

Belmont University

Belmont Digital Repository

Belmont University Research Symposium
(BURS)

Special Events

2021

Public Practice: How Women Nursed Their Way Into Society

Annika R. Simpson

Belmont University, annika.simpson@pop.belmont.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://repository.belmont.edu/burs>



Part of the [Labor History Commons](#), [United States History Commons](#), and the [Women's History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Simpson, Annika R., "Public Practice: How Women Nursed Their Way Into Society" (2021). *Belmont University Research Symposium (BURS)*. 79.

<https://repository.belmont.edu/burs/79>

This Oral Presentation is brought to you for free and open access by the Special Events at Belmont Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Belmont University Research Symposium (BURS) by an authorized administrator of Belmont Digital Repository. For more information, please contact repository@belmont.edu.

Annika Simpson

HIS 3110

Dr. Jackson-Abernathy

11/20/21

Public Practice: How Women Nursed Their Way Into Society

“Our brave boys,’ as the papers justly call them, for cowards could hardly have been so riddled with shot and shell, so torn and shattered, nor have borne suffering for which we have no name, with an uncomplaining fortitude, which made one glad to cherish each as a brother.”¹

Louisa May Alcott, “Civil War Hospital Sketches,” (1862)

The American Women’s Rights Movement of the mid-nineteenth century came to a screeching halt when shots rang out at Fort Sumter in April, 1861. What existed of the movement was abandoned in favor of the war effort. This did not force women out of the public sphere; the Civil War thrust women into it. Although most direct women’s rights activism took a temporary hiatus, women played hugely important roles during the war that existed as a type of activism, in and of itself. In droves, women on both sides of the war translated their domestic skills to the public realm and entered field hospitals. In doing so, women undertook medical work and training previously reserved for men. During the war, a kinship, like that described by Louisa May Alcott, blossomed between nurses and the soldiers they treated. There was a mutual appreciation between practitioner and patient - one, grateful for lifesaving care, the other, in

¹Louisa May Alcott, *Civil War Hospital Sketches*, edited by Louis M. Hacker (Champaign, IL: Sagamore Press Inc., 1957), 58.

reverent awe of the sacrifices being made. This mutual appreciation - this companionship - existing between a man and a woman who were otherwise strangers, was characteristic of Union Civil War field hospitals, but far from ordinary. Union women's increased involvement in the public arena during the American Civil War opened American minds to the prospect of women as autonomous political actors. Growing public acceptance facilitated the larger post-war Women's Rights Movement and allowed it to flourish, culminating in the creation of the National Woman Suffrage Association in 1869.

Union women desperately wanted to be involved in the war effort. Some used their domestic skills to clothe and feed their husbands, brothers, and sons. Many women felt called by a sense of patriotism "akin to the soldier's; others spoke of religious calling, Christian duty."² Others still wished they could serve alongside their men. One such woman was American novelist Louisa May Alcott, who wrote in her journal in April, 1861, "I've often longed to see a war, and now I have my wish. I long to be a man; but as I can't fight, I will content myself with working for those who can."³ While the rare, daring woman did disguise herself and don the Union blues, most women settled for involvement in field hospitals. Like Alcott, Esther Hill Hawks, one of the first female American physicians, also felt drawn to the war effort, and channeled her enthusiasm into hospital work. Hawks expressed this sentiment in her own journal: "Having firm faith in the belief that I was born to be a missionary, I decided that the time had arrived for me to sacrifice myself, so I answered accordingly."⁴ Hospital work operated as a form of women's activism, the use of involvement to enact social and political change,

² Schultz, *Women at the Front*, 45.

³ Louisa May Alcott, *The Journals of Louisa May Alcott*, edited by Joel Myerson, Daniel Shealy, and Madeleine B. Stern, (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1989) 110.

⁴ Esther Hill Hawks, *A Woman Doctor's Civil War: Esther Hill Hawks' Diary*, edited by Gerald Schwartz (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1984) 31.

propelling women from the private sphere into the public sphere. Women turned a catastrophic war into an opportunity to bring value to their work outside the home, subtly promoting the ideas of women's rights and furthering women's place in society.

Prior to the Civil War, women's activism existed mainly in the form of moral reforms. While some women, including Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Lucy Stone, began to incorporate calls for women's rights such as suffrage, the majority of antebellum female activism occurred in temperance and abolition movements. The American Temperance Society, founded in 1826, attracted mostly middle-class women concerned with "the deleterious effects of alcohol within the family setting."⁵ Northern women flocked into abolitionist organizations with similar fervor; slavery did not morally fit into their Christian ideals. Prior to the war, much of this reform work existed only within the home or the direct community to "save men from themselves."⁶ The war gave women the opportunity to take this work into the greater community, "regard[ing] the war as an extension of their local moral reform work."⁷ As they extended their work into the public sphere, women proved their value within society and proved their worthiness of rights within American society.

Women's rights - or lack thereof - have been of concern since the beginning of patriarchal society. Women's status as second-class citizens became painfully obvious when Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott were banned from the World's Anti-Slavery Convention in 1840: "The vote was taken and the women excluded as delegates of the Convention, by an

⁵ Ruth M. Alexander, "'We Are Engaged as a Band of Sisters': Class and Domesticity in the Washingtonian Temperance Movement, 1840–1850," *The Journal of American History* (Bloomington, Ind.) 75, no. 3 (1988): 763–85, doi:10.2307/1901529.

⁶ Judith Ann Giesberg, *Civil War Sisterhood: The U.S. Sanitary Commission and Women's Politics in Transition* (Boston, MA: Northeastern University Press, 2000), 15.

⁷ Giesberg, 15.

overwhelming majority.”⁸ Forty-one years later, Stanton reflected on her exclusion, asking “Would there have been no unpleasant feelings in [American abolitionist] Wendell Phillips’ mind, had Frederick Douglass and Robert Purvis been refused their seats in a convention of reformers under similar circumstances?”¹⁰ Disappointed and angered at their exclusion, Stanton and Mott “agreed to hold a woman’s rights convention on their return to America... Thus a missionary work for the emancipation of woman... was then and there inaugurated.”¹¹ This plan came to fruition eight years later in Seneca Falls, New York. In the summer of 1848, Stanton, Mott, and nearly 300 others convened at Seneca Falls to discuss their Declaration of Sentiment. Modeled after the Declaration of Independence, the women’s Declaration listed their grievances and demands for future equality, including women’s suffrage - an especially contentious point.¹² Although women remained disenfranchised for nearly another century, the convention at Seneca Falls set the Women’s Rights Movement in motion.

In 1861, as secession seemed inevitable and the war grew nearer, the new flames of the Women’s Rights Movement diminished. Supporters of the movement knew that the Union’s top priority was to reunite the North and South, so most temporarily abandoned the movement in favor of the war effort. Stanton and Anthony, however, continued to nurse the coals of their movement out of fear that it would burn out completely. In a series of speeches, Stanton and Anthony linked the war, anti-slavery, and their own cause. They argued that being anti-slavery also meant being pro-woman; that abolition was a humanitarian interest and therefore an interest

⁸ Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Matilda Joselyn Gage, “World’s Anti-Slavery Convention” in *History of Woman Suffrage*, Vols. 1-4, (Rochester, NY, 1881), 60.

⁹ Douglas H. Maynard, “The World’s Anti-Slavery Convention of 1840,” *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 47, no. 3 (1960): 452–71, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1888877>.

¹⁰ Anthony, et al., “Woman’s Patriotism in the War” in *History of Woman Suffrage*, 1-3.

¹¹ Anthony, et al., “Woman’s Patriotism in the War,” 1-3.

¹² Jennifer Chapin Harris, “Celebrating Women’s Herstory: The Story of Seneca Falls,” *Off Our Backs* 28, no. 7 (1998): 9–9, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20836139>.

for all humanity, which included women. If women could make independent choices about civic matters such as slavery, “a hallmark of an independent political actor,”¹³ how could society deny them those political rights?

When the war broke out in April, 1861, the same women who had been denied their rights refused to retreat to the private sphere. As Union soldiers flooded into hospitals, women saw a need to be met: nursing their boys in blue back to health. One such woman was Dorothea Dix, an activist and advocate for the mentally ill. Several years prior, during the Crimean War (1854–1856), Dix met the prolific nurse and author, Florence Nightingale, while Dix visited Crimean hospitals. A pioneer and role model for future nurses, Nightingale taught American nurses the importance of cleanliness through her 1860 book, *Notes on Nursing: What It Is and What It Is Not*.¹⁴ Armed with this knowledge, Dix persuaded the United States Surgeon General William Hammond to allow her to construct an Army Nursing Corps of female volunteers. Alongside Elizabeth Blackwell, the first American woman to receive a medical degree, Dix created the Woman’s Central Association of Relief (WCAR).

Through the WCAR, women could serve in the war effort with skills generally associated with femininity, such as compassion, warmth, and kindness. “Insisting that women made better nurses than did convalescent soldiers because they were more docile and efficient than men and were superior morale builders,”¹⁵ the WCAR “appealed to Victorian notions of women’s natural

¹³ Linda Czuba Brigance, "Ballots and Bullets: Adapting Women's Rights Arguments to the Conditions of War," *Women and Language* 28, no. 1 (2005): 1+. *Gale Academic OneFile*, https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A133864709/AONE?u=tel_a_belmont&sid=bookmark-AONE&xid=0a671aa6.

¹⁴ Rhonda G. Lesniak, “Expanding the Role of Women as Nurses during the American Civil War,” *Advances in Nursing Science, U.S. National Library of Medicine* 32, no. 1: 33-42 (2009), doi: 10.1097/01.ANS.0000346285.14483.74.

¹⁵ Jane E. Schultz, “The Inhospitable Hospital: Gender and Professionalism in Civil War Medicine,” *Signs* 17, no. 2 (1992): 372, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3174468>.

benevolence,”¹⁶ bringing stereotypically feminine attributes into an area largely dominated by men: medicine.

The Woman’s Central Association of Relief brought Dorothea Dix and Elizabeth Blackwell to work together, but the two had significant differences. Prior to her work with the WCAR, Blackwell opened the New York Infirmary for Women and Children. The Infirmary allowed female physicians to practice medicine, despite being barred from other hospitals by men. While Dix, who regarded herself as a religious crusader, viewed nursing as a genuinely feminine vocation, Blackwell saw this view as counterproductive to women gaining equal access to medical schools. Still, these differences proved largely beneficial rather than detrimental, as their two viewpoints combined medical training with moral activism of middle-class women; Dix and Blackwell “combined benevolence and science.”¹⁷

The WCAR was just one of many such relief organizations across the Union, and while it served its purpose in New York, it could not meet the greater need throughout the country. Blackwell saw the need to “organize the whole benevolence of the women of the country into a general and central association.”¹⁸ At the end of April, 1861, a large group of women convened in New York to discuss possible next steps. While visiting field hospitals and camps in Washington, D.C., the delegates became keenly aware of the poor conditions in which wounded soldiers were expected to recover. At the beginning of the war, the high Union mortality rates could be attributed in many cases to unsanitary conditions, as “more men died from disease than in battle.”¹⁹ The delegates were convinced that “inadequate government accommodations

¹⁶ Giesberg, 38.

¹⁷ Giesberg, 42.

¹⁸ United States Sanitary Commission, *Documents of the U.S. Sanitary Commission*, Vol. 2 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Archives, 1866).

¹⁹ Pam Tise, “A Fragile Legacy: The Contributions of Women in the United States Sanitary Commission to the United States Administrative State,” (MA applied research project, Texas State University, 2013), 45.

provided a novel opportunity for them to become actively involved in the war, not simply as the mouthpiece for women's organized homefront relief but as special advisors to the national government."²⁰ At this moment, women had the chance to break out of private life, further continuing their activism.

The solution to the hazardous camps and hospitals became obvious: the delegates, along with the United States War Department established the United States Sanitary Commission (USSC) "a civilian relief agency whose charge was to promote sanitation and hygiene in the army camps."²¹ Societal belief held that the gentle presences of women were ideal for supporting sanitation and cleanliness, especially because convalescent soldiers, often in need of nursing themselves, proved inefficient and ineffective.²² The USSC eventually became a springboard organization for numerous other medical programs, including training schools for nurses, and Clara Barton's Red Cross.

The WCAR was officially named an auxiliary branch of the USSC in 1861. Henry Bellows sat as President of the all-male board, created to give the organization more traction than it could gain with Dix at the front. The organization found purchase, but failed to represent the women's initial intentions, dropping Blackwell's plan to give volunteer nurses proper medical training. The board sided with Dix, likely due to Blackwell's assertiveness, a trait that made the nineteenth-century men uncomfortable. Unlike Dix, Blackwell did not equate middle-class status

²⁰ Giesberg, 37.

²¹ Lesniak, 37.

²² Strong, Melissa J. Strong, "'The Finest Kind of Lady': Hegemonic Femininity in American Women's Civil War Narratives," *Women's Studies* 46, no. 1 (January 2017): 1–21, doi:10.1080/00497878.2017.1252560.

and a moral reputation with medical training. Dix's version of the USSC was "merely an extension of the domestic ideal and nurses were proudly subordinate to male doctors."²³

As eager as women were to productively participate in the war, they faced adverse effects not unlike those of soldiers. Out in the field, nurses put themselves in harm's way for the sake of their soldiers, but most detrimentally, hospital work took a psychological toll. For women who had primarily spent their lives working in the home, the things they saw in field hospitals were extremely jarring. Women had backgrounds in rudimentary nursing practices within their families, but tending to hundreds of strangers was an entirely different experience, and "none was prepared for the carnage that filled military hospitals."²⁴ Controversy arose as people believed women were too fragile for this kind of work. In her semi-autobiographical book *Civil War Hospital Sketches*, Lousia May Alcott reflects on the societal belief that it was unseemly for women to work so close to injured, sometimes naked, men.²⁵ As expressed by historian Jane E. Schultz, "aspiring workers had to weigh desire against disapproval of friends, family, and society."²⁶ Women tending to injured men that they did not know was an incredible novelty. Much more shocking than the sight of an injured stranger were the injuries themselves: "In they came, some on stretchers, some in men's arms, some feebly staggering along propped on rude crutches, and one lay stark and still with covered face, as a comrade gave his name to be recorded before they carried him away to the dead-house."²⁷ Esther Hill Hawks remembered "Several severe cases of gangrene" that "poisn'd the air" and made her sick nearly to the point of

²³ Giesberg, 44.

²⁴ Schultz, *Women at the Front*, 74.

²⁵ Alcott, *Civil War Hospital Sketches*.

²⁶ Jane E. Schultz, *Women at the Front: Hospital Workers in Civil War America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004) 46.

²⁷ Alcott, *Civil War Hospital Sketches*, 58.

needing to return home.²⁸ Alcott reported similar horrors: “The first thing that I met was a regiment of the vilest odors that ever assaulted the human nose,” noting “pneumonia on one side, diphtheria on the other, five typhoids on the opposite, and a dozen dilapidated patriots, hopping, lying, and lounging about.”²⁹

“The only thing that sustained us was the patient endurance of those stricken heroes lying before us, with their ghastly wounds cheerful and courageous, many a poor fellow sighing that his right arm was shattered beyond hope of striking another blow for freedom.”³⁰

Esther Hill Hawks' Diary (1862)

A unique kinship developed between soldiers and their nurses. Nurses saw their patients as war heroes, fighting for the same causes that brought the women into hospital work. Soldiers saw their caretakers as saviors and angels, as “queer mothers for the wounded soldiers temporarily alienated from their family care and affection.”³¹ When Hawks took ill and could not work for a week, she recalled returning to a “hearty ‘God bless you we are glad to see you back with us,’” which “compensated for much weariness.”³² The sense of appreciation from the patients proved that the women were necessary in the hospitals. Attitudes about women’s place in society changed, leading to a greater acceptance for women in American culture.

Because these bonds had been forged so deeply, the feelings of loss were especially profound. One nurse “confessed that she was of little use until she overcame her constant urge to

²⁸ Hawks, 51.

²⁹ Alcott, *Civil War Hospital Sketches*, 56-57.

³⁰ Hawks, 51.

³¹ Daniela Daniele, “Domestic Wounds: Nursing in Louisa May Alcott’s War Tales,” *European Journal of American Studies* 10, no. 1 (2015): 24. doi:10.4000/ejas.10747.

³² Hawks, 51.

cry.”³³ Alcott vividly reflected on the death of one of her patients: “The bed was empty. It seemed a poor requital for all he had sacrificed and suffered, - that hospital bed, lonely even in a crowd; for there was no familiar face for him to look his last upon; no friendly voice to say, Good-bye; no hand to lead him gently down into the Valley of the Shadow.”³⁴

Like their armed counterparts, women who worked in field hospitals came out of the war changed. They bandaged the stumps off of which limbs had been blown, saw “several stretchers, each with its legless, armless, or desperately wounded occupant,”³⁵ and watched more soldiers succumb to disease than war injuries. Despite all of the horrific things nurses encountered, according to Alcott, “answering letters from friends after some one has died [was] the saddest and hardest duty a nurse ha[d] to do.”³⁶ Not all consequences were damaging, though. As the war dragged on, women began to take on more responsibility in the hospitals, no longer content to perform menial labor with blind obedience to male superiors. Insisting on humane care, women stepped into leadership roles, and in doing so, also stepped into public roles. It was through their work with sick and injured men that women broke social boundaries. Public opinion about women in the workforce changed over the four years of the Civil War, but it did not make entering the workforce or retaining a position significantly easier for women directly thereafter. Lower and middle class women were not in a position to push for greater rights and very few elites sought formal medical training immediately following the war. In many situations, men came home and refilled positions, about which women could do little. Still, the experiences

³³ Schultz, *Women at the Front*, 75.

³⁴ Alcott, *Civil War Hospital Sketches*, 70.

³⁵ Alcott, *Civil War Hospital Sketches*, 59.

³⁶ Louisa May Alcott, *The Journals of Louisa May Alcott*, 114.

gained during the war, and the promotion of women's place as public creatures rather than private, allowed the quest for women's rights to continue.

Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton's activism, though relatively dormant throughout the war years, never died. Using the same rhetoric that linked the Women's Rights cause to those of the war, "Anthony and Stanton attacked the powerful tradition of separate spheres and the premise that different types of civic performance justifies different classes of citizenship - concepts that grounded women's ambiguous citizenship status throughout the ages."³⁷ Joined again by their fellow activists, in 1866, Anthony and Stanton formed the Equal Rights Association, "established for the express purpose of reminding the American nation that women form a part of the people."³⁸ The Equal Rights Association was only a stepping-stone, though, on the path to something much greater: the National Woman's Suffrage Association (NWSA). Displeased with a Fifteenth Constitutional Amendment that ignored the entire female population, Stanton and Anthony petitioned the Equal Rights Association to push for a Sixteenth Amendment to enfranchise women. Male leaders, fearing the consequences of supporting the women in this endeavor, refused to endorse this. Exasperated, Stanton and Anthony left the Equal Rights Association in 1869 to form their own association dedicated to giving women the right to vote: the National Woman's Suffrage Association.³⁹ On January nineteenth and twentieth, 1869, the first convention of the NWSA was held.

Change and growth occur in the midst of adversity. The American Civil War may have been one of the most damaging time periods in United States history, but it was through this

³⁷ Brigance, *Ballots and Bullets*.

³⁸ "Woman's Rights Convention," *The New York Herald*, (New York, NY), 07 Dec. 1866. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Lib. of Congress, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83030313/1866-12-07/ed-1/seq-8/>.

³⁹ Brigance, *Ballots and Bullets*.

devastation that women broke free from their chains to private life. It took time, especially for women of lower-class status, but serving as nurses in the Civil War gave many women the push they needed to pursue an education in medicine. Unlike prior to the Civil War when female physicians like Blackwell and Hawks were barred from hospitals by male superiors, women were slowly incorporated into the world of medical training and practice. Without an event as catastrophic as the Civil War, nineteenth-century women's rights activism may not have experienced the quiet boom it did. This is not to say that women would not leave the domestic setting eventually, but it can be assumed that the Women's Rights Movement would not have flourished in the same way, had the Civil War not been a catalyst. The flood of Union women into public society as nurses during the American Civil War created a greater acceptance for women outside the home. Women broke down social barriers by building social bonds with the men they nursed in an exceedingly unusual situation. Through their hospital fieldwork, women opened American minds to the idea of women as public creatures, able to make political decisions and differences. The post-war Women's Rights Movement was able to develop into a national society, the National Woman Suffrage Association, by 1869, because of the work that women did in field hospitals during the war. By treating Union soldiers during the American Civil War, nurses progressed the Women's Rights Movement of the United States.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

- Alcott, Louisa May. *Civil War Hospital Sketches*. Edited by Louis M. Hacker. Champaign, IL: Sagamore Press Inc., 1957.
- Alcott, Louisa May. *The Journals of Louisa May Alcott*. Edited by Joel Myerson, Daniel Shealy, and Madeleine B. Stern. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1989.
- Grant, Julia Dent. *The Personal Memoirs of Julia Dent Grant*. Edited by John Y. Simon. New York, NY: Putnam, 1975.
- Hawks, Esther Hill. *A Woman Doctor's Civil War: Esther Hill Hawks' Diary*. Edited by Gerald Schwartz. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1984.
- Stanton, Elizabeth Cady, and Anthony, Susan B. Edited by Ann Gordon. *The Selected Papers of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony*, vols 1-4. Piscataway, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2012.
- United States Sanitary Commission. *Documents of the U.S. Sanitary Commission*, vol. 2. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Archives, 1866.
- “Woman’s Rights Convention.” *The New York Herald*. (New York, NY), 07 Dec. 1866. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83030313/1866-12-07/ed-1/seq-8/>

Secondary Sources

- Alexander, Ruth M. “‘We Are Engaged as a Band of Sisters’: Class and Domesticity in the Washingtonian Temperance Movement, 1840–1850.” *The Journal of American History* 75, no. 3 (1988): 763–85. doi:10.2307/1901529.
- Anthony, S., Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Matilda Joslyn Gage. *History of Woman Suffrage*. Vols. 1-4. Rochester, NY, 1881.
- Brigance, Linda Czuba. "Ballots and Bullets: Adapting Women's Rights Arguments to the Conditions of War." *Women and Language* 28, no. 1 (2005). https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A133864709/AONE?u=tel_a_belmont&sid=bookmark-AONE&xid=0a671aa6.
- Daniele, Daniela. “Domestic Wounds: Nursing in Louisa May Alcott’s War Tales.” *European Journal of American Studies* 10, no. 1 (2015): 24. doi:10.4000/ejas.10747.
- Giesberg, Judith Ann. *Civil War Sisterhood: The U.S. Sanitary Commission and Women's*

- Politics in Transition*. Boston, MA: Northeastern University Press, 2000.
- Harris, Jennifer Chapin. "Celebrating Women's Herstory: The Story of Seneca Falls." *Off Our Backs* 28, no. 7 (1998): 9–9. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20836139>.
- Hilde, Libra R. *Worth a Dozen Men: Women and Nursing in the Civil War South*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2012.
- Lesniak, Rhonda G. "Expanding the Role of Women as Nurses during the American Civil War." *Advances in Nursing Science, U.S. National Library of Medicine* 32, no. 1: 33-42 (2009). doi: 10.1097/01.ANS.0000346285.14483.74.
- Maynard, Douglas H. "The World's Anti-Slavery Convention of 1840." *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 47, no. 3 (1960): 452–71. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1888877>.
- Schultz, Jane E. "The Inhospitable Hospital: Gender and Professionalism in Civil War Medicine." *Signs* 17, no. 2 (1992): 363–92. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3174468>.
- Schultz, Jane E. *Women at the Front: Hospital Workers in Civil War America*. Civil War America. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004. <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=127511&site=ehost-live>.
- Smith, Dale C. "Military Medical History: The American Civil War." *OAH Magazine of History* 19, no. 5 (2005): 17–19. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25161973>.
- Strong, Melissa J. "'The Finest Kind of Lady': Hegemonic Femininity in American Women's Civil War Narratives." *Women's Studies* 46, no. 1 (January 2017): 1–21. doi:10.1080/00497878.2017.1252560.
- Tise, Pam. "A Fragile Legacy: The Contributions of Women in the United States Sanitary Commission to the United States Administrative State." MA applied research project, Texas State University, 2013. <https://digital.library.txstate.edu/bitstream/handle/10877/4591/TisePam.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y>.