice" whereby women demanded the vote as a natural right for all humans. The second she refers to as "expediency" by which suffrage was advocated on the grounds that it would create better wives and mothers and at the same time benefit society. While this thesis agrees with Kraditor's division of ideas, there is some disagreement over the period in which the author states they occur. Kraditor states that the "justice" argument was used by the suffragists from 1840 - 1890 and uses statements from Anthony and Stanton to justify her point. She then states that the "expediency" argument became popular after the 1890s due to the work of Jane Addams. Kraditor's decision to concentrate on a few individuals in order to illustrate her argument leads to some fundamental flaws. Anthony and Stanton did, as Kraditor states, use the "justice" argument to justify their call for the vote. However, both Stanton and Anthony were considered to be radical in their views and while they may have been advocating the principle of justice the majority of the suffrage movement chose to believe in the idea of expediency. Indeed it was the theory of expediency, not justice that was largely responsible for ensuring the successful enactment of suffrage in the western states from 1869 to the mid 1890s. Kraditor then points to arguments issued by Jane Addams and other women progressive reformers to argue that the idea of expediency arose in the late 1890s. While Addams arguments of "enlarged housekeeping" may have appealed to the older generation of suffragists and helped maintain the support of the more conservative organisations such as the WCTU, the "new woman" had begun to reject such ideals. The Congressional Union party led by Alice Paul is perhaps a more apt representation of the views held by the new generation of suffragists. The Congressional Union used the
principles of democracy and justice in their fight for the vote and their militant and political activities held greater appeal to the generation of "new women" who had now begun to dominate the suffrage ranks.
FOOTNOTES


2. Ibid.


5. Ibid., p. 156.


13. Ibid., p. 68.


20. Ibid., p. 258.


25. Ibid, p. 3.


27. Ibid, p. 32.


30. Appendices to the Journals, Paper E12 Session II 1912. p. 598.


33. Margaret Tennant, "Natural Directions: The New Zealand Movement for Sexual Differentiation in Education During the Early Twentieth Century" New Zealand Journal for Educational Studies, 12, No. 2, (1977), 143.

34. Fry, Its Different For Daughters, p. 38.

35. Ibid, p. 16.

36. Ibid, p. 16.

37. Ibid, p. 47.


39. Appendices to the Journals, p. 164.

41. Ibid.

42. Fry, Its Different For Daughters, p. 116.

43. Tennant, "Natural Directions", p. 152.


46. Ibid., p. 129.


48. Ibid., p. 121-122.

49. Woloch, Woman and the American Experience, p. 283.

50. Ibid., p. 283.

51. Ehrenreich and English, For Her Own Good, p. 55-56.


53. Quoted in The Woman's Journal Boston, June 12, 1904, p. 94. Menstruating women were considered 'unclean' by Doctors and society alike. Menstruation was labelled an illness, during which women were expected to be confined to the home. Dr J H Kellog recommended the following treatment: "When the menstrual period makes its appearance or a day or two before, if the symptoms are such to make its approach apparent, the girl should be relieved of taxing duties of every description, and should be allowed to yield herself to the feeling of malaise which usually comes over her here in this period, lounging on the sofa or using her time as she pleases provided it is not in the perusal of sensational stories or in too great devotion to fancy work, or any other occupation in which an unhealthful or strained position has to be assumed." J H Kellog, Ladies Guide in Health and Disease: Girlhood, Maidenhood, Wifehood, Motherhood (California: Pacific Publishing House, 1888), p. 182.

54. Grimshaw, Women's Suffrage in New Zealand, p. 5.


56. Ibid., p. 47.

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CHAPTER THREE

THE ORIGINS OF THE WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT
IN NEW ZEALAND AND THE UNITED STATES

"Wanted, Women Pure and Holy"

In the United States, the temperance and suffrage causes were, for a period, intertwined, while in New Zealand the temperance and suffrage organizations were inseparably linked. In both New Zealand and the United States women discovered that their efforts to contribute to the temperance organizations were severely restricted. Women became increasingly aware of their political disabilities within the temperance organizations and society as a whole. This eventually caused them to form separate organizations in an effort to gain greater control and authority.

The history of the Women's Christian Temperance Movement traditionally begins with the Ohio women's crusades in 1873 and 1874.¹ A group of middle class women in Hillsboro, Ohio left their homes and invaded liquor retail outlets and public bars. Their actions forced many in the liquor industry to temporarily close their business and the success of the experiment lead to the formation of the WCTU. The actions appeared drastic and sudden and one is tempted to look at immediate causes in order to discover the reasons for the crusades. Dannenbaum argues, however, that the crusades did not signal the start of the movement but, rather, were the climax to a long series of events dating back to the 1840s. The underlying factor prompting women to change their role in the temperance movement was the movement's shift in emphasis from moral suasion to political action.
This shift left temperance women feeling alienated and redundant. Joseph Gusfield divides the temperance movement's policies into two main areas. From the 1820s to the 1840s, temperance members worked on the basis of 'assimilative reform.' Gusfield refers to this as a type of "progressivist Christianity" in which the drinker was identified as a 'poor', 'urban' and 'downtrodden' figure who was willing to accept the help of the reformers.² Combining moral instruction with charitable support, the reformers taught that abstinence would lead to respectability and the chance to gain middle class status. The influx of German and Irish immigrants in the 1840s, however, forced a change of tactics. The reformers 'new subjects' rejected the goal of abstinence and thereby, as Gusfield argues, rejected the reformers social dominance. Gusfield uses the "status anxiety" school of thought when he argues that the reformers, fearing a loss of both their cultural dominance and social status turned to the coercive method of law and force in order to ensure their position in society.³

This switch in tactics greatly affected the women in the temperance movement. At the time of its formation women were actively encouraged to join the cause:

At the 1833 Ohio State Temperance Convention the delegates (all male) passed a resolution stating "That it is a matter of importance to the cause of temperance that the united influence and energies of females should be enlisted actively in its support: Resolved, therefore that a committee of five be appointed to prepare an address to the ladies of this State on that subject".⁴

In their given role as moral guardians, women were seen to be effective agents in the process of moral suasion. Certainly within the home, their moral influence was supposed to help ensure a sober environment. During the 1830s and 1840s women attended the temperance meetings but did not address the public or participate in temperance marches.
By the late 1840s the need for political rather than moral action was becoming increasingly evident. The successful enactment of prohibition legislation in Maine in 1851 signalled the start of full-scale political activity by the temperance movement. This transition from the private to the public sphere left the women of the movement feeling that they had no useful role. While their efforts towards moral suasion had been regarded as essential, they were not welcome in the political fight for temperance as this task was viewed as 'unsuitable' for women. When Susan B. Anthony attempted to contribute ideas at a temperance conference she was informed, "that the sisters were there not to speak but to listen and learn." Anthony later commented, "Oh I am sick and tired of the senseless, hopeless work that man puts out for woman to do." It was this type of blatant discrimination that forced Anthony and other temperance women to examine not only their stance in the temperance movement but in society as a whole, as abolitionist women had to do so a few years earlier. Confinement to the private sphere was viewed as a retrograde step thus temperance women firmly stepped out into the public sphere. The first major move into the "public" world occurred between 1853 and 1859 and proved to be both spectacular and successful.

Women in numerous communities banded together, marched into liquor outlets and physically destroyed all stocks. These vigilante tactics were supported by the majority of the community for, although the actions were violent and illegal, the women were excused on the grounds that they were acting out of protective maternal instincts. The effects of this militant action were twofold. Firstly, women discovered that their actions in the public sphere were not only acceptable but effective as well. Secondly, women gained first-hand experience in organising public demonstrations. The success of their
experiment increased their self-confidence. Despite this new-found expertise, women were still being prevented from speaking publicly at temperance meetings or voting on policy decisions. These continual barriers served only to increase temperance women's awareness of their political disabilities and they began to adopt "a political rather than moral definition" of their own status. However, further plans for separate and militant demonstrations were laid aside with the outbreak of the Civil War. After the war the saloon invasions were revived but physical action was replaced with prayer. The women would band together, enter the saloon, fall to their knees and commence praying for the liquor trade to halt. This technique, which had first been used by the New York Moral Reform Society, effectively combined psychological, social and economic pressure, was successful and demonstrated women's increasing skill in dealing with the public.

The women of Ohio adopted the praying method after hearing the temperance crusader Dio Lewis speak of its effectiveness. Hence, the Ohio crusades can not be seen as the beginning of women's active involvement in the temperance movement but alternatively as the climax to several decades of increasing militancy. This militancy had been prompted by the male temperance members refusal to accept women in the movement as their equal partners. Such discrimination led to women adopting separate action and becoming increasingly aware of their inequality not only within the reform movement but in society as a whole.

While the Ohio crusades were the result of mounting action, immediate events may have helped spark the movement. Dannenbaum suggest that one of these events may have been the introduction of the Permissive Bill in New Zealand in 1871. The link is an interesting one for the temperance movement in New Zealand and the United States
followed similar historical development and, likewise, New Zealand women's increasing militancy in the temperance movement parallels that of women in the United States. The first temperance society in New Zealand was formed in 1836 and, over the next three decades, numerous small temperance lodges and societies were formed throughout the country. Cocker and Murray, in their history of the prohibition movement mentioned only two women among the list of prohibition pioneers: Mrs William White and Mrs Atkinson. Mrs White's proposal for the establishment of a teetotal society in 1842 was recorded while references to Mrs Atkinson were confined to her watching the movement with the keenest interest and delightfully entertaining the movement's leaders. Hence women's actions in the early movements were it would appear, confined to interest rather than action. On the other hand, it could be that those who recorded the movements activities did not regard women as being important.

During the 1870s larger temperance organizations were established in New Zealand. These societies were eager to have women join their ranks and often used emotive language to appeal to women for their support:

"Wanted, women pure and holy,
Like the heroines of old,
Who will gather in the outcasts
As they wander from the fold
To the sin-polluted alleys,
Where their erring sisters hide;
They may bring the sunshine winning
Triumphs oft denied to men."  

In 1876 The New Zealand Liberator stated, "that there is another sphere for which women are more highly fitted than men, in which honour would rebound to themselves, and incalculable benefit for those whom they might labour. We refer to the great work of temperance reform." All appeals were made on the grounds of women's effectiveness in the field of moral suasion. Paul McKimmey contends
in his 1968 study that the women in the temperance societies were
given opportunities equal to those of their male counterparts. They
were "allowed to vote in lodge and society elections, to stand for
committees and to hold important offices. They also gave addresses
and chaired meetings." However, statistical evidence provided by
Anthony Grigg goes some way towards countering this claim. In a
sample of 844 committee members of local and national prohibition
organisations, Grigg discovered that only 144 (17.06%) were women.16
The WCTU was included in Grigg's survey and its numbers would have
contributed significantly to the overall total. While temperance
societies may have made "allowances" for equality, in reality women
were largely denied positions of importance.

In August 1884 Mrs C.M.Brown formed a temperance society for
women in Invercargill. She was said to have been "inspired by the
women of America".17 This source of inspiration may have been equally
matched by New Zealand women's growing dissatisfaction with their
position in the main temperance organisations. Six months later Mrs
Mary Clement Leavitt from the American WCTU visited New Zealand. Her
call for the establishment of a WCTU in New Zealand was quickly
enacted upon and provides further evidence of New Zealand women's
eagerness to play a larger and more significant role in the temperance
fight. In the same year, Mr Richard T Booth, American founder of the
Blue Ribbon Army, visited New Zealand and according to Cocker and
Murray, he increased not only the popularity of temperance, but also
the method of political legislation rather than moral suasion.18 In
1886 the New Zealand Alliance was formed and acted as the governing
body to all temperance organizations in New Zealand. In its first
meeting the Alliance established its objectives as follows:

The abolition and prohibition of liquor traffic in New
Zealand by the direct vote of the people.
To obtain from parliament such legislation as will give to the people absolute power over the liquor traffic. To secure the return to parliament of such candidates, irrespective of party, as will support these objects. To promote all these objects by public meetings, lectures, the circulation of literature, and the organization of all persons favourable to such objects.  

Clearly all previous forms of moral suasion had been abandoned. The WCTU were members of the Alliance but they were expected to stay within the boundaries of their conventional female role. The following quote from Cocker and Murray's, *History of the Temperance Society* neatly sums up women's perceived role in the Alliance:

> Despite their other activities women were still to be found at their old post the kitchen, and we find that the annual picnic tea at which two hundred people sat down was provided by the WCTU. All along the union has assisted its big brother the Alliance by providing teas at the local and general meetings, suppers at socials as well as lunches at Area Councils.  

Such attitudes served only to increase the WCTU's feminist perspective and, shortly after the formation of the Alliance, a women's franchise department was added to the WCTU.

Male temperance workers' refusal to allow women into the political areas of their work helped temperance women recognise their lack of political power in society as a whole. In an effort to gain control over their own action, temperance women established their own organization. The temperance men's failure to recognise the professional skill and success of these organizations meant an increase in women's determination to gain the vote and work towards full equality for women.
FOOTNOTES


2. Ibid., p. 6.

3. Ibid., p. 7.


8. Ibid., p. 241.

9. Ibid., p. 245.

10. Ibid., p. 235.


12. Ibid.


15. Ibid., p. 137.


19. Ibid., p. 55.
20. Ibid., p. 179.
CHAPTER FOUR
'CIVILIZING AGENTS':
WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE IN WYOMING AND NEW ZEALAND

In 1869 Wyoming was the first territory in the world to gain women's suffrage and in 1893 New Zealand became the first colony in the world with women's suffrage. These two historically significant events have, until recently, been largely neglected by historians. Those historians who did cover the history of women's suffrage in Wyoming and New Zealand concentrated mainly on politicians efforts to impose or oppose this 'unusual' step. The opinions and role of women in the debate was ignored. One of the reasons for this may have been due to women's relative 'invisibility'. The women of Wyoming did not publicly agitate for the right to vote, and while the women of New Zealand actively fought for the vote, it was on a much smaller scale compared to suffragists activities in Britain and the eastern states of America. Historians have interpreted this as evidence that women were not interested in gaining the vote. However, recent work by historians such as Eleanor Flexner, Virginia Scharff and Raewyn Dalziel has shown that the women of Wyoming and New Zealand wanted, and were granted the vote on the understanding that it was necessary in order to establish a more ordered and moral society. In keeping with this heavy emphasis on the role of 'true womanhood', the women confined their efforts for the vote to the private rather than the public sphere.
WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE IN WYOMING

In 1869 the territory of Wyoming was the first place in the world to introduce women's suffrage. Despite the historical importance of this event there was little contemporary writing on the subject. Subsequent historical analysis as to the complex reasons for Wyoming granting the vote have remained relatively sparse. The absence of public political agitation by the women of Wyoming has meant that historians, such as Grimes and Larson have largely dismissed the idea of women's contribution to the vote. However, Eleanor Flexner and Virginia Scharff have argued that women effectively utilized their role in the private sphere to assure their entrance into the public sphere.

The majority of writing on women's suffrage in Wyoming comes from the eminent Wyoming historian T.A. Larson. Larson argues that Wyoming introduced women's suffrage for three main reasons. Firstly, the territory was desperate to seek publicity which would attract settlers. 1 Wyoming territory covers a vast area but its population in 1869 numbered only 8014. A large majority of this population were often transient and the community leaders were eager to attract a stable population in order to establish a firm economic basis. By introducing women's suffrage, Wyoming gained large amounts of free advertising. In 1870, the Cheyenne Leader claimed that the women's suffrage legislation was "nothing more or less than a shrewd advertising dodge. A cunning device to obtain for Wyoming a widespread notoriety." 2 Secondly, Larson states that according to Edward M Lee, Secretary of the Territory in 1869, women's suffrage was the result of a joke. In 1870 Lee wrote:

Once, during the session, amid great hilarity, and after the presentation of various funny amendments, and in the full
expectation of a gubernational veto, an act was passed
Enfranchising the Women of Wyoming. The bill, however, was
approved, became law, and the youngest territory placed in
the van of progress . . . How strange that the muddy pool
of politics . . . should have originated in a joke . . .
All honor to them, say we, to Wyomings first legislature.3

The passing of the legislation may also have been an attempt at
political trickery. The all-democratic council may have hoped to
embarrass the Republican governor, who it was assumed, would
automatically veto the bill. Governor Campbell, however, chose to
approve the bill.4 Finally, Larson states that in Wyoming there was
only one women over 21 for every six men over 21 and the women's
suffrage legislation could be seen as an attempt to attract women to
the territory.

Like Larson, Alan Grimes in The Puritan Ethic argues that the
women's suffrage in Wyoming was primarily introduced as an attempt to
attract women to the territory thereby establishing a more 'moral' and
'stable' community. Wyoming was considered to be the 'wildest' of the
frontier towns as seen in this historical description:

. . . it was the gambling centre of the world and its
reputation grew with its population . . . Deaths were
frequent, often violent; the cemetery was as essential as
the post office. Both came second to the saloon. . . . Many
workers became as callous and excitable as the bad folk.
"Hell must of been raked to furnish them," one early visitor
said, "and to Hell they must naturally return after
graduating here.5

Grimes argues that many believed that this state of lawlessness and
chaos could only be abolished by introducing the main instigators of
civilization - women. It was believed that the mere presence of women
would ensure an air of civility and morality. The Reverend D.J.
Pierce of Laramie, Wyoming argued that the women's vote was vital to
the community: "We need to intrust our state interests to the class
most noted for true character. As a class, women are more moral and
upright in their character than men. Hence America would profit from their voting." The legislative council hoped that women, through their voting powers, would select morally sound candidates who would work towards replacing "force and brute strength" with "civility and reason". It was also hoped that this unique demonstration of political equality would attract single women from the east who would in turn become wives and act as a stabilising influence to the unruly bachelor population.

While Grimes and Larson emphasize the importance of women's moral character in obtaining the vote, little attention is given to the role women played themselves. The first historian to highlight the role of women in the Wyoming suffrage victory was Eleanor Flexner. In 1959 Flexner wrote *Century of Struggle* and became the first historian to examine in full detail the woman's rights movement. The book has now become the "classic and essential text . . . on the nineteenth century woman's rights movement." Flexner highlighted the role of women where they had previously been ignored. For example, Larson and Grimes attributed Governor Campbell's decision not to veto the Bill to the fact that he wished to offend the democratic members of the council. Flexner, however, argued that the early suffragists had a favourable effect on the Governor:

... some twenty years earlier, he (Campbell) had sat in the back rows of one of the earliest woman's rights conventions - in Salem, Ohio, where no man had been allowed to take part - and watched the amazing spectacle of women conducting such a gathering for and by themselves, and the memory had sunk deep.  

The controversy over what degree of influence the women of Wyoming had in securing the Bill centres on the role of Esther Morris. Morris apparently invited the main legislators of Wyoming to her house and spoke to them on the advantages of women's suffrage, drawing upon many of Susan B Anthony's arguments. Contemporary historians
attribute Morris as having some influence on the legislation members. Larson, however, dismisses the 'story' as a mere legend started by Morris's son and claims that the 'story' would have been promptly scouted had it not "promptly received the imprimatur of Dr Grace Raymond Hebard, militant feminist at the University of Wyoming." Larson dismisses Morris as a "mere romantic glorification" and credits Colonel Bright, who introduced the legislation as being the "leading actor in the drama." Virginia Scharff challenges Larson's dismissal of Esther Morris and uses the term 'domestic feminism' to explain how women played an influential role in gaining the vote in Wyoming. Domestic feminism refers to a subtle type of agitation by women to further their rights. Working within the home environment they use their 'womanly skills' to persuade the men of the need for greater rights. Scharff argues that Esther Morris used this type of feminism in her fight for women's suffrage. Morris was a firm adherent of 'true womanhood' and believed that open agitation by women could harm their cause. "Do not agitate" warned Morris, "The women can do nothing without the help of men. It is a rule of life that we must all work together." Larson argues that Morris had little, if any, influence in the women's suffrage legislation "since she campaigned for no public office for herself or others, wrote nothing except a few letters for publication, and made no public addresses except for brief remarks on four or five occasions." However, Morris would have realised that the legislators of Wyoming were considering giving women the vote in order to enhance their 'proper sphere' rather than free them from it. By inviting the politicians to a tea party rather than confronting them at the council, Morris demonstrated that while women wanted the vote, they were still prepared to stay within the home sphere. There is further evidence
to suggest that women may have played a behind-the-scenes role in the
suffrage legislation. While Larson suffrage legislation. While
Larson credits Colonel Bright as being the chief author of the women's
suffrage Bill, one contemporary observer believed that the idea
actually came from his wife. Ben Sheeks, a member of the House of
Representatives and a close friend of the Bright family wrote:

Mrs Bright was a very womanly suffragist and I have always
understood and still believe, that it was through her
influence that the Bill was introduced. I know I supposed
at the time that she was the author of the Bill. What
reason if any I had for thinking so I do not remember.
Possibly it was only that she seemed intellectually and in
education superior to Mr Bright.14

Sheek's statement is also backed up by Governor Hoyt (governor of the
Wyoming Territory 1878-82) who claimed that Bright had stated to his
wife:

"Betty, it is a shame that I should be a member of the
legislature and make laws for such a woman as you. You are
a great deal better than I am; you know a great deal more,
and you would make a better member of the Assembly than I,
and you know it. I have been thinking about it and made up
my mind that I will go to work and do everything in my power
to give you the ballot. Then you may work out the rest in
your own way." 15

Questions also arise as to the role eastern suffragists played
in influencing the Wyoming suffrage legislation. Grimes claims that
women's suffrage in Wyoming was the result of "chance and
circumstance" and bore "only the most tenuous relationship to the
Eastern suffrage movement."16 He neglects to mention, however, that
two well known eastern suffragists visited Wyoming in 1869. When Anna
Dickinson visited Cheyenne in September 1869 she attracted a crowd of
250 people and the local newspaper described it as "quite an event in
our city."17 Another visiting suffragist, Redelia Bates, spoke in
Wyoming just one week before the introduction of the women's suffrage
legislation. Larson's references to the suffragists' visits, do not
concentrate so much on what they said, as on the attractive appearance
of the two suffragists. Quoting one Wyoming newspaper editor's description of Susan B Anthony as "the old maid whom celibacy has dried and blasted, and mildewed until nothing is left but a half crazy virago," Larson concludes, "it was fortunate that Miss Dickinson and Miss Bates, rather than Miss Anthony, came to Wyoming to promote women's suffrage in the autumn of 1869." Both Miss Dickinson and Miss Bates were respected as intelligent and highly articulate speakers. While these women may not have directly initiated the suffrage legislation, their speeches (rather than their looks) would have been certain to have increased peoples knowledge of the issue and stimulate debate.

Wyoming granted women's suffrage for a variety of reasons, though the primary aim was to introduce women's moral influence into the public sphere. Hence, in granting the suffrage, Wyoming did not treat women as political equals but rather, hoped to emphasize their separate sphere of home and morality. Historians have traditionally confined the Wyoming women's role to that of passive observers. However, while the women of Wyoming may not have participated in the 'traditional' sense, they worked behind the scenes to ensure the success of the Bill.
WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE IN NEW ZEALAND

Historical analysis concerning the granting of women's suffrage in New Zealand has centred on two main themes: Firstly, who was responsible for the suffrage victory and secondly, why was it granted so early in comparison to the rest of the world. Opinion regarding the first question is diverse - some give full credit to the male politicians of New Zealand, others believe that the women of New Zealand, in particular the Women's Christian Temperance Movement, were largely responsible for the suffrage win. In answer to the second question, there is a general consensus that New Zealand regarded women more highly than Europe and had few qualms in granting them rights. This chapter sets out to explore these themes and will attempt to show that firstly the responsibility for the legislation cannot be placed on one sector and secondly, New Zealand women's suffrage was not awarded because women were more highly esteemed than in the old world.

The first issue to be discussed on women's suffrage in New Zealand is the question as to why colonial society was relatively receptive to the idea of women's suffrage. It would appear that both politicians and the public alike feared that society was facing an increasing threat by the male culture. Immediate steps had to be taken to ensure that respectability and morality were made the keystones of society and women were seen as the most effective agents to enact this policy. Women had always been considered morally superior to men in New Zealand. Early colonists were eager to attract women to New Zealand as they believed that they had a special role to play. A wife was considered to be as much a valuable asset as a strong horse and fertile land. Man's strength was physical, woman's moral, and both were equally essential for the development of the
country's character. Medical experts spoke of the genetically different characteristics of men and women. Writing in *The New Zealand Medical Journal*, Doctor Herbert Barraclough stated:

The masculine element is strong, brusque, determined, selfish, fighting for its own hand; the feminine element is soft, plastic, with love as an essential of life, unselfish, devoted, and capable of rising to greater heights than the masculine could ever attain, even though it has within itself the possibility of falling to greater depths.17

The sexes also inhabited different worlds. The heart of the male culture was the pub. It was here that he could seek, "physical warmth and entertainment" and the feeling of 'mateship' countered any loneliness.18 Women's reign was in the home which was referred to in sacred terms: "feminine art and grace have their abiding place here, and within its walls are mirrored the very soul of its Chatelaine."19 Those advocating women's suffrage expressed concern that male culture was beginning to dominate the country's character. Political equality would correct this imbalance and Sir John Hall pleaded with parliament to allow women to widen their protective sphere: "We cannot afford to bid women to stand aside from the work of the nation, we need all their spirit of duty, their patience, their energy, in combatting the sorrow, sin, and want that is around us."20 Other politicians advocated women's suffrage on the grounds that it would counter the vote of the rousing bachelor:

"Woman's suffrage will have the excellent effect of balancing the vote of the floating population; That the vote of women, which will practically mean the increased vote of the family man, will very largely prevent the mischievous of the vote of the floating population, who have no stake and apparently no interest in the country..."21

Grimshaw, in her article entitled, "Women and the Family in Australian History " argues that women in the colonial countries of Australia and New Zealand were considered to have an important role in the development of society. This, combined with their scarcity of
numbers meant that the women of New Zealand and Australia were able to command a higher status than their European sisters. According to Grimshaw, legislatives measures directed towards women, such as the Married Women's Property Act, the early admission of women into universities and the introduction of women's suffrage, all demonstrate this argument.

I would argue, however, that Grimshaw is at fault in assuming that the status of women was higher in New Zealand than in other countries such as Britain. A closer examination of Grimshaw's evidence reveals that New Zealand society, except in the area of women's suffrage, was not setting precedents in legislation concerning women. Rather it was merely following earlier examples set by Great Britain. By the mid to late nineteenth century there were a number of legislative moves which attempted to improve women's status in society. However, this legislation cannot be seen as 'revolutionary' as in most cases it was merely following precedents that had been set by Britain. For example, the Married Women's Property Act first introduced into New Zealand parliament in 1860 was based on British legislation of 1857 and changes made to the act in 1881 were based on advanced legislation passed in Britain in 1870. Similar patterns are shown in higher education. New Zealand women were admitted to university in 1871. Grimshaw compares this date with that of Oxford, which did not admit women until 1920 and Cambridge, which did not confer full degrees on women until 1948. The comparison is impressive and would seem to suggest that New Zealand, unlike Britain, was willing to accept women as intellectual equals with men. This misconception arises from the fact the Grimshaw is comparing New Zealand universities with the ultimate bastions of English tradition.

Many of the early immigrants coming to New Zealand hoped to escape the
traditional values that institutions such as Oxford and Cambridge epitomized. In setting up their own institutions, New Zealand chose to follow patterns set by such areas as Scotland and Manchester, particularly in the area of education. Manchester and Scotland had granted provisional entry of women to university as early as 1869. In the light of this comparison it can be argued that once again New Zealand was not setting precedents - it was merely following them.

An equally important issue is the question of who was responsible for this win. William Pember Reeves was one of the first historians to deal with the subject of women's suffrage in New Zealand. In his book, *State Experiments in Australia and New Zealand* (1902) Reeves explains how New Zealand women obtained the vote in the following terms:

So one fine morning of September 1893, the women of New Zealand woke up and found themselves enfranchised. The privilege was theirs, given freely and spontaneously in the easiest and most unexpected manner in the world by male politicians . . . . No franchise leagues had fought the fight year after year . . .

Reeves claims of political benevolence can, to some degree, be substantiated. A number of politicians had begun advocating greater rights for women, particularly in the area of education. As early as 1863 Julius Vogel addressed the need for greater education for girls, stating:

The importance of education for girls can hardly be over-estimated. True that woman's sphere of education is not so extended as that of men; that her influence is usually bounded by the family circle, or at the utmost by society in which she moves. But how all-important is that influence! It is the mistress of the family who gives the tone to manners and habits of the household - it is a women in society who may be said to reign supreme; it is the mother in the family who must lay the foundations of the principles, the tastes and the aspirations, that are to regulate the actions of the rising generation.  

Robert Stout was also in favour of higher education for girls and in 1871 he "warmly supported" the principle of university
education for women. In addition to this, William Rolleston, as minister of education, encouraged school committees to hire women teachers. These three politicians, along with William Fox, Alfred Saunders and James Wallis were the principal supporters of the early women's suffrage Bills. Their 'liberal' views towards women were strengthened with the publication of John Stuart Mill's *The Subjection of Women* in 1869. Mill's influence is directly apparent in the speeches of those first advocating women's suffrage in parliament in 1878. James Wallis, in raising the issues on women's political rights stated:

"I am rather a late convert to "women's rights". I was converted by the writings of Mr Mill, and may I say that his thoughts are my thoughts, and the conclusions at which he arrived have become my convictions."  

Some politicians indeed worked hard towards introducing women's suffrage but theirs was not a single-handed effort. William Pember Reeves was personally involved in the political debate over women's suffrage and by creating the myth that women's suffrage was a direct result of male political benevolence, Reeves may have been hoping to gain glorification for himself and the liberal government. The story given by Reeves was quickly countered in a series of articles in *The White Ribbon* called "The Outlines of the Women's Franchise Movement in New Zealand." The title of the series immediately contradicts Reeves assertion that women played no role in the suffrage victory. In 1905 the author of the articles, Sidney Lovell-Smith, republished his work in book form as he was disturbed about the "number of erroneous statements concerning the Suffrage Movement in this colony" made by men "who should have known better". Smith acknowledged the work of several individual politicians but argued that the main impetus and efforts came from the women themselves. Reeves named James Wallis and Alfred Saunders as the pioneers in the implementation for women's
suffrage in New Zealand, but Smith, while acknowledging Wallis' and Saunders' role, credited the pioneer position to Mrs Mary Muller. Using the nom de plume "Femina", so as to disguise her identity from her husband, Mrs Muller began writing articles in 1869 advocating women's suffrage. Her nephew, Charles Elliot was sympathetic to her views and published her articles in his paper, The Nelson Examiner. In a pamphlet entitled, "An Appeal to the Men of New Zealand", Femina gave her reasons as to why women should gain the vote. This document provides the first instance of America's influence in the New Zealand suffrage fight. She encouraged New Zealand to abandon the traditional caution of the mother country and follow the new and innovative approach of America: "America has many things stepped in advance of the mother country. How often she has shown us the advantages of things the English mind feared to attempt, though it does not disdain often to adopt these innovations, and, as Mr Gladstone says, "Americanize our institutions?" Why should not New Zealand also lead? "31

She believed that America's willingness to accept new ideas had greatly benefited women and the country as a whole:

... in America women are doctors, lawyers, managers of factories, schools, &c., are government clerks, and in one place judges.32

Femina promised that women would introduce a "fresher, purer spirit and higher tone into politics." "I do not think we are likely to call together a great female convention," stated Muller, "nor is it probable that a society for the promotion of female suffrage will be formed here; yet not the less earnestly do we, in all feminine gentleness, ask redress".33

Muller's article was sent to John Stuart Mill who wrote congratulating Mrs Muller for her courage and urged her to continue to
publicize the need for the vote. Muller's husband's belief in the proper sphere of women prevented her from openly agitating for the vote and the task was left to Wallis and Saunders. Mary Muller's role in the fight for women's suffrage shares remarkable similarities with that of Esther Morris of Wyoming. Both women were restrained from expressing their opinions openly as it would not appear 'womanly' and their actions for the suffrage were restricted to the private sphere. Such action meant that these women, until recently, were largely overlooked in suffrage history.

As well as failing to acknowledge Muller as the first women in New Zealand to advocate women's suffrage, Reeves also asserted that New Zealand women had displayed "not the faintest desire to become voters". Smith argued that women not only initiated the fight, but after 1887 were also its main proponents and he credited the franchise league of the Women's Christian Temperance Union as being largely responsible for the suffrage victory.

The WCTU had originated in the United States in 1873 and its mixture of Christianity and temperance provided many women with a socially acceptable form of protest. In 1885, Mrs Mary Clemment Leavitt was sent from America on a mission to establish a branch of the WCTU in New Zealand. Her talks on temperance were met with enthusiasm but her calls for women to agitate for the vote were treated with trepidation. Mary C Leavitt delivered four lectures in Christchurch, three of which were well attended and considered highly successful. The fourth lecture entitled, "Woman: her duties and responsibilities," was considered by Leavitt to be her most important, yet only a small number of women attended. The chairman of the meeting apologised for the near empty hall, explaining that the temperance campaign had been in full swing for two months and the
members were obviously tired. Mrs Leavitt took a more realistic view of the situation, replying that it was more likely that the subject of her talk had kept the audience away and she understood how some women were being misled by the rumours concerning women's suffrage. In her speech she attempted to dispel these myths and argued that it was women's moral duty to support the franchise, for their votes would "increase the moral and religious element in the government" and she pointed to Wyoming as providing a concrete example of this. Despite initial reluctance, the New Zealand union agreed to accept Mrs Leavitt's recommendation that a franchise department should be established and, in 1887, Mrs Kate Sheppard was appointed franchise superintendent for New Zealand. The idea of women's suffrage was still relatively new to New Zealand and Kate Sheppard had to utilize literature from Wyoming until the New Zealand union could print its own. Much of this literature concentrated on how successful the introduction of women's suffrage in Wyoming had been and spoke of the moral benefits to society. The WCTU was made up of a largely middle-class membership and a significant number of its members had close connections with many of the country's politicians. Miss Learmonth Dalrymple, whose claims for women's rights had included the organizing of a petition to allow the admission of women to universities, was a personal friend of the politician and later Prime Minister, John Ballance. Politicians wives who were members of the WCTU included Messrs. Dick, Begg Reynolds, Packe, Fox, Fulton, Packer, Ballance, Hall and Daldy. In addition to these, members of the Women's Franchise League included the wives of such politicians as Downie Stewart, Earnshaw, Pinkerton and Cohen. Lady Anna Stout, wife of the politician Sir Robert Stout, was the president of the Dunedin Franchise League.
The activities carried out by the WCTU were initially low key. Written material rather than public lectures was popular in the early stages of the women's suffrage campaign. Leaflets were distributed at drawing room parties and there was regular correspondence to newspaper columns and M.P.s. Petitions were also a popular form of protest. Eventually women attended public meetings and began to question M.P.'s about their stand on women's suffrage. The success of this experience coupled with the growing acceptance for women's suffrage provided women with the confidence need to speak at public meetings. Reeves' comments on these efforts were derogatory. He claimed that only a few women "mustered up courage enough to mount the platform and make fluttering, half audible little speeches. The audience greeted them with the kindly curiosity and amused suspension of the critical facilities which are bestowed on clever children nervously reciting poems at small gatherings." In reality the women speaking at these meetings were usually either members of the WCTU or university graduates and had gained wide experience in the art of public speaking. The passing of the women's suffrage Bill can be seen in part as a testament to their success.

The WCTU's contribution to the women's suffrage victory was important. However, Smith, like Reeves, was guilty of allowing personal bias to influence historical analysis. Smith's personal involvement with the temperance movement in addition to his close friendship with Kate Sheppard meant that he concentrated solely on the WCTU's role in gaining the franchise. I would suggest that the responsibility for the introduction of women's suffrage does not belong solely to either the WCTU or the politicians. Rather, from 1887 these two groups began a working partnership. By working in conjunction these two sectors were able to push the measure through
parliament.

The significantly high level of support for women's suffrage amongst New Zealand politicians meant that the WCTU's main role was that of priority rather than conversion. By 1878 political opinion concerning women's suffrage was divided into three main trends. Firstly there were those who directly opposed any suggestion of political rights for women. Secondly, some politicians, while supporting the idea of women suffrage, believed it should be granted to women ratepayers only. Finally, there were the 'radicals' who argued for full emancipation for all women.39 The WCTU confined their energies to the second and third group. Abstract ideology did not always equal practical realities. Politicians may have supported the idea of women's suffrage in open debate but when it came to the act of voting, practice often contradicted theory. The Lyttelton Times commented on this phenomena and it compared the politicians with the banker who greeted a lady with charm and grace but became "colder by degrees and beautifully icy" when specific business requests were made.

The politicians may have spoken politely in favour of the suffrage Bill, but as the paper pointed out, when it came to voting on the issue the politicians were no longer "charmed and delighted" but rather afraid that "there were difficulties."40 The WCTU exerted pressure on these politicians, urging them to be true to their professed principles.

Perhaps the best illustration of the partnership of these two groups can be seen in the working relationship between the WCTU and Sir John Hall. In 1888 Kate Sheppard approached John Hall with the request that he present the WCTU's petition to parliament:

As we understand that you are in favour of extending the franchise to women, we shall feel grateful if will kindly

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present our petition when the Bill comes before the House, and as it is certain, if passed at all, to be considerably altered or amended, we have a faint hope that the little sentence amongst the interpretation clauses which reads thus: "Persons does not include female" may be expunged, if some influential member like yourself would propose it."41

At first the choice of John Hall, Canterbury pastoralist, publican and 'conservative' politician, seems somewhat strange. The choice was, in fact, politically shrewd. Hall had been an early advocate of women's suffrage and it was under his ministry that women's suffrage had been first introduced into parliament.42 In addition to this, Hall was considered a responsible and respectable politician who carried considerable political clout. While Hall was not a temperance advocate, "his private life appeared nothing but admirable, and his long public service to New Zealand was conspicuously moderate and free from scandal."43 Many of the WCTU members considered Hall to be a 'true gentleman', with Kate Sheppard describing him as "the embodiment of Chaucer's Veray parfit gentle knight"44 The members of the WCTU were newcomers to the political arena and a full knowledge of parliamentary procedures and party politics was necessary to ensure effective lobbying. Their political apprenticeship was served under John Hall's guidance. They constantly sought his advice on a variety of matters - who were the most suitable politicians to target for lobbying, when would the next women's suffrage Bill appear, what were the chances of its success, when would be the most politically effective time to send petitions? Hall's replies were invariably swift and informative, yet by 1891 questions were being raised as to the sincerity of John Hall's support. The seeds of this doubt were sown by Alfred Saunders. In August of 1891 he wrote to Sheppard informing her that Hall was merely using the suffrage issue to further his own party's interest:

It is every day made more and more plain that he would sell
us all if he could finally defeat the Gov. policy bills and he comes round every day to urge us to do something in the way of threatening the Govt. We are hardly working with him at all. ... I think you will see that the most fatal course would be to allow ourselves to be used as a decoy in Sir John's hands.45

Saunders accusations were most likely based on political jealousy rather than fact. Like Hall, Saunders had been an early supporter of women's suffrage and he worked in close consultation with both Hall and the WCTU. By 1891 Hall was beginning to consult Saunders less and less and it was in a slightly sulking tone that Saunders complained to Sheppard:

It is not fair to treat me like that as I have always left the post of honour for him and attended to any drudgery he liked to leave for me.46

By undermining Hall's efforts Saunders may have been hoping to promote himself into the position of leadership and at the same time gain some political glory. The WCTU's doubt was temporary. In April 1893 Kate Sheppard wrote to Hall assuring him of the WCTU's continued support:

As you have worked in the interest of this reform so long and so arduously, I do not like the idea of anyone else acting for us.47

While the WCTU relied heavily on Sir John Hall's support, Hall was dependent on the WCTU. Hall's activities were confined mainly to the parliamentary sector and the more practical activities such as public meetings, debates and petitions were organized and run by the WCTU. Hall shared his position of 'leadership' with Kate Sheppard and the two were in constant contact. The strength of this partnership was such that by 1892 Kate Sheppard, when writing to Hall about the latest legislative developments, was able to refer to the women's suffrage Bill as "Our Bill"48 Indeed, Hall himself acknowledged this working partnership and in 1906 he wrote to Sheppard that any services he had done for women had "been more than repaid not only by their
kind acknowledgement, but also by the satisfactory results of the
great reform in which we worked together."49

The responsibility for the introduction of women's suffrage can
not be placed on any one group or individual. Rather it should be
viewed as a combined effort by both politicians and the WCTU alike.
This victory served to entrench women further into their 'moral
sphere' rather than heighten their general status in society.
FOOTNOTES


2. Ibid., p. 57-58.


4. The reasons for this will be discussed in a later section.


13. Under the new Woman Suffrage Act, Mrs Esther Morris was appointed as the first woman Justice of the Peace. This action could be interpreted as a reward for work done in securing the Bill.


16. Ibid. p. 53.


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21. Ibid.

22. I gratefully acknowledge Dr. Chris Connolly's contribution to this discussion.

23. William Pember Reeves, State Experiments in Australia and New Zealand vol.1 (Melbourne: Macmillian, 1902) p. 112.


26. Ibid., p. 4.

27. Ibid., p. 15.


30. Ibid.

31. Mary Muller, An Appeal to the Men of New Zealand (Nelson: J. Housnell, 1869)

32. Ibid., p. 4.

33. Ibid., p. 5.

34. Christchurch Press May 23, 1885.


36. Ibid., p. 29.

37. Ibid., p. 40.

38. Reeves, State Experiments in New Zealand and Australia p. 115.


40. The Lyttleton Times 9 August 1890, p. 4.

41. Sheppard to Hall, 5 June 1888, Hall MSS, cited in Grimshaw, p. 40.

42. Grimshaw, Women's Suffrage in New Zealand p. 15.
43. Ibid., p. 41.

44. Ibid.

45. Saunders to Sheppard, 29 August, 1891, Sheppard MSS, cited in Grimshaw, p. 68.

46. Ibid., 28 July 1892, Sheppard MSS, cited in Ibid., p. 70.

47. Sheppard to Hall, 27 April 1893, Hall Manuscript, cited in Ibid., p. 87.

48. Sheppard to Hall, 25 June 1892, Hall MSS

49. Hall to Sheppard, 8 September, 1893. Cited in Grimshaw, p. 93.
CHAPTER FIVE
"WOMANLY WOMEN:"

THE LEADERSHIP OF FRANCES WILLARD AND KATE SHEPPARD

Frances Willard and Kate Sheppard held positions of leadership in the Women's Christian Temperance Union yet both had their greatest achievements in the field of women's suffrage. As leader of both the American and World WCTU, Frances Willard was largely successful in persuading temperance women of the need for women's suffrage. Appealing to her members on the grounds of 'true womanhood', Willard argued that temperance women should join their suffrage sisters and fight for the vote in order to establish a more moral society. Once Willard had convince the WCTU of the advantages of 'equality' she was able to establish over 40 different departments within the WCTU, each of which worked towards improving women's rights in a wide range of areas. Kate Sheppard worked in the legal department of the New Zealand WCTU and was soon echoing Willard's call on the need for temperance women to fight for the vote. Both Willard and Sheppard won respect not only from WCTU members but also from politicians and the general public. In dress, manners and speech they were typical of the 'true woman'. But while their appearance may have been Victorian, their ideas were not. Willard and Sheppard advocated a wide variety of ideas, including dress reform, vegetarianism, alternative health, but above all, greater freedom and equality of women. This mixture of traditional appearance and modern ideas meant that Willard and Sheppard were successful in appealing to both the 'new' and 'true' women.
FRANCES WILLARD

The WCTU under the leadership of Frances Willard exercised considerable influence in American society and its activities covered a wide and, at times, controversial range of issues. In 1889 Frances Willard wrote her autobiography and this work has subsequently been used as a basis for a number of biographies. Although the number of works covering Frances Willard's life is relatively small, a variety of interpretations arise. In examining the works, one discovers that the authors interpretations reflect not only the changing attitudes towards women's role in society, but also the authors personal ideological perspectives.

The first work to cover Frances Willard's life and philosophies was by Willard herself: *Glimpses of Fifty Years: The Autobiography of an American Woman* which appeared in 1889. Throughout her career Willard had encountered criticism for her more 'radical' actions within the WCTU and her autobiography can be seen as an attempt to explain these actions. An introduction by Hannah Whittall Smith immediately sets out to counter any criticism of Willard. She describes Willard in almost saint-like terms and is at pains to emphasize her tolerance, stating, "she has been essentially American in this, that she is always receptive of new ideas without being frightened at their newness."¹ Such a statement serves to place any criticism of Willard in an unreasonable, if not unpatriotic, light. Willard herself chose to counter any criticism by employing a tactic that had served her usefully throughout her career - sentimentality.

Willard writes at some length on the question of suffrage, for it was her support of women's suffrage that was to draw the most criticism from within the WCTU. The temperance movement and the
suffrage organization had traditionally kept to separate paths. The
predominantly conservative membership of the WCTU considered the
suffrage actions and ideals to be 'unwomanly' and they avoided contact
with this radical group. Willard, although in favour of the vote for
women, had initially been reluctant to join the woman's suffrage
movement and opted instead to become a member of the Association for
the Advancement of American Women, an organization considered to be
more moderate and conservative in its objectives. Willard's
experience with this organization, as she recounts in her
autobiography, helped her gain confidence within herself and at the
same time eased her fears concerning the suffrage movement. She
subsequently joined the American Suffrage Association and became
associate editor of its magazine, The Woman's Journal.

When Willard joined the WCTU in 1874, her organizational skills
were warmly welcomed, her philosophies on suffrage, however, were not.
At one of the early national conferences Willard made the first of
many speeches advocating woman's suffrage, after which Mrs Allen
Butler, President of the New York Union, quickly stepped forth and
stated "I wish it clearly understood that the speaker represents
herself, and not the Women's Christian Temperance Union, for we do not
propose to trail our skirts through the mire of politics." The
suffrage question caused a split between the liberal and conservative
elements within the WCTU and in 1877 Willard was forced to resign
because of these ideological differences. A year later, she returned
to the WCTU and began to base the call for woman's suffrage not on
reason but on emotion. In her autobiography, in fact, Willard claims
that it was a flash of divine inspiration that persuaded her to
advocate woman's suffrage on the grounds of 'home protection'. She
argued that the vote would not mean that women would leave their homes
but rather widen the walls of the home so that the 'love and warmth' found there could flow into society as a whole. She placed heavy emphasis on the morality of suffrage rather than equality of men and women and with her idea of 'home protection', her arguments found favour with many of the WCTU members. However, there was still a section within the WCTU that believed all suffragists to be 'man haters' and they refused to accept the WCTU's support of suffrage. Hence, ten years later Willard was still at pains to explain her reasons for support. A section entitled "My Opinion of Men" appears to have been designed to counter the attribution of any 'unwomanly' characteristics of those associated with woman's suffrage. Willard writes: "If there is a spectacle more odious and distasteful than a man who hates women, it is a woman who hates men."3 She then proceeds to praise men and tell of the encounters she has had with them (most of which relate to their acts of chivalry while on train journeys.) Willard's treatment of Susan B Anthony provides a further example of her emphasis on 'mother love'. Rather than concentrating on Anthony's active involvement in the suffrage movement, Willard relates a story of how a man informed Anthony that with her great heart and head she should of been a mother. The 'noble pioneer' was said to have replied:

"I thank - you sir, for what I take to be the highest compliment, but sweeter even to have had the joy of caring for children of my own has it been to me to help bring about a better state of things for mothers generally, so that their unborn little ones could not be willed away from them."4

At the conclusion of her autobiography, Willard writes, "All that I claim is that in this book, from cover to cover, I believe I have been loyal to the higher claim of truth, if not to the common law of fact..."5 However, Willard often chooses to ignore either 'fact' or 'truth' and instead justifies her more controversial actions..."
in a sentimental, almost naive manner. Willard's sentimentalized account of her own life was useful in providing the woman's movement with an example of how woman, with her moral virtues and maternal instincts, longed for the vote in order to protect the home and better the world.

Anna Gordon's book, *The Beautiful Life of Frances Willard* appeared in 1898, a year after the death of Willard. Gordon, who had been a close friend of Frances Willard's as well as her personal secretary, held a laudatory view of Willard, describing her as "a prophetic genius and a spiritual sphere." The WCTU commissioned Gordon to write the book as a memorial to their leader and the style is one of florid prose, with Willard being described in such terms as, "strong, courageous, indomitable, yet a fair sweet flower..." 6 By the late nineteenth century the phenomenon of women speaking in public had become commonplace but there were still those who believed this action to be abrasive and aggressive, hence Gordon was eager to describe Willard's actions in 'womanly' terms: "She was a born organizer, which only means she was magnificently a woman, for woman is the born organizer of creation." 7

During her term of leadership Willard had introduced a 'Do Everything' policy into the WCTU. Under this policy, the organization divided itself into almost forty departments and dealt with such diverse issues as the franchise, health, child-care and trade unions. Shortly after Willard's death this policy was dropped in favour of the return to an emphasis on temperance. Accordingly, Gordon makes only a fleeting reference to Willard's work in areas other than temperance and woman's suffrage is spoken of mainly in terms of the benefits it will have in assuring the enactment of prohibition. 8

The first attempt to provide a critical analysis of Frances
Willard's work and motives appeared in 1912 with the publication of Ray Strachey's *Frances Willard: Her Life and Work*. Strachey had been educated at Bryn Mawr College and when she returned to England she became actively involved in the woman's movement, holding positions such as Secretary of the Women's Employment Federation, Honorary Parliamentary Secretary to the National Union of the Women's Suffrage Society and Editor of *Woman's Leader*. She was later to stand as an independent candidate for parliament in 1918, 1922 and 1923.\(^9\) Strachey's work was an attempt to counter "exaggerated reports of Frances Willard's life", however, her preface immediately discounts any possibility of a neutral account:

> I started to write this book as a outsider, and a critic, as one who could judge of her life unblinded by loyalty and affection. But I have not succeeded. I am not a outsider any longer, but a follower and a friend.\(^10\)

Lady Somerset's introduction sets the tone for the book. She writes that when Frances Willard entered a room people "found themselves gazing into that which they had never seen, and realising that in which they had never believed: they had come for a moment within the laws of the Kingdom of Heaven."\(^11\) Strachey's only criticism of Willard is that she was apt to be 'rash' and 'sometimes unwise' but that this was tempered by a blessed and pure heart. Strachey dismisses Willard's autobiography as 'propaganda' yet like Gordon she takes direct quotes from the autobiography in order to demonstrate Willard's thoughts and motives.

In light of Strachey's personal interests and political career, it is perhaps not surprising that the only place where her interpretation departs from others is her representation of Willard's motives for campaigning for the vote. While admitting that 'home protection' was an underlying motive in her desire for the vote, Strachey emphasizes that Willard wished for women to have the vote in
order that they may achieve equality in all areas of life. What this reveals is that, by the beginning of the twentieth century, the 'new woman' had become more acceptable in society. Her increased participation in public life meant that it was more reasonable to demand the vote on the grounds of political equality rather than on protective maternal rights. It was clearly considered 'safe' in 1912 to reveal Willard's dual motives for the vote.

The next biography of Frances Willard did not appear until 1940, with the publication of Mary Earhart's book *Frances Willard: From Prayer to Politics*. Earhart is highly critical of the earlier nostalgic and emotional treatment of Willard and accuses the WCTU of cultivating the saintly status of Willard for their own financial gain. Earhart begins to strip away the myths that surround Willard and attempts to provide a critical assessment of her. For Earhart, Willard was more of a sinner than a saint. Much of the work is taken up with the more 'sordid' side of Willard's life. Her brother's alcoholism is discussed at length and Earhart suggests that Willard's close working relationship with the Knights of Labor stemmed from her alleged affair with leader Terrence Powderly, rather than a concern for the working class. She also places heavy emphasis on the high level of internal fighting within the WCTU. Earhart's attempts to de-pedestalize Willard at times lapse into direct and somewhat malicious attacks. Earhart's motives for such a stance may have been somewhat personal. Her work originates from a PhD thesis written in the late 1930s when the percentage of women graduate students was quite low. One cannot not help but remark that over fifty years ago, there were very few doctoral theses in women's history. In trying to justify her choice of topic for a doctoral thesis, Earhart perhaps felt that she must become overtly critical of Willard. Yet, Earhart's
work was important in demonstrating that, in order for a woman to have strong leadership skills and wield a powerful influence in society, she did not have to be a unique saint but rather a determined, if at times manipulative, human being.

Despite the development in women's history in the '70's and '80's, surprisingly little attention has been paid to Willard. Historians dealing with the topic of woman's suffrage began to mention Willard's contribution and her role is portrayed in a positive light.12 Degler describes her as "one of the truly outstanding organizational leaders of the nineteenth century" and he praises her skill in introducing feminist causes into the WCTU.13 Ruth Bordin in her book, Women and Temperance. (1981) is one of the first historians in more recent years to provide an in depth and critical analysis of Willard's work. Bordin highlights the powerful influence Willard had not within the WCTU but in American society as a whole, describing her as "the most charismatic, almost messianic mobilizer of American womanhood for over two decades."14 Bordin views the main basis of Willard's work to be strategy rather than ideology and labels Willard's term of 'home protection' as "a master stroke of public relations."15 Bordin readily admits that Willard had faults and states that she could be both manipulative and dramatic. At the same time, however, Bordin attacks Earhart's negative view of Willard and argues that many of Earhart's views can be dismissed on the grounds of insubstantial evidence. In contrast to Earhart, Bordin holds both admiration and sympathy for Willard and manages to convey a balanced critical perspective of her life.

The power and influence of Frances Willard reached almost legendary proportions and biographers, in an attempt to explain their reasons for such power, have either portrayed Willard as a
self-sacrificing saint or a manipulative sinner. Early writing on Willard by Gordon and Willard herself concentrates on the sweet, nurturing nature of Willard and her desire to obtain suffrage in order to further women's moral influence. Ray Strachey made the first tentative move towards re-examining Willard's motives. The increasing respectability being given to women's public role in society and to women's suffrage allowed her to suggest that Willard was wanting not only to widen the walls of the home but also allow women to break free from this confinement. Earhart attacked the sentimentalized and simplistic accounts of Frances Willard's life by exposing what she viewed to be the 'sordid' side of Willard's nature. Bordin on the other hand, was the first to acknowledge the complexities of Willard's character. By examining the attitudes of the society in which Willard lived, Bordin was able to explain how Willard skilfully used emotion in order to ensure the success of her feminist ideals. Although Bordin's work goes some way towards discovering Willard's true motives and methods, her study is incomplete and a definitive work on the ambivalent character of Frances Willard remains to be written.
KATE SHEPPARD

Frances Willard's leadership had a profound influence not only in the United States but throughout the world. Leaders of women's movements recognised the success of Willard's tactful and 'womanly' approach and many began to imitate her style. Kate Sheppard, leader of the suffrage forces in New Zealand had great admiration for Willard's leadership qualities:

Miss Willard is an ideal President. It is not often that one finds, either in man or woman, such a happy combination of qualities as in her exist and so eminently fit her for the position she holds . . . . If her brain is quick so also are her sympathies, not only where work is concerned but for the workers . . . . She has a keen sense of humour, which adds to her charm, and helps brighten many a discussion.16

Kate Sheppard's ideals and methods corresponded closely with those of Willard's and her efficient and tactful leadership of the suffrage forces ensured early success for the franchise legislation.

Born in Islay, Scotland in 1848, Kate emigrated to New Zealand with her mother and sisters in 1869. Two years later she married Walter Sheppard, a moderately successful businessman and city councillor. Kate was an early member of the small but enthusiastic feminist movement in Christchurch. She soon won notoriety as one of the first women cyclists in Christchurch, while her sister Isobel became a strong advocate of dress reform.17 Like Willard, Sheppard held moderate views on the question of temperance but was attracted to the women's side of the WCTU. The New Zealand WCTU had adopted Willard's 'Do Everything' policy and Sheppard undertook work in several departments. Her pleas for improved legal protection for women and children were largely ignored by politicians. Sheppard became frustrated at being "hampered and hindered in various departments of work" and realising the importance of political
influence she began to "ardently long for a vote". Her appointment as franchise superintendent in 1887 placed her as the official spokesperson for women's suffrage in New Zealand. She worked energetically for the cause, meeting with politicians, organizing petitions and arranging public meetings. Sheppard's character made her popular with both the public and politicians who were attracted by her 'womanliness'. The New Zealand Graphic interviewed Kate Sheppard and was immediately at pains to point out that she had, "not an atom of the woman's rights style about her". She was a 'womanly woman' in speech, dress and manner. Describing Mrs Sheppard the writer stated:

Seen in her pretty, pleasantly situated residence in Fendalton it is somewhat difficult to realise that this graceful, tastefully attired woman, who possess such a rare tact as a hostess and places you so completely at your ease, can be the one who has had so much to do with political tactics for the last few years... In public speaking Mrs Sheppard has a pleasant, clear though not powerful voice, and, better still, she has not a trace of the mannerisms that are so usually acquired by women who attempt to open their lips in public.

Kate Sheppard was largely responsible for giving the women's suffrage movement in New Zealand an air of respectability. While Sheppard's appearance may have been traditional, her ideas were not. Like Willard, Kate Sheppard favoured such unconventional topics as vegetarianism, peace and arbitration and natural medicine. Unlike Willard, however, she chose not to make these views public. Instead she concentrated her energies on winning the vote and her displays of patience, tolerance and intelligence helped win many supporters for women's suffrage.

Only a small number of articles have been written on Kate Sheppard and the majority of these tend to imply that her career ended once the suffrage fight had been won. In fact, she was to play a major role in the woman's movement in New Zealand for another twenty years. The argument for women's suffrage in New Zealand had been
based on the idea of women's morality, gentility and respectability. But with the franchise now secured, Sheppard was free to express her opinions more openly, without having to worry about alienating or offending the public. In 1895 she attended the World WCTU conference in London and heard speeches by such leaders as Susan B Anthony, Lady Somerset and Frances Willard. The views expressed at this conference were of a more militant feminism than had been expressed in New Zealand and Sheppard was exposed to an array of new ideas on the 'woman question'. Sheppard had a personal meeting with Frances Willard and seemed somewhat overawed by her presence:

If she is in the chair her apt, quaint, witty remarks keep everything rolling smoothly, and when delivering an address one can not but be struck by the breadth of her outlook, her faith in humanity and her love for the race. Her style is enigmatic and uncommon, and she is a curious mixture of hard-headedness and emotional fervour... now that I think of it, she is very difficult to describe and I had better give her up and turn to one less complex.21

On returning to New Zealand Sheppard was appointed editor of the WCTU's newly established magazine, The White Ribbon22. The first editorial reflected a new openness and confidence in Kate Sheppard's style:

This paper will be a medium for the discussion of subjects bearing on social, political, moral and religious questions of the day, will, we think, be found useful... It will be essentially a woman's paper, one that will deal with the many phases of the "Woman Question" in its legal and social aspects. When all the disabilities under which women labour are removed, then and not till then, shall we be a free country in the fullest sense of the word; and we intend that any paper shall do its part in helping to cultivate a more healthy and just public opinion in this direction... We do not intend crowding our space... with descriptions of the latest fashion in dress, and what are friends wore at the last reception, but will endeavour to appeal to the more thoughtful section of the community.23

Kate Sheppard realised that just winning the franchise was not enough - women now had to increase their political awareness and use their voting power to ensure full equality for women. With these aims
in mind, Sheppard founded and became the first president of the National Council of Women. Through her work with the NCW and The White Ribbon she attempted to increase women's awareness of the need for full equality. Her active lobbying to make women eligible for parliament was seen by many as extreme. The editor of New Zealand Church News criticized Sheppard's stance, stating:

We must confess that we ourselves should not rest comfortably under a female premier, nor can we contemplate with equanimity a woman treasure for the colony. Even the lesser dignity of a seat in the legislature is hardly what we would confer upon woman. Her sphere is elsewhere.24

Sheppard's reply was equally as cutting:

Regarding the latter sentence it is curious that we hear so little from are brethren what a "man's sphere" is. Is it because they consider men are capable of filling all "spheres"? Surely not . . . . In every advance hitherto made by woman she has been met by this "sphere" bogey, and it is astonishing how, in spite of her power and acknowledge aptitude for a hundred and one new "spheres", the phrase - and the idea behind it - still keeps cropping up every now and again.25

This statement was a radical departure from the argument of women's traditional sphere that had been used by New Zealand suffragists. In her speeches and editorials Sheppard advocated a variety of ideas, such as natural medicine and vegetarianism. But perhaps one of her most radical views centred on her fight against "women's economic dependence in marriage and the unequal employment opportunities that made marriage an economic necessity."26 At a time when most were supporting the Boer War with a patriotic zeal, Sheppard spoke out against war and advocated the use of arbitration:

That war is the most cruel, the most unfair, the most costly, and least permanent method of settling a dispute cannot be sufficiently emphasised. It may be that the world is not sufficiently civilized, not sufficiently permeated with the spirit of Christianity for us to dare to altogether lay aside our arms and rely solely on just and humane methods of adjusting our differences. But even if it still be necessary to rely on force for the safety of our homes, and the preservation of our liberties, there should be no vain, no bombastic ideas of glory to be found in the killing
or maiming of our fellow creatures.\textsuperscript{27}

Such ideas inevitably lead to criticism of Kate Sheppard by some in the WCTU. While Sheppard may have not possessed the charisma that enabled Frances Willard to express such views, she at least had the political shrewdness to point out that her ideas were similar to those of Willard's. For example, Kate Sheppard criticized the proposal to introduce a doctrinal test for intending members of the WCTU and in an editorial stated:

While we welcome and admire zeal we most strenuously resist narrowness, lest we lapse into bigotry and create greater evils than those we are banded together to overcome.\textsuperscript{28}

Directly in the next column appeared an article criticizing the Boston WCTU for attacking Frances Willard's friendship with Roman Catholic temperance leaders. The writer criticized the actions as bigoted and narrow and went on to quote Frances Willard's opinion on the matter:

... the WCTU is not a church; it is a Temperance Union; it has no creed but a declaration of principles. Among its rally cries are these; No sectarianism in religion, no sectarianism in politics, no sex in citizenship.\textsuperscript{29}

Kate Sheppard continued to contribute critical assessment on a wide number of women's issues, including the contagious diseases acts, economic equality in marriage, protective legislation and legal inequalities.

In 1903 Sheppard resigned from The White Ribbon and travelled to England via the United States. While overseas she was much in demand from women's groups and sat on the boards of such international committees as the International Council of Women (of which she was appointed honorary vice president) and the World WCTU. She was forced to turn down the offer of World Franchise Superintendent because of ill health. On returning to New Zealand she continued to play an active but somewhat low key role in the woman's movement. She revived the NCW in 1918 but resigned in 1921. Histories politely refer to her
as graciously relinquishing her leadership to younger women. In fact, the burden of work coupled with the personal tragedies of the loss of her only son and her husband had taken a heavy toll. In her letter of resignation to the NCW she stated: "Some years ago I had a nervous breakdown which left me in a frail condition." Physical frailty was accompanied by memory loss and Sheppard felt she was no longer able to hold positions of responsibility. She retired from public life, remarried at the age of 77 and lived to see the election of Elizabeth McCombs as the first women M.P. in New Zealand.

To celebrate the first anniversary of women's suffrage in New Zealand the WCTU published the following tribute to Kate Sheppard:

The women of the Christchurch WCTU cannot let this First Anniversary of our Women's Franchise pass without a grateful acknowledgement of our indebtedness to you. We feel that to your quiet perseverance and indefatigable zeal we owe our new privileges. We know that your efforts to gain us a voice in the legislation of our land, and the choice of our lawgivers, necessitated years of work. By voice and pen you kept the subject constantly before the Women of our land, and patiently bore both the ignorant opposition of many whose good you sought. Through all New Zealand your name will be cherished as our Leader in this movement, which places our land as foremost in the liberation of our sex.

The tribute is somewhat ironic, for contemporary and historical recognition of Kate Sheppard's importance in New Zealand history is scant. While contemporary politicians such as Saunders and Hall paid tributes to her, recognition by those who she had benefitted was not forthcoming. The Lyttelton Times criticized this lack of recognition given to her:

We are a little surprised . . . that the women of the colony have not signalled the tenth anniversary of their 'emancipation' by making some appropriate acknowledgement to the lady to whom they owe, more to anyone else, their present position in the political world. Mrs Sheppard, we understand, is about to leave New Zealand and it will not be creditable to the great body of electors who are enjoying the fruits of her splendid tact and tireless enthusiasm if she is allowed to sever her connection with the colony.
without receiving some adequate expression of gratitude from
the people for whom she laboured.\textsuperscript{32}

Throughout her life Kate Sheppard had fought to have women
treated as human beings rather than attractive, unthinking objects.
She criticized society's treatment of women, citeing newspapers 'Ladies
Columns' as an example of women being credited with no intelligence:

Besides the inanity of this sort of writing, there is a
vulgar personal tone about it, and we wonder that women of
any sense do not resent it. One can hardly perceive of
anything more impertinent than public comment on one's
clothes, and how one looked in them. Yet we are told that
there are certain women who like it, and probably this is
true. But they should not be addressed as "ladies". Call a
spade a spade, and let their descriptions of dresses and
looks be headed "The Peacock Column". Then those that like
it may read it, and the old English word "lady" will be
saved from degradation.\textsuperscript{33}

It is therefore ironic that a short obituary on Kate Sheppard
was to appear in the "Ladies Column" tucked in between articles on "
The Party at the Ritz" and "Latest Wedding Fashions". News of
Frances Willard's death caused an outpouring of appreciation and
sympathy, Kate Sheppard's death was largely ignored. When Phillida
Bunkle was asked to write a short biography of Sheppard to mark the
anniversary of women's suffrage in New Zealand her initial enthusiasm
was replaced by frustration. As Bunkle discovered: "the personal
record of the long, incredibly active, life of New Zealand's leading
feminist had left no trace..."\textsuperscript{34} In order to discover the ideas and
personality of Kate Sheppard the researcher is forced to search
through collections scattered throughout New Zealand. This situation
highlights the need for a comprehensive collection of archives
relating to the history and achievements of New Zealand women. Until
this occurs New Zealand is at risk of losing what little knowledge it
has of individual women's contribution to society.
FOOTNOTES


4. Ibid., p. 596.

5. Ibid., p. 695.


7. Ibid. p. 31.

8. At this time the idea that woman's suffrage would automatically lead to prohibition was being questioned by some members of the WCTU who pointed to the publicity surrounding the fact that the women of New Zealand had failed to vote for prohibition. Gordon refuted these worries by publishing a letter from Miss Powell, corresponding secretary of the New Zealand WCTU. Miss Powell assured Miss Gordon that the prohibition vote by New Zealand women was in fact significant and would definitely improve by the next election.


11. Ibid., p. xvi.


15. Ibid., p. 68.


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17. Patricia Grimshaw, "A Notable Feminist" in New Zealand Heritage vol. 4 p. 1305. Kate Sheppard was also concerned with the issue of dress reform and often protested against the restrictions clothing placed on women. For example, she wrote:

... when I see a ruddy, romping school-girl in her first long dress, afraid of the stone walls in the fields, or standing aloof from the game of ball, or sadly turning away from the ladder which her brother is climbing to the cherry tress, or begging him to assist her over the gunwale of a boat... when I consider these things, I feel that I have ceased to deal with blunders in dress, and have entered a catalogue of crimes."

Quoted in Phillida Bunkle, "Women's Suffrage: Kate Sheppard." Broadsheet September, 1981. p. 22

19. Ibid.
20. Ibid.
22. While Kate returned to New Zealand, her husband Walter choose to stay in England. She spent the rest of her life with the Lovell-Smith family who provided her with emotional support and security.
25. Ibid.
27. Kate Sheppard to the National Council of Women. Quoted in The White Ribbon May, 1901.
29. Ibid.
31. Kate Sheppard to the National Council of Women. Letter held in the Auckland Museum Library.
33. The Christchurch Press July 14, 1934. p. 3.
CHAPTER SIX

ANTI-SUFFRAGE

"You do not need a ballot box to clean out your sink spout."

i. Opposition in the United States

The anti-suffrage forces, unlike the pro suffrage movement, were largely unorganized and their levels of activity varied. Those opposing suffrage were divided into two main groups. Firstly some argued against woman's suffrage on theoretical grounds, providing theological, sociological and biological arguments as to why women could not vote. Secondly, there were organizations, such as the liquor industry, business and political machines, all of whom felt threatened by woman's suffrage. The 'antis' as they were known, failed to combine forces and their effectiveness was lost through this lack of cooperation. In many instances the antis proved useful to the pro suffrage forces as they helped to publicize the woman's suffrage debate and provided the woman suffrage advocates with an opportunity to reason out often emotional and irrational questions.

Official church statements on woman's suffrage were not issued by any of the main denominations but, representatives of the churches were given the freedom to express their personal opinions on the franchise, the majority of which were inevitably negative. The bible was used to demonstrate that man's place was in the outside world and woman's in the home.\(^1\) The anti-suffrage forces made particular use of the Book of Genesis and St. Paul and often directly quoted from them in an effort to demonstrate that God had ordained woman's proper and only sphere to be the home. The Church understandably felt
threatened by the emancipation of women. The 'new woman' was often in paid employment and charities were no longer a priority for many women. In addition to this, an increasing number of women were gaining a higher education and learning an array of new ideas and philosophies, some of which challenged traditional theological teaching. The gaining of woman's suffrage was seen by many in the church as a further fatal step towards the acceptance of the idea that women were independent humans who could choose spheres other than that of the home.

Opponents also fought woman's suffrage on biological grounds. Natural science was viewed as the latest, "liberating intellectual force and problem solver" and increasing importance was given to its findings. Scientists emphasised the difference in masculine and feminine characteristics. The female was supposed to be emotional and had a head full of sentiment and idealism, but she was also blessed with a special intuition. These qualities were regarded as admirable but dangerous if released from their proper sphere. Politics demanded reason, realism, and a keen sense of judgement - all such characteristics were confined to men, thus making them the only suitable voters. While woman's mental abilities posed a threat to politics, politics posed a threat to women's physical health. The strain of having to care for a family and at the same time consider who to vote for could prove physically exhausting for women. Such exhaustion would inevitably lead to bouts of hysteria. The following statement was read at an anti suffrage meeting and was typical of many said to be based on scientific fact:

"A woman's brain evolves emotion rather than intellect; and whilst this feature fits her admirably as a creature burdened with the preservation and happiness of the human species, it painfully disqualifies her for the sterner duties to be performed by the intellectual facilities. The best wife and mother and sister would make the worst
legislator, judge and police. The excessive development of the emotional in her nervous system, ingrafts on the female organization, a neurotic or hysterical condition, which is the source of much of the female charm when it is kept within due restraints. In . . moments of excitement . . . it is liable to explode in violent paroxysms . . . Every woman, therefore, carries this power of irregular, illogical and incongruous action; and no one can foretell when the explosion will come.3

Such unexpected combustion was out of place at the ballot box or political meetings. It was even suggested that the gaining of the franchise would also ensure physical side effects, with women becoming, "large-handed, big-footed, flat chested and thin lipped."4

Woman's suffrage, it was alleged, would have disastrous consequences for the stability of the family and society. The granting of political rights to women would cause an imbalance in society, for, "... social peace and the welfare of the human race depended upon woman's staying at home, having children and keeping out of politics."5 Political arguments between spouses would shatter domestic harmony and divorce rates would increase. Woman's main role was to instruct their children in moral righteousness which in turn would produce good citizens and sound governments. If women were given the right to vote, maternal duties would be neglected, or even worse, rejected. These kind of arguments were often conveyed through various methods, for example a "Household Hints" leaflet stated:

Housewives! You do not need a ballot to clean out your sink spout. A handful of potash and boiling water is quicker and cheaper . . . Control of the temper makes a happier home than control of elections . . . Good cooking lessens alcoholic craving quicker than a vote on local option. Why vote for pure food laws, when you can purify your icebox with saleratus water? To shine cut glass rub it over with a freshly peeled potato and then wash . . . Clean houses and good homes, which cannot be provided by legislation, keep children healthier and happier than any number of laws.6

Politics were said to be a dirty, shady and often offensive world and many antis believed that women should be shielded from its
influence. Representative Clark of Florida stated in 1915 that he wished to protect women:

"from the muck and mire of partisan politics. I prefer to look upon the American women as she has always been, occupying her proud estate as the Queen of the American home, instead of regarding her as a ward politician in the cities."/n

Anti-s were arguing that women should have the right not to vote and viewed those women who rejected this protection as ungrateful mannish feminists.

Several organisations and groups felt threatened by the prospect of women gaining the vote and they used a variety of methods to ensure that the franchise legislation would not be passed. Perhaps the most active opponent was the liquor industry. The link between the WCTU and the suffrage movement led many to equate woman's suffrage with prohibition. The liquor industry, anxious to avoid bad publicity, worked steadily but anonymously in its campaign to defeat suffrage. Evidence of direct involvement in the anti suffrage campaign by liquor interests is somewhat difficult to pinpoint but Eleanor Flexner discovered statements in the brewery industry's files that illustrates the industry's methods and motives:

In regard to the matter of woman's suffrage we are trying to keep from having any connection with whatever. We are however in a position to establish channels of communication with the leaders of the anti suffrage movement for our friends in any state where suffrage is an issue.8

In order to avoid any accusations of open agitation towards the suffrage forces, the liquor industry played a behind the scenes role. Official statements condemning woman's suffrage were never issued by the industry, but confidential memorandums stating the industry's policy were often sent to saloon-keepers, hoteliers and grocers. For example, the Wholesale Liquor Dealers League issued the following statement to its distributors in 1895:
At the election to be held on November 3, Constitutional Amendment Number 6, which gives the right to vote to women will be voted on. It is to your interest and ours to vote against this amendment. We request and urge you to vote and work against it and do all you can to defeat it.9

Business organizations, like the liquor industry, were not seen to be directly opposing woman's suffrage, however, when the suffrage amendment vote arose in each state the business industry worked discretely to lobby against it. Business industries felt threatened by the call for woman's suffrage for a number of reasons. Firstly, they viewed it as yet another menace of the progressive movement which was starting to question the equality and morality of big business.10 Secondly, they feared that women would use their political power to enact such legislation as improved working conditions for women and equal pay.

Immigrants were another group hostile to the idea of woman's suffrage. Many of the European immigrants who had recently settled in America continued to believe in and practice the ideas of their home country. To them woman's traditional role was that of wife and mother. But while many immigrant women were forced to leave their homes and work, and woman's presence in the workforce was accepted as a necessity, the suggestion of their participating in the political sphere was viewed as an unnecessary luxury. The male immigrant was able to demonstrate his opposition by voting against woman's suffrage in State referendums. The woman suffrage movements reaction to the immigrants opposition revealed racist traits among the largely middle class movement. Susan B Anthony, speaking to the United States Senate Judiciary Committee explained the defeat of woman's suffrage in Colorado in the following terms:

"In Colorado, at the close of canvas 6,666 men voted "Yes". Now I am going to describe the men who voted "Yes". They were native born white men, temperance men, cultivated, broad, generous, just men, men who think. On the other
hand, 16,007 voted "No". Now I am going to describe that class of voters. In the Southern part of that State their are Mexicans, who speak the Spanish language. They put their wheat in circles on the ground with the heads out, and drive a mule round to thrash it. The vast population of Colorado is made up of that class of people . . . ."11

Perhaps the most devastatingly effective force opposing woman's suffrage were women themselves. The role of women anti suffragists was largely overlooked by the suffragists and subsequently historians have underestimated their role. However, Jane Jerome Camhi's work, Women Against Women12 illustrates the effectiveness of this group. Women anti suffragists or 'Antis' as they were known, feared woman suffrage on the grounds that it challenged woman's traditional place in society. The Anti's opposed woman's equality as they equated it as 'sameness' and they believed women would lose their special feminine qualities. They held the family to be the most precious attribute of the State and woman's sole role was to specialize in the home:

The business of women must be to work out a national ideal of domestic life and juvenile training. They must standardize the family life with their new understanding of the importance of the product of every separate family to the state.13

The Antis perceived woman's main role in the home as moral instructor. The morality of motherhood was glorified, with one woman Anti stating, "God could not be everywhere so he made mothers."14 Woman's ample reward for rearing and training the children was protection by the man:

... man has, in return for serving the state with his physical strength, or his wealth, or his intellect, been granted the privilege of voting on questions pertaining to the affairs of State. And woman, in return for her services as child-trainer, and in consideration of the disabilities incident thereto, has been allowed immunity from further service; her rights as a citizen being taken care of for her by her male representatives.15

Suffrage was seen as especially threatening to the woman's sphere, for it was viewed not merely as just the right to vote but as the
beginning of women's entrance into the political field. It was seen as a case of, "first suffrage, then office, one barrier after another disappearing and then promiscuous commingling" \(^{16}\) and eventually both sexes would be debased.

The antis remained silent in their opposition for a significant number of years but by 1895 they decided to speak out publicly in order that their silence not be interpreted as fear, indifference or consent. \(^{17}\) The largest of the Woman Anti Suffrage organizations was in Massachusetts. In 1907 it claimed a membership of 12,500 and had 34 branch committees. In other States, organizations were small and sporadic. The move by the Antis from the private to the public sphere was contradictory to their own arguments of women's place in society. In order to counter this ambiguity the Anti's claimed that their public appearances were a, "necessity most repugnant to all their instincts and habits." \(^{18}\) Once they had won their battle they would return to their homes. Like the suffrage forces, the Antis membership consisted largely of middle class women and inevitably their arguments showed a middle class bias. The Antis believed that woman's suffrage would result in the 'good' women staying at home while 'bad' women went out and voted. By 'bad' the Antis meant working class women, the prostitute and the immigrant. As members of the WASP group, the Antis feared the equal suffrage would lead to a majority of the ignorant vote:

\[\ldots\] surely the well-trained, educated, intelligent boys of New York City, even though they be not more than ten years old would make better voters than vicious tramps or stupid foreigners all but wholly ignorant of the English language. \(^{19}\)

The Antis began publishing periodicals, such as Remonstrance, The Anti Suffragist and Woman Patriot. Many of the articles in these periodicals seized on the supposed link between suffragism and
socialism. The Antis viewed the suffragist desire for economic independence as a direct step towards socialism and they warned of the secret ties between the two groups:

The gravest, most awful thing that the home, the church, the nation must confront in giving the ballot to women is socialism. Woman's suffrage is one of the clever suggestions of modern socialism. It is the socialists most important tenet. 20

The periodicals, and indeed the Woman Anti-Suffrage movement itself were short-lived. Although they were never a mass movement, women anti-suffragists played an effective role in ensuring the delay of the franchise legislation by demonstrating that many women were not in favour of the vote. The antis objected to the fact that the suffragists were prepared to place their own cause - that is women - first. This type of thinking went against woman's traditional role of selflessness and was seen as "selfish and self-serving, bold and unwomanly." 21 The antis fight had been not only against woman's suffrage but against the 'new woman' and her abandonment of the traditional womanly roles.

* * *

ii. Opposition in New Zealand

In New Zealand as in the United States opposition to women's suffrage came mainly from the churches and the liquor industry. Individual clergymen used the pulpit and the press to denounce the franchise. The majority of New Zealand suffragists were members of the WCTU and the liquor industry were convinced that the introduction of women's suffrage would automatically lead to the enactment of prohibition. Parliament became the main arena for debate and it was
here that the main arguments against women's suffrage were aired and refuted.

The first and most commonly used argument against women's suffrage was that of woman's 'proper sphere'. As we have already seen, woman's role was said to be in the home and it was from here that she could exert her influence by providing training in moral justice. The 'perfect' woman was allegedly happy with this position and it was only those 'mannaish feminists' who had begun to enter the traditional male sphere who wanted the vote. Speaking in parliament, Doctor Blackwell, a M.P. and prominent anti-suffrage spokesman, explained the differences between these two types of women:

"What nature intended every healthy women to be, is to be the mother of healthy children. For this purpose all her mental and physical powers are created. If she fulfils this purpose wisely and well she has done her work in the world. Incomplete or imperfect women have to a certain extent initiated or taken up part of men's work, but the complete and perfect woman, lovely and gracious in youth, gentle and tender and loving at all ages, is sufficiently occupied and employed in bearing and rearing children, and in the multifarious duties of a good housewife."22

Mr Gisborne backed up his colleague's assertions and predicted dire consequences if women were to obtain the vote:

"In my opinion I think it would be a social calamity if we were to politicize women. Woman's parliament is in her home, it is within that sphere that her function lies for making laws for our peace, order and good government."23

Others warned of the domestic disharmony woman suffrage would cause and they stated that divorce rates would increase and men would be left to rock the cradle.24 As the suffrage campaign progressed and women's demands for the vote on moral grounds increased, it became evident that women were not threatening to leave the home, but rather, to widen its influence. The argument that suffrage posed a serious threat to home life was no longer plausible so that different tactics had to be employed. Some M.P.'s used the argument that women were
biologically inferior to men when it came to intelligence. Women were said to have a weak intellect, with the M.P., Mr Blake, asserting that "I think it is an acknowledged fact that a woman has, on average, 5 ounces less brains than a man."\textsuperscript{25} Politics were said to be too complicated for the woman's intellect to comprehend and it was feared she would vote for a candidate on the basis of his looks and charisma rather than his political stance. Such political ignorance would in turn lead the country into financial ruin and ultimately endanger civilisation.\textsuperscript{26} The M.P., Mr Whitmore, stated, "It is always a first step in the decadence of a nation when men hand government over to women, and I think this country must be said to be tottering to its fall when the women have too much power in their hands."\textsuperscript{27}

The churches backed up such arguments and added that they wished to protect women from the perils of politics:

Instead of the female mind purifying our politics, there would, we suspect be some danger of our politics contaminating the female mind... We will not positively assert that all women are unfit for politics, though we imagine the less any of them have to do with politics the better; but we will say that it seems a rash, if not foolish thing to force the franchise upon them.\textsuperscript{28}

The liquor industry, fearing the link between prohibition and woman's suffrage, engaged in several attempts to halt the suffrage legislation. The M.P.'s representing the liquor trades interests were known as the 'licensed victuallers party' or the 'publicans ring'. This group used several tactics to stonewall the debate on woman's suffrage. For example, they introduced an amendment that would allow women to become members of parliament. In doing so they hoped to ultimately defeat the Bill, for while some M.P.'s were prepared to allow women to vote, they could not tolerate the thought of a woman leaving her home and participating in politics directly. The liquor trade also organized anti-suffrage petitions in an attempt to counter
those being presented to parliament by the pro-suffrage forces. Underhand methods were used in obtaining signatures. Canvassers had been paid in amount of per hundred names collected, some had signed believing that the petition was in support of suffrage, and the majority of signatures were obtained in pubs, often with the bribe of a free drink. Public knowledge of these methods meant that the petitions were held in disrepute and largely ignored.

The introduction of woman's suffrage was seen to be a 'leap in the dark' and many believed in the dire rumours and myths that were circulating. To counter these fears pro-suffrage M.P.'s regularly referred to the one example that could dispel suspicions - Wyoming. Women did not want the vote, said the antis, and even if it was granted they would not use it. Once again the churches were ready to back such assertions, with the Presbyterian Church claiming, "It is the merest nonsense to affirm that the women of the colony have asked for it. They have done nothing of the kind." Sir John Hall stated that this same argument had been used in Wyoming where now "one to one third of the electors on the role are females, of whom 80 per cent are in the habit of recording their votes." Hall dispelled the myth that women lacked the ability to exercise their political vote soundly by quoting the Governor of the Wyoming territory who stated:

"It is simple justice to say that the women entering for the first time in the history of this country upon these new and untried duties, have conducted themselves in every respect with as much fact, sound judgement and good sense as men."

He further quoted the Governor when arguing that women, with their sound moral judgement, would have an excellent civilizing effect on the country while, at the same time, Hall refuted opinions that women would automatically vote conservative by stating:

"... the men know that if that put up candidates that are unworthy if they nominate dissolute men irresponsible or incompetent men, woman will certainly be at the polls with
her veto in the form of the ballot. They are not so wedded to party lines as to be willing to cast a vote for the candidate representing the party of her preference if he be decidedly unfit, and on the other side stands a worthy man."32

Some M.P.'s opposed woman's suffrage on the grounds that woman would vote only as her husband instructed her and this in effect would introduce plural voting. Worse still, some feared that women might vote independently. The M.P., Mr Buick pointed to America to demonstrate that women had voted independently and no drastic results had ensured:

"... in America where the law is in operation, we find that when elections were recently held, the women voted according to their own convictions, and quite independently of their own husbands, or anybody else."33

The M.P., William Pember Reeves34 soothed the more irrational fear that women would dominate politics to such a point that the government would become 'effeminate':

"Let us look abroad to the western states of America. Is the state of Wyoming a place where there is effeminacy in government?. Are the cowboys and ranchmen of Wyoming a class among who you look in order to find softness and effeminacy in fighting the battle of life and settling the question of the day? And yet there we find political power given to women."35

The opposition's replies to these arguments were often tinged with anti American sentiments. Mr Blake commented on Sir John Hall's continual reference to Wyoming by stating, "I am sure I must compliment him on his American examples, where the people only shoot one another, as far as I can see."36 The M.P., Mr Bowen dismissed the Wyoming examples as "characteristic American hyperbole", and claimed to be offended "by this abuse of language."37 In an effort to un dermine the pro-suffrage examples the opposition stated that women's suffrage was unpopular in those parts of America where it was now enforced, with Mr Buckley claiming:
"I am informed on good authority that in parts in America which this system is in existence the people would be only too well pleased if they had never seen such a thing, and would give a great deal to get back to the original position."38

This theory of unpopularity was heightened when Washington repealed its woman's suffrage legislation. According to Mr Buckley, this was done at the direct request of 'the ladies' of Washington. They also argued that the example of Wyoming should be ignored as it was only a territory. However, in 1893 Wyoming gained union status and the new states' reaffirmation of woman's suffrage proved to be invaluable to the pro-suffrage forces:

Resolved, that the possession and exercise of suffrage by the women of Wyoming ... has wrought no harm and has done great good in many ways; that it has largely aided in banishing crime, pauperism, and vice from this State ... that it has secured peaceful and orderly elections, good government and a remarkable degree of civilisation and public order ... not one county in Wyoming has a poorhouse ... our jails are almost empty and crime, except that committed by strangers in the State, almost unknown ... we urge every civilized country to enfranchise its women without delay.

Resolved, that we request the press throughout the civilized world to call attention of their readers to these resolutions.39

Unlike the United States New Zealand had no direct instance of women organizing to oppose the vote. Despite this fact, anti-suffrage parliamentarians continually insisted that women did not want the vote. The M.P., Mr Bruce, claimed that:

"In some solitary instance ... just as, in America, one comes across the demand for the franchise by ladies who go about with their umbrellas ready to dig into anybody who differs from them; but the sensible and modest women of New Zealand are not asking for it."40

His colleague, Mr Mackenzie, stated that "not only do women not want this Bill but they absolutely loathe it and repudiate it."41, and Mr Whyte blamed the "shrieking sisterhood" for giving the false impression that the majority of women in New Zealand wanted the vote. By 1893, the argument that suffrage was only wanted by a fanatical few
appeared weak. The active support for suffrage by the WCTU leant respectability to the cause and a petition in favour of the suffrage contained over 30,000 signatures. Mr Fish, a most vocal opponent of woman's suffrage, denounced the petition as a 'gigantic fraud' and continued to insist that there was no proof that the women of the colony wanted the vote.\textsuperscript{42} Perhaps the most effective way to measure the level of support and opposition to the suffrage by women is to examine how many women voted for the first time in 1893. The Franchise Bill was finally passed on September 19, leaving women only six weeks to place their names on the roll. The WCTU began an active campaign to encourage women to enrol and they were joined by pressure groups and political parties, both of whom were anxious to gain women's support. Women attended election meetings in large numbers and those who had been actively involved in the suffrage campaign were surprised to hear anti-suffrage M.P.'s quickly change their stance.

Kate Sheppard made a wry comment on these events:

\begin{quote}
It would be amusing if it were not such a degrading spectacle, to see the bland and oily manner with which men who have scoffed at the proposed franchise of women now address the "lady electors" and "solicit their vote and interest". If these gentlemen had been more alert, and not so lamentably ignorant of the sign of the times, they would certainly have been spared the necessity of these LIGHTENING CHANGES which are almost diverting as they are contemptible.\textsuperscript{43}
\end{quote}

Despite of the short period for enrolment, 80 per cent of New Zealand women had their names placed on the electoral roll. Of this number, 85 per cent voted, that is 70 per cent of the entire female population.\textsuperscript{44}

While opposition to woman's suffrage in New Zealand was on a smaller scale than in the United States the arguments against the franchise and the groups opposing the suffragists were similar. In both countries, the anti-suffrage forces failure to co-ordinate and
enact a comprehensive attack meant ultimate victory for the suffragists.

* * * *

iii: Wilson and Seddon

Both New Zealand and the United States share similarities in their respective leaders attitudes towards women's suffrage. Women's suffrage was secured during Woodrow Wilson's presidency in the United States and Richard Seddon was the premier of New Zealand when women's suffrage was enacted in 1893. Both leaders publicly claimed to have been 'converted' to the women's suffrage cause but privately they held reservations. Their reasons for supporting the women's suffrage cause were due mainly to political necessity rather than personal conviction.

Until recently, discussions concerning Wilson's public and private views on woman's suffrage had been limited and inadequate. For example, Arthur Link in his five volume work on Woodrow Wilson makes only a fleeting reference to the issue of woman's suffrage. In their works on the history of the woman's suffrage movement, Kraditor, O'Neill and Flexner make only a brief mention of Wilson's role in the enactment of the nineteenth amendment. Despite the brevity of their comments, all of these historians agree that Wilson continually avoided and neglected the question of women's suffrage and it was only after mounting political pressure that he was forced to face the issue.

There is indeed much evidence to suggest that Wilson privately opposed women's suffrage. Wilson was born in Virginia in 1856 and
throughout his life he continued to hold to the Victorian views of women. Women's sole role was confined to the home where she could best use her innate virtues of caring, patience and moral superiority. These views were shared by Wilson's wife, Ellen, who agreed with him that if a woman "cannot preserve her individuality within the family ... she simply has no individuality worth preserving." As a young man, Wilson had attended a Woman's Congress Meeting of the Association for the Advancement of Women and he viewed the 'spectacle' of women speaking in public with a mixture of contempt and amusement. In describing the event he wrote:

Barring the chilled, scandalized feeling that always overcomes me when I see and hear women speak in public, I derived a great deal of whimsical delight ... from the proceedings.46

Despite the fact that Wilson had held a teaching position at Bryn Mawr College, he held a low opinion of women's intellectual capabilities. In his confidential journal he wrote:

Lecturing to young women of the present generation on the history and principles of politics is about as appropriate as would be lecturing to stonemasons on the evolution of fashion in dress. There is a painful absenteeism of the mind on the part of the audience.47

Wilson tempered these thoughts in public and attempted to avoid the question of woman's suffrage by creating political excuses. The Democratic party plank was used as a convenient shield on non-committance. Wilson stated that until his party made a definite stand on the question of suffrage he was not at liberty to express his personal opinion. By 1911, however, support for woman's suffrage was steadily increasing and further pressure was applied to Wilson to state his views. Once again he avoided the issue, this time stating, "Suffrage is not a national issue, so far. It is a local issue for each state to settle for itself."48 By confining the question to
state rather than federal level, Wilson hoped to relieve the pressure on himself to act.

When a delegation of NAWSA members met with the president to plea for his support for the suffrage amendment, Wilson yet again used political excuses to cover his own reluctance. He told Anna Howard Shaw that he could not persuade congress to act on women's suffrage for he had set himself a principle:

"I am not at liberty to urge upon Congress in messages policies which have not had the organic consideration for whom I am spokesman. In other words, I have not yet presented to any Legislature my private views on any subject, and I shall never, because I conceive it to be part of the whole process of government that I shall be spokesman for somebody, not for myself."49

Wilson's personal involvement in ensuring the passing of the Underwood Tariff Act and the Federal Reserve Act contradicted such a statement.

In October 1915 New Jersey held a state referendum on woman's suffrage. As political representative of New Jersey, Wilson was forced to publicly state his views on women's suffrage. Wilson declared himself in favour of the franchise. David Morgan in his book, *Suffragists and Democrats*, argues that the reasons for this stance were not only political but personal:

Widowed a few months earlier, he [Wilson] was about to announce his engagement to Mrs Gatt and chose to release both items on the same day. The coincidence, naturally, opened him to the charge of wishing to soften feminine protests at his overly quick marriage.50

By 1913 Wilson was under considerable pressure to act on woman's suffrage and this was largely due to the work of Alice Paul. Paul was born in New Jersey and after completing her masters degree in 1907 she travelled to England and soon become actively involved in the militant British suffrage movement. She returned to America in 1910 and in 1913 she was appointed as chairman of the NAWSA Congressional Committee. At this time the NAWSA was focussing its fight for
suffrage on a state rather than federal level. Alice Paul believed that suffrage would only be assured through a federal amendment and that active political pressure would be more effective than diplomacy and tact. Such ideological differences caused a split between Paul and the NAWSA and three years later she left the organization to form the Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage. The Union adopted militant tactics similar to those of the British suffragists and in 1917 they began to picket the White House. Wilson's support of the war on the grounds of the need to defend liberty and democracy provided a powerful political weapon for the militant suffragists. They argued that rather than fighting for freedom abroad, Wilson should be concentrating on putting matters in order at home. The suffragists carried banners with such slogans as, "MR PRESIDENT, HOW LONG MUST WOMEN WAIT FOR LIBERTY?". They also used direct quotes from Wilson's speeches, such as "WE SHALL FIGHT FOR THE THINGS WE HAVE ALWAYS HELD NEAREST OUR HEARTS - FOR DEMOCRACY"\(^51\) to emphasize the irony of Wilson's stance. Such political embarrassment forced Wilson to act and in 1918 he appeared before the Senate to encourage them to vote for woman's suffrage.

The traditional historical view that Wilson was negative in his attitudes towards woman's suffrage has been challenged by Christine Lunardini and Thomas Knock in an article entitled, "Woodrow Wilson and Woman Suffrage: A New Look"\(^52\). The authors argue that Wilson's change in support for woman's suffrage was not solely the result of political necessity but rather came about through his own personal convictions. While acknowledging that Wilson had a clearly 'paternalistic' view of women, they state that over a number of years personal education and a strong desire for social justice combined to change this view. Once this personal 'conversion' was complete, Wilson worked actively to
ensure the success of the woman's suffrage amendment. In presenting their evidence of this they state:

Wilson's exertions were manifold. From 1914 through to 1920, he held some fifty interviews with various suffrage delegations and consulted with members of Congress at least eighty times. In addition to addressing the Senate on at least three occasions, he urged at least fifteen state legislatures to take action on state amendments. Letters to senators and congressmen, too numerous to cite in their entirety, number over 100. And perhaps most importantly, he secured the decisive votes in the House in 1918, the decisive vote in the Senate in 1919, and the decisive state vote during the ratification process in 1920.53

Lunardini and Knock claim Wilson was not only an active suffrage supporter, but he also played a 'pivotal' role in securing the enactment of woman's suffrage. In a article entitled, "Woodrow Wilson, Alice Paul and the Woman Suffrage Movement", Sally Graham sharply refutes Lunardini and Knock's argument that Wilson's conversion was personal in its origins, and at the same time she provides further damaging evidence on Wilson to support her case.54 According to Graham, Wilson's opposition to woman's suffrage was not merely confined to 'benign neglect' but rather involved direct efforts of active discouragement. These activities centred mainly around the Congressional Union suffragists who continually picketed the White House. Wilson's initial reaction to these pickets was one of amusement. Playing the role of the southern gentleman, he often tipped his hat as he passed the picketers and on one occasion asked them in for afternoon tea. However, continual daily appearances by the suffragists shifted Wilson's attitude from that of amusement to embarrassment. In an effort to rid himself of this situation Wilson had the picketers arrested. This action served only to further the suffragists' cause, for the publicity surrounding the arrests and the public's general disapproval of police actions proved to be poor publicity for the White House. Wilson, having failed in his attempts
to silence the suffragists, turned to press censorship. The Committee on Public Information had been established in 1917 for the purpose of censoring any information that could damage the war effort. Wilson had been adamant in his assurances that the censorship would be confined solely to war activities. "I can imagine no greater disservice to the country," Wilson wrote, "than to establish a system of censorship that would deny to people of a free republic like our own their undisputable right to criticize their own public officials." Wilson abandoned these principles when it came to dealing with the suffragists and he instructed his secretary, Joseph Tumulty to discuss with newspaper editors the possibility of imposing a news blackout on the picketers activities. At least one newspaper editor was willing to comply with Wilson's suggestions. In a letter to Tumulty, Arthur Brisbane, editor of the Washington Times sent a copy of his instructions to the staff of the Times:

Please have nothing about the picketers or what they do in prison or anything else on the front page of the paper. Tell the news in two sticks, not farther forward than the fourth page until further notice, no matter what happens and what they do, and a small head over the two sticks, never a display head.

However, apart from the Washington Times, newspapers largely ignored Wilson's suggestions and preferred to risk his anger in order to get a good news story. Graham contends that Wilson's 'conversion' only after this third attempt to silence the suffragists failed. The politically sensitive nature of the suffrage issue barred Wilson from imposing direct censorship on their activities, however, his willingness to suggest suppression and distortion of the suffragists activities constituted an abuse of the war censorship powers.

Wilson's failure to act on the suffrage issue frustrated not only the suffragists but some of his political allies as well. Dudley Field Malone resigned from Wilson's administration and in a lengthy
letter of resignation wrote:

To me, Mr President, as I urged upon you in Washington two months ago, this is not only a measure of justice and democracy, it is also a urgent war measure. . . . The whole country gladly acknowledges, Mr President, that no vital piece of legislation has come through Congress these five years except by your brilliant and extraordinary leadership . . . . If the men of this country had been peacefully demanding for over half a century the political right or privilege to vote, and had been continuously ignored or met with evasion . . . . you, Mr President, as a lover of liberty, would be the first to comprehend and forgive . . . . righteous indignation. . . . In every circumstance I have served you with the most respectful attention and unshadowed devotion. It is no small sacrifice for me now, as a member of your Administration, to sever our political relationship. But I think it is high time that the men in our generation, at some cost to themselves, stood up for the battle for the national enfranchisement of American women. So in order to effectively keep my promises made in the West . . . . I hereby resign. 57

Richard Seddon, like Woodrow Wilson, was personally opposed to the idea of woman suffrage, however, unlike Wilson, he was not afraid to declare these sentiments in public. When woman's suffrage was first proposed in New Zealand Seddon was a vocal opponent, by the early 1890's, however, his high ranking in the Liberal government forced him to come into line with the party's policy of support. While Seddon no longer publicly declared himself opposed to the franchise he continued to privately carry out attempts to defeat the Bill.

Early historians have portrayed Seddon in an almost mythical light. 58 'Brave', 'powerful', 'fearless', 'remarkable', 'always in the advance', and 'champion of the oppressed' are just some of the terms used to describe the so called father of liberalism, causing one historian to label him as, "the most overrated man in our history." 59 In his biography of Richard Seddon, R.M. Burdon attempts to destroy some of these myths that had surrounded the leader. He is partly successful in his attempts, though he is occasionally guilty of glorifying Seddon's character. Burdon admits that Seddon's liberal
attitudes did not extend as far as women suffrage but he excuses Seddon's thinking on the grounds that he was of the 'romantic school'. Seddon feared that too much political power would 'unsex' women and he wished to protect them from this danger. Seddon's attitude was said to have changed once he became premier after Ballance's death. Ballance had been a firm supporter of woman's suffrage and Seddon felt 'pledged' to carry out his wishes.

Patricia Grimshaw, in Women's Suffrage in New Zealand has been one of the few historians to carry out an in depth study of Seddon's attitudes and action towards woman's suffrage. Her evidence reveals that Seddon's public opposition to woman's suffrage was toned down considerably by the 1890's, but that in his private actions he continued to work against the suffrage. Seddon's changing public attitudes on woman's suffrage are revealed in his voting patterns. When woman's suffrage was first proposed in 1879 Seddon voted against it. In 1887 Seddon once again voted against woman's suffrage stating, "I will not have it said that the majority of the members of this House are under a petticoat government. We shall have to look at our laurels and assert our prerogatives as the lords of creation before long." When the franchise Bill was once again proposed in 1891 Seddon abstained from voting. This move was politically shrewd, for public support for woman's suffrage was growing and the Liberal Party had declared itself in favour of the Bill. By abstaining from the vote, Seddon no longer appeared to be openly hostile to the Bill and thereby reduced the risk of alienation from the public. At the same time he minimized any hints of a rift within the Liberal party ranks.

In 1892 the Franchise Bill reappeared before the House and the opposition forces, in an attempt to defeat the Bill, added an amendment that allowed postal voting rights for women. The party was
opposed to the principle of postal ballots in any circumstances in case it threatened the secrecy of the ballot. Conferences between the two parties were held in an effort to gain a compromise and save the Bill. At this time Seddon was acting as premier and his position of leadership provided him with the opportunity to use his influence and diplomacy to ensure a compromise. However, his actions revealed what the suffragists had suspected for some time - while Seddon declared publicly that he supported the Bill his private actions proved otherwise. "Tales of his rudeness, belligerency, and failure to attempt any real compromise, soon became widespread, and the suffragists viewed the situation with despondency."64 This despondency was to increase as political proponents of the Bill informed the suffragists of Seddon's true intentions:

When Seddon was new as a Minister the sense of the new responsibility restrained him considerably and we saw less of his verbosity and unlimited conceit[,] but now that circumstances have placed him in front he talks and acts like a blown frog as his conceit and daily impudence know no bounds. Mr Hutchison and Pinkerton are the only two members I find would resolutely resist Seddon's tricks to get rid of the franchise. I have no doubt that Seddon has pledged himself to the publicans and to Hallet [?] to stop the franchise and he thinks the simple advocates of the measure can be and are easily hoodwinked by his cunning.65

In 1893 Sir John Hall wrote to Kate Sheppard suggesting that all further attempts to gain Seddon's support would be futile:

About communication with Seddon. I don't think it would do any good - He really wants to defeat women's franchise and he is very cunning - There is no knowing what way he might turn or twist anything you say to him.66

Hall's assertions were correct, for when the Franchise Bill passed in the Lower House, in 1893 Seddon attempted to delay its appearance in the Upper House.67 Seddon made his final attempt to defeat the Bill when it appeared in the Upper House. Realizing that only one vote was needed to defeat the Bill, Seddon persuaded one of the new councillors to switch his vote from support to opposition. Ironically, Seddon's
actions ultimately led to ensuring that the Bill was passed, for two Opposition Councillors were so angered by Seddon's political trickery, "that rather than let him get his own way they switched sides, and cast their votes in the Bills favour." 68

Once the Bill was passed, Seddon excused his previous 'reluctant' stance by stating that he feared woman's suffrage because it was an unknown quality. By way of compensating for this Seddon spent much of his time on his overseas tours praising the advantages of woman's suffrage. In addressing an audience in Ireland, Seddon claimed that woman's suffrage, "had had an elevating tendency", and he credited woman with bringing about such reforms as the Old Age Pension and improved prisons. 69 This high praise had served to counter any criticism that had previously plagued Seddon and may have gone some way in convincing early historians that while Seddon may have been some what reluctant about the proposal he still grudgingly supported it. The WCTU, however, were never convinced by Seddon's outward appearance of support and they were to remain critical of Seddon's performance, as seen in this editorial of the White Ribbon

Popularity and power have . . . in his estimation apparently occupied first place. Had his ethical sensibilities been quickened and allowed to open more largely to his actions, the role of New Zealand's public men would have contained no greater name than that of Richard John Seddon. 70

Both Wilson and Seddon have been traditionally portrayed as leaders fighting for social justice and equality for all. Such philosophies hardly correspond to their treatment of woman's suffrage. Their thoughts were not confined to mere personal reluctance but rather involved direct political action in an attempt to thwart the suffragists efforts. It is hoped that the continuing development of woman's history will eventually lead to a complete re-evaluation of the respective leaders attitudes and actions.

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FOOTNOTES


4. Ibid., p. 36.

5. Ibid., p. 22.


9. Ibid., p. 224.

10. Ibid., p. 224.


15. Mrs E McVicar, "Whats an Anti Suffragist" quoted in ibid., p. 60.


17. Ibid., p. 90.

18. Ibid., p. 149.

19. M.G. van Rennesselear, quoted in ibid., p. 93.

20. Annie Bock, "Address to the United States Senate Committee on Woman Suffrage" quoted in ibid., p. 91.

21. Ibid., p. 113.

24. Grimshaw, Women's Suffrage in New Zealand., p. 1
26. This argument was still being used once the Bill had passed. A petition was sent to the Governor requesting that he not approve the Bill as the country's financial security could be seriously threatened.
27. Grimshaw, Women's Suffrage in New Zealand, p. 76.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid.
34. Reeves was later to write a factually incorrect account on the fight for women's suffrage.
41. Ibid.
42. Ibid.
43. Grimshaw, Women's Suffrage in New Zealand, p. 100.
44. Ibid., p. 103.
46. Ibid., p. 655
47. Anne Fitzer Scott and Andrew Scott, One Half of the People: The Fight For Woman Suffrage. (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott,


53. Ibid., p. 671.


55. Ibid.

56. Ibid., p. 672.


61. Ibid., p.109.


63. Quoted in ibid., p. 42.

64. Ibid., p. 72.

65. Alfred Saunders to Kate Sheppard. 30 September 1892. Quoted in Ibid., p. 72.

66. John Hall to Kate Sheppard, 24 May 1893, Kate Sheppard Collection, Canterbury Muesum Library.


68. Ibid., p. 92.
69. *Dublin Irish Times* 29/8/02. Held in the Seddon Collection, National Archives

CHAPTER EIGHT

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN NEW ZEALAND AND THE UNITED STATES

"I am rejoiced with you"

The granting of female franchise in New Zealand in 1893 aroused interest throughout the world. This liberal "experiment" was keenly watched by both those supporting and opposing the franchise and each looked to New Zealand to help endorse their opposing claims on the alleged effects of suffrage. The level of United States interest in New Zealand women's suffrage can be gauged in two ways. Firstly, one can examine a number of United States publications, articles and public statements concerning the granting of women's suffrage in New Zealand and its subsequent effects. The degree of interest shown at this level appears to be somewhat limited and short-term. Secondly, one can examine the scale of interest shown at the private rather than public level. Personal correspondence between individuals provides strong evidence of interaction and influence between the United States and New Zealand women's movements. Women in these two movements held a sustained interest in each other, often exchanging their ideas, methods and messages of support.

When New Zealand women first won the vote in 1893 little immediate interest was shown by the United States press. The event went unreported in such daily newspapers as the New York Times and the story was crowded out by other events such as the economic recession. By the turn of the century, however, Americans began expressing interest in New Zealand women voters. The reasons for this may be twofold. Firstly, the rise of Progressivism in the United States had brought New Zealand to the attention of many Americans. The country
was viewed as a successful working model of Progressive ideals, including women's suffrage. Statements on the success of New Zealand's liberal laws by such leading American figures as Jane Addams gave New Zealand an air of importance and respectability. Secondly, female franchise had been enacted in New Zealand for some time and, with none of the predicted disastrous effects occurring, the American suffragists could now safely use New Zealand as an example.

The New Zealand M.P. and author, William Pember Reeves first helped New Zealand gain world wide attention when he published his book, *State Experiments in New Zealand and Australia* (1902). Reeves travelled to the United States to publicize his book and brought to the American public's attention such liberal policies as arbitration and the old age pension. He also told the story behind the winning of the franchise in New Zealand, however, his version was factually incorrect. Beginning with the statement, "So one fine morning the women of New Zealand awoke to find themselves franchised", Reeves went onto describe New Zealand women's 'inactivity':

Brief had been the season through which New Zealand women had to struggle or agitate. No franchise leagues fought the fight year after year, no crowded meetings had listened to harangues from eloquent and cultured women with intellects and powers of expression protesting even more effectually than their words against the political subjection of their sex. No female orator or leader of women could by the most polite exaggeration be said to have stood at the forefront and bore a leading part in converting public opinion and swaying public feeling.1

New Zealand women, "a wholesome, happy, intelligent, home-loving race" had "displayed not the faintest desire to become voters."2 These false statements could not be excused on the grounds of misinformation or misinterpretation of the facts, for not only was Reeves involved in the long legislative process needed to pass the Bill, but his wife was one of the many women who became active in the fight for the vote. The myth created by Reeves was perpetuated by

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American writers who drew heavily on his work. The American, Frank Parsons, in The Story of New Zealand (1904) was largely influenced by Reeves and borrowed many of his phrases, such as "women woke to find themselves franchised."³ In speaking of suffrage, Parsons contended that, "the women themselves on the whole made very little effort on the matter."⁴ At the same time he was eager to assure fellow Americans that women's suffrage had caused none of the dire effects being predicted by anti suffrage groups. Housework had not been neglected, marriages remained intact, and women's moral influence had been brought to bear on politics:

Enfranchisement has lead neither to divided households nor divided skirts. On the contrary family life had been strengthened with a new sympathy; politics have gained a new influence full of high motive and comparatively free from commercialism; the home has more weight in political affairs, and character has more weight in elections; temperance, morality, justice and high principle have somewhat more influence in legislative bodies; and the passage and enforcement in humanitarian laws is more vigorously demanded and jealously watched.⁵

America could now learn from New Zealand's example and relax, for it had now been "proved beyond question"

... that even in wholesome, well-educated and well developed Anglo Saxon communities, women can suddenly be enfranchised in a body without doing the slightest harm to themselves or anyone else.⁶

Much of the writing published on New Zealand women's suffrage emphasised the alleged lack of interest displayed by New Zealand women. This attempt to denigrate the New Zealand women's role in winning the vote was perhaps motivated by a desire to undermine American women's efforts to secure the vote. New Zealand women were supposedly given the vote as a reward for quietly carrying out their moral duties within their separate sphere. American women were being told that they should learn from this lesson. Much of this writing naturally proved to be of little use to the United States suffragists.
In order to obtain the New Zealand women's view of the event they undertook personal correspondence with those women involved in gaining the vote. Much of this correspondence was directed to Kate Sheppard, leader of the New Zealand suffrage forces.

Many of the leading figures in the United States suffrage and temperance movements corresponded with Kate Sheppard, including Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Anna Howard Shaw, Carrie Chapman Catt, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Frances E Willard and Anna Gordon. A number of these women also held personal meetings with Kate Sheppard, thus strengthening the ties of friendship. The letters reveal keen interest in the affairs of New Zealand women and, at the same time, portray a sense of envy. New Zealand women were encouraged in the interests of 'sisterhood' not to rest on their success, but to continue working actively to ensure the enactment of female franchise in all parts of the world. While the Kate Sheppard collection of letters contains a significant amount of correspondence written to her, it is by no means complete. Sheppard had written a list of her frequent correspondents but letters from such figures as Stanton and Gilman are now either lost or contained in the Stanton and Gilman collections. Those letters which are in the collection often refer to earlier correspondence which also appears to be missing. Despite these gaps in the correspondence, a sufficient amount of information can be obtained from the letters held in the collection.

Kate Sheppard wrote to many of the leading United States suffragists immediately informing them of New Zealand women's success in the suffrage fight. Susan B Anthony promptly replied to the news stating, "I am rejoiced with you." She then went on to speak of the United States suffragists forthcoming conference in Washington D.C. and urged Kate Sheppard to write, "telling us of your new possession
and of its use to the women." It was to be one of the first of many appeals by the United States suffragists for information. Kate Sheppard also corresponded with Susan B. Anthony's niece, Mary. In 1906 Mary wrote to thank Sheppard for sending her further information on women's suffrage in New Zealand. At this time the United States suffragists were suffering a series of defeats. The majority of the western states had introduced women's suffrage and many politicians had agreed that this had been essential in order to 'civilize' the frontier states. However, this argument of 'gentle tamers' was not finding favour in the industrialised eastern states and it was with a sense of frustration and despondency that Mary wrote: "I wonder how long it will be before the women of the United States have the same political feeling that the women of New Zealand have."

Although Anna Howard Shaw's name appears on Kate Sheppard's correspondence list, no letters from her survive. Shaw's successor to the NAWSA leadership, Carrie Chapman Catt, had regular contact with Sheppard and several of her letters survive. Catt took a keen interest not only in New Zealand women but in the country itself. In 1903 she wrote:

I cannot tell you how proud we all are of the progress in New Zealand. There may be disabilities, but these will be removed with comparative ease now you have the suffrage. New Zealand seems to be leading the world in new experiments, and it must be a grand old country to live in. I look forward to the day when I may have the pleasure of paying New Zealand a visit. There is no country I should enjoy becoming more intimately acquainted with. Perhaps the pleasure may never be coming to me, but I shall anticipate it hopefully.

Catt was instrumental in setting up the International Suffrage Alliance and was eager for New Zealand to take up membership. In 1906 Catt wrote to Sheppard stating the reasons why New Zealand should join the Alliance. Her comments reveal that some people in the United States women's movement still believed that the New Zealand women's
victory had been 'easy' and they therefore failed to comprehend the
struggle undertaken by women in other parts of the world:

I am very anxious that New Zealand should become affiliated
with our International Suffrage Alliance in some way. It is
not they we can do much to help you, since you have all that
we labor for in other countries. It is impossible for you
to even imagine the terrible struggle which we have to
secure that which was so easily won in New Zealand. All
kinds of criticism upon the suffrage is tramped up and
printed in the press as truisms. Now since New Zealand have
the suffrage it is important that all the world should know
about it. I have no doubt it is as difficult for you to
tell about woman suffrage as it would be for us here to tell
you about man suffrage; it is so thoroughly established that
no one pays much attention to it. Yet we must have this
information in order to answer the foolish charges that are
every now and then made even against New Zealand.10

The next surviving letter from Catt was more light-hearted in tone.
She was "amazed and delighted" with the news that Kate Sheppard was
coming to New York, however, she feared that she would miss her as she
was due to leave New York shortly before Sheppard's arrival. She
arranged for Sheppard to stay at the Martha Washington Hotel which
accommodated women only. Catt apologised for not being able to
accommodate Sheppard personally and she stated, "There is no woman in
all the world that I would be so please to meet as your own dear
self."11 Catt once again requested that Sheppard join her at the
International Suffrage Alliance meeting, "as it would make me and the
others happy beyond expression." Sheppard informed Catt that it was
not possible for either herself or Mrs Reeves to represent New Zealand
at the conference. Catt's reply was sober and reprimanding in tone:

I am very sorry indeed to learn that Mrs Reeves cannot be
present at our meeting; yet, I am hoping that, if everything
else fails, you will feel that it is your duty to represent
New Zealand yourself. That would make me very happy, and I
would be grievously disappointed if New Zealand is not here
to speak for herself . . . I shall expect to hear from you
again ere long, and learn what success you have in finding a
delegate; but when you tell me you will come yourself, I
shall throw my hat for joy.12

New Zealand failed to send a delegate to the conference. No further
correspondence from Catt survives. New Zealand was continually being urged to attend international women's meetings. May Wright Sevell, President of the International Council of Women, wrote to Sheppard requesting her attendance at the 1904 conference:

New Zealand is a country in which I have warm interest. It has seemed to me in many ways one of the most progressive and liberal-minded of all England's colonies.\(^{13}\)

Members of various international women's movements often expressed resentment and frustration at New Zealand's lack of involvement as they felt it was the duty of New Zealand women to promote themselves for the good of others. However, financial difficulties, travelling distances and lack of free time all hindered New Zealand's efforts to help. In addition to this New Zealand women were often tied up with their own activities such as the campaign for the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act.

As a member of the temperance movement, Kate Sheppard held strong ties with the World WCTU. Only one letter from Frances Willard is contained in the collection but its informal tone suggests that prior correspondence had taken place. Addressing Kate Sheppard as "My Dear Friend", Frances Willard wrote thanking her for her "invaluable article" on New Zealand women's suffrage and stated her intention to reproduce it in Lady Henry's paper and her own. She praised her for her contribution, stating, "you have done a distinctive service in writing it." The letter was closed with the lines, "Hoping to see you Saturday night. I am your affectionate friend, Frances E. Willard."\(^{14}\)

Letters written to Kate Sheppard on Willard's behalf were sent to her by Willard's personal secretary, Anna Gordon. Gordon continued to hold correspondence with Sheppard after Willard's death.

The gaps in the Kate Sheppard collection are somewhat filled by the newspaper, The White Ribbon. This paper was established in 1895
and was under the editorship of Kate Sheppard from 1895 to 1903. While it can not be viewed as evidence of direct personal contact it is nevertheless valuable in providing examples of interaction between the women's movements in the two countries. The White Ribbon was founded by the New Zealand WCTU. Previously, all news concerning the women's temperance movement had been gathered from the United States temperance paper, The Union Signal. However, by 1895 New Zealand women had significantly increased their own levels of activity and they felt the need for a paper of their own. This move may also indicate that the New Zealand women no longer looked to the United States for guidance, for their suffrage victory had instilled a feeling of confidence and prestige. While the underlying theme of the paper was temperance, close attention was paid to the women's movement as a whole, especially in the United States. The White Ribbon ran articles on several individual American women with greatest attention being paid to Frances Willard. Willard's leadership of the World WCTU provided a common bond for temperance women throughout the world and, when she died in 1898, New Zealand women wrote of their 'shared grief' with their American 'sisters'. In New Zealand the news of their 'beloved chieftain's' death was initially treated with a mixture of disbelief and grief. Mrs Schnackenberg, president of the New Zealand WCTU, speaking of the news of Frances Willard's death stated, "Most of us found it so hard to realise that we felt it impossible to hold a memorial service while the hope remained that she was still with us in the flesh." The White Ribbon issue of March 1898 was largely taken up with various tributes to Frances Willard, including one from Kate Sheppard:

Miss Willard's life was a beautiful example of what may be done by a noble woman... Now that she has passed from our sight, we shall have a truer perception of all that she
did, and better understand the brave and bright spirit of Frances Willard.  

Obituaries were also printed in the New Zealand daily papers, indicating that knowledge of Frances Willard and her work was well known by the New Zealand public. Large memorial services for Frances Willard were held throughout New Zealand. In Christchurch, a well attended service was conducted in a hall that was decorated with an American flag and a large portrait of Frances Willard. The New Zealand WCTU continued to hold commemorative services on 'Frances Willard Day' each year. In 1909, eleven years after her death, the Frances Willard commemoration held in Dunedin, attracted the attendance of 500 people. Meetings at which talks on the life and work of Frances Willard were held continued well into the 1920s. For a short time The White Ribbon ran a column entitled, 'Rest Cottage'. Willard's former home was described as a "veritable Mecca for temperance workers and those interested to see where Frances E. Willard lived, loved and toiled to make the whole world more home-like."  

By the turn of the twentieth century, the original pioneers of United States women's suffrage were gaining a level of acceptability and respectability amongst temperance women. The White Ribbon carried several articles on Susan B. Anthony but the main emphasis was placed on her 'humanitarian' and 'self-sacrificing' qualities rather than her ideas on women's equality. When Anthony died in 1906 the paper paid tribute to her, describing her as "perhaps the greatest of the nineteenth century pioneers, brave earnest, constant hearted." A carefully selected obituary by Ida Husted Harper was reprinted. Heavy emphasis was placed on Anthony's 'womanliness' and most of the tribute was taken up with a description of Anthony's home, with its splendid array of silver spoons, fine linen and china. In conclusion
the article stated:

She will ever stand alone and unapproached, her fame continually increasing as evolution lifts humanity into higher appreciation of justice and liberty.¹⁹

Elizabeth Cady Stanton was treated in an equally cautious manner. She was described as "the boldest, most brilliant woman reformer of the age"²⁰ but articles concentrated mainly on her 'life story' rather than her theories on women's position in society. While temperance women had come to accept Stanton and Anthony's contribution to woman's suffrage, they were still anxious to destroy the belief that suffragists were man haters. Hence, heavy emphasis was placed on Stanton and Anthony's 'womanly' and moral characteristics.

Unlike Stanton and Anthony, Charlotte Perkins Gilman's ideas received full coverage. Gilman's book, Women and Economics, studied the economic relationship between men and women and the corresponding effect on women's position in society. Her ideas were new, unconventional and controversial and yet they were highly praised in The White Ribbon. The August 1899 issue carried a lead story on Gilman, describing her as a "New Woman of the highest type"²¹. The article also stated that Gilman had a keen interest in New Zealand and it was anticipated that she would visit in "a year or two." Such predictions continued to be made for several years, the visit, however, did not eventuate. Articles by Gilman, such as "Good Mothers Wanted" and "Competing With Men" were reprinted and her poetry appeared in nearly every issue from 1898 to 1908. Sheppard admired many of Gilman's ideas and this personal interest helps explain the large amount of attention given to Gilman.

The White Ribbon reported news not just on American individuals but the progress of the suffrage movement as a whole. There were continual reports on the progress of state campaigns the results of
state referendums and the latest tactics being employed by the United States suffragists.

In 1896 Kate Sheppard established the National Council of Women and this organization's ties with the International Council of Women strengthened New Zealand's involvement with the international women's movement. The New Zealand National Council of Women provided practical assistance to the women's suffrage movement in the United States. For example, in 1899 they forwarded a petition to the United States Congress on behalf of the women of Hawaii imploring them to introduce equality of sex and stating that the practical outcome of women's enfranchisement in New Zealand had been beneficial to the community. This action was preformed at the suggestion of Susan B. Anthony who encouraged New Zealand women to help their American sisters. The NCW also kept United States women informed of activities in New Zealand. In October 1900, The White Ribbon reported that The Woman's Journal of Boston had acknowledged the receipt of the printed minutes and proceedings of the last annual meeting of the New Zealand NCW. The Woman's Journal expressed, "great sympathy with the progressive ideals set forth in the papers read" and remarked that New Zealand women were, "striving for the same things that American women are always anxious to obtain." 22 The journal held high praise for Mrs Sievwright's paper on 'Women's Disabilities' and published it in full. The following year, the New Zealand NCW again sent their annual report to the woman's papers in the United States. The report was highly commended by Ida Husted. The following comments by Husted printed in the Harpers Bulletin demonstrate the important role the reports played in informing United States women on New Zealand women's real situation:

"The report," she says, "contains some things which are very astonishing to those of us who have believed that, with the
granting of the full franchise to the women of New Zealand in 1893, their equality of rights in all matters was secured." She quotes lengthily from Mrs Siewwright's paper on 'The Disability of Women' and draws attention to the papers on the 'Economic Independence of Married Women' and on the 'Ethics of Wage Earning'. The resolutions that women should occupy seats on all public bodies, and that all civil and political disabilities should be removed were given in full . . . "We expect just such reports as above from most countries," says Mrs Harper, "where injustice to women is the rule, but they come with a shock from New Zealand which, in many respects, and especially in its recognition of the rights of women, is generally supposed to represent general progress. But we cannot understand why the women, who have the Parliamentary suffrage, do not unite to defeat the members who are responsible for these wrongs. Most assuredly they have the ability to do so, for one seldom finds a more able set of papers than are found within the covers of this National Council Report."23

These comments seem very naive in their character and reveal the mistaken belief held by many suffragist that suffrage would automatically lead to equal rights. United States suffragists were to experience this type of disillusionment after woman's suffrage was finally passed in 1920. Many had failed to realise that suffrage was not the final step to equality but only the first. Alice Paul, leader of the group of suffragists who had employed militant tactics in their fight for the vote, had foreseen this situation. Immediately after the suffrage victory she began a campaign for the introduction of an equal rights amendment. However, the woman's movement was by this time in a recession and her campaign failed through lack of support. While those who saw women's suffrage as being a wider part of feminism were disappointed with New Zealand women's performance, the 'rank and file' of the American suffragists were delighted with the results of women's suffrage in New Zealand. They pointed to New Zealand's steady series of reforms that reflected moral and home orientated laws.

Between the years 1893 and 1919 New Zealand women had indeed made their presence felt in the area of political reform. A new divorce law was passed allowing women to sue for divorce on the grounds of
adultery alone, the age of consent was raised and a drive against prostitution had begun. The fears expressed by the 'liquor interests' during the suffrage fight were, to some extent, realised. Local option was introduced in some areas and the referendum for the introduction of complete prohibition was lost by a mere three thousand votes. Women were banned from serving behind bars and earlier closing times for public bars were enforced. These laws were to challenge and eventually change the male-dominated society of New Zealand. The traditional male culture still survived - but within strict boundaries. While a number of individuals continued to battle for greater rights for women, the majority of New Zealand women were satisfied that their main ambition of greater moral influence in politics had been achieved and they saw no need for further agitation of women's rights.

In 1903 Kate Sheppard retired as editor of the White Ribbon, but her successor, Jessie McKay, continued with the same liberal editorial policies. But when Mrs Oldham took over as editor the paper became markedly conservative. Alfred Lord Tennyson replaced Charlotte Perkins Gilman, 'Concerning Women' became 'What Our Workers Are Doing' and the main issues were now the white slave trade and prohibition rather than the Woman's Disability Bill or the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act. The activities of various women's groups, such as the NCW, were no longer reported. From to 1921 only brief mention was made of the progress of the United States women's suffrage movement. The event of Jeanette Rankin's election to Congress was treated not as a victory for women's equality but as a step towards securing prohibition. The White Ribbon's reduced coverage of the United States women's movements did not mean there was a lull in relations between the American and New Zealand feminists. Individuals
of the two countries continued to correspond and New Zealand continued
to provide valuable support and information to the United States.
When Mrs Cole, former president of the New Zealand WCTU, died, letters
of sympathy were printed in The White Ribbon. Amongst these letters
was a tribute from a Mr and Mrs W F Horn from Topeka, Kansas. It
reveals just one instance of how individual New Zealand women provided
important support to their American sisters:

It was a great privilege, and equally as great a pleasure,
that through our long and bitter struggle for the adoption
of Woman's Equal Suffrage here in the State of Kansas in the
campaign of 1912, that we, through correspondence, became
acquainted with the late Mrs Cole, who, through her
broad-minded views, her general knowledge of the effect of
woman's suffrage in her own land, and the clear and concise
statements which she so kindly sent here that had so much
influence in allaying the ill-feeling throughout our State
by false statements circulated by the opponents of Equal
Suffrage, and the "Kansas Club" gave her full credit for her
deep interest in their cause in Kansas, which was carried to
a successful termination.
It became my honoured privilege to forward a message of
thanks from our Governor to Mrs Cole for the interest she
had taken on behalf of the success of the women of the State
of Kansas of obtaining their political and civil rights . . .
we extend our deep and true sympathy in the loss of so
able and efficient a member and leader, for her influence
and public views extended far from the New Zealand shores;
and here in Kansas the Good Government Club are adopting
some of her plans of modern ideas for future enactment into
our laws, in memory of her who, just on the eve of departure
of this life, sent us many good suggestions.24

The efforts of individual New Zealand women in securing the
success of suffrage in the United States were clearly minor. Any
assistance was limited mainly to messages of advice, sympathy, and
support. However, the contribution of New Zealand women was of a
major consequence in the sense that it established a precedent for
others to follow. The Melbourne WCTU expressed the excitement felt by
women all over the world when it wrote: "... this means so much, not
only to you and the women of New Zealand, but for women everywhere on
the face of the globe. It will give more hope and life to all women
struggling for emancipation, and gives promise of better times
approaching Millennium for all the downtrodden and enslaved millions of women." Just as New Zealand women had found it easier to argue for the adoption of the franchise in New Zealand when it was already in existence in Wyoming, so too had the American suffragists found the New Zealand example invaluable for their arguments. They could point to New Zealand to demonstrate that women could exercise their political rights in an intelligent and responsible manner without bringing mayhem to the community or physically endangering themselves.
FOOTNOTES


2. Ibid., p. 116.


4. Ibid., p. 260.

5. Ibid., p. 272-273.

6. Ibid., p. 274.

7. Susan B Anthony to Kate Sheppard, 7 November 1893, Sheppard MSS. Anthony also mentions that a letter she sent to Sheppard almost a year ago has been returned to her. The somewhat unreliable postal service made communication between the two countries difficult.

8. Mary E. Anthony to Kate Sheppard, 28 September 1906, Sheppard MSS.

9. Carrie Chapman Catt to Sheppard, 3 June 1903, Sheppard MSS.

10. Carrie Chapman Catt to Sheppard, 3 December, 1906, Sheppard MSS.

11. Carrie Chapman Catt to Sheppard, 14 April 1908, Sheppard MSS.

12. Carrie Chapman Catt to Sheppard, 12 May 1908, Sheppard MSS.

13. May Wright Sevell to Sheppard, 19 April 1904, Sheppard MSS.

14. Frances Willard to Sheppard, 6 June 1894, Sheppard MSS.


17. Ibid., October 1900, p. 10.


19. Ibid.


22. Ibid., October 1900, p. 8.
23. Ibid., February 1902, p. 7

24. Ibid., December 1913, p. 10.

CONCLUSION

Carrie Chapman Catt, president of the National American Women's Suffrage Association between 1915 and 1920 summarised the United States suffrage campaign with the following statement:

To get the word "male" in effect out of the Constitution cost the women of the country 52 years of ceaseless campaign . . . . During that time they were forced to conduct 56 campaigns of referenda to male voters; 480 campaigns to get Legislatures to submit suffrage amendments to the voters; 47 campaigns to get State constitutional conventions to write woman suffrage into state constitutions; 2777 campaigns to get State party conventions to include woman suffrage planks; 30 campaigns to get presidential party conventions to adopt woman suffrage planks in party platforms, and 19 campaigns with 19 successive Congresses.¹

In contrast to this, New Zealand women's campaign to rid the words "persons does not include female" from the Electoral Bill seems minor. A comparison between New Zealand and the United States, however, is immediately uneven due to the United States geographical size and complex political system. Hence, in terms of suffrage, there were naturally notable differences in the national campaigns of the two countries. While there may not be obvious similarities on a national scale, a comparative analysis is still valid, for there are many parallels to be drawn between New Zealand and the frontier states in the West.

The state of Wyoming was chosen for this thesis as it was the first place in the world to grant full suffrage to women and was subsequently used as an example in the New Zealand campaign for suffrage. This study has found a strong resemblance in the historiography of women's suffrage in New Zealand and Wyoming. Contemporary and historical analysis of suffrage in these two
places has been, until recently, relatively sparse. The emergence of women's history in the late 1960's has helped destroy some of the myths that surround the introduction of suffrage. The absence of public activity by women in Wyoming had caused some historians, such as Larson and Grimes, to dismiss any suggestion of women's involvement in the introduction of suffrage. However, as Flexner has pointed out, women were active within the private sphere, and she highlighted the role of Ester Morris to illustrate this argument. Virginia Scharff expanded on this theory of private activity by arguing that the women of Wyoming, such as Julia Bright, were active participants of 'domestic feminism'.

While the myths surrounding New Zealand women's supposed non-involvement in the suffrage fight have, to a large extent, been destroyed, there still remains some debate as to why the women were granted the vote. There has been an assumption made that women were scarce in New Zealand and were therefore awarded a higher moral status than women elsewhere in the world. It is hoped that this study's examination of legislation concerning women prior to the introduction of women's suffrage has proved this to be incorrect.

As stated earlier, it is difficult to draw parallels between the national campaigns for suffrage in the United States and New Zealand, however, the Women's Christian Temperance Movement's in the suffrage activities in both countries does provide a valid basis of comparison. Women were originally welcomed into the temperance organizations as it was felt that there 'inherent' morality was particularly suitable for the task of temperance reform. By the 1850's, the temperance organizations decided that political coercion was a more effective agent of change than moral
suasion and their tactics were changed accordingly. While the 
temperance men became politically active in their bid to introduce 
temperance, women were expected to continue their passive role. 
For many women, this action served to highlight the limits that 
were imposed by their 'separate sphere'. Rejecting the redundant 
role imposed by them by the temperance men, the women formed a 
separate temperance organization. Through this organization women 
gained organizational skills, experience in the public sphere and 
most importantly, a feeling of 'sisterhood'. The establishment 
and the subsequent success of the separate women's temperance 
movement had raised women's confidence, and at the same time, lead 
to a growing feminist consciousness amongst the women. Despite 
these factors, temperance women were reluctant to lend their 
support to the suffrage movement as they considered it somewhat 
radical in both motives and actions. In both the United States 
and New Zealand the responsibility for persuading the temperance 
ranks to lend their support to suffrage lay largely with one 
individual.

Frances Willard was the highly successful leader of the 
American and world WCTU, but perhaps her main achievement lay, not 
in the field of temperance, but in suffrage, for it was she who 
convinced the temperance forces that support for suffrage was not 
only 'safe' but essential. Many temperance women were afraid of 
suffrage as it would introduce equality which, in turn, would 
destroy the separate spheres. Willard assured the members of the 
WCTU that the women's vote was needed to establish a more moral 
society. 'Equality' did not mean a destruction of the separate 
spheres, rather it would merely widen women's influence and in 
turn produce a more balanced, just and caring society. Willard
successfully converted the WCTU and their subsequent support not only swelled the suffrage ranks considerably, but also added an air of 'respectability' to the issue.

Willard's power was such that she not only influence the American WCTU, but women temperance members throughout the world. In 1885, Mary Clemment Leavitt was sent to New Zealand as part of Willard's 'missionary' programme and she brought with her the message of the important need to support votes for women. Kate Sheppard, legal superintendent of the New Zealand WCTU, took up the challenge issued by Leavitt, and in 1887 she organized and lead a franchise department within the WCTU. Kate Sheppard, like many temperance women, strongly admired Frances Willard and she was to imitate much of her style and techniques. Using arguments similar to those of Willard, Sheppard soothingly assured both public and politicians that women's suffrage would enhance rather than threaten society.

Both Sheppard and Willard were highly successful in their efforts to gain support for suffrage. A skilful mixture of determination, emotion and reason meant that these women were able to appeal to a wide cross section of women. They can be seen as respectable radicals and it is this paradox that makes these women complex, and, to a certain degree, elusive.

By the time New Zealand had won the vote in 1893, the United States suffragists were still struggling in their campaign and only a small number of Western states had enacted the franchise. Hence, American suffragists were eager to hear of the methods their New Zealand counterparts had used to win their success. These requests for help were unable to be fully satisfied due to several factors. The first of these was misinformation. William
Pember Reeves' account of women's suffrage stated that the New Zealand suffrage had been a surprise gift endowed by a benevolent government. Kate Sheppard's correspondence with the United States suffragists repaired the damage done by Reeves and established the truth concerning New Zealand women's fight for the vote. This personal correspondence was vital in establishing a bond between the suffragists of the two countries, however, distance, together with lack of time and money on the New Zealand women's part, somewhat weakened the link between the two groups.

These problems were somewhat further compounded by the fact that United States suffragists were no longer using the argument that had won the vote for New Zealand women. The United States suffragists, like their New Zealand counterparts, had originally argued for the vote on the ground of morality. By the mid 1890's, the failure to gain suffrage in the Eastern states, together with the demands of the 'new woman' who was now entering the ranks of the suffragists, led to a change in tactics. They no longer asked for the vote on the grounds that they may further exercise their moral duty, rather they stated that it was their natural right as citizens to demand equal voting. This change of policy meant that New Zealand suffragists were no longer able to offer concrete assistance.

Finally, there was some disappointment over New Zealand women's 'performance' after gaining the vote. United States suffragists had mistakenly placed heavy emphasis on the vote, believing it to be the ultimate cure to all forms of equality. Thus, they were somewhat surprised over New Zealand women's supposedly limited success in gaining new legislation for women.
These problems, though many, did not fully diminish the feelings of 'sisterhood' between the two groups. New Zealand women's ultimate contribution to the United States suffragists campaign was their win itself. United States suffragists could look to New Zealand not only as a symbol of hope, but also as a sound example of how the enactment of women's suffrage did not, as many feared, lead to moral mayhem.

Despite the development of historiography on New Zealand women's suffrage, misconceptions still exist. For example, Carl Degler in *At Odds* (1980) states that the New Zealand women had the vote extended to them "before they even asked for it" while Ruth Bordin in *Women and Temperance* (1981) claims that the New Zealand WCTU "supported a property qualification for the franchise". A comparative analysis is useful in destroying these inaccuracies and at the same time can lead to a new level of understanding on the movements in each country. Some historians (such as William O'Neill) rate women's enfranchisement as a 'failure' as women did not use their voting power to 'clean up politics' or better their position in society. But, as Scott and Scott succinctly state:

... if using the vote wisely is to be made the measure of entitlement to it, men would of been disenfranchised years ago.

By refocusing on the past we are better able to understand the present. The objections and fears expressed on the suffrage issue may seem ridiculous to the modern reader but they likely to reappear in today's society, as seen in the objections to the introduction of an Equal Rights Amendment in the United States and the complaints voiced over the establishment of a Ministry of Women's Affairs in New Zealand. It is hoped that the continued study of suffrage in both the United States and New Zealand will
underline the importance of the movement and highlight the contributions made by hundreds of individuals who sacrificed their time and energy to ensure equal voting rights for women.

FOOTNOTES


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