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African American Women and the Women's Suffrage Movement in Knoxville, TN

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AFRICAN-AMERICAN WOMEN AND THE WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT IN KNOXVILLE, TN

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An Abstract of the Thesis by
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During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and despite the fact that white women often discriminated against them, African-American women across the United States worked to obtain voting rights for all women. Nationally, black women used the African-American club movement and their experiences in benevolent societies to advocate for women's suffrage. However, a widespread and thriving club movement did not always lead to suffrage activities. In Knoxville, Tennessee, there is no evidence that the clubwomen participated in the suffrage movement. This thesis outlines the specific social conditions and the delicate balance of race relations that caused Knoxville's black clubwomen to avoid suffrage work. They did not want to mar their reputations or stir up controversy that would harm African-Americans' progress in Knoxville by openly associating themselves with the women's suffrage movement.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: RACE AND THE WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT

The fight for women's suffrage in the United States was a long and storied battle, affected by social conventions and individual personalities. Different socio-economic groups approached suffrage struggles from their own specific angles, colored by their own outlooks and interests. The first analyses of the women's suffrage movement tended to focus on elite women's involvement. The elite left plenty of records for historians; they kept diaries and wrote letters, and newspaper articles often featured their activities. The first women's historians generally did not analyze marginalized socio-economic groups' reactions to, and involvement in, the suffrage movement. It was not until the 1980s that historians began to account for African-American women's involvement in suffrage. Even then, those historians tended to focus on elite black women's activities in the national movement. The everyday African-American woman's suffrage work and her reactions to national events are just now making an appearance in historical research. This thesis works to fill a historical gap in explaining how African-American women from different locations in the South reacted to the national suffrage movement and how specific social conditions affected their work.

It is not surprising that historians only began to examine African-American women's local suffrage work in the late 20th century, as women's history and African-

American history are new fields in comparison to other forms of historical investigation. In 1959, Eleanor Flexnor produced the first major analytical history of the women's suffrage movement.[1] Flexnor described women's social history from the colonial era up through the suffrage movement and outlined the difficult and tedious nature of the fight for suffrage. She claimed that changes in family and work structure contributed to the rise of the suffrage movement, arguing that as more women began to work outside of the home, they saw a need to influence public policy in order to protect their own interests.[2] Flexnor claimed that by the 20th century, suffrage had become a popular movement that crossed class divisions. However, she did not account for African-American women among these divisions, as she claimed that black women chose to fight racism rather than for suffrage, nor did she acknowledge the large percentage of black women who had always worked outside of their homes.[3]

Nineteen-seventies historians Anne Firor Scott and Andrew M. Scott reinterpreted the struggle, arguing that social factors in the 19th century contributed to women's belief that they deserved the vote; one of these factors was the deconstruction of barriers to the franchise for an increasing percentage of the male population. As women began to participate in temperance and mission work during the Second Great Awakening, they began to believe that in order to achieve their objectives and serve their communities, they needed to be able to vote for representatives who would champion their causes.

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[1] Eleanor Flexnor, *Century of Struggle: The Woman's Rights Movement in the United States* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1975), xi.

[2] Ibid., 223.

[3] Ibid., 25; Rosalyn Terborg-Penn, *African-American Women in the Struggle for the Vote, 1850-1920* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1998), 3-4, 9-10.

Furthermore, as increasing numbers of women moved into the workforce during the Industrial Revolution, they felt a need to participate in politics in order to protect women workers' rights. Despite the fact that the social climate was ripe for women's suffrage in the 19th century, the Scotts claim that women's suffrage was controversial because people believed that it would disrupt the social hierarchy.[4] In general, women's historians of the 1970s did not discuss African-American women's work in the suffrage movement because they, like Flexnor before them, claimed that black women did not participate in suffrage work. When they did discuss African-Americans, they tended to focus on black men as hindrances to the women's suffrage movement. More recent historians claim that historians of the 1970s believed that black men were impediments to women's suffrage. Scholars in the 1970s made that claim because suffragists themselves often cited black men as their adversaries when in reality, the relationship between African-Americans and white women in the equal rights movements was complex and not easily summarized.[5]

In the 1980s, historian Aileen Kraditor claimed that a unified motivation or ideology did not exist in the suffrage movement. Each suffrage advocate had personal reasons for believing in women's right to vote.[6] Because each woman had her own agenda concerning suffrage, the national movement was willing to pander to women's individual interests in order to gain supporters. This was especially true of the national movement's relationship with southern women in the early 20th century. Kraditor argued

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[4] Anne Firor Scott and Andrew M. Scott, *One Half the People: The Fight for Woman Suffrage* (Philadelphia and New York: Lippincott, 1975), 6-8, 9.

[5] Terborg-Penn, 3-4, 9-10.

[6] Aileen Kraditor, *The Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement 1890-1920* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1981), xi.

that the National American Woman Suffrage Association was willing to abandon its historical ties to abolition, a movement that initiated many women into public social work. Though their work in the equal rights movement had allowed women to see the social discrimination that they also faced, in order to appeal to southerners who did not want to associate themselves with African-American causes, the NAWSA forsook the interests of African-American women.[7]

Historians of the 1990s began to discuss women who were active in the anti-suffrage movement. Previously, most historians assumed that only men were Antis, since in an attempt to boost the legitimacy of the movement, suffragists themselves had claimed that men were their only adversaries.[8] It would have been counterproductive to the suffrage movement to acknowledge that there were women who did not want the vote. An example of these new analyses of women in the anti-suffrage movement, Jane Camhi's work reveals that socio-economic class affected suffrage activity, as elite women tended to be anti-suffragists and sometimes led the Anti movement.[9] Antis rallied in reaction to both national and local suffrage activities, and they were often successful at stalling suffrage legislation in local government.[10] Historian Susan Marshall claims that elite Anti-women fought suffrage because they believed it would strip them of the indirect political power that was unique to women of their socio-

[7] Ibid., xiv.

[8] Jane Camhi. *Women against Women: American Anti-Suffragism, 1880-1920* (Brooklyn: Carlson Publishing, 1994), xi -1.

[9] Ibid., 1-3.

[10] Ibid.

economic class. If all women had the right to vote, upper class women, who were often married to community leaders whom they could influence, would no longer benefit from that power.[11]

In addition to a more careful investigation of the Antis, 1990s historians also took into account the history of marginalized groups in the women's suffrage movement. Rosalyn Terborg-Penn argued that, though past historians such as Eleanor Flexnor claimed that black women chose to fight racism rather than fight for suffrage, the two causes were not mutually exclusive.[12] According to Terborg-Penn, black women both joined the national suffrage movement, despite the segregation and discrimination they often found there, and developed their own suffrage tactics.[13]

Though the national women's suffrage movement often excluded black women from many of its activities, it began with a special relationship with African-Americans. Women abolitionists, who saw parallels between slavery and their own lack of civil rights and freedoms, started the women's suffrage movement. These women resented that men did not allow them to participate fully in abolitionist conferences. Thus, abolitionist women began to advocate for their own rights as well as the rights of slaves.

Facing discrimination both because of their sex and because of race, black women had varied responses to the fight for women's suffrage. Some of them believed the right to vote would be liberating for black women, but they did not directly advocate for it

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[11] Susan Marshall, *Splintered Sisterhood: Gender and Class in the Campaign against Woman Suffrage* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1997), 5.

[12] Terborg-Penn, 3-4.

[13] Ibid., 3-4, 9-10.

because they had bigger concerns, such as racial discrimination and violence. In addition, white women often excluded them from the mainstream suffrage movement. Others were too concerned with their daily trials and tribulations to have time to advocate for suffrage. Though there were many black women leaders who came out in support of women's suffrage across the nation, the movement affected black women in small towns and rural areas differently than it did leaders in large cities.

Many black women in the late 19th and early 20th century did not leave recorded thoughts on suffrage. At the very least, few records exist in open archives. However, the few available archived records do suggest the reasons why they did or did not participate in the suffrage movement and what they believed suffrage could do for their communities. Understanding the mainstream suffrage movement and its racial attitudes as well as African-American women's communities is key to understanding the framework in which African-American women worked.

Knoxville, Tennessee is an interesting case study for race relations and suffrage struggles in the late 19th and early 20th centuries because it did not follow patterns seen in other towns across the South. Having never been a major agricultural area, there were not many slaves in East Tennessee before the Civil War.[14] Though whites did discriminate against African-Americans, a small black population combined with the lack of a history of widespread slavery presented the appearance of better race relations than in other places in the South during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Both whites and blacks in the early 20th century claimed that Knoxville could boast of relatively good race

[14] Robert J. Booker, *Two Hundred Years of Black Culture in Knoxville, Tennessee: 1791-1991* (Virginia Beach: The Donning Company Publishers, 1993), 13.

relations. However, there was still underlying racial tension, which is critical to any study of the region's black activism.

The unique race relations in Knoxville affected the way that African-Americans interacted with the broader community, including attempts to better their own circumstances. Middle class African-Americans in Knoxville were active in social and religious work and were dedicated to helping those who needed assistance. Despite evidence that black women in Knoxville were interested in suffrage, indications of their open activity in the movement are few. This is curious since black women were active in other social betterment societies such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union.[15] Lizzie Crozier French, a white leader of the women's suffrage movement in Knoxville, kept an exhaustive collection of local public documents that discussed women's suffrage. French's papers contain one program from an African-American women's club meeting listing women's suffrage as a discussion topic.[16] Other than that, French's papers do not mention any suffrage activism among African-American women in the community. In 1942, Dr. Mattie Coleman, a black leader in Tennessee during the suffrage movement, told local suffrage historian A. Elizabeth Taylor that there was no organized black suffrage participation in Tennessee.[17]

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[15] Grace Leab, "Tennessee Temperance Activities, 1870-1899," *The East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications* 21 (1949): 61.

[16] Lizzie Crozier French, "Lizzie Crozier French Scrapbook," C.M. McClung Historical Collection, Knox County Public Library, Knoxville, TN.

[17]Anita Shafer Goodstein, "A Rare Alliance: African-American and White Women in the Tennessee Elections of 1919 and 1920," The *Journal of Southern History* 64, no. 2 (May 1998): 246.

Though there may be many other reasons for a lack of black women's participation in the suffrage movement in other areas of Tennessee, when analyzing Knoxville's race relations within the context of the broader women's suffrage movement and national African-American social betterment societies, it becomes apparent that certain factors affected black women's lack of suffrage participation. White women often prevented black women from joining their suffrage groups, and the controversial nature of women's suffrage that might mar black women's reputations most likely prevented them from creating their organizations. In an area where race relations appeared to be relatively good and where blacks saw themselves making social advances, black women could not risk stepping out of line and participating in a controversial movement that might inflame racial tensions and produce setbacks for the black community.

The second chapter of this thesis, "A Short History of Women's Suffrage," discusses the origins of the suffrage movement. It provides a background of the national suffrage movement and prominent activists. This chapter analyzes what caused divisions within the national movement.

The third chapter of this thesis, "Those Who Oppose," examines how race relations came into play in the national women's suffrage movement and their contributions to the anti-suffrage movement. It analyzes those who opposed suffrage and the Anti ideology.

The fourth chapter of this thesis, "African-American Women and the Club Movement," is an examination of the African-American women's club movement nationally and in Tennessee. It reveals why African-American women began founding

clubs and why they kept white women from participating in those clubs. Furthermore, it explains how club involvement allowed black women to work for the betterment of their society and their social and political goals, including suffrage.

The fifth chapter, "A Delicate Balance," reveals the status of race relations in Tennessee in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It examines local race relations and the how those relations affected black women's involvement in social movements. Local documents from Knoxville reveal how the black community related to the white community in the area.

CHAPTER II

A SHORT HISTORY OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

It is important to know the national context concerning the women's suffrage movement in order to understand the position of African-American women in the South. The women's suffrage movement was a prolonged battle that both included individuals who fought for equal rights for all and had moments of racial tension. African-American women took on different roles throughout the long history of the movement and which role they embodied depended on the era and location in which they lived. The background of the suffrage movement provides the context for African-American women in Knoxville's lack of obvious participation in the women's suffrage movement.

Though many prominent women, such as Abigail Adams and Mary Wollstonecraft, had long advocated women's rights, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott helped initiate a women's suffrage movement when they issued the Declaration of Sentiments at the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention. Though controversial even among women's rights advocates, the Declaration of Sentiments included a demand for women's suffrage. The fact that many suffrage leaders were abolitionists allowed a special relationship to develop between the fight against slavery and for women's rights. However, after the Civil War, Congress passed the 14th and 15th Amendments, which promised fundamental rights, including the franchise, for all men, no matter race, but

excluded women. This caused some women, such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, to feel abandoned in the fight for equal rights. They split from their abolitionist friends, whom they believed had put African-American rights before women's rights. Stanton and Anthony formed the National Woman Suffrage Association in 1869 in response to the debates over the 14th and 15th amendments. They believed that African-American men and their proponents abandoned women in the fight for equal rights because those individuals argued that Congress would not pass the 14th and 15th amendments if the amendments included equal rights for women and it was expedient for black men to receive equal rights in order to function in society. Those who advocated for expediency believed that women's inclusion in the amendments would prove to be too much social change for conservative congressmen who thought that giving women the franchise would threaten their traditional roles of mothers and homemakers. [18] After forming the NWSA, Stanton and Anthony both argued for a national women's suffrage amendment and that women, as American citizens, should already have the Constitutional right to vote.[19]

Soon after Stanton and Anthony formed the NWSA, Lucy Stone and her husband, Henry Blackwell, who disagreed with Stanton and Anthony's position on the 14th and 15th amendments and had argued for expediency, formed the American Woman Suffrage Association. The AWSA preferred to pursue suffrage through state amendments rather

[18] Scott and Scott, 9, 17.

[19] Marjorie Spruill Wheeler, *One Woman, One Vote: Rediscovering the Woman Suffrage Movement* (Troutdale, OR: New Sage Press, 1995), 10-11.

than a national amendment.[20] The members believed that it would be easier for women to gain the franchise if it happened gradually and locally.[21]

The movement faced other hardships besides a division over tactics. An association with Victoria Woodhull, a free love advocate, gave suffrage advocates a bad reputation. Woodhull was a proponent of Francis Minor's argument that since the 14th amendment prevented states from infringing on the rights of citizens, states could not deny women, who were citizens, the right to vote. However, Woodhull's activism hurt the movement more it than helped. She published a weekly that advocated sexual freedom for women, a sentiment that contradicted Victorian mores. She also became involved in a sexual scandal when she accused popular preacher, Henry Ward Beecher, of having an affair. By involving herself in discussions of a sexual nature while simultaneously advocating for suffrage, she leant a licentious image to the suffrage movement. This caused moderate conservatives who might have advocated for suffrage to shy away from the movement.[22]

In 1875, the Supreme Court decided against Woodhull's argument that the 14th amendment gave women the right to vote when it claimed that citizenship did not automatically confer a right to vote. In an effort to test the 14th amendment, Francis Minor's wife attempted to register to vote but was denied, and she challenged the state over the incident. The case made it to the Supreme Court, and the Court decided against

[20] Scott and Scott, 17.

[21] Wheeler, 10-11.

[22] Scott and Scott, 18

Minor.[23] This meant that women would have to acquire separate legislation to obtain the vote.

However, the movement had some success in the West, where individual states allowed women to vote. It is debatable why the West was more liberal in passing women's suffrage amendments, however, the specific hardships associated with life on the frontier may have contributed.[24] It is probable that, in a world where life was so unsure, politicians found women's suffrage advantageous to their causes.[25]

Temperance advocates also believed that women's suffrage was expedient. In the late 19th century, the Women's Christian Temperance Union advocated women's suffrage as a way to gain votes for temperance measures. This recruited more women to the women's suffrage movement. As more women joined the movement, the newer members believed it worthy for the American and National groups to work together. In 1890, the two groups converged and became the National American Woman Suffrage Association.[26]

Despite a lack of progress in the late 19th century and early 20th century, a period labeled "the doldrums," NAWSA and Alice Paul's National Woman's Party, a group that was more militant than the conservative NAWSA, gained momentum around 1910. Though both groups used different tactics, they both contributed to the success of the eventual passage of a national women's suffrage amendment. Furthermore, progressive

[23] Scott and Scott, 19, 20.

[24] Wheeler, 10-11.

[25] Ibid., 11.

[26] Ibid., 11-13.

policies were popular during the early 20th century, which allowed for the proper climate for the passage of the suffrage amendment.

In 1912, Carrie Chapman Catt, heading up the NAWSA, promoted her "Winning Plan." This plan called for suffrage advocates to work for both state and federal amendments. Those who lived in states that had already granted suffrage to women were to work for a federal amendment while those who did not were encouraged to work for state amendments. In 1918, President Woodrow Wilson became a suffrage supporter in exchange for suffragists' support of his political and military actions. This turned the tables for suffrage because he was able to influence other politicians. Eventually, in 1919, because of the NWP and NAWSA's efforts along with the President's support, Congress passed a women's suffrage amendment. However, this was not the end of the battle, as the amendment needed the states to ratify it. In 1920, Tennessee became the final state to ratify the amendment when Harry Burn, influenced by his mother Febb Burn, changed his vote in favor of ratification.[27]

[27] Scott and Scott, 34, Wheeler, 14-19.

CHAPTER III

THOSE WHO OPPOSED

Since race relations colored the formation of women's suffrage organizations, it also contributed to the women's suffrage movement as a whole for the duration of the movement. One of the initial ways race relations affected the suffrage movement was in the controversy over the 14th and 15th Amendments. Arguments over the amendments and the political implications of women's suffrage caused some pro-suffragists to espouse anti-suffrage rhetoric while also causing some pro-African-American rights advocates to espouse racist rhetoric. The arguments over these amendments and the political intrigue involved in their passage caused many suffragists to think that black men were anti-suffragists. Though there were many black men who did not support women's suffrage, they were not a driving force behind the anti-suffrage movement. Rather, most black men were more interested in gaining their rights, whether or not women gained rights as well.[28]

Within this context, not only did African-American women who wished to participate in the suffrage movement face racial discrimination within the movement but they also faced prejudice from women who resented what they thought was the betrayal

[28] Faye E. Dudden, *Fighting Chance: The Struggle over Woman Suffrage and Black Suffrage in Reconstruction America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 183-4.

of women in favor of African-Americans. Though at times white suffragists claimed to accept black women among their ranks, overall they discriminated by excluding them from conferences, segregating them in parades, and using racist rhetoric in the fight for the vote. In response to this discrimination and exclusion, black women who participated in the suffrage movement created their own platforms for organized social work.[29] Progressive black women worked for the good of their whole race rather than just for individual freedoms because they knew that their entire race had to progress in order to establish individual liberty.[30] To ensure racial progress, black women worked for social betterment on their own terms and created their own arguments advocating black women's suffrage. Since black women faced discrimination and often feared for their lives and the lives of their loved ones, social work, such as the suffrage movement, had to fit their own agenda. They had to see that the benefit outweighed the risk. Furthermore, black women constantly had to prove their respectability. African-American women may have avoided an association with women's suffrage movement since it was controversial as a reputed front for Socialists and free-love advocates. In looking out for the interests of their own communities, black women could not afford to allow the women's suffrage movement to mar their reputations. Black women believed that they needed to prove their respectability in order to gain acceptance in white communities. They understood that before they could socially progress as women they first had to progress as African-Americans. If women received rights but African-Americans faced discrimination, black

[29] Rosalyn Terborg-Penn, *African-American Women in the Struggle for the Vote, 1850-1920* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1998), 2, 10, 55.

[30] Ann Gordon and Bettye Collier-Thomas, eds., *African-American Women and the Vote 1837-1965* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997), 87.

women would have gained nothing. Thus, black women who advocated women's suffrage had to live in areas where their involvement in the suffrage movement would not hurt the broader black community.

Black women not only faced racial discrimination from white women in the mainstream suffrage movement, but they also had to deal with the stigma assigned to blacks during the controversy over the 14th and 15th amendments. Because many universal suffragists and black men chose to endorse the 14th and 15th amendments, which gave black men the vote while still excluding all women from the franchise, white suffragists began to associate blacks with the anti-suffrage movement. In reality, there were African-Americans in both the suffrage and anti-suffrage camps.[31] Many of the universal suffragists who supported the 14th and 15th amendments still supported women's suffrage, but thought that it was more expedient to exclude women from the amendments enfranchising black males in order to ensure the amendments' passage. This likely may have influenced white women's decision to later discriminate against black women and use racist rhetoric as a tactic in the women's suffrage movement. Since white suffragists believed that their voting rights became a casualty in the effort to obtain the vote for black men, they most likely believed that it was justifiable to diminish the importance of black women's suffrage in order to obtain the vote for white women.

Although they may not have been openly involved in the anti-suffrage movement, African-American women factored into anti-suffrage arguments in different ways. As the women's suffrage movement became more prevalent, the opposition banded together in order to fight the opinion that women deserved the vote. Though some of these

[31] Terborg-Penn, 3-4, 23, 28.

individuals may have protested women's suffrage for their own personal reasons, most anti-suffragists who publically protested suffrage were elite women who wanted to maintain the status quo.

The reasons for anti-suffragism varied throughout the United States. However, race was a major factor in anti-suffrage rhetoric, particularly in the South. Though men contributed to anti-suffragism, elite women led the anti-suffrage movement and were the main contributors to the racial rhetoric involved in it in the South. Still, race alone did not make anti-suffragists. Liquor interests, fearful of women temperance advocates acquiring the vote, and political machines also contributed to anti-suffragism. Businesses and governmental agencies that women wanted to clean up were against suffrage because they were opposed to the change they feared that women would vote into effect.[32]

Besides serving as a response to particular social conditions, anti-suffragism also served as an effort to maintain the status-quo of gender roles and the function of the family unit. The late 19th century and early 20th century were times of change and men and women stepped outside of their roles as homemakers as they became more involved in public affairs. Antis believed that the family worked as a unit in society and that each member had specific roles, particularly revering the idea of women as mothers. They believed if women entered the public sphere, they were no longer allowing men to take care of them, and paternalism was a civilizing aspect of society.

Religion was another important factor that contributed to anti-suffrage ideology. Many anti-suffragists interpreted certain passages of the Bible to indicate that women

[32] Flexnor, 287-97.

needed to be submissive to men and women's suffrage would serve to undermine their submissiveness.[33]

Surprisingly, possibly because suffrage advocates claimed men spearheaded the anti-suffrage movement, elite women were the true leaders of anti-suffragism. Though suffragists generally argued that women who opposed suffrage were backwards and isolated, Antis were generally well-connected community leaders.[34] However, the suffragists' accusation that Antis were isolated may have been valid as elite women often surrounded themselves with members of their own class. Though elite women may have been involved in reform efforts, and though there may have been a few exceptions to this rule, they usually participated in reform by serving on charity boards rather than in ways that would have given them direct contact with the people they were helping.[35]

The women in the Anti movement used a variety of arguments in order to combat suffrage. They responded to the suffragists' arguments and created their own ideology that revealed their fears concerning the social changes suffrage might initiate. The Antis argued that women were able to achieve more without the vote than they could with it. They claimed that women would not be as involved in direct social reform if they thought they could institute change with a vote. They believed that the vote would disturb the power dynamic between men and women, break down the current social hierarchy and

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[33] Aileen Kraditor, *The Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement 1890-1920* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1981), 14-24, 82.

[34] Jane Camhi, *Women against Women: American Anti-Suffragism, 1880-1920* (Brooklyn: Carlson Publishing, 1994), 2.

[35] Marshall, Susan. *Splintered Sisterhood: Gender and Class in the Campaign against Woman Suffrage* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1997), 33-39, 72.

strip women of womanly qualities, such as submissiveness and purity. They believed that women were not biologically suited to the political and social pressures associated with the vote since women were generally physically weaker than men were. They argued it was necessary to maintain sexual differences.[36] These arguments show that most elite women who were Antis believed that suffrage would diminish the power that they possessed outside of the direct political system. Women were able to use their position outside of the traditional power structure to influence society and elite women were the most influential within this power structure because they had time to devote to the home and community, whereas working women had to divide their time between a job and their duties at home. Elite women did not want all women to receive the vote because they did not want to upset the status quo and give power to women they perceived as their inferiors who might vote in ways that would contradict the interests of the elite.[37]

Antis also used other arguments that did not necessarily reflect their fears but rather attempted to convert others to their cause. These arguments were not only in response to suffragists' arguments but also attempted to convince others how women's suffrage would degrade society. These arguments included that the vote was a burden and that women did not need any more burdens than they already had.[38] Antis also espoused the idea that suffrage was related to socialism, a political ideology that many in the 19th century feared, and that if women received the vote it was one step closer to

[36] Camhi, 12, 20.

[37] Marshall, 5, 93-94.

[38] Camhi, 19.

achieving socialism in the United States. They also attacked suffragists on a personal level and claimed that women's participation in society outside of the home would destroy the home. Antis believed that women needed to dedicate their lives to raising good citizens. Elite women clung to this idea and feared that any interference with women's place in the home would diminish women's power within the family.[39]

Antis also exploited racial prejudices to argue against the vote. They argued that black women would be more inclined to vote than black men would and that women's suffrage would lead to black women's suffrage, which would lead to racial equality.[40] However, suffragists employed equally racist tactics by excluding black women from suffrage activities or segregating them. In fact, this trend followed the suffrage movement throughout its entire history even up to right before the suffrage amendment passed. In 1919, Carrie Chapman Catt did not want black clubs to apply to the national association for fear that including them would cost the suffrage amendment votes.[41]

Besides prejudice against African-Americans, both anti-suffragists and suffragists expressed discriminatory rhetoric against immigrants. Both feared that uneducated immigrants who held on to the social values of their former lands would form a voting block that would outvote the *status quo*. However, the Antis argued that women's suffrage would just give more votes to the immigrants while the suffragists argued that

[39] Ibid., 6-10.

[40] Ibid., 131-132.

[41] Flexnor, 299.

white women could outvote the immigrants.[42] Overall, Antis feared who would receive power and how they could weld that power by receiving the vote.

Despite the fact that women were major contributors to the anti-suffrage movement, suffragists generally either downplayed women's roles as Antis or denied it. This may have been because the Antis themselves downplayed their own political involvement. Many Antis presented themselves as women who avoided politics and stayed in their proper womanly sphere in order to act in accordance with their social ideology. Furthermore, class related expectations kept women from fully committing to anti-suffrage involvement. Elite women led busy and varied lives and often had other commitments that they put ahead of anti-suffrage work. Still, it was not always apparent how much effort they put towards the anti-suffrage movement since their commitment to separate gendered social spheres caused them to hide their activism. Even though the Antis publically espoused arguments against women's suffrage, barring a few exceptions, they generally tried to do so within prescribed gender boundaries. Women anti-suffragists used ladies' journals to promote their ideas and they sometimes allowed men to speak for them. Though men were less inclined to belong to anti-suffrage groups, they would sometimes advocate on behalf of women Antis. Though there were some exceptions, many women were able to work within the anti-suffrage movement without stepping outside of the social boundaries prescribed for women.[43]

Though male Antis distracted the suffragists, women Antis were much more active in the anti-suffrage cause than men were. Men generally did not want to appear

[42] Marshall, 143.

[43] Ibid., 53, 72.

bothered by what they perceived as the trivial political concerns of the masses, but rather wanted to appear above it. Elite women generally made up the anti-suffrage movement because any possible changes in the power structure would most affect them. They wanted to maintain the status quo so that they could maintain their influence within the family and on society. Part of this status quo was ensuring that African-American women did not have equal rights.

Some black women chose to focus on everyday problems that affected their communities while others believed that suffrage was the means to fix their problems. Many black women may have believed that they faced more pressing concerns than voting rights as they fought to combat poverty and lynching in their communities.[44] However, though some black women may have felt that women's suffrage came second to other social problems, many believed that the vote was a vehicle to combat social ills and racism, and often the variety of socio-economic backgrounds and regions of residence affected black women's suffrage activity.[45] Different challenges in different areas affected the way black women participated in the suffrage movement. Furthermore, black women's involvement in the suffrage movement did not interfere with their effort to combat racism. Black suffragists combatted racism by both trying to break through racial barriers in the mainstream suffrage movement and advocating suffrage from the political platforms available to them through their own club movement.[46]

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[44] Dorothy Salem, *To Better Our World: Black Women in Organized Reform, 1890-1920* (Brooklyn: Carlson, 1990), 37-39.

[45] Terborg-Penn, 1.

[46] Ibid., 4, 86.

CHAPTER IV

AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN AND THE CLUB MOVEMENT

Race relations in the late 19th and early 20th centuries made black women's participation in the suffrage movement difficult as racial tensions colored most interactions between whites and black in the 19th century. Even whites who supported African-American rights still often did not see blacks as their equals. Though national suffrage organizations accepted black women among their membership, black women experienced segregation at demonstrations and their participation in national conferences was often controversial. The national suffrage movement also adopted racist rhetoric to assure the concerned public that women's enfranchisement would not give too much power to black women. These suffragists argued that, since white women outnumbered black women, the white women would always be able to out vote black women. In fact, many suffragists claimed that white women would be able to ensure white supremacy with the vote by outvoting black men as well.[47]

Not only did many white women make it difficult for black women to participate in the women's suffrage movement, but not all black women believed that the vote would be beneficial to them. Black suffragists had to convince both the public and other black

[47] Terborg-Penn, 110-30.

women that African-American women deserved the right to vote. They had to convince working class black women that the vote would help them better their living and working situations and open up new prospects for them. By the early 20th century, black women already had the infrastructure to provide information concerning suffrage to all classes of black women through the educational opportunities offered by black women's clubs. The club movement began for black women in the late 19th century and, though composed of mostly middle and upper class black women, it influenced working class black women as well through social welfare programs.[48] Black women instituted a tradition of reaching out to the poorer members of their race by working together on social issues even before the Civil War.[49] During the Civil War, wherever Northern occupation led to freedom for African-Americans in the South, black women established welfare organizations to help the black community.[50] This tradition continued into the club movement in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Through club work, black women did not just reach out to working women in order to help them individually but also worked to elevate the entire race.[51] By reaching out to working class women, working for the interests of the entire race, and through middle class women's attempts to bring working class women up to their level, the club movement minimized class differences among black women.[52]

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[48] Ibid., 72, 73, 110.

[49] Gordon, 38.

[50] Scott, 5.

[51] Beverly W Jones, "Mary Church Terrell and the National Association of Colored Women, 1896-1901," *Journal of Negro History* 67, no. 1 (Spring 1982): 27-28.

[52] Cynthia Neverdon-Morton, *Afro-American Women of the South and the Advancement of the Race, 1895-1925* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1989), 6.

However, while club membership provided social status for elite and middle class black women, their social work did not separate them as the "betters" of the individuals they helped. Rather, black clubwomen worked to help elevate working class women by treating them as equals. Middle and upper class black women faced the same racial discrimination that working class black women faced; therefore it was imperative that they work together to overcome it.[53] The assumption that any race or class needed to acquiesce to middle class standards might be patronizing, and therefore the black club movement was not as accepting as it might seem. However, black women's clubs still provided women of all classes with opportunities to overcome the racial discrimination and hardships that every black woman faced.[54]

Many black women activists believed that in order to achieve social respectability, their contemporaries needed an education. Black women saw education as the main means to elevate the race and open career and social opportunities for blacks. Influential blacks established educational institutions throughout the country and these institutions focused on preparing students for professions.[55] However, black women also instituted their own educational programs through the club movement, which differed for rural and urban areas in order to focus on each demographics' specific needs.[56] These educational programs also served to help working women provide for their families by

[53] Anne Meis Knupfer, "'If You Can't Push, Pull, If You Can't Pull, Please Get Out of the Way': The Phyllis Wheatley Club and Home in Chicago, 1896-1920," *Journal of Negro History* 82, no. 2 (Spring 1997): 223.

[54] Gerda Lerner, "Early Community Work of Black Club Women," *Journal of Negro History* 59, no. 2 (April 1974): 160.

[55] Neverdon-Morton, 6, 12.

[56] Lerner, 159.

allowing them to gain the information needed to obtain better jobs and to better care for their families as black women generally had low-paying jobs, lacked healthcare and daycare opportunities for their children and lived in undesirable housing.[57] Because black women leaders like Mary Church Terrell, believed that society judged black women by the "least" members of their race, it was important to address these issues in order to elevate black women as a whole. The educational programs in the club movement attempted to do this.[58]

Black women also felt the responsibility to uplift their communities because after emancipation, black communities often worked as collectives. Blacks believed that in order to live in a free world and maintain autonomy from whites, they needed to help and uplift each other. If the black community could not take care of itself and maintain an autonomous lifestyle, then no black individual could. This idea of collectivism affected black women's social work and suffrage activism and caused them to be concerned about the state of their community.[59]

Although their race and sex caused many obstacles, black women did not let it hamper them in their efforts toward racial betterment. When faced with discrimination, black women worked to overcome prejudice in mainstream white organizations in order to improve society. At the same time, they also created their own organizations and expressed their own reasons for working for social progress.

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[57] Neverdon-Morton, 68, 122.

[58] Jones, 24.

[59] Gordon, 87.

The Progressive Era of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was a time when people sought not only to better themselves, but also to better society. In order to achieve this, both white and black women formed their own clubs to educate themselves and others while also serving their communities. These generally segregated clubs were particularly important for black women because they served as a way for black women to improve conditions for their race through education and social work. Black women's clubs allowed black women to serve others while developing the skills necessary to advocate for racial advancement.

Social clubs were not the first organizations for black women. They had a history of participating in church organizations, which evolved into women's clubs in the late nineteenth century.[60] Black women first formed clubs at the local level, and, as they gained prominence, they united under a national federation. Though several national federations arose in the late nineteenth century, those organizations merged and eventually formed the National Association of Colored Women in 1896.[61] Though both white and black women began founding women's clubs in the late nineteenth century, white women usually formed clubs that were exclusively for whites. Black women's organizations also often addressed different social needs than white women's clubs.[62] Both black and white women wanted to better themselves and people around them, but

[60] Joan Marie Johnson, "'Drill Into Us...the Rebel Tradition': The Contest Over Southern Identity in Black and White Women's Clubs, South Carolina, 1898-1930," *Journal of Southern History* 66, no. 3 (August 2000): 527.

[61] Beverly W Jones, "Mary Church Terrell and the National Association of Colored Women, 1896-1901," *Journal of Negro History* 67, no. 1 (Spring 1982):23.

[62] Salem, 7-8.

black women did so in order to promote race advancement.[63] After the end of Reconstruction, opportunities diminished for African-Americans and they began to face increased discrimination.[64] Discrimination, particularly discrimination that led to lynching, often served as an impetus for black women to join social clubs. African-Americans felt a need to defend the race against lynching, which had become more prevalent during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[65] Ida B Wells led the movement to end lynching and it gained the attention of other black women who then united in order to further Wells' campaign. However, not every black women's club focused solely on ending lynching and other reasons motivated women to join clubs, including an effort to prove black women's respectability. As revealed in a letter written in 1895 by James W. Jack to Florence Belgarnie, an English woman, many individuals portrayed black women as an amoral group. Black women's access to this letter served as an impetus to their involvement in clubs. In order to combat any corrupt reputation, black women joined clubs and promoted themselves as a well educated elite focused on reaching out to the masses.[66]

However, no single event alone inspired black women to form clubs. Though lynching and Jack's letter may have pushed some women into action, the overall need for community improvement and racial uplift were more universal reasons for black

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[63] Gerda Lerner, "Early Community Work of Black Club Women," *Journal of Negro History* 59, no. 2 (April 1974): 167.

[64] Jones, 20.

[65] Lerner, 160.

[66] Jones, 22.

women's club involvement. Most black women formed clubs because they had the leadership, common interests, desire to show society the respectable aspects of black womanhood, and interest in serving others.[67]

Although some black clubs may have formed because white women's clubs denied black women entrance, most organized to address racial needs. And although both white and black clubwomen may have participated in the same activities, black women had additional motives for educating themselves and others. Both black and white women studied classic literature; however, black women also studied African-American literature in order to inspire racial pride in a time when their race often counted against them. Besides promoting education, black women also focused on women's roles in the home as mothers and wives.[68] Though they took pride in their race, black women also emulated the standards that Victorian society set for white women in order to prove their respectability. Respectability and acceptance was important for black women as they saw it as a means to fight stereotypes and discrimination. They wanted influence in order to promote black rights. Black women believed that if white women's clubs recognized black women's clubs, their clubs might gain social legitimacy among white society and provide black women with the influence they needed to make social changes.[69]

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[67] Salem, 11-12.

[68] Anne Meis Knupfer, "'if You Can't Push, Pull, If You Can't Pull, Please Get Out of the Way': The Phyllis Wheatley Club and Home in Chicago, 1896-1920," *Journal of Negro History* 82, no. 2 (Spring 1997): 223.

[69] Salem, 43.

In many cases, white women did not socially accept black women and this was particularly true of white clubwomen in the South. After the Civil War, white Southern women sought to define their roles in a changing environment and black and white women often created separate definitions of racial identity in the post war South. Both black and white women used their clubs as a means to educate their communities on their ideas and values concerning race. Many white clubwomen began to embrace the ideology of the "Lost Cause," which claimed the South had noble intentions during the Civil War and portrayed slavery as a glorified method of race relations. The "Lost Cause" redefined the antebellum era and the Confederacy as a golden age of the South in order to justify all of the hardship associated with the Civil War. White women's glorification of the "Old South" defended white patriarchy and reduced blacks to second-class citizens. Because of the Southern views of race, the white women's club movement often marginalized black women. Black clubwomen countered white women's construction of society by providing alternate definitions of race and black women's roles. In order to promote racial pride and their heritage, they encouraged and studied black talents. Response to Southern white women's glorification of slavery also prompted black Southern women to begin to assert themselves in the social atmosphere of the South. Collaborating and asserting themselves enabled them to work toward their own rights and began to give them the tools necessary to take a stand during the Civil Rights Movement.[70]

The tools that black women gained in the club movement also allowed them to elevate their reputations, which whites had marred by promoting the image of the black

[70] Johnson, 526-32.

woman as a temptress during a time when society valued chastity, by proving their respectability. Black women's efforts to change their reputations highlighted another difference between black women's clubs and white women's clubs since white women did not have to prove they deserved respect.[71]" Black women's struggle for acceptance was evident when the predominantly white General Federation of Women's Clubs attempted to keep the Women's Era Club president, Josephine Pierre Ruffin, from attending their annual conference in 1900. The GFWC eventually allowed Ruffin to attend, but only as a representative for the mostly white New England Federation of Women's Clubs.[72] This discrimination was widespread throughout many women's activities in the Progressive Era. As the suffrage movement picked up during this time, black women found themselves increasingly excluded from white suffrage activism. Even white women who supported black women's involvement in the suffrage movement tried to minimize black women's visible activity to prevent isolating racist individuals from the movement.[73]

However, club activity was not always segregated, and some women's clubs accepted black women as members. In addition, many black women recognized that they needed broader support in order to enact some of their social improvements and thus knew that they needed to engage the help of white women. In cases where whites were willing to work with blacks, the black women skillfully manipulated white involvement. For example, when African-American schools in Atlanta needed improvements, the

[71] Jones, 23.

[72] Ibid., 23-4.

[73] Salem, 126.

Atlanta Neighborhood Union first gathered the support of white women before going to white church leaders and white men to address the issue.[74] Black women knew that they needed white women's influence in order to sway prominent men to their cause.

Still, black clubwomen mostly worked with other black women in order to help their race. The predominant way that African-American women attempted to uplift the race was by educating women and they particularly reached out to educate poor blacks. Black women's clubs often defined a woman's class and status because club members were generally elite women who helped the poor. However, even though club membership separated the elites from the poor, there was not a major divide among class lines in black women's groups because elite black women wanted to elevate the poor to their own ranks.[75] However, Gerda Lerner criticizes the black groups for having a "patronizing, missionary attitude in dealing with the poor.[76]" In reality, both of these arguments have merit. Though elite black women may have distinguished themselves through club membership, and, though they may have encouraged poor women to emulate their ways, they were also bringing the poor women up to their level rather than just helping them at their own level.

Though black women's clubs both promoted education and service, historians of the clubs often disagree as to whether they existed first to serve or to educate their community. Many black women's clubs promoted better housekeeping and childcare in homes, fought for state support of black institutions and other social welfare goals, but

[74] Salem, 43, 112-13.

[75] Knupfer, 223.

[76] Lerner, 160.

often their primary purpose was to educate black women.[77] Whether the clubs served first to educate or provide help, Mary Church Terrell, a prominent leader in the club movement, espoused the theory that clubs existed to elevate the black race.[78]

In order to promote racial uplift, black women's clubs did everything from study literature to educate women on hygiene and black history.[79] They also established kindergartens and day cares for working women's children and established "Mother's Clubs" to teach women how to raise children and keep homes.[80] Northern clubs also founded homes for Southern transplants, who were vulnerable to con artists.[81] Clubs adapted to the needs of their communities. Most black women's clubs generally followed Mary Church Terrell's theory that they needed to "uplift the masses" in order to elevate the entire race.[82]

In working to better the masses, the national confederation of African-American women's clubs embodied some conservative and some radical ideology. They were radical because black women controlled them, they emphasized reform, and they nurtured women's leadership. However, they were also conservative because they were not feminist, as they did not necessarily believe in the equality of women to men; they

[77] Johnson, 527.

[78] Jones, 24.

[79] Lerner, 159.

[80] Jones, 27.

[81] Knupfer, 222.

[82] Jones, 27-28.

encouraged homemaking, and were devoted to racial causes rather than just female causes.[83]

Another factor that reveals the conservative nature of many black women's clubs is that they did not often address political issues such as segregation. However, though they may not have directly addressed certain political and social issues, and, though they usually put topics such as suffrage on the back burner, black women looked for the opportunity to establish political influence through clubs.[84] Black women advocated against lynching and even brought white women into the anti-lynching campaign.[85] The national federation openly supported women's suffrage, even though there was not an overabundance of suffrage activism in the local clubs until after 1910. Generally, black women faced issues that threatened the survival of members of their communities and they looked for relief for their entire race rather than just women.[86] Thus, black women worked to better the lives of the members of their race while also striving to have social influence.

The club movement not only helped black women educate themselves and others, it also served as a means for elite women to provide social welfare for the poorer members of their race. Furthermore, leadership in the club movement prepared women to voice their concerns about the treatment of their race in a broader social context. The tools that they learned while leading clubs and advocating for social welfare on the local

[83] Ibid., 24-26.

[84] Ibid., 29

[85] Lerner, 167.

[86] Salem, 37-39.

level allowed them to contribute to founding broader movements for racial betterment, such as the NAACP.[87]

African-American women were active in the club movement in Knoxville and both black men and black women had their own clubs. The Daughters of Zion, formed in 1882, stated in their charter that they formed in order to help each other when in need. Different clubs had different purposes. The Household of Ruth, founded in 1887, was a club exclusively for female family members of Odd Fellows.[88] Black women were involved in the Women's Christian Temperance Union, and by 1895, there were five African-American chapters of the W.C.T.U. in Tennessee.[89] A program for the State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs 6th session that took place in Knoxville in 1914, lists Mrs. William Cansler, a known Knoxvillian, as a speaker giving an address on the W.C.T.U., which indicates that Knoxville's black women were involved in the cause.[90] By 1926, there were countless clubs for black women in Knoxville. Some notable clubs besides the ones already mentioned were Court of Calanthe, Band of Mercy, Golden Cross, Eastern Star, Samaritan, and the Sisters of the Mysterious Ten. A study of the black population in Knoxville in 1926 listed the purpose of these clubs as a form of "group control," and as a place to "exchange of ideas." The study stated that the clubs also existed to provide friendship and conduct charity work. Other black women's clubs mentioned in the study were the Altruistic Club, which worked to "raise the standard of

[87] Ibid., 178.

[88] Booker, 85-86.

[89] Leab, 61.

[90] French, 8.

entertainment," the Community Club, a charitable club, the Phyllis Wheatley Y.W.C.A, a club that "promoted Christian character," and other various benevolent societies. The study also proves that some interracial interaction existed in the attempt to improve society. The Student Inter-racial Commission was a group of students from Maryville College, a school that integrated early, Knoxville College, an African-American school, and the University of Tennessee, an all-white school that studied race issues in Knoxville.[91] These clubs were obviously important to the African-American community as multiple pieces of literature and newspapers included information concerning them. *The East Tennessee News*, an African-American publication, listed club activities, meeting times, notes and events.[92]

[91] J.H. Daves, *A Social Study of the Colored Population of Knoxville, TN* (Knoxville: The Free Colored Library, 1926), 15, 17.

[92] *The East Tennessee News*, April 9, 1925.

CHAPTER V

A DELICATE BALANCE

Knoxville's black elite in the late 19th and early twentieth century not only focused on working towards better living conditions for fellow members of their race, but also worked to maintain what they considered good race relations. Though discrimination existed in Knoxville, black leaders saw opportunities in the city that they felt other cities did not offer.[93] This delicate balance of race relations most likely affected black's political activism in the city, including black women's suffrage work.

White women's suffrage advocates were no more or less accepting of black women's voting rights than the majority of the rest of the country. Lizzie Crozier French's papers include an article written by Julia A. Lucky in 1913 titled, "Some Evils (?) of Equal Suffrage" which highlights a white women's suffrage advocate's view concerning black women's suffrage rights. In the article, Lucky addresses concerns about women's suffrage expressed by anti-suffragists. One of the concerns she takes on is the worry over women's suffrage enfranchising more African-Americans. Lucky acknowledges that the "negro problem" in the South complicates the question of suffrage for women. However, she argues that every political and social problem has unpleasant

[93] Bartow G. Wilson, *The Knoxville Negro* (Knoxville: Trent Printing Co., 1929), 4.

side effects and the extension of the vote to blacks happens to be one of those side effects of women's suffrage. She further claims that so many "undesirable" people had the right to vote that there was no reason to draw the line at women. She adds that the problems with black women voting would be similar to black men voting and communities could handle those issues in similar ways. Thus, since black men could vote there was no reason to deny the franchise to black women. She supposes that men believe that good women outnumber the bad and she would hope this was true with black women as well as white. She quotes a Miss Elliot who says, "this question of the negro is irrelevant, extraneous and has nothing to do with the issue." She believes that, though it was not ideal to extend the vote to black women, it would not threaten white supremacy.

Lucky also introduces a class issue along racial lines by stating, "At the ballot box we may have to rub elbows with cook and maid, yet we suffragists might prefer even that to being classed with idiots, criminals and insane." Thus, she points out the fear that suffrage would equalize women of all classes and races. Lucky's article reveals suffragists in Knoxville were not against black women receiving the vote because they thought that they could control the way those women voted. This is important because black women may have believed that their votes would not be significant since whites thought they could outnumber and control them. Furthermore, it exposes class and race issues as it shows that white women in Knoxville like Lucky did not generally want to socialize with black women outside of work responsibilities.[94] There is little record of Lizzie Crozier French, the leader of the women's suffrage movement in Knoxville, discussing race besides a quote in a newspaper article in which she claims it was a

[94] French, 32b.

tragedy that women's sons and uneducated, "uncivilized" black men could vote when women could not.[95] Therefore, it is not surprising that there is no evidence of black women's involvement in the white women's suffrage association in Knoxville considering it was apparent that white women did not find black women's company desirable.

However, other factors had to have contributed to Knoxville's black women's lack of suffrage involvement since black women throughout the nation faced discrimination yet were still members of both the National Woman Suffrage Association, the American Woman Suffrage Association and, later, the National American Woman Suffrage Association. The national movement influenced its members' ideology and their suffrage arguments. As the national movement moved away from a natural rights argument to an expediency argument, black women also argued for women's suffrage based on expediency. However, they specifically tailored their arguments to the needs of black women. As white women argued that women needed the vote because they were more moral than men were and that they would use the vote to correct the ills in society, black women began to argue the same. African-American women also claimed that black women needed the vote in order to protect themselves from discrimination. They said that since black women faced so much persecution, they needed the vote even more than white women needed it. Nannie Burroughs argued that black women were targeted for rape and they needed the vote to protect them from sexual vulnerability.[96] At a time when white women were attempting to exclude black women from the suffrage movement,

[95] Ibid., 28b.

[96] Terborg-Penn, 55-59, 71.

black women were arguing that African-American needed the vote even more than the white suffragists needed it.

Furthermore, black women in Knoxville worked to serve the interests of the black community from the time of the Civil War. In 1864, Laura Ann Scott Cansler became the first African-American teacher in Knoxville when she started a school for free black children after receiving permission from General Ambrose Burnside, who oversaw the Union occupation of Knoxville at that time. Cansler attended school throughout her life and in Knoxville, Reverend Thomas Humes, pastor of St. John's Episcopal Church, taught her and other black children. Cansler's children went on to become black leaders in Knoxville who worked for racial progress and her story is evidence that Knoxville's black women were instrumental in bettering their race.[97]

Since Knoxville's black women were involved in bettering their community, there must have been something in particular that kept them from the suffrage movement. It could not have only been discrimination that kept them from advocating for suffrage, since other Southern black women faced discrimination and still advocated for the vote. Therefore, there must have been something unique to Knoxville's race relations that prevented African-American women from pursuing women's suffrage. Early 20th century black leaders in Knoxville, such as Bartow G. Wilson, who published a book in 1929 that highlighted the achievements of prominent black Knoxvillians, claimed that race relations in their city were relatively good and that those conditions allowed African-Americans abundant opportunities.[98] However, black leaders in Knoxville also

[97] Booker, 38.

[98] Wilson, 4.

recognized racism and inequality in the area. In 1926, J.H. Daves published *A Social Study of the Colored Population of Knoxville, Tennessee,* which revealed how Knoxville's black population lived. This study showed that there was a connection between race and living conditions in Knoxville and the committee found that though there were many blacks who lived in good neighborhoods, the majority of African-Americans on the low end of the economic spectrum lived in crowded, unsanitary conditions. This was mostly because rent was higher for blacks, making it difficult for them to afford suitable places to live. The committee also found that African-Americans were often underpaid, which contributed to their difficulties in paying higher rent. Furthermore, during this era of segregation, African-American public schools were overcrowded and were not on par with white schools in Knoxville, and African-American teachers received less pay than white teachers who had received the same level of training.[99]

Despite these conditions, Wilson's collection of Who's Who in the black community in Knoxville showed that some members of East Tennessee's black community prospered. In addition, the Knoxville College Catalogue of 1889-90 suggests that the majority of Knoxville's population favored equal rights under the law even if it did not always support social equality.[100] According to an article by Jason Yeatts, Knoxville's blacks established a tradition of thriving after the Civil War. Yeatts argues that they were able to do so because, combined with their own ingenuity, blacks were a

[99] Daves, 1-10.

[100] Knoxville College Catalogue: 1889-90, McClung Historical Collection: Knox County Public Library, 33.

minority in Knoxville and thus not a threat to the white population. Furthermore, the African-American population was an asset to the ruling Republican Party and blacks provided labor for new industries. Because of these reasons, whites were more accepting of the black population in Knoxville.[101]

Still, racial tension existed and inequality was evident. In the summer of 1919, when racial tensions were exploding across the nation, Knoxville had its own race riot. It began when a white woman was shot and killed in the middle of the night in her home by a burglar whom her cousin, who witnessed the murder, claimed was a lighter skinned African-American. The policemen who responded to the scene included Andy White, who suspected Maurice Mays. White had a personal vendetta against Mays who was a controversial black man with a reputation for dating white women. The rumor was that Mays was the mayor's illegitimate son. Though race relations in Knoxville may have been relatively good, whites still feared amalgamation. This is evident in a 1910 newspaper article in *The East Tennessee News*, a black publication that advertised a white woman looking for a good African-American home for her "colored" baby girl. The article gave a number to call for other individuals who might be dealing with the same issue, indicating that it was not acceptable for white women to have mixed race babies in Knoxville in the early 20th century.[102] Mays represented the reality of the fear of amalgamation through both his mixed racial heritage and his dalliances with women of both races. When White brought Mays to the victim's cousin for identification, the upset

[101] Jason M. Yeatts, "'That We May Think Right, Vote Right, and Do Right': Knoxville's Black Community, 1864-1867," *The Journal of East Tennessee History* 82 (2010): 100.

[102] *The East Tennessee News*, Oct. 22, 1910, The Beck Cultural Center.

woman briefly looked at him, identified him as the killer and walked away all while Mays claimed innocence. A group of white men threatened to take Mays from the Knoxville jail, so authorities moved him to Chattanooga. However, the white men stormed the jail, ransacked it while looking for him, and later took the riot to the black side of town after having consumed confiscated liquor stored in the jail. The police had called the National Guard, who stationed at the black side of town, yet unknown individuals fired shots and killed people on both sides. White leadership claimed that the riot was the result of the actions of lowbred poor whites and the broader white community claimed that the actions of the lowbred whites embarrassed the rest of their race.[103] Black leaders, W. L. Porter and Charles W. Cansler claimed that it was important to maintain friendly race relations between whites and blacks despite the riot. Porter claimed that crime was the issue that led to the riot rather than racial issues.[104] Porter and Cansler were attempting to smooth over race relations out of fear that whites might turn on the black community. Despite the background of the men who attacked the jail and led the riot toward the black side of town, they were specifically acting out against the blacks in Knoxville for a crime done to a white woman by a mixed race or black man. Whatever their specific reasons for rioting, the white men's actions were racially charged and showed how class and race affected white individuals' treatment of African-Americans. Those who were in a place to benefit from Knoxville's African-American community or those who did not feel threatened by them were able to promote a

[103] Matthew Lakin, "'A Dark Night': The Knoxville Race Riot of 1919," *The Journal of East Tennessee History* 72 (2000): 5-9, 15, 25-26.

[104] Lester C. Lamon, "Tennessee Race Relations and the Knoxville Riot of 1919," *The East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications* 41 (1969): 81-82.

perceived feeling of good race relations. However, the actions of the mob show how fragile those relations really were. Thus, the black community had to tread carefully in order to maintain the perception of good race relations that allowed them more opportunities in Knoxville than elsewhere.

This particularly affected black women as they felt a need to prove their respectability in order to prove that they deserved equality. Mary Church Terrell, a leader within the national black club movement and a suffrage advocate who lived in Washington D.C., insisted that the club movement was important because black women needed to elevate their race since society judged black women by the "lowest" members of the race. In her effort to uplift black women, Terrell did not challenge Victorian social norms for all women. She supported those norms, claiming that women's place was in the home. Black women leaders saw the importance of insisting upon some traditional social values in order to make changes less threatening to the social order. Combining this logic, the club movement founded institutions such as mother's clubs in order to teach women how to be the best at roles in which society most judged them. Terrell also insisted on differences between the sexes to women's benefit. She believed that women were more virtuous than men were and thus better equipped to make beneficial changes to society.[105]

Black women also believed that they needed to prove their respectability because they had an undeserved reputation of immorality. Josephine Pierre Ruffin, president of the Women's Era Club, believed that white women denied black women entrance into white women's clubs because white women believed that the black women were

[105] Jones, 26-8.

immoral. Therefore, black women thought that they needed to prove their respectability in order to gain access to all areas of society. The immoral reputation arose out of white men's traditional sexual abuse of black women during slavery. This gave black women a reputation of promiscuity that they needed to combat.[106] Furthermore, Anne Firor Scott claims that, "The Victorian definition of woman was particularly incongruous for poor people of any color…Victorians, who had rigid standards for acceptable society, viewed deviation from those standards as immoral." Thus, African-American women who wanted to be accepted had to work extra hard to not only attempt to conform to Victorian norms but also combat racism. Whites often resented successful African-Americans, so in an area like Knoxville, where successful African-Americans had made some inroads into broader society for their race, blacks would have wanted to maintain the delicate balance that allowed them to gain some acceptance.[107] It was difficult for black women because in order to gain broader acceptance in society, black women had to assimilate to white values while living in exploited African-American communities.[108] Not only did whites exploit blacks for labor, but also white men often sexually exploited black women in slavery. While whites feared amalgamation and the rape of white women by black men, in reality, white men were more likely to rape black women. Black men had consequences to fear if they raped a white woman whereas white men did not if they raped a black woman.[109] Because black women had no recourse if raped, it made it

[106] Ibid., 26- 7.

[107] Scott, 10-11.

[108] Ibid., 20.

[109] O'Brien, 617.

difficult to maintain the chaste reputation necessary to be a respectable Victorian woman. Any rape of a black woman was seen as the black woman's fault. Since black women often had to work, it was also difficult for them to attain the ultimate status for respectable Victorian women: housewife.[110] However, their difficulties allowed black women to come together across class divides. They realized that in order to progress as individuals they had to progress as a race.[111] The Knoxville College Catalogue of 1889-90 demonstrates that the African-American community in Knoxville was concerned with Victorian mores as it specifically states that the college will keep a close eye on young women and limit their visits to the city to keep them safe.[112]

Black women's effort to combat their promiscuous reputation posed problems for their involvement in the women's suffrage movement. Suffrage detractors argued that the women's suffrage movement was a front for socialism and free love. The National Woman Suffrage Association's connection with Victoria Woodhull, a swindler, blackmailer, and free love advocate, contributed to the suffrage movement's immoral reputation. Free love was a controversial topic in Victorian society, and some suffragists resented that the Woodhull connection caused some people to accuse women of wanting the vote in order to practice "free love." Since Woodhull was a prominent women's rights activist, she harmed the reputation of other suffragists. As black women worked to combat their own reputations for promiscuity, it may have been possible that they would

[110] Ibid., 610.

[111] Scott, 20.

[112] Knoxville College Catalogue. 1889-90, 23.

have avoided association with the suffrage movement in order to avoid further damaging their image.

Although by the early twentieth century the suffrage movement had become more respectable and widespread, many Antis still tried to discredit the movement, particularly by claiming that the women involved in it were not decent. The Harry Burns collection at the McClung collection contains telegrams sent to the Nashville legislature while it was voting on the ratification of the 19th amendment. These telegrams indicate how individuals wished the legislature to vote. The sampling in the collection may not be exhaustive of all of the telegrams sent to the legislature, so it is impossible to tell if more people sent telegrams in favor or against, but there are plenty for both sides in the sampling. Those against the amendment were from all over the United States, showing that there was still widespread criticism of women's suffrage. Though there were Antis across the country, Southerners, in particular, hotly debated suffrage.[113] When ratification of the 19th amendment came down to Tennessee, it was unclear whether or not the amendment would pass. An article in the NWP's newsletter discusses the Georgia legislature's anti-suffrage sentiments. The article quotes a Georgia state senator stating, "good domestic women don't talk about such things in Georgia.[114]" Southerners still thought that advocating suffrage was not respectable. Furthermore, the article in the *Suffragist* indicates that there may have been racial overtones in Georgia's opinion on suffrage. The author states that the Georgia legislature displayed the Confederate flag

[113] Kraditor, 85.

[114] Florence Brewer Boeckel, *Suffragist*, August 1920: 165.

and that, in Georgia, "the past still rules, a sad and bitter past." This indicates that pre-Civil War society, including racial opinions established by slavery, still widely affected the Georgia population. This was not necessarily the case in Knoxville, a mostly pro-Union town with few slaveholders during the Civil War. However, it was still a Southern city affected by Southern racial attitudes. The race riot of 1919 is proof of this. As indicated by the rhetoric among black leaders after the riot of 1919, prominent black community members, who would have had the time to participate in the women's suffrage movement, did not want to stir the pot and incite racial tensions. Thus, it is possible that Knoxville's prominent black women did not want to associate themselves with a cause, such as suffrage, that was so inflammatory.

Bartow G. Wilson's, *The Knoxville Negro*, published in 1929, gives insight into the social trends concerning Knoxville's black population during the early twentieth century. The book includes a list of prominent black individuals in Knoxville and celebrates men for their careers and moral influence and women for their popularity, their education, their careers, and their desire to be good housewives. Many women listed were also church members and club members. Generally, if a man was included in the list, his wife was included as well. These prominent black women generally had careers up until they had children, some even continuing in their careers after they had children. Teaching and nursing were the most popular careers for prominent black women in Knoxville. Many women who had a career but were not yet married expressed a desire to become a housewife one day. Thus, it appears that housewives who were involved in social welfare causes were the ideal black women in Knoxville.[115] Since Knoxville's

[115] Wilson, 20.

black population appeared dedicated to the domestic role of women as the ideal, it is no surprise that they would advocate conservatism within social change. Because of their particular race relations in the city, the black population knew that they could not advocate too much social change if they wanted to institute racial change. Since black populations had a history of working for the collective interests rather than the individual, black women would have been less inclined to advocate for women's suffrage while it was controversial. They needed to prove that they were respectable in order to enter broader society and advocate for the rights of their race. In addition, before they could hope to receive rights as African-American women, they had to secure rights as African-Americans.

It is particularly telling that Knoxville's unique race relations most likely contributed to black women's avoidance of the women's suffrage movement as an incident in Nashville proves that African-American women were willing to work with white suffragists in order to secure particular legislation. African-American and white women came together in Nashville in 1919 to organize women to vote after women received limited municipal voting rights in the city. This interracial cooperation was unique to Nashville and did not happen in other cities in Tennessee.[116] In this particular instance, white women needed black women's votes to institute certain changes and so enticed black women to join them in voting by promising that whites would vote for social betterment causes dear to black women's hearts. Black women decided to work

[116] Anita Shafer Goodstein, "A Rare Alliance: African-American and White Women in the Tennessee Elections of 1919 and 1920," *The Journal of Southern History* 64, no. 2 (May 1998): 219.

with the white women and vote because white women were offering the black women a way to better their race.[117] In Tennessee, it took an instance in which black women saw an opportunity for the vote to benefit their whole race, and not just women, for them to ally themselves with the white women's suffrage movement. However, though black and white women may have come together in Nashville in this particular instance, it does not mean that white women set aside their racial prejudice. They were willing to participate in interracial cooperation in order to serve their own purposes. Just because they were willing to work with black women did not mean that they treated black women any better or worse than Antis did. One suffragist stated, for example, that seeing household employees in line to vote was not enough reason to keep those women's employers from voting.[118] Women wanted to vote whether or not they had to do so with individuals they saw as their social inferiors. Many white women suffragists believed that they were members of the elite and they were willing to risk an association with the most elite members of black women's society in order to achieve specific goals.[119] However, the black women in Nashville took advantage of white women's outreach in order to achieve some of their own goals.[120] Since discrimination was not always a motivating factor to keep black women away from the suffrage cause, there had to be other factors that kept Knoxville's black population from working for suffrage. Though Nashville had a significant black middle class population and many black clubwomen and black women

[117] Ibid., 220.

[118] Ibid., 221-22.

[119] Ibid., 234.

[120] Ibid., 222.

leaders, so did Knoxville. The fact that this interracial cooperation happened in Nashville and not Knoxville when both cities could boast of well-educated and prosperous black females reveals there must have been something different about Knoxville that kept black and white women from working together for suffrage. It is possible that Knoxville's unique race relations contributed to this lack of interracial cooperation in the suffrage movement. The incident of interracial cooperation in Nashville reveals that white women had to see an advantage to reach out to black women and convince them it was in their best interest to vote and black women had to feel that voting might be worth the consequences. In Knoxville, black rhetoric proves that they believed that following conservative paths would lead to better race relations and therefore black women would have seen suffrage work as a determent to their cause.

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This is the newsletter of the National Woman Party. It discusses news relevant to the suffrage movement and this particular issue focuses on the debate over ratification of the nineteenth amendment in Tennessee. It is relevant to this research because it demonstrates Tennesseans' reception of women's suffrage.

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This book discusses the living conditions of the African-American population of Knoxville in the mid-1920s. It notes that most African-Americans were living in poverty and that their public buildings were not equivalent to public buildings for whites. This book is relevant to this thesis because it reveals how African-Americans lived in the early 20th century in Knoxville.

East Tennessee News. June, 1925. Knoxville, TN. Beck Cultural Center.

This publication was an African-American newspaper in Knoxville in the early 20th century. It gives the perspective of the African-American community in Knoxville and discusses events that affected the community.

French, Lizzie Crozier. "Lizzie Crozier French Scrapbook." Scrapbook. Ca 1910s. C.M. McClung Historical Collection, Knox County Public Library, Knoxville, TN.

This scrapbook contains newspaper clippings relevant to the Women's Suffrage Movement. Lizzie Crozier French was a leader of the suffrage movement in Knoxville, TN. The clippings discuss both the work the women did in order to obtain the right to vote and contemporary views concerning race and African-American women's suffrage.

Jackson, R.N., and W.F. Yardley. *Knoxville Bulletin* 1, no. 6 (November 17, 1881). C.M. McClung Historical Collection, Knox County Public Library, Knoxville, TN.

This newspaper was an African-American newspaper in Knoxville. It gives information on what mattered to the black community in Knoxville in the late 19th century. It is important to this thesis because it gives insight into how both white and black communities in Tennessee treated African-American women.

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This is the course catalogue for the historically black college, Knoxville College. It outlines the courses of study offered at the school as well as the school's expectations for students and rules.

KCA Knoxenior. Knoxville, TN. 1923. McClung Historical Collection, Knox Country Library.

This was the yearbook for Knoxville College in 1923. The yearbook highlights important events that took place at the college as well as what everyday life was like for a student at the historically black college. This was the first yearbook produced for Knoxville College and the senior class was responsible for publishing it.

KCA Knoxunior. Knoxville, TN. 1925. McClung Historical Collection, Knox County Library.

This was the yearbook for Knoxville College in 1923. The yearbook highlights important events that took place at the college as well as what everyday life was like for a student at the historically black college. This was the second yearbook produced for Knoxville College and the junior class was responsible for publishing it.

Wilson, Bartow G. *The Knoxville Negro*. Knoxville: Trent Printing Co., 1929.

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SECONDARY SOURCES

<u>Books</u>

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This book highlights elements of the black community in Knoxville, Tennessee. It discusses how blacks made a place for themselves in Knoxville. It is important to this thesis because it provides context for examining African-American women in Knoxville.

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This book outlines women's anti-suffrage work. The author argues that women, rather than men as most suffragists believed, drove the anti-suffrage movement. She analyzes what drove women to advocate against suffrage, what indirect influence they thought they might lose by obtaining the vote and how they worked against the suffrage movement.

Ceplar, Larry. *The Public Years of Sarah and Angelina Grimke: Selected Writings, 1835-1839*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989.

This book is a collection of letters and documents written by the abolitionist Southern women, Sarah and Angelina Grimke. It gives insights into the abolition movement as well as the sisters' views on women's rights. It also highlights how the public received women working in the public sphere. It is relevant to this thesis because it reveals how white women became involved in voluntary associations and how that brought them into the world of men.

Cott, Nancy. *The Bonds of Womanhood*. 1977. Reprint, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997.

This book is about women's roles in early nineteenth century America. It analyzes women's place at home and their contributions to society. It is important to this thesis because it discusses women's role in the family and how the Industrial Revolution changed that role.

Cox, Karen L. *Dreaming of Dixie: How the South was Created in American Popular Culture*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina, 2011.

This book discusses myths surrounding the "Old South." It analyzes how "Lost Cause" mythology and the entertainment industry contributed to the image of an idealized South. It also discusses how this view contributes to how individuals interpret Southern history.

Dudden, Faye E. *Fighting Chance: The Struggle over Woman Suffrage and Black Suffrage in Reconstruction America.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.

This book discusses the intricate details of how the debate over the 14th and 15th amendments led to a rift in the women's suffrage movement. Dudden argues that it was plausible that a women's suffrage amendment could have passed along with amendments protecting African-American rights during reconstruction. However, she says that competing factions within the equal rights movement along with racism and sexism drove wedges between individuals who did not agree on the reconstructions amendments and these things prevented women from being included in the amendments.

Farnham, Christie Ann. *The Education of the Southern Belle: Higher Education and Student Socialization in the Antebellum South.* New York: New York University Press, 1994.

This book outlines and analyzes the education of antebellum southern women. It describes the type of education they received, compares it to the education that men received, and argues that there was advancement in women's education during this time. This is important to this thesis because it discusses how historians viewed how antebellum Southern women were educated participants in society.

Flexner, Eleanor. *Century of Struggle: The Woman's Rights Movement in the United States*. Rev. ed. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1975.

Eleanor Flexner discusses the women's rights movement from the beginning of the American Republic up to the 19th amendment. Flexner argues that feminism and the women's rights movement began well before Seneca Falls. She outlines the ideology and changes in society and economy that led to women's suffrage.

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This book contains a collection of articles that discuss black women's suffrage work. The articles give insight into why black women wanted suffrage and how they worked for it. It is important to this research because it provides a broad context for black women's suffrage work.

Green, Elna C. *Southern Strategies: Southern Women and the Women Suffrage Question.* Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.

This book discusses the strategies behind the suffrage and anti-suffrage movements in the South. It also discusses how the suffrage movement dealt with Southern concerns over the African-American vote. It is relevant to this thesis because it discusses how Southern women became involved in the suffrage movement, why some Southerners were against suffrage and Southerners feelings about black women voting.

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This book discusses how African-American used their influence in the church to push the church into addressing African-American needs in their communities during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Higgenbotham argues that the gendered discourse of the time gave black women a unique perspective concerning the social implications of race and gender.

Keith, Jeanette. *The South: A Concise History Volume 1*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2002.

This textbook outlines the history of the American South. It gives an overview of major events that happened in the South from Colonization up to Reconstruction. It is important to this thesis because it provides background information for the topics discussed.

Kraditor, Aileen. *The Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement 1890-1920.* New York: W.W. Norton, 1981.

This book outlines why women believed they should have the vote and what arguments they used to convince others to join their cause. Kraditor claims that there was no official women's suffrage ideology, but rather that the ideas behind the movement varied from woman to woman and region to region. This book is important to this thesis because it analyzes white women's ideology concerning suffrage and thus provides the background for how black women either did or did not fit into that ideology.

Marshall, Susan. *Splintered Sisterhood: Gender and Class in the Campaign against Woman Suffrage.* Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1997.).

This book analyzes anti-suffragists' ideology. Marshall argues that anti-suffragists were generally upper class women who wanted to preserve the status quo in order to maintain their unique social power dynamic. Marshall also discusses the anti-suffragists' tactics and the arguments they employed.

Neverdon-Morton, Cynthia. *Afro-American Women of the South and the Advancement of the Race, 1895-1925*. Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1989.

This book outlines how Southern African-American women contributed to black society. It discusses ways that they worked to improve themselves and those around them. It also discusses the ways that they reached out to the less fortunate.

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This book outlines the lives of the women in the Petigru family. The book analyzes their letters to each other and explains how they led their lives in antebellum South Carolina. It is important to this thesis because it describes the influence of antebellum Southern women in their families and society.

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This book discusses black women's role in reform in the late 19th and early 20th century. It examines how black women proved their respectability by caring for the less fortunate of their race. It is important to this thesis because it reveals how active black women were in driving social change.

Schwalm, Leslie A. *A Hard Fight for We: Women's Transition from Slavery to Freedom in South Carolina*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1997.

This book discusses how African-American women created a role for themselves in free society. It argues that black women did not merely conform to roles that whites attempted to create for them. It also discusses how slavery affected their worldview and how they associated with other people.

Scott, Anne Firor, and Andrew M. Scott. *One Half the People: The Fight for Woman Suffrage*. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1975.

This book provides a short history of the women's suffrage movement and then provides an anthology of articles that are relevant to women's suffrage. The articles discuss major issues that affected the movement. In particular, they discuss anti-suffrage activity, what motivated suffragists, and how racial attitudes affected the movement.

Stowe, Steven M. *Intimacy and Power in the Old South: Ritual in the Lives of the Planters*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987.

This book discusses how ritual played a significant role in the culture of the antebellum South. It analyzes how ritual allowed Southern elites to maintain their system of hierarchy. It is important to this thesis because it discusses the differences in society for men and women in the 19th century.

Taylor, A. Elizabeth. *The Woman Suffrage Movement in Tennessee*. New York: Bookman, 1957.

This book gives a brief overview of the women's suffrage movement in Tennessee. Taylor outlines how different Tennessee women worked for and against suffrage. She briefly mentions African-American women's interest in the movement and discusses white women's attitude toward black women voters.

Terborg-Penn, Rosalyn. *African-American Women in the Struggle for the Vote, 1850-1920*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1998.

This book outlines African-American women's participation in the women's suffrage movement. It describes how they worked for women's suffrage both on their own and within the mainstream white women's suffrage movement. It discusses why black women wanted suffrage and the strategies they used to argue for it.

Varon, Elizabeth R. *We Mean to be Counted: White Women and Politics in Antebellum Virginia*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press. 1998.

This book describes women's political participation in the antebellum South. It outlines how women's political participation was important to society. It is useful for

this project because it describes how women affected society through their involvement in politics.

Wheeler, Marjorie Spruill. *One Woman, One Vote: Rediscovering the Woman Suffrage Movement*. Troutdale, OR: New Sage Press, 1995.

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Journal Articles

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This article describes the lives of a liberal couple who lived in the antebellum South. It outlines how they were anomalies in Southern culture yet describes how the South still accepted them. However, though the author discusses the wife's life briefly, he spends much more time discussing the husband. This article is important to this thesis because it reveals how historians in the 1940's viewed the discussion of women's history and what they expected of antebellum Southern women.

Goodstein, Anita Shafer. "A Rare Alliance: African-American and White Women in the Tennessee Elections of 1919 and 1920." *The Journal of Southern History* 64, no. 2 (May 1998): 219-46.

This article discusses how, after receiving the ability to vote in state elections, white and black women formed an alliance in order to achieve their personal goals. The article discusses how this was not common and did not generally happen in other places and points out that white women courted black women's votes in order to convince black women to vote for the causes white women supported. This article is important for this research because it analyzes how white and black women were generally politically isolated from each other and it reveals what it took in order for the two races of women to work together.

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This article discusses how scholars define race. It notes that race is a social construction used to maintain social power structures. It is important because it identifies why black women faced unique issues.

Jabour, Anya. "'Grown Girls, Highly Cultivated': Female Education in an Antebellum Southern Family." *The Journal of Southern History* 64, no. 1 (February 1998): 23-64.

This article discusses the education of antebellum Southern women. It discusses whether women's education coincided or went beyond societal expectations for women. This relates to my research because as I have several sources that deal with education it will help me analyze what different historians thought about women's education.

Johnson, Joan Marie. "'Drill into us ... the Rebel Tradition': The Contest over Southern Identity in Black and White Women's Clubs, South Carolina, 1898-1930." *Journal of Southern History* 66, no. 3 (August 2000): 525-62.

This article discusses the difference between the ways that white and black women's clubs told the story of American history. It argues that each group created their own identity based on their version of history and that white women's groups revised history to establish a "lost cause" mythology. Because white women and black women operated on different assumptions concerning society, black women generally would not have wanted to participate in white women's clubs even if white women allowed black women to do so.

Jones, Beverly W. "Mary Church Terrell and the National Association of Colored Women, 1896-1901." *Journal of Negro History* 67, no. 1 (Spring 1982): 20-33.

This article discusses one of the leaders of the black women's club movement. It analyzes how Terrell and black women's clubs influenced black women's social involvement and effort to elevate their race. It is important for this project because it contextualizes the broader impact of the black club movement.

Kirkley, Evelyn A. "'This Work is God's Cause': Religion in the Southern Woman Suffrage Movement, 1880-1920." *Church History* 59, no. 4 (December 1990): 507-22.

This article discusses the role of religion in the Southern woman suffrage movement. It claims that, although suffragists' main tool was not Biblical references, individual religion and a pervasive religiosity within the movement played a role in suffrage. It is important to this thesis because it demonstrates how white women used religion to legitimate suffrage.

Knupfer, Anne Meis. "'If You Can't Push, Pull, if You Can't Pull, Please Get Out of the Way': The Phyllis Wheatley Club and Home in Chicago, 1896-1920." *Journal of Negro History* 82, no. 2 (Spring 1997): 221-31.

This article discusses how black women contributed to social reform in urban areas, using Chicago as a case study. It discusses the hardships that blacks faced in urban areas and the ways that black women came together to address those hardships. It is

important to this research because it analyzes why it was necessary for black women to help others and how their actions elevated their race.

Lakin, Matthew. "'A Dark Night': The Knoxville Race Riot of 1919." *The Journal of East Tennessee History* 72 (2000): 1-29.

This article discusses a race riot that happened in Knoxville in 1919. It describes the racial conditions of the city and the events that contributed to the riot. It is important to this thesis because it elucidates race relations in the subject city.

Lamon, Lester C. "Tennessee Race Relations and the Knoxville Riot of 1919." *The East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications* 41 (1969): 67-85.

This article discusses a race riot that happened in Knoxville in 1919. It describes the conditions and events in Knoxville that led to the riot. It is important to this thesis because it discusses how, even in a city that claimed to have good race relations, there was always racial tension in the early 20th century.

Leab, Grace. "Tennessee Temperance Activities, 1870-1899." *The East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications* 21 (1949): 52-68.

This article describes men and women's temperance activities in Tennessee during the late 19th century. It discusses how women were particularly involved in the movement and mentions African-American women's temperance societies. It is important to this thesis, as temperance activity was often the first collective social work that women did.

Lerner, Gerda. "Early Community Work of Black Club Women." *Journal of Negro History* 59, no. 2 (April 1974): 158-67.

This article discusses how black women took social reform from a grassroots to a national movement. It discusses why black women needed clubs and what social hardships the clubs addressed. It combats the myth that blacks did not help themselves and argues that blacks had a trend of working to better their race.

O'Brien. C.C. "'The White Women All Go for Sex': Frances Harper on Suffrage, Citizenship, and the Reconstruction South." *African-American Review* 43, no. 4 (Winter 2009): 605-20.

This article discusses the differences in white women and black women's societal concerns during reconstruction. It points out how black women were concerned for their entire race and how white women did not consider that concern. It also discusses the discrepancy between how black women were viewed as harlots and black men as sexual predators when, historically, white men were the ones who took advantage of black women. It reveals why black women may have been hesitant to join white women in the woman suffrage movement.

Scott, Anne Firor. "Most Invisible of All: Black Women's Voluntary Associations." *The Journal of Southern History* 56, no. 1 (February 1990): 3-22.

This article discusses how black women organized into benevolent associations and unions during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These organizations greatly impacted their communities, however, it took years for white historians to recognize that impact. This article is enlightening concerning how black women banded together to address the problems that faced their entire race.

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This article describes how women were not always happy with the limited role carved out for them in the antebellum Southern patriarchy. It outlines how, while they still supported Southern society, they indirectly protested their confinement to domestic life. This is important to this thesis because it divulges how historians in the 1970s believed that antebellum Southern women wanted to step out of the domestic sphere.

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This article describes how science became an important topic for women across this nation. It discusses how, in school, women learned the same scientific concepts that their male counterparts learned. This article is relevant to this thesis because it demonstrates that women intended to be educated participants in society.

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This article discusses women's place in society in the mid-nineteenth century. Welter argues that society valued certain qualities in women and that those qualities were best cultivated at home. It is important to this thesis because it show the structure of pre-suffrage society.

Yeatts, Jason M. "'That We May Think Right, Vote Right, and Do Right': Knoxville's Black Community, 1864-1867." *The Journal of East Tennessee History* 82 (2010): 76-100.

This article discusses what life was like for African-American in Knoxville directly after the Civil War. It describes African-American communities and efforts to make a place from themselves in society. It is important to this thesis because it discusses the creation of a free African-American society in the subject city.