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Library Research Award Application

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Reflective Essay

My junior seminar solidified my focus on the anti-suffrage movement. While this began as a longstanding interest in the repression of women during the First Red Scare, I learned resource mobilization theory and political opportunity theory in “American Social Movements Since 1900: from Woman Suffrage to Black Lives Matter to White Nationalism” with Professor James Gregory. This theoretical framework evaluates the successes and failures of social movements. The course’s exploration of why the Equal Rights Amendment failed in the wake of the Nineteenth Amendment raised the question of the impact of a female-led countermovement.

I used a secondary source to guide my preliminary research. A UW Libraries search for “female antiradicalism” yielded *Battling Miss Bolsheviki: The Origins of Female Conservatism in the United States* by Kirsten Delegard. This book ultimately became my essential secondary source that led me in the direction of newspapers in the process of corroborating its citations. Using the HathiTrust Emergency Library through the University of Washington Library, I reviewed publications like the anti-suffragist *The Woman Patriot* and the suffragist *The Woman Citizen*, a subsidiary of the National American Woman Suffrage Association. I kept a database of anti-suffragists referencing suffragists and vice versa. This database included images of relevant pages, their dates, page numbers, and a brief description of their subject matter. My section for *The Woman Patriot* quickly multiplied with provocative articles to analyze. After meeting with Professor Gregory to discuss my initial research, I heeded his advice to make *The Woman Patriot* the subject of my project.

My project began in October 2020 and ended in December 2020. Reading hundreds of pages of *The Woman Patriot* was foundational. The excitement of solving the puzzle of change and continuity over time as well as correcting inaccuracies in secondary sources, like Delegard's claim that the newspaper did not include advertisements, rewarded the time-intensive process.¹ Still, research in the time of COVID-19 provided no shortage of obstacles. Considering this research inaugurated my declaration of the History major in Spring 2020, the process was nothing short of a baptism by fire. First, the COVID-19 pandemic prevented access to microfilm. While HathiTrust enabled my initial access to *The Woman Patriot*, the volumes contributed by Ohio State University only covered the issues from April 27, 1918 to April 12, 1919 and April 19, 1919 to December 25, 1920. Furthermore, the latter volume was mislabeled as including 1924 until 1926. The HathiTrust access to over two years of issues is by no means insignificant, but it does not encompass the fourteen years of publishing from 1918 to 1932. I could not rely solely on e-resources and checked out the bound issue of volume one through volume nine (from September 14, 1918 to April 1, 1925) from the UW Library. The continued use of my aforementioned database was crucial in merging both my physical and electronic copies. This expanded time frame let me keep a narrow focus and ward off repetition while accounting for crossroads like the 1924 Spider Web Chart, a conspiratorial anti-feminist and anti-pacifist figure published in *The Dearborn Independent* and inspired by *The Woman Patriot*, and the newspaper's involvement in congressional battles. Second, the analysis of *The Woman Patriot* and its strategies is not complete without contextualization. The UW Library has microfilm archives of *The Remonstrance*, *The Anti-Suffragist*, and *The Woman's Protest*, the direct predecessors of *The Woman Patriot*. However, there are no bound copies to compensate for the

¹ Kirsten Marie Delegard, *Battling Miss Bolsheviki: The Origins of Female Conservatism in the United States* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 75.

inaccessibility of the reels. The keywords “anti-suffrage publication” in the UW Libraries search happened to include the statistical comparison of the rhetoric of *The Woman Patriot* and *The Woman’s Protest* (the most recent of its predecessors) by Artour Aslanian. Aslanian’s work facilitated my analysis of changed strategies and efficacy, both crucial to my theoretical framework.

My search terms replaced the rite of passage of combing the UW Library’s stacks. My initial multiple character wildcard searches of “anti-suffrag*” and “female anti-radical*” expanded into greater specifics after reading *The Woman Patriot*. HathiTrust’s document search feature permitted the locating of “Tennessee” in earlier issues on the Southern anti-suffrage campaign, for example. In addition to the newspaper, I utilized primary sources such as congressional and Supreme Court records to evaluate the legal and political sway of *The Woman Patriot*. The UW Library found the former, as guided by Delegard’s references, in the HeinOnline U.S. Congressional Documents Library. The UW Library led me to the HeinOnline U.S. Supreme Court Documents Library and *Frothingham v. Mellon* through a search for Harriet Frothingham, one of the board members of the Woman Patriot Publishing Company. In addition to secondary sources used in my junior seminar, I discovered academic articles, largely from JSTOR, through keywords including the above as well as “The Woman Patriot,” “Woodrow Wilson suffrage,” and “anti-feminis*.” Considering the obscurity of my topic relative to suffrage history and the use of a century-old newspaper, I included secondary sources published in journals from the last forty years.

The UW Library proved to be indispensable in constructing my argument. Researching and writing twenty-three pages of my findings in two months seemed impossibly daunting. While I hope to gain access to the microfilm in the near future, my project on *The Woman Patriot*

bolstered a sense of competency in my scholarship regardless of its continuation into graduate education. I better understand how to navigate and translate the wealth of information in databases, archives, and academic articles into a novel argument. The thrill of discovery now propels my research.