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WOMEN AND CANADA: STRUGGLES, SUCCESSES AND A CENTURY OF SUFFRAGE



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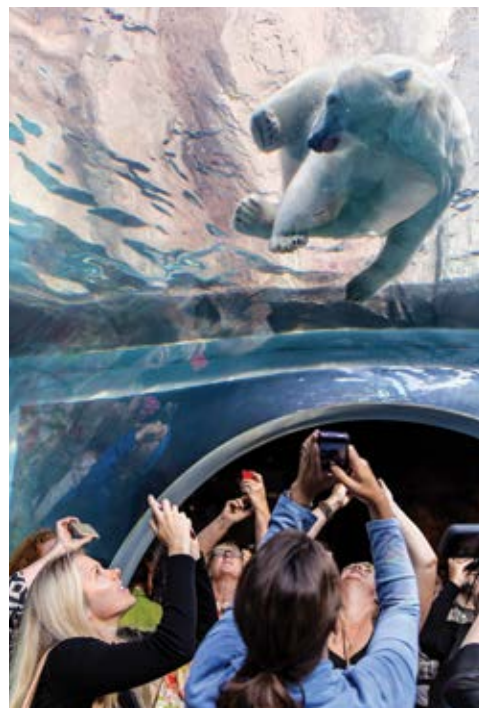


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LETTERS

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The 12 finalists for a new bank note featuring an "iconic" Canadian woman: Pitseolak Ashoona, Emily Carr, Thérèse Casgrain, Viola Desmond, Lotta Hitschmanova, E. Pauline Johnson (Tekahionwake), Elizabeth (Elsie) MacGill, Nellie McClung, Lucy Maud Montgomery, Fanny (Bobbie) Rosenfeld, Gabrielle Roy, and Idola-St-Jean.

(Cover image courtesy of Bank of Canada)



The more we know about our history, the better we understand where we've come from and who we are. Learning about our history makes us remember our past and face our future with confidence and optimism. Our Government is proud to support organizations like ACS that enhance Canadians' knowledge of our country.

As we prepare to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Confederation in 2017, we have a wonderful opportunity to highlight important anniversaries and the people and events that have shaped our history. This includes this year's centennial of women in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta gaining the right to vote—a first step toward equality and women's rights in Canada.

As Minister of Canadian Heritage, I would like to commend ACS on its commitment to ensuring our collective past has a vibrant presence in Canada today. I wish everyone taking part an enjoyable and productive conference.



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INTRODUCTION

WOMEN AND CANADA: STRUGGLES, SUCCESSES AND A CENTURY OF SUFFRAGE

CELINE COOPER

As an area of historical investigation, the story of women's suffrage in Canada continues to evolve and expand. This edition of *Canadian Issues/Thèmes Canadiens* marks the centennial anniversary of the bill that extended the franchise to women in Manitoba, paving the way for the eventual enfranchisement of women across the country. The eight contributors featured here offer reflection and provocation for work in this field.

The relationship between women and the Canadian nation state has never been static; it has always been multiple and in transformation, shaped in different ways by intersections of gender, race, class, language, dis/ability, age and sexuality. Suffrage itself was an uneven and unequal process. Under the Constitutional Act of 1791 that created Upper and Lower Canada, some propertied women in Quebec already had the right to vote. This changed in 1849 when the legislature passed a bill excluding women

from the franchise. There were provincial disparities as the vote was extended to white women in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta in 1916 while their counterparts in Quebec would not be granted that right until 1940 largely due to resistance from the powerful Roman Catholic Church. Throughout the nineteenth and into the twentieth century, the mainstream suffragist movement — radical though it was at the time — reflected a white, middle-class, Anglo-European, colonial perspective. Many women and men were ineligible to vote until long after the post World War II era due to their Indigenous, racial and immigrant status. First Nations were not permitted to vote until 1960 without giving up their treaty rights.

Over the last hundred years, Canada has made strides in strengthening women's political representation within a liberal democratic framework. Two recent examples come to mind. For a brief per-

iod in 2013, women premiers were at the helm of five provinces and one territory representing 85 percent of Canada's population — Ontario, Quebec, Newfoundland and Labrador, Alberta, British Columbia and Nunavut. (For the record, only Kathleen Wynne in Ontario and Christy Clark in British Columbia remain as sitting female premiers today.) Last November, the newly elected federal Liberal government set a precedent by naming the first gender-parity cabinet in the country's history. Shortly after he was sworn in as Canada's 23rd prime minister, a reporter asked Justin Trudeau — who calls himself a feminist — why it was so important to have a gender-balanced cabinet. His now iconic response: "Because it's 2015."

Progress? Absolutely. At the same time, the contributors in this issue push us to further develop how we measure success in the ongoing struggle for gender justice in early 21st century Canada. This involves thinking across a range of institutional and social contexts. Their remarks on a century of women's suffrage collect loosely around themes of Canadian nation-building; citizenship, democracy and forms of political participation; diversity and the representation of women's experiences in historical records; the imbrication of power hierarchies in suffrage and, by extension, feminist movements and; the persistence of social inequalities in our contemporary liberal democracy.

Cora J. Voyageur challenges the colonial legacy of the historical record and its erasure of the knowledge, skills and status of First Nations women in pre-colonial society and their essential role in the creation of Canada, particularly in the early days of European contact and the fur trade industry. gives heroine Nellie McClung her due as a leader in the

groundbreaking Manitoba campaign for votes for women while bringing into relief some of the forgotten names and stories from that struggle. **Rose Fine-Meyer** studies the evolution of women's historical experiences with suffrage as represented in Ontario history textbooks between 1922 and 2014. She problematizes, among other aspects, the exclusion of diverse women's organizations that existed across Canada as well as the transnational character of this activism that linked Canadian women to movements across the Commonwealth and the United States. **Merna Forster** details her recent experiences in the fight to put Canadian women on a bank note. She raises questions about which historical figures our national institutions deem worthy of acknowledging.

Joan Sangster disputes the prevailing idea of feminist "waves" and "troughs of inactivity". Using illustrations from grassroots organizing, she argues that after the federal vote in 1918, new campaigns, issues and organizations emerged reflecting a multiplicity of views on how to achieve gender equality. **Sharon Cook** explores how early women temperance advocates who fought for the franchise helped to shape industrialized Canada by pushing forward social reform in areas such as education, health, changes to the penal code, economic redistribution, social services for vulnerable citizens and the introduction of mother's allowances. **Yolande Cohen** considers the integration of women in political life in Canadian and Quebec contexts, with attention to how we attend to the complexity of social relationships in our changing politics and cultures. She highlights the importance of networks and civil society in democratic transitions and proposes a shift from models of representative democracy to a more egalitarian society based on

participatory democracy. In a similar vein, **Veronica Strong-Boag** draws on political theorist Nancy Fraser's discussion of 'participatory parity' which emphasises the importance of recognition and redistribution in a democratic politics. She highlights the work of two critics of North American colonialism who championed gender justice while simultaneously advocating racial justice for Indigenous and Asian peoples – E. Pauline Johnson and Edith Maud Eaton (Sui Sin Far).

The 1916 extension of the franchise was a landmark success in the struggle for gender equality in Canada. But it was not a universal achievement for all women, and it took major economic transformations and war for the state to relent to those who were demanding equal citizenship rights. This issue shuttles between past and present to provide much needed context and insight into what this historical moment has meant — and continues to mean — for Canada as we move forward into the future.

SUFFRAGISTS AFTER SUFFRAGE: CONTINUING WAVES OF FEMINISM

JOAN SANGSTER

Professor Joan Sangster has written articles and monographs on working women and labour movement, the history of the Left, feminist theory and historiography, the criminalization of women and girls, and Aboriginal women and the law. A Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, she has held a Killam fellowship, as well as visiting professorships at Duke, Princeton, and McGill Universities. Her most recent book was *Transforming Labour: Women and Work in Postwar Canada* (University of Toronto Press). A retrospective collection of her historical and theoretical essays, *Through Feminist Eyes: Essays on Canadian Women's History*, was published by Athabasca University Press in 2011, and she is currently finishing a monograph, tentatively titled *Contact Zones: Images of the Aboriginal North, 1940-1970*. As recipient of both Trent's Symons Teaching award and the University Research Award, she is also a member of the Frost Centre for Canadian Studies and Indigenous Studies at Trent University where she teaches in the MA and doctoral Canadian Studies program.

For decades after white women received the federal vote in 1918, popular magazines asked if the extension of the franchise had really changed politics, invariably using one measure of success: the number of women elected to parliament and provincial legislatures. Grattan O'Leary, later a Conservative senator, suggested in a *Chatelaine* article in 1930 that the woman's vote did not have a discernable impact since women voted much like men. Vancouver suffragist Judge Helen Gregory MacGill disagreed, pointing out in the same magazine that

women's voices were still underrepresented since they still faced both discrimination and their own feelings of "inferiority." A group of unsuccessful women candidates in the 1930 federal election added their views in a *Chatelaine* piece, "Why I Failed to be Elected." While some pointed to overt discrimination and lack of support, Manitoban Beatrice Brigden, who ran as a Farmer-Labour candidate, noted that nine of the ten women ran for alternative rather than "old line" parties: their radical views made their run for office even more of an

uphill battle.¹

Whatever their explanations, there was some pessimism about feminism in the interwar period, a view that has been remarkably resilient in subsequent histories. “After gaining the vote in 1920, the women’s movement simply sputtered” claim two legal historians.² While their book is a masterful discussion of the Persons case, this characterization of the women’s movement is questionable. The idea of feminist waves – first (suffrage), second (sixties) and third (1990s) – perpetuates this unfortunate image of cresting waves and troughs of inactivity. Both the notion that suffrage was finished with, and that feminist apathy prevailed after 1918 are contradicted by four facts. First, the franchise was not universal: some women and men remained disenfranchised due to racial or Indigenous status until long after World War II. Second, the battle for the vote was not over; three Maritime provinces enfranchised just after the end of World War I and Quebec not until 1940, after a difficult struggle for legal equality and suffrage by Anglophone and Francophone suffragists in that province. Third, suffragists immediately put their demands on the legislative agenda in the 1920s and 1930s, pressing for reforms they had long promoted. And fourth, suffragists and the next generation of feminist activists threw themselves into old and new political struggles – though not necessarily electoral politics. The fleeting unity of the suffrage battle fragmented into multiple feminist causes, political organizations and visions of emancipation.

If we look at a few examples illustrating the fourth point, we can trace suffragists after suffrage. Of course, suffragists had never been a politically homogeneous group. They ranged from socialists to conservatives; some wanted to join the ruling elite while others opposed the class system tout court. Cracks in the edifice of suffrage unity were strikingly apparent when labour conflict swept across Canada in 1919. During the Winnipeg General Strike, Nellie McClung opposed labour’s tactics and the strike, while on the other side, Women’s Labor League organizer and strike supporter Helen Armstrong ended up in prison for her role aiding the strike.

The post-suffrage era brought these significant ideological differences to the fore, but even accounting for such divisions, there is ample evidence of continued organizational and lobbying work by feminists. However, rather than focus on federal elections or on Emily Murphy’s search for a Senate seat (the Persons case), we need to examine how women expended their energies on local grassroots politics, on social justice issues including peace, education, labour or farm improvement, or on issues of class, ethnic and racial inequality linked to gender difference and discrimination.

Some suffrage organizations did not even disband: they established public forums to educate women about their new rights, and reformulated their political goals, merging suffragist views of women’s maternal political power with a new emphasis

1 Grattan O’Leary, *Is Women’s Suffrage a Success?* *Chatelaine*, September 1930, 12, 52; Helen Gregory MacGill, “Are Women Wanted in Public Life?” *Chatelaine*, Sept 1928, 2-4; Mrs George Holis, Miss Mildred Low, Miss Beatrice Brigden, Miss F.S. Greenwood, Mrs. Donald Macdonald, “Why I Failed To Be Elected” *Chatelaine*, Oct 1930, 17, 37.

2 Robert Sharpe and Patricia I. McMahon, *The Person’s Case: The Origins and Legacy of the Fight for Legal Personhood* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008).

on their role as active 'women-mother citizens.' Newfoundland suffragists created a new League of Women Voters, designed to "agitate" to amend legislation relating to women and children. Saskatchewan's suffrage group, the Political Equality League, developed a new "Plan of Work," ambitious in its goals, calling for the nationalization of public utilities, international arbitration to end war, changes to the criminal code, education reform, and equal pay.³

Many suffragists had been liberal reformers at heart, and they continued to lobby for pragmatic policy changes, sometimes with the aid of the few newly-elected women legislators. In B.C., suffragist Mary Ellen Smith, a British immigrant and wife of Liberal-Labour MPP Ralph Smith, ran successfully for her husband's seat after his death, standing as an Independent Liberal. Under the banner "women and children first," she helped to realize suffragists' maternal feminist agenda, championing causes such as an Equal Guardianship Act, allowing women equal custody of their children, mothers allowance legislation, providing financial aid to impoverished widows with children, and a female minimum wage. She was less successful with other suffragist demands, such as women's right to sit on juries, and she also persisted with suffragist racial prejudices, opposing Asian immigration.⁴

Women often focused their sights on local issues and elections, where they were less beholden to established party politics and where they could more easily combine political work with care of their families. The latter can't be underestimated: women's primary responsibility for caring work limited both their time and geographical mobility. An English immigrant, Annie Gale, backed by a non-partisan Women's Ratepayers Association, was elected to Calgary City Council after World War I on a platform reminiscent of suffragists' maternal feminism: protection of child labour, control of food prices, milk purification, and better health care.⁵

Educational reform had long been on suffragists' 'to do' list; some feminists ran for election to School Boards, advocating equal pay for female teachers and better educational services for working-class children. Amelia Turner, a Calgary suffragist and Labour Party activist ran for the School Board in 1929, proposing free school texts for all children in order to democratize access to basic education.⁶

Vancouver suffragist-socialist Helena Gutteridge, a leader in both the pre-World War I suffrage and labour movements, and a former "suffragette" in Britain, was elected Vancouver alderman in the 1930s. Her social justice platform called for subsidized low-rental housing, public ownership of utilities, and she vigorously opposed efforts to fire

3 Margo Iris Duley, "The Radius of Her Influence for Good: the Rise and Triumph of the Women's Suffrage Movement in Newfoundland, 1909-25" in *Pursuing Equality: Historical Perspectives on women in Newfoundland and Labrador*, ed. Linda Kealey (St John's: ISER, 1993), 14-65; Elizabeth Ann Kalmakoff, "Woman Suffrage in Saskatchewan," MA Thesis, University of Regina, 1993.

4 <http://womensuffrage.org/?p=21014>. Accessed 15 April 2016.

5 http://womensuffrage.org/?designsentry_portf=improving-cities-annie-gale-and-calgary-canada. Accessed 15 April, 2016.

6 Patricia Roome, "Amelia Turner and Calgary Labour Women, 1919-35" in *Beyond the Vote: Canadian Women and Politics*, eds. Linda Kealey and Joan Sangster (University of Toronto Press, 1989), 89-117.

married women workers as a solution to Depression unemployment. Suffrage was an ongoing issue: the city's restrictive, property-based voting laws excluded many renters, women without a legal share in their family home, and Native and Asian residents. Gutteridge proposed universal suffrage for everyone in the city, a radical idea considered beyond the pale by most of her fellow councilmen.⁷

If there was one issue which had converted women to suffrage, it was temperance. For women who became suffragists to combat 'the liquor interests,' the vote initially appeared a resounding success as some provinces enacted prohibition. That this became one of their greatest disappointments became apparent later in the decade, when many governments abandoned prohibition for state-regulated sales of liquor. Other legislative success stories, long supported by suffragists, such as provincial eugenic legislation, also appear far less to us like victories, more like mistaken pathways.

The more exaggerated claims suffragists had made about wiping out crime and corruption were always overly optimistic but they did work to see some of their cherished proposals like mothers allowances and a minimum female wage become law in many provinces, even though these reforms proved less than transformative in their actual implementation, failing to alter relations of inequality between women. A significant minority of suffragists also developed a more radical political agenda, arguing

that gender equality was only possible when it was linked to socialist transformation.⁸ In the aftermath of a devastating world war, suffragists and newly politicized feminists founded peace organizations, including Canadian chapters of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF or WIL). Suffragists Violet MacNaughton, Rose Henderson and Laura Jamieson transferred their feminist idealism to WILPF, which argued wars could never be eradicated until economic and social inequality – including gender and racial oppression – were vanquished and imperialism challenged. WIL feminists were motivated by various ideals – humanist tolerance social co-operation, anti-capitalism – but they agreed war was caused by territorial ambitions, greed, prejudice, and the propensity to use violence in settling disputes. Vancouver suffragist Laura Jamieson (later a CCF member of the B.C. legislature) was an indispensable organizational force for the WIL in the interwar period. Sometimes facing intense public skepticism or hostility, WIL women wrote, pamphleted, petitioned and lobbied the public and politicians in order to convey their feminist pacifist views.

Rose Henderson's pathway from suffragist to feminist-socialist activist is just one example of this wave of activism following 1918. Radicalized by World War I and the labour revolt of 1919, Henderson was dismissed from her job as a social worker in Montreal but threw herself into a new life of political activism, aiding the labour movement,

7 Irene Howard, *The Struggle for Social Justice in British Columbia: Helena Gutteridge, the Unknown Reformer* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1992).

8 Thomas Socknat, "For Peace and Freedom: Canadian Feminists in the interwar Peace Campaign," in *Dreams of Equality: Women on the Canadian Left*, eds. Janice Williamson and Deborah Gorham (Toronto: Women's Press, 1989), 66-90; Joan Sangster, *Dreams of Equality: Women on the Canadian Left* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1989).

socialism (later the CCF), and women's equality, as well as international peace and disarmament. Henderson had what feminists today often call an "intersectional" analysis; as her biographer, Peter Campbell says, she "did not focus on any one of the major hierarchies of power in capitalist society, but rather on them all."⁹

To be sure, suffragists after suffrage were alarmingly complacent about continuing racist exclusions from the vote, and issues we see as critical today — Indigneous women's rights, domestic violence — were absent from their agenda, reflecting a dominant Anglo-European and colonial perspective. Nonetheless, feminists did not fall into a trough of inactivity after 1918; instead, they developed new campaigns, issues and organizations that reflected highly divergent views of how to achieve gender equality.

9 Peter Campbell, *Rose Henderson: A Woman for the People* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill Queens University Press, 2010).

FIRST NATIONS WOMEN IN THE FUR TRADE: FROM ESSENTIAL TO REDUNDANT

CORA J. VOYAGEUR

Dr. Cora J. Voyageur is a professor of sociology at the University of Calgary and the faculty lead for the Indigenous Women in Leadership program at the Banff Centre.

Her research explores the Indigenous experience in Canada, including leadership, employment, community and economic development, women's issues, and health. Dr. Voyageur, from the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation in northern Alberta, conducted the first academic study of female chiefs in Canada. She co-edited the book *Hidden in Plain Sight: Contributions of Aboriginal People to Canadian Identity and Culture, Volumes I and II, Restorying Indigenous Leadership: Wise Practices in Community Development* and is the author of *My Heroes Have Always Been Indians*.

Prior to colonization, women were a present and powerful force in the Indigenous society. Legal scholar Robert Williams states that traditionally women controlled the political realm in a number of North American Indian tribes by selecting the male chiefs and other political leaders.¹ They also held the power to initiate or call off war. In addition, women owned substantial property interests, including the marital home, and exercised exclusive dominion over the means of production and the products of major subsistence activities, such as farming.² Thus, Indigenous women controlled

the economic, political and social aspects of their pre-colonial society. Further, the Iroquois Confederacy operated on a matriarchal system prior to the arrival of the Europeans.³ This system was based on the concepts of equality between the genders. Iroquois women played a profound role in the political and economic life of the community. They also traditionally played important roles in their communities as nurturers, educators, and providers.⁴

First Nations women were essential to the creation of Canada. Their social networks, efforts, know-

1 R. Williams, "Gendered checks and balances: Understanding the legacy of White patriarchy in an American Indian cultural context," *Georgia Law Review* 24 (1990): 1019-1044.

2 Williams, 1990.

3 Mann, Barbara Alice. (2000). *Iroquoian Woman: the Ganowisas*. New York: Peter Lang.

4 Mann, 2000.

ledge and companionship meant survival for the early European fur traders and the fur trade industry on which this country was founded. In fact, intermarriage between fur traders and Indigenous women was encouraged to promote growth of the industry.⁵ Although prized “country wives”⁶ in early Canada, their contribution was soon overlooked and they found themselves alienated by the very people they helped. Their fur trader “husbands” were marrying European women and they were being tossed aside or “turned off.”⁷ As Jennifer Brown wrote of such an example, when a high-ranking fur trader (re)married, “a white lady from (the) civilized world,” such traders, “interposed new social barriers between themselves and the natives of the country.”⁸ Indigenous women were subjugated and vilified for the very traits that had previously made them so valuable.

In the early days of European contact, the newcomers relied heavily upon the First Nations community. European traders were forced to adopt a native lifestyle to survive.⁹ First Nations women were not only invaluable to the success of the early European fur traders, but the Canadian fur trade as a whole. Their involvement made it possible for the fur trade to prosper and set the foundation for the creation of Canada as a country. Historian Sylvia Van Kirk

found that, “throughout the 18th century, officers of the day argued with the London Committee that it was essential to keep Indian women in the posts, as they performed important tasks (which) the British had not yet mastered.”¹⁰

As country wives, their practical skills such as language and translation talents were vital to the trade activities between the Indigenous people who had the furs and the European traders who wanted them. Traditional skills such as preparing country food, cooking and making camp helped meet the immediate needs of food and shelter. Other necessities such as suitable clothing, moccasins, snowshoes and canoes were also required for travel outside the camp. As early explorer Samuel Hearne once commented, “the man cannot even venture outside the fort to collect firewood or hunt small game in winter without snowshoes. To be without women to make them is to invite disaster.”¹¹ The tasks Indigenous women performed were second nature to them, but unfamiliar — and yet essential — to the traders.

Perhaps the most utilitarian role of First Nation “country wives” was that of cultural liaison. Their community connections and economic linkages helped their fur trade spouses solidify their com-

5 Van Kirk, Sylvia. 1980. *Many Tender Ties: Women in the Fur-Trade Society, 1670-1870*. Winnipeg: Watson & Dwyer.

6 Country wives were First Nations who married fur traders.

7 Being ‘turned off’ meant that their marriage to a fur trader was not seen as a permanent bond. Van Kirk, 50

8 Brown, Jennifer S. H. 1980. *Strangers in Blood: Fur Trade Company Families in Indian Country*. University of British Columbia: Vancouver. P. 133

9 Van Kirk, 1980.

10 Van Kirk. 1980. P. 54

11 Van Kirk. 1980. P. 55.

mercial partnerships with her family and her extended social and political network. These practical skills made them the highly-prized wife of any ambitious trader. In addition, their affection, companionship, and childbearing abilities produced a family environment that made for a more comfortable lifestyle as traders lived so far away from their country of origin.

As European women entered fur trade society they were soon viewed as more civilized, respectable and cultured. They quickly supplanted First Nations women as the “preferred” spouse of the respectable or aspiring trader. Thus, the once-irreplaceable First Nations wife was rejected, reviled, deemed “less than” and summarily eliminated from “respectable” society.¹² European traders seemed to prefer the “glorified frailty” and dependence of settler women over the strength, endurance and independence of their former Indigenous conjugal partner. Robert Connell would argue that men benefit when women are dependent upon them because men then have more control over women’s actions and they are more easily dominated.¹³

Although highly-coveted wives of fur traders, settler women had few rights and their value remained strictly in the private sphere. Their duties dealt primarily with the care for home and family. They prided themselves on their ability to aid the success

of others — supporting their husband’s ambitions, having a well-maintained home with clean and well-behaved children. A modern interpretation of this domestic gaze is explained by Susan Faludi’s (1991) assertion that women must sacrifice themselves for others for a society to work, and that the advancement of women is bad for the family and the children.¹⁴

Settler women were expected to remain virtuous at all times. This expectation widened the social gulf and thus further alienated First Nation women, as clergy and “society” people spread rumours about First Nations women being promiscuous, “easily available,” bad mothers and poor housekeepers — basically, lacking all the qualities of “decent” settler women”.¹⁵ They believed that the domestically inept Indigenous women must be helped to raise themselves up to the moral, hygienic and domestic standards of the more refined settler society. This damning indictment of First Nations women’s domestic ability and degenerate morals would dog them for centuries, and, in my opinion, contributes to the subordination that First Nations women suffer to this day.

Many factors led to the subordination of Indigenous women. These factors include the hegemonic view of European supremacy, patriarchy, the manipulation of the historical record, efforts to eliminate

12 Harper, Anita Olson. (2009). “Sisters in Spirit.” In *Restoring the Balance: First Nations Women, Community, and Culture*. Gail Guthrie Valaskakis, Madeleine Dion Stout, and Eric Guimond (eds). Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press. 175-199. P. 177

13 Connell, R. W. (2002). *Gender, Short Introductions*. Oxford: Polity Press.

14 Faludi, Susan. (1991). *Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women*. New York: Anchor Books.

15 Harper, Anita Olson. (2009). “Sisters in Spirit.” In *Restoring the Balance: First Nations Women, Community, and Culture*. Gail Guthrie Valaskakis, Madeleine Dion Stout, and Eric Guimond (eds). Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press. 175-199. P. 177

Indigenous people, and the creation of discriminatory legislation.

With colonization, the Europeans brought established opinions of their cultural, intellectual, and structural supremacy over the Indigenous people they encountered in the new land. European ideology rested on the assumption that their civilization was superior to all others and carried with it the self-imposed burden of “civilizing the barbarians.” The European view of the world was simple: Indians were savages; women were socially and politically invisible; and individualism and patriarchy must prevail. These attitudes formed the foundation of the Eurocentric view that the newcomers must *fix* whatever they viewed as *unacceptable* in the social, economic and political conditions of the New World. This preference included the subordination and exclusion of women in public matters.

In Western society, the written word had long been considered the “true medium” of historical accuracy, while oral history was viewed as primitive, biased, and unreliable. As a result, creating the historical record was left to the discretion of the literate and those with the ability and opportunity to put pen to paper — whatever their agenda, philosophy, or predisposition.

European explorers, fur traders and missionaries wrote early accounts of women’s status in the First Nations community. These accounts tell us as much about the ideological perspectives of the authors as they do about the subject at hand. The authors were part of the patriarchal and hierarchical structure

that benefitted from their domination of women. As a result, they did not acknowledge the contributions made by First Nations women to everyday life. Patricia Albers and Bea Medicine (1983) write that journalistic accounts either ignore or trivialize women’s contributions, activities and experiences by dealing exclusively with Indian men and documenting only the pursuits of males.¹⁶

In conclusion, Indigenous women were crucial to the success of their fur trader spouses and the fur trade industry. Their traditional skills and wide social networks helped lay the foundations for a new country — Canada. Intermarriage between European traders and indigenous women was encouraged because it helped cement economic advantage through familial bonds and allowed entrée into extended social networks. However, the conjugal unions formed during the early days of the fur trade were only temporary. After their usefulness waned, they were subjugated, vilified and alienated. They eventually became unimportant in the eyes of the traders and colonizers as a result of their race — as Indians — and their gender — as women. Their contributions to Canada were thus overlooked in the historical record.

16 Albers, Patricia, and Beatrice Medicine, eds. (1983). *The Hidden Half: Studies of Plains Indian Women*. New York, University Press of America.

THE GENDER JUSTICE CAMPAIGNS: WOMEN SUFFRAGE AND BEYOND IN CANADA

VERONICA STRONG-BOAG

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Canada's women suffrage movements have received an evolving press. Contemporary supporters hailed achievements as a significant advance for democracy; opponents prophesized the end of (patriarchal) civilization. Subsequently, in the context of the emergence of the Canadian mainstream liberal consensus, suffragists were largely ignored as little

more than eccentric footnotes to democracy's supposedly inevitable triumph. The last quarter of the 20th century, however, renewed doubts about capitalism, colonialism, and patriarchy. In that context, many feminist, socialist, and anti-racist scholars and activists condemned suffragists as inadequate foremothers.¹

1 On this evolution see Veronica Strong-Boag, "Taking Stock of Suffragists: Personal Reflections on Feminist Appraisals," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* NS, 21:2 (2011): 76-89.

Today, as the forthcoming UBC Press seven volume series, "Women Suffrage and the Struggle for Democracy in Canada," of which I am the General Editor, suggests, we stand in another time. The on-going crisis of liberal capitalism, the resurgence of sectarianism, and a diverse resistance politics encourage further reconsideration of the citizenship debates that infused the suffrage age. Today, political theorist Nancy Fraser's discussion of 'participatory parity,' with its requirement of both 'recognition' and 'redistribution,' as essential to a democratic politics offers a useful approach to the gender justice debates of which women suffrage was a significant part.²

For some hundred years, Canada's enfranchisement campaigns raised the best-known standard for 'gender justice.' In this, they were not, however, entirely alone. A few other critics of the dominant order, while rejecting the race prejudices of much mainstream suffragism, also called for respect and reallocation of resources in women's favour. This short paper highlights that common political terrain. It begins with the centrality of respect and economic redistribution to the mainstream suffrage cause. It then turns to two critics of North American colonialism who also championed gender justice —

the English-Mohawk writer and performer E. Pauline Johnson (Tekahionwake; 1861-1913) and the Eurasian writer Edith Maud Eaton (Sui Sin Far; 1865-1914). New Women of their age, they advocated for women while never naming themselves suffragists.³ Like the suffragist mainstream, they too imbricated race into their discussion of gender. In their case, this meant racial justice for Indigenous and Asian peoples.

CANADA'S MAINSTREAM SUFFRAGISTS

Respect for and recognition of women's contributions to home and country, in other words a repudiation of what Fraser has termed pervasive "status subordination,"⁴ infused Canadian franchise campaigns.⁵ Activists typically scavenged history for examples of female industry, talent, and sacrifice to counter the pervasive "demeaning representations" that characterized much western culture.⁶ Heroines, from the Virgin Mary to Boadicea, Mary Wollstonecraft, Laura Secord, Elizabeth Fry, and Queen Victoria, affirmed worthiness. Crusades for domestic science in schools and universities in turn asserted the value of women's domestic labour. So too did support for child study and maternal health programmes and demands for legislative change

2 See her "Rethinking Recognition," *New Left Review* 3 (May-June 2000): 107-230 and "Feminist Politics in the Age of Recognition: A Two-Dimensional Approach to Gender Justice," *Studies in Social Justice* 1:1 (Winter 2007): 23-35.

3 Johnson and Eaton never met but the latter wrote a short story suggesting sympathies with Indigenous women. See Mary Chapman, "Cultural Affinities between Native American and White Women in 'The Alaska Widow' by Edith Eaton (Sui Sin Far)," *MELUS: Multi-Ethnic Literature of the U.S.* 38:1 (Spring 2013): 155-63. Johnson, however, may have shared some anti-Asian sentiments with white imperialists. The observations here draw on my work on Johnson with Carole Gerson and on Mary Chapman's assessments of Edith Maud Eaton.

4 Fraser, "Rethinking Recognition," 119.

5 These campaigns are explored in Denyse Baillargeon, *A Brief History of Women in Quebec* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2014); Penni Mitchell, *About Canada: Women's Rights* (Black Point, NS: Fernwood, 2015), and Gail C. Brandt, et al, *Canadian Women. A History* 3rd ed. (Toronto: Nelson, 2011).

6 Fraser, "Rethinking Recognition," 110.

of the age of consent and marriage for girls and in favour of mothers' custody of their children. Decades-long efforts to win women entry to universities and to professions sent the same message of recognition. The emergence of Canada's University Women's Clubs and the Canadian Women's Press Clubs, like associations representing nurses, teachers, and business and professional women, as well as those centred on patriotism such as the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire and the Women's Canadian Club, constituted other assertions of worth. In the 1920s Alberta's suffragist 'Famous Five' turned naturally to recognition of legal personhood under the British North America Act. All such engagement repudiated longstanding gender codes that set men as the standard for citizenship.

As Nancy Fraser has argued, recognition of worth cannot be "neatly separated" from economic reward.⁷ Suffrage campaigns for respect never existed in isolation. Activists regularly tackled the "economic structures, property regimes or labour markets" that "deprive actors of the resources needed for full participation" in the community.⁸ While pursued for the most part within the framework of liberal capitalism, feminist efforts were diverse. Crusades for homesteads for women and reform of the married women's property acts focused on equalizing access to community and family resources. Others addressed the labour market, arguing for minimum wages for women and against employment barriers. Still others demanded that the state help women when men and families failed. Mothers' allowances and old age pensions (since the female elderly

were regularly poor) were popular suffragist causes. Even when activists rarely made the point explicit, such demands involved redistribution of individual and community resources from one sex to another. For all their very real radicalism, suffragist campaigns for recognition and recompense often invoked an exclusive sisterhood. Indigenous and Asian women were rarely offered participatory parity with European settler women, let alone with white men.

E. PAULINE JOHNSON

That dominant racist narrative helps explain why E. Pauline Johnson never publicly endorsed the vote. As she made sense of ascendant colonialism and racism and recognized the particular vulnerability of Indigenous women, she looked elsewhere for remedy. Like suffragists, she nevertheless demanded respect and redistribution, Fraser's key determinants of participatory parity. These themes pervaded her writing and performance.

Johnson's 1894 "The Cattle Thief," recited across North America, typically condemned imperial Canada's dispossession of Indigenous peoples and stressed the significance of women in Indigenous resistance. Like Boadicea facing the Romans, her heroine, the daughter of the Cree chief, a "lion" cut down by settler "demons", dispels aspersions of inferiority. She might be starving but, like all Johnson's Indigenous women characters, she merited respect: "you must cut your way through *me*." British invaders are forced to confront the humanity of those they

7 Fraser, "Rethinking Recognition," 118.

8 Ibid., 117.

despoil. That demand is accompanied by an insistence on restitution “for the land you live in,” for “our herds of game,” and for “the furs and the forests that were ours before you came; Give back the peace and the plenty.” The ‘new nationality’ celebrated in Johnson’s 1886 poem “‘Brant’ A Memorial Ode” required respect and compensation.

Johnson’s “Mothers of a Great Race” (1908) offered another typical assertion of merit. Embracing a maternalist perspective, which many Indigenous advocates shared with mainstream suffragists, it hailed Indigenous mothers as “ideal mothers of our day” not as New Women. In a pointed condemnation of settler practices and a foreshadowing of racism’s later injuries, Johnson insisted that offspring of such mothers never went to “orphanages.” Nor was superior parenting Indigenous women’s only achievement. Among the Iroquois, matrons were “openly acknowledged by every man of her tribe, be he chief, brave or warrior.” They represented “a living, breathing contradiction to the common idea that Indian men look down upon women and treat the mothers of their children as mere property.” In governing councils, matrons’ rule was law, a fair recompense for their many contributions. As in her 1906 article, “The Lodge of the Law-Makers,” where Johnson asserted that “there is no need for an Iroquois woman to clamour for

recognition in our councils,” Indigenous women are celebrated as receiving respect and reward, unlike suffragists who had to “cry out for a voice in the Parliament.”⁹ Johnson judged European culture as ultimately deficient in respecting and rewarding either settler or Indigenous women.

EDITH MAUD EATON

Relocating from Montreal to the United States, Edith Maud Eaton did not match Johnson as a Canadian icon. Neither, however, was she constrained by a sentimental (and pragmatic) loyalty to the British Empire. Eaton developed a sophisticated response to the racism and related sexism of North America and the Caribbean’s multiple ‘contact zones’.¹⁰ Both women nevertheless shared an interest in ‘flexible citizenship’ in which their key characters, like their mixed-race authors, existed in multiple worlds where their merits and their rewards required assertion against mainstream denial.¹¹

Eaton’s 1890 autobiographical essay “Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian” begins with the author’s earliest encounter with racism. Her remembered response as a young child embraced the reviled status: “I’d rather be Chinese than anything else in the world.” She retreated to the

9 All citations come from the works republished in Carole Gerson and Veronica Strong-Boag, eds., *E. Pauline Johnson, Tekahionwake: Collected Poems and Selected Prose* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002). See also Strong-Boag and Gerson, *Paddling Her Own Canoe: The Times and Texts of E. Pauline Johnson (Tekahionwake)* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000).

10 See Mary Chapman, ed., *Becoming Sui Sin Far: Early Fiction, Journalism, and Travel Writing by Edith Maude Eaton* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2016) and Eaton’s texts now on the www. My thanks to Mary for her generosity in sending a pre-publication pdf of her manuscript. See also her *Making Noise Making News: Suffrage Print Culture and U.S. Modernism* (Oxford Scholarship Online: April 2014).

11 Chapman, “Introduction,” *Becoming Sui Sin Far*, lix. Chapman draws on the concept of ‘flexible citizenship’ described by Aihwa Ong, *Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural Logics of Transnationality* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999).

library “to read every book I can find on China and the Chinese. I learn that China is the oldest civilized nation on the face of the earth.” Eaton maintained that insistence on historic merit even as she documented “Chinese women’s struggles against arranged marriages, sex slavery, and patriarchal Confucianism.”¹² Her Asian female characters challenged demeaning portrayal. They merited respect.

In “The Chinese Woman in America” (1897) and elsewhere, Eaton invoked the past, much like mainstream feminists’ recovery of white women worthies, to claim promising histories. Her project of redemption also engaged with a domestic feminism associated with contemporary Chinese critics of sex slavery, foot binding, and arranged marriage. This perspective, much like an older strain within western feminism, celebrated women’s special nature, in other words their essential maternalism, rather than their similarity to men. Much like Johnson, Eaton insisted that her sex had no need to become New Women to deserve fair treatment and a fair share of resources. In emphasizing the intrinsic value of mothering, these anti-racist critics of the status quo challenged both the “antidomestic ideals and racist heartlessness” of some suffragists.¹³ In celebrating China’s reformers and domestic feminists, Eaton suggested that respect and reward for women would come through the efforts of the Chinese themselves. Rescue by Europeans, feminist or otherwise, was not necessary.¹⁴

CONCLUSION

Canadian suffragists campaigned for the recognition and redistribution that would advance participatory parity and gender justice. A pervasive prejudice that frequently excluded involvement of non-white women substantially undercut that ambitious goal. As anti-racist critics of contemporary North America and suffragists, E. Pauline Johnson and Edith M. Eaton were committed to a better deal for their sex. In a North American public world in which racism was wide-spread and often unquestioned by settler suffragists, Johnson and Eaton seized upon the potential of versions of maternalist feminism to offer women respect and equality, in effect a significant measure of what Fraser has called ‘parity of participation.’ In considering the evolution of democracy, their message needs to be absorbed along side that issued by Canada’s women suffrage mainstream.

¹² Chapman, *Making Noise*, 177.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 195.

¹⁴ See *ibid.*, Chapter 6.

NELLIE WAS NOT ALONE...

LINDA MCDOWELL

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Centennial celebrations are important reminders of the events that changed our history. As we celebrate we read and talk about the heroes who made it happen – or at least those heroes we know from school or the daily news. Too often that means that we only know a few people who had “star power” or those who have been the subject of books or videos. Surely an anniversary should also be a time to learn about those others who also worked to make history. This is an invitation to consider some of the less well known women and men in the Manitoba campaign for votes for women.

There is no question that Nellie McClung is the most famous figure in the woman suffrage campaign in Manitoba. She was a long-time advocate for the cause, using her fame and popularity as a writer to get a hearing, and using her talent as an orator to keep people listening. It was Nellie who suggested that she could capitalize on the popu-

larity of her readings of her books by adding the woman suffrage topic to her performances, and most importantly, charging 25 cents a head to cover her expenses. The Political Equality League had little money in the early days and Nellie could be counted on to make many appearances, as indicated by the more than 100 performances she did in 1911. She was also very popular, even in Conservative territory. People flocked to hear her in the Roblin stronghold of Carman and she could get as many as 3 000 out in Brandon. In fact, the more that she and Premier Roblin sparred, the more popular she became as a suffrage speaker.

Nellie was a talented stage performer who was energised by the kind of heckling common in this period. Her witty and speedy replies to the hecklers were legendary and her ability to put her arguments into understandable, everyday language made her an important leader of the suffrage movement. All

of this explains why Nellie was such a prominent figure in the suffrage campaign. Nellie deserves the attention, but the unfortunate consequence of her fame is that so many other people, some who came before her and others who came after her, have been forgotten.

Do most people know that the Icelandic women of Manitoba had the earliest suffrage organization, not just in Manitoba, but in western Canada? We might have heard of Margret Benedictsson, publisher of Freya, Canada's only suffrage newspaper, but we probably can't identify Thorbjorg Sigurdson or Kristjana Thordarson, organizers of *Sigurvon*.¹ The Icelandic women were active in Manitoba for more than twenty-five years without a break, campaigning and circulating petitions in the 1890s such as the one begun by Steina Stefanson in 1910.² They often worked alone but at times they participated in the petitions of the English speaking groups, they worked with the Political Equality League for the final 1915 petition and they were represented on the important occasions when suffragists met with Premier Roblin.

Who recognizes the names of Kenneth McKenzie and James Huston, two hardy MLAs who had the courage to argue for and put forward a motion that women should have a vote on the Prohibition issue as early as 1892? Who remembers that

George Malcolmson, an Opposition MLA, moved a motion for woman suffrage in 1914 — a motion that obviously worried Premier Roblin because he declared it a confidence motion?³ These three men are a reminder that suffragist groups in Manitoba always had strong male support. The Political Equality Leagues of Winnipeg and Roaring River were open to men as well as women, but with the understanding that women would be the spokespeople. Delegations to the Legislature always included men such as religious and political leaders Rev. Charles Gordon, J.S. Woodsworth, and Salem Bland.

Manitobans may have heard of the formidable Dr. Amelia Yeomans who was part of the 1890s Manitoba WCTU and the Equal Suffrage Society, but the name of Arminda Blakeley is likely to be met with a blank stare, despite the fact that she was introduced in Chicago at an International Women's Congress by the great American suffragist Susan B. Antony as the originator of the first woman's parliament, the 1893 Mock Parliament in Winnipeg.⁴ Some historical records have credited her husband with the achievement! Today, the most famous "Mrs. McClung" is Nellie but, in the 1890s, it was her mother-in-law, Annie McClung, who was campaigning for the vote when Nellie was a young beginning teacher. Annie and Cora Hind, another early Manitoba suffragist of the 1890s, were

1 Interviews with Miss Stefania Sigurdson in May, 1975. (*Sigurvon* means "Hope of Victory" and was the Gimli suffrage group.)

2 *Petition of Steina Stefanson et al., praying for the passing of an Act to enfranchise all women, whether married, widowed or spinster on the same terms as men* (No. 51) Sessional Papers, 1910. Archives of Manitoba.

3 Catherine Cleverdon. *The Woman Suffrage Movement in Canada*. 2nd edition. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974, pp. 52 and 60.

4 *The Winnipeg Tribune*, June 6, 1893.

Nellie's role models and mentors in the suffrage movement.⁵

The 1890s campaign lost momentum in the early years of the twentieth century and didn't regain it until the formation of the Political Equality League in Winnipeg in 1912. Much of Nellie's fame as a suffragist is tied to this group of talented and determined people, many of whom are now forgotten or appear only as names on a list. Where are the photographs of Martha Jane Hample, Winnipeg's first businesswoman and the person who financed the Political Equality League in the beginning? What books have been written about Dr. Mary Crawford, Agnes Munro or Alice Holling? The general impression is often that the campaign for the vote was easily won by a group of wealthy Winnipeg women. There were some women who had time to campaign because other women cleaned their houses and cared for their children but there were also career women such as the journalists Kenethe Haig, Anne Anderson Perry, Isobel Graham or Genevieve Lipsett-Skinner, later to be the first woman in the Parliamentary Press Gallery.

Lillian Beynon Thomas and her sister, Francis Marion Beynon, are rightly recognized for their leadership in the Political Equality League. Lillian was known as a major organizer and speaker in the movement and she was also one who resisted Mrs. Pankhurst's advice on suffragette tactics.

Francis Marion Beynon made an important contribution through the Women's Page in the *Grain Growers' Guide*. The Grain Growers' Association had supported votes for women since 1911 and George Chipman, the editor of the *Guide* made an important decision when he hired Miss Beynon. She is known for her work on the Women's Page but perhaps not so well known for the role she played in January of 1916 when Mrs. Thomas found that Premier Norris had included votes for women in the legislation but had not included the right to run for office. The Government said that it was too late to change the bill. Francis Beynon was at a Grain Growers' convention in Brandon and apparently let it be known that, unless the bill was changed, she would move a motion of censure against the Government at the convention. Suddenly, it was not too late! Manitoba women got the right to run for office.⁶

We may know of the Beynon sisters, Lillian and Francis, but do we know of the Flett sisters, members of the PEL, who were also part of the Women's Labor League? Winona and Lynn Flett were stenographers, Winona owning a stenographic bureau and Lynn working as a court stenographer. Winona chaired the Literature Committee of the Political Equality League and any reading of the PEL Minutes indicates that this was an extremely active group.⁷ The Flett sisters, Fred Dixon, John Queen, and Arthur and Gertrude Puttee were a connection between the Winnipeg Labor organizations and the

5 These relationships are mentioned in a number of sources, including the following: Nellie McClung, *Clearing in the West*. Toronto: Thomas Allen Limited, 1964. pp.268-269; Kenethe Haig, *Brave Harvest: The Life Story of E. Cora Hind, LL.D.* Toronto: Thomas Allen Limited, 1945. pp.128-130; Mary Hallett & Marilyn Davis, *Firing the Heather: The Life and Times of Nellie McClung*. Saskatoon: Fifth House, 1993, pp.56-58; 84-88 etc.

6 Cleverdon, p.63 (Information in a letter from Mrs. A.V. Thomas, April 21, 1944)

7 *Political Equality League minute book* (file 1), Archives of Manitoba

Political Equality League, an important connection that has often been forgotten or downplayed.

There were also branches of the Political Equality League outside of Winnipeg. They were formed in small communities like Carberry and were a useful network for organizing petitions or election support. One of the most interesting was the small group at Roaring River (near Swan River), begun by another pair of sisters, Gertrude and Fanny Twilley, from Leicester, England. They came to stay with a brother who had homesteaded there and married men from the community. Their group was small but their activities lively and often reported in suffrage news.⁸ Gertrude Twilley Richardson wrote of their activities in newspapers in Britain as well as in Canada.

The most famous and most successful event of the suffrage movement in Manitoba was the Women's Parliament of 1914. Nellie's performance as the Premier was the highlight of the evening but the idea came from Mrs. Thomas and the play was the work of the entire group, with considerable help from Harriet Walker of Walker's Theatre. This Parliament made enough money to fund most of the rest of their activities but it was most important because it made woman suffrage a respectable cause that everyone wanted to join.

All of these people mentioned and many more who

are not named here, deserve recognition and our thanks for the work they did to give the women of Manitoba the right to vote and to run for provincial office. Nellie would have agreed.

8 Barbara Roberts, *A Reconstructed World: A Feminist Biography of Gertrude Richardson*. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queens, 1996.pp. 90-100.

The newspapers of the day, *The Manitoba Free Press*, *The Winnipeg Tribune* and *The Telegram*, provide very detailed accounts of the debates of the Manitoba Legislature and of other Winnipeg political and social events connected to the suffrage campaign.

There were many more rural newspapers then than there are now. Newspapers such as *The Brandon Sun*, *The Hamiota Echo*, *The Virden Empire-Advance*, et al provide the ads for temperance and suffrage events and some lively reports of the activities.

WOMEN CREATING CANADA: THE LONG REACH OF TEMPERANCE INTO THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

SHARON COOK

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It is well understood that women temperance advocates in nineteenth-century Canada supported the franchise for women. They did so from the position that women possessed a loftier moral code, as demonstrated in part by their rejection of alcohol and other polluting substances for the body, like tobacco. Women of this view formed the Woman's Christian Temperance Union in 1874 in Canada. Within a few years, it became the largest non-denominational women's organization in the country, counting in

its membership many current Canadians' grandmothers and great-grandmothers. Throughout the late nineteenth century, the W.C.T.U. argued that if women were given the vote, they would inject a higher moral tone into politics and indeed, into the entire society.¹

But this was by no means the only way that temperance women helped to create the Canada we know today. In fact, in many respects, groups like

1 Sharon Anne Cook, *"Through Sunshine and Shadow": The Woman's Christian Temperance Union, Evangelicalism, and Reform in Ontario, 1874-1930*. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 1995, chap 4.

the W.C.T.U. influenced other Canadian norms more profoundly than they did our attitudes to women receiving the franchise, which was accomplished both provincially and federally during and after the First World War. To take the W.C.T.U. as a case in point, in all of their campaigns, the W.C.T.U. worked alongside other women's associations in a loose network to improve Canada. At the core of the W.C.T.U. philosophy was its confidence that women could change the world. The organization is often classified as a "proto-feminist" one, although by placing women's talents and commitment, their particular needs and potential at the heart of its mission, it can safely be identified as (First-Wave) Feminist. Along with their sisters in other organizations, the women of the W.C.T.U. were essential participants in shaping industrialized Canada. Many of their goals and strategies are strikingly modern as they nudged Canada towards a better future.

The W.C.T.U. self-defined as an evangelical women's organization. Long after their heyday, they were termed, "evangelical feminists."² Their religiosity put the W.C.T.U. fully in step with Canadian society before the First World War, when the dominant form of religious expression in most Protestant denominations in Canada, the United States and Britain was evangelical.³ If our own society is more secular, having abandoned religious mission in mainstream culture, we continue to accept the close connection between religious principle and social activism, acknowledging the

power of a robust spiritual life for believers. The evidence shows that W.C.T.U. women's resolve was strengthened by their religiosity. In their minute books, they expressed their confidence that they could purify their world. Meetings of the W.C.T.U. always opened and closed with prayer, and often included Bible readings which were connected to the many public projects which the group initiated.

In this era, evangelicalism was characterized by a belief that society would be transformed through worshippers' individual will and the salvation of sinners, supported by a caring community. This transformation would result in a rejection of alcohol by individual drinkers as well as government legislation: "Moral suasion for the individual and Prohibition for the state."⁴ Aside from the overt religious focus, in their understanding that morality in public issues was both an individual and collective responsibility, the W.C.T.U. shows its link to modern social policy. Further, when we realize that Canadian norms for how alcohol is legally consumed are much more restrictive than in many other countries, we recognize again the power of the W.C.T.U. in their campaigns to limit public drinking.

The W.C.T.U. had an abiding faith in the power of education. They expended significant resources in both courting teachers to support the temperance cause in the public school system, and in teaching children themselves through temperance-based extra-curricular activities in their own groups, to which they also invited school teachers. They

2 Cook, "Through Sunshine and Shadow," pp. 11-14.

3 William Westfall, *Two Worlds: The Protestant Culture of Nineteenth-Century Ontario*. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 1989.

4 Archives of Ontario. Annual Report of the Ontario W.C.T.U., 1894.

understood teachers to be amongst their strongest allies, and in 1899, the Ontario W.C.T.U. Conference resolved:

That we urge [teachers] to endeavour more earnestly to inspire those under their charge with exalted ideals of purity, nobility, and integrity of character... We would emphasize our belief that no person addicted to the use of any of these narcotics should ever enter the schoolroom as a teacher.⁵

The notion that teachers must demonstrate exemplary qualities as models for the children and youths they teach remains a central part of the Education Acts governing education in most Canadian provinces. Teachers often find this intimidating, and yet it is an accepted principle by teachers and exercised through their associations and those which govern them. While we no longer insist that teachers neither smoke nor drink, we do hold teachers to a higher standard of comportment because of the vulnerable populations with which they interact. Ultimately, this demand has contributed to the general respect with which Canadian teachers are held, resulting as well in pay scales and working conditions which are amongst the best in the world.

Beyond the essential role of teachers, the W.C.T.U. believed that children needed convincing school textbooks to most ably receive the temperance case. These they promoted with the provincial Depart-

ments of Education, pressuring them to revise curriculum so the temperance message would be imbedded in the formal curriculum. These W.C.T.U. departments of "Scientific Temperance Instruction" succeeded in having school textbooks adopted that put the temperance message to generations of school children.⁶ In so doing, they became part of the complex system of pressure groups weighing in on provincial curriculum committees to adopt textbooks and curricula in line with community standards. As illustrative of this process, in 2010 the Ontario Ministry of Education elected to withdraw a Sex Education curricula after parents protested that it did not meet community standards. School textbooks in 2016 still bear the mark of the temperance message in their organization and general approach in teaching about the dangers of drinking and smoking.⁷

The W.C.T.U.'s unwavering support of the public school system across Canada, rather than sponsoring parallel religiously-informed education through independent schools, thereby enriched the curriculum of the school system and reinforced the moral mission of Canadian teachers. Of our many national characteristics to be celebrated, the strength of our public school system is a key one, with an independent sector that remains amongst the smallest in the developed world. This is grounded in a tradition which we can trace back to decisions of groups like the W.C.T.U. to fight for children in the state-sponsored school system.

5 Archives of Ontario, Annual Report of the Ontario W.C.T.U., 1899.

6 Cook, pp 119-123.

7 Sharon Anne Cook, *Sex, Lies and Cigarettes: Canadian Women, Smoking, and Visual Culture, 1880-2000*. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 2012, chap. 4.

Comprised mainly of middle-class women without themselves much formal education, an important part of W.C.T.U. programming was directed to teaching the members about current public affairs. They did this through locally-organized “unions,” where the women led study groups on public issues and possible solutions. Sometimes, they all read the same book or pamphlet and discussed it; at other times, a leader summarized challenging sources and presented this to the group, asking leading questions to help the members understand the essence of the source, and to then plan their community-based response. However the local union decided to approach their studies, they did so through their own deliberations, experimenting with different approaches to see what would make the learning process most pleasurable and effective. The unions pioneered strategies that today would be very close to those of many book clubs with similar results. Groups of women studied and worked together to champion reforms over the course of decades, creating lasting networks of engaged women that included neighbours, kin and more distant members of the community.⁸ This produced a particular middle-class women’s culture in Canada that endures today in many communities.

The W.C.T.U. provided a forum for regular women to become active participants in their own communities long before they had the right to vote, and after as well. The members of this, and associated organizations, chose their issues carefully: immigration, women’s rights in the justice system, the penal code, violence against women and children, the care of the aged, male violence and irrespons-

ibility, the survival of the family unit, cultivating a culture of peace rather than war, and the need to provide social services for vulnerable community members, such as new Canadians. The issues they championed were ones that affected their lives, and those of their families and kin in communities across Canada. They did not typically involve themselves in national campaigns or even provincial ones where they were not directly affected. They sought practical solutions to community-based problems that were collaborative and long-lasting. They were deeply representative of those communities’ views and thus in response to some crises, could easily have been termed racists and classists by today’s standards. And yet, through their care of representing community standards, they provided models for today’s community activists who wrestle with problems in our environment and social services. They demonstrated that women with little education but deep concern could train themselves and work collaboratively in partnerships to be activists, thereby changing public policy in the short and long term.

The phenomenon of every-day women banding together to address weaknesses and wrongs in their communities is not as common in the twenty-first century as it was in the late nineteenth. Except for a relatively narrow range of issues touching on such topics as rape culture or violence against women, Canadian women too rarely see their public role anymore as studying with other women, developing strategies to get the attention of those with more power, or mobilizing other women and children to demonstrate their collective power through gen-

8 Cook, *Through Sunshine and Shadow*, pp. 133-147.

dered solidarity. The social and legislative results of our foremothers who did take this approach are impressive and worth considering anew in modern Canada as we continue to build a humane and prosperous society founded on diversity and respect.

THE INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN POLITICAL LIFE IN CANADA: FROM REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY TO PARTICIPATIVE DEMOCRACY

YOLANDE COHEN

Yolande Cohen is a full professor, FRSC, historian, UQAM. She completed her postgraduate thesis in history at the Université Paris VIII and the Écoles des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (Paris). Having studied social history and the history of contemporary social movements, Yolande Cohen has always been interested in illustrating the processes by which groups that are traditionally excluded from political life have developed their sociability and partaken in alternative forms of public intervention. She is one of the pioneers of the history of youth, the history of women and the history of Moroccan Jews.

The persistence of gender inequalities often stirs up debates on the capacity of contemporary democracies to set up egalitarian and inclusive systems. Women's emancipation movements that have punctuated the western world in the 20th century and which have culminated in the 1970s are a testimony to women's repeated attempts to change power dynamics in order to have their rights recognized. Their history, which is relatively well-documented today, has enabled us to recognize the diverse forms that discrimination can take and to associate feminist triumphs with their female heroes, and their history is far from being one about victimization. However, beyond promises of equality, the significant issue remaining concerns the symbolic equality that was conquered by women while discrimination continues to persist in power dynamics as well as in the work place. In other

words, how do we escape this dual history, or the contradictions of a unique gendered history? How do we restore the complexity of social gender relations, both in terms of political and social change? Because if there is a cultural/sexual revolution that needs to be understood, it is the one that has radically transformed relationships between women and men, between generations, religions, within families, overturning the established order in order to bring to the forefront our problems of integration. How do we, as a matter of fact, tackle the issue of the integration of minority groups in societies that are being completely transformed by globalization, which is in turn the epicentre of recent reconsideration in advanced societies. In Canada, where multiculturalism thrives everywhere but in Quebec, there remains a strong imagined fear surrounding massive immigration, whose embodi-

ment possesses origins that are radically foreign (to our “national” values) and who we imagine would destabilize established rules; this fear is, however, a lot less potent here than in the US and in Europe. Heated debates took Quebec by storm in 2015 and resulted in a failed attempt by the Parti Québécois in power at that moment to adopt a “Charter of Values”.

The case of the integration of women into contemporary democracies enables us to better identify the strategies implemented by feminist movements in order to obtain recognition and access to positions of power. The integration of women to (political) citizenship brings up various issues related to the processes by which liberal democracies transform, especially the processes associated with political representation. The emergence of western democracy, which excluded women from political representation, had to hence find ways to progressively and fully integrate groups that wished to be integrated. To that effect, the role of feminist organizations is central.

The first wave feminist movements of the turn of the 20th century wanted to extend women’s rights (suffrage, social and civil rights) and their contributions are exemplified by organizations such as the Fédération Nationale Saint-Jean Baptiste. Despite their exclusion from the partisan sphere and focusing exclusively on their role in the private sphere, which should have kept them away from elected and representative positions, these women put into action complex strategies in order to obtain political recognition for their social contribution. Among those strategies are alliances between different feminist factions and movements, and with the political parties best suited to represent them.

The history of women’s suffrage in the western world is hence a long history of past compromises between liberal, radical, Freemason, free-thinking, maternal, reform, Protestant, Jewish, etc. feminists and the elected political parties or the ones wishing to remain in power. This unlikely coalition found a large base after the First World War, mostly formed by maternal feminists, through which to achieve this compromise. More than ever, women were needed.

WOMEN’S ACQUISITION OF THE RIGHT TO VOTE

Suffrage is hence achieved in the 1920s in numerous countries (Canada included) in exchange for the services provided by mothers, nurses, widows, during or just after the First World War. In Quebec, feminist demands for the right to vote, achieved at the municipal and federal levels during the same period, garnered resistance mainly from the Catholic episcopacy. Those demands are obtained twenty years later at the provincial level, thanks to strategic alliances between radical and reform feminists and the Liberal Party.

In 1938, under the pressure of Thérèse Casgrain and the forty or so representatives that gained entry to Congress under her guidance, the provincial Liberal Party adopted a resolution that made suffrage an item on their program. Defeat at the hands of Maurice Duplessis’ Union nationale in 1936, a change of leadership in the liberal camp after Alexandre Taschereau’s departure, and the need to obtain women’s support for the grand social reform projects by his successor Adélard Godbout hence lead to this first formal engagement of a provincial party in favour of women’s suffrage. A liberal win in 1939 lead to women obtaining the right to vote in 1940

at the provincial level.

Hence, extending the right to vote to women was intrinsically linked to a process of inclusion of social issues within the new responsibilities of the State. Based on a similar model to the one in English Canada, the right to vote was granted to women for the services they provided to their nation. It rewarded the contributions of women to society. In his House address, Godbout mentioned the reasons which pushed him to introduce a bill to help "those young women who, working in our charitable societies and organizations, are wholly devoted to us. I ask you that we banish all barriers for those benevolent women in our society." The Act Granting to Women the Right to Vote and to be Eligible as Candidates (bill 18) was finally passed on April 25, 1940.

Even though the episcopacy succeeded for a while in hampering the FNSJB suffragist, they rebuild themselves quickly outside of the Federation, through networks that were closely associated with the Federation. The provincial Liberal Party hence became the only political party where suffragist demands were taken into consideration. Most of the militants identified with the Liberal Party's positions: the need to democratize institutions, to reform education and to confine the Church to its religious function. As for the Conservative Party, none of the three consecutive party leaders between 1920 and 1930 (Arthur Sauvé, Camilien Houde and Maurice Duplessis) supported suffrage at the provincial level, and their electoral base, which was mainly rural, was less likely to support the idea than the Liberal's base. Even if both Liberal ministers in power in Quebec for 31 years, Lomer Gouin (1905–1921) and Alexandre Taschereau (1921–1936),

were personally opposed to women's suffrage, their caucus and their electorate were increasingly composed of supporters of the women's movement, and the main leaders of the suffragist movement overall maintained excellent relationships with Liberal leaders, often being themselves personally involved with the province's Liberal elite.

As we can see, there had to be a collaboration between different feminist groups, between maternal feminists and equal-right feminists, as well as a solid partisan capacity from women's associations, for their demands to finally be heard and for this last barrier to be lifted and for women to be represented at the provincial level. Everyone in this context agreed that the need to value equal rights is one of the guiding lights of representative democracy.

AND REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY

Gender studies applied to citizenship enable us to put into perspective the actions of militants and their impact on public institutions and political life in a democracy. Women's agency is highlighted and their diverse roles in public life are identified. We have seen that in Canada, women also rapidly learned about partisan politics, and this, even before having the right to vote.

The feminist fight for suffrage in Canada has thus slightly opened up our liberal democracy with women gaining the right to vote at different levels of government. These new rights, obtained at different times depending on the provinces, enabled the coexistence of different citizenship systems and the extension of democracy through the recognition of women's equal rights.

However, what the history of suffrage also shows us, besides the numerous forms of resistance that movements for the integration of minority groups are faced with, is the relative homogeneity of the groups engaged in this process, namely a small elite of Anglo-Protestant men and women, and, to a lesser degree, the French-Catholic elite. For those elites, we could say that the democratic process was able to feed on citizen participation. But the glass ceiling with which women struggle to this day is resistant to the large waves of women belonging to other social categories, other ethnoreligious origins and other regions. In other words, as long as the conquest of equal rights for all women does not destabilize the patriarchal order of domination, other civil and political rights cannot be acquired. As it is evidenced, the fact that women obtained the right to vote has not led to an equal participation of women in politics, and even less to an equal division of power between women and men, far from it.

AND NOW

Almost a century later, during a debate organized by the Council on the Status of Women in Quebec, debates emerged around why more women do not enter politics and become party leaders, and why in general so few women (32.8% of representatives in Quebec in 2012) can be found in elected positions and in positions of power. We should be proud of the significant increase of women in the Assembly. After the great feminist uprisings of the 1970s in favour of greater female representation in politics, we saw an increase of elected women, going from 6.5% in 1981 to 14.8% in 1985, and then to a sharper increase of 23.2% elected female representatives in Quebec and to the (snap) election of Kim Camp-

bell as Prime Minister of Canada. Surely, we also have to note that six women have been elected as provincial ministers in Canada recently. Does this fact attest to a major breakthrough in this area and reflect a decline in gender stereotypes associated to women and politics, or is this simply a small victory that distracts us from the inequalities that persist between men and women in this as in many other areas? As we know, Barack Obama's election to the US presidency did not dispel all racism against blacks.

Curiously, one of the recommendations that resulted from this debate was that we need to tackle women's lack of self-esteem, something that purportedly prevents them from entering politics. This diagnosis seems slightly problematic, since, as we all know, it is the close-knit and male-dominated networks that lead one to the halls of power. In order to change this situation, we could provide support, networks and money to aid in the recruitment of the women that want to enter politics. But women are also confronted with the dominant political culture, a culture that does not reflect right now their values nor their preoccupations. Furthermore, the disastrous image that is associated with the political milieu nowadays does not attract good candidates, either male or female.

Did the greater number of women representatives, mayors and prime ministers succeed in creating change in this culture? Does this fateful threshold of equality between women and men in the National Assembly enables us to consider that women's integration is henceforth complete? And, it seems that at this moment, it is alternative forms of politics that seem to appeal to women more, the networks that they established in volunteer associations, in

charitable organizations and even in small parties where they felt they were making a difference and where they are numerous; those are the training grounds preparing them to take the great leap to politics. This a symbolic and necessary transition, which will change the dominant political culture and which results' we can get a glimpse of in recent sexual revolutions (marriage for everyone, recognition of the rights of LGBTQI people, etc.).

If there is something to be learned from the acquisition of political rights by women, it is the importance of networks and civil society in those democratic transitions and that great changes are preceded by transformations in the personal politics of everyone involved. Our political culture, which is infused by divergent conceptions of multiculturalism and interculturalism (in Quebec) is still, however, dominated by an us/them dualism that continually reproduces exclusion. One of the ways to resist such mechanisms is, to my belief, to change the parameters of how our democracies function in order to achieve an equal society within the framework of a participative democracy.

MONEY MAKEOVER: CANADIAN WOMEN ON BANK NOTES

MERNA FORSTER

Merna Forster is an author, historian and public speaker who advocates for recognition of female historical figures. She helped raise funds for a statue of Emily Carr in Victoria, and led the successful national campaign calling for Canadian women on bank notes. Now at the University of Victoria, she is Executive Director of the Great Unsolved Mysteries in Canadian History.

A century after women in Canada gained the right to vote, the country will finally put an iconic Canadian woman on the face of a bank note for the first time. On International Women's Day in 2016, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Finance Minister Bill Morneau announced that the image of a woman from Canadian history will appear on a new bill in 2018. The news was a victory for the hard-fought campaign I launched in the summer of 2013 to end sexist bank notes, and for the more than 73,000 supporters who signed my petition at change.org/CanadianHeroines. Yet why was female representation on bank notes even an issue that required discussion, in a nation that boasts of being a world leader in advancing gender equality and women's rights? Is systemic sexism in our national institutions so firmly entrenched that the

exclusion of half the population from a prominent national symbol was deemed acceptable?

Early Canadian bank notes portrayed many recognizable people, including reigning monarchs and their family members as well as Jacques Cartier, Samuel de Champlain, General James Wolfe, Montcalm, Governors General and their spouses. After the Bank of Canada was created, it assumed responsibility for issuing bank notes in 1935 and has since released seven different series, plus three commemorative bills. Recent bank policy has been to depict "portraits of former Canadian prime ministers and members of the royal family on the front and scenes that reflect Canadian culture, history and achievements on the back."¹ The faces of our current polymer series depict Queen Elizabeth II

¹ Bank of Canada website, 2011.

and former prime ministers Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Sir John A. Macdonald, W.L. Mackenzie King, and Sir Robert L. Borden.

In 2004, lobbying resulted in the release of a \$50 bill that depicted activists Thérèse Casgrain and the Famous 5 on the back. The issuing of this note marked the first time that identifiable Canadian women were celebrated, though it represented them with a medallion showing Casgrain and a statue of the five Albertans — rather than actual portraits.

The progress towards gender equality on Canadian bank notes was erased when the Bank of Canada began rolling out a new series of polymers in November 2011, and Canadians realized that Bank of Canada Governor Mark Carney had purged Canadian women — replacing them with an icebreaker on the back of the \$50 bill. In response to protests about the move, Bank of Canada spokeswoman Julie Girard stated “We’ve had the privilege to feature the Famous 5 on the 50 for the last series... now, it’s our opportunity to celebrate new things.”²

Neither the Bank of Canada Governor or Minister of Finance, responsible for approving bank note designs, showed a commitment to ensure that future bank notes would honour Canadian women as well as men. I eventually called for action from the two leaders in a petition launched in July 2013. This appeal highlighted the importance of recognizing the contributions of Canadian women in

national symbols such as bank notes:

Bank notes that belong to all Canadians should depict a wider range of Canadians, of both genders as well as various ethnic origins. Who and what is celebrated on our bank notes matters, as it reflects what we consider important in our culture and history and who we consider worthy of honouring for achievement. Women are not absent from the list of notable worthies in Canada, just notably absent or under-represented in many of the images that surround us and which contribute to our view of the world and our potential role in it.³

While Canada is finally about to celebrate one notable Canadian woman on the face of a bank note, a multitude of countries around the globe already depict non-royal female historical figures on their money. These countries include Japan, Columbia, Chile, Peru, Turkey, Ukraine, Venezuela, Mexico, Serbia, New Zealand, Philippines, Argentina, Israel, Uruguay, and South Korea.⁴ The Royal Bank of Scotland announced in 2016 that Scottish scientist Mary Somerville and poet Nan Shepherd will be the faces of two new bank notes. Sweden has begun issuing new bank notes that will feature portraits of an equal number of men and women. Australia provides an excellent model for including nation builders of both genders on its bank notes, as four out of five feature a notable Australian woman on one side and a man on the other; the fifth note

² Calgary Herald, 20 December 2011.

³ www.change.org/CanadianHeroines

⁴ Though 48 countries currently feature women on bank notes, Queen Elizabeth II dominates by appearing on 74 of the 120 female-fronted bills. See <http://www.vox.com/2016/4/21/11456180/women-us-money>.

depicts Queen Elizabeth II along with parliament buildings.

Activists in a number of countries recently resorted to public campaigns to ensure that famous men are not the only historical figures on national currency. The Bank of England, in addition to issuing countless bills honouring its female monarchs, depicted nurse Florence Nightingale and then social reformer Elizabeth Fry on bank notes. But when the Brits announced plans in 2013 to replace the latter with Sir Winston Churchill, activist Caroline Criado-Perez launched a petition which soon convinced new Bank of England Governor Mark Carney to fix the problem. He quickly announced in July 2013 that acclaimed author Jane Austen will be the face of a new £10 note in 2017.

In the United States, a grassroots organization created the *Women on 20s* campaign in 2015 to have an American woman on bills before the 100th anniversary of women's suffrage in 2020. After the group submitted a petition to President Barak Obama on May 12, 2015, the government quickly committed to taking action and selected the legendary former-slave and abolitionist Harriet Tubman to be the face of a new bank note. Pocahontas had appeared on American bank notes in a group image back in the 1860s, while former first lady Martha Washington was depicted in the 1890s.

As for Canada, it took about three years for the high-profile campaign calling for Canadian women on bank notes to finally see concrete results. The battle involved: letter-writing and emails to every federal member of parliament as well as numerous Bank of Canada staff and board members, organizations and prominent citizens; lobbying polit-

icians; op-eds in newspapers; numerous interviews on radio and television; extensive media coverage and social media engagement; and petition support from Canadians across the country – including notable Canadians such as author Margaret Atwood and activist Judy Rebick as well as a few politicians. Hundreds of women were nominated through an interactive website at womenonbanknotes.ca that enabled users to create images of bank notes featuring their picks, and share them on social media. Pressure mounted when city councils started getting involved in the national campaign, with motions calling for Canadian women on bank notes passed in Montreal, Whitehorse, Cambridge, Toronto, Oakville and North Saanich.

Once Prime Minister Trudeau and Finance Minister Morneau provided the long-awaited commitment to celebrate an iconic Canadian woman on our notes, the Bank of Canada moved quickly to involve Canadians by inviting them to submit nominations online. A bank website received over 26,000 submissions. It also established a seven-member Advisory Council, of which I was a member, to review the 461 names which met the qualifying criteria – which included the nominee being dead for at least 25 years. The council then produced a long list of a dozen women which was made public. A short list was later provided for review by Bank of Canada Governor Stephen Poloz and Finance Minister Bill Morneau, with the latter making the final decision in accordance with the *Bank of Canada Act*. The announcement of which Canadian woman will be the first to appear on the face of a bank note is expected in the fall of 2016, with the actual bill being issued in 2018 as part of a new series.

The lengthy campaign and the eventual announcement resulted in an interesting national discussion about female historical figures and which ones were banknoteable. Journalists, political pundits, petition supporters, historians, students and the general public weighed in on the topic through everything from television and radio talk-shows to online polls, articles, twitter and school projects. Many bemoaned their ignorance of women in Canadian history and expressed interest in learning more about the ones being suggested. While a national poll conducted by Angus Reid in May 2016 showed Canadians were divided about who to select for that lone bank note, 80% agreed that at least one Canadian woman should be depicted on the front of a Canadian bank note.⁵

Though the honouring of one female Canadian historical figure on the face of our money is a significant symbolic step towards including women as part of our national identity, gender equality on bank notes and in all other aspects of Canadian life remains the target just as it was for the current federal cabinet. Why not?

5 <http://angusreid.org/women-on-money>

“A REWARD FOR WORKING IN THE FIELDS AND FACTORIES:” CANADIAN WOMEN’S SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT AS PORTRAYED IN ONTARIO TEXTS

DR. ROSE FINE-MEYER

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The year 2016 marks the one hundredth anniversary of women’s right to vote in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta. Ontario and British Columbia followed. This paved the way for the extension of the right to vote in federal elections in 1918.¹ The topic of suffrage holds a unique place in history curricula as it is a noted women’s historical experience in all school texts, albeit briefly. Until the 1980s textbooks and resources focused exclusively on male military, industrial, and political achievements. Women did not appear, except in brief flashes. So the topic of “suffrage” provides an opportunity to explore how women’s historical experiences enter the curriculum schema, and change over time. What is evident in Ontario hist-

ory textbooks is a limited and static portrayal of the suffrage movements, reducing decades of women’s reform activism into a legislative “reward” for good citizenship. This paper briefly reflects on how suffrage is presented in approved textbooks 1922-2014. None offer a full examination of women’s work to achieve equity in Canada.

The first post-World War One, Ontario history textbook, published in 1922, made brief reference to women gaining the right to vote noting; “war service was made the basis of war-franchise.” It argued that under terms of the Wartime Elections Act, “... the vote was given to the mothers, sisters and wives of all who had enlisted...”² In the first decade after

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- 1 Alison Prentice et al, *Canadian Women a History* (Harcourt Brace, 1998). At the federal level women’s right to vote was achieved in 3 stages: The Military Voters Act, 1917 to women nurses serving in the war; The Wartime Elections Act to wives, widows, mothers, sisters, daughters of those serving in the war and The Federal Women’s Franchise Act, which gave the vote to all female British subjects aged 21 who met the property criteria in their province of residence. The vote was denied to Indigenous women and women of certain religions and race.
- 2 W.L. Grant. Rev. *The Ontario High School History of Canada* (Toronto: Ryerson Press 1922), 386

the war, brief recognition of women's suffrage in school texts is noted, and tied to women's work during the war; as a reward for their patriotism. By the 1930s texts add reference to the Persons Case, the right of admission to universities, and "eligibility for election to parliament, appointment to cabinet office, and the senate."³ After the Second World War, despite increases in narratives, books continue to focus on the links between war service and the vote.⁴ These early texts form a template for future textbooks. None will recognize that women did not speak in one voice; that they held multiple positions on the reforms they supported, and on the vision they had for Canada. Few texts will reference the multiple reform activism of the 19th and early 20th century, or that the suffrage movement was regional, national and international, or that not all women were included in the legislation of 1918, including Indigenous women and women of certain religions and race.⁵

Early academic scholarship, such as Deborah Gorham's article on Flora Macdonald Denison, a leader in the suffrage and reform movements, provided support that challenging the narrative that women

were 'granted' the vote within the context of war work. Gorham argued that Denison stood out from the "early women doctors" as she was not middle class but rather a dressmaker and journalist who advocated for working class women.⁶ In fact, references of working class narratives were only found in supplementary texts, such as Desmond Morton's "Years of Conflict" which explored working conditions of women, the NCCW demands for reforms in public health, and links to the vote. Morton recognized the "group of brilliant women journalists, including Nellie McClung, Cora Hind and Francis Beynon, who broadened the suffrage campaign by backing labour and temperance causes."⁷ This book is one of the few that also acknowledged that not all women supported the war; "some like Flora Denison and Francis Benyon had joined the small brave minority of pacifists."⁸

The majority of school texts disregard the diverse women's organizations that existed across Canada. The WCTU, the NCWC, the WI, The DWE, The CWSA, to name only a few, all had goals and objectives.⁹ Some advocated for rural women's rights to property and some for urban women's labour

3 Wm. Stewart Wallace, *A History of the Canadian People* (Toronto: Copp, Clark, 1930), 352

4 George Brown, *Building the Canadian Nation* (Toronto: J. M. Dent, 1946), 411. Although textbooks had expanded narratives, women's suffrage remained a small reference point. Exact text in Chaffe and Lower, *Canada-A Nation*, (Toronto: Longmans, Green) 1948 with reprints into the 1950s.

5 <http://www.elections.ca> The 1948 Dominion Elections Act deleted the reference to discrimination in the franchise on the basis of race. By 1960, further amendments removed racial and religious discrimination.

6 Linda Kealy, ed. *Not an Unreasonable Claim: Women and Reform in Canada 1880s-1920s* (Women's Press, 1977).

7 Desmond Morton, *Years of Conflict* (Century of Canada Series (1983), 15-16

8 Ibid, 80-81

9 Full names: The Woman's Christian Temperance Union, The National Council of Women, The Women's Institutes, The Dominion Women's Enfranchisement, The Canadian Women's Suffrage Association. Women were active in hundreds of women's clubs across the country, most which advocated for social reform.

rights in factories. Middle class women advocated for access to higher education, acceptance into the professions, and the health of children. Protestant Women, Black Women, advocated for social reforms through missionary societies, French Catholic women social, health, and daycares. Suffrage had links to organized labour, farmers associations, churches, schools and communities. There was significant regional diversity within the reform movements.¹⁰

What is also missing is acknowledgement of the reform movements as international in nature. As members of the Commonwealth, Canadian reformers were knowledgeable about reforms in New Zealand and Australia, that legislated for the vote in 1893 and 1894, respectively, and suffrage movements in the United States and in Britain, through newspapers and public talks. An invitation to speak by Dr. Emily Stowe to Sarah Curzon in 1882 and Anna Howard Shaw in 1889, are only two of the many visits to Toronto by well-known American suffragists and Emmeline Pankhurst, founder and the leader of the British Suffragette Movement. Canadian women were also part of the WILPF, their peace activism established in the Canadian Suffrage Association, FWTA, WCTU, The Red

Cross, and as part of religious sects. A number of women travelled as a result of this work; significant trans-national activism that linked them to women's groups in different countries.¹¹ To access these narratives, however, educators had to access supplementary resources. Not all teachers did, as it was never mandatory.

Social movement activism in the 1960s and 1970s helped draw attention to demands for greater equity, and feminist scholars, and women's organizations, pressed governments to make change. The RCSW in Canada published a number of studies.¹² A 1973 Ontario government report focused on the removal of "sex bias" from textbooks. To remedy the situation schools boards organized workshops and published resources for teachers; some published by the Ministry of Education that provided a small wedge in adding women's historical narratives into the curriculum.¹³ Resources featured prominent women such as Nellie McClung, Agnes Macphail, Suzanna Moodie as well as Clara Barton, Peggy Mann (US), Emmeline Pankhurst (UK).¹⁴

Textbooks were slow to catch up. "Decisive Decades," a 1960s popular text was first to list suffrage in the Index and to acknowledge the inequity of

10 See: Gail Cuthbert Brandt et al, *Canadian Women: A History*, 3rd ed. (Toronto: Nelson Education, 2011)

11 Fine-Meyer, "'The good teacher is a revolutionary': Alternative War Perspectives in Toronto Classrooms, 1960s-1990s, in C. Gidney & L. Campbell, eds., *Worth Fighting For: Canada's Tradition of War-Resistance from 1812 to the War on Terror* (Toronto: Between the Lines Press, 2015) After the war, The Canadian Women's League of Peace & Freedom undertook a survey of textbooks to assess in what ways textbooks supported militarism.

12 See: *The Report of The Royal Commission on the Status of Women Canada* (1970) and Margaret Wade Labarge et al, *The Status of Women Canada: Volume 8: Cultural Tradition and Political History of Women in Canada* (1971)

13 Ministry of Education for Ontario, *Equal Opportunity for Women in Ontario: A Plan for Action* (June 1973); *Girls and Women in Society: A Resource List* (1977) Resource lists included films, audio-visual materials, primary resources and biographies, many which focused on suffrage.

14 This book contained multiple photos ranging from Lady Aberdeen, Nellie McClung, Agnes Macphail, factory workers, farm workers in WW1, Temperance Parade, 1905, Female army Volunteers, Canadian Women's Press Club Executive 1923.

the Act.¹⁵ Canadian women were placed in the war section, adding the act "gave the vote to women; not all women, as a reward for working in the fields and factories..."¹⁶ By 1978, and influenced by the expanding women's movement, textbooks explored the history of the NCWC, noting some of women's reforms. One text includes a bio of Nellie McClung, and a reference to how the post-war period changed the "old order" and brought "a society ready to create a more democratic order in which men and women have more freedom to question authority and to choose their own social roles."¹⁷

In 1987 the Resources for Feminist Research (RFR/DRF) published "Women's Studies in Canada," a booklet that included suffrage related resources.¹⁸ That same year, a teacher's guide, "Women as Agents of Change" acknowledged that most history studies texts "gloss over or ignore the contributions of women" acknowledging that students may complete their education "having little or no knowledge of the female involvement in history."¹⁹ The guide suggested themes, such as suffrage, be

implemented as "case studies."²⁰ In 1992 the Canadian government designated October as Women's History Month and provided funds for a range of supplementary resources, but not to overhaul curriculum.²¹

Fitzhenry & Whiteside published a series, "The Canadians." The book, "Nellie McClung" explored her family life, publications, and activism. This 62 page booklet is filled with primary documents and a reading list for students. It explores suffrage history; bills introduced in Ontario and Manitoba, and recognizes the work of the CWPC, especially E. Cora Hind. The book makes note of visits from Emmeline Pankhurst and Barbara Wiley, which "helped fire the club with fresh enthusiasm" and the work of Local and National Councils of Women.²² McClung led a delegation to parliament in Jan 1914, represented by the PEL, the IWSA, the Grain Growers Association, the WCTU, the Trades and Labour Council, the CWPC, and the YWCA; thus acknowledging diverse groups. It explores the famous Mock Parliament, staged at Walker Theatre, where "peti-

15 AB Hodgetts, *Decisive Decades* (Toronto: T. Nelson, 1960), 151.

16 AB Hodgetts, 214-215.

17 R. Stewart, N. McLean, *Forming a Nation: The Story of Canada and Canadians* (Gage Educ.Pub 1978), 223.

18 Resources for Feminist Research / Documentation sur la recherche féministe included, Catherine Cleverdon, *The Woman Suffrage Movement in Canada* (U. of Toronto Press 1950; Meg Luxton, *More than a Labour of Love: Three Generations of Women's Work in the Home* (Women's Press, 1980); Alison Prentice & Susan Mann Trofimenkoff, *The Neglected Majority: Essays in Canadian Women's History* Toronto (McClelland & Stewart, 1977).

19 ON Ministry of Education, *Sex-role Stereotyping and Women's Studies Conference Report* (Toronto: 1978), 65.

20 ON Ministry of Education, *The Story of Canada and Canadians, Canada's Original People, Women's Suffrage and Trade Unions*. Intermediate Division Curriculum, 1977, Circular 14 (1983). (Circular H.S.1. 1979-1981).

21 See: Rose Fine-Meyer, *Including Women: The Establishment and Integration of Canadian Women's History into Toronto Ontario Classrooms 1968-1993* (PhD Thesis, U. of Toronto, 2012).

22 Mary Lile Benham, *Nellie McClung* (Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1977), 25 The author points out the resistance from Manitoba Premier Rodmond Roblin, who is quoted, "I don't want a hyena in petticoats talking politics at me. I want a nice gentle creature to bring me my slippers." CWPC = Canadian Women's Press Club.

tions were presented, motions were moved...and bills were read."²³ The book, "Emily Stowe" explores her work as a physician, activist, and founder of the women's suffrage movement in Canada.²⁴ Denied entrance into medical schools in Canada, Dr. Emily Howard Stowe obtained her education in the US where she met American activists engaged in anti-slavery, civil and women's rights movements. The book notes her attendance at the iconic 1848 Convention for Women's Rights in Seneca Falls, where she met Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott. In November of 1876 Stowe established the Toronto Women's Literary Club, with a number of prominent Canadians activists, later called the Canadian Women's Suffrage Association. The book explores the many deputations the Club prepared; thousands of signed petitions; historical details not found in school texts.²⁵

Some school boards developed resources. The Toronto Board of Education had a Committee on Women's Suffrage.²⁶ Suffrage was a major focus for educators and a special Unit was developed in

the 1980s for all grade 8 students, part of Social Studies.²⁷ A play, "Fighting Spirit, the story of a Canadian Suffragette," was also developed and presented by the Toronto Workshop Productions.²⁸ The Curriculum divisions advocated for special "kits" with primary documents and bibliographies.²⁹ Two resources, published by OISE, "Pioneer Women of Western Canada;" primary documents on suffrage and "Breaking the Mould," on women's voting and labour issues.³⁰

A popular 1990s textbook included "women icons" throughout the text with references to the WCTU, Dr. Emily Stowe and women's' war work. The revised 2000 publication removed the icons and devoted 2 pages to suffrage, noting, "Since women were doing so much for the war effort, they wanted to share in making decisions about the country."³¹ Still linking the war to suffrage is not surprising, but by the 2000s, there remained limited attention to broader reform movements. One text notes, "In one fell swoop, parliamentarians officially granted all white women born in Canada the right to vote in

23 Ibid, 27-28 Political Equality League, the Icelandic Women's Suffrage Association, The Woman's Christian Temperance Union.

24 Janet Ray, *Emily Stowe* (Don Mills, ON: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1978) and *Towards Women's Rights* (Toronto: Grolier, 1981).

25 Janet Ray, *Emily Stowe*. See also Margaret McCallum, *Emily Stowe* (Canadian Pathfinders Series, Grolier, 1989) which also explores her life and leadership in the suffrage women's movement.

26 Toronto Board of Education (TBE) Archives/Women's Studies File, 1980).

27 Myra Novogrodsky. Interview with author, Toronto: October 29, 2009. See also Myra Novogrodsky, "Generating Women's Studies Programs in the Public Schools: The Use of Human, Print and Audio-Visual Resources," *Canadian Women's Studies*, 6, no. 3 (summer/fall 1985): 34-35.

28 T.B.E. Committees: Status of Women Files. The play was shown to over 900 grade 8 students in the 1980s, then linked to Suffrage units.

29 P. Bourne, *Women in Canadian Society*, (OISE 1978), V. D'Oyley, *Black Presence in Multi-Ethnic Canada* (1978), B. Kane & P. Harris, *The Women's Kit* (OISE 1974), C. Pasternak: *Breaking the Mould* (1977).

30 Others in the series included: Linda Silver Dranoff, *Women in Canadian Law*. (Toronto: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1977); Jean Cochrane, Abby Hoffman, Patricia Kincaid, *Women in Canadian Sports*. (Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1977); Jean Cochrane, *Women in Canadian Politics* (Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1977).

31 J. Bradley Cruxton, W. D. Wilson. *Spotlight Canada* (Oxford University Press, Toronto, 2000), 116.

federal elections."³²

So to summarize, no texts discussed the conflicts and power relationships that took place within communities, workplaces, homes, and governments that affected women's work to make change. None covered the breadth of the movement across the country or the links to democracy; that the fight for enfranchisement was not about rewarding women for good citizenship, but rather was rectifying a wrong, an essential element of a democratic society. If women had not received the vote, could Canada have continued to identify itself as a democratic state? Few acknowledge Indigenous women, or black, or immigrant women.³³ Finally, the use of language never changes. Women are "given" the vote, as texts maintain a patriarchal perspective, and reform movements are women's "struggle." They do not explore women's diverse historical experiences, and as such, continue to support gender inequity.

What is surprising is the lack of attention in school texts to increased scholarship in the field of women's history. As history educators, we need to do more than question pedagogy, we need to question content. Feminist theorists, such as Anne Phillips, have suggested that women were included as a "special case," peripheral to dominant narratives.³⁴ Wendy Brown has argued, women's history

requires a newly constructed historical framework; a bold step, yet to take place in education.³⁵ And yet, the history of women's suffrage provides a lens into broader economic, political, and social histories in Canada. Its inclusion, as a reward for patriotism, is disappointing and historically inaccurate. History students deserve the full story.

32 Margaret Hoogeveen et al, *Creating Canada* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 2014), 200-203.

33 Texts make no mention of feminist activism, including early work by Mary Ann Shadd Cary and her newspaper *The Provincial Freeman* (1853-1857) which advocated for the abolition of slavery, temperance and the franchise.

34 Anne Phillips, "Democracy and Difference: Some Problems for Feminist Theory" in Will Kymlicka, ed., *The Rights of Minority Cultures* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1995), 293.

35 Wendy Brown, "The Impossibility of Women's Studies," *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*. 9.3 (Fall, 1997)



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