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Building a Coalition in California: The 1911 Campaign for Women's Suffrage

Kristina A. Cardinale
California State University - San Bernardino

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BUILDING A COALITION IN CALIFORNIA:
THE CAMPAIGN FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

A Thesis
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
History

by
Kristina A. Cardinale
May 2022

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Approved by:

Jeremy Murray, Committee Chair, History

Thomas Long, Committee Member

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ABSTRACT

Women in California gained the right to vote in 1911 after a mass-organized campaign across the state. Suffrage, labor, and temperance organizations were driving forces behind the women's suffrage proposition passing and being amended to the state constitution. The women figureheads and membership of these associations were responsible for organizing politically and reaching across class lines in order to build a coalition for women's suffrage in the state. This research serves as a compilation and analysis of the female-driven clubs, leadership, and strategies behind the Campaign of 1911.

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Lastly, I am incredibly thankful for my partner, Casey, and my family for believing in me when I struggled to believe in myself. Thank you for being my number one champion.

DEDICATION

To all of the women before me who refused to be quiet.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

On October 10, 1911 California held a special state election that asked white male voters a fundamental question: should women have the right to vote? Women in California have fought for their right to political and economic autonomy since the state's birth in 1850. Their struggle has been driven by Supreme Court rulings that withheld civil rights from women and minorities. As taxpaying citizens, many women in the West believed their rights should have been ensured by the Constitution. In 1871, Ellen R. Van Valkenburg sued Santa Cruz County Clerk Albert Brown for denying her right to vote.¹ She argued that women were citizens in name but not in practice and their voting rights should be protected under the 14th Amendment. Van Valkenburg likely did not know it at the time, but her actions would sow seeds California women would reap forty years later.

The California Women's Movement has been given little-to-no attention in mainstream history and is often in the shadow of the passage of the 19th Amendment and the greater, national suffrage movements prior to the 1920's.

¹ Albert Hagan Attorney for Appellant, "Brief of Appellant Ellen R. Van Valkenburg vs. Albert Brown in the Supreme Court of the State of California," Supreme Court Records, 1871. Doc ID: WPA 3494. <https://archives.cdn.sos.ca.gov/pdf/suffrage/wpa3493-supreme-court-3091.pdf>.

Many historians believe the first steps of the California Women's Movement were taken in the 1860's, when a handful of women began delivering public lectures on women's suffrage in San Francisco and other booming cities.² This paralleled the wave of women's political franchise seen in early Western states like Wyoming, Colorado, and Utah. In California, voting rights advocates had successfully managed to get women's suffrage on the ballot in 1896. (Franchise and suffrage will be common terms utilized throughout this analysis in reference to voting rights.) Prominent names from around the country were attached to this nineteenth century crusade in the Golden State, with Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton at the center. Unfortunately, they lacked the political backing needed for it to pass in the state legislature that year and the proposition failed. This defeat would be the impetus behind the 1911 Campaign for women's suffrage in California.

The 1911 Campaign for women's suffrage consisted of diverse groups of women throughout the state who built unlikely alliances and amassed grassroots efforts rarely seen before in California history. This piece aims to serve as a compilation of women and their respective organizations who organized politically and created coalitions with one another during the 1911 Campaign. Highlighting the political strategies implemented by suffrage, labor, temperance,

² Jennifer Helton, "Woman Suffrage in the West," National Park Service, accessed April 7, 2022, <https://www.nps.gov/articles/woman-suffrage-in-the-west.htm>.

and religious activist groups will illuminate the underrepresented voices and efforts in the California Women's Movement. It was the contributions of these women and the Western women before them that set the national stage for women's suffrage to pass at the federal level—giving women voting access across the US.

This research will focus on club women, working women, and some women of color whose talents and political savvy created a state-wide mobilization of men and women dedicated to obtaining votes for womankind. There will be limitations to this research despite its goal of being inclusive and holistic as possible. Asian-American and Native American women are largely excluded from this approach for issues regarding citizenship and minority demographics in the West during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. There is also an apparent lack of rural and farming sources, despite the fact that these counties all voted in favor of the women's suffrage proposition. Although these demographics are rarely discussed in this specific analysis, they are still important to California and Western US History as a whole, and will perhaps be further researched in a later project.

Methodology

The vast majority of primary sources in this study have been collected from newspaper repositories, specifically the University of California Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research. Word of the special 1911 election was spread and supported widely in the state through newspapers,

including the *San Francisco Call*, the *Los Angeles Herald*, and the *San Diego Bee*. Pro-suffrage publications gave insight as to what arguments were being made in favor and against women's right to vote during the 1911 Campaign. Many of these institutions published advertisements and literature written by suffrage organizations like the California Equal Suffrage Association and the Votes for Women Club. The *Western Woman*, formerly *The Yellow Ribbon*, was a popular western suffrage advocacy paper run by distinguished women in the movement. The heavy reliance on public media throughout this analysis allowed for a deeper understanding of public sentiment during the early twentieth century towards the women's suffrage issue. Interviews with club presidents, leading suffrage and labor union advocates, as well as statements from prominent politicians were ample in the vast collection of scanned newspapers available through the Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research at UC Riverside. By compiling articles that reported on meetings, rallies, and speaking events organized by suffrage, labor, and temperance organizations throughout California, this study hopes to function as a narrative covering prominent female leaders, their clubs, and their contributions to the 1911 Campaign.

First-hand accounts from suffragettes were crucial in understanding the complexity of their grassroots efforts. One of the most detailed primary sources available on club women and working women in the Bay Area came from Selina Solomons. In *How We Won the Vote in California: A True Story of the Campaign of 1911*, Solomons explained that many educated, wealthy club women in the

Bay Area had organized leagues with numbers in the tens of thousands. Her narrative was incredibly helpful as she deconstructed the complicated relationships among clubs, leagues, associations and the women who ran them. As a working class woman herself, Solomons was skeptical of the effectiveness of elite club women who had lost the 1896 vote. However, she still applauded groundbreaking efforts by nineteenth and twentieth century club women whom she described as “too far ahead of their time.”³

In the brief discussion on women of color in Chapter Three, Delilah Beasley’s first hand account titled *The Negro Trail Blazers of California* is relied on heavily for information on Sarah Massey Overton and her significance during the 1911 Campaign.

Additionally, California State resources were helpful in setting and understanding the context necessary for this analysis. The National Park Service, the California State Parks, and the California Secretary of State websites had invaluable information on women in the West, nineteenth century social movements in relation to the Women’s Rights Movement, and the complex history of Latinos in California.

³ Selina Solomons, *How we Won the Vote in California: A True Story of the Campaign of 1911* (San Francisco, California: The New Woman Publishing Co., 1912) 1.

Assessment of Literature

In order to analyze the coalition of women united through the California Suffrage Movement, it is essential to discuss scholarship on the topic. Western and Women's Studies historians alike have contributed to this as a niche subject—isolating the state as a sole case study. Addressing the figures, adjusting the lens of analysis to narrow in on the view of California, as well as the discourse in the historiography surrounding the movement will be fundamental in understanding the evidence presented throughout this examination.

In *Paving the Way: Women's Struggles for Political Equality in California*, Swatt et al. compiled a detailed chronological account of the Women's Suffrage Movement in California and its impact on politics in the region. Swatt et al. covered the pioneer women of the West and their metamorphosis since California statehood in 1850 to their ultimate victory in gaining women's suffrage amended to the state constitution. Detailing the contributions and experiences of women across racial lines, Swatt et al. arguably presented a rare, inclusive account of California's women's movement than other historians in the field.

Swatt et al. argued the California Frontier “spawned white women willing to push back against the social mores that severely constricted expectations and permissible behaviors for most American women.”⁴ This was in stark contrast to the deeply embedded social norms from the East and South that demanded

⁴ Steve Swatt, et al., *Paving the Way: Women's Struggles for Political Equality in California* (Institute of Governmental Studies Press, 2019) 3.

women be confined to the private sphere and limited the political sphere to men exclusively. Not long after statehood, Clara Foltz and Laura de Force Gordon were among the prominent women who were known to cause “rabble-rousing behavior” in the Golden State.⁵ Foltz and de Force Gordon became the first female lawyers in California. Foltz even drafted legislation challenging the state’s law limiting legal professions for “any white male citizen” and was responsible for drafting the legislation to grant women voting rights on the 1896 ballot.⁶ Beyond these individuals were the club women, often educated, married, and well-off who famously organized and lobbied in both the 1890’s and 1900’s. These were the women who received the most attention at the national level on the Women’s Suffrage Movement stage. Generally, scholarship in the field revolves around these women and for the sake of inclusivity, will be brief in this analysis. It is important to note that these clubs were typically for whites only and were purposely unwelcoming to non-whites. While it may be an “inconvenient truth” that white, educated women were at the forefront of the movement, Swatt et al. argued that “many women of color... faced more daunting challenges [than suffrage] that dealt with freedom and basic rights.”⁷

Swatt et al. asserted that sexist, racist and ethnically discriminatory laws were put into place that subjected women of color to a dual set of constrictions

⁵ Swatt, et al., *Paving the Way*, 3.

⁶ Swatt, et al., *Paving the Way*, 3.

⁷ Swatt, et al., *Paving the Way*, 27.

since statehood in 1850.⁸ One of Swatt et al. explained that California practiced its own set of Jim Crow laws, targeting non-whites, especially in public institutions.⁹ California's runaway slave law required runaways to be returned and allowed for African Americans who were brought into the state to be held in captivity. This was despite the fact that the California constitution outlawed slavery. Non-whites were also forbidden from testifying in court against whites, which directly impacted women like Bridget "Biddy" Mason who sought legal avenues of freedom.¹⁰ Asian, Mexican, and other Latin Americans seeking opportunities out west were often excluded from the goldfields and, if permitted, were frequently subjugated with extra taxes. Laws targeting Chinese immigrants were especially common in the early twentieth century across the country; clearly the shadow of the federal Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 loomed large. These civil rights issues were significant hurdles that not only impeded women of color's right to vote, but also played a role in denying their right to all the fruits of citizenship.

The broad content covered by Swatt et al. was especially useful in referring to a solidified timeline of events in California women's political history. In addressing key issues of race that are often left out or overlooked in the historiography of the women's West and their right for suffrage, Swatt et al.

⁸ Swatt, et al., *Paving the Way*, 4.

⁹ Swatt, et al., *Paving the Way*, 5.

¹⁰ Swatt, et al., *Paving the Way*, 5.

provides an honest depiction of an overlooked niche within the larger, national context.

Leading historian on the California women's suffrage movement, Gayle Gullett, emphasized the role of club women in the 1911 election. Gullett determined California club women created a social movement they termed "organized womanhood" which contributed to the Progressive Era of the late nineteenth century.¹¹ Gullett focused on the white, educated women who had been organizing for suffrage in the early 1890s and how their work opened the door for women to see themselves as independent and worthy of citizenship. Many of these women were associated with clubs who played a crucial role in rebuilding the movement after the campaign loss in 1896. Despite taking up political projects like establishing a juvenile state court system, these women claimed their work was non-political and labeled it "civic altruism."¹² Gullett insisted that while their grassroots efforts were seen as an extension of their domestic womanly duties, it created political roles for women that ultimately contributed to the advancements of the Progressive Era. Influenced by religious moralism, club women sought to usher out the corrupt politics in California and work together with progressive Republican male politicians who had gained control of the state government by 1910. This was a threat to the social order of

¹¹ Gayle Gullett, *Becoming Citizens: The Emergence and Development of the California Women's Movement, 1880-1911* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000) 2.

¹² Gullett, *Becoming Citizens*, 5.

the state and by proxy, the nation. Facing anti-suffragists who asserted women were second class citizens, the women Gullett discussed took radical stances against centuries-long social norms in their struggle for power and agency all under the guise of “civic altruism.”

In *How the Vote Was Won: Woman Suffrage in the Western United States, 1868-1914*, Rebecca Mead contributed to discourse in the conversation and challenged some notions historians, including Gullett, asserted in their positions on the Women’s Suffrage Movement in California. While Gullett did not negate the political agency of club women, Mead’s interpretation suggests these women had more political representation beyond what was labeled an extension of the home. Mead argued suffragettes in the West had a political adaptability that bolstered their success in radical reform. This was executed by way of “modern techniques and arguments that invigorated the movement” and reached across class lines.¹³ Western club women were often supporting third-party and reform coalitions. These contacts made through labor unions, trade unions, and progressive male politicians were key in getting the vote passed at state level.

Whereas the South failed women during Reconstruction by not implementing universal suffrage for all, the topic continued to be an ongoing conversation in the West.¹⁴ Mead suggested this was because the West

¹³ Rebecca J. Mead, *How the Vote Was Won: Woman Suffrage in the Western United States, 1868-1914* (New York: New York University Press, 2004) 1.

¹⁴ Mead, *How the Vote Was Won*, 2.

continued to expand and territories had the issue of voting rights come into question whenever a territory applied for statehood.¹⁵ As early as the Western Frontier pioneer suffragists asserted their right to vote by utilizing small territorial legislatures, statehood processes, third-party challenges, and reform politics.¹⁶ Western women became increasingly involved with political lobbying, running for office in their unions, and creating voluntary associations that promoted candidates with progressive agendas. Western states began passing legislation in the 1840s that protected women's martial property and business interests—a safeguard from the legal principle of coverture.¹⁷ Challenging coverture meant that women were increasingly becoming protected from laws that deprived women of an independent political identity. California had these protection laws passed by 1873, much to the credit of hardworking early club women.

Englander focused on class and labor unions in her analysis of the San Francisco Wage Earners' Suffrage League (WESL) and their impact on the California's woman suffrage movement. The WESL can be viewed as a case study and applied to areas of California during the early twentieth century where women's labor unions were growing and gaining political exposure. Working women in unions gained valuable political experience considerably across California but even more so in San Francisco, Englander argued. Compared to

¹⁵ Mead, *How the Vote Was Won*, 2.

¹⁶ Mead, *How the Vote Was Won*, 2.

¹⁷ Mead, *How the Vote Was Won*, 3.

the rest of the country in 1910 (one year before woman suffrage passed in the state) women comprised nearly 10% of union workers whereas the national average lingered around 1.5%. Evidence presented by Englander beginning from the turn of the century documented how working class and trade union women were significant factors in obtaining full voting rights for women in California specifically. In maintaining this argument through ample analysis and documentation, Englander challenged the misconception that middle to upper class women were the sole driving forces behind suffrage passing in 1911. By examining the efforts of working class women, the coalitions they built, and the socioeconomic lines they crossed, Englander set forth an excellent examination on working women in California cities that illuminated the broader context of the shifting Western political tide.

Union women in San Francisco first formed the WESL in 1908 as a platform for suffrage and labor rights and provided women the opportunity to gain and develop political experience and acumen.¹⁸ The group was granted official sanction and recognized as an official union by the San Francisco Labor Council for their efforts towards “secure[ing] the labor vote.”¹⁹ By August of 1911, WESL

¹⁸ Susan Englander, *Class Conflict and Coalition in the California Woman Suffrage Movement 1907-1912: The San Francisco Wage Earners' Suffrage League* (United Kingdom: The Edwin Mellen Press, Ltd, 1992) 95.

¹⁹ Englander, *Class Conflict and Coalition in the California Woman Suffrage Movement 1907-1912*, 2.

branches in Los Angeles, San Jose, and Richmond had all been established.²⁰

The Women's Labor Movement was a critical backdrop that ushered in a wave of female activists whose efforts were often intertwined with the suffrage movement.

As working class women became increasingly involved in political organization and lobbying for labor rights, Englander insisted, "it should be no surprise that at the turn of the century women trade unionists began to demonstrate interest in political strategies...and the vote...as ways to enrich their gains..."²¹ The work of the WESL and other labor unions provided an often overlooked perspective of the women involved in mobilizing for women's right to vote. The WESL created a platform that reached across class lines and created a coalition of working class and immigrant or second generation Americans dedicated to getting women the right to vote in California. While union women felt that worker's rights and protections should be the first priority, many understood that labor reform would not pass without women's votes.

Despite discourse over prioritization of each group's goals, Union activists worked alongside reform suffragists to ultimately organize enough support for women's suffrage to pass in California in 1911. Englander discussed how the Union Labor Party of San Francisco endorsed woman suffrage in 1906 after Maud Younger assisted the legislative committee of the California Equal Suffrage

²⁰ Englander, *Class Conflict and Coalition in the California Woman Suffrage Movement 1907-1912*, 131.

²¹ Englander, *Class Conflict and Coalition in the California Woman Suffrage Movement 1907-1912*, 2.

Association in obtaining endorsement. Maud Younger would prove to be a keystone diplomat between the labor and suffrage movements in California and an influential figure Englander referred to repeatedly because of her privileged upbringing and passion for working-class advocacy.

As someone from the financial elite, Maud Younger utilized her socioeconomic clout to draw attention to women unionists and suffrage activists like WESL, who lobbied for progressive reform like an eight hour work day. WESL gained public attraction for their work from newspapers and magazines during the election season who reported, “many working women who are unable to do more than attend their employment during the day are volunteering to work at night, speaking before organizations or doing whatever they can to serve the vote.”²² By August of 1911, the WESL women had visited more than seventy-eight unions to obtain vast support for Amendment 8 from working-class men, working women on their lunch hours, temperance advocates, and even some brewery unions.²³

It is evident through Englander’s analysis that working women were crucial, yet overlooked in the grand narrative of women’s suffrage. While middle and upper class women arguably had the socioeconomic connections, working class women described by Englander had self-taught political acumen that built

²² Englander, *Class Conflict and Coalition in the California Woman Suffrage Movement 1907-1912*, 131.

²³ Englander, *Class Conflict and Coalition in the California Woman Suffrage Movement 1907-1912*, 131.

powerful coalitions. The efforts of union women like WESL and their allies in urban areas were clearly a demonstration of how women with little to no socioeconomic clout were able to gain agency and assert themselves into the realm of politics.

CHAPTER TWO

CLUB WOMEN

Introduction

There were countless women's suffrage organizations functioning during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in California and relationships between club women and their associations ebbed and flowed constantly. Many organizations fell under the domain of broader associations, some split due to discourse amongst leadership, and others were consolidated under new titles entirely. Generally speaking, clubs served as local, micro organizations that operated on a small scale. Whereas associations and leagues were typically more bureaucratic, larger scale operations that were made up of clubs all over the state. Associations and leagues would hold officer elections, allocate funds to sister clubs, and support advertisement publication efforts for the 1911 Campaign. Archived primary sources on Southern California club women indicate these sociopolitical clubs functioned more heavily in the economically and socially more vibrant Northern and Central coasts. Southern California women's suffrage efforts are discussed in greater detail in later chapters on working women and women of color.

California club women had begun petitioning the state's Committee on Public Morals for protections on women and young girls before the turn of the century. This was leading up to the 1896 state campaign for women's suffrage, which failed despite efforts by notable suffragists Anna Howard Shaw and Susan

B. Anthony. According to Solomons' account, she and other suffragists went straight to work and formed associations dedicated to suffrage grassroots efforts after the 1896 defeat. Various women took on political leadership positions in these clubs, most having little-to-no experience.

Prominent Club Women

Katherine Reed Balentine was an influential club woman who was known for her role on the Executive Board of the California Equal Suffrage Association (CESA) and founded the suffragette magazine *The Yellow Ribbon* in 1906.²⁴ *The Yellow Ribbon* was published weekly and distributed often at suffrage conventions to both men and women as it featured ads, editorials, art, and investigative journalism on Pacific women's issues.²⁵ At some point in 1907 *The Yellow Ribbon* was rebranded as *The Western Woman* and was continued by both the California and Oregon Equal Suffrage Associations. Laura Bride Powers would later take over the publication and serve as editor, making her own mark on the California Suffrage Movement.²⁶ Balentine served as the secretary to the association and utilized skills she had learned being her father's "helper" in the

²⁴ "The Yellow Ribbon," (1906) The Library of Congress, accessed November 27, 2021. <https://www.loc.gov/item/sn94051561/>.

²⁵ Matilda Johnson Gage, et al. *History of Woman Suffrage Volume V*, (National American Suffrage Association, 1922): 48.

²⁶ Laura Bride Powers, *Western Woman*, 1, no. 8, (San Francisco Western Woman Publishing Company: 1907) 1.

“old-fashioned school of statesmanship.”²⁷ She was frequently elected into leadership roles within the suffrage community and was applauded as a figurehead in the movement— speaking at both state and national suffrage conventions.²⁸ It is apparent that Balentine’s position in the crusade for suffrage, as voted on by club members, was representative of democracy at play within the California Women’s Movement. Furthermore, Balentine embodied the upper class women who utilized their sociopolitical and economic ties to amplify their political agenda. Later Balentine went on to interview President Roosevelt by way of her father’s connections. In response to the question of women’s suffrage Roosevelt replied, “public sentiment was not yet strong enough for him to do anything.”²⁹

By the time the California Suffrage Movement had five different headquarters in downtown San Francisco in 1911, Mary Theresa Harding Gamage was Treasurer for the Golden State’s Political Equality League. Immersing herself in the women’s movement as early as 1906, Harding Gamage was elected president of San Francisco’s Equal Suffrage League.³⁰ Harding

²⁷ Solomons, *How we Won the Vote in California*, 5.

²⁸ “About Women” *Colusa Daily Sun*, 33, no. 21, (21 January 1908), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed November 24, 2021. <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=DCS19080125.2.37&srpos=6&e=-----en--20--1--txt-txIN-katherine+balentine-----1>.

²⁹ Solomons, *How we Won the Vote in California*, 5.

³⁰ Cole Pueblo, “Equal Suffragists to Open Big Convention Here Today,” *San Francisco Call*, 108, no. 122, (30 September, 1910), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies

Gamage participated in nearly every branch of work across the movement and used her father's connections with well-respected Republican politicians to acquire male political support.³¹ She went on speaking tours, traveled across the state, arranged receptions, and organized committees to collect data on political inequality conditions.³² After women's suffrage was amended to the state constitution in 1911, she continued as treasurer for CESA and served the San Francisco Ladies Protection and Relief Society as a lifetime member.³³

Mary McHenry Keith was another well-to-do San Franciscan and maintained a home for suffrage campaign efforts. Her club, the Berkeley Political Equality League, attracted students at the nearby university but made their mark by canvassing every voting precinct in Berkeley leading up to election day.³⁴ McHenry Keith regularly attended CESA's yearly conferences and delivered speeches to the audience where both club women and men were present.³⁵ As

and Research, accessed November 24, 2021.
<https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=SFC19100930.2.51&srpos=1&e=-----en--20-SFC-1--txt-txIN-Equal+Suffragists+to+Open+Big+Convention+Here+Today-----1;>
"Mary Theresa Harding Gamage." askART. Accessed November 26, 2021.
https://www.askart.com/artist/mary_theresa_harding_gamage/11003623/mary_theresa_harding_gamage.aspx?alert=info.

³¹ Bailey Millard, *History of the San Francisco Bay Region: History and Biography, Volume 2* (San Francisco: The American Historical Society, Inc., 1924): 345.

³² Solomons, *How we Won the Vote in California*, 26.

³³ Solomons, *How we Won the Vote in California*, 27.

³⁴ "Annual Report: 1912," *San Francisco Ladies' Protection and Relief Society*, (San Francisco: The Blair Murdock Co. Printers: 1913), 19.

³⁵ Associated Press, "Suffragettes Meet in Stockton," *Morning Press*, (1 October, 1909) California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside

an elected member of the state's Suffrage Central Committee, McHenry Keith was responsible for copy writing resolutions and delivering two minute reports at CESA's conventions. McHenry Keith represented the younger, liberal women associated with the suffrage movement in California and was supported by Lillian Harris Coffin and Harding Gamage to run for president of her branch of the Equal Suffrage Association in 1909.³⁶ Her agenda's top issue was to push women's suffrage through the legislature and have it amended to the state constitution.

Lillian Harris Coffin was a prominent club woman in the Bay Area and served in a myriad of California clubs, committees, and the Congressional Union for Women's Suffrage.³⁷ Coffin was particularly active in public engagements and conducted tours that spawned new, local branches of the state suffrage league in the Bay Area and Central Coast.³⁸ Harris Coffin became involved in the suffrage movement early in her life beginning in 1905 when she served in her local

Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed November 24, 2021. <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=MP19091001.2.29&srpos=3&e=-----en--20--1--txt-txIN-Mary+McHenry+Keith-----1>. (Hereafter cited as "'Suffragettes Meet in Stockton,' *Morning Press*).

³⁶ "Younger Element Backing Mrs. Keith and Conservatives Want Mrs. Chapman," *San Francisco Call*, 106, no. 124 (2 October, 1909), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed November 27, 2021. <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=SFC19091002.2.24&srpos=6&e=-----en--20--1--txt-txIN-Mary+McHenry+Keith-----1>.

³⁷ "Mrs. Lillian Harris Coffin, President New Era League, Hotel San Francisco," (1910) Library of Congress. Accessed November 27, 2021. <https://www.loc.gov/item/mnwp000353/>.

³⁸ Solomons, *How We Won the Vote in California*, 28.

California Club as chair of the civic section. As a member of the California Club, Harris Coffin was exposed to issues of child labor, juvenile courts, and natural rights.³⁹ After creating the San Francisco Equal Suffrage League, Harris Coffin successfully united multiple clubs and their members in the Bay Area. She was known for being able to build alliances and attract endorsements from political parties, partly by suggesting a feminine approach to the movement's political strategy.⁴⁰ Her "pleasant temperament" swayed even the media, who claimed, "it is true that this little woman... this apostle whose message is, 'No more taxation without representation' is logical, appealing, convincing, and that she left many new converts to her creed... More than that, she conferred with the leaders of the movement in Los Angeles and they laid plans..."⁴¹

In 1906, Harris Coffin was elected to head the State Central Committee of the California Equality Suffrage Association. After the 1911 victory in California, she began her work at the federal level with the Congressional Union for Women's Suffrage. Harris Coffin was involved in the Temperance Movement in

³⁹ Gayle Gullett, *Becoming Citizens: The Emergence and Development of the California Women's Movement* (Chicago, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 2000): 166.

⁴⁰ Robert W. Cherny, et al. *California Women and Politics: From the Gold Rush to the Great Depression* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011): 180.

⁴¹ "Local Suffrage Plans," *Los Angeles Herald*, 3, no. 188 (7 April, 1909): 3, California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed November 27, 2021. <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=LAH19090407.2.89.33.5&srpos=77&e=-----190-en-20--61--txt-txIN-lillian+coffin+harris-----1>. (Hereafter cited as "Local Suffrage Plans," *Los Angeles Herald*).

addition to suffrage politics and began speaking as a prohibition advocate. She was invited to speak at the 1909 Women's Christian Temperance Union's Congress of Reform in Berkeley, where she stated:

These women do not own themselves as an investment. They pay the man who procured them, the man whose house they occupy, the man who supplies the liquor, and a few others; but economically... they are not allowed to keep their gotten gains for themselves. These women are simply being exploited, and thousands of girls go down to ruin every year to gratify a greed that is never satiated...⁴²

This excerpt from her speech at the Women's Christian Temperance Movement (WCTU) conference showcased how Harris Coffin sought women from all backgrounds to join the suffrage cause. As temperance women were key supporters of suffrage efforts in their desire to enforce laws on drunkenness, alcohol sales, female financial autonomy, and domestic abuse.

Clubs, Goals, and Tactics.

The Club Women's Franchise League was a well-organized group in Northern California under the guidance of Lillian Harris Coffin, whom Solomons credited with carrying to victory a number of local enterprises in the cause of civic progress.⁴³ While Coffin Harris served as president of San Francisco's branch of

⁴² "Local Suffrage Plans," *Los Angeles Herald*, 3.

⁴³ Solomons, *How We Won the Vote in California*, 28.

the Club Women's Franchise League, the organization had branches throughout the state including Santa Clara, Monterey, San Benito, Marin, and Placer counties.⁴⁴ The League quickly instituted a statewide campaign of speakers including Coffin Harris to visit more rural areas in hopes of instituting their own local Franchise Leagues.⁴⁵ One of these speaking tours was organized as a train excursion throughout the Bay Area and Central inland counties. A "whole army of suffrage workers" gave platform speeches at each stop and distributed packages of "Equality Tea" to audience members.⁴⁶ Speaking campaigns were a favored strategy by the Club Women's Franchise League to incorporate more women and men into the California Suffrage Movement and ensure large turnout in rural regions on election day. This is not to suggest that rural women were less interested in politics, in fact it implies quite the opposite. It is apparent that when rural women were made aware of the possibility of women's suffrage passing in

⁴⁴ Form Women's Voting League to Carry on Active Campaign in Placer County" *Auburn Journal*, 41, no. 3, (17 August 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed January 24, 2022.

<https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=AJ19110817.2.12&srpos=1&e=-----en--20--1--txt-txIN-club+women%27s+franchise+league-----1>.

⁴⁵ "Mill Valley Franchise League" *Sausalito News*, 22, no. 22, (27 May 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed January 24, 2022.

<https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=SN19110527.2.24&srpos=12&e=-----en--20--1--txt-txIN-club+women%27s+franchise+league-----1>.

⁴⁶ "Women to Espouse Cause from Train," *Los Angeles Herald*, 37, no. 328, (25 August 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed February 2, 2022. <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=LAH19110825.2.61&srpos=29&e=-----en--20--21--txt-txIN-club+women%27s+franchise+league-----1>.

California they took on the personal responsibility of organizing their own Franchise Leagues and grassroots efforts. These coalitions built between wealthy, city-dwelling women and small-town club women throughout California were crucial for the women's suffrage amendment to pass.

The Club Women's Franchise League worked alongside other club women organizations to host rallies each day of the week leading up to election day in San Francisco. Debates, "mass meetings," and keynote speaker addresses were coordinated in popular areas in the city and were open to the public. The debates were inclusive and aimed at appealing to men and women alike as male figureheads in the community including Rev. Charles F. Aked and Col. John P. Irish were on the docket to debate against one another on the issue of women's suffrage.⁴⁷ Outside of San Francisco, towns and midsized cities with their own branches conducted fanfare leading up to the election. In Madera, a city nestled in between Fresno and the Sierra Nevada Mountains, an outdoor meeting with a brass band and campaign wagons was held at a rally encouraging its citizens to vote in favor of the women's suffrage amendment. Other Northern and Central California local Franchise Clubs hosted events

⁴⁷ "Suffrage Rallies for Remainder of Week," *San Francisco Call*, 110, no. 127, (5 October 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed January 24, 2022. <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=SFC19111005.2.38&srpos=15&e=-----en--20--1--txt-txIN-club+women%27s+franchise+league-----1>.

ranging from bonfires in the mountain regions to high society tea parties along the coast in order to get their communities rallied behind the vote.⁴⁸

The San Francisco branch of the League held their most exciting event to date on September 11, 1911—just one month before suffrage for women was on the ballot. Their kick-off event was anything but subtle. The group hired a brass band to perform while “monstrous mass-meetings” took place and prominent male politicians addressed the audience in favor of franchise for women.⁴⁹ Distinguished editor and author of *American Suffragette*, Isaac N. Stevens reportedly traveled from his home state of Colorado to California to refute statements made against women’s suffrage at this Club Women’s Franchise League’s assembly.⁵⁰ Stevens argued that in his eighteen years of professional, political, and academic experience women used their franchise with far more wisdom than men and were more effective in implementing their political agenda.⁵¹ Stevens articulated how Colorado women took less than two months

⁴⁸ “Clubwomen’s Franchise League Inaugurates Statewide Campaign ,” *San Francisco Call*, 110, no. 94, (September 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed February 4, 2022. <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=SFC19110902.2.57.10&srpos=20&e=-----en--20--1--txt-txIN-club+women%27s+franchise+league-----1>.

⁴⁹ Solomons, *How We Won the Vote in California*, 28.

⁵⁰ “Pueblo Editor Talks on Women and Ballot,” *Mill Valley Record*, 13, no. 34, (22 September 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed November 24, 2021. (Hereafter cited as “Pueblo Editor Talks on Women and Ballot,” *Mill Valley Record*).

⁵¹ “Pueblo Editor Talks on Women and Ballot,” *Mill Valley Record*.

getting laws for children on the ballot, while men were unsuccessful in doing so for nearly a decade.⁵² In addition to Stevens, the League had a large list of men vice-presidents and spokesmen including well-respected Republican congressmen, judges, reverends, and doctors. By election day, twenty-five hundred men and women had joined the Club Women's Franchise League.⁵³

The Club Women's Franchise League was inclusive to men and incorporated the male voice into their grassroots approach. In a society that valued men's opinions over all else, this was a strategic method of weaponizing the patriarchy against itself as the masses of the time were more likely to take a man's word seriously over a woman. Aforementioned politicians, judges, and doctors spoke in favor of women's suffrage throughout the League's 1911 Campaign as a way to reach a wider audience that would normally be hesitant to lend an ear to the plight of women. Male orators presented lectures such as "The Reasonableness of Suffrage" and "Municipal Administration and Women's Suffrage" to engage both men and women by appealing to logic, government, and issues of citizenship.⁵⁴

⁵² "Pueblo Editor Talks on Women and Ballot," *Mill Valley Record*.

⁵³ Solomons, *How We Won the Vote in California*, 28.

⁵⁴ "Speakers to Help Franchise League," *San Francisco Call* 110, no. 15 (15 June 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed January 24, 2022. <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=SFC19110615.2.34&srpos=30&e=-----en--20--21--txt-txIN-club+women%27s+franchise+league-----1>.

The California Equal Suffrage Association (CESA) was first founded in Santa Clara County, California in 1904 to “secure for women, by appropriate legislation, the right to suffrage, together with all rights enjoyed by male citizens of the state.”⁵⁵ Lillian Coffin Harris of the Club Women’s Franchise League, served as president of the Northern branch of CESA in Mill Valley, California.⁵⁶ CESA was crucial in Northern and Southern California alike in spreading information and educating the public about the 1911 ballot.⁵⁷ The organization hosted an annual convention for various suffrage clubs to attend and dictate their yearly agendas.⁵⁸ Literature published by the organization covered a wide array of arguments for suffrage and aimed to not only refute anti-suffrage rhetoric but to sway those men and women who were still undecided. CESA was strategic in their literature outreach initiatives as to appeal to a variety of individuals rather than focus on a singular demographic.

⁵⁵ California Equal Suffrage Association, “Articles of Incorporation of the California Equal Suffrage Association,” Secretary of the State Records, 1904. Accessed July 20, 2021. <https://archives.cdn.sos.ca.gov/pdf/suffrage/articles-equal-suffrage-assoc.pdf>.

⁵⁶ Powers, *Western Woman*, 3.

⁵⁷ “Women Suffragists of State Gather in Their Annual Convention,” *San Francisco Call* 11, no. 128 (October 1906), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed November 24, 2021. <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=SFC19061006.2.54&srpos=33&e=-----en--20--21-byDA-txt-txIN-%22California+equal+suffrage+association%22-----1>.

⁵⁸ “Suffragettes Meet in Stockton,” *Morning Press*, 2.

Their campaign advertisements featured pictures that could be easily interpreted regardless of class or education. For instance, CESA had a map of the US where each state that had passed women's suffrage was colored in to distinguish from the rest of the country.⁵⁹ Postcard distribution was another platform where imagery and iconography were used to bolster awareness for the campaign by invoking familiar symbols. A well-preserved postcard that had been published by CESA featured a woman putting the "Sixth Star" on the women's suffrage flag. The flag was a replica of the US flag except for the left-hand corner where fifty stars were traditionally displayed. The women's suffrage flag only had five stars on it at the time—representing the five states that had ratified women's suffrage in their constitutions.⁶⁰ The back side of the postcard had the lyrics to "Another Star," that served as the anthem for the California women's movement written by national suffragette Charlotte Perkins Gilman. Its message was hopeful of a vote that would protect women, children, and their homes. Visuals

⁵⁹ "Votes for Women: Equal Suffrage Map of the United States," 1901, California Equal Suffrage Association, Women's Suffrage and Equal Rights Collection, Box 1 Folder 107, Ella Strong Denison Library, Claremont Colleges Digital Library. Accessed November 27, 2021.
<https://ccdlib.claremont.edu/digital/collection/p15831coll5/id/419/rec/2>.

⁶⁰ "California Putting the Sixth Star on the Woman Suffrage Flag," 1911, California Equal Suffrage Association, Women's Suffrage and Equal Rights Collection, Box 1 Folder 107, Ella Strong Denison Library, Claremont Colleges Digital Library. Accessed November 26, 2021.
<https://ccdlib.claremont.edu/digital/collection/p15831coll5/id/1473/rec/23>.
(Hereafter cited as "California Putting the Sixth Star on the Woman Suffrage Flag," California Equal Suffrage Association).

like this alluding to well-recognized symbols of American freedom were purposely done as to garner attention from mass audiences.

In hopes of drawing in male interest, one campaign flier published and distributed by CESA in 1911 read, “Ma Can’t Vote” in bold, black lettering leading up to election day.⁶¹ This 5x8 inch flier detailed the stark contrasts between women and men’s responsibilities and access to political autonomy. The stanzas lamented how mothers were withheld voting rights and control over family finances despite their roles as teachers in their own home and the public sphere. The sentence structure was written as a nursery rhyme to come across to readers as non-threatening, but also as a means to be accessible for different audiences. While women were likely very familiar with the gendered responsibilities at the time of the early twentieth century, one cannot assume men were as savvy to the plight of suffragettes. By framing the argument for suffrage in an easily digestible way, CESA was strategically incorporating men into the conversation, all under the guise of a clever poem.

Naturally, college-educated women were among CESA’s top demographic for disciples. Their publications frequently dictated logical, reasonable arguments for women’s suffrage that would hit a nerve for most educated women who were

⁶¹ “Ma Can’t Vote,” 1911, California Equal Suffrage Association, Women’s Suffrage and Equal Rights Collection, Box 1 Folder 107, Ella Strong Denison Library, Claremont Colleges Digital Library. Accessed November 27, 2021. <https://ccdlib.claremont.edu/digital/collection/p15831coll5/id/1366/rec/14>. (Hereafter cited as “Ma Can’t Vote,” California Equal Suffrage Association).

subjected to taxes, government regulations, and men's decisions. One such advertisement declared, "because women suffer from bad government just as men do, they should vote equally with men."⁶² Thoughtful arguments like this evoked Enlightenment concepts such as fundamental natural rights and no taxation without representation were consistent in CESA's messaging. One specific advertisement published by CESA read:

Women as well as men are human beings, and voting is one of the special rights which distinguishes human beings from brutes... Women by the payment of direct taxes on their property and indirect taxes on what they eat and wear, contribute to Government Revenues and should, because of this financial interest, be represented in every government not a tyranny⁶³.

Alluding to issues of citizenship and highlighting the unconstitutionality of withholding the vote from women was a purposeful way CESA framed the issue of suffrage as a civil rights issue. Women were not fully citizens because they

⁶² "Votes for Women; The Woman's Reason: Why California Women Should Vote," California Equal Suffrage Association, Women's Suffrage and Equal Rights Collection, Box 2 Folder 65, Ella Strong Denison Library, Claremont Colleges Digital Library. Accessed November 27, 2021. <https://ccdlib.claremont.edu/digital/collection/p15831coll5/id/806/rec/3>. (Hereafter cited as "Votes for Women," California Equal Suffrage Association).

⁶³ "Votes for Women; The Woman's Reason: Why California Women Should Vote," California Equal Suffrage Association, Women's Suffrage and Equal Rights Collection, Box 2 Folder 65, Ella Strong Denison Library, Claremont Colleges Digital Library. Accessed November 27, 2021. <https://ccdlib.claremont.edu/digital/collection/p15831coll5/id/806/rec/3>.

were not granted the rights declared in either the state or federal constitutions. Educated women, and likely men, could rally behind this reason for suffrage—a purposeful strategy implemented by CESA.

Many non-suffrage groups “threw the weight of their personal influence” behind the women’s suffrage amendment as a result of elite, white women’s clubs and their campaign efforts.⁶⁴ These included but were not limited to Social Settlements, the Women’s Christian Temperance Union, the Humanitarian and Civic Betterment Leagues, the Socialists and Single-Taxers, the State Federation of Clubs, the Native Daughters of the Golden West, and various Labor Unions (see Chapter Two).⁶⁵ It is important to note that these non-suffrage groups were overwhelmingly co-ed or women-dominant. This demonstrated the formation of a coalition, or rather coalitions, among different groups of women unified under the same cause. Each group had individual reasons for wanting women’s suffrage, including passing measures on temperance politics, child protections, and labor reform.

⁶⁴ Solomons, *How We Won the Vote in California*, 30.

⁶⁵ Solomons, *How We Won the Vote in California*, 30.

CHAPTER THREE

THE LABOR VOTE

While every organization examined in this analysis shared the same goal to pass women's suffrage in California during the 1911 election, each group had different reasons for wanting to participate in the statewide campaign. Labor unions and organizations wanted to extend the interests of working class women in politics. Working women were particularly vulnerable to abuse, unfair taxation, and low wages due to the lack of protection guaranteed to them under state and federal laws. Childcare, safe working conditions, union perks, and financial autonomy had yet to be introduced in the majority of state legislatures around the country, including California.

Working women had a collection of concerns that motivated them to champion the cause of women's voting rights. In an increasingly urbanized state, cost of living had inflated more than it had back East. Fathers and husbands were working longer hours, commuting deep into the city where brothels and bars were plentiful. Whereas mothers and wives had to take on additional responsibility for the family by working lower wage jobs to meet the growing economic demands of the twentieth century. This meant that children were frequently unsupervised and out of reach of their mother's protection, as they too, typically worked long hours in unsafe factory conditions. If in an unsafe home or

work environment, a married woman with children in the early twentieth century had few, if any, options for escape.

With the vote in their arsenal working women would be able to vote on and implement policies that expanded worker protections, better wages, and reasonable working hours. In addition, they would have the opportunity to propose reform on children's protections and policies affecting the home. Labor unions and activists were imperative to the California Women's Movement because they massed a broad demographic whose reach superseded the club women of the Bay Area elite. In this biographical section, it is apparent that each of these women were formidable forces in their communities. They championed the rights of women and children, challenged prominent politicians, and initiated policy change that would radiate across the state.

Labor Suffragettes

Selina Solomons was a second-generation Jewish American who participated in nearly every facet of the Women's Suffrage Movement in California. Almost twenty years before working on the campaign that successfully passed women's suffrage in 1911, Solomons was deeply rooted in late nineteenth century suffrage politics. She served on one of the state's first committees that oversaw the coalition between the State Women's Alliance and the WCTU.⁶⁶ As a working-class Jewish woman who managed profitable

⁶⁶ "State Women's Alliance," *San Francisco Call* 74, no. 99 (7 September 1893), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center

relationships with both upper-class and union women, as well as temperance organizations, Solomons was an excellent example of how coalitions were built among various groups of women across socioeconomic classes in California.

Solomons had proven herself a true advocate and activist since immersing herself into the California Suffrage Movement. Newspapers reported on her attempt in April of 1910 to demand entry to register to vote in San Francisco County, along with a delegation of other suffragettes. Standing in front of the Deputy Registrar, Solomons and her colleagues pointed out the sign hanging over the office door that classified “voters” as “all citizens.”⁶⁷ Solomons insisted that her and the delegation were surely citizens—per the state constitution. Solomons had been recorded stating, “we are citizens, all right, and we claim our right to share in the government should not be blocked by rules and regulations of this character,” referring to the Deputy Registrar.⁶⁸ While ultimately

for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed February 5, 2022.
<https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=SFC18930907.2.128&srpos=15&e=-----en--20--1--txt-txIN-selina+solomons-----1>. (Hereafter cited as “State Women’s Alliance,” *The San Francisco Call*.)

⁶⁷ “Suffragettes Turn Tower of Babel,” *Lompoc Journal*, no. 47 (9 April 1893), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed February 5, 2022.
<https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=LJ19100409.2.22&srpos=27&e=-----en--20--21--txt-txIN-selina+solomons-----1>.

⁶⁸ “Women Try to Register,” *Marysville Daily Appeal*, no. 76 (2 April 1910), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed February 7, 2022.
<https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=MDA19100402.2.10&srpos=10&e=-----en--20--1--txt-txIN-selina+solomons-----1>. (Hereafter cited as “Women Try to Register,” *Marysville Daily Appeal*.)

unsuccessful in this singular endeavor, the *Marysville Daily Appeal* insisted that “Miss Solomons had voiced a protest against the denial of what she affirmed to be her right to vote under the constitution.” Journalists described the scene as aggressive and the women reportedly withstood a bombardment of protests, abuse, and ridicule from a crowd of men.⁶⁹

In November of the same year, Solomons along with other notable suffragists organized a “descent on Washington.” Their goal was to “make voting for women an assured fact by this date next year.”⁷⁰ In preparation for their journey Solomons, leading members of the Votes for Women Club, and suffragettes from Utah and Ohio held an open Congress to discuss their work, goals, and strategies. In these discussions, Solomons had insisted that street speaking was the best way of gaining the ballot, as it was the most effective form of outreach in her experience.

As president of the Votes for Women Club’s San Francisco branch, Solomons was responsible for organizing and hosting conventions where lecturers discussed “philosophy and domestic economy.”⁷¹ The Club’s Congress

⁶⁹ “Women Try to Register,” *Marysville Daily Appeal*.

⁷⁰ “On to Washington’ Cry Suffragists” *San Francisco Call* 108, no. 155 (2 November 1910), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed January 5, 2022.
<https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=SFC19101102.2.46&srpos=13&e=-----en--20--1--txt-txIN-selina+solomons-----1>.

⁷¹ “Votes for Women Club Tackle Three Problems,” *San Francisco Call* 108, no. 24 (7 September 1910), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed

discussed issues including the increasingly high cost of living in California and, of course, equal suffrage in the state. By having multiple perspectives, Solomons and her colleagues created a platform for the general public to listen to each side of the suffrage debate, ask questions, and come to their own conclusions. Possibly, this strategy was to push against the status quo of patriarchal hierarchy, and give people the opportunity to hear intellectual and reasoned arguments for suffrage that they would never normally hear. Well-known local politicians were invited to deliver addresses to the convention, according to an article in *The San Francisco Call*.⁷²

Solomons played many roles as a spear header for women's rights. One of the issues tackled by the Votes for Women Club under her leadership was human trafficking of young women in San Francisco. Young, immigrant girls who were constantly arriving into the Bay were most vulnerable to trafficking. The topic was brought to order at a 1910 Votes for Women club meeting where Solomons pressed the question, "What are clubwomen doing to aid the authorities?"⁷³ Solomons suggested bringing a petition to the mayor on appointing

February 3, 2022.

<https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=SFC19101024.2.4&srpos=11&e=-----en--20--1--txt-txIN-selina+solomons-----1>. (Hereafter cited as "Votes for Women Club Tackle Three Problems," *San Francisco Call*.)

⁷² State Women's Alliance," *The San Francisco Call*.

⁷³ "Women to Fight Traffic in Young Girls," *San Francisco Call* 107, no. 147 (28 April 1910), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed January 3, 2022. <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=SFC19100426.2.55&srpos=18&e=-----en-->

young women to city official positions to ensure that working women's interests were looked after. In addition, the club discussed the necessity of establishing women as "as an auxiliary to the police force."⁷⁴

Solomons took an active role in organizing literature campaigns with the Votes for Women Club in the Bay Area that would distribute informational material on the upcoming election. As part of the literature aspect of the campaign, Solomons published an article in the *San Francisco Call* titled, "Anti-Suffrage Arguments Are Boiled Down to Indifference" where she tackled the anti-suffragist argument. In her op-ed she questioned the US's progress in response to the government insisting it had been "leading the nations in freedom," yet withheld constitutional rights from over half its citizens.⁷⁵ The state of women's rights in the country was reflective of "illogical" and "unjust" political lies drawn on the basis of sex.⁷⁶ Her critique concluded with an assertion that the US was inferior to any European nation in comparison on the issue of women's rights.

20--1--txt-txIN-selina+solomons-----1. (Hereafter cited as "Women to Fight Traffic in Young Girls," *San Francisco Call*.)

⁷⁴ "Women to Fight Traffic in Young Girls," *San Francisco Call*.

⁷⁵ "Miss S. Solomons, President, Votes for Women Club," *San Francisco Call* 110, no. 114 (22 September 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed January 3, 2022.

<https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=SFC19110922.2.105.7&srpos=25&e=-----en--20--21--txt-txIN-selina+solomons-----1>. (Hereafter cited as "Miss S. Solomons, President, Votes for Women Club," *San Francisco Call*.)

⁷⁶ "Miss S. Solomons, President, Votes for Women Club," *San Francisco Call*.

Solomons also penned a manuscript that was distributed during the Votes for Women Club literature campaign. Written as a suffrage play set in California titled, “The Girl From Colorado,” this was the first of its kind to be written by a member of California’s political suffrage community. Arguably, “The Girl From Colorado” represented the wave of Western influence that was overtaking the Pacific Northwest at the time. The manuscript is evidence of grassroots efforts made by working class women to create and publish literature on California’s suffrage vote.

Clara Shortridge Foltz was the first female attorney on the West Coast and known for having conducted a “‘thirty years’ war’ for women in the state of California.”⁷⁷ In Los Angeles, Shortridge Foltz was heavily involved in local politics. She was the first woman appointed to the California State Boards of Charities and Corrections where she oversaw state institutions such as prisons, orphanages, and asylums.⁷⁸ The same year, Shortridge Foltz was elected as Deputy District Attorney for the city and presided over women and children’s cases.⁷⁹ She served as president of the Woman's Mining and Stock Exchange in

⁷⁷ The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, “Clara Shortridge Foltz: American Lawyer and Reformer,” Britannica.com, accessed November 27, 2021, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Clara-Shortridge-Foltz>.

⁷⁸ “All Honor to the Great Woman,” *Colusa Daily Sun* 37, no. 32 (8 February 1910), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed March 4, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=DCS19100208.2.25&srpos=43&e=-----en--20--41--txt-txIN-clara+shortridge+foltz-----1>.

⁷⁹ “Appoint Woman Deputy,” *Sacramento Daily Union* 119, no. 63 (25 April 1910), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside

Los Angeles, encouraging women's sense of financial autonomy.⁸⁰ Shortridge Foltz broke barriers for women who sought careers in the legal profession and would be at the forefront of suffrage and reform politics in Los Angeles from 1906 until her bid for governor in 1930 at the age of 81.⁸¹

In her early years, Shortridge Foltz demonstrated her lifelong dedication to empowering women in local politics in San Francisco by forming the Portia Law Club of California in the late nineteenth century. The club's goals were to advance "science and study of the law; promotion of the study of history and political science among women, and generally to afford them the means of becoming more familiar with the science of governing and the laws of the land."⁸²

Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed March 4, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=SDU19100425.2.71&srpos=106&e=-----en--20--101--txt-txIN-clara+shortridge+foltz-----1>.

⁸⁰ "Women Open Stock Exchange," *Los Angeles Herald* 34, no. 288 (16 July 1907), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed March 4, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=LAH19070716.2.160&srpos=40&e=-----en--20--21--txt-txIN-clara+shortridge+foltz-----1>.

⁸¹ Jill Norgren, *Rebels at the Bar: The Fascinating, Forgotten Stories of America's First Women Lawyers* (New York: New York University Press, 2013): 104. https://archive.org/details/isbn_9780814758625/page/n9/mode/2up?view=theater. Accessed November 27, 2021.

⁸² "The Portia Club," *San Francisco Call* 77, no. 117 (6 April 1895), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed January 13, 2022. <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=SFC18950406.2.77&srpos=70&e=-----en--20--61--txt-txIN-clara+shortridge+foltz-----1>.

It is evident in hindsight that her efforts were not in vain, as California remains a beacon for women’s rights well into the twenty-first century.

Shortridge Foltz ran the *San Diego Daily Bee* as editor for approximately two years during her brief time in San Diego County. The *San Diego Daily Bee* was a “union recognized” publication and printed articles, op-eds, and advertisements for various women’s groups efforts across the country in the late nineteenth and into the early twentieth century.⁸³ The paper did not shy away from discussing and publishing progressive stances on controversial issues, including women’s suffrage and labor issues. One of the recurring ads offered the legal services of Shortridge Foltz herself, attorney at law.

Before the election of 1911, Shortridge Foltz actively traveled all over California in both rural and metropolitan areas to speak to women about their experiences, efforts, and roles in their communities. Shortridge Foltz was notably “anxious to meet the members” of the local Woman’s Civic Improvement Club in Marysville—a small rural region near Chico, CA.⁸⁴ At this particular meeting in

⁸³ “The Progress of Women,” *San Diego Union & Daily Bee* 33, no. 116 (15 December 1887), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed January 12, 2022.

<https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=SDDU18871215.2.5&srpos=6&e=-----188-en--20-SDDU-1--txt-txIN-women+labor-----1>.

⁸⁴ “Clara Shortridge Foltz Coming” *Marysville Daily Appeal* 89, no. 20 (24 January 1904), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed January 31, 2022. <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=MDA19040124.2.31&srpos=18&e=-----en--20--1--txt-txIN-clara+shortridge+foltz-----1>.

1904 Shortridge Foltz met the representative women of the small town and discussed their shared interest in civic improvement measures. She described the club's work as "energetic" and praised the women for their "untiring" persistence.⁸⁵

Shortridge Foltz was the president of the Votes for Women Club in Los Angeles and members often journeyed at her expense throughout Southern California to contribute to the 1911 Campaign. As president, Shortridge Foltz organized a statewide speaking tour in small towns, sheep ranches, cross-roads, and mining camps in rural areas to bolster support.⁸⁶

Activist Maude Younger was at the forefront of the labor vote. Though she was well off financially, Younger immersed herself in labor and union politics to rally working women behind the suffrage vote. Younger found herself immersed in social movements dedicated to progress during her time as a settlement worker in New York.⁸⁷ Younger's pivotal role in the labor movement includes her

⁸⁵ "Clara Shortridge Foltz Lady Lawyer of West" *Colusa Daily Sun* 25, no. 25 (29 January 1904), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed January 31, 2022. <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=DCS19040129.2.6&srpos=101&e=-----en--20--101--txt-txIN-clara+shortridge+foltz-----1>.

⁸⁶ Solomons, *How we Won the Vote in California*, 31.

⁸⁷ "The Smart Set," *San Francisco Call* 100, no. 44 (14 July 1906), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed February 2, 2022. <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=SFC19060714.2.96&srpos=24&e=-----190-en--20--21--txt-txIN-%22maude+younger%22-----1>.

work organizing one of the first waitress unions in San Francisco, where she simultaneously found her voice as a proponent and advocate for socialism.⁸⁸

Women in the waitress union were highly involved in suffrage politics. The union utilized diplomacy and democracy by electing their own officers, public speakers, and delegates for local and statewide meetings. Younger was one of three women in the labor union to be elected as a delegate to represent the group at a Woman's Suffrage Convention held in Oakland, California in August of 1908.⁸⁹ In addition, Younger and other union members were appointed representatives to the San Francisco Labor Council. Under the guidance of Younger and Harris Coffin, the waitress union organized a sick fund charity event to raise money for members who grew ill and were in need of medical care. In building these community-based activist organizations, women essentially raised support for their movement one person at a time. Suffrage was one of the most popular topics being discussed amongst the waitress union members at their regular meetings, and sources say membership was up to 400 women by

⁸⁸ "The Insider," *San Francisco Call* 105, no. 37 (6 January 1909), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed February 2, 2022. <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=SFC19090106.2.51.8&srpos=18&e=-----190-en--20--1--txt-txIN-%22maude+younger%22-----1>.

⁸⁹ "The Labor Unions" *San Francisco Call* 104, no. 38 (8 July 1908), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed February 5, 2022. <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=SFC19080708.2.38&srpos=23&e=-----190-en--20--21--txt-txIN-%22maude+younger%22-----1>.

January of 1908.⁹⁰ In efforts to expand working women's protections, Younger set upon a press junket of sorts in San Jose, San Joaquin, and the Sacramento Valley in October of 1908.⁹¹ Their mission was to increase the membership in the waitresses' union and address the state's labor federation on the topic of working women.

Younger played a key role as diplomat in building connections between working women and club women leading up to the election of 1911. Her connections with aforementioned club woman Lillian Harris Coffin formed into a working, symbiotic relationship that connected union women with California suffrage clubs and their resources. Among her endeavors with Harris Coffin, Younger was included on a panel of speakers discussing the topic of suffrage in the West. The panel was hosted at the home of Harris Coffin near Sausalito, California. Presenters spoke on Utah's suffrage campaign and how those strategies could be implemented in California. Utah speaker, Agnes Pease, shared a particularly successful strategy used by Utah suffragettes who would

⁹⁰ "Waiter Girls Will Give Ball for Benefit of Newly Found Sick" *San Francisco Call* 103, no. 53 (22 January 1908), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed February 5, 2022.
<https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=SFC19080122.2.80&srpos=20&e=-----190-en--20--1--txt-txIN-%22maude+younger%22-----1>.

⁹¹ "Strike on Bank Building Settled" *San Francisco Call* 104, no. 129 (7 October 1908), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed February 6, 2022.
<https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=SFC19081007.2.54&srpos=25&e=-----190-en--20--21--txt-txIN-%22maude+younger%22-----1>.

visit housewives door-to-door as means to encourage women to register to vote.⁹² When homemakers were too busy with house duties to make it to the polls, campaign women would provide childcare, cooking, and cleaning duties so busy mothers were able to make it to polling locations. Younger spoke on women's labor unions and how working women contributed to the suffrage campaign efforts. Reaching across the socioeconomic aisle and building a state-wide network was how "working women and their wealthy sisters" would secure the vote in California.⁹³

Unions, Goals, and Tactics.

This section will cover the political efforts and actions of prominent labor unions, working class organizations, and the female leadership behind them. While Southern California will be the primary regional focus of this section, Bay Area contributions will be discussed briefly.

In June 1911, seventy-six Angelenos created the Los Angeles branch of the Wage Earner's Suffrage League (WESL). Seventy-five of those individuals

⁹² "Mrs. Pease of Utah Speaks on Suffrage" *Sausalito News* 24, no. 25 (20 June 1908), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed February 20, 2022. <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=SN19080620.2.13&srpos=10&e=-----190-en--20--1--txt-txIN-%22maude+younger%22-----1>.

⁹³ "Young Author Admits She is Socialist at Woman's Club Meet," *San Francisco Call* 103, no. 39 (8 January 1908), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed February 1, 2022. <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=SFC19080108.2.121&srpos=9&e=-----190-en--20--1--txt-txIN-%22maude+younger%22-----1>.

were women, who, after a “hot debate” agreed to allow men into the league.⁹⁴ This would later prove to be advantageous for the group as incorporating male suffragists into the 1911 Campaign would cumulate wide support from working class men and politicians. The seventy-six individuals in attendance elected officers to lead the Los Angeles Branch of WESL, with Frances Noel as president.

The group’s key strategy was to include working men in their campaign for women’s voting rights. In a 1911 edition of the *Los Angeles Herald*, WESL published an advertisement for a local meeting where the leading candidate for Los Angeles County auditor spoke on the issue of women’s voting rights. The league announced in this advertisement that their purpose was “to get prominent labor men to speak and hear an expression of their opinions concerning suffrage for women.”⁹⁵ Even the mayors of San Francisco and Berkeley spoke at a WESL rally to arouse “militant masculine suffrage spirit” in the Bay Area.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ “Lone Man Talks Way Into Woman’s Club Membership,” *Los Angeles Herald* 33, no. 264 (22 June 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed February 15, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=LAH19110622.2.189&srpos=9&e=-----en--20-LAH-1--txt-txIN-wage+earners+suffrage+league-----1>.

⁹⁵ “Clubs,” *Los Angeles Herald* 32, no. 395 (2 August 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed February 15, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=LAH19110802.2.63&srpos=4&e=-----en--20-LAH-1--txt-txIN-wage+earners+suffrage+league-----1>.

⁹⁶ “Mayors to Speak on Votes for Women,” *San Francisco Call* 110, no. 91 (30 August 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed February

In their efforts to assemble a male caucus, WESL hosted public meetings across Los Angeles and other Southern California counties giving male suffragists a platform to speak on behalf of women. Making “an earnest appeal for masculine aid toward securing to women the right to vote,” the suffrage league and the Woman’s Union Label League worked together in hosting a labor union meeting in Los Angeles in 1911.⁹⁷ Female speakers at the event invoked the Declaration of Independence and the Revolutionary War, declaring that women were being subjected to tyranny by way of taxation without representation and declarations of “un-American” franchise policies.⁹⁸ Important men from the Los Angeles Bankers’ Union, Carpenters Union, and the California Federation of Labor spoke in favor of women’s voting rights at this public meeting held at the Union Labor Temple; the Union Labor Temple served unions across Los Angeles, San Bernardino, and Riverside counties.⁹⁹ Because they were

15, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=SFC19110830.2.78.8&srpos=34&e=-----en--20--21--txt-txIN-club+women%27s+franchise+league-----1>.

⁹⁷ “Women’s Suffrage Leagues Make Plea For Men’s Help,” *Los Angeles Herald*, 32, no. 290 (28 July 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed February 15, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=LAH19110728.2.186&srpos=5&e=-----en--20-LAH-1--txt-txIN-wage+earners+suffrage+league-----1>. (Hereafter cited as “Women’s Suffrage Leagues Make Plea for Men’s Help,” *Los Angeles Herald*.)

⁹⁸ “Women’s Suffrage Leagues Make Plea for Men’s Help,” *Los Angeles Herald*.

⁹⁹ “Unions Proud of New Temple,” *Los Angeles Herald* 26, no. 179 (29 March 1909), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed February 19, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=LAH19090329.2.126&e=-----en--20--1--txt-txIN-----1>.

recognized as an official union, the group was able to utilize the Labor Temple on a regular basis and had a table containing suffrage literature accessible to all members who walked through the doors.¹⁰⁰

Creeping closer to election day, political activism demonstrated by WESL in Southern California was praised by media outlets. Working women were gaining political clout in their communities and gained impressive support from local labor unions and their head officers. “Receiving hearty support” by those union members in attendance at a Union Labor Temple meeting in Los Angeles, the California labor union representatives favored “in the strongest terms” equal pay for women in the industrial world according to a July 1911 issue of the *Los Angeles Herald*.¹⁰¹ The League was growing in membership rapidly that summer leading up to the October election where women’s suffrage would be on the ballot.

Francis Noel, president of the Los Angeles WESL branch reportedly sought sponsorship and support from the State Federation of Labor. Noel

¹⁰⁰ “Suffragists Seek Permit to Speak in Streets,” *Los Angeles Herald* 32, no. 203 (21 July 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed February 19, 2022. <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=LAH19110721.2.175&srpos=11&e=-----en--20-LAH-1--txt-txIN-wage+earners+suffrage+league-----1>.

¹⁰¹ “Wage Earner’s Suffrage League Favored by Unions,” *Los Angeles Herald* 32, no. 279 (7 July 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed February 21, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=LAH19110707.2.233&srpos=6&e=-----en--20-LAH-1--txt-txIN-wage+earners+suffrage+league-----1>.

traveled to Bakersfield in October of 1911 to attend a labor convention and voice her plea to the labor organization board. During the week-long convention, Noel gave pro-women's suffrage speeches outside the meeting hall for all to hear.¹⁰² Making the issue of women's suffrage important to labor demographics in the state was a core goal of WESL, as they sought to bring public attention to working women's interests.

Campaign meetings organized across Los Angeles were working, according to the media. Articles painted the months leading up to the 1911 Campaign in the city with a flurry of political activity from organizations rallying for women's suffrage. The Los Angeles Herald reported that WESL specifically held street meetings nearly every night in October of 1911. Workers, activists, and volunteers for the league would "continue these until the close of the campaign, speaking wherever it possible to find a corner free from other organizations and speakers."¹⁰³ The *Los Angeles Herald* praised these meetings as successful in attracting many listeners who had "shown an intelligent interest" and "asked many questions concerning the equal suffrage movement."¹⁰⁴ Involving men,

¹⁰² "Suffragists Notes," *Los Angeles Herald* 32, no. 365 (1 October 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed February 21, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=LAH19111001.2.42&srpos=7&e=-----en--20-LAH-1--txt-txIN-wage+earners+suffrage+league-----1>. (Hereafter cited as "Suffragists Notes," *Los Angeles Herald*.)

¹⁰³ "Suffragists Notes," *Los Angeles Herald*.

¹⁰⁴ "Suffragists Notes," *Los Angeles Herald*.

working women, and the curious citizen WESL was especially fruitful in getting their voices heard.

Public meetings organized by WESL were more elaborate as the election grew closer. In Los Angeles, theaters were rented out and decorated with the signature suffragette saffron hue and literature was passed out to attendees. The programs were well-organized and displayed films on suffrage, had performances of suffrage songs and rally cries, and of course, gave time to presenters to give speeches on the issue. As a local and symbolic touch, President Francis Noel was featured in a moving picture portrayed as Joan of Arc on horseback, waving the Votes for Women Banner.¹⁰⁵

WESL and other labor activist organizations were particularly akin to the dangers uniquely present to working women. In a coalition meeting between New York and California labor and suffrage organizations, representatives including Maude Younger pointed to the infamous Triangle Shirtwaist Fire where 146 factory workers died as a direct result of unsafe working conditions. “The woman shirt waist makers of New York would not have been abused by the police and their demands would not have been ignored if they had had votes,” claimed a

¹⁰⁵ “Suffrage Notes,” *Los Angeles Herald* 32, no. 349 (15 September 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed February 25, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=LAH19110915.2.35&srpos=18&e=-----191-en--20--1--txt-txIN-francis+noel---1911---1>.

labor representative.¹⁰⁶ Having occurred just months into the California Suffrage Campaign of 1911, labor women felt emboldened by their fallen sisters to bring awareness to the daily threat that loomed over them every time they entered the workplace. This was especially true for immigrant and minority women, who made up the majority of the fire's victims.

Either the tragedy had also struck a core with the state politicians, or, they were buckling under the increasing negative press over women's unsafe working conditions. Regardless, Los Angeles building inspectors quickly ordered arrests across the city for "alleged violations" of building ordinances quickly following the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire. Even city fire chiefs spoke out about the lack of safety precautions in the county, urging politicians to allow for more fire escapes to be built.¹⁰⁷

Various demographic groups were critical to the suffrage and labor movements in California because without a majority vote in the state assembly, women's suffrage would not have passed. By operating hand in hand with other

¹⁰⁶ "Hear Pleas of Suffragists," *Los Angeles Herald* 32, no. 220 (17 August 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed February 25, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=LAH19110817.2.30&srpos=24&e=-----191-en--20-LAH-21--txt-txIN-wage+earn+suffrage+league-----1>.

¹⁰⁷ "Seven Arrested in Los Angeles for Violation of Building Ordinances of City," *Santa Ana Register* 6, no. 103 (29 March 1911). Newspapers.com. Accessed March 1, 2022, https://www.newspapers.com/image/?clipping_id=32254396&fcfToken=eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiIsInR5cCI6IkpXVCJ9.eyJmcmVlXzZpZXctaWQiOjcxNDcyOTE5LCJpYXQiOiJlY2NDY2MDc1NzAsImV4cCI6MTY0NjY5Mzk3MH0.0FcbKQbT7f5n5WQu9Jli3iV1IQ96Z07DsrvDFIVGO4M .)

working class organizations, WESL created a coalition of union members, suffragists, and working class Californians.

The Votes for Women Club was popular in the Bay Area under the leadership of Selina Solomons and in Southern California, largely under the direction of Clara Shortridge Foltz. Both of the prominent Southern and Bay Area organizations were largely comprised of working and professional women. Both Solomons and Shortridge Foltz made sure the driving force behind the group was to expand protections for women in the workplace. This section will primarily focus on the Los Angeles and greater Southern California branches and their contributions to the 1911 election.

The club utilized a democratic system where officers were elected by members. Clara Shortridge Foltz was selected as president and Mary Pot, Mary Foy, and Cora Lewis were appointed leading officers. Under the guidance of these women, the Votes for Women Club was a formidable force in Los Angeles and was very politically active.¹⁰⁸ Lewis was often busy organizing in outer city areas known today as Orange County. In Huntington Beach, Lewis was responsible for planning “all day” meetings in September 1911 to address voters

¹⁰⁸ “Clubs,” *Los Angeles Herald* 32, no. 311 (8 August 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed February 25, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=LAH19110808.2.59&srpos=54&e=-----191-en--20--41--txt-txIN-%22votes+for+women+club%22----1911---1>. (Hereafter cited as “Clubs,” *Los Angeles Herald*.)

and their families at a pavilion on the sand.¹⁰⁹ Lewis served as a chairman on the juvenile court committee, where her experiences in law and politics was invaluable to the Votes for Women cause. Before dedicating her time as an advocate and suffragette, Foy was employed by the city of Los Angeles as head librarian.¹¹⁰ Foy was responsible for organizing much of the precinct coverage in Los Angeles for the Votes for Women Club.¹¹¹ Her work with other Southern California counties included taking speaking trips to San Diego where mass meetings were organized with local citizens to publicize both club affairs and the upcoming election.¹¹²

Precinct work was tedious, and required nearly every suffrage worker to be out on the streets doing footwork. Organization was vital in order to make sure every neighborhood in the city was covered. Precinct workers partook in house-to-house canvassing—ensuring voters in each precinct were made aware of the

¹⁰⁹ “Clubs,” *Los Angeles Herald* 32, no. 330 (27 August 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed February 26, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=LAH19110827.2.83&srpos=125&e=-----191-en--20--121--txt-txIN-%22votes+for+women+club%22----1911---1>.

¹¹⁰ “Partial Report on Juvenile Hall,” *Los Angeles Herald* 41, no. 210 (3 July 1915), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed February 26, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=LAH19150703.2.141&srpos=32&e=-----191-en--20--21--txt-txIN-cora+lewis-----1>.

¹¹¹ Paul R. Spitzer, “The Remarkable Life and Careers of Mary Eliza Foy (1862-1962),” Homestead Museum, accessed February 24, 2022, <https://homesteadmuseum.blog/2020/01/19/one-for-the-books-the-remarkable-life-and-careers-of-mary-eliza-foy-1862-1962/>.

¹¹² “Clubs,” *Los Angeles Herald*.

cause for suffrage in the upcoming October election. Some precinct workers were not involved in any organizations officially, yet, were happy to volunteer their time and energy for the movement. The *Los Angeles Herald* reported at least 230 voting precincts were active in Los Angeles on election day in 1911.¹¹³ Precinct work became a priority in October with the election was mere days away. Foy directed the precinct work with the Votes for Women Club and others in the area including the Political Equality League. Downtown Los Angeles and precincts east of the LA River were formed by campaign volunteers and recruited residents. Canvassing these districts was an important aspect of ensuring turnout on election day.

The Votes For Women Club in Los Angeles held similar meetings to their sister organizations that served as platforms for the public to hear arguments addressing women's suffrage. Suffragists naturally faced backlash for advocating in favor of extending women's rights beyond the home, so meetings were held regularly to dispel frequent anti-suffrage propaganda. A common argument heard from the opposition was that "women [had] no opportunity for distinguishing right from wrong in voting."¹¹⁴ The Votes For Women Club made sure to have

¹¹³ "Secretary of Organization Work Says Amendment Will Carry by 20,000 Majority," *Los Angeles Herald* 28, no. 4 (5 October 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed February 26, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=LAH19111005.2.87&srpos=19&e=-----191-en--20-LAH-1--txt-txIN-women+christian+temperance+union----1911---1>.

¹¹⁴ "Secretary of Organization Work Says Amendment Will Carry by 20,000 Majority," *Los Angeles Herald* 28, no. 4 (5 October 1911), California Digital

eloquent and educated speakers that asserted women distinguished between right from wrong far more effectually than men do, alluding to the various obligations that fell under women's purview.

The Amendment proposed to the California State Assembly would not have passed by the all-male legislature had women's suffrage organizations not forged relationships with increasingly progressive state Republican politicians. The Votes for Women Club created political alliances with local Southern California county judges, city council members, and state senators in order to pass what was then introduced as Amendment 8 to the state constitution. Meetings hosted by the women's club where men, including the mayor of Los Angeles, addressed other politicians proved successful in gaining support in the state legislature.¹¹⁵

In fact, men who showed up to weekly suffragists meetings were often just as passionate about women's access to representation as women were. As previously stated, incorporating men into the California Suffrage Movement was a key tactic used by nearly all suffrage and labor clubs leading up to the 1911

Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed February 26, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=LAH19111005.2.87&srpos=19&e=-----191-en--20-LAH-1--txt-txIN-women+christian+temperance+union----1911---1>.

¹¹⁵ "Senator Hewitt To Speak To Votes for Women Club," *Los Angeles Herald* 33, no. 219 (8 May 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed March 16, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=LAH19110508.2.183&srpos=9&e=-----en--20--1--txt-txIN-%22votes+for+women+club%22-----1>.

election. Frequent speaker and Los Angeles mayoral candidate Lee C. Gates was a prominent political ally who enthusiastically advocated to the public that it was unconstitutional for women to be withheld their right to vote. During a Votes for Women Club meeting, Gates drew crowds of men and women alike to hear his defense of female suffrage. He explained to the audience that “women will purify politics, the reforms and liberties of the future are to come through them.”¹¹⁶ He reiterated a core, foundational argument that women’s rights advocates had been chanting for decades—that women were “obligated to bear the same burdens, to obey the same laws and pay for the support of the government, and no government is a representative one which refuses you the rights of citizenship.”¹¹⁷ Striking at a patriotic nerve, Gates’ oratories deconstructed the illogical restraints put on women who pay into society and participate as much as their male counterparts, yet receive none of the legal benefits or securities.

Presiding mayor of the city of Los Angeles George Alexander wrote directly to Shortridge Foltz in 1911 to declare his support for women’s suffrage in California. This letter was quickly published in an edition of the *Los Angeles*

¹¹⁶ “Senator Hewitt To Speak To Votes for Women Club,” *Los Angeles Herald* 33, no. 219 (8 May 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed March 16, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=LAH19110508.2.183&srpos=9&e=-----en--20--1--txt-txIN-%22votes+for+women+club%22-----1>.

¹¹⁷ “Gates Talks of Votes for Women,” *Los Angeles Herald*.

Herald to announce to the entire region that the mayor was in favor and would be doing his part in the political sphere to propel women's suffrage in the state forward. Mayor Alexander's proclamation, written on official letterhead, insisted that women had the right to actively participate in political affairs. He praised the women of Los Angeles for their intelligence and thoughtful insight to governmental problems that engrossed the city. Public support from the mayor was a huge win for both the Votes for Women Club and suffrage organizations throughout the region. Former mayor of the City of Santa Monica also publicly supported the suffrage crusade in Southern California. He was reported to have "volunteered his service to the Votes for Women Club to travel and take charge of extensive organization work."¹¹⁸

The Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) was a prominent, politically active organization rooted in Quaker philosophy from the early nineteenth century. Recognizing the problems alcohol caused in the home and family, their main objective was to legislate prohibition and pass public safety initiatives. Temperance suffragists pointed out the ills in society and convinced male politicians who recognized these societal plights that women would be the solution to legislative corruption. With voting access, women and their forward

¹¹⁸ "Give Votes to Women' Says Mayor of City," *Los Angeles Herald* 37, no. 323 (20 August 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed March 16, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=LAH19110820.2.13&srpos=10&e=-----191-en--20--1--txt-txIN-%22votes+for+women+club%22----1911---1>.

thinking Republican male counterparts would form their own political coalition in California and pass progressive legislature protecting women, children, and the home. First hand accounts suggest that California's WCTU had sent correspondences to the State Women's Alliance as early as 1893, possibly earlier, in efforts to unite. The state's WCTU sought collaboration with the State Women's Alliance and other "societies of women" to hold a congress on local temperance politics midwinter of 1893.¹¹⁹ Despite not having voting rights, women in the California WCTU branches were influential enough as a political force to pass public safety and sanitation legislation, including installing public drinking fountains in the cities. Proponents of women's suffrage believed that WCTU women would help usher in a "wave of purer politics" in California if they were granted voting rights. As Christian women were seen as the "moral force" in early twentieth century society, their votes would surely guide the state towards a more family oriented way of life.¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ "State Women's Alliance," *San Francisco Call* 74, no. 99 (7 September 1893), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed March 27, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=SFC18930907.2.128&srpos=15&e=-----en--20--1--txt-txIN-selina+solomons-----1>.

¹²⁰ "100 Suffragists Rally At Pasadena," *Los Angeles Herald* 37, no. 352 (18 September 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed March 16, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=LAH19110918.2.136&srpos=6&e=-----191-en--20-LAH-1--txt-txIN-women+christian+temperance+union----1911---1>.

The WCTU believed both men and women should be held to “the highest ideals of purity, both within the home and society.”¹²¹ In their 1911 annual resolution published in the *Calexico Chronicle*, the members were in agreement to “condemn all books which by implication or otherwise make a distinction between the sexes as to the obligation of virtue and moral action.”¹²² The union subscribed to the idea that women and men held equal responsibility in all aspects of life— including law, labor, and religious morality.

By mid-July 1911, the Southern California WCTU had amassed a membership of over five thousand members.¹²³ All of these members were formally allied with the Federation of Suffrage Associations of Los Angeles and were heavily involved in the 1911 Campaign for women’s suffrage in the state. In September, membership in Southern California grew to over six thousand, representing a steady increase of membership leading to election day.

¹²¹ “Resolutions,” *Calexico Chronicle* 2, no. 60 (18 April 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed March 12, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=CC19110418.2.3&srpos=112&e=-----191-en--20-101--txt-txIN-women%27s+christian+temperance+union----1911---1>. (Hereafter cited as “Resolutions,” *Calexico Chronicle*.)

¹²² “Resolutions,” *Calexico Chronicle*.

¹²³ “Suffragists Clubs From Federation to Supervise Campaign,” *Calexico Chronicle* 2, no. 60 (18 April 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed March 12, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=LAH19110715.2.187&srpos=7&e=-----191-en--20-LAH-1--txt-txIN-women+christian+temperance+union----1911---1>.

Mrs. Hester T. Griffith managed the Southern California WCTU as president during the 1911 Campaign. She was a vehement proponent of women's right to vote and deeply integrated her union with leading suffrage organizations in the Southern California area. Griffith argued in the *Los Angeles Herald* that, "Man needs the comradeship and the ballot help of woman. Woman needs the comradeship and the power the ballot will give her."¹²⁴ She explained that assigning men with total power and withholding agency from women will "hinder the progress of the human race."¹²⁵ A keystone point in her argument was her desire for mutual co-operation and comradeship between men and women. Concluding on a religious note, Griffith cited the *Book of Genesis* in her argument for women's suffrage. She quoted, "In the beginning God said, let them have dominion. Male and female created He them and blessed them and said unto them, have dominion over every living thing."¹²⁶ She emphasized the text's use of pronouns, pointing out that both men and women were destined by God to have dominion over the world. Using *The Bible* as supporting evidence and appealing to Californian's religious duty would prove to garner political support

¹²⁴ Hester T. Griffith, "California Chivalry," *Los Angeles Herald* 37, no. 335 (1 September 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed March 13, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=LAH19110901.2.52&srpos=20&e=-----191-en--20-LAH-1--txt-txIN-women+christian+temperance+union----1911---1>. (Hereafter cited as "Griffith, "California Chivalry.")

¹²⁵ "Griffith, "California Chivalry."

¹²⁶ "Griffith, "California Chivalry."

from men and bolster union membership among women. These ideals would be clear driving forces behind the work of WCTU members in both Southern and Northern California as they operated tirelessly with fellow organizations to endorse women's suffrage across the state.

The WCTU offered churches as platforms for Clara Shortridge Foltz and other prominent suffragette speakers to engage with the city's Protestant demographics.¹²⁷ This was significant because it allowed churchgoers and community members a comfortable, local venue to hear pro-suffrage arguments. In Los Angeles, WCTU members hosted suffrage debates at Methodist Churches where speakers were organized similar to a debate tournament.¹²⁸ Orators were voted on and moved up brackets until gold medalists would compete against one another. In addition to Methodist Churches, these "suffrage competitions" were hosted by the WCTU at universities and Quaker Churches across the state, including First Friends' Church in Pasadena.¹²⁹ This was an excellent way of

¹²⁷ "Suffrage Notes," *Los Angeles Herald* 37, no. 335 (21 September 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed March 19, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=LAH19110921.2.78&srpos=96&e=-----191-en--20--81--txt-txIN-%22votes+for+women+club%22----1911---1>.

¹²⁸ "Suffrage Notes," *Los Angeles Herald* 37, no. 335 (21 September 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed March 19, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=LAH19110921.2.78&srpos=96&e=-----191-en--20--81--txt-txIN-%22votes+for+women+club%22----1911---1>.

¹²⁹ "Women's Christian Temperance Union Will Direct Gold Medal Oratorical Competition," *Los Angeles Herald* 33, no. 141 (19 February 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed March 14, 2022,

targeting college students and faculty in the community to get involved with the cause. The women involved with the WCTU understood the need for women across ways of life to unify in order to obtain the right to vote for her and her family's interests.

The WCTU worked closely with the Votes for Women Club in the North and South, functioning as key allies during the 1911 Campaign. Members from the San Francisco WCTU attended Votes for Women Club meetings to seek support in establishing housing for working girls and homes near the ferry where girls would arrive at all hours of the day and night. The union members had been dedicated to their work monitoring the Bay ferry where young, immigrant girls were at high risk of being sold into human trafficking.¹³⁰ At a Votes for Women meeting, WCTU representatives suggested establishing homes around the city as refuge spots for young girls, especially those who worked late hours. The concern expressed about immigrant and working women across organizations in the state was representative of the expansive and progressive politics women in the Western US were subscribing to in this period. It also pointed out the lack of legal protections for women at the time, and gave a glimpse into the policies

<https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=LAH19110219.2.322&srpos=105&e=-----191-en--20--101--txt-txIN-women%27s+christian+temperance+union----1911---1>.

¹³⁰ "Women to Fight Traffic in Girls," *San Francisco Call* 107, no. 147 (26 April 1910), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed March 19, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=SFC19100426.2.55&srpos=18&e=-----en--20--1--txt-txIN-selina+solomons-----1>. (Hereafter cited as "Women to Fight Traffic in Girls," *San Francisco Call*.)

women desired to pass in the state. These collaborations on public safety and women's rights were arguably what made women's organizations successful in obtaining the vote and initiating reformative policies.

Simultaneously in the greater Central California Valley, the Central WCTU made moves to protect young working women in the cities. They had arranged for "matrons" to be stationed at busy railways to protect young girls who traveled from train to train alone throughout their workday.¹³¹The *Lompoc Journal* reported growing concerns in the WCTU over sexual assault and harassment towards young, working girls in the city.

Nearly all of the Southern California clubs, branches, and leagues covered in this chapter unified officially in July of 1911 to form the Central Committee of the Federation of Suffrage Associations.¹³² While based in Los Angeles, the committee served a number of groups dedicated to suffrage across Southern California, including Pasadena. Prominent members of the Votes for Women Club, Clara Shortridge Foltz and Cora Lewis, were among the delegates for this coalition who prioritized organization and efficiency. The entire committee

¹³¹ "Coast Haps and Mishaps of the Week," *Lompoc Journal* 2, no. 27 (27 May 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed March 19, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=LJ19110527&e=-----191-en--20--121--txt-txIN-women%27s+christian+temperance+union----1911---1>.

¹³² "Clubs," *Los Angeles Herald* 37, no. 202 (20 July 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed March 19, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=LAH19110720.2.54&srpos=73&e=-----191-en--20--61--txt-txIN-%22votes+for+women+club%22----1911---1>.

consisted upward of seven Southern California associations, most notably being the Votes for Women Club, WCTU, Woman's Socialist Union, and WESL. The combined membership of the Central Committee of the Federation of Suffrage Organizations in Southern California totaled 10,500 individuals.¹³³

¹³³ "League Has Membership of More Than 10,000 Persons and Will Begin Work Immediately," *Los Angeles Herald* 37, no. 287 (15 July 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed March 19, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=LAH19110715.2.187&srpos=99&e=-----191-en--20--81--txt-txIN-%22votes+for+women+club%22----1911---1>.

CHAPTER FOUR

WOMEN OF COLOR

This project revolves around the California Women's Movement and the individuals who were involved in campaigning for women's suffrage in the Golden State in 1911. It is true that in October of 1911 the California State Legislature voted to grant women the right to vote, however, the state did not extend this right to all women. California, much like the rest of the US, has had a complicated history with anyone deemed by the government as "non-white." African-American, Native American, and Asian-American women continued to be denied their right to vote on the basis of their "non-whiteness." Most of these minority women would be withheld their right to vote by state and federal governments until the 1965 Voting Rights Act was passed. While many women of color were at the forefront of their own social movements that spurred forward the civil rights era of the mid-twentieth century, the California Women's Movement narrative lacks the contributions made by women of color. Their accomplishments in the 1911 Campaign were perhaps the most impressive, as minorities in the US faced insurmountable opposition in politics, society, and the workplace. The women discussed in the chapter dealt with both patriarchal and white supremacist institutional structures that restricted their path to citizenship. Many of these limitations were a factor within the movement itself, as suffrage clubs across the state restricted membership to whites only. Despite the

socioeconomic and political hurdles, both of these women championed voting rights for all, even if they would not be granted it themselves.

Prominent Women

Maria de Guadalupe Evangelina Lopez was elected president of the College Equal Suffrage League of Los Angeles in May 1911.¹³⁴ Originally from the San Gabriel Valley just East of Los Angeles, Lopez's family home was one of the first adobe homes built in the region and was part of the San Gabriel Mission. She eventually moved to the city and took a position as a high school Spanish teacher early on in her career. Lopez studied at University of California, Berkeley and graduated with her Bachelor of Science degree.¹³⁵

Lopez was described as a "champion" to the ladies of Los Angeles by the *San Luis Obispo Daily Telegram*.¹³⁶ She was widely known for being an

¹³⁴ "Clubs," *Los Angeles Herald* 33, no. 314 (3 May 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed March 20, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=LAH19110503.2.71&srpos=106&e=-----191-en--20--101--txt-txIN-miss+lopez----1911---1>.

¹³⁵ "Short Range Chat With A Suffragette," *San Luis Obispo Daily* 14, no. 11 (26 September 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed March 20, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=SLODT19110926.2.107&srpos=21&e=-----191-en--20--21--txt-txIN-miss+lopez----1911---1>.

¹³⁶ "Speakers Arrive This Afternoon," *San Luis Obispo Daily* 14, no. 27 (23 September 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed March 20, 2022,

“eloquent speaker” who addressed crowds in both Spanish and English. This was incredibly valuable, as Lopez was able to reach a completely different audience than other suffrage advocates discussed thus far. Because of Lopez’s work, Spanish-speaking men and women were incorporated into the political conversation on women’s voting rights. She was responsible for translating suffrage leaflets into Spanish, approximately fifty thousand of which were distributed on election day.¹³⁷

Los Angeles was the largest Mexican-American city in California in the early twentieth century, and one of the largest in the country. At the time of the state’s infancy, Californio families and Latino immigrants alike were granted citizenship and equal rights in theory, according to the California State Parks and the California Office of Historic Preservation¹³⁸. However, Californio families who once ruled the region as the patrician class were “typically treated poorly and robbed of their land” in the later half of the nineteenth century.¹³⁹ Meanwhile, the US grew increasingly dependent on underpaid Latino labor to meet market

<https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=SLODT19110923.2.8&srpos=5&e=-----191-en--20-1--txt-txIN-miss+lopez----1911---1>.

¹³⁷ Frances Kaplan, “Women’s Suffrage in California: What One Document Reveals,” California Historical Society, September 24, 2021, accessed April 2, 2022, <https://californiahistoricalsociety.org/blog/womens-suffrage-in-california-what-one-document-reveals/>.

¹³⁸ *Latinos in Twentieth Century California: National Register of Historical Places Context Statement*, California State Parks, 2015, accessed April 2, 2022, http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/pages/1054/files/LatinosMPDF_Illustrated.pdf.

¹³⁹ *Latinos in Twentieth Century California*, 3.

demands. The expansion of Latino immigration in the early twentieth century heightened the need for safer working conditions and legal protections in the US. Lopez played a huge role in making politics accessible to the Latino and Spanish speaking communities in California, especially in the state's Southern region. Furthermore, she paved a path for Latina women to get involved in suffrage politics and create agency for themselves. Without a Spanish-speaking trailblazer to harness an otherwise overlooked demographic, the Campaign of 1911 could have easily fallen through the cracks of bureaucracy.

Lopez aligned herself with Judge Dillon of Ventura, a man of influence who notably "addressed some of the largest gatherings in the history of the [suffrage] movement in Los Angeles."¹⁴⁰ The pair, like other aforementioned advocates during the 1911 Campaign, traveled north from Los Angeles to the San Luis Obispo area in September where they addressed local residents on woman suffrage at the county court house. Dillon and Lopez did similar outreach in the Santa Barbara area as well.¹⁴¹

¹⁴⁰ "Judge Dillon and Miss Lopez from the South to Address Suffragettes," *San Luis Obispo Telegram* 14, 10 (22 September 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed April 1, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=SLODT19110922.2.106&srpos=2&e=-----191-en--20--1--txt-txIN-miss+lopez----1911---1>.

¹⁴¹ "Suffrage Rally Wednesday at Opera House Pay Will Also Be Given in Near Future by Local Talent!" *Morning Press* (5 September 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed April 1, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=MP19110905.2.15&srpos=127&e=-----191-en--20--121--txt-txIN-miss+lopez----1911---1>.

Lopez worked to serve the College Equal Suffrage League in Southern California in part by hosting suffrage tea parties at her home in the San Gabriel Valley.¹⁴² Suffrage teas were popular means of hosting women in the community to discuss ideas on women's rights, political activism, and social issues. Under the guidance of Lopez, the College Equal Suffrage League made it clear that their intentions for these tea parties was "to reach, either by the eloquence of their speakers or the interesting literature, the foreigners and many of the native born Spanish speaking men of the State whose vote greatly affects every election."¹⁴³

Her position as president of the College Equal Suffrage League was not the only office title held by Lopez. She was elected by the community of San Gabriel to serve as precinct chairman in the Valley, where she worked tirelessly interacting with voters and citizens alike. The *Los Angeles Herald* reported accounts of Lopez driving "all over the San Gabriel Valley distributing literature and posters, and personally inviting many of the citizens of that populous

¹⁴² "Suffragists Will Rally Tonight in San Gabriel Ready for Visitors," *Los Angeles Herald* 37, no. 329 (26 August 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed April 4, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=LAH19110826.2.66&srpos=69&e=-----191-en--20--61--txt-txIN-miss+lopez----1911---1>.

¹⁴³ "Will Attend Bankers Convention," *Madera Mercury* 27, no. 10 (17 June 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed April 1, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=MM19110617.2.62&srpos=175&e=-----191-en--20--161--txt-txIN-miss+lopez----1911---1>.

country.”¹⁴⁴ Lopez and the College Equal Suffrage League collaborated closely with the Central Suffrage Campaign Committee of Southern California, including their associated organizations that were discussed at length in Chapter Two. In September of 1911, Lopez directed a large meeting in San Gabriel with the Central Suffrage Campaign Committee where orators, representatives, politicians, and prominent religious leaders in the community were present. Not only did this bring attention to the 1911 Campaign in the greater Los Angeles area, but it also demonstrated the unity across various women’s rights groups in the state.

Sarah Massey Overton was an African-American suffragette based in San Jose, California during the 1911 Campaign. She was a “distinguished woman” of her time and filled a large place in her community, according to an obituary published by the *San Jose Mercury* in 1914. Overton was a public supporter of temperance, peace, and most notably, African-American voting rights.¹⁴⁵ She worked dutifully during the Campaign of 1911 as a member of the Political Equality Club of San Jose to engage the interest of African-American voters in

¹⁴⁴ “Suffrage Meeting in Los Angeles,” *Madera Mercury* 37, no. 20 (2 September 1911), California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, accessed April 4, 2022, <https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=MM19110902.2.10&srpos=84&e=-----191-en--20--81--txt-txIN-miss+lopez----1911---1>.

¹⁴⁵ Delilah L. Beasley, *The Negro Trail Blazers of California*, (Berkeley: Bancroft Library, 1919), 233.

the greater San Jose region. This often was at her own expense, as she traveled across the state on speaking tours.

Overton was elected as vice president of the San Jose Suffrage Amendment League in addition to her role in the Political Equality Club. Furthermore, she served as president of the Victoria Earle Matthews Club who dedicate themselves to “protect imperiled girls from those who prowl for their destruction.”¹⁴⁶

It is important to note the tireless, yet overlooked contributions of women of color to the Women’s Suffrage Movement in general, especially on a state by state scale. Both Lopez and Overton continue to be left out of the conversation, despite the fact that they represented a large portion of California as women of color.

¹⁴⁶ Beasley, *The Negro Trail Blazers of California*, 233.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

On October 10, 1911 Californians went to sleep as votes continued to be counted into the night on whether women's suffrage would pass in the state. It took several days for the total amount to be tallied and the final results showed that women's suffrage had passed in California with the majority of affirmative votes coming from rural farming areas and Los Angeles. This great success can be directly attributed to the coalition of women who collaborated with one another and built a network that spanned across the state. The 1911 Campaign was arguably so unique because of this diversity and incorporation. Whereas the 1896 suffragettes saw defeat with their small support base and close-knit organizations, the women fighting for the cause in 1911 did something different. They were able to unify working women and labor advocates, educated and wealthy women, temperance advocates, mothers, single women, Christian and Jewish women into a movement centered fundamentally in moral reform.

The female leadership in prominent suffrage groups associated voting rights with economic, bodily, and political autonomy as to appeal to women of all different circumstances and backgrounds. By inspiring enthusiasm across socioeconomic lines, membership in these organizations became passionate and eager to do the footwork necessary to persuade male voters for their support in the polls. Incorporating men into the movement was an essential maneuver

promoted by women's and labor groups, especially in Southern California. Large, public meetings and parades were effective in accumulating public attention as well as speaking events with well-known, sometimes male, political figures. While some may argue women would not have received the vote without men giving it to them, another could argue that women were clever enough to take it. Because of these women and the women of the West who blazed trails before them, California continues to be a beacon of democratic progress to the rest of the US.

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<https://homesteadmuseum.blog/2020/01/19/one-for-the-books-the-remarkable-life-and-careers-of-mary-eliza-foy-1862-1962/>.
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