

discouraged, some impoverished, and some turn to welfare programs that give women workers even less help than UI does. The experiences of these women have a profound effect on all women workers. Inadequate protection against the loss of income through unemployment makes women workers as a class much more vulnerable to employer exploitation.

Some time ago, Harold Wilensky observed that private fringe benefits run counter to the egalitarian trends in the distribution of public transfers. The availability of private fringe benefits also undermines public support for more universal, income inequality-reducing programs.<sup>38</sup> The present character of unemployment compensation shows that Wilensky's argument should be modified, for UI is the worst of both worlds: it is a publicly supported set of fringe benefits that reinforces rather than decreases the inequality produced in the labor market. Moreover, the program gives precedence to the economic security and status maintenance of some of the jobless, while providing little or no support for the majority of the unemployed or their families. As long as we have income support systems that are based on distinctions—for example, between deserving and undeserving workers, or between regular workers and casual or secondary workers—we will have systems that reinforce the inequality experienced by women and minorities. Just as the court declared separate, dual systems to be inherently unequal in the field of education, we must recognize that the dual system of income support is likewise inherently unequal. Only a single and universal system of income support for the unemployed can function with real justice, and only with universal systems can we truly be a society of opportunity for all.

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38. Harold L. Wilensky, "The Problems and Prospects of the Welfare State," in *Industrial Society and Social Welfare*, ed. Harold L. Wilensky and Charles Lebeau (New York: Free Press, 1965), pp. xv-xvi.

# Separate Paths: Suffragists and the Women's Temperance Crusade

Jack S. Blocker, Jr.

For students of the dialectic between human condition and response, nineteenth-century American women represent a special problem. Because we still live in the shadow of their world, we are often tempted to take what we share with them as a reliable guide to their experience. But in doing so, we risk oversimplifying and thereby misunderstanding both the conditions faced by nineteenth-century women and their responses.

Women reformers are a case in point. During the nineteenth century, women organized for change in a variety of movements besides suffrage—most notably temperance, antislavery, and moral reform. Yet no matter what goal they sought, analysis of their actions usually begins—and too often ends—with the question, Were they feminists? Because their world contained, sometimes in exaggerated form, many of the elements against which late twentieth-century feminists struggle, the question is a natural one. But because their world contained other elements as well, a focus on feminism's presence or absence in women's reform activities can be misleading.

Of nineteenth-century women's reform movements, temperance was by far the largest. From the beginning of their organized activity in the 1820s, women evidently contributed between one-third and one-half of the temperance movement's mass support. But until 1873 they worked

Research and analysis for this article were supported by a grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. I wish to thank Susan Margaret Smith Blocker, Craig Simpson, and three anonymous *Signs* reviewers for their comments on earlier versions. All citations in the notes are to 1874 meetings or publications unless otherwise indicated.

primarily through organizations headed by men.<sup>1</sup> The Women's Temperance Crusade of 1873–74 brought thousands of new women into the fold, and their action created the first large-scale temperance movement specifically by and for women. The Crusade's successor, the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), institutionalized temperance women's independence from male control.

Recent studies of the Crusade have described it as a protofeminist movement. According to Barbara Epstein, the Crusade secularized and politicized women's feelings of sexual antagonism, which had originated in response to subordination and had been fostered by the evangelical culture shared by middle-class women. Although the WCTU gave further expression to this antagonism, it too fell short of true feminism since it accepted the centrality of the patriarchal family.<sup>2</sup> For Ruth Bordin, the Crusade engaged conservative women in actions that were objectively feminist, although they were not usually recognized as such.<sup>3</sup> Epstein and Bordin have directed attention to the scale and significance of women's temperance work and have suggested that women had their own reasons, rooted in economic dependence on men, to engage in temperance reform. But in evaluating the Women's Temperance Crusade, they have applied an ahistorical definition of feminism to women who never used that term, and they have neglected the responses evoked by the movement. My analysis, drawn from a larger study of the Crusade, defines the Crusaders' position on women's rights and woman suffrage through an examination both of their actions and of contemporary observers' perceptions. In addition, I examine with particular care the views of the Crusade held by suffragists, who are generally regarded by historians as the leading nineteenth-century advocates of women's rights.

The Women's Temperance Crusade was the largest nineteenth-century protest movement by women.<sup>4</sup> Beginning in small towns in western New York state and southwestern Ohio shortly before Christmas 1873, it spread over the following six months to at least 911 communities in thirty-one states and territories plus the District of Columbia. The

1. Jed Dannenbaum, "The Origins of Temperance Activism and Militancy among American Women," *Journal of Social History* 15, no. 2 (Winter 1981): 235–52; Ian R. Tyrrell, "Women and Temperance in Antebellum America, 1830–1860," *Civil War History* 28, no. 2 (June 1982): 128–52. A partial exception was the Daughters of Temperance, founded in 1843 as an affiliate of the Sons of Temperance.

2. Barbara Leslie Epstein, *The Politics of Domesticity: Women, Evangelism, and Temperance in Nineteenth-Century America* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1981), chaps. 4–5.

3. Ruth Bordin, *Woman and Temperance: The Search for Power and Liberty, 1873–1900* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1981), chap. 2.

4. This description is based on examination of fifty-one newspapers and journals published in twenty-three states during the Crusade and on the alcohol tax records of the Internal Revenue Service, RG 58, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

movement reached its greatest intensity in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan, which together contained nearly two-thirds of the reported Crusades and four-fifths of the Crusaders. In a survey of contemporary newspapers conducted for this study I found a total of over 56,000 Crusaders; the actual number of participants may have been closer to 150,000. A nonviolent movement against the retail liquor business, the Crusade adopted as its principal tactic a public march by groups of women that ranged in numbers from a handful to several hundred. At each liquor outlet the Crusaders attempted, through prayer and song, arguments and pleas, to persuade or coerce dealers to abandon their business. Crusaders justified their movement as an attempt to remove the temptations that beset their husbands, sons, and brothers. Women, they said, were the "greatest sufferers" from male intemperance because of the pain, shame, violence, and economic loss they endured when men drank to excess.<sup>5</sup>

Their movement was, in fact, prompted by a sharp rise in the number of retail liquor outlets and a concurrent jump in the level of alcohol consumption. In at least sixty-nine communities the movement was reported to have shut down all retail liquor outlets and in 128 all saloons; newspaper reports claimed a total of 1,260 retail liquor outlets closed or pledged to stop selling beverage alcohol as a result of the movement. During the Crusade, both alcohol consumption and the retail liquor business shrank, an effect both of the Crusaders' marches and of the economic depression that began at around the same time; the number of retail liquor dealers relative to population did not reach its pre-Crusade level for at least a half-century thereafter.<sup>6</sup>

The Crusade was a nationwide movement (save the deep South) but was locally generated and regionally centered. Therefore my analysis proceeds on the national, state, and local levels. Ohio, which contained over one-third of reported Crusades and three-fifths of the Crusaders, furnishes the best state case study of the movement. Washington Court

5. See *Fredonia* (N.Y.) *Censor* (December 17, 1873); Matilda Gilruth Carpenter, *The Crusade: Its Origin and Development at Washington Court House and Its Results* (Columbus, Ohio: W. G. Hubbard & Co., 1893), pp. 35–36; *Christian Advocate* (New York) (May 7); *Philadelphia North American and United States Gazette* (March 6); *New York Tribune* (February 12).

6. The number of retail liquor dealers increased by 154 percent in the decade before the Crusade, while the U.S. population rose by only 23 percent. The largest annual increase occurred during 1872–73. Per capita consumption of beer rose from 4.4 gals. in 1866 to 7.0 gals. in 1873, the highest level up to that time. Per capita consumption of distilled liquor cannot be definitely established, but circumstantial evidence indicates a rising level in the decade preceding the Crusade (*Annual Report of the Commissioner of Internal Revenue, 1901* [Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1901], pp. 376–83, 431–33; Jack S. Blocker, Jr., "Why Women Marched: The Temperance Crusade of 1873–74" [paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Historical Association, New York, December 28, 1979]).

House, Ohio, the fourth town to engage in the Crusade and the first to achieve complete success, provides a local case study.

At a meeting of the Crusaders of Battle Creek, Michigan, in June 1874, one Crusader reported that "there was a misapprehension among some of the citizens with regard to the Woman's Suffrage movement being connected with the women's temperance work." Those attending the meeting thereupon instructed the secretary to issue a public statement "that although some of the members of the Temperance Society were also members of the Suffrage Association, the two societies are entirely distinct and their movements disconnected."<sup>7</sup> In an atmosphere highly charged by the suffrage issue, meeting such expectations from potential participants, supporters, and opponents probably became a typical experience for Crusaders.<sup>8</sup>

Also typical was the Battle Creek Crusaders' avoidance of the suffrage issue. Of the 911 reported Crusade groups, only one, in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, went on record for or against suffrage.<sup>9</sup> Crusaders in many states held statewide conventions, but in none was suffrage reported to have been an issue. Nor was it an issue at the founding convention of the national WCTU, which occurred in Cleveland in November 1874, and although subsequent national conventions debated the issue, no suffrage plank passed until 1881.<sup>10</sup> On the few occasions during 1873-74 when suffragists rose in Crusade meetings to announce the futility of proceeding without the ballot, they were ruled out of order or drowned out by the singing of hymns.<sup>11</sup>

Even though Crusaders avoided the suffrage issue, the Crusade was widely regarded, by both opponents and male supporters, as a movement for women's rights. Evaluations of the movement usually addressed its potential effects rather than its causes. No one in 1873-74, not even representatives of the liquor business, denied that intemperance was a great social evil and that women were the "greatest sufferers" since it was predominantly men who were intemperate. Instead, liquor-industry spokesmen pointed to the economic damage—loss of markets, jobs, and

7. Minutes of June 2 meeting, minute book, Battle Creek WCTU, Bentley Library, Michigan Historical Collections, Ann Arbor.

8. See, e.g., *Buffalo Commercial Advertiser* (January 30); *Xenia (Ohio) Torchlight* (March 4, 11); *Chicago Tribune* (March 17); *Woman's Journal* (Boston) (May 30).

9. The Allegheny County Crusaders passed a resolution advocating woman suffrage (Earl C. Kaylor, Jr., "The Prohibition Movement in Pennsylvania, 1865-1920" [Ph.D. diss., Pennsylvania State University, 1963], pp. 193-94).

10. On the suffrage debate within the WCTU, see Mary Earhart, *Frances Willard: From Prayers to Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1944), pp. 151-72.

11. In Indianapolis, see *Indianapolis Journal* (March 16), and *Woman's Journal* (Boston) (October 17); in Portland, Oregon, see Abigail Scott Duniway, *Path Breaking: An Autobiographical History of the Equal Suffrage Movement in the Pacific Coast States* (Portland, Oreg.: James, Kerns & Abbott, 1914), pp. 69-72.

tax revenues—that would result from reduction of their business. They also asserted their right to “personal liberty”—not the right to drink liquor but the right to sell it, the right “to pursue any honest calling or trade.”<sup>12</sup> Indeed, liquor-industry spokesmen in 1874 recognized no right to drink to excess, for they shifted the blame for intemperance from seller to consumer. This position and its consequences were outlined by Henry Clausen, president of the National Brewers’ Association: “Instead of condemning and prosecuting the saloon keeper, punish the drunkards; refuse to recognize them as gentlemen, debar them from all society, disfranchise them at the polls, condemn them to sweep the streets of your city with chain and ball fastened to their feet. Make drunkards criminals, but not the honest producers and purveyors of a necessity of life.”<sup>13</sup>

Other opponents of the Crusade perceived it as the opening shot of a women’s revolution. For them, marching on saloons represented an illegitimate means of seeking redress for women’s grievances, for such action usurped man’s sole right to make all important social and political decisions. Such usurpation, some felt, would inevitably lead to a reversal of power roles, with women dominant and men subordinate.<sup>14</sup> While utterances by male supporters of the Crusade rarely shared the apocalyptic quality of these last statements, they too revealed a belief that the Crusade would lead directly to the ballot for women (a development that at least some were prepared to welcome).<sup>15</sup>

Ardent suffragists held a different view, one conditioned by the history of the woman suffrage movement. Although the campaign for women’s rights had existed since 1848, only after the Civil War did some suffragists, led by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, wean themselves from the abolitionist movement, within which suffragism had developed, and from the Republican party, through which abolitionists now acted. The weaning process was greatly accelerated by the abolition-

12. Resolutions of the National Brewers’ Congress, published in *Cincinnati Enquirer* (June 5). For further statements by individuals and groups representing brewers, distillers, wholesalers, and retailers, see *Columbus Evening Dispatch* (March 10); *Cincinnati Gazette* (March 16, 18); *Cincinnati Enquirer* (March 18); *Detroit Daily Post* (May 8); *Boston Daily Advertiser* (June 4).

13. *Boston Daily Advertiser* (June 4).

14. *Cincinnati Enquirer* (January 5, February 23); *Nashville* (Tenn.) *Republican Banner* (February 7); *Buffalo Commercial Advertiser* (February 7); *Rochester* (N.Y.) *Union and Advertiser* (February 16, April 14, May 13); *Indianapolis Evening News* (February 24); *New York Tribune* (February 27); *Louisville Commercial* (February 27); *Columbus Evening Dispatch* (March 3); *Ohio State Journal* (Columbus) (March 7, 16); *Chicago Tribune* (March 17); *Chicago Times* (March 18); *Baltimore American and Commercial Advertiser* (March 26); *Akron Daily Beacon* (March 27); *Omaha Bee* (March 30); *Wheeling* (W. Va.) *Intelligencer* (April 7, 8); *Daily State Journal* (Lincoln, Nebr.) (April 12, 14; May 31); *Pittsburgh Post* (May 1).

15. *Detroit Daily Post* (February 13); *Xenia* (Ohio) *Torchlight* (March 4, 11); *Cincinnati Enquirer* (April 27).

ist and Republican decision to focus reform energies on passage of the Fifteenth Amendment enfranchising black men; the decision alienated some suffragists and split the suffrage movement. The founding of the National Woman Suffrage Association in 1869 marked the emergence of an independent women's movement, but neither this association nor its rival, the American Woman Suffrage Association, enrolled more than a tiny nucleus of those who would fill the movement's ranks after the turn of the century.<sup>16</sup>

By 1873-74, small bands of suffragists had made their cause an issue in state and national politics, although the movement lacked the strength to force the issue in its favor. During the Crusade, legislatures or constitutional conventions in at least nine states, as well as the U.S. Congress, were confronting the suffrage question, but none of their deliberations resulted in a suffrage victory.<sup>17</sup> In Ohio a proposal for a suffrage referendum had recently been defeated in the state legislature; nevertheless, the constitutional convention, which began in early 1873, considered the issue, then finally rejected a suffrage clause in April 1874.<sup>18</sup> Organizers from the Ohio Woman Suffrage Association had visited Washington Court House in March 1870, stimulating about thirty women to organize a local branch of the association, but the group left no record of its activities after August of the same year.<sup>19</sup>

Critical responses to the Crusade by suffragists were complex, but they generally fit a single pattern. Probably the most bitter public critic was Jane Grey Swisshelm, a lecturer and writer whose views were widely reported. To Swisshelm the Crusade was both unlawful (an invasion of the saloonkeeper's right to be free from intrusion) and hopeless. "Is it not better," she asked, "that women should submit to even so great a wrong as that of the liquor traffic . . . until they can devise and execute some other

16. Ellen Carol DuBois, *Feminism and Suffrage: The Emergence of an Independent Women's Movement in America, 1848-1869* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1978).

17. The nine states were Pennsylvania, Iowa, Michigan, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Maine, California, Missouri, and Ohio (*St. Louis Dispatch* [January 27]; *Portland [Maine] Eastern Argus* [February 11]; *San Francisco Chronicle* [February 19]; *New Haven [Conn.] Journal and Courier* [March 6, May 15]; *Illinois State Journal* [Springfield] [March 13]; *St. Louis Globe* [March 13]; *Cleveland Leader* [May 29]; Ira V. Brown, "The Woman's Rights Movement in Pennsylvania, 1848-1873," *Pennsylvania History* 32, no. 2 [April 1965]: 153-65).

18. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Matilda Joslyn Gage, *History of Woman Suffrage*, 6 vols. (Rochester, N.Y., and New York: Susan B. Anthony, 1881-1922), 3:492; Mary Marjorie Stanton, "The Woman Suffrage Movement in Ohio prior to 1910" (M.A. thesis, Ohio State University, 1947), pp. 13-16; J. G. Adel, *Official Report of the Proceedings and Debates of the Third Constitutional Convention of Ohio* (Cleveland: W. S. Robinson & Co., 1873-74), pp. 2800-2808; *Woman's Journal* (Boston) (October 24).

19. *Fayette County Herald* (Washington Court House, Ohio) (March 10, April 28, August 18, 1870); *Ohio State Register* (Washington Court House) (March 10, 24, 31; April 7; May 5, 1870).

road to reach it than one which leads directly across fundamental laws protecting the rights of all?"<sup>20</sup> She illustrated the movement's hopelessness by suggesting that "these women are re-enacting the part of the old sheep who knocked his own brains out butting a swinging mallet."<sup>21</sup> Elizabeth K. Churchill, a New England suffragist, added the charge that the Crusade placed women in an ignoble position. To see women on their knees before men pleading with them to abandon their business, she said, was pitiful; use of this degrading approach was a result of women having been taught that their influence was indirect, that it involved wheedling and cajoling.<sup>22</sup> Even Swisshelm and Churchill, however, expected beneficial results eventually since both women and men, they believed, would discover in the Crusade's appearance and inevitable failure reason to support the vote for women. Women would discover their powerlessness without the vote; temperance men would realize the strength of women's attraction to the cause.<sup>23</sup> Although the balance varied from speaker to speaker, a similar combination of denunciation and optimism marked the public response to the Crusade by prominent suffragists.

The American Woman Suffrage Association, as represented by Lucy Stone, her husband Henry Blackwell, and their publication, the *Woman's Journal*, took a more favorable view of the movement. Early on Blackwell endorsed the Crusade because it was a woman's movement and through it women were entering the public sphere. Most of all, however, he welcomed the Crusade because it would surely fail and by its failure convince women of their need for the vote in order to close the saloons.<sup>24</sup> But when the Cleveland convention created the WCTU without adopting a suffrage demand, Blackwell was baffled by the convention's action: "That women who feel themselves defrauded, by their exclusion from the franchise, of a God-given and inalienable right, should be goaded to extreme measures, is at least conceivable; but that women who are too conservative or too timid to desire a voice in the making of the laws which govern them, should have been moved to so marked a departure from the old paths, is to us, we confess, a puzzling enigma."<sup>25</sup>

Miriam M. Cole, president in 1873 of the Ohio Woman Suffrage Association, similarly pointed out the Crusaders' unconventionality: "A woman knocking out the head of a whiskey barrel with an axe, to the tune of Old Hundred, is not the ideal woman sitting on a sofa, dining on

20. *Chicago Tribune* (February 27).

21. *Atlanta Constitution* (March 10).

22. *Woman's Journal* (Boston) (March 28), reprinted from the *Providence Journal*.

23. For additional statements by Swisshelm, see *Cincinnati Commercial* (March 20), reprinted from the *Independent* (New York) and the *Cleveland Leader* (April 13).

24. *Woman's Journal* (Boston) (February 28, March 14). This was also Mary Livermore's position (see *Indianapolis Journal* [March 27]).

25. *Woman's Journal* (Boston) (December 5).



strawberries and cream, and sweetly warbling "The Rose that all are praising." But she too insisted, at a time when only one-fifth of the eventual number of Crusades had begun, that the movement could not be successful since women could not make the laws that alone could restrain "depraved passions and appetites."<sup>26</sup>

In her later recollections and in her private correspondence at the time, Susan B. Anthony excoriated the Crusade. "Those identified with the woman suffrage movement," she wrote in 1896, "had no sympathy with what they felt to be a desecration of womanhood and of the religious element in woman." The Crusaders' hopeless faith was "pitiful." Women, in fact, were partly responsible for drunkenness because of their consenting "to make licentious, drunken men the fathers of their children."<sup>27</sup> Her biographer claimed that Anthony had lectured the Rochester Crusaders on the futility of their efforts. "I am always glad," she is reported to have told them, "to welcome every association of women for any good purpose, because I know that they will quickly learn the impossibility of accomplishing any substantial end."<sup>28</sup>

Contemporary records, however, reveal that Anthony responded somewhat more sympathetically than later statements indicated. Anthony attended at least five Crusade meetings in Rochester between March 30 and April 23, 1874. Strongly influenced by clergymen and deterred by a dense concentration of liquor outlets and bitter opposition from a local newspaper, the Rochester women conducted a relatively tame movement, limiting their efforts to a petition campaign against liquor license renewals. At a meeting on April 6, Anthony tried to turn them in a more militant direction by introducing a veteran Crusader from Albany who urged the women to abandon the petition campaign in favor of street marches. Although these suggestions were rejected, Anthony continued to attend meetings.<sup>29</sup> Her efforts may have been prompted merely by a desire to demonstrate to the Crusaders that even a militant attack on the saloons was useless without the vote. But since it was a women's movement against an enemy Anthony described as "the great demon that desolates [women's] homes," she may have felt at the same time a desire to see the movement succeed.<sup>30</sup> Certainly she did not act as if she felt "no sympathy" for the Crusade.

As usual, Elizabeth Cady Stanton formulated the suffragists' most

26. *Woman's Journal* (Boston) (February 21).

27. Stanton et al. (n. 18 above), 3:500; Ida Husted Harper, *The Life and Work of Susan B. Anthony*, 3 vols. (Indianapolis: Hollenbeck Press, 1898), 1:457.

28. Harper, 1:457.

29. *Rochester* (N.Y.) *Union and Advertiser* (March 26–June 1); see also the entries for March 24, 30; April 1, 6, 13, 19, 23, Susan B. Anthony diary, Susan B. Anthony Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

30. Harper, 1:457.

thorough and reasoned statement. She delivered it first as a lecture to the Radical Club of Philadelphia on February 26, 1874; excerpts were widely quoted in both the pro- and antisuffragist press. Like other suffragists, she welcomed the Crusade as a public activity by women, agreed with the Crusaders' picture of the damages inflicted by intemperance, and added that if the movement were to succeed, general rejoicing should follow. But then Stanton took a new tack, pushing further Swisshelm's claim that the Crusade was unlawful. "This 'whisky war,' as now waged," she said, "is mob law, nothing more nor less, and neither church influence, psalms nor prayers can sanctify it. Though we may wink at mob law in a good cause, we are educating the people to use it in a bad one." Reminded of the use of mobs in the American Revolution, Stanton asserted a quantitative difference between the Revolution and the Crusade: "When laws and customs are so oppressive as to be no longer endured; when resistance is general so as to carry everything before it, then a movement rises to the dignity of a revolution; anything short of this is mob law, and, in the end, does more harm than good." She closed by arguing that the vote was the only sure and lawful means to eradicate the liquor business.<sup>31</sup>

Stanton may not have been entirely comfortable with this stand, however. After all, if women were threatened by the activities of liquor sellers, how could one oppose a direct approach to those sellers? Indeed Stanton herself, only a few years before, had seemed to advocate a woman's temperance strategy quite similar to that adopted by the Crusaders: "In temperance woman will not I think theorize and violate individual freedom & responsibility by saying that a man shall not buy, or sell, a drink, but they will deal directly with drunkenness and with public drinking dens, closing up the latter as nuisances. . . . My interpretation of woman's method in dealing with public conflicts, where there are good elements in both sides is reconciliation, but where there is unpardonable or unmitigated wrong *direct* action."<sup>32</sup> But speaking publicly in 1874, Stanton the radical agreed with the suffragist maverick Swisshelm and the moderate Blackwell that suffrage was the only effective remedy for intemperance.

To the women who marched to meet an immediate threat from rising alcohol consumption and proliferating liquor dealers, such advice represented a prescription for continued suffering. In order to persuade them, Stanton had to show that their apparently successful marches were not only unlawful but also likely to be futile. She attempted to do so by asserting that the Crusade aimed itself at the wrong target. Temperance

31. *Philadelphia Inquirer* (February 26). Stanton's address was reprinted in the *Woman's Journal* (Boston) (March 21).

32. Undated speech (ca. 1872), in Scrapbook, 1870-78, Elizabeth Cady Stanton Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

societies, she said, erred in "cuddling drunkards; excusing their crimes and bestiality." Although their movement focused on the retail dealer, Crusaders recognized the drinker's role in intemperance and sometimes preceded or accompanied their marches with circulation of a total-abstinence pledge. Stanton, in contrast, suggested a remedy only marginally less sweeping and coercive than that later advocated by Henry Clausen of the National Brewers' Association. Drunkards, she said, "should be treated as criminals; taken to the public jails and kept there where they could not do themselves or anyone else any harm."<sup>33</sup>

Besides undercutting the Crusaders' marches, blaming the drinker was advantageous for Stanton because it explained why drinking had survived the existing legal restrictions on liquor sellers. For the Crusaders, however, blaming the drinker held different meanings. For one, it implicated mothers for their apparent failure to guide their sons from the bottle. And, for wives and daughters, jailing drinkers simply removed the primary source of family support.

Given suffragist claims that the Crusade was both illegal and futile and that suffrage was the only true remedy for intemperance, Stanton had to explain why thousands of women chose to march for temperance while only hundreds campaigned for suffrage. Previously, suffragists could see women outside their organizations as the unreached or the timid. But the militant action of the Crusaders, together with the extensive public debate over women's place that it provoked, undercut this analysis. Stanton addressed the Crusaders' indifference toward the vote in an article published by the *Woman's Journal* in April 1874. Basically, she argued, the cause lay in men's control over women. While men would countenance and even support women's activities that did not attack their privileges, they were always prepared to oppose women's movements that threatened to seek equality. The mass of Crusaders, knowing this, in effect purchased men's support for their movement by avoiding the issue of women's rights. "All kinds of slaves," Stanton wrote, "seem to have a blind instinct, compounded of ignorance and hypocrisy, that teaches them just how to please their masters."<sup>34</sup>

Suffragists, then, were both fascinated and repelled by the appearance of this vigorous new sister. The fascination was no doubt provoked by the Crusade's success in rallying so many women to launch "so marked a departure from the old paths." Some suffragists improved on Anthony's example by taking active and sometimes leading roles in the

33. *Detroit Daily Post* (March 27). The temperance movement had long since abandoned a belief in the responsibility of the drunkard (see Harry Gene Levine, "The Discovery of Addiction: Changing Conceptions of Habitual Drunkenness in America," *Journal of Studies on Alcohol* 39, no. 1 [1978]: 143-74).

34. *Woman's Journal* (Boston) (April 18).

Crusade. Suffragist participation was particularly evident in Michigan, where officers of the state woman suffrage association helped to lead Crusades in Adrian and Jackson and where Hillsdale Crusaders sent an official delegation to the state suffrage convention.<sup>35</sup> In Des Moines, Iowa, Lizzie Boynton Harbert, dress reformer and president of the county woman suffrage society, played a leading role in the organization of the local Crusade.<sup>36</sup> In Ohio, suffragists Eliza Daniel Stewart (a founder of the Ohio State Equal Rights Society), Sarah Knowles Bolton, and Martha McClellan Brown served as Crusade missionaries, and Stewart noted that other suffragists were among the first Crusaders in her hometown of Springfield.<sup>37</sup> Rebecca Anne Smith Janney, a leading Ohio suffragist and coordinator of the suffrage petition campaign to the constitutional convention of 1873, presided at the first organizational meeting of the Columbus Crusade and later helped reorganization efforts behind the scenes. She could not take a more active part because she was recovering from an injury, but her daughters Anna and Frances marched, Anna as a leader of one of the "praying bands."<sup>38</sup> In Washington Court House, of the eight publicly identified officers and members of the suffrage association, six became Crusaders.

These suffragist Crusaders did not hide their suffrage commitment, but neither did they seek to commit the Crusade publicly to the cause of equal rights.<sup>39</sup> Rebecca Janney told Henry Blackwell that this course was deliberate:

I do not approve of saying anything about suffrage publicly in connection with the prayer movement—but privately the subject is frequently discussed—and many are ready for it—indeed I shall not be surprised if there should be women who will pledge themselves to go to the polls and canvass for the anti-license ticket. . . . It really

35. *Detroit Daily Post* (May 4, 7). See also the clipping dated March 24 from the Adrian newspaper, in the scrapbook in the Sarah E. Turner Papers, Bentley Library, Michigan Historical Collections, Ann Arbor.

36. *Iowa State Register* (Des Moines) (February 7, March 14).

37. Stanton et al. (n. 18 above), 3:492, 494; Mother (Eliza Daniel) Stewart, *Memories of the Crusade, a Thrilling Account of the Great Uprising of the Women of Ohio in 1873, Against the Liquor Crime* (Chicago, Philadelphia, Kansas City, and Oakland, Calif.: H. J. Smith & Co., [1888] 1890), pp. 124–28; *Cleveland Leader* (February 28).

38. Jane Grey Swisshelm to Rebecca Anne Smith Janney, January 19, 1872; Frances Dana Gage to Janney, February 4, 1872; Janney to H. B. Blackwell, n.d. (ca. late March or early April 1874), all in Janney Family Papers, Ohio Historical Society, Columbus; *Columbus Evening Dispatch* (March 2, 18).

39. Mrs. Norman Geddes, a Crusade leader in Adrian, Michigan, made her suffrage views clear at a Crusade mass meeting (see the March 24 clipping in the scrapbook in the Sarah E. Turner Papers). Sarah Bolton's letter arguing for suffrage was published in the *Cleveland Leader* on February 28 (see Sarah K. Bolton, *Sarah K. Bolton, Pages from an Intimate Autobiography*, Edited by Her Son [Boston: Thomas Todd & Co., 1923], p. 50).

seems to me that nothing short of the street praying movement will arouse the apathy and indifference among men—which has permitted that [ ] element to get into power. We have to take things as they are—and stand in the way of no one who steps forward in the fulfillment of a known duty. Seeing the effects and results of the movement upon women themselves, as I have done, I always feel pained when I see anything from the pens of our prominent women suffragists in condemnation.<sup>40</sup>

The congruence of Crusade activity with a suffrage commitment was clear in the novel written by Sarah Bolton during the winter of 1873–74, entitled *The Present Problem: A Temperance Story*.<sup>41</sup> When she began the book the Crusade had probably not yet begun, and she conceived of “the present problem” as one of women’s rights. In the first three-quarters of the book, Bolton uses fiction to advise women to pursue individuality and careers—through sacrifice—and to reject vanity and worldliness. The book then breaks abruptly into a description of the Crusade, which directly reflects Bolton’s own activity in organizing and leading Crusades throughout northern Ohio. This section ends with a thinly veiled argument for suffrage, before the final two chapters provide a conclusion to the original story.

Participation in the Crusade by these suffragists was possible because an area of agreement existed between the two movements. Not only were both movements by and for women, but both also asserted women’s right to be active in the public sphere. Suffragism did this explicitly, through the demand for the vote, and the Crusade did so implicitly, through independent action by women. The Crusaders’ marches, undertaken in the face of hostile crowds and violent resistance by liquor dealers and their supporters, represented an attempt to exercise the right to participate in public affairs, which suffragists sought to gain by other means. To be sure, the Crusaders acted in the public sphere for a specific purpose, but they did not respond to criticism from opponents of women’s rights by offering to circumscribe either the grounds for or the forms of women’s activism. In some cases Crusaders even engaged, insofar as they could, in formal political activity; at least sixty-one Crusades in thirteen states included participation in elections or referendum campaigns. In these campaigns Crusaders nominated candidates, canvassed, and, where permitted, cast ballots.<sup>42</sup> Granted, only a small minority of Crusades

40. Janney to Blackwell, n.d. (ca. late March or early April 1874), Janney Family Papers.

41. Sarah K. Bolton, *The Present Problem: A Temperance Story* (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1874). See also Bolton, *Sarah K. Bolton . . .*, pp. 51–52.

42. *Ohio State Journal* (Columbus) (April 15); *Iowa State Register* (Des Moines) (March 3); *Daily State Journal* (Lincoln, Nebr.) (April 12); *Woman’s Journal* (Boston) (April 18).

employed formal political action (less than 10 percent of those whose tactics are known), and they usually did so when other means, such as pledge or petition circulation and marching on saloons, had failed. But its use suggests that Crusaders had no objection in principle to exercising the rights that suffragists demanded. This area of agreement on women's public role attracted some suffragists; led others, although critical, to welcome the movement; and gave substance to opponents' warnings that the Crusade was attacking male privilege.

But despite suffragists' sympathy for women threatened by male drinking, their willingness to support other women seeking relief and redress, and their readiness to undertake militant action, suffragists ultimately found the Crusade inadequate because it did not acknowledge what they saw as the necessity for women to wield the ballot in order to bring about significant or lasting social change. The more prominent the suffragist, the greater her tendency to emphasize this point. But even Rebecca Janney, who cooperated with the Crusade, hoped that eventually the temperance advocates would come around to suffragism and advised discretion about the Crusade's defects as a means to that end. The official statement of the National Woman Suffrage Association on the Crusade clearly expressed the general suffrage view: "*Resolved*, that we rejoice to see the growing feeling of responsibility for the public good among women, as shown by their recent movements in the temperance cause; and aside from success or failure of this crusade, we welcome their action as a means of rousing women to a sense of their helpless condition and their need of the ballot as a moral power to coin their prayers and tears into law."<sup>43</sup> In this statement could be found all three major elements of the suffragist response: basic sympathy; confidence, despite the disclaimer, that the Crusade would fail (if the movement succeeded, women's condition would not be "helpless"); and their essential belief in the power of the ballot.

This faith in the power of the ballot may seem exaggerated from a post-1920 perspective, but, as Ellen DuBois has shown, it was an appropriate response among those who wished to liberate nineteenth-century women from the specific conditions facing them. Confinement to the domestic sphere was the principal means by which women were oppressed, and the demand for the vote explicitly challenged their exclusion from the public sphere. Suffragists believed that women voting could also "break open new occupations, raise the level of their wage scales to that of men, win strikes, and force reforms in marriage and family law."<sup>44</sup>

43. *New York Tribune* (May 15).

44. Ellen DuBois, "The Radicalism of the Woman Suffrage Movement: Notes Toward the Reconstruction of Nineteenth-Century Feminism," *Feminist Studies* 3, no. 1/2 (Fall 1975): 63-71.

In addition, enfranchisement of black men had been both the crowning achievement of the abolition movement, which had fostered suffragism, and the event that precipitated creation of an independent women's movement. Black suffrage, in place less than four years at the time of the Crusade, was a powerful symbol of acceptance in American society, although white opposition limited its long-term effectiveness.

In demonstrating the radicalism of the suffrage movement, DuBois, like Epstein and Bordin, presents temperance workers as conservative women, concerned more with protecting their position within the family than with asserting women's right to participate as individuals in the public sphere. As their justification for the movement shows, the Crusaders considered the welfare of their families to be important, but their actions demonstrate that this concern was not antithetical to a willingness to act in the public sphere. Most Crusaders were not suffragists, but this does not necessarily mean that they disagreed with suffragists on the need for women's emancipation. Instead, Crusaders may have rejected suffragists' advice to seek the ballot because of a tactical disagreement over the most effective means to bring about social change. This hypothesis can be explored by examining further the contrasting views of Crusaders and suffragists toward the use of law.

Faith in the power of the ballot created a blind spot when suffragists confronted the issue of using state power. Consider Swisshelm's and Stanton's charge that the Crusade was "mob law" and the marches a road "which leads directly across fundamental laws protecting the rights of all." In fact, the legal status of the Crusaders' actions was never definitely established in the courts, partly because complaining liquor dealers' requests for injunctions were impaired by their own ongoing violations of law. In some cities, such as Portland, Oregon, Crusaders were successfully prosecuted for disturbing the peace, but in others, such as Pittsburgh, the same charges were quickly thrown out on appeal.<sup>45</sup> Some municipalities threatened the women with enforcement of ordinances against obstruction of streets and sidewalks, but others found they had to pass new ordinances in order to penalize the marchers.<sup>46</sup> Furthermore, the legal status of the Crusade was particularly unclear during the early stages, when Swisshelm and Stanton pronounced it unlawful. By that time, however, it clearly was a movement that sought to attack the liquor business without using the law. The suffragist charge of illegality seems to have been made not because the marching women had broken the law but

45. Frances Fuller Victor, *The Women's War with Whisky; or, Crusading in Portland* (Portland, Oreg.: G. H. Himes, 1874); *Portland Oregonian* (April 2-8, 17-23); *Pacific Christian Advocate* (Portland, Oreg.) (April 9, 23); *Pittsburgh Post* (May 22-30); Kaylor (n. 9 above), pp. 201-2.

46. See *Cincinnati Enquirer* (March 31, May 16, 21); *Cleveland Plain Dealer* (March 21); *Cincinnati Commercial* (May 6); *Daily State Journal* (Lincoln, Nebr.) (April 17).

because they deliberately ignored its potential either to help or to hurt them.

Suffragists' faith in the ballot appears to have brought with it a belief in the ability of law to effect social change. This belief probably prevented suffragists from perceiving the Crusaders' actions as deliberately chosen in response to the Crusaders' own contrasting experience with the exercise of state power. From the perspective of temperance workers, that experience was not a happy one. Local prohibition through nonlicensing had long been a goal, but by 1850 failures had convinced temperance advocates to turn to statewide prohibition. During the 1850s, prohibition had been enacted by thirteen states, but by 1873 it remained on the statute books in only four.<sup>47</sup> Of the four, enforcement had broken down completely in Michigan, which in 1873 supported an army of retail liquor dealers (6.6 per 1,000 population); in New Hampshire, with 4.8 dealers per 1,000 population, the force of law could not have been much more effective. The remaining prohibition states, Vermont and Maine, contained fewer retail outlets—2.2 and 1.8 per 1,000 population, respectively—but after twenty legally dry years clearly neither had managed to suppress the liquor business.<sup>48</sup>

In Ohio, state law had prohibited the sale of distilled liquors by the drink for twenty-two years before the Crusade, but in 1873 all but 2 percent of Ohio's 13,243 retail liquor dealers paid a higher federal tax rate that enabled them to furnish distilled spirits as well as beer.<sup>49</sup> In Washington Court House, a form of local prohibition had been legally adopted three times within the lifetime of most Crusaders, most recently in 1869. Yet in 1873 the town of 2,117 persons supported fourteen retail liquor dealers, and several more lurked just beyond the edge of the village, waiting for a sudden increase in law enforcement that would send local drinkers across the village boundaries. In Washington Court House, and in many other towns as well, the ballot had been used again and again to strike down the liquor business, yet liquor sales flourished in 1873 as they had not done for two generations.

Not only had law failed to control the drink trade, but the nature of its failure also suggested that the power of law to effect social change was limited indeed. In 1874, the most obvious recent example of the use of law in the interest of temperance was statewide prohibition, or the Maine Laws, passed during the 1850s, most of which were repealed or struck down by the courts during the late 1850s and the 1860s. Historians have

47. See Ian R. Tyrrell, *Sobering Up: From Temperance to Prohibition in Antebellum America, 1800–1860* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1979), pp. 225–315.

48. *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Internal Revenue, 1873* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1873).

49. *Ibid.*



long believed that the decline of prohibition after the mid-1850s was caused by the shift of public attention to the deepening sectional conflict. But Ian Tyrrell has shown instead that the Maine Laws discredited themselves because they were difficult to enforce, they provoked widespread resistance, and they consequently tended to produce rather than reduce social disorder.<sup>50</sup> The failure of the Maine Laws alienated many temperance supporters, and those who remained with the movement either downplayed the failure of prohibition or argued that law could succeed in controlling the liquor business if enforced by a party in power committed to that purpose; the latter line of argument led to the founding of the Prohibition party in 1869. In light of the failure of the Maine Laws and the impossibility of disenfranchised women's playing an important part in campaigns, Prohibitionists should not have been surprised (although they were) when the Crusaders generally refused to endorse prohibition.<sup>51</sup>

Although the WCTU at its founding convention avoided the prohibition and woman suffrage issues, by 1881 the organization had come to support both. By that time the WCTU was no longer a narrowly focused temperance organization; it was well on its way to becoming a general purpose women's reform organization whose policy was, "Do everything."<sup>52</sup> Although new women had been attracted by the new policies, the organization still included some former Crusade participants. Those Crusaders who joined the WCTU, however, did not represent either a majority or a cross section of all Crusaders. For some, the Crusade strategy had worked, and they had been able through their own actions to reduce or eliminate the retail liquor business in their communities. Others had been unable to achieve success, generally because they did not recruit enough women to overcome entrenched liquor sellers supported by community opinion. These latter women were the ones who were most likely to form permanent temperance organizations.<sup>53</sup> Because for them

50. Tyrrell, *Sobering Up*, pp. 290–315.

51. With the substitution of prohibition for woman suffrage, the resolution on the Crusade passed by the Ohio Prohibition Party Convention of 1874 was strikingly similar to that passed by the National Woman Suffrage Association (*Delaware [Ohio] Signal* [March 10]).

52. See Bordin (n. 3 above).

53. In 58.4 percent of the 226 Crusade towns for which information is available, Crusaders achieved some degree of independent success (i.e., the number of retail liquor dealers was reduced through their actions alone). But only 42.4 percent of women's temperance leagues formed as a result of the Crusade were organized in these communities. In 175 Ohio Crusade towns, Crusaders won independent success in 60 percent; but only 45.1 percent of women's temperance leagues were organized in those towns. These figures are drawn from a data file constructed using the survey of newspaper reports on the Crusade. In Washington Court House, only 48 of the 151 Crusaders joined the women's temperance league organized in July 1874. When the Ohio WCTU was organized in June 1874, only 134

the Crusade's strategy had failed, they were receptive to the urgings of suffragists like Frances Willard, WCTU president after 1879, that they seek both to make and to use law on women's behalf.

The Women's Temperance Crusade raised two issues, and the relations between Crusaders and suffragists cannot be fully comprehended without understanding the positions of both groups on both issues. The first issue was women's right to participate in public affairs: on this issue a large area of agreement existed, which explains why some suffragists found it possible to cooperate with the Crusaders. The second issue was the way in which use of beverage alcohol was to be subject to public control. For Stanton and other suffragists it was essential to employ the law. Their insistence on this point came from their faith in the power of the ballot, which was confirmed for them by the apparent success of black enfranchisement. That success, however, was more symbolic than practical. The Crusaders needed immediate practical results—closing retail liquor outlets to stop the rising tide of alcohol use. For them, the most relevant example was the earlier attempts at prohibition, in which the use of state power proved futile. Because of these disagreements over the use of the law, not because they differed over women's right of access to the public sphere, Crusaders and suffragists traveled separate paths toward protecting the interests of women.

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of the 356 or more Ohio Crusade towns were represented (Carpenter [n. 5 above], pp. 198–99; manuscript minute books of the Ohio Woman's Christian Temperance Union, 2 vols., OWCTU Headquarters, Columbus, Ohio, 1:95–96).