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Artour Aslanian

Claremont Graduate University, artour.aslanian@cgu.edu

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The Use of Rhetoric in Anti-Suffrage and Anti-Feminist Publications

Artour Aslanian
 Claremont Graduate University
 School of Politics & Economics

After decades of struggling to gain the right to vote, women were finally granted that right with the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment on August 18, 1920. While it would seem that most, if not all, women would be in favor of gaining the right to vote, the women's suffrage movement did not represent the wishes of all women within the United States. Scholarship in this area largely focuses on the historical developments of the suffrage movements, with the presence of female opponents of suffrage and anti-suffragist organizations receiving less attention.¹ These anti-suffragists were vocal in their opposition to the suffragists who represented a threat to their ideal of womanhood. While female suffragists largely ignored them at that time, it is important to acknowledge their presence in American history.²

Following the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, the women within the anti-suffrage movement did not disappear, but instead "organized themselves into a broad political movement in order to oppose expansion of social welfare programs, women's peace efforts, and to foster a political culture hostile to progressive female activists." This anti-feminist movement persisted throughout the 1920s, using its influence to try and halt what they saw as being subversive legislation, before largely disappearing into political obscurity.³

While it may appear odd that women were fighting against the extension of suffrage and reform legislation that would seem to benefit them, it is important to hear the justifications they used for supporting such movements. To that end, this study focuses on comparing rhetorical arguments used by a string of major anti-suffrage and anti-feminist publications which followed one another in order to examine how arguments were used by each to promote their agenda. This

¹ This has to do with the fact that "antisuffragists ultimately became part of history's forgotten 'losers.'" Thomas Jablonsky, "Female Opposition: The Anti Suffrage Campaign" as featured in *Votes for Women: The Struggle for Suffrage Revisited*, ed. Jean Baker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 129. Hereinafter cited as Jablonsky, "Female Opposition."

² Jane Jerome Camhi, *Women Against Women: American Anti-Suffragism, 1880-1920* (Brooklyn: Carlson Publishing Inc., 1994), 1. Hereinafter cited as Camhi, *Women Against Women*. Suffragists tended to dismiss women within the antisuffrage movement as being "passive fronts for men." Susan E. Marshall, *Splintered Sisterhood: Gender and Class in the Campaign against Woman Suffrage* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1997), 73. Hereinafter cited as Marshall, *Splintered Sisterhood*.

³ Kim Nielsen, "Introduction", *How Did Women Antifeminists Shape and Limit Social Reform Movements of the 1920s?* (Binghamton: State University of New York, 2004), accessed electronically from the Women and Social Movements in the United States database, <http://asp6new.alexanderstreet.com.ezproxy.libraries.claremont.edu/wam2/wam2.object.details.aspx?dorpId=1000678983>. Hereinafter cited as Nielsen, "Introduction."

study seeks to answer if arguments used by anti-suffragist publications were similar to those used by anti-feminist publications. Due to the relationship between the anti-suffrage and anti-feminist movements, it is likely that the rhetoric used in both movements would be quite similar.

Background of Anti-Suffrage and Anti-Feminist Movements

Prior to analyzing the rhetoric used in the publications, it will be useful to provide a brief background on the anti-suffragist and anti-feminist movements and what prior literature has stated about the principles of these movements. The anti-suffrage movement can trace its historical origins to 1868-1869, following the introduction of a proposal legalizing woman suffrage in the Massachusetts state legislature. In response, two hundred women countered this petition “with a ‘remonstrance’” in which they pleaded with their elected officials to reject forcing onto the female citizenry the ballot.⁴ Marshall states that in 1871, the first instance of women’s antisuffrage mobilization occurred when “nineteen women published a petition to the U.S. Congress remonstrating against votes for women in the editorial pages of the popular *Godey’s Lady’s Book and Magazine*.”⁵ Its formal beginning could be traced to the 1880s where the movement started building its institutions.⁶ The movement initially began as general public disapproval of arguments made by suffragists through mediums such as the press or the pulpit. It gained momentum throughout the 1890s during the period of state amendment campaigns regarding women suffrage, culminating in the peak of its power and influence between 1895 and 1907.⁷⁸ By 1911, the movement existed largely through diffuse state associations before merging together to form the National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage (NAOWS) in New York City which was active from 1912-1918. NAOWS continued to grow, coordinating the activities of twenty-five state associations by 1916.⁹ Unlike the suffragist movement, anti-suffragism was not exemplified as a mass movement.¹⁰

In her analysis of anti-suffragist thought, Camhi identifies three premises that were present within the movement. Anti-suffragists believed that women exercised the right of suffrage through proxy; due to her dominant influence on her husband and sons, it was argued that the males in the family would be certain to follow her wishes, implying that women were adequately represented in politics through their husbands.^{11 12} Anti-suffragists also saw citizenship as being independent from the privilege of suffrage. A third premise of the movement was that women did not constitute a separate class, rather every woman that was a part of a

⁴ Jablonsky, “Female Opposition,” 119.

⁵ Marshall, *Splintered Sisterhood*, 20.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 23. Camhi, *Women Against Women*, 2.

⁷ Camhi, *Women Against Women*, 2.

⁸ Aileen S. Kraditor, *The Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement, 1890-1920* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965), 14. Hereinafter cited as Kraditor, *Ideas*.

⁹ Nielsen, “Introduction.”

¹⁰ Kraditor, *Ideas*, 14.

¹¹ M., “Women Do Not Want the Vote Despite Cry of Suffragists,” *The Woman’s Protest*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (May, 1912), 7.

¹² Camhi, *Women Against Women*, 33.

group was represented by the “well-ordered government, automatically and inevitably, by the men of that group”¹³

Anti-suffragists did not deny that women had natural rights, but they pointed to their natural differences in order to deny equal political rights for women.¹⁴ Throughout the United States, four premises supported this denial of equal political rights: that God ordained women to serve the desires of men; that women consented to obey men in exchange for protection, thereby creating an inequality; that women voting would not be able to fulfill their role as the caretaker of the family; and the belief that women are “good persons” which made them ineligible to become “good citizens” since good citizens occasionally have to engage in bad behavior.¹⁵

The main anti-suffrage arguments consisted of claims that “woman’s vote was a threat to the home, to God’s will, and to government stability.”^{16 17} Anti-suffragists saw the extension of suffrage as a dangerous tool because they believed that it would give control of government over to those in society who were unfit to handle that responsibility.¹⁸ Jablonsky notes, “At times their arguments contradicted one another. At times other anti-suffragists demonstrated a perceptive understanding of the wishes of a great many American women in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. From this construct came a finished product, the ideology of anti-suffragism.”¹⁹

Marshall identifies the fact that “Mobilization against suffrage was precipitated by the perceived threat of the suffrage movement, but rather than suffrage successes, it was suffrage persistence that aroused antisuffrage organization.” The women that composed the leadership of the antisuffrage movement did not come from the same social strata as did the suffrage leaders. Antisuffrage leaders were members of the “American aristocracy” who used their “privileged class positions to great advantage.”²⁰ These antisuffrage women “fought suffrage as a threat to their own positions of privilege.”²¹

“After the passage of the Susan B. Anthony amendment, a handful of diehards transformed NAOWS into the Woman Patriot Corporation which, throughout the twenties, continued its anti-suffrage battle in the guise of anti-socialist, anti-bolshevik, and anti-radical

¹³ Camhi, *Women Against Women*, 33.

¹⁴ Suzanne M. Marilley, *Woman Suffrage and the Origins of Liberal Feminism in the United States, 1820-1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), 4.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, 9.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, 196.

¹⁷ This list is also affirmed by Kraditor, *Ideas*, 15.

¹⁸ Kraditor, *Ideas*, 32.

¹⁹ Jablonsky writes that “Through monographs, magazine articles, letters to the editor, debates, pamphlets, and press releases, anti-suffragists wove an ideological tapestry that portrayed their intertwined assumptions about women and American society. Beneath the surface colors of this weaving lay a sturdy, plain warp comprising three fundamental principles: duty, nature, and stability. Upon these elements was built whatever insight, whatever bigotry, whatever sincerity emanated from the anti-suffrage camp. Around these principles developed an intricate set of arguments, some universal in character, others expedient and contemporary... From this construct came a finished product, the ideology of anti-suffragism.” Thomas Jablonsky, *The Home, Heaven, and Mother Party: Female Anti-Suffragists in the United States, 1868-1920*, (Brooklyn: Carlson Publishing Inc., 1994), 32. Hereinafter cited as Jablonsky, *The Home, Heaven, and Mother Party*.

²⁰ Marshall, *Splintered Sisterhood*, 56.

²¹ *Ibid*, 5.

rhetoric.”²² These anti-feminists gained political experience throughout the anti-suffrage movement and used the experience they had obtained to develop an ideology that “embraced antiradicalism and antistatism as well as gender, sexual and family conservatism.” The organizations that fought against feminism during the 1920s resisted the expansion of the federal welfare state and any legislation that attempted to accomplish this progressive state building.²³ Much like their counterparts, anti-feminists also made sure to emphasize the point that men and women had different relationships to the state, influenced by their gender.²⁴

Anti-feminism developed in a tumultuous era. A year prior to the birth of the movement, the Red Scare of 1919-1920 had come about, which was influential to the development of the anti-feminist ideology.²⁵ The movement expressed a more poignant sense of paranoia in which anti-feminism was linked with anti-radicalism and anti-statism. Anti-feminists feared that feminist influence would make the newly enfranchised women support radical legislation to expand the role of the state. One such measure that anti-feminists expressed concern over was the Child Labor Amendment, which would have given Congress the authority to prohibit labor of anyone under the age of eighteen. Anti-feminists feared such state-expanding measures as being detrimental to the patriarchal family, the cornerstone of the liberal democratic state.²⁶

Methodology

In order to compare the rhetoric employed by the anti-suffragist and anti-feminist movements, primary sources were utilized. These primary sources consisted of newspaper articles contained within three prominent anti-suffrage and anti-feminist newspapers: *The Anti-Suffragist: Devoted to placing before the public the reasons why it is inexpedient to extend the ballot to women*²⁷, which began publication in July, 1908 and ended publication in April, 1912; *The Woman's Protest Against Woman Suffrage*²⁸ which began publication in May of 1912 and

²² Jablonsky, “Female Opposition,” 125.

²³ Kim Nielsen, *Un-American Womanhood: Antiradicalism, Antifeminism, and the First Red Scare*, (2001), 1. Hereinafter cited as Nielsen, *Un-American Womanhood*.

²⁴ Ibid, 2.

²⁵ Ibid, 13-14.

²⁶ Nielsen, “Introduction”, (2004).

²⁷ The *Anti Suffragist* was based in Albany, New York and was published by the Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage. Regarding the background of the publication, Jablonsky writes, “Remonstrants in New York, who rivaled their cousins in Massachusetts for leadership of the national movement, imitated the Bay State antis and in 1908 established their own quarterly titled *Anti-Suffragist*. The editorship was held by Mrs. Winslow Crannell. A modest venture compared to the *Remonstrance*, the *Anti-Suffragist* published speeches and articles by conservative women and men, and made a particular point of keeping its readership informed of all anti-suffrage activities in other countries. The New York publication was simply taking its lead from *Remonstrance*, and, appropriately, the two merged in 1912.” Jablonsky, *The Home, Heaven, and Mother Party*, 21.

²⁸ *The Woman's Protest* was based in Albany, New York and was published by the National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage. *The Woman's Protest* was published on a monthly basis. Jablonsky mentions, “The monthly magazine listed state affiliates, the officers and various activities of NAOWS as well as news from around the country and around the world. It reprinted exceptional anti-suffrage speeches and excerpted articles from other publications, such as *North American Review*. The most famous members of anti-suffrage affiliates graced the pages

ended publication in November of 1917; and *The Woman Patriot: Dedicated to the defense of womanhood, motherhood, the family and the state, against suffragism, feminism, and socialism*²⁹ which began publication on April 27, 1918 and ended publication in December, 1932. Since these newspapers followed each other in sequence, it provided a method to document the change or similarity in rhetoric used in the movements they represented. All newspaper articles were accessed electronically through the Gerritsen Collection of Aletta H. Jacobs.

Content analysis was performed on 200 articles total.³⁰ The first 100 articles analyzed were from the anti-suffrage era, beginning with the first publication of *The Anti-Suffragist* in June, 1908 and culminating with the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment granting women the right to vote on August 18, 1920. The 100 articles analyzed after the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment were considered to be part of the anti-feminist movement.³¹ Each article examined was coded into an Excel spreadsheet and later transferred into STATA 11, which was used to conduct ANOVA analysis, difference of proportion tests, and tabulations to analyze the coded data. The data was coded with the use of dummy variables indicating whether or not a specific type of rhetorical argument was used.³²

Data Gathering

The data gathering was done on non-randomly based on content in order to analyze only relevant articles dealing with issues of suffrage or reform. This nonrandom selection of articles was especially important when working with articles in *The Woman Patriot* since the newspaper dealt with diverse topics, some of which had nothing to do with feminism. The anti-suffrage articles selected focused on the topic of suffrage in general, implications of granting women suffrage, and discussions of the Nineteenth Amendment. In order to get the closest parallel to rhetoric used in anti-suffrage articles, the anti-feminist articles selected for this study primarily dealt with arguments against reforms that would affect women, or was perceived to affect women such as the Sheppard–Towner Maternity and Infancy Protection Act of 1921 which sought to secure federal funding to help fund child care and maternity as well as legislation dealing with child labor laws.³³

of *Woman's Protest* as the antis strove to identify their cause with the respectable elements of American society.” Jablonsky, *The Home, Heaven, and Mother Party*, 86, 100.

²⁹ The *Woman Patriot* was based in Washington D.C. and was published by the Woman Patriot Publishing Company. *The Woman Patriot* was published on a weekly basis. Jablonsky writes, “With a revised editorial staff, the new publication embraced a journalistic style worthy of the most notorious tabloids of that era. Accusatory photographs linking suffragists with subversive elements were sprinkled throughout its pages. Larger, bolder headlines screamed out the dangers of woman suffrage and its disloyal allies. Weekly articles authored by Margaret Robinson of Massachusetts provided a continuous stream of calumny guaranteed to exploit the most sensational in feminist news. Jablonsky, *The Home, Heaven, and Mother Party*, 100.

³⁰ The breakdown of individual articles examined within each paper are as follows: *Anti Suffragist* – n = 38; *The Woman's Protest* – n = 44; *The Woman Patriot* – n = 118.

³¹ To clarify, when referring to anti-suffragists, I mean women who were part of the movement to deny other women the right to suffrage prior to the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment. Anti-Feminists are used to delineate women that were a part of the movement to deny women various rights after the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment.

³² Data was also coded by era in order to help run the analysis to examine how the arguments differed by era.

³³ Nielsen, “Introduction.”

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Socialism

During the data gathering process, there were six different types of primary arguments identified that were used in order to deny women suffrage or reforms pertaining to women. More than one type of argument could be made in a single article. The first type of argument linked suffragists or feminists to socialism. Arguments that made this connection would link prominent figures within the suffrage or feminist movements to leaders of pro-socialist groups internationally, highlight aspects of these programs that they considered socialistic, or link the overall aim of these movements as trying to promote or fulfill the goals of socialism, communism, and Bolshevism.

Margaret C. Robinson's article "Have You Time to Save Your Country?" provides an example of one type of argument espousing socialistic rhetoric:

Socialism is known to be in every country the cover for German propaganda, which has proved far more successful and more deadly than German guns. Woman suffrage is its twin. New York Socialists claim that when they have had time to naturalize the foreign Socialist women that socialism will be unbeatable in New York. It will be equally unbeatable in New Jersey, Massachusetts, or any State with a large foreign industrial population, if votes are granted to women. No wonder the Pro-German Socialists in New York worked so hard to gain woman suffrage!³⁴

Radicalism

Jablonsky writes, "to anti-suffragists, feminism meant radicalism, and radicalism intrinsically meant socialism."³⁵ An argument would be considered to fall under the radicalism category if it explicitly stated that women in the suffrage or reform movements were radicals or supported a radical ideology. Any other use of the term radical that did not fulfill either condition listed above would not have been considered as employing radicalism rhetoric. The following portrays a typical radicalism argument:

Predatory lobbies working for the Radical Congressional Program operate disguised as uplifters and welfarers. Under the banner of "care of mothers and babies," the last attack on the Constitution and raid on the Treasury was made by the cohorts of State Medicine, Health Insurance, Birth Control, Maternity Benefits or Endowments of Motherhood, State Care of Children and the European "Doles" system (which threatens Great Britain with bankruptcy today) and by all the disciples of Alexandra Kollontay's Soviet Russian Maternity and Infancy System, re-enforced by every job-hunting social worker in the country.³⁶

³⁴ Margaret C. Robinson, "Have You Time to Save Your Country?," *The Woman Patriot*, Vol. 1, No. 4, (May 18, 1918), 4.

³⁵ Jablonsky, *The Home, Heaven, and Mother Party*, 43.

³⁶ "Defensive Measures Against Radical Program", *The Woman Patriot*, Vol. 7, No. 19, (December 1, 1923), 2.

Later in the same article, the author makes the distinction between “subversive radicals” who are attempting to restrict the Supreme Court and the American people who are seeking to defend the independent judiciary and therefore preserve the institutions within the Constitution.³⁷

Militarism

The use of a militarism argument labels women fighting for feminist reforms or the right to vote as being militants, terrorists, or as part of a mob. This category, like radicalism, also has to make an explicit reference to a group as being militant. The use of militaristic rhetoric is illustrated in the following quotation: “Militant women have invaded Wisconsin and have caught the attention of a certain class of their sisters, and these, with the support of a number of noted theorists and dreamers, are asking that the voters impose the ballot upon ALL women of the State.”³⁸

Traditional Values

An article that would be coded under traditional values would have to link a specific reform or suffrage as being incompatible with the traditional role of a woman. For example, an anti-suffragist may mention that a woman entering politics would not be able to take care of the home while an anti-feminist would argue that the Maternity Act being considered in Congress would make education of a child a state’s responsibility therefore abrogating the right of the parent to raise their own child. Unlike the previous three categories, this category did not have to make an explicit mention of an incompatibility (though often times it did).³⁹

An example of a traditional value argument can be seen in the following article: Will the women vote? The radicals, yes - those with any ISM, yes - also a few patriots - but the majority of home women, and, therefore, the majority of all women, No. Woman suffrage handicaps the conscientious woman with family cares. She cannot fill political office, she cannot enter political life, without neglect of duties of greater value - yet she is the country’s greatest asset. Is it so just to handicap her?⁴⁰

With reform legislation such as the Child Labor Amendment, there was also a great concern for the welfare of the mother and her traditional role in society. In describing the effect of the proposed amendment on the Constitution, anti-feminists made their sentiments known by quoting Thomas F. Cadwalader who stated that “Under this amendment Congress can legislate for any reason at all and becomes the undisputed master of the lives of all minors under eighteen,

³⁷ “Defensive Measures Against Radical Program”, *The Woman Patriot*, Vol. 7, No. 19, (December 1, 1923), 2.

³⁸ M., “Women Do Not Want the Vote Despite Cry of Suffragists,” (May, 1912), 7.

³⁹ Whereas the first three categories were more about the use of specific terms to identify the woman’s suffrage and feminist movements, the last three categories are more conceptual.

⁴⁰ Katherine T. Balch, “The Dangers of Federal Suffrage”, *The Woman Patriot*, Vol. 4, No. 28 (July 10, 1920), 5.

and therefore, of all families containing such minors.” The anti-statism of the anti-feminists is readily apparent through these types of arguments.⁴¹

Country Security

Country security arguments make the claim that giving women reforms or suffrage would be incompatible with the ideals of a republican form of government, or that perhaps by passing reforms that are socialistic, we may be transforming our political system to one mirroring a German or Russian system. Mrs. A. J. George makes the following statement in an article in *The Woman's Protest*, “The Suffragists are in revolt against our form of government, and we feel that we should be unpatriotic and untrue to our ideals of democracy if we should fail to organize and work against them.”⁴²

In discussing the topic of standardized education, Anti-feminists would make similar arguments about the dangers to the country due to government centralization. In an article in *the Woman Patriot* entitled “Local Self-Government in Education”, anti-feminists quoted Secretary of the Department of the Interior, Ray Wilbur in highlighting the danger of developing a national standardized education:

We cannot rise higher than our source. That source in government with us is local. The family and the local community must be the places where citizenship is built and where the fiber of the nation is strengthened and its forces recruited. Too much help from afar is harmful to the initiative and self-reliance requisite for character in a community.⁴³

Do Not Need

For an article to be coded as making a “do not need” argument, it would have to make the claim that women did not need suffrage or the reform being considered because of two reasons. The first reason is that women were not interested in obtaining suffrage or reform legislation. The second reason would indicate that women did not need it because it would not help them obtain what they set out to seek in the first place.⁴⁴

An example of this rhetorical argument can be seen in M.H.F.’s article within *The Anti-Suffragist*:

At the present time the great majority of American women are opposed to women suffrage. The Anti-Suffragist has been known as the “silent woman,” but now the time has come for the voice of the majority to be heard; it has become a plain duty to protest

⁴¹ Thomas F. Cadwalader, “Short Arguments Against Twentieth Amendment”, *The Woman Patriot*, Vol. 8, No. 17, (September 1, 1924), 2.

⁴² A.J. George, “Why We Are Anti-Suffragists”, *The Woman's Protest*, Vol. 7, No. 6, (October, 1915), 5.

⁴³ Ray Lyman Wilbur, “Local Self Government in Education”, *The Woman Patriot*, Vol.13, No. 9, (May 1, 1929), 1.

⁴⁴ This category is affirmed within anti-suffragism by Kraditor who, in explaining anti-suffrage ideology, identified the argument that women did not want to vote. Kraditor also stated the following: “Antis repeatedly insisted that the suffragists overestimated what the vote could accomplish.”; Kraditor, *Ideas*, 34, 36.

that it would be no right but a wrong, no act of justice, but a great injustice to make women bear the burdens of political life, when it's merely the demand of a small minority so restless and dissatisfied that they have no time to enjoy their privileges which are far greater than they would be if political equality were granted them.⁴⁵

Anti-suffragists also made the argument that the right to vote could not create public policy, but rather that voting was used to reflect opinions already formed through the evolution of public opinion, a sphere that women were in a position to influence as mother and wife without suffragism. As such, the vote could only cause harm to the political system, since it would thrust political duties onto them, and cause them to concern themselves less with their traditional role as mother or wife.⁴⁶

Anti-feminists on the other hand, emphasized the dangers of reform such as the Sheppard-Towner Act in which it was stated that “Congress has no power under the Constitution ‘to raise and support children’ nor the right to tell States and parents how they shall be ‘raised.’⁴⁷ For anti-feminists, these types of reforms were wrought with corruption and would only damage society, which is why they felt that these reforms were not needed.

Analysis/Results

Table 1 – Frequency of Arguments Used

Type of Argument	Frequency Used (percentage in parentheses)
Socialism	61 (30.5)
Radicalism	20 (10)
Militarism	19 (9.5)
Traditional Values	76 (38)
Country Security	76 (38)
Do Not Need	88 (44)

N=200

Table 1 illustrates the overall frequency of the arguments used. The “do not need” arguments came about as being the most frequent, being used in 44% of the articles examined. Traditional values or country security rhetoric were used slightly less, being present in 38% of the articles, with socialism coming in as the fourth most frequent argument used by anti-

⁴⁵ M.H.F., “The Voice of the Majority”, *The Anti-Suffragist*, Vol. 2, No. 1, (September, 1909), 2.

⁴⁶ Kraditor’s quote proves enlightening when we consider this argument, “History proved that when women participated in government, their nations suffered: consider Cleopatra, Marie Antoinette, and Catherine de Medicis.” Kraditor, *Ideas*, 35, 37.

⁴⁷ “Fundamental Objections to the Maternity Bill”, *The Woman Patriot*, Vol. 5, No. 30, (November 15, 1921), 4.

suffragists/anti-feminists, being used approximately 31% of the time. Used the least, were arguments portraying suffragists or feminists or their ideology as being radical (10%), and arguments referring to these groups as militants (9.5%).

While Table 1 is informative in telling us about the overall frequency of the different arguments, it does so at the expense of being able to illustrate how these arguments may have been used over time. Table 2 shows the usage of arguments by era:

Table 2 – Frequency of Arguments by Era (percentage in parentheses)

Type of Argument	Anti-Suffrage	Anti-Feminism
Socialism	17 (27.9)	44 (72.1)
Radicalism	4 (20)	16 (80)
Militarism	15 (78.9)	4 (21.1)
Traditional Values	40 (52.6)	36 (47.4)
Country Security	24 (31.6)	52 (68.4)
Do Not Need	55 (62.5)	33 (37.5)

N=200

Out of the 200 articles analyzed, rhetoric portraying suffragists/feminists as socialists increased by a dramatic margin after the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment. Considering the circumstances at the time, this result is not surprising. Americans believed that The Russian Revolution of 1917 and the Bolshevik rise to power in 1919 promoted “unnatural gender roles, immoral sexual values, victimized feminine women, and power-hungry masculine women.” The Red-Scare of 1919-1920 similarly kept Americans on their guard against socialistic influences in American society.⁴⁸

Arguments emphasizing the security of the country, or its ideals followed the same pattern as socialistic arguments. In the aftermath of the Russian civil war, government agencies warned the public of a threat of Bolshevik incursions into American society. As a result, Americans felt threatened and feared a Bolshevik takeover of schools, government, clubs, and families. This takeover was not going to be through military action but through brainwashing and infiltration of institutions such as “organized labor, political and racial reform groups, religion, women’s clubs, and the family.”⁴⁹

Claims that the women supporting feminism were radicals were more pronounced than it was for their suffrage counterparts. As mentioned above, in the aftermath of World War I, many Americans were paranoid about the possibility of domestic subversives. As a result, those who were seen as a threat to the status quo of society were seen as radicals. The efforts to pass “radical” legislation such as the Maternity Act were seen as a method to instill society with radical socialistic values which would decimate the family.⁵⁰

On the other hand, rhetoric, which stated that women do not need suffrage, was more prevalent than those arguing that they did not need reforms like the Sheppard-Townshend Act.

⁴⁸ Nielsen, *Un-American Womanhood*, 14, 28.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 14.

⁵⁰ The Red Scare was also called a period of antiradicalism by historians, Ibid, 4.

This may be attributed to the fact that anti-suffrage organizations had one goal in mind and that was to prevent suffrage from being extended to women. Anti-suffragists were aided by the fact that some states had already granted the right of suffrage to women and as a result, anti-suffragists were able to compile data in those states to try and prove their point. An example of this is presented in an article in *The Anti Suffragist*, “It is said by the Suffragists that 40 per cent of the women of Denver, Colorado, vote; but they always fail to say that only 10 per cent of the women in the country districts of Colorado take the trouble to vote.”⁵¹

Anti-suffragists also used militaristic rhetoric to describe their opponents in a greater frequency than anti-feminists did. Historical accounts tend to shed light as the reason that this may have been so. During the course of the suffrage movement, American suffragists eventually began emulating the militaristic tactics of their British counterparts.⁵² The term militarism may be a bit misleading considering the fact those militant suffragists in America did stop short of using violence to achieve their objective.⁵³

While the frequency of arguments within the two eras has been examined, it is also necessary to run difference of proportion tests in order to see if the differences of argumentation between the eras were statistically significant:

Table 3 – Difference of Proportion Tests (Overall)

Type of Argument	Difference (Suffrage-Feminist)	P-Value (diff<0)	P-Value (diff!=0)	P-Value (diff>0)
Socialism	-.27	0.0000	0.0000	1.0000
Radicalism	-.12	0.0023	0.0047	0.9977
Militarism	.11	0.9960	0.0080	0.0040
Traditional Values	.04	0.7200	0.5601	0.2800
Country Security	-.28	0.0000	0.0000	1.0000
Do Not Need	.22	0.9991	0.0017	0.0009

Cutoff: Error level of .05

Note: A negative difference indicates an increased use of the specific argument after August 18, 1920.

Within the anti-feminist era, the difference in the amount of times that socialist, country security, and radical rhetoric is used is statistically significant, with each having a p-values of

⁵¹ “Colorado Voters”, *The Anti-Suffragist*, Vol. 2, No. 3, (March, 1910), 6.

⁵² Articles in Anti-suffrage publications seem to also hint toward the possibility of Americans using the militant tactics of their British counterparts. See “Do American Suffragists Favor Militancy?” *The Woman Patriot*, Vol. 4, No. 2, (December, 1913), 12.

⁵³ Christine Bolt, *The Women’s Movements in the United States and Britain from the 1790s to the 1920s*, (2004), 236.

0.0000 and 0.0023. The anti-suffragists increased use of militaristic and “do not need” arguments is also statistically significant with p-values of .0040 and .0009 respectively.

While traditional values rhetoric was employed slightly more in anti-suffrage articles, the difference of proportion tests reveals that this difference was not statistically significant, with a p-value of 0.5601. The result of this test confirms that it is possible for there to be no difference between the amount of times traditional values are utilized within anti-suffrage articles compared to anti-feminist articles.

In order to find out how specific newspapers differed in the type of argumentation used, ANOVA tests were conducted:

Table 4 – ANOVA Analysis of Variance of Argument by Newspaper

Type of Argument	F (Diff=0)	Prob>F (Diff=0)
Socialism	7.59	0.0007***
Radicalism	4.55	0.0117*
Militarism	1.58	0.2078
Traditional Values	1.50	0.2260
Country Security	9.59	0.0001***
Do Not Need	9.26	0.0001***

*= $P < 0.05$ **= $P < 0.01$ ***= $P < 0.001$

After conducting ANOVA tests for each type of rhetoric, the results show that there is significant variance among the newspapers using socialism, radicalism, country security, and do not need arguments. Arguments utilizing militarism and traditional values had non-significant variance among the newspaper publications, meaning that it is possible that there may be equal variance among the three newspapers in their use of these arguments. In order to gain more information about how rhetoric were used among different newspapers, difference of proportion tests were also conducted on pairings of newspapers:

Table 5 – Difference of Proportion Tests of Arguments Used by Newspaper
5a. Difference of Proportion Test (The Anti-Suffragist and The Woman’s Protest)

Type of Argument	z (Diff=0)	P> z (Diff=0)
Socialism	0.62	0.535
Radicalism	-0.11	0.916
Militarism	0.71	0.476

Traditional Values	0.07	0.948
Country Security	0.48	0.631
Do Not Need	0.99	0.324
	*=P<0.05	**=P<0.0
		***=P<0.001
	1	

AS = Anti Suffragist (N=38); PR = The Woman's Protest (N=44)

The first pairing analyzed with the use of a difference of proportion test was that of *The Anti-Suffragist* and *The Woman's Protest*. When examining the usage of the six types of rhetoric used, it becomes apparent that *The Anti-Suffragist* and *The Woman's Protest* seemingly yields similar results, with no p-value being under the cutoff of .05. The lack of a statistically significant result in any of the six areas presumes that there may be no difference in regards to the usage of any of the rhetorical arguments. This is especially true for arguments emphasizing radicalism or traditional values, but less so for arguments emphasizing that women do not need suffrage.

5b. Difference of Proportion Test (The Woman's Protest and The Woman Patriot)

Type of Argument	z (Diff=0)	P> z (Diff=0)
Socialism	2.68	0.007**
Radicalism	2.28	0.022*
Militarism	-1.78	0.075
Traditional Values	-1.46	0.144
Country Security	3.12	0.002**
Do Not Need	-3.87	0.000***
	*=P<0.05	**=P<0.0
		***=P<0.001
	1	

PR = The Woman's Protest (N=44); PT = The Woman Patriot (N=118)

In the second pairing, a comparison of *The Woman's Protest* and *The Woman Patriot*, the results differ quite a bit. With the exception of traditional value arguments, of which it is possible for there to be no difference among publications, every single argument is statistically significant in its difference between the two newspapers. Arguments emphasizing socialism, radicalism, and

country security were emphasized more in *The Woman Patriot* (the p-values of each were under 0.05). The “do not need” and militarist arguments were used more in *The Woman’s Protest*.

5c. Difference of Proportion Test (The Anti-Suffragist and The Woman Patriot)

Type of Argument	z (Diff=0)	P> z (Diff=0)
Socialism	-3.12	0.002**
Radicalism	-2.07	0.039*
Militarism	0.75	0.451
Traditional Values	1.31	0.192
Country Security	-3.43	0.001***
Do Not Need	2.55	0.011**

*=P<0.05 **=P<0.0 ***=P<0.001
 1

AS = Anti Suffragist (N=38); PT = The Woman Patriot (N=118)

The last pairing that was analyzed was that between *The Woman Patriot* and *The Anti-Suffragist*. The results indicate that both publications may be more similar to each other in content than the previous pairing, on the basis that two of the arguments, traditional values and militarism, may have no difference in their frequency of use within both publications. In all other areas, the difference between the rhetoric used was statistically significant. *The Anti-Suffragist* placed more emphasis on “do not need” arguments, while *The Woman Patriot* emphasized rhetoric arguing that suffrage and reform were a threat to country security, and that suffragists and feminists or their ideals were radical or socialistic.

Conclusion

Based on the sample of articles analyzed for this study, it is evident that the anti-suffragist and the anti-feminist publications did use all six types of rhetoric categorized in this study. They did not use the same rhetorical arguments in the same manner or even in the same frequency. Anti-suffragists saw a woman’s indifference or lack of utilization of their “privilege” to vote as clear evidence that women did not need nor really want the right to vote. Anti-suffragists also believed that women did not need the vote since their husbands adequately represented them. To anti-suffragists, suffrage was only an issue for a minority of women, and a minority of the general public, which was being forced through the Amendment process instead of being directly voted on by the people.⁵⁴ From the anti-suffrage perspective, a few militant

⁵⁴ Kraditor, *Ideas*, 38.

suffragists were bolstering political duties onto women who were already tied down with the more important duties of caretaker and character builder of the family.

It is apparent that the articles after the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment emphasized threats in the form of international ideologies, such as communism or socialism, as seeking to invade the American lifestyle and tradition. Gone were the outright threats about suffrage that had been the prevalent theme in anti-suffragist articles. *The Woman Patriot* now focused on the way in which female suffrage had opened up the floodgates to socialist influence as being a direct threat to the American way of life. Reforms like the Maternity Act were seen as a way of nationalizing the youth of the nation, who would be taken from the care of their mothers and given to the state to raise and indoctrinate. This would endanger the role of the mother as the guardian of the home and consequently make the citizens of the nation weaker in general.

Such internal threats to the American lifestyle were seen as direct consequences of suffrage being extended. After anti-feminists realized that they could not repeal the Nineteenth Amendment, they had to switch their focus and ways to stop feminist reforms. As a result, their emphasis shifted more towards arguments containing country security, socialism, and radicalism rhetoric.

These findings indicate the distinct features of the two movements in how they employ rhetoric, and help bring about a greater understanding of these movements. Future research in this area should include more diverse primary source material through the inclusion of letters and diary entries from women in these movements along with publications released by the state anti-suffrage associations and anti-feminist organizations as well. Through examination of other sources, researchers may be able to reaffirm the findings of this study or may find the findings contrary to the ones presented here. Future research could also try to link some of the arguments made by anti-feminists to contemporary anti-feminist movements in American politics to see how the rhetoric employed within these movements may have changed since the 1930s.

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