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**Submersion as Rhetorical Tactic for
Women of Color at the 1893 Columbian Exposition**

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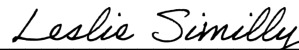
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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

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The 1893 Columbian Exposition of the Chicago World's Fair was a moment meant to showcase the best of the American experience, and many women of color saw this event as an opportunity to voice their message of suffrage for all women that had up until that point been sidelined. Several Black suffragists petitioned for the opportunity to speak at the Columbian Exposition on the issue of women's suffrage, but the power establishment that controlled access to the Women's Building declined or ignored all petitions. This flagrant injustice prompted women of color to take matters into their hands and employ a rhetorical tactic that would get them to the podium. Women's Studies scholars Kimberlé Crenshaw and Laura Behling are both influential to this thesis. Crenshaw's work with intersectionality and Behling's insights into the 1893 World's Fair and its marginalization of women of color created the backbone for this thesis. This thesis argues that due to systematic and unrelenting oppression from the white leadership of the Women's Building, women of color flooded the media using the rhetorical tactic of submersion. Submersion is a three-component tool that utilizes amplification, circulation, and multimodality. Ultimately, women of color were able to speak at a podium in 1893, though it was in the Pavilion of Haiti and not the Women's Building. It was their successful use of submersion that enabled them in their argument. Rhetorical analysis of speeches and pamphlets from the 1893 World's Fair were primarily used to conduct this research. Through analysis of previous moments in history, it was found that when submersion was used piecemeal, it was not successful. The 1893 World's Fair example was successful because submersion was utilized in its full form. This thesis also looks at contemporary examples of successful submersion. Suggestions for future research include further analysis of the Women's Suffrage Movement for evidence of submersion outside the 1893 Columbian Exposition.

Submersion as Rhetorical Tactic for Women of Color at the 1893 Columbian Exposition

This began with a pamphlet. In June of 2019, I led a weeklong student/teacher tour to our nation's capital. This was my third visit to Washington DC, but never does the romance or rich history of this city grow old. Trying to experience everything in DC is a fool's dream. It is simply impossible: there are too many museums and too many landmarks. In addition to the overwhelming nature of DC, the summer months are tourist season, so long lines become an expected cost of experiencing America's past. Yet amongst the humidity and crowded sidewalks that braced the Smithsonian's of Washington DC's Mall was the sanctuary of rising lore: the Library of Congress.

When I think of the Library of Congress, my heart sighs; this is one of the few places that regardless of however many times you visit it is still breathtaking. Not just the architecture but also the catalog of materials that the building keeps safe is inconceivable. That summer the Library of Congress had assembled an impressive gallery dedicated to the Women's Suffrage Movement. The centennial for the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment was on the horizon, and it was time to give credit where credit was due. Video clips and actual suffrage sashes graced the exhibit. I was quickly humbled by not only the sheer magnitude of the collection but more importantly, by how little I knew about the Women's Suffrage Movement. Thinking as a teacher, I picked up a pamphlet (Appendix A) that the Library had thoughtfully placed at the beginning of the exhibit; I figured this item would come in handy when it came to teaching Susan B. Anthony's 1872 speech to Congress. However thoughtful my action was, I quickly tossed the

pamphlet in my backpack, adding it to the already growing collection of mementos one picks up when visiting tourist sites. The pamphlet was forgotten.

At least it was forgotten until later that summer when I returned to my classroom to start sorting all of the teaching materials I had gathered from my visit to DC. I rediscovered the pamphlet and opened it—thank goodness. A cornucopia of historical names and dates displayed the rich history of what happened at the end of the nineteenth century. Nonchalantly flipping the pamphlet over, the well-known map known as “The Awakening” covered 10 of the 12 back panels. Yet, it was the other two panels that began this research and I’ll say enlightenment that American history needed rehistorization.

Four women were on those other two panels: Nannie Helen Burroughs, Adelina Otero-Warren, Fannie Barrier Williams, and Anna Julia Cooper (Appendix B). They were the women of color who were silenced and shushed, not considered prestigious enough to mark the pages of historical significance, or in this case the front page of a women’s suffrage pamphlet. These women had stood alongside Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton (not so much alongside but instead at the back of the line) as the suffragists paraded down city streets demanding the vote. Still, they had been there. They had suffered the consequences, often physical and emotional, of daring to ask for society’s recognition as a citizen. But where were they in history? Why are these women not only relegated to the backside of a pamphlet but also demoted to the forgotten truths of history? History, and unfortunately the white leaders of the Women’s Suffrage Movement, saw these women not for their rhetorical abilities but instead for the color of their skin.

In the late nineteenth century, the prevention of universal suffrage was an injustice that caused the streets of America to be crowded with shouts of reform. People of all races stood together on the sidewalks and in the streets, but when rallies were held and speakers took to the podium only white suffragists were allowed to speak. Sidelining men and women of color is nothing new. A disappointing tendency in human history is the failure to identify personal bias, and in doing so, pushing out potential. This intolerable action caused several Black suffragists to take action. Having been denied the opportunity of speaking at podiums, the Black suffragists ingeniously overwhelmed the movement with a diverse catalog of rhetorical tactics. No longer would weak evidence allow the white suffragists to evade facing the questions of Black suffragists as to why they were not being given more opportunities to lead parades or speak on platforms.

Women of color flooded the movement with pamphlets and speeches, causing American audiences to realize the Women's Suffrage Movement was not singular in its race. Wherever one turned there would be a pamphlet asking the question of why Black women weren't being given the same opportunity as white women within the movement. This tsunami-like effect of submerging an audience with rhetorical messaging found success. The white suffragists relented. They had been gnawed down by a group that they, admittedly, had once used solely for their presence. White suffragists needed as many bodies as possible, in order to convince their opposition of the need for suffrage. But now the white suffragists were being outwitted by a gift not many achieve—a voice that commands attention. The Black suffragists overwhelmed the public with arguments of justice and reform. These tactics, of flooding listeners with an argument, are necessary for wrongs to be righted. Ultimately the cause was worth the action. Black women, in

realizing that they would be forever reduced to the back of street parades and rally auditoriums, were clever. In circulating mass volumes of rhetorical materials and other stylistic appeals, Black women succeeded in their fight. They used their bodies. They used visuals. They used their voices. They labored intensely to overcome.

This paper researches one specific moment in history, the Columbian Exposition of 1893 when Black suffragists used multimodal rhetorical structures to circulate and overpower systemized racist illogic. I identify and created the rhetorical tactic of submersion as an effective weapon when marginalized voices are routinely silenced. More specifically, submersion describes a strategy in which those marginalized develop multimodal means to circulate and amplify their message. This tactic becomes the preferred method when counteracting a majority's attempt to sideline a minority. Determined and unwavering in their resolution, Black women in the late nineteenth century purposely chose to repeat again and again their argument; hounding the public was their goal. Driving their dissenters into submission, Black women wished to make the point that their voice was just as relevant as the white women that audiences had been listening to for years now. The time was ripe for a change. Many moments of marginalization led to 1893 but ultimately it was this moment in history when submerging the rhetorical field proved successful in awakening society to intersectionalized voices. Effective in their goal, Black women proved that by inundating the field with their message they could move from the streets to the podium with their rhetorical talents.

In the following chapters, I will discuss the progression and ultimate rise of women of color in the Women's Suffrage Movement of the late 19th century. In Chapter 1,

I will describe the context of the Women's Suffrage Movement, noting major players in the movement and the introduction of the 15th Amendment, which proved contentious to many white women. In Chapter 2, I move to the developing racism within the Women's Suffrage Movement, as more written texts were being publicized recording the marginalization of nonwhite and immigrant women. Contextually as time drew nearer to the 1893 Columbian Exposition, a Board of Lady Managers, comprised of white men and women, held the reins over the management of the Women's Building at the Columbian Exposition. Women of color repeatedly petitioned for leadership roles in the development of the Women's Building but were repeatedly shot down. This battling is detailed in Chapters 2-3 and leads me to my thesis in Chapter 3 where I define and identify successful and unsuccessful moments of submersion. Chapter 4 presents a penultimate moment for the Black suffragists of 1893. Six Black women were enabled to speak at the Columbian Exposition but sadly not in the Women's Building. I analyze the submersion techniques in the first two speakers: Fannie Barrier Williams and Anna Julia Cooper. Finally, in Chapter 5, I examine examples of submersion in the twenty-first century and discuss the continued relevance of this rhetorical concept.

Chapter 1

Women's Suffrage: A Call to Action

Though slavery had been eradicated in America in 1865, the chains of inequity were still bound for women. Without the ability to vote at the close of the nineteenth century, women, and especially Black women, were subjected to second-class citizenship. The Progressive Movement was heating up, and social reform dominated the streets. Calls to action for causes that pervaded the everyman were reflected in new rhetoric. No longer was society willing to suffer examples of injustice without fighting the cause.

Injustice for women lay rooted in the public acknowledgment that they were, in fact, second-class citizens. Often considered too feeble or, worse, not intelligent enough for politics and issues of serious concern, women were relegated to the notion that not being able to vote was better for them. This patronizing attitude was rampant not just nationwide, but the idea that women were intellectually soft was felt worldwide. Men, specifically white males, dominated society. Men regulated the idea that women did not belong in the political world. Many men maintained the demeaning mindset that women and Black men were weaker citizens and that the vote was too important to fall under their uninformed hands. Throughout the history of the Women's Suffrage Movement, numerous examples of societal injustice begin to take shape, and one begins to realize that history requires rewriting to better reflect the realities of this crusade for equality.

Origins

The path to universal suffrage found its beginnings in the streets of Great Britain. Not considered valuable, women were property. Men were the breadwinners and women were caretakers. But soon, the need and desire for more than just an existence in the

kitchen began to take shape for women. By the latter half of the nineteenth century, the movement had sprouted roots. More of society supported the idea of universal suffrage, considering many disagreed that those who did not own property should not be able to vote on tax laws (just one example from the opposition). Capitalism and male supremacy forced British women to acknowledge that until suffrage spread globally their cries would not be heard. Slowly, the protests of British women reached American streets. As the suffrage push migrated into American cities, a constituency was created between the active members and non-political women. Social reform author Ellen Carol DuBois writes about the juxtaposition between the different types of women called together under one movement. History begins to see this time as, finally, a social movement, collecting a diverse group that came together for one cause. This cause was to serve all American women (DuBois 70). Both British and American women banded together to appeal to the masses. The suffragists knew they needed the support of all women—politically active and passive for them to win the vote.

Two factions eventually formed in the United States: the National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA) and the American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA). The NWSA and AWSA were deeply divided over several issues, one being who should be lobbied for suffrage legislation. The NWSA felt suffrage was a federal issue, while the AWSA felt states were more attuned to their cause. As the two groups ultimately worked against each other for the same cause, particular names were forever marked into history. Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, founders of the NWSA, rose to historical notoriety through their platform of women-only suffrage. More accepting of universal suffrage, Lucy Stone helped found the AWSA. Although the associations differed on their

political stance, the ties that bound these women were far stronger than a difference of opinion, or at least on the surface. Both the NWSA and the AWSA knew the importance of persuasive attack or argumentation. The street corner suffragists wholeheartedly believed in the conviction that they should be full participants in society; after all, America was a democracy. Their right to protest, valued in a democratic system, was conveyed through writing newspaper columns, distributing handbills, and lobbying lawmakers—all this is, of course, non-disruptive, but their methods of protest centered around a systematic idea that to win the vote the suffragists needed to overwhelm their opposition in as many ways as possible. This is just a sprinkling of what would later become a waterfall of written rhetoric. Vanderbilt Professor Holly J. McCammon characterizes the feminine experience in her research. Suffragists relied on the firm belief that they had the right to cast the vote, just as men did, and their street work was vital to the cause (McCammon, “No Weapon Save Argument” 529-530). It should be noted that the beginnings of the Women’s Suffrage Movement were characterized by non-combative protesting. Militant suffragists, who used violence in the form of rock-throwing and building bombs meant for political leaders, did not appear on city streets until passive tactics became useless. But, remarkably, throughout this time in history, the resilience of the suffragists was characterized by an ingenious strategy to flood the political field with their argument of enfranchisement. Through rhetorical techniques in the nineteenth century coupled with the persistent belief that justice was on their side, suffragists maintained the firm belief that equality was a cause they would do anything to accomplish. Little did the women who fought the cause know how long it would take for the 19th Amendment to be ratified.

Both the NWSA and the AWSA contributed to the Women's Suffrage Movement; through both written and verbal communication, the public came to know the reasoning behind universal enfranchisement. Bold in their resolve, women from both parties took their message to the streets. They stood on street corners and inside the halls of Congress, they would not relent until their goal was accomplished. The NWSA and the AWSA combined a shared understanding for many American women, or in this case working women. They openly recruited women who were competent, skilled, and contributed to the social product—equality with, but also independence from, men. This period of the Women's Suffrage Movement became associated with the demands of the Labor Movement. Stanton and Anthony realized the benefits of recruiting skilled and hard-working women and created a labor group for typesetters. A Working Women's Association gathered together a cornucopia of American women, though this lasted only a year; accessibility to modern women's concerns helped shape the platform (DuBois 74). Creating commonalities for all types of women, working and stay-at-home, established a shared understanding.

Leaders within the NWSA and the AWSA recognized the hardships of working women and somewhat exploited these issues to their advantage. Though it must be said that the struggles of working women were of such a nature (domestic violence, child labor) that they needed to be publicized to the masses. For example, knowing the dangers working women faced on city streets, Stanton and Anthony established meetings to help women who had been sexually assaulted or exploited. In appealing to all women, the movement gained energy and further increased their numbers needed to flood American streets. Crimes committed against women were nothing new, but now, through the help of

NWSA and AWSA, these atrocities drew a larger audience at suffrage rallies. More women acknowledged that they were not alone. All women were suffering from unspoken crimes and suffragists demonstrated that they could speak to these issues on an economic, social, and political dimension—women’s oppression was a universal problem (DuBois 76). Overwhelmingly, women of all backgrounds constituted a majority in the sense that someone or something at least once in their lives had oppressed them all.

The target audience for both NWSA and AWSA mass meetings was the submissive woman, for it was easy to attract the outgoing feminist to the cause. Instead, street corner rhetoric and podium arguments had to be designed to demonstrate to the passive listener that the vote was coming; acceptance of denied rights was not an option. The AWSA met with different state organizations to individually work together. At every step laws and regulations would attempt to stop the movement. But plugging a drain only prevents the rush of the onslaught; the dripping of rebellion will continue until it breaks through the wall of oppression. Initially, many women were averse to linking themselves to the more militant or subversive feminists, but in the end, as the movement gained strength, even the more traditional women realized the miseries of the single working mother were falling on deaf ears.

This coming together of both femininities was remarkable. Regardless of whether one was liberal or conservative, the suffrage movement attracted all under one banner—the vote. However, this uniting of personalities was consequential, and the movement would quickly see its repercussions. The Woman’s Suffrage Movement in America harnessed an ideology that garnered support from many, including Congress. As time passed in America, political leaders recognized that legislation was needed to mirror

the changing times. The Civil War had empowered millions of American Blacks to fight for their freedom; now the 15th Amendment would guarantee voting rights for Black men. Though the 15th Amendment was significant for its place in history, it was a festering pox for many of the more conservative suffragists that disagreed that Black men should have the vote before white women. With the coming passage of the amendment, women became bolder and began to view enfranchisement as the key to self-worth and the key to voice aggressive perspectives.

The 15th Amendment

It was the controversial 15th Amendment that divided the suffragist movement so powerfully. Black male enfranchisement seemed like salt in an open wound to women, and especially white women. Highly recognized and respected, Frederick Douglass knew the conflict enfranchising only Black men would cause, but still publicly spoke on the need for Black men to receive suffrage first. Anthony and Stanton rejected the 15th Amendment, thus adding hostility to the already fragile party. Their short-lived magazine the *Revolution* was an outlet for not only editorials on suffrage but also, deceptively, two published articles that brandished white women enfranchisement over Black. Professor Jen McDanel from the University of North Carolina conveys the two women's actions were a testament to their race prejudice, "The debate over the Fifteenth Amendment begins to appear in the pages of the *Revolution* in the middle of 1868; as Congress was lobbied to pass the amendment, Stanton and Anthony went on record opposing it" (247). When questioned over this staunch advocacy for such a revolutionary idea, Stanton attempts to elicit sympathy for her offensive claims. She responds to a reader's questioning with, "as an abolitionist we protested against the enfranchisement of the

black man alone, seeing that the bondage of the women of that race, by the laws of the south, would be more helpless than before” (McDanel 248). Stanton attempts to both envelop herself in the abolitionist argument while also segregating male and female Black Americans. Due to this off-putting attitude of not only Stanton but other affiliates, many of the members of the NWSA discontinued their alliance. Though led by a far more liberal president, the AWSA at this time also dissolved its party, causing the two factions to form one, the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), and now many of the white leaders were checked for their segregationist attitudes. The goal for the NAWSA was to gain the vote. But to gain the vote, the party needed numbers. A strategic plan was formed to encourage all American women to join the NAWSA, regardless of economic status, race, or age; they wanted the party to reflect American women.

As the movement gained popularity, more women vacated the parlors that had so long harbored repressive attitudes and took to the streets to voice their demands: Recognition as a human, recognition as a citizen. If the 15th Amendment guaranteed Black men the right to vote, then why were women not also guaranteed this same fundamental right? Appealing to the long-held feelings of inferiority and submission, women called for all to tear down the invisible barriers that afflicted them. The movement needed weight, weight in clogging the sidewalks and adding names to petitions. This element of amplification in the protest strategies of the movement coincided with enlisting more racially and economically diverse women to join the cause. And though many white suffragists in the party resented the idea of working alongside women of color, the party needed a coexistence that reflected American cities.

Major Players & Racial Tensions

Finally, the NAWSA, in the late nineteenth century, began to mirror an image of America as more and more women joined the cause. The names Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Carrie Chapman Catt are synonymous with women's suffrage, but hidden beneath the pages of history lies the names of Ida B. Wells, Fannie Barrier Williams, and Anna Julia Cooper. It would be silly to believe that Anthony, Stanton, and Catt carried the banners, wrote the speeches, and lobbied politicians all by themselves. There were a plethora of workers, white and Black, who manned the suffrage machine. NAWSA created a bridge between NWSA and AWSA: "The shift from black women to non-black women is almost imperceptible but ultimately lends legitimacy to the call for all women to be enfranchised. The victimhood of black women is transformed to stand in for the victimization of *all* women" (McDanel 254). Suffrage was a wound that all women suffered, but as white women declared the problems of Black women to be of the same nature as their own, Black women suffered from the stings of intersectionalized frameworks. Black suffragists were drawn to the idea of full citizenship yet found their voices flooded out by white suffragists. The leaders of NAWSA not only wanted the passage of the 15th Amendment but also the passage of an amendment extending suffrage to all women. Recruitment of men and women of color for NAWSA produced a juxtaposition of conflicts: on the one hand, minorities rallied to new opportunities of freedom, but at the same time, long-held segregationist beliefs from conservative members divided the party.

NAWSA rhetoric reflects a communal idea of membership, and thousands of men and women of color joined the party based on the idea that racist Reconstructionist

mentalities would be abolished. In her research on the recruitment strategies of NAWSA, Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham writes, “The rally notion of ‘racial uplift’ among black Americans during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries illustrates the problematic aspects of identifying a standpoint that encompasses all black women” (271). Many Black women saw this as their opportunity to gain autonomy. Coexistence between white and Black members of NAWSA was feasible, as long as racism from former NWSA members was held at bay. Many previous NWSA members did not share a collective belief in universal suffrage. And, although these often-hostile attitudes were obvious at suffrage meetings and parades, it did not stop Black suffragists from rallying for the cause. Often white suffragists presented wave after wave of faulty reasoning as to why they preferred their Black sisters in the cause to stay in the shadows and background and not be in the limelight. Education, employment, income, manners, or the color of skin were just some of the reasons that white suffragists supplied Black suffragists for pushing them to the background of the movement. As ludicrous as these ideas are to a twenty-first century audience, women of color tasked themselves with the fight that these reasons would not stop them when asking for a fundamental right. Yet, while Black suffragists did not view themselves differently in the quest to attain enfranchisement, white suffragists began grouping Black women into an inferior and subservient status that both demeaned and infuriated many non-whites (Higginbotham 259). Even though the Black suffragists saw one goal to be achieved, many white suffragists refused to give up their Reconstructionist mindsets. The Women’s Suffrage Movement was quickly turning into a white/Black movement, a race movement.

The mentality that one race was inherently superior to another was a mindset women of color struggled to negotiate for some time. Critical race theorist and acclaimed author bell hooks argues that it is through education that a white domination perspective rose in society. At a very young age, classrooms teach the Columbus's discovery of America and the savagery of the preexisting indigenous tribes. The colonization of not only Native Americans but also African tribes is taught as a liberating social force that these primitive and less enlightened populations were privileged after their occupation. The establishment of socially-acceptable behaviors and customs was thus filtered into colonized groups based on the white race, and thus transgressed into further centuries of race treatment. Hooks writes that many today "[refuse] to acknowledge the link between the political fate of black citizens of the United States and black folks on the African continent" (25). Seeds were sown early in racial oppression, and these roots have gathered strength that history can observe through the treatment of white suffragists to Black suffragists. The persistent belief that they were on an equal footing was fraught with institutionalized racism.

Often referred to as chattel, Black suffragists suffered from isolation and alienation for a cause that all women experienced. The racial contrast between party members caused some to forget their original purpose: "Gender, so colored by race, remained from birth until death inextricably linked to one's personal identity and social status. For black and white women, gendered identity was reconstructed and represented in very different, indeed antagonistic, racialized contexts" (Higginbotham 258). The party wanted unity but was also clearly fragmented. Party leaders were quick to designate laborious tasks to Black suffragists, while more menial, but at the same time more public,

tasks were given to white suffragists. The same belittling that all women felt in the home, whether by husbands or fathers, by chauvinistic males was now being transferred from white suffragists to Black suffragists. Black women were seeking to identify themselves with a common cause, but due to racialized social constructions found their place in the movement limiting.

As the movement grew across the nation, ironically enfranchisement moved west to east, leaders changed, and the ability to solidify the fissures that were breaking party lines became more difficult. Donna Kowal, in her article “One Cause, Two Paths: Militant versus Adjustive Strategies in the British and American Women’s Suffrage Movements”, characterizes the growing conflict as not only originating with class identity but also race identity. Bonds were beginning to sever. “The new protest strategies of NAWSA, an organization whose membership reached over two million by 1916, primarily occurred in the form of organized rallies and parades,” while at the same time, “The National Women’s Party created by Alice Paul, author of the Equal Rights Amendment, was the most aggressive organization within the American women’s suffrage movement” (Kowal 246). Members were torn as to party loyalty. Many women identified themselves with either the NAWSA or the National Women’s Party (NWP) based on their class and race; public perceptions at rallies was critical. Both the NAWSA and the NWP sought support from all women but recognized that “In both cases, class consciousness contributed to shaping the movement’s rhetorical tone and protest strategy” (Kowal 246). The relationships and connections formed within party lines were delicate, to say the least. Within the frameworks of the NAWSA and the NWP was a

whole host of women caught in a web of social structures, racial and economic, that presumed a superior and inferior divide, though their cause was the same.

Enfranchisement formed a coexistence between these women, meaning they had a commonality that united them, but sadly, human nature failed them. Inherent bigoted patterns proved that many women easily fell victim to prejudices that could have easily been ignored. White and Black suffragists could have worked together but, “More than this, race is a highly contested representation of relations of power between social categories by which individuals are identified and identify themselves. The recognition of racial distinctions emanates from and adapts to multiple uses of power in society” (Higginbotham 253). Many women failed at this simple concept. The systemized power exacted over women in the home was now a cause for tension as white women exacted power over other Black women, using class distinctions and race differences to carry out these structures. Black suffragists were caught in a net of racialized gender identity conflicts: they were Black women but were not being given the standing of having a race or gender. White suffragists did not want Black suffragists to represent the movement as women or as Black persons. Arguing that their femininity was not ladylike enough and that the color of their skin relegated them to secondary rank, Black suffragists found their roles in the movement degraded. As the Woman’s Suffrage Movement progresses, racial identities become one of the most distinct areas for hostility within the movement.

Chapter 2

Rising Racial Conflicts in the Women's Suffrage Movement

The Women's Suffrage Movement of the late nineteenth century opened doors of possibility for women who had never dreamed of voting. The call to ask for, or better still, demand, more than just a measly existence in the kitchen and parlor was empowering to American women. Both the NAWSA and the NWP appeared to rally for all American women, regardless of age, race, or socioeconomic status. This social injustice of preventing women from voting gathered together a collection of women. Yet, the call to unite the masses under enfranchisement was cleverly disguised by an underlying prejudice to segregate the races at the same time. Little did Black women in the Women's Suffrage Movement know that soon their bodily impact would be exploited and their rhetorical skills would be ignored.

Just as all women cried out for recognition as citizens, Black women further cried out for recognition within the movement. Multiple occasions of systematic racism were flagrant by white suffragists against Black suffragists. Black women pounded the sidewalks alongside white women, but when it came down to it, they were not being given the option to lead rallies and spearhead speeches behind podiums. White suffragist leaders failed to see that in isolating key Black suffragist leaders from speaking at rallies, they were ultimately failing the cause. This breakdown of inequality erupted at the close of the nineteenth century.

America was going to showcase its very commendable past at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair. This would be a moment for the world to see how progressive and state-of-the-art Americans were; this was also the moment American suffragists chose to

broadcast the need for women's suffrage. And though the American Suffrage Movement recognized the advantages of allowing a plethora of speakers to argue for enfranchisement, white leaders refused to consider the advantages of allowing Black suffragists to speak at this opportunity. Focusing on one particular instance of racism, specifically at the 1893 Columbian Exposition of the Chicago World's Fair, reveals the inherent prejudices of white suffragists in the movement and the awe-inspiring ability to overcome by Black suffragists. However, before 1893, racism within the movement was spreading, and the tension between white women and women of color was becoming more obvious.

Causes

As the tide of women grew within the movement, marginalization from inherent stereotypes caused conflict. Both the NAWSA and NWP contingently based their movements on rhetoric that challenged the dominion men held over the vote, but as Donna M. Kowal discusses, this rhetoric was branded with internal tensions, divisions, and changes all due to splintering audiences and class differences (242). Widely accepted but ethically reprehensible behaviors were causing upheaval within the movement. Many women, such as women of color and immigrant women, were neglected in their aspirations to achieve prominence in either party. Unfortunately, and similar to the British Suffrage Movement, the party was broken by class lines, causing working women and women of color to form their own party. Not good enough to sit in a parlor alongside the socially-privileged, women who earned for their family were continually pushed aside by more financially-advantaged women. This misplacement forced one group of working suffragists to be forced out based on the excluding factor that they were not entirely made

up of native-born, white Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, middle-class women (Kowal 243). Women who could have been useful were vanishing to the inner scheming going on behind the scenes. This parting was regrettable, because, if more women would have set aside their prejudices, then the power they wielded could have enacted more change. The struggle to achieve the vote created a split amongst races and social classes, where public recognition would "...benefit a handful of propertied ladies, with absolutely no provision for the vast mass of working women" (Kowal 243). This sprinkling was not reflective of American women. Men and women of color were fighting for existence for a cause they believed was universal. This rupture into a Black/white movement did not have to happen, and women of color openly argued for their right to help lead the party.

The idea of suffragism was quickly gaining power, but at the same time, this power of enlisting multitudes of women to join the cause invigorated racism to spread throughout the party. For white suffragists, a mindset of superiority was familiar; this thought process had been passed down from fathers and husbands. According to suffrage historian Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, "For blacks, race signified cultural identity and heritage, not biological inferiority" (268). Women of color in the movement saw this treatment as illogical. This pushing out of Black voices caused more affluent writers to voice their concerns. Highly-recognized human rights advocate, W.E.B. DuBois was a prolific figure for universal suffrage, and writer Neale McGoldrick reflects on this: "DuBois's basic argument was that women and African Americans shared the same problems and that they should have the right to vote because justice demanded it" (272). People of color within the movement found it difficult not to see the commonalities that could unite instead of destroy. The justice argument began to filter into conversations of

women of color, and now more than ever, Black suffragists were empowered to stand up to bigoted hate.

Justice demanded change was the prevailing claim for all people who desired suffrage. Yet, sadly, white suffragists refused to believe that Black women had the mental or even physical capacity to lead suffrage rallies. They continually dismissed the notion that women of color could harness a crowd, arguing that a rowdy crowd would not listen to a just-freed enslaved person and this task was too much for them. Considered feeble-minded and weak, Black suffragists were silenced, and there are multiple examples where classist and ethnocentric attitudes sifted into suffrage meetings and rallies. White leaders of the party began voicing concerns as to why anyone would listen to an immigrant voice, let alone a woman of color. Holly McCammon further writes about how American cities became more differentiated by class and ethnicity, just as the suffrage movement became divided by class and race (“No Weapon Save Argument” 540). Bias routinely plagued the movement. Splintering and factions due to racism resulted in Black suffragists rising to the occasion. Motivated by justice and an unquenchable desire to overcome, women of color refused to concede to the preconceived notions white women enforced within the movement.

Elitist stereotypes maintained by white suffragists excluded Black suffragists from full participation. Jen McDaneld reveals that many white women felt they were above working alongside Black women, and “[this was] a field in which white women suffragists translate the political and ideological vulnerabilities of gender through race in order to become more deserving, more palatable, or more visible” (McDaneld 259). The visibility that many women seek was thus translated into white women pursuing the

spotlight of suffrage attention and drawing further attention away from Black suffragists. White women sought out and favored the spotlight, viewing themselves as being alone in this world of suffrage. They isolated anyone they did not consider worthy of recognition. Women of color and women of lower economic status were routinely neglected and cast into the shadows. This selective exclusion was not profitable to the cause, "...after all—they were some of the most privileged women in the country—or that they used the figure of the black woman, a figure who represented less power and privilege, to make these claims" (McDanel 259). Power over leadership roles and suffrage rally scheduling was applied through this white/Black contrast.

Considered less than valuable, Black suffragists were looked down on and treated, even in an educated society, animal-like. The term chattel was frequently used. Black suffragists were forced into pre-Civil War roles within the movement and often ignored at suffrage parades. Having been pushed out and ignored for too long, Black suffragists were tired of the continual silencing they felt from white suffragists. Muzzling tactics were a common method white suffragists employed in their efforts to deny equal participation and because of this purposeful strategy to separate American women within an American cause, many suffrage participants began to recognize the need to overwhelm society with their voices. The mentality that women of color were not feminine enough to stand next to white women resulted in an unrelenting push to prove worthiness. Tactics such as amplification, circulation, and multimodality became a new light at the end of a dark tunnel for women that had been pushed to the sidelines of the movement. However, many participants realized their fight to overcome systematic prejudice would not be easily or quickly won.

Seclusion Tactics of the White Suffragists

Conflicts surpassed the overall goal of the Women's Suffrage Movement, and white suffragists carefully instigated a plan to prevent Black suffragists from full membership. History indicates the many instances where women of color were excluded. Historian, Grace Farrell, in her essay *Beneath the Suffrage Narrative*, writes:

However, the movement was never exempt from internecine warfare. In this, it was clear that women did indeed share a common humanity with men. The battles could be vicious, and the major strategy was one of exclusion: Those who threatened one's position of prominence were not invited to speak, were allotted five minutes at the podium instead of an hour, or did not have their contributions acknowledged in the written record. (46)

Strategic planning to drive out outsiders, anyone labeled unladylike or an agitator, was ubiquitous. Concentrated efforts to ban anyone considered not loyal enough to the white establishment were a frequent tactic. White suffragists were duplicitous in their attempts to drive away anyone they considered unworthy of the public podium. These schemes were also reflected in letters between party members. Writing about these tactics, Faye E. Dudden writes that, still a member of NAWSA, and still struggling to segregate, Stanton "had surveyed the whole array of women's grievances and argued for all women's rights, not just the vote. But she spoke especially sharply on the vote, declaring, 'We are moral, virtuous, and intelligent, and in all respects quite equal to the proud white man, yet by your laws we are classed with idiots, lunatics and negroes'" (Dudden 43). This

unadulterated hate conspired to eliminate anyone she felt was against her. In analyzing Stanton's statements, one quickly notices the parallel ties between white women's untouchable characteristics of *moral, virtuous, and intelligent* as she compares them to the less appealing qualities of the *idiot, lunatic, and negro*. Stanton is comparing the adjectives with the nouns and claiming that the negro is unintelligent. This antithesis reflects Stanton's and, for that matter, many of the white suffragist's rhetorical approaches in creating division.

White women, such as Stanton, exacted a totality over whoever they deemed unfit. They flooded Black suffragists with illogical reasoning as to why they shouldn't be in leadership roles, trying to submerge any agitator mentalities that could inspire other non-white socio-economically advantaged women from rising to prominent positions. This behavior constituted prevailing rhetoric that John W. Bowers writes in his book *The Rhetoric of Agitation and Control*, where the white leaders, like Stanton, intentionally use tactics such as belittling and muzzling to assert themselves as the establishment—never to be contradicted or questioned. Bowers writes about the power of vertical deviance and lateral deviance. These definitions work seamlessly with the white suffragist's seclusion tactics: “Agitation based on vertical deviance occurs when the agitators accept the value system of the establishment but dispute the distribution of benefits or power within that value system. Agitation based on lateral deviance occurs when the agitators dispute the value system itself” (Bowers 6-7). By accepting the idea of vertical deviance, white suffragists were agitators who acknowledged a valued hierarchy but still argued that they deserved the vote. Women of color were considered agitators within the movement, reconciled to refute the profits that white suffragists routinely received: public

recognition. The Black suffragists were forced into stirring up agitation, which came in the form of letters of protest to white leaders, attempting to counter-submerge their opposition, to have their voices heard. Ironically, considering that both white and Black women agreed on the movement's purpose of achieving suffrage that value system was not opposed. Instead, the value system that caused agitation was the idea that white suffragists could get away with setting up a caste system within the party. The agitators rejected this status quo hierarchy, which caused the establishment to attempt to exert more control over the party.

Control was the driving force in the Women's Suffrage Movement, and this force was based on racism. A battle commenced. White suffragists did everything in their power to stake claims to public spotlights, and Black suffragists did everything in their power to not be sidelined. This back and forth reflects a white/Black construction in American history: "Once an establishment has achieved dominance, its main task from that point forward is to maintain itself" (Bowers 8). White suffragists were desperate to oppose anyone they viewed as dissenters. Almost creating a sanctuary, a realm private to themselves based on elitist ideas, white suffragists deployed their racist rhetoric so that they could direct the party the way they saw fit. In her essay, "*Out of the Parlors and into the Streets: The Changing Tactical Repertoire of the U.S. Women's Suffrage Movements**", Holly J. McCammon writes that the battle for public space in the Women's Suffrage Movement was a springboard for a shift in social status. Women of color became outlets for oppressed Americans, and their struggle to enter the public realm is carefully and methodically documented. Their collective shift to push their struggle into the nation's view and submerge the American people with their voice

became a rallying cry for all oppressed American women. Wanting to draw the public's attention to such racial disparities, Black suffragists willingly chose to challenge preconceived notions unlike before and in a manner unheard of before (McCammon, "Out of the Parlors", 789). Their strategy was submersion. The struggle for Black suffragists was now becoming two-fold: on the one hand, Black suffragists needed to draw attention to the importance of suffrage, but at the same time, Black suffragists also needed to draw attention to the segregation within NAWSA and other women's parties. Bold and daring in their drive to not be pushed out anymore, the Black suffragists refused to be victims of a force they believed they could beat.

For the Women's Suffrage Movement, the desire for social power lay in the tendency to fear what society could not accept or what many thought would challenge the status quo. White suffragists not only feared they would be replaced by better, more adept, Black speakers, but white suffragists also feared that this displacement would exclude them from their position in society. Bowers explains, "Research has generated several generalizations about power: (1) The need for social power in some form is almost a universal attribute of Western culture. (2) An individual or a group seldom gives up power voluntarily to another individual or group. (3) The exercise of social power is satisfying in *itself* to most individuals in Western culture" (12). These claims help us to understand this struggle. The white suffragists found satisfaction in benching the Black suffragists, and privately, if not publicly, acknowledged they were not going to willingly hand over any control. Particular white suffragists, Stanton being one, did not mind the split in the party.

As the fight for suffrage heated up, many white suffragists continued their campaign to isolate Black suffragists. Various publications, such as newspapers and magazines, were utilized to achieve control. What should have been a publication for all, “The writings in the *Revolution* demonstrate that the racist representation of black women positioned white woman suffragists as victims of male privilege on the one hand and inheritors of white privilege on the other—as both oppressed and oppressing” (McDanel 244). This dichotomy created a power hierarchy. White suffragists were subjects in the household and thus transferred this subjectivity onto Black suffragists at party meetings and rallies. McDanel further expands, “Stanton, Anthony, and other US suffragists ... relied on a variety of racisms, both subtle and overt, benevolent and malicious, as they lobbied for their cause, and the writings in the *Revolution* verify these forms of bigotry in a host of ways” (245). White leaders were able to propagandize their racism in written form. Carefully veiled behind a cloud of universal suffrage, the *Revolution* became a vehicle, an outlet, for racist rhetoric. Stanton, specifically, anchored her power and control through the *Revolution*.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton is one of the more misinterpreted and misunderstood figures from American history. Only now are her more coarse writings coming into the public eye. Her rather deceptive work is analyzed by author Frances McCurdy. Not many people knew that:

She came to oppose universal suffrage, supporting education as a qualification for voting. Her prejudice against immigrants is perhaps understandable in light of their opposition to emancipated women, but her harsh adjectives are nonetheless disturbing in a woman who urged the

right to full development of every individual. Her belief that right was on her side made her impervious to opposition. Her overwhelming concern for the rights of women sometimes led her to consider any other rights as of minor importance. (McCurdy 191)

Stanton had blinders on to anything in opposition to her. Similar to the literacy tests and Jim Crow laws that forbid nonwhites from voting in the 20th century, here, Stanton is distinguishing universal suffrage with the stipulation that one must be educated to be able to vote. Because education was not accessible to all, Stanton knew that this key requirement would separate the minorities in society who did not have access to formal education. This elitist belief left many women feeling unwanted in the party, and women of color quickly fought back with their agitator rhetoric.

Inclusion Tactics of the Black Suffragists

Though Stanton and other white leaders continually pursued flagrant means to diminish the public perception and frequency of Black suffragists, it was at this time in 1893 that several women of color refused to allow this treatment to continue. Small steps that made an important impact on the written rhetoric of Black suffrage participation came from women like Fannie Barrier Williams. Tired of constantly seeing the term *negro* placed alongside the words *idiot* and *lunatic*, also discriminatory labels, Williams went on record asking that white suffragists no longer use the term. One of the most prolific writers of suffrage segregation during the World's Fair, Laura L. Behling writes about the struggle to overcome subjective tension and records the unrelenting efforts Williams took to be considered on the same intellectual level as her white contemporaries. Williams was undeterred and unwavering in her fight for femininity

reform. In a ruthless battle against the continual use of the words *colored* and *Negro*, Williams petitioned for the use of the phrase “women of a darker complexion” in referring to any nonwhite woman within the Movement (Behling 176). This one decision began a series of consequential repercussions. Their confidence grew as more women of color, viewing Williams’s actions as a springboard for future actions, began demanding opportunities to help the cause. A wave of Black suffragists lobbied for leadership positions, and their voices would no longer be silenced. Submerging society with messages of their fight for equality was proving successful.

As 1893 drew nearer and NAWSA began preparing for the Columbian Exposition, white suffragists knew the establishment mindset they had previously exercised on Black suffragists would certainly be tested. NAWSA began gathering collections and exhibits for their platform, dating back far into history, but these collections were primarily limited to white-only accomplishments. Behling is quoted at length here to add concrete evidence as to the sequence of events:

Despite this unprecedented show of women’s achievements, however, the Board of Lady Managers, the handicraft and artistic exhibits included in the Women’s Building, and the Congress of speakers were far from representative of all women. Black women lobbied for a seat on the Board, a proposal that was sent to the Executive Committee of the Commissioners during the first session of the Board of Lady Managers but was never acted upon. A proposal to “establish an office for a colored woman whose duty it shall be to collect exhibits from the colored women of America” also received no response. (179-180)

Here we have concrete examples of the suppression tactics that white suffragists routinely used to silence Black suffragists. Behling then continues to acknowledge the outright hypocrisy of the Board of Lady Managers with their own recorded minutes of meetings:

Black women who desired to address the Congress were told by the all-white Board of Lady Managers that only national women's organizations could receive a place on the speakers' platform. Despite the claim in the *Official Manual of the Board of Lady Managers* that "[I]n this Exposition there is to be no color or racial division", clearly there was a hierarchical division between the civilized and the uncivilized in the "Columbian Exposition's schema of hegemonic civilization" (Bederman 35), and only the whites were civilized enough to address the audience. (Behling 179-180)

Williams and other Black suffragists repeatedly petitioned for a more involved position in the leadership role for the Columbian Exposition, but were ignored without any justification. NAWSA was granted a building by the architects of the Exposition. NAWSA was supposed to display the history of women—the history of the Women's Suffrage Movement. Yet, the Board of Lady Managers were diligent in their plans to only historize white women's history.

Racism throughout the movement was nothing short of insulting, but now, as 1893 approached, and the Columbian Exposition presented itself as an opportunity not to be missed, women of color rose to the occasion. Historian and Women's Studies scholar, Anna Massa records the details of the Black suffragists efforts: "Since the World's Columbian Commission had given the Board of Lady Managers plenary power as 'the

channel of communication through which all women or organizations of women may be brought into relation with the Exposition, and through which all applications for space for the use of women or their exhibits in the buildings shall be made', the black women focused on the Board" (320). Here again, we see white women in power and oppressing Black women with their ability to deny. In an attempt to erase their history from being conceptualized at the Exposition, white suffragists expunged Black suffragists. Stanton continued her written rhetoric, furthering her ideas that control should be placed in the hands of the educated: "The most pitiful spectacle this country presents, is that of educated American women consenting, in this hour of our country's danger, to this incoming tide of ignorance, poverty, and vice, from every quarter of the globe, to legislate for them at the polls, without demanding that it be outweighed with the wealth, virtue and intelligence of their own sex" (qtd. in McDaneld 250). Here Stanton was creating contrasts. Her statement mirrors the treatment women of color felt by the Board of Lady Managers: that women of color were ignorant, poor, and depraved. The actions taken by the Board of Lady Managers coupled with Stanton's racist remarks pushed the Exposition managers to delineate an entirely separate exhibit for the women of color. They were officially pushed out of the Woman's Building.

Williams, along with anti-lynching supporter Ida B. Wells and other Black suffragists, worked diligently to achieve the equality they deserved for their work in the Women's Suffrage Movement. Their hopes for inclusion were for naught because too many white suffragists blocked them from being a presence with the white exhibition in the Woman's Building. When questioned as to the reasoning behind such exclusion, the Women's Columbian Auxiliary Association (W.C.C.A.) responded with, "Its first care

was that this ‘best opportunity...to give evidence to the world of the capability of the race...just what it has accomplished since Emancipation’ should not be passed up; and that opportunity had to be seized independently” (Massa 322). The W.C.C.A. acknowledged that women of color should be recognized but were not willing to accept their existence alongside them. This lukewarm attitude was preposterous and not only encouraged Williams and Wells further in their efforts for inclusion but also encouraged Stanton to continue her attacks on them. However, now realizing that women of color were not going to back down from their crusade for acknowledgment, both Stanton and the Board of Lady Managers shifted their rhetorical style.

The white/Black coexistence became a boiling pot for outright lies and mixed metaphors ultimately used to deceive and misdirect at the Columbian Exposition. Stanton was notorious in her public statements: “But remember we speak not for ourselves alone, but for all womankind, in poverty, ignorance and hopeless dependence, for the women of this oppressed race too, who, in slavery, have known a depth of misery and degradation that no man can ever appreciate” (qtd. in McDanel 254). Stanton considered herself a spokeswoman for all women. How unnerving is it that this woman who repeatedly compared women of color to idiots and lunatics would make the statement that she speaks on behalf of every woman. Her use of the word *slavery* also reflects her mindset to connect Black suffragists through their history of enslavement, never allowing them to rise or escape from their servitude. The Board of Lady Managers, similar to Stanton, released contrived statements meant to mislead the public as to why women of color were being separated in the Exposition. Considering themselves justified in their lies, they stated, “[O]ur Board was entirely willing to appoint a national representative from the

Negro women, and only refrained from doing so because they were quarreling so among themselves and could not decide on a leader” (qtd. in Massa 329). This joint effort to seclude would not stop Fannie Barrier Williams or Ida B. Wells. Regardless of the dishonesty, regardless of the scapegoating, Black suffragists refused to be contained.

After days and days of meaningless explanations, Williams took it upon herself to put herself forward as the representative for all the Black suffragists. She hoped to gather all women who had either been pushed out or neglected in the white women’s war against anything non-white. Williams was characteristic of an educated, well-born lady—this, no white woman could dare question. But, quickly, the Board of Lady Managers rejected Williams and published the following statement:

Whereas we understand that a request has been made by a woman representing no organization or workers, for two clerkships to satisfy nine millions of citizens, we do emphatically protest against such an action as we already have a very capable young gentleman of our race filling such a position...as we sincerely believe this woman’s proposals to be detrimental to our work...(Massa 330)

However, as Massa explains, ““This woman’ was Fannie Barrier Williams, wife of a Chicago lawyer, member of the elite black community and its exclusive, twenty-five member Prudence Crandall Study Club, whose art and music department she headed” (Massa 330) But, this rejection was not in William's scope. *A woman. Our race.* Williams was not just one woman; she stood beside millions of women who were no longer satisfied and were now demanding opportunity and inclusion. The divide between white suffragists and Black suffragists finally erupted in Chicago during 1893: polluted,

overpopulated, and plagued with the task of hosting the World's Fair. Amid the Industrial Revolution Behling explains the significance of this historical moment:

The 1893 Chicago World's Fair, the so-called Columbian Exposition since it was explicitly planned to coincide with and celebrate, albeit a year late, the four-hundredth anniversary of Columbus's 'discovery' of the Americas, was designed to display not only the achievements of the Americas to people who visited from all over the globe but also to proclaim the cultural and technological superiority of the host country and of Chicago. (Behling 175)

The World's Fair was the nation's opportunity to showcase the achievements and arts of mankind. Scientists and artists flocked to the architects of the Fair in hopes of scoring a key position in each building. So too did NAWSA. Columbian Exposition scholar Rosemarie K. Bank has researched the power and prestige behind being present at the Fair. The Fair ran "186 days of continuous performance in one location from 26 April to 31 October 1893, before six million people" (Bank 603). This was an opportunity like none held before. Suffragists everywhere descended on Chicago; this was the breakthrough they needed.

The Fair offered the opportunity to hold sway over masses of registered voters, if only for a brief moment. The NAWSA saw this opportunity to engage the nation with their cause. This would be their time, millions would be listening. Having been granted a platform and podium for the NAWSA, Stanton and other key white suffragists within the party, adamant that only white women would preach the cause, quickly dismissed the idea that any women of color would help with the administration of the women's

exhibition or would take the stage. This flagrantly bigoted choice set Black suffragists to work: submersion through amplification, circulation, and multimodality.

The White City

Perhaps it is the rhetoric of the Black suffragists, and the help of key abolitionists, in 1893 that reveals how precious the power of voice is, for in 1893 women of color desperately needed to be heard. The Columbian Exposition was a coming together of talent and skill; the spotlight for recognition was shined on whoever could get a place in this conglomeration. Ironically, the outer exterior of every building (save one) at the Fair was plastered alabaster white, which is why the nickname *White City* became so notorious. Scholar and women's studies researcher Rosemarie K. Bank remarks that in some mystified dreamland, the White City became a powerhouse for the elite to put on display what they considered beautiful. This was the opportunity to control or to harness their hierarchical self-secured success in front of a mass audience (Bank 591). It became obvious quite quickly what the managers of the Fair considered valuable. Representations and displays, often of white success, were at the forefront of the Exposition. The managers created their version of America: "...far from utopian, indeed, as a dystopic, malevolent site which, by design or indifference, featured exhibits and interpretations that produced intensely racist, sexist, and ethnist effects" (Bank 591). Managers repositioned certain groups to please the white majority. But more than *pleasing* the white majority, it could be argued that displays were created to *entertain* the white majority. The White City was an embarrassing culture shock, where non-white races and ethnicities were put on display without any show of respect or genuine interest from the viewing public. For a

few brief moments, viewers gawked and snickered at what they found unusual: Indigenous tribes, such as Eskimo and Penobscot tribes, became a spectacle. The White City was like instantaneous theatre: where visitors paid little attention to the depth or breadth of an attraction but instead used this as an opportunity for a distraction from the cares of the world.

The White City was singular in its design—showcase the white accomplishments—and plural in social injustice: exploit non-white, lesser-known constructions that would result in laughter and stares. Historical scholar Barbara J. Ballard explores how the buildings at the Exposition (Appendix C) were a testament to elitist stereotyping:

The pavilion of the Republic of Haiti stood as the only structure erected by a black nation and the only autonomous representation of people of African descent in the White City. The fairgrounds consisted of two distinct parts: a main area called the “White City,” due to the color of its buildings and its pristine environment, and the Midway Plaisance, a narrower strip of land adjacent to the White City that contained amusement attractions, restaurants, and ethnological exhibits. The White City’s grand Neoclassical structures, dedicated to commerce, manufacturing, technology, and the arts, sat on wide boulevards unified by bodies of water, bridges, and walkways. Various exhibitions, state and foreign buildings (including Haiti’s), and the woman’s pavilion resided in the White City.

The disorderly Midway, with its makeshift structures that characterized the villages of “lesser” European nations and so-called primitive peoples, contrasted sharply with the White City. It displayed a variety of amusements such as the world’s first Ferris Wheel, restaurants, and shops selling souvenirs and demonstrating a variety of crafts. Exhibits representing, and indeed stereotyping, the lifestyles of Dahomeans, Algerians, Tunisians, Bedouins, Egyptians, Samoan Islanders, and Eskimos, among others, also lined the Midway. (Ballard 31)

It was inevitable that a superior/inferior relationship would be established in the construction of the Exposition. We must examine this spatial rhetoric as an argument: the architecture of the Exposition created multimodal opportunities for the white managers to push out or platform what they wanted the public to appreciate. The exploitation of Indigenous tribes carried amusement for the public as they sashayed down the Midway. Bank further explains that racism spread prolifically throughout the Midway Plaisance. It is not definite whether or not visitors to the Fair were overcome by the stark contrasts of racism in public facilities but one would quickly notice the restricted space limiting African Americans and Native Americans in their exhibition space. Many displays encouraged and magnified the creation and development of the white man which quickly juxtaposed the lack of development with other nonwhite races (Bank 597). The managers wanted a white utopia and to push everything else to the shadows. Both Black suffragists and abolitionists saw this as an abomination. Like a machine, the 1893 Columbian Exposition was becoming an opportunity for white America to proudly display every

example of their dominance. But machines can be stopped and the opposition was ready to rise.

Chapter 3

Getting to the Podium: Submersion Tactics

In 1893 the stark contrast between right and wrong lay buried deep within predisposed societal conceptions that preordained race as a definite inferior construction. Not only was the lack of universal suffrage an example of a societal breakdown, but the inevitable imbalance between races within NAWSA was also further evidence that without reform American society would not progress. It would be unfair to say that all white women within NAWSA were flawed with prejudices against race. Both white and Black women proudly marched for the ability to vote. Though we do have ample evidence that Stanton repeatedly went out of her way to impede Black women and keep them from the podium, ultimately she did not prevail. Ida B. Wells saw to this. Wells knew that the moment had come where street rhetorical tactics that had been used in the past to get the attention of the masses were the key to getting her fellow Black suffragettes to the podium. Too long had American society denied the natural and inalienable rights to many. Too long had American society profited from outright segregation. Yet, the tides were changing; women, particularly Black women, were unwilling to be silenced any longer.

A strategic multimodal campaign to flood the public with arguments as to why women of color were being silenced was enacted at the 1893 Columbian Exposition. When requesting participation in the administration of the Women's Building but moreover, when requesting opportunities to speak at the podium in the Women's Building

reflected the determination that would prevail. Along with the help of Frederick Douglass, and other abolitionists, Wells created a pamphlet campaign that would turn the tide and set Fannie Barrier Williams, Anna Julia Cooper, and four other Black suffragists on the stage at the 1893 World's Fair. Speeches, pamphletting, and the force of the body were not new to the Women's Suffrage Movement; shouting speeches on street corners and passing out leaflets for passersby had become routine for the movement. Through precise language, emotionally driven images of Black lynching, and sheer numbers of the product (the Wells pamphlet was eighty pages), the drive to place Black women on a stage was successful. Although Stanton and the white-only Board of Lady Managers did succeed in driving the Black suffragettes to a whole separate building, the Pavilion of the Republic of Haiti, she did not succeed in stopping their message. Stanton, and others with her same prejudiced mindset, could no longer prevent the Black voice from being heard. Black suffragists were tired of archaic mentalities that no longer made sense as the century turned, and they made a choice. For it was their rhetorical choice of submersion that took them from the streets to the podium.

The Experience of Black Suffragists at the 1893 Columbian Exposition

The Board of Lady Managers for the Women's Building at the Columbian Exposition were purposeful in their actions taken to deny women of color a voice. These repeated denials angered many Black suffragists who were aware that their support and manpower in the effort was simply an exchange value of commodities. They were working for a cause in exchange for nothing in return. Women of color, knowing they too shared the enfranchisement desire, wanted a place on the speaking platform. White women did not see this argument in the same light and emphasized feminine ideals,

ideals that made them more desirable to men. They argued men, who could alter enfranchisement, would rather see one of their own race speaking on behalf of all women than a woman of a different race. Men would favor an elitist white woman's argument, as Laura L. Behling writes, but this weak assumption presupposes that white women are better speakers on platforms, let alone more desirable to listen to. This exploitation was further evidence for many women of color that their voices would not be heard unless they took a stand and gave voice to their style at the podium (Behling 180). A premium was placed on public appearance. White suffragists viewed this as an opportunity to display themselves as worthy of male attention. But, antithetically, this pushing out invigorated Black suffragists to seek the center of the room to expose racial disparities. First, though, Black suffragists needed a change in persuasive tactics.

The Black suffragists knew they were facing an uphill conflict, but they knew that this was a battle worth fighting. The ability to vote was their end goal, but for now, they wanted recognition from within the movement. The Black suffragists believed in this cause, and knowing that this cause provoked in them a desire to agitate the establishment, they sought out change. A coming together of idea and voice enveloped many, as John W. Bowers states, "In the process of speaking to the established hierarchy, the activists must marshal evidence and arguments to support their position, indicate how many people they represent, and characterize their followers" (20). Many white suffragists, adamant that Black suffragists did not have the wherewithal to organize, did not acknowledge the number of supporters for Black suffragists—working women and recent immigrants united with the Black suffragists. Women of color knew that they were not alone: "...the agitators [Black women] attempt to recruit members. Among the tactics employed in this

strategy are *informational picketing, erection of posters, use of bumper stickers, painting messages in prominent locations, distribution of handbills and leaflets, and mass protest meetings*” (Bowers 20-21). This variety of rhetoric is classic submersion and created an appeal to the masses, which was necessary. Planning was imperative for this to work.

Degradation and belittling because of race discrimination were all that many non-white women had felt from society, and now, being sidelined by their gender based on the color of their skin or for the amount of money in their pocketbook was intolerable. Jen McDaneld reflects that white suffragists had gotten away with “exploiting the black female figure to perform a number of strategic functions in negotiating their ambivalent positions in relation to the racist and patriarchal postwar political system” (McDaneld 247). But now the female Black-figure was a concrete force to be reckoned with. The propaganda white suffragists, such as Stanton, had conveyed through letters, newspaper columns, and parade rallies would soon backfire. Women of color were asking for support to be seen and heard in 1893. Holly J. McCammon cites how women of color gathered evidence that would “shape their frames to resonate with potentially sympathetic audiences and to counter potentially damaging claims by the opposition” (McCammon, “No Weapon Save Argument” 537). The Black suffragists knew the precise arguments needed to win recognition. Multimodal arguments began appearing everywhere in public and especially in the hands of white suffragists, yet the Board of Lady Managers were resolute in their decision to not accept Williams, or for that matter any other woman of color, as a representative for Black suffragists, nor to give any time for women of color to speak in the Woman’s Building. This egregious decision set Wells,

Williams, Douglass, and others who supported the oppressed voice to drown out any attempt at justification for segregation.

Agitative rhetoric was nothing new to the Black suffragists; they had been working alongside white suffragists for years with this style of stirring up the public. But now, the Black suffragists were turning the tables on those who they marched the streets and shouted on corners with, their seemingly allies. The Black suffragists recognized the idea of timing is linked to the success or failure of their recognition and it's ancient Greek term *kairos* plays into their precision in delivery. Kairotically, the moment had arrived when silence would not be tolerated and the Black suffragists took advantage of the moment. There would be a freshness that the public would experience because women of color had been pushed to the back of parades and rallies for so long. The Black suffragists wanted to lay bare the pain that had been inflicted on them by labeling them unworthy of participation. Playing on the public's sensibilities became their focus, for Black suffragists planned to strip the white suffragists naked of defense, desiring to ultimately irritate and infuriate. The rhetorical effects and consequential nature of aggressive arguments are revealed through Mary G. McEdwards's writings. Agitative rhetoric is composed of consequential metaphors and retaliating adjectives, and when used properly, denies suppression of refutation (McEdwards 43). A persuasive attack was their only option. Suppressed by the white majority for too long, women of color now aimed to suppress their opposition. Their rhetorical style was to submerge and flood the media with similar arguments that had been used in the past, only now these arguments had a different target.

Submersion Techniques that Succeed

The task to overcome unmitigated racism in 1893 required a submerging effect, meaning a multimodal force of written and spoken text, simultaneous leaflets, and a bodily impact. A flooding of media, I argue, was their rhetorical weapon. It was multidimensional and required a reframing of mindsets. Both the public and the Board of Lady Managers were overpowered by the amount of evidence stacked in favor of the Black suffragists. An engulfing of rationale caused, and moreover forced, the Board of Lady Managers to consider the Black suffragists as a part of the whole. In 1893 no longer would women of color, and most importantly their voices, be sidelined and silenced, because from here on wave upon wave would exasperate any force of opposition.

This voluminous physicality in written, visual, and bodily rhetoric becomes a patterned behavior in history. Totally flooding an establishment to the point of silencing any justification against an agitator becomes a bedrock for the underdog in a fight. In Nazi Germany, the use of the blitzkrieg created insurmountable and utter destruction when weaker communities were incapable of resisting military devastation. For the Black suffragists, no doubt, the nexus for their tidal wave of rhetoric was Williams not only being told “no” to representing the Black race in the Columbian Exposition, but moreover being told that a white man was preferable in this position to her. Let us examine the power behind the rhetorical technique of submersion and catalog its many features.

Submersion is not a singular, one-dimensional method, but rather it can be equated with a figurative-like avalanche of rhetorical tactics. Submersion entails amplification, also known as exhaustion; circulation or distribution; and the use of a multimodal campaign. This three-tier composition creates a knock-out effect that causes whatever audience the submersion is directed at to relent and be practically clobbered by

a sheer volume of discourse. One must note that submersion is a last resort tool. In the case of the 1893 Black suffragists, Ida B. Wells, Fannie Barrier Williams, and Anna Julia Cooper deliberately hesitated and patiently paused to see if one rhetorical method, in this circumstance, letters to the Board of Lady Managers would succeed, but instead, mocking insults was their reprisal. The Board of Lady Managers had a goldmine of rhetoric at their disposal; they could have entertained audiences for days at the Fair with a vast mixture of persuasion as to the need for women's enfranchisement. But instead, they chose to ignore what they viewed as agitators within the movement. Let us examine each of the components of submersion to better define this rhetorical tactic.

Though all three components of submersion—amplification, circulation, and multimodality—reflect an awareness for ethos, amplification or exhaustion demonstrates an acute consciousness for flooding an establishment. Rhetorical scholar Jonathan L. Bradshaw writes about the careful balancing act that must happen when applying amplification to an audience. In a comprehensive definition of amplification, Bradshaw writes that “Rhetorical exhaustion involves active means of circulating rhetorical material to halt discourse, redirect the rhetorical trajectories of public deliberations, or demobilize publics.” (2) In 1893, rhetorical exhaustion was the deliberate plan to circulate the Wells pamphlet all over the Fair, shifting attention away from the white suffragists and back to the Black suffragists. Strategy and the effect of that strategy are pertinent here because overwhelming an audience can easily become off-putting to listeners. An author or speaker can easily lose their credibility if listeners find the message fatiguing. There is a direct correlation between when an audience is turned off from the message and the passion or appetite for the message.

The suffragists knew that their message had been heard nationwide, but what is key here is that the nation had been listening to the same speakers: white suffragists. Even if the white suffragists had decided to employ amplification to their satisfaction in 1893, this strategy would not have been successful because their ethos was lacking, not because they were white women but because only white women had been on platforms for decades now saying the same message. Instead, when we see Wells and Williams utilizing this strategy, it is successful because not only was their message refreshing, their ethos was still intact because they were new to the platform. Audiences were refreshed to the enfranchisement argument by a new style and a new speaker—their novelty reinvigorated the movement. The next component of submersion, circulation or distribution, is vital in redirecting the repercussions of an exhaustive message.

The second tenant of submersion is circulation or distribution and, arguably, this factor reflects both control and a lack of control within the given argument. How a message is delivered is just as important in determining whether a message is effective, and this component of circulation has remained in rhetorical studies since the birth of the genre. In juxtaposing the relationships between rhetoric and mass communications, James E. Porter begins the unpacking of the possibilities of circulation with how Greek rhetoricians defined distribution. Opening with the five canons of rhetoric, Porter writes, “In classical rhetoric and through most of the history of rhetoric, delivery referred to the oral/aural and bodily aspects of an oral speech or performance—i.e., to the speaker’s voice (intonation, volume, rhythm) and to bodily movements and gestures” (207). But recognizing that delivery is no longer just through oral communication, mainstreamed devices, such as social media platforms, have diversified circulation methods. We are not

limited to the audience right in front of us to hear or read our message. As Porter explains, circulation is “...not a monolithic, well-defined thing: it is a range of media, technologies, rhetorical venues, discourse genres, and distribution mechanisms...” (208) However, as our communication availabilities change, we must be cognizant of the emotional impact and, even more so, our ethos, based on the vessel of delivery. The desired effect of the message might be completely written off by how the message is received, and thus the speaker/writer may suffer from unexpected consequences.

Many of the 19th-century suffragists stood in improvised spaces shouting at the tops of their lungs, possibly a turn-off, or they paraded down crowded streets passing out leaflets, many of these pamphlets instantly discarded and tossed into gutters. The establishment's perception of the delivery of the suffrage message was uniquely tangled up with ethos. We must understand that circulation is a plethora of delivery; however, one needs to reimagine conveying messages to achieve success. Circulation is letting go of the control and acknowledging that the more your message spreads, the wider your audience becomes. In 1893, the Black suffragists resorted to a circulation of amplification, meaning Wells, Williams, and Cooper purposefully passed out a pamphlet that would weigh down any passerby, but they also flooded the media with so many of these pamphlets that one was instantly engaged with their message. The Black suffragists, through heft and frequency of amplification and circulation, achieved success and ultimately their argument was, at the very least, acknowledged if not accepted.

Submersion could never be successful if it were compartmentalized, meaning success is found in the versatility of message—a multimodal strategy. Multimodal rhetoric, the third and final piece of the puzzle of submersion, is intentional and

organized audience engagement, a mix up of media. Jens E. Kjeldsen, in his research into the fundamental practices of multimodal methods, characterizes this strategy as a crossing of paths, channeling much organization to achieve a purpose. Multiple visuals, such as graphs and diagrams, and other imagery are all essential to the construction of organizational ethos (Kjeldsen 360). There is a webbing effect, where one listener may prefer a certain form of communication and another may prefer something else, but the speaker must realize that rhetorical interaction can be fragmented and splintered into multiple components. Kjeldsen writes that “Especially relevant for organizational rhetoric attending to visual and multimodal communication are issues of trust and credibility, legitimacy, identity, identification, and community building, and value and norms” (363). Similar to amplification and circulation, when employing multimodal strategies, an author’s ethos is inextricably linked to the platforms used for the message. We have to trust a speaker or author. We have to believe that the message that we are being presented with is for our betterment. We have to know that that speaker or author has our best interests at heart and their message that is coming at us through wave upon wave of amplification is genuine. Authors must create ethos through a diversity of multimodality. Up until this point, much of the suffrage message had been conveyed through extemporaneous speeches on street corners or at rallies, but the Black suffragists shifted their focus beyond the already frequented settings and were able to ultimately diversify. Responding to a stagnant audience, the Black suffragists profited from the use of submersion.

Submersion is a series of codes: it’s amplification, circulation, and the use of multimodality; it’s not one genre or the other, it’s an accumulation of all. Effective

communication cannot be defined by one strand or by one thread. Submersion is an approach in rhetoric that figuratively is conveyed through unsung heroes, meaning this technique releases the underdog in a fight to overcome an unremitting opposition. The compilation of amplification, circulation, and multimodality builds a pyramid of submersion. The times in history when all three components shared in the construction of submersion is rare, for it is far more frequent to see an individual use of the three pieces than it is to see a three-fold use of submersion.

The single-component of amplification dates far back into history and we can see various renowned speakers employing this strategy in the quest to overwhelm. Dating back to the sixteenth century, German monk Martin Luther ingeniously knew that when he grappled with the crimes of the Catholic Church, he had to mount incorrigible evidence, evidence that could not be bartered or bargained, and most importantly, evidence that amplified his argument. The Catholic Church had, for far too long, weaseled its way out of well-deserved criticism. Luther, asking for public discourse, nailed his 95 Theses, which framed the history of the many discretions of the Catholic Church to the door of the castle church at Wittenberg (“Luther, Martin”). He didn’t write one; he didn’t write ten; he didn’t write fifty. Luther wrote 95 reasons why the Catholic Church was not above reproach. This use of amplification through circulation was successful because ultimately a Great Reformation began, though unfortunately, Luther was severely disciplined for his use of a bulletin board to air the Churches' many foibles. Amplification, though effective in presenting evidence that opposition finds hard to contend, easily causes the agitator that is using amplification to fall under recrimination.

Later, in the nineteenth century, we see John Quincy Adams using amplification to such an extent that in legislative decorum, the gag rule is created to silence his amplification. In an act of flooding the Congress with tens of thousands of petitions, Adams was attempting to stop the annexation of Texas and ultimate entry into the Union as a slave state. For three weeks, Adams, along with the American Anti-Slavery Society, bombarded Congress with petitions. This choking effect eventually caused southern legislators to institute a gag rule that "...[required] that all petitions to Congress on the subject of slavery be automatically tabled without being printed, referred to committee, or discussed or debated by the representatives" (Smith). Adams was denied a voice just as he was trying to give voice to thousands of enslaved Americans. Amplification did have a negative side effect here: this technique isolated Adams in Congress. But Adams placed his body in the line of fire, intentionally, with full knowledge that his fight would be a lonely one. Often causes worth fighting require individuals to realize fully the desert they willingly place themselves in and amplification is an act of this result.

In quite the opposite ethical argument to Adams, Strom Thurmond, in the twentieth century, became the record-holder for the longest filibuster in the United States Senate. Thurmond was attempting to block the passage of the Civil Rights Act. He talked, and talked, and talked: the man kept his fellow Senators chained to their seats for twenty-four hours and eighteen minutes. Chris Wilson, political rhetorical scholar later characterized this as "...a one-man roadblock simply by refusing to shut up" (Wilson). Amplification, in this case, earned Thurmond a place in history for the longest filibuster, his filibuster was against the Civil Rights Act, which passed in the Senate the moment his verbal protest ended. So yes, his amplification caused everyone around him to stop what

they were doing (much to their annoyance, I'm sure), but once his amplification stopped, his argument failed. This realization that clogging of discourse does not always succeed is noteworthy, which is why the Black suffragists understood that amplification needed circulation and multimodality as well.

Fast forward just decades later to the Supreme Court Justice hearings of Clarence Thomas and a contentious Senate Judiciary Committee panel. Not only do we need to note the rhetorical use of amplification here, but we also must layer in the racially gendered factors that swayed many members in their voting to confirm the justice. Lawyer and professor Anita Hill publicly testified to the sexual assaults she and others had received at the hands of Thomas. She was well-spoken; she was dressed professionally; she presented herself supremely as a lady. Yet, she received from not only Senate committee members, but also a racially-charged public, a backlash that a Black woman was preventing a Black man from entering the highest judiciary court. In her attempt to exhibit herself as a survivor of sexual harassment, Hill became a target. She was belittled left and right, criticized for just now coming forward. Professor Kimberlé W. Crenshaw begins the study of intersectionality with her arguments on racialized and gendered segregation. The risks taken by a Black woman to push her argument into the public sphere had an amplification side effect: "They rallied together to purchase a full-page advertisement in the New York Times titled 'African American Women in Defense of Ourselves.' The 1,600 signatories noted the racism and sexism playing out in the Hill-Thomas drama" (Crenshaw, "We Still Have Not Learned From Anita Hill's Testimony" 19). In an act of amplified support, 1,600 supporters were willing to sign their names to an article that called out the discriminations in the justice hearings. Here

we see both amplification and circulation working together because the *New York Times* is a highly-recognized publication that garners not only respect but worldwide attention. These two techniques, arguably, would have been successful if society would have been ready and willing to listen to the context of the argument.

The approachability of an audience is vital to the success of submersion. We've now taken into account several cases of unsuccessful submersion, due to many reasons. By far the Hill-Thomas example comes the closest to the context and relatability of the Black suffragists, where a marginalized group must choose to act regardless of the counter-weighting force against them. But there is more than one successful case of submersion before the twenty-first century. The same power produced when someone who is oppressed becomes empowered and takes a stand is evidenced in the prolific propaganda World War II machine of Rosie the Riveter. Women at the beginning of the twentieth century had little incentive to enter the workforce and earn a hard day's wages, let alone wear pants. But when the United States entered into WWII, a call to action for women was orchestrated solely by a successful submersion campaign, though this argument was circulated by the United States government. With a heavy distribution of posters that blanketed every building claiming women must do their part, multimodal constructions combined to unite women together in this fight. Though, it must be acknowledged that the Rosie the Riveter posters were of a very particular woman: white, unmarried, and with a propensity to still entice men while wearing overalls, the submersion here was successful. Women were marginalized and the federal government utilized submersion to motivate women into the workforce but the government's actions were still consistent with those in an established power base, whereas the Black

suffragists were marginalized and their argument was not consistent with those in power. Just as with the WWII propaganda posters, the Black suffragists rhetorically dominated the movement. Their written, visual, and bodily force exemplify the nature of flooding a field with discourse.

Written and Spoken Rhetoric

Frederick Douglass, both abolitionist and supporter of women's rights, had been given a platform to speak in the Pavilion of Haiti. Knowing of the discrimination by the Board of Lady Managers against his friend Fannie Barrier Williams, Douglass used this opportunity to overwhelm his listeners with speeches on racial disparities with the Woman's Building. August 25, 1893, was declared Colored American Day at the Columbian Exposition, and this is where Douglass utilized the podium to elicit empathy for the Black suffragists. Abolitionist scholar Daniel Hautzinger reflects on the significance that Douglass made at the Fair:

‘There is, in fact, no such problem,’ he said. ‘The real problem has been given a false name. It is called Negro for a purpose. It has substituted Negro for Nation, because the one is despised and hated, and the other is loved and honored. The true problem is a national problem. The problem is whether the American people have honesty enough, loyalty enough, honor enough, patriotism enough to live up to their own Constitution.’ (as qtd. in Hautzinger)

Douglass not only appeals to American loyalty but pushes to the forefront the guiding principles of this country. Douglass is inciting all Americans to remember the life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness guaranteed to all. Many Americans are willingly blind to the

injustices found on American streets, and here, Douglass's repetition and amplification of the word *problem* reminds his listeners that problems can be solved if we choose bravery over ignorance. Douglass continues his remarks:

I hold that the American Negro owes no more to the Negroes of Africa than he owes to the Negroes in America. . . . We have a fight on our hand[s] right here . . . and a blow struck for the Negro in America is a blow struck for the Negro in Africa. The native land of the American Negro is America . . . and millions of his posterity have inherited Caucasian blood. (Ballard 38)

Here, Douglass is not only appealing to the 1893 injustice but also reminding his listeners of the injustice of slavery. Douglass, himself escaped from enslavement, knew that a deplorable practice of many slave owners was to breed in Caucasian blood in enslaved females; raping female enslaved persons was rampant amongst southern plantation owners. So now, Douglass reflects that many of the Black Americans who are being denied their Constitutional right to vote may also carry Caucasian heritage. Rhetorically, Douglass's argument is designed to remind his listeners of the common humanity so many share, and at the same time, point out the wrongs that are still plaguing our country. His identification argument revealed to his listeners that the everyday stings that so many feel is all they have ever known of America. Amplifying the idea that problems cannot be ignored while also coupling that idea with the fact of common bloodlines among Americans, Black or white, Douglass submerged his listeners with the irrationality of social injustices that were prevalent in the Woman's Building, in the Columbian Exposition, and in our nation's treatment of Black Americans. Like Douglass, Wells

wanted to remind the visitors to the Columbian Exposition that Black Americans have been a part of this country from the time of its birth.

The Pamphlet

Just as Douglass had applied the rhetorical technique of written speech into this multimodal attack against flagrant racism at the Columbian Exposition, Wells instituted flooding of pamphlets into the Pavilion of Haiti to overpower any disagreement with their position of equality. Confounded and baffled as to the exclusion techniques applied at the Fair, “Douglass, Wells, Chicago lawyer and newspaper publisher Ferdinand Barnett, and educator, author, and publisher I. Garland Penn wrote a protest pamphlet entitled *The Reason Why the Colored American Is Not in the World’s Columbian Exposition* that they distributed at the fair” (Ballard 27-28). This fight became a communal effort. All four were prominent in the Chicago Black community; all four knew that this pamphlet had the potential to alter the course of history. As Anna Massa writes, the details of creating this document are also interesting: “Miss Wells had Chicago’s black women organize meetings at their respective churches, and it was the \$500 so raised which financed the printing of *The Reason Why...*” (336). Again, a communal effort was needed. The need for financial backing was concrete: this pamphlet would not be any normal one-page pamphlet—indeed this was an eighty-page pamphlet (Appendix D). Wells knew that the time to expose the evidence of crimes committed against not only her race but also her gendered race had come.

The pamphlet *The Reason Why the Colored American Is Not in the World’s Columbian Exposition* is an example of stalwart history. Inside the pamphlet, readers were educated on six chapters of injustices committed against Black Americans, with a

preface and introduction as well. Wells, champion for universal civil rights, wrote the Preface, Chapter Two: Class Legislation, Chapter Three: The Convict Lease System, Chapter Four: Lynch law, and the endnote: To The Public. In her preface, she sets the tone for the entire pamphlet:

The exhibit of the progress made by a race in 25 years of freedom as against 250 years of slavery, would have been the greatest tribute to the greatness and progressiveness of American institutions which could have been shown the world. The colored people of this great Republic number eight millions - more than one-tenth the whole population of the United States... They have contributed a large share to American prosperity and civilization. The labor of one-half of this country has always been, and is still being done by them. Those visitors to the World's Columbian Exposition who know these facts, especially foreigners will naturally ask: Why are not the colored people, who constitute so large an element of the American population, and who have contributed so large a share to American greatness, more visibly present and better represented in this World's Exposition? (Wells et al. 1).

This very clear statement introduces and amplifies the rational and logical evidence in favor of Black Americans, and at the same time, begs an ethical question deserving of an answer. A present and clear dichotomy is revealed where Wells places freedom and slavery side-by-side and asks the nonchalant passerby to consider how far has America come in its progressive history. This rhetorical prowess by Wells continues throughout the pamphlet as she continues to push the question so titled in the pamphlet.

Arguably, her most powerful reasoning is displayed in her chapter titled “Lynch law,” where both data and visuals come together to force the reader to recognize the atrocities of lynching. Here we see multimodality working. Wells quotes *The Chicago Tribune* with her statistics, citing that between 1882 to 1891 a total of 800 black men and women were lynched (Wells et al. 26). She then follows these facts with actual pictures of lynched men. This overpowering imagery is purposeful. America cannot look away. The crimes committed against Black Americans cannot continue. In this case, Wells was drawing attention to the physical slaughter of innocent men and women, but at the same time, she did not want to lose the opportunity to vocalize the more subtle wrongs committed against Black suffragists—in this case by the Board of Lady Managers. The pamphlet was remarkable for its ability to effect change through submersion of facts and imagery.

The Reason Why the Colored American Is Not in the World's Columbian Exposition is incredibly important to study in terms of how not only imagery can effect change, but also the amount of imagery can effect change. Wells, with the assistance of her fellow supporters, sat at a table in the Pavilion of Haiti and printed approximately 10,000 copies of an eighty-page pamphlet, though there is research that she might have printed over 15,000 copies (Wells). This laborious process was extraordinary, considering the nineteenth-century printing press was still a hand-powered crank and wheel. The stamina, the exertion. Knowing that she would be perspiring from the exhaustion, probably through a blouse or dress, knowing that passersby's would see her physicality in this effort, Wells disregarded any shaming and snickering the Board of Lady Managers may have thrown at her and regarded her mission as a task to prove she is a lady—a lady

with something to say. Wells is the epitome that dedication to a single idea, through sheer force, will consume a hostile establishment. Attention must be paid to the idea that Black suffragists were often criticized for being not lady-like enough to represent the suffrage cause. This attitude projected onto Black women was based on an envious sexuality idea.

In the nineteenth century, many white women feared the allusive sexual appeal women of color held over society. Societal white women maintained a Reconstructionist belief that women of color were more promiscuous than white women and were able to influence or persuade others, not through words but their bodies. White women in the suffrage movement, to fend off women of color's sexual objectification, intentionally barred them from leading positions. Higginbotham explains that "The exclusion of black women from the dominant society's definition of 'lady' said as much about sexuality as it did about class. The metalanguage of race signifies, too, the imbrication of race within the representation of sexuality" (262). The image of a Black suffragist as temptress, not of rhetorical tempting but for sexual tempting, swayed white suffragists to preclude Black involvement in the movement. But this identity of a Black female body being worthy of nothing more than bodily attention and not rhetorical attention did not discourage Wells from projecting her body into the arena. Wells knew her worth. Wells knew she was a lady. No side-eye or scoffing from white suffragists could dissuade her from printing her pamphlet regardless of the physicality involved.

We must examine how this pamphlet came to alter history, for eventually Black suffragists were allowed to speak. Once a visual has been printed, the ability for that visual to move, transform, and reassemble in a collective space is remarkable. All of these actions are characteristic of the design, genre, and materiality of the visual while it

is having various interactions that become inextricably entangled. Visual and spatial rhetorical critic Laurie E. Gries conveys the effects of image on the masses. The merging that an image encounters in the media is also presupposed on its circulation, transformation, and consequentiality, and the totality of its effect on society is dependent on tracing the wake of its impact (Gries 108-109). We must understand that the moment an image leaves an author's hands, they lose control over that image. The image can be passed on, reshaped, and ultimately placed in the hands of someone who may be unintended, but someone who could have meaningful effects for the author. The possible imaginings behind the potential of an image are inconceivable. The word *entangled* is key, because, though we do not have evidence as to who Wells was passing this pamphlet to, we do have indefatigable evidence as to when and where she was. Five days after the Colored American Day, August 30th, Wells was sitting in the Pavilion of Haiti. Wells was surrounded by visitors who were an entanglement of all races, gender, ages, and socioeconomic statuses. What could have been a biased push to only speak to a one-race audience turned into a public wave of support for the Black suffragists.

The influence of this pamphlet was considerable. Laurie E. Gries explains the power in instantaneous moments, where images can weave in and out of human and nonhuman entities. It must be understood that distribution is an intentional activity, but unintentionally, an image can be circulated by outside forces that were entirely accidental (Gries 120-121). The chance that someone picked up a discarded Wells pamphlet and passed it along to others embodies the ripple-effect principle. Wells knowingly put thought into action with her pamphlet. Methodical and pragmatic, Wells and her collaborators purposefully weighted this pamphlet, eighty-pages in fact, so that a

passerby must consider the rhetorical title on the cover. Not only was the size and quantity of pages a legitimate concern, but the actual visuals and data Wells selected were all intentional activities. The very fact that Wells, motivated by the systematic racism experienced by the Black suffragists, systematically constructed a successful pamphlet speaks to her discipline as a twentieth-century rhetorician and the success in utilizing submersion tactics against oppressive forces.

Bodily Force

In addition to the speeches and pamphlets used as flooding mechanisms, we must also examine the bodily aspect of multimodal significance. Gries explains that arguably the body, in particular the female body, is one of the most powerful forces in establishing a connection between speaker and audience. Energy is naturally transferred, and senses are piqued as an audience, possibly a predominantly male audience, views a woman's body. A woman's body is placed in a vulnerable position on a platform: she is judged, she is ridiculed, she is also scaled up and down. A woman must delicately respond to her audience (Gries 125). Wells was taking a great risk with her pamphlet. She was a Black woman asking the public to acknowledge unspoken crimes. To say that Wells was brave is not only underestimating her magnitude, it is also devaluing her rhetorical power. She placed her body at risk to distribute her pamphlet and then to speak at the podium, but in doing so, she proved to all undervalued women and men that many risks are worth taking, and she is a body to be respected and listened to.

In distributing her pamphlet, Wells knew that there was the possibility that it would be successful and Black suffragists would not only assist in the administration of the Woman's Building but also stand on stage and give speeches as to the need for

women's suffrage. She not only placed her body at risk for the unpopular ideas in her pamphlet but, also, placed at risk the bodies of the other Black suffragists who would be on platforms speaking. Advocate for bodily awareness within argument, Kevin Michael Deluca explores the power behind presence in space. Body rhetoric is complex: "What they do have some control over, however, is the presentation of their bodies in the image events that attract media attention. Their bodies, then, become not merely flags to attract attention for the argument but the site and substance of the argument itself" (Deluca 10). For Wells, Williams, Cooper, and the other four speakers, placing themselves at the forefront was in their control. These women not only rhetorically placed themselves in vulnerable positions, but their argument of calling out the Board of Lady Managers also placed them in vulnerable positions. Their bodies were susceptible to any passerby's reaction, which is why when Wells chose a table alongside Douglass in the Pavilion of Haiti, her decision was deliberate.

As mentioned prior, the Pavilion of Haiti was the only building erected for any collection of African descent in the White City, already a symbol for many as fresh hope against a sea of the white majority. This placement allowed Wells to feel stable. In researching social movements, Danielle Endres and Samantha Senda-Cook delve into the relationship between place and space. Body rhetoric can be multidimensional: "Place in protest builds from the notion that place is rhetorical to specifically show how the rhetorical performances of place in protest are a rich intersection of bodies, material aspects, past meanings, present performances, and future possibilities" (Endres and Senda-Cook 261). Wells understood that now was the time to break the assumptions in

the White City. In disregarding the apparent risks to her body, Wells reframed the argument and opened her body as a site of the womanly contest.

Wells was contesting not only the suffrage argument, but she was, as a woman, asking the passerby in the Pavilion of Haiti to recognize the applicability of femininity in 1893. Women were not meek creatures anymore; women were fleeing from the parlors that had harbored instinctual stereotypes. Wells, as a strong Black woman, pushed her body into the White City. Dana L. Cloud, a feminist critic, comments on the unbreakable ties between a visual of a woman's body and the power to transform argument. This behavior was unusual, for "...the capacity of bodies to disrupt, interrupt, and exert instrumental control over the proceedings was a revelation of the agency of women" (Cloud 30). A new dawn was breaking. Wells created reidentification for her body, meaning she reshaped what others presupposed of her based solely on physical characteristics, by subjecting it to ridicule in the White City. But this ridicule was based on being a Black woman able to cleverly articulate arguments. The societal restraints that were ingrained in many women were washed away in Wells as she presented wave after wave of persuasive attack. Well's bodily rhetoric was unconventional, "Women's bodies are simultaneously the site of ideological and political contestation in public and the repository of everything private, dangerous, disgusting, and out of bounds in politics proper" (Cloud 28). When it came to the political field white men were territorial and a Black woman placing her body in this arena was unheard of and shocking. But Wells did not mind the bodily attention, for after being ignored for far too long, the attention she openly sought was for a cause that, though was dangerous, was demanded of her now.

Wells presented her body as a symbol for other women: she was feminine, she was intelligent, and she had nothing to hide.

Adding to the bodily rhetoric Wells displayed, let us also take into account the actual printing and circulation of the pamphlet. D J R. Bruckner researches the transformation of print media and the power of the press. The printing press first came into use around 1450, but through tremendous strides in technological advancement, what once was a steam-powered hand press, by the late 1890s, became the linotype and monotype machines, which enabled double-sided printing simultaneously (Bruckner). We do not know for sure what actual machine Wells was using to print her pamphlet, but we can make several assumptions and inferences. We can assume she did not have access to the most up-to-date printing press, so we can infer she was using a hand crank single-sided press. We can assume, even if volunteers or Douglass helped her, that she was the primary printer of this pamphlet, from which we can then infer that this process took hours upon hours to complete. Probably standing for an exorbitant amount of time, sweating to the point of fatigue and an unladylike appearance, Wells demonstrated tremendous willpower. To physically crank out over, arguably, 10,000 pamphlets with a hand crank that probably weighed more than fifty pounds over an extended amount of time can test not only one's patience and endurance but also their resolve. The mass and velocity of this task demonstrate a willingness that is feminine in its perfection. The exertion and stamina of Wells, the fact that she inundated this task upon herself, the physical weight of carrying and distributing an eighty-page pamphlet—Wells was a woman who had an inexhaustible determination. Wells knew submersion was her course.

Between speeches, pamphlets, and a sheer physical force, six black suffragists—Fannie Barrier Williams, Anna Julia Cooper, Francis Jackson Coppin, Sarah J. Early, Frances Harper, and Hallie Q. Brown—established themselves as a voice for not only women but women of color in 1893. They managed to address an audience on issues they found were being neglected. Geographically in the Pavilion of Haiti and not in the actual Women’s Building, the Black suffragists made it to the podium though the Board of Lady Managers still could undermine their efforts through scheduling. The Board of Lady Managers purposefully coordinated white NAWSA speakers to address an audience at the same time that Williams was slated to begin her speech. The marginalization never ceased:

The irony of the NAWSA’s evening session running at the same time as the session of Black women underscores the difficulty Black women had in becoming part of, and at the very least heard by, the woman suffrage movement. It also highlights the marginality of Black women—they were still accounting for their ‘intellectual progress,’ or still organizing to improve their condition, while the white women, whose ‘progress’ and ‘condition’ were naturally (i.e., evolutionary) assured, could move on to fight the more exalted battle of enfranchisement. (Behling 184)

This became a whittling down process. The white suffragists believed they could slowly chip away at the Black suffragists’ determination. And even in the end, the white suffragists still managed to address an audience that coincided with the Black suffragist's speakers. Knowing these head games the Board of Lady Managers were playing, and scheduled to speak first of the six, Williams gave a speech titled *The Intellectual Progress*

of the Colored Women of the United States Since the Emancipation Proclamation. This title is linked to chapter five of the now notorious pamphlet, “The Progress of the Afro-American Since Emancipation,” written by I. Garland Penn. And just as Douglass awed his listeners with rhetorical prose, just as Wells overwhelmed her audience with her pamphlet, Williams exhausted her audience with her style. Williams spoke from a ten-page speech, the longest of the six speakers, again amplification. Between the efforts of the uncompromising Douglass, Wells, and other contributors, finally, recognition was in sight, even if that meant performing from a stage branded as un-American and un-female.

Now was the time that Williams and her compatriots took the podium; this gathering of strength was purposeful. Within the Pavilion of Haiti, Douglass, Wells, Williams, and other Black leaders were no longer invisible. The 1893 Fair was a parade for Columbus discovering America but within the confines of the Pavilion of Haiti, Black voices found root. From this moment we see the growth of nonwhite voices that refuse to be silenced (Ballard 43). A stand was taken. Wells, Douglass, Williams, and others knew that they had right on their side when requesting participation in the administration of the Woman’s Building and speaking at the podium. People of color existed; they could not and were not going to be shushed or sidelined further. But this mentality required a push of substantial rhetorical backing, a conviction that carried weight and, in Williams’s case, style.

Chapter 4

At the Podium

Fannie Barrier Williams, just like her fellow Black speakers, wished to use this opportunity of speaking at the 1893 Columbian Exposition to reshape the minds of her audience in favor of universal suffrage. Williams's speech was the longest of the six women, ten pages total, a perfect example of submersion. Nevertheless, Williams, knowing the walls she had to breakdown before she could have this moment, chose to dispel every preconceived notion that white suffragists, and for that matter, her American audience in general, had had about Black suffragists taking the stage to speak about the importance of enfranchisement and the uplifting of the Black community. This was a moment; this was their cause. Through the use of submersion and its tactics of speeches, pamphlets, and bodily force, history is coming to know the names Wells, Williams, and Cooper.

Williams was the first to speak for the Black suffrage cause. In a similar vein as Wells, Williams used the opportunity to overwhelm the audience with her rhetorical skills. She cleverly used amplification to incite an emotional response. The title of her speech has a direct correlation to the Wells, Douglass, Barnett, and Penn pamphlet. Williams purposefully linked the ideas in this pamphlet, which was passed out to any audience in hopes that they would attend her later speech. There is staying power here that Williams not only invoked but played on to utilize the initial power behind the pamphlet. Williams and the other five Black suffragists fully realized the Board of Lady Managers had dismissed them into the Pavilion of Haiti, and this moment to advocate for the contrasts in equal opportunities likely would not come again. The six of them were voicing opinions of a daring character; the six of them were women of color marked in a White City.

It would not be difficult to see the relationship between the nickname White City and the outer façade of practically every building at the 1893 Columbian Exposition. Nonwhite exhibits were secondary to the establishment's goal of showcasing, like a billboard, white accomplishments. This disparity in display space was then transferred to the fairgoers, many of whom were interested in cultural education, but found that the inconsistencies in exhibit positions created disorder. Rosemarie K. Bank, historical critic of the marginalization within the Fair, examines the conflict in visitor expectations shaped by the fair managers and states, "...when assaulted by acres of disorderly and simulated phenomena, [created] points of detachment from the intellectual performance of the 'dream city,'" visitors were left feeling lost (Bank 596). This is where Douglass's lectures, Wells's printing of her substantial pamphlet, and finally Williams's speech comes in to challenge the nonchalant fairgoer, circulation of argument through multimodality. Expectations were instantly defied as visitors came to understand that the six Black suffragists speaking on women's rights (ironically at the same time as the white suffragists) had been thus pushed out of the Woman's Building. Visitors had to ask themselves why. What was so threatening about these six women that caused them to speak on women's rights, not in the Women's Building, but instead in the Pavilion of Haiti?

This strategy of pushout was effective in location displacement but not in rhetorical displacement, as listeners still heard the six Black suffragists speak on women's rights, just not in the Woman's Building. If we only had the opportunity to fly a drone over the platforms of both the white speakers and the Black speakers to count the frequency and volume of passersby, we could argue the rhetorical effectiveness of these

women. If only. But it may not be necessary to record the physical presence of whose audience was larger; we know that the white suffragists intentionally scheduled their speeches at the same time as the Black suffragists—I think we can assume a bit of fear was their reasoning behind this. John W. Bowers discusses how this tactic to physically suppress an agitator is primarily energized by an establishment ignoring their requests for increased participation (37). But this flagrant discrimination would not deter Williams, or the other five Black suffragists, from pouring forth their opinions on equality. Regardless that they were not in the Woman's Building, Williams and the others chose to ignore the attempt to suppress them. A new place and space were thus created for them. Danielle Endres and Samantha Senda-Cook write on the idea that temporary constructions have the prospect and risk of creating fissures in the dominance of an establishment (Endres and Senda-Cook 259). Regardless of the lack in honor of where they were speaking, nonetheless, they were speaking.

The spaces in the Columbian Exposition were rhetorically designated based on social status; marginality created geography. This was the White City and even the Woman's Building intersected with a white man's world. Laura L. Behling demonstrates that one could not help but notice how far away the Woman's Building was to the Court of Honor at the center of the Exposition or how close the Woman's Building was to the chaos of the Midway Plaisance; women were on the tip between civilized and savage (Behling 178-179). The juxtaposition of order and bedlam was objectively a woman's dilemma, but then as the Board of Lady Managers deemed Black suffragists unworthy of the Woman's Building, they differentiated between white women and Black women and which side of the order or bedlam Black suffragists belonged to. Williams, Cooper,

Coppin, Early, Harper and Brown were all dignified women within the Black Chicago community, and now they were being treated as pieces on a chessboard, pawns in a game of proving who was the most worthy and valuable at the Exposition. The six women were justified in their bitterness for they became “exhibits in an exhibit already within an exhibition—then their presence suggests that they were to be viewed not as ‘representative’ women, but rather as objects...” inconsequential and meaningless to the establishment (Behling 180). Their experience and perspective of location and space matter gravely in their performance for as these six women approached the podium, their rhetoric revealed a deep and abiding wound that encapsulated many. Due to the attempt to subdue their ideas and arguments, the rhetorical approach of submersion was utilized and the Black suffragists became outliers in a field of vanilla.

“Less is known of our women”

Fear and anxiety were not in Williams's character as she graced the stage on May 18, 1893. Her time at the podium was a lesson in the collective community: Black women were her focus but all women were her motivation (Behling 184-185). She emphasized the immediacy in remedying the fragmentary politics in the movement and bolstered the plight of every woman across the nation who felt the stings of oppression. The renowned biographer of Williams, Sashir Moore-Sloan, notes William's public support of local and national issues in written speeches and impromptu street corner lectures. Williams was at the forefront of Black women in the Chicago community. Williams frequently motivated Black women to get involved in politics; researcher Sashir Moore-Sloan writes about Williams's perceptions of the intersectionality of labor, race, and gender led to her becoming nationally acclaimed (Moore-Sloan 64). Her sole desire

was to help the Black woman realize their potential and become one with the white American woman. In her 1893 speech, *The Intellectual Progress of the Colored Women of the United States Since the Emancipation Proclamation*, Williams carries the journey of Black women through their literal and figurative enslavement.

No doubt, Williams's prerogative in stepping in front of an ambiguous audience was to enlighten all as to the productivity the American Black woman has accomplished since the Civil War, considering her resolute title. And she succeeds in this by beginning her speech with a repetitive remark. Her opening claim of, "Less is known of our women than of any other class of Americans," sets up her stance that the American Black woman has been forgotten, washed away (Williams). This claim is established through Williams stating, again and again, *our women*, which amplifies and moves the reader through the Black woman's advancements in society. These ten pages are a culminating manifesto of grievance and victory, submersion at its best. Williams wants her listeners to realize the disadvantages in being a woman of color, "To-day they feel strong enough to ask for but one thing, and that is the same opportunity for the acquisition of all kinds of knowledge that may be accorded to other women" (Williams). This statement is two-fold. On the one hand, Williams begins with the memory of slavery, where Black women were chained to the bondage of inferiority, not strong enough to ask for something better. But those days are certainly in the past, at least literal enslavement. Strength in numbers and strength in resolve is their guide. And, on the other hand, these *other women* must grasp the concrete evidence staring them in the face: Black women are not going away. Besides the fact that they are not going away, women of color now have a growing spirit in them that is unquenchable. Williams continues with, "In short, our women are ambitious to be

contributors to all the great moral and intellectual forces that make for the greater weal of our common country.” This statement, albeit short in its syntactical length (at least compared to her other sentences) is not short in its example of the makings of reform arguments. She likens women of color to *contributors* to society, not the dregs or chattel that stigmatize them too often. Her idea that Black women have multi-faceted power likens to a circulative subversive power. Williams’s reflects the idea that many share a commonality: growth, progress, success, now society must acknowledge that advancement in all aspects of society, notwithstanding race or gender, or it will certainly fail in our perception of the common good.

One of Williams's more powerful moments in the speech is her discussion of the enslaved woman. Remembering that she herself is on display, she also displays the previously-enslaved woman. Laying her naked for all of her scars to be viewed, she said, “The question of the moral progress of colored women in the United States has force and meaning in this discussion only so far as it tells the story of how the once-enslaved women have been struggling for twenty-five years to emancipate themselves from the demoralization of their enslavement” (Williams). Here she connects the preconceived notions Americans have of Black women with the facts of slavery in America. Slavery betrayed Black women, and thus America betrayed Black women. Whatever attitudes society has towards women of color they have been brought on by the institutionalization of the very system of slavery. Williams then goes on to say, “This general failure of the American people to know the new generation of colored people, and to recognize this important change in them, is the cause of more injustice to our women than can well be estimated. Further progress is everywhere seriously hindered by this ignoring of their

improvement.” Not only is Williams finding fault in Americans stereotyping her race, but she is also pointing out the egregious faults in the Board of Lady Managers, though this criticism is not as obvious to the uninformed listener. Appealing to the patriotism of all Americans, who only three decades previously finished fighting a war to reunite the country, Williams reminds her audience that Americans do not value failure in anything and this continual sidelining of Americans is a failure. The new woman, let alone the Black woman, is changing and Americans must accept this change.

Yet where would William's argument be without understanding her ability to tap into the three components of submersion? Her rhetorical patterns demonstrate that when she crafted her speech she amplified and circulated a shared understanding of womanhood, or *our women*, then citing evidence of discrimination across many establishments, she finished with a historical allusion that would tie all of her rhetorical approaches together. By uniting rather than dividing Williams distributed a multimodal argument that spoke to all. In her final statement:

The colored women, as well as all women, will realize that the inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness is a maxim that will become more blessed in its significance when the hand of woman shall take it from its sepulture in books and make it the gospel of every-day life and the unerring guide in the relations of all men, women, and children.

(Williams)

Here Williams bridges the cries of not just Black women but gathers all women under the umbrella of subjugation, fronting the humanity in them all. By alluding to the Declaration of Independence, William's symbolizes the enslavement of colonists, and slaves, a

century ago, and the burning desire to fight Great Britain. Here these same words must evoke an equally effective passion to stand against tyranny. The imagery of a woman's hand breaking the stone that imprisons equality for women is powerful, especially since Williams notes that equality may be written but must now be applicable in all societal aspects. How can we be the nation of freedom if we hypocritize ourselves in writing a Bill of Rights but fail to act on it? It is not just for one gender, or one race, but humanity must relinquish the shackles that divide our country in order to construct a more perfect union. The longest speech of the six women, William's utilized the aspect of amplification through submersion to appeal to her listeners. She then circulates ideas that all Americans must break free from predisposed segregationist ideas that limit democratic ideals. William's speech rose to the occasion of proving to any naysayers that women of color can stand at the podium and arouse the passion needed in the American public to stimulate change. Now Anna Julia Cooper would follow with her thoughts and discussion on the universality of suffrage.

“Untrumpeted heroine, the slave-mother”

Anna Julia Cooper was another leader in the Chicago Black elite; educated and well-refined, she consistently presented herself as the image of a true lady. Cooper's writings reflect that she often struggled with the social constructions of race and gender that continually sidelined her. In her study of Cooper's essays, Beverly Guy-Sheftall examines the evolving maturity in Cooper's excerpts as she gains power in prose. Wanting to do more for her race, she found that being unacknowledged as both a woman, but more so as a Black woman, was infuriating and inconceivable (Guy-Sheftall 11). And it is this lack of recognition that drove Cooper to excite in women of color the inkling to

want and be more than just a stereotype. In one of her most quoted public remarks from her epic *A Voice from the South*, Cooper births the transformation of Black feminism with, “Only the Black Woman can say ‘when and where I enter, in the quiet, undisputed dignity of my womanhood, without violence and without suing or special patronage, then and there the whole *Negro race enters with me*’” (Guy-Sheftall 12). This power, this ability to have choice and decision, is one Cooper demands of all Black women. Unmitigated violence of the body and spirit has been forced on women of color for too long, and Cooper, as a prominent figure, writes that the time has come to decide identity. Cooper was on a track to not only redefine but also rehistoricize, the term *womanhood*.

In reconstructing the image and identity of the Black female, Cooper as a member of the upper echelons focused her energy on breaking down the systemic social hierarchies that pervaded her race. Following Williams at the Columbian Exposition of 1893, Cooper employed the moment when she took the podium to add to the argument of the progression of emancipated women. In her essay, *Tending to the Roots: Anna Julia Cooper’s Sociopolitical Thought and Activism*, Kathy L. Glass characterizes Cooper’s time at the podium as short (her speech was only two pages) but memorable. Here, Cooper’s submersion was not in numbers of pages but thematic ideas. Coupling the problem of suffrage with a more intimate feminist question, Cooper draws her audience to not just race, gender, and class, but moreover, she envelopes the evils of elitist mentalities (Glass 24). The very idea that one woman was better than another woman based entirely on an archaic marginalization was absurd to Cooper. Women have a bond that is fixed. Women have an incomparable force. Her title for the 1893 speech,

“Women’s Cause is One and Universal,” speaks to the natural and instinctive drive to unite all American women.

Knowing the breadth of Williams’s speech, Cooper understood that she did not need to flood her audience with facts, statistics, and imagery of the crimes committed against Black Americans. No, she purposefully decided that her speech would take on a different tone. If Williams's premise was to reassert the Black female into progressive existence, then Cooper’s premise was to reflect the opportunity that all women can acknowledge their commonalities. In her opening paragraph, she states, “It requires the long and painful growth of generations. Yet all through the darkest period of the colored women’s oppression in this country her yet unwritten history is full of heroic struggle, a struggle against fearful and overwhelming odds...” She begins with a claim that the brutal violence incurred by Black women has, hopefully, turned and society is ready to move forward. The evidence of injustices committed against Black women was countless and Cooper refers to these atrocities through subtle amplification. The path to growth is fraught with stumble but Cooper makes it clear that these stumbles need publishing to continue the growth of her race. Future generations can learn from the past.

For it is in the past where Cooper derives her argument that the universal woman has been persecuted and must now prosper. Cooper’s diction and detail create empathy, “It is enough for me to know that while in the eyes of the highest tribunal in America she was deemed no more than a chattel, an irresponsible thing, a dull block, to be drawn hither or thither at the volition of an owner, the Afro American woman maintained ideals of womanhood unshamed by any ever conceived.” Note the cataloging of different identities that the Black woman has been referred to. Here her amplification reflects the

humiliation Black women have endured. The sad reality that our country profited from slavery, the sad reality that our country tries to turn a blind eye to the repercussions of the very system it once profited from is despicable. White Americans labeled Black Americans as property, able to be bought and sold, like an animal. Now the reality that many white Americans and the Board of Lady Managers refuse to acknowledge is that circumstances have changed; women of color were tested, and through all of their tribulations, they remain.

This level of emotionally-laden writing helps to instruct Cooper's listeners as to the physical sufferings of the body and the psychological segregation that continues in the movement. Cooper conveys the journey of generations of Black women:

Not even then was that patient, untrumpeted heroine, the slave-mother, released from self-sacrifice, and many an unbuttered crust was eaten in silent content that she might eke out enough from her poverty to send her young folks off to school. She 'never had the chance,' she would tell you, with tears on her withered cheek, so she wanted them to get all they could.

There is hope, there is a desire here that Cooper offers her audience. In recalling the past, the life of the slave-mother, Cooper demonstrates the daily effort it takes to live in the body of a Black woman. This is an example of submersion where she amplifies the emotional journey of the slave-mother. Cooper exemplifies the plight of both a slave-mother and a modern woman of color, circulating a new definition. Here now in front of the 1893 audience, Cooper is presenting her body as a chance to earn a piece of buttered bread. The bread is a metaphor for every time a woman of color was denied an

opportunity; for Cooper, Williams, and other Black suffragists that opportunity was speaking in the Woman's Building at the Columbian Exposition.

Cooper resolves that every woman can relate to her thematic idea of suffrage denial, just as every woman has the power to rise to the occasion. Intersectionalism had created this moment in history and now Cooper was going to make it clear that all women had in their power the ability to crush whatever establishment was repressing them.

Cooper moves to a climactic statement:

Now, I think if I could crystallize the sentiment of my constituency, and deliver it as a message to this congress of women, it would be something like this: Let woman's claim be as broad in the concrete as in the abstract. We take our stand on the solidarity of humanity, the oneness of life, and the unnaturalness and injustice of all special favoritisms, whether of sex, race, country, or condition. If one link of the chain be broken, the chain is broken.

Stringing together these clauses at the close of her speech conveys Cooper's amplification and determination to enlighten all to the need for universal enfranchisement. Cooper is speaking on behalf of all women of color, for again their cause is one and universal that the racism perpetrated on behalf of the Board of Lady Managers is the same as the prevention of women's enfranchisement. The blocking of the vote is the objective, the blocking of Black women to speak is subjective. Observe Cooper's use of *unnaturalness* and *injustice*, where she appeals to the principles of the country's, and for that matter women in general, civil rights and liberties. However, more moving than her other claims is her culminating metaphor in the use of the chain. Literal

chains have long shackled Black Americans to a mere existence; figurative chains are still forged and barring Black women from full participation in the movement. Cooper is remarkable in standing on the stage and letting all know that these chains just need one link broken. She has placed herself in a highly vulnerable position when standing up to the establishment of the Board of Lady Managers and also the establishment of elitist society. The metaphor of the chain is an appeal to both justice and reform arguments; Americans were once bound to the tyranny of Great Britain and women are now constructing roles in society that fashion them in modern womanhood. Both Williams and Cooper knew that they had a duty to reshape through submersion the image of Black femininity. Their speeches built precedence for podium rhetoric.

The fact of the matter is that the Board of Lady Managers managed to drive the Black suffragists from any participation in the management or speaking opportunities inside of the Woman's Building in 1893. The fact of the matter is that this entire exhibition was in remembrance of a man credited with the discovery of a new world, a man who also exploited and enslaved whole tribes of people. In 1893, the Board of Lady Managers was unwilling to recognize the ethical crime in treating any non-white contributions to the fair as sideshow mediocrity. It is a lie. To the public and themselves, it is a lie. The idea that Black women could become true agitators and fight the terms of their place in society, both racially and socially, based on denied inclusion, speaks volumes to their gumption (Glass 26). Wells, Williams, and Cooper were agitators. They reconciled with the notion that the women within their party did not accept them and they chose to refute such nonsense. Williams and Cooper accepted the idea that if they were going to stand on the scaffold and truly represent Black women, then maybe the

dominant race would have a cultural shift in identity construction; the masses might stop grouping and generalizing all non-whites based on hierarchical attitudes (Glass 30).

Capability is an individual concept. Intellect is an individual concept. What history is starting to realize is that marginalized within the Woman's Suffrage Movement of the late nineteenth century was a fraction of capability and intellect that lay hidden and removed for almost no one to hear or see. But, fortunately, they did not stay hidden. These women demanded justice and did not mind the circumstantial place they spoke from; they spoke their truth. And these truths would not have become recorded into American history if it were not for their commitment to submersion techniques.

Williams and Cooper redefined the protocols that blanketed suffrage speech.

White women were not the only ones talented enough to grace a stage. But even more so, Williams and Cooper redefined the message that before this moment had tired audiences with the same monotonous premise. They expanded the suffrage audience by circulating their argument through multimodal frames and an amplified message. The fight for suffrage had been heard across the country, but Williams and Cooper introduced the fight for womanhood. The two women moved the suffrage argument forward with moving language that reexamined how to enable and advance all Black Americans, through pluralistic representation (Glass 34). The country was growing and the movement needed growth within it. The Black suffragists, Williams and Cooper, established themselves as icons for the retraining of systematic mindsets, meaning they broke the mold. These women are a reflection of the greatest of feminist rhetoric. Articulate and methodical, Williams and Cooper proved that a non-white voice, aided by submersion tactics, carries power.

Chapter 5

Discussions and Conclusions

Perhaps one of the most highly recognized remarks from any First Lady, Abigail Adams, wife to John Adams, was simply to “remember the ladies” when drafting the Declaration of Independence in 1776. Many have argued that she was being coquettish. Many have argued that this line was simply bantering between a long-suffering wife and her often-absent husband. But I, in the twenty-first century, tend to believe otherwise. This was a moment the whole world was watching. Abigail Adams, realizing this, deliberately wrote three words that we still remember to this day. Going beyond the premise that in 1776 equality was not a natural right, anyone who was not white, male, and upper-class was viewed as second-class property. Abigail’s words symbolize a feeling of tiredness across disparaged groups. I feed off of Abigail’s words and want to hope that *ladies*, in this sense, were pluralistic of all women, not a definition of elitist, privileged, spoiled parlor women. I want to believe that she meant that now was the time to remove the qualifiers to equality and to declare this founding nation as a birthplace for true democracy.

In a post-Civil War era, where the country witnessed families torn apart on the battlefield, women saw their role in both the household and in society changing. The standards that had governed the parlor for so long now seemed obsolete. Women wanted a foothold in something more; they had an unsatisfied appetite to no longer be seen as incapable of understanding politics. The Women’s Suffrage Movement grew out of this contention to want more, where women navigated inaccessible spaces in society, saying they belonged, too. And though this movement was known as an American movement for

all women, evidence has proven that women of color had a far harder time getting recognized and getting appointed to leadership positions than white women. Women across the nation took to the streets to yell. Americans have a perverse affinity for yelling, but in this case, volume was based on how much space a suffragist could occupy. Volume rhetorics became the standard for pushing minority arguments to the forefront of majorities. An established and guarded hierarchy refused to acknowledge women as citizens, and unfortunately, while still fighting for this American acknowledgment, Black suffragists fought for recognition from white suffragists. At the close of the nineteenth century, women of color embarked on a crucible that tested their fight for enfranchisement and their fight for feminism.

Women had been mainstreamed into believing their worth was secondary to men and layered within this belief structure was the societal conviction that certain gendered races were predisposed to silencing other races. In her research of the suffrage segregation, Belinda A. Stillion Southard writes on the political, gender, and racial demands of the movement. Elitist constructions set boundaries of accepted behaviors that were pressed onto minorities and other non-ruling classes, causing only one narrative to rule society (Stillion Southard 91-92). White mentalities of the proper definition of a lady, white mentalities of who should stand behind the podium at suffrage rallies. White suffragists, based on inherited frameworks from men, subjugated Black suffragists. To say that suffrage membership was limited is an understatement. Marginalizing women of color became a ritualistic campaign strategy as white suffragists further pushed “whiteness” on anyone they perceived as in opposition to their predefined goals (Stillion Southard 119). Targeting race and socioeconomic status, anyone within the party who fell

short of the elitist traps set by white suffragists often withdrew their participation. A one-sided mentality of upper class white women divided rather than united.

Dismissal and denial were rhetorical tactics white suffragists utilized to separate those who served their interests and those who didn't. Privileging rather than universalizing discouraged women from letting go of the harbored racism that should have been broken the moment the movement was referred to as an American cause. Historically, women, enslaved people, and the laboring classes have routinely been victims of seclusion from the upper echelons of society, but as feminist rhetorician Dana C. Cloud points out, when deconstructing these epical catalysts, their bodies and identities have more power to include rather than divide. Cloud writes, "...it is women whose porous, bleeding bodies and historical tie to reproduction pose the greatest existential challenge to the artificiality of the abstractions of public political discourse" (32). Women as a disciplined force have the power to rewrite the narrative but not if too many oppressive dynamics build barriers. Women of color within the suffrage movement felt bound and blocked by opposing identities. Professor Kimberlé Crenshaw pushes this argument with her integral definitions of intersectionality. The disempowerment of Black suffragists was multidimensional: Black men patronized them, and white women segregated them, and this subordination caused Black women to correlate feelings of failure to political discourses (Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color" 360). Caught in a web of identity-based games, Black suffragists viewed the movement as their opportunity to deflect gender stereotypes that had been presupposed on them, but first, they had to

overcome racial stereotypes which meant confronting seeds of segregation that had been planted long ago.

The Black suffragists were not the first generation of marginalized minorities; they were, however, a collection of the first generation to see the benefit of liberation and now have a substantial backing to be able to act. One of the most prolific if not poignant writers on the intersectionalized relationships of men and women of color, bell hooks, teaches on the dominant juxtaposed with the subservient cultures in society and how the struggle for many to overcome stretches far into history. We were a nation of colonies that constantly engaged with breaking down the identities of indigenous tribes, pressing out any relevant cultural distinctions that were not mainstreamed, or white, enough. A mentality grew from this action, compounded by a systematized education in public schools that celebrated the dominator behavior. Now, the Black suffragists were forced to engage in a decolonizing campaign where they had to break down the institutions of colonized mannerisms—white suffragists still viewed them as conquerable. Reshaping the consciousness and actions of white suffragists was integral to the Black suffragists, but this liberating process could not and would not happen overnight—a mountain was in front of the Black suffragists. The idea to decolonize long-established mentalities is to break down biased dominator thinking, and this could only be achieved through new, militant ways of thinking (hooks 26). Exposing ideologies that segregated and secluded was two-fold for the Black suffragists: they had been barred from the vote and they had been barred from full participation in the movement.

Decolonizing an entire establishment is rigorous work, to say the least, but the Black suffragists were willing to take on this task. Wells, Williams, Cooper are just a few

of the women who were willing to risk everything for the chance to be counted as an American woman. Daring to speak out against the interior scheming would draw negative attention to both the Black suffragists but also the movement collectively but this move was necessary for it spotlighted the colonization mentalities that were prevailing within the cause (Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color" 377). The desire for social power by white suffragists forced women of color to take a stand, but the timing was everything. The gendered and racial dimensions that Wells, Williams, and Cooper fought against had been conceptualized in an actual physical White City, where Black women proved their rhetorical femininity in instantaneous spaces. Their arguments grew out of need and timing.

Rhetorical timing is vital. Consciously knowing when and where to shape and enter an argument is imperative to the receptiveness of the message. Debra Hawhee discusses this idea that there are certain circumstances and certain moments that a rhetorician must be aware of. She reinvigorates the ancient Greek term of *kairos* and defines it as intrinsic mindfulness (Hawhee 65). Reading a situation and reading your audience are all packed into *kairos*. We must recognize that there are particular times and places where comments and statements are not appropriate, and there are particular times and places when we must take advantage of the situation and present our discourse. The rhetorical concept of *kairos* outlines this construction. Careful adjustments, fine-tuning openings, laying the groundwork to properly accommodate a given situation, and audience and mood all produce the theory of *kairos* (Hawhee 68). Now, we must take this rhetorical term and couple it with the Black suffragist's ingeniousness to stake their claim

in the enfranchisement argument. Rhetorical timing is just as vital in submersion as the three components of amplification, distribution, and multimodality. For when an author realizes that thus far their argument has fallen on deaf ears then it is imperative that submersion be implemented. The Black suffragists were at their wits end and recognized the timing for submersion was at that moment.

The suffrage argument was nothing new by 1893; our nation had become deaf to the cries of suffragists pounding the streets for the vote. But it was this moment at the Columbian Exposition in 1893 that many suffragists viewed as an opening to shift their arguments. Kairotically, this was their chance to get on a platform and be heard by audiences that might pause a little longer and listen to what they had to say. However, if the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, specifically dedicated to memorializing Christopher Columbus, was meant to be a showing off or a proving to the world how perfect we were or are, then it was a sham. Columbus and the pristine White City are façades, vehicles for disguising truths. One needs only look at a map of the 1893 Columbian Exposition (Appendix C) and note the displacement or sidelining of anything not created by a white male. There was strategic syndication that revolved around only showcasing America's proud sons. And yes, you will find a Woman's Building on any map of the 1893 Columbian Exposition; you will also find other various countries represented in building exhibits, the Pavilion of Haiti being one. But take a moment, just one moment, and note the geographical location of not only this building but any building not dedicated to American white males. There was a distinct and concrete agenda to push out anyone considered unworthy of being in the same realm as Columbus. Thus this attitude was then projected onto Black suffragists that attempted to negotiate leadership positions and

speaking opportunities at the Woman's Building from the Board of Lady Managers. A ripple effect, or even, an unacknowledged education was systematically being passed down throughout society. This was an unstated lesson that the managers of the Fair were passing onto women and who thus passed it onto the Black suffragists: based on elitist assumptions they were not worthy of the center of attention. Having your worth brokered for far too long, at what point does a body say these moments that are sometimes unfair and sometimes not right add up? The Black suffragists had reached their breaking point: submersion became their weapon.

One careful observation must be connected with the decision to submerge an opposition: this technique is not singular in design. Just as many educators understand that students retain knowledge from a vast repertoire of learning strategies, the Black suffragists recognized that a diverse and recursive plan to engage new audiences was needed here. Composition does not have to be linear. Writing about the ability to add flavor and sync arguments to new audiences, Jason Palmeri comments on the positive effects of not thinking in terms of limited writing. Writing needs to be conceptualized in visual-spatial concentric circles (Palmeri 35). There are an ebb and flow to well-adapted writing, and it does not distinguish one audience from the next, but instead encourages the multi-representation of a collective body. There may not be one particular modality that could reach every listener, which is why Wells, Williams, and Cooper specifically stormed their audience with a cornucopia of arguments.

Protest work for the suffragists was a never-ceasing battle of what works and when that argument works, and in 1893 the time called for a conscious reshaping and refiguring of the movement. Submersion, through speeches, pamphlets, and bodily force,

created an attraction and magnetism in the movement that had up until then been controlled by an establishment unwilling to share in the public spotlight. Protest rhetoric is a difficult task to manage, so argues Mira Bekar, who understands the ingredients necessary to reach an uncharted audience. A deliberate entanglement or calculated weaving of imagery and words achieves success, and whatever target audience a group has in mind values clear messages that depict a variety of communication (Bekar 341). Repositioning visual rhetoric with written rhetoric and alongside bodily rhetoric situates a context for a universal audience. There is an unruliness, there is a disassembling that is culturally desirable in not making an argument uniform, and the Black suffragists saw this. The discourse needed a change-up and Wells, Williams, and Cooper created solidarity in not individualizing their argument. Their submersion enables, it does not divide.

The use of submersion has a totality aftermath, meaning every time a writer uses another strategy to impart argument against opposition it heightens the wave of concentrated message that is coming. Adding more strategies, in the possible forms of writing, pamphlets, or bodily force, symbolizes the adding of more marginalized groups to an agitative body. The more collective or communal an agitative group becomes, the more waves of submersion are possible, the more successful this tactic is over an establishment. It must be noted that submersion has been used in piecemeal subsets in the past, as noted from sixteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth-century writers, and more recently in the twenty-first century as we see circulation and multimodal studies developing through more coverage of amplification strategies. We can mark the moments in history when key speakers used one strategy to overwhelm listeners, but again, one

strategy is not submersion. It is in the compounding of amplification, circulation, and multimodal constructions that submersion is achieved. Circulation and multimodal opportunities have recently become more available as more occasions to reach wider audiences have opened up. Social media is a circulation platform that has both engaged and enveloped wider audiences that might not have been aware of movements without the ability to generate buzz around specific causes. Also, news media is more inclined to cover social causes that broach topics of sensational concern, meaning media needs their sound bites that will keep an engrossed audience, and baiting listeners with tidbits of protest rhetoric will typically capture attention.

We've spent pages discussing the misogyny and patriarchal behaviors that were early-on instilled in women. These social constructions were readily maintained in the nineteenth century and at the close of the twentieth century. It is not until the twenty-first century and the flooding of the Black Lives Matter Movement, #MeToo Movement, and the Woman's March of 2017 that submersion for agitator rhetoric proves successful, based on the extent of the audience. Society could no longer deny minorities their pain. Society could no longer deny the oppressed their voice to amplify and circulate that pain with multimodal methods. Centuries of racism and subjugation, coupled with irrefutable video footage of police brutality, catapulted the revolution of the Black Lives Matter Movement. Years and years of sexual violence and a feminine awakening led women to use social platforms to state #MeToo to publicize that they, too, had been another victim of silenced sexual violence, which ultimately culminated in the Woman's March of 2017. Submersion enabled each of these key movements to be successful and to collect a host of participants that gathered under one banner and cause.

In the summer of 2013 Americans were faced with indisputable evidence that Black Americans had for decades faced not only police brutality but also had been victims of unchecked policing which resulted in death. The cases of Trayvon Martin, killed at the hands of George Zimmerman, and Michael Brown, killed at the hands of police officer Darren Wilson, and their subsequent acquittals led our nation to cry out that now was the time to act. In their essay to capture the connection between amplification and circulation, Danielle K. Kilgo, Rachel R. Mourao, and George Sylvie define the protest paradigm as one of the active patternings of rhetoric. Submersion of the Black Lives Matter Movement [founded by two Black women], across the nation, drew the media's instant attention: "In 2016, at least 1500 Black Lives Matter demonstrations transpired, demanding police accountability and revised policies addressing the disproportionate police misconduct against Black citizens in the United States" (Kilgo et al. 413). However, the 1,500 protests that the Black Lives Matter Movement sanctioned did not always receive positive media coverage. Because the movement was for a marginalized group that was awakening the public to an establishment's evident crimes, often news sources continually marginalized the movement further by either only covering protests that resulted in violence and militancy or did not cover protests at all. Traditional media, such as newspapers and institutionalized sources, sidelined coverage of the Black Lives Matter Movement for much of the beginning of the movement. But as the movement began to circulate through diverse multimodal channels and digital technologies, submersion substantiated the cause.

Similar to the Black Lives Matter Movement, the #MeToo Movement, also founded by two Black women, became a breeding ground for voicing the plight of the

wounded woman. Sexual violence against women has been a part of our society for far too long. Silencing victims of sexual violence has been a part of our society for far too long. Through #MeToo, millions of women linked themselves to the lamentable acknowledgement that they too were sisters allied in their molested bodies. The hashtag took off, like a rocket, and millions of women realized their story was not alone. By circulating #MeToo, women understood that their feminine pain was pluralistic; they too were part of a whole. Women Studies scholar Emily Winderman has characterized the #MeToo Movement as one of information energy. When social constructions cause agitators to confront an establishment, we see how "...volume rhetorics encourage bodies to collectivize" (Winderman 329). Here, we can link volume rhetorics, or heightening the argument for a desired effect, to submersion rhetorics for amplification, circulation, and multimodal approaches all volumize a given argument. Ultimately, the #MeToo Movement was a collective effort to catalog and collect the many women whose crimes were silenced by an establishment. This time, unlike the many examples in the past, the agitators were successful in generating an acknowledgment of their sexual subjections; the public was no longer able to ignore such legitimate anger.

Anger is what prompted submersion: anger at the clear and focused campaign to segregate women of color in 1893. The ignorance of the Board of Lady Managers, coupled with the ingrained social stereotypes that the white suffragists were unwilling to break with, forced the hands of the Black suffragists. But in this case, the segregation was not symmetrical. Men had alienated women for years, claiming voting rights were for property-owners and the political field was a man's world based on taxpayers. But now the Board of Lady Managers for the 1893 Women's Building had alienated the Black

suffragists for reasons that were completely false and nonsensical. They were forced to make up reasons to not allow participation by the Black suffragists in the 1893 Columbian Exposition. But the Black suffragists, frustrated by such deliberate racism, got angry and they developed a plan.

I specifically dedicated space in this chapter to the factor of anger because it is far too frequent that Black women's anger is stereotyped. They are viewed as unhinged or unbalanced if they get angry. During the Hill-Thomas hearings, Anita Hill had to keep her cool when, literally, a Senator asked her the question, "Are you a scorned woman?" In the nineteenth century, a black woman could not own the power they wielded in anger. They must, referring to the 1893 Columbian Exposition and Board of Lady Managers, present themselves as ladies of society and hold a decorum that sustains a falsity of identity. But Wells, Williams, and Cooper were, undoubtedly, angry.

And in 2017, women got angry again. Only one day after the forty-fifth president, Donald Trump, was inaugurated, a massive, practically all-consuming protest was held globally to demonstrate an alliance in feminine issues. These issues had the power to unite or divide as researchers Jessica Gantt-Shafer, Cara Wallis, and Caitlin Miles point out; tensions were running high. Millions of people marched nationwide, in fact, so many people marched in metropolitan cities that the demonstrations were record-breaking as estimates that five million people participated in 673 separate protests (Gantt-Shafer et al. 221). This day in history came to be known as the Women's March, a powerful example of many coming together to counter-weight a majority, submersion in physical force. This march is, arguably, sublime and powerful for two reasons: it was comprised of women (and men) of differing ages, races, and socio-economic backgrounds, and this movement,

although simultaneously happening in major metropolitan cities nationwide, represented the most voluminous march in American history. This is an example of pure submersion. Amplification in numbers, circulation by social media, and multimodal forms that reached millions everywhere all generated an acknowledgment of community. Congesting city streets to the point where the march was paradoxically a stagnation of bodies, the Women's March was a symbol for excavating for feminists everywhere. There were enough feminist women (and men, that must be said) that responded to an idea, an urgency to an idea. Emotions ran high that day, but solidarity was integral to the march because festering just beneath the pluralistic title of a Women's March was the intersectionality issue that marginalization was still happening within this collective protest. Many participants felt underlying disunity based on pre-established power structures. Could it be that the same social structures that barred Black suffragists from full participation in the 1893 Columbian Exposition were now harboring in 2017 with the Women's March? Disparate bodies weaved together for the march to submerge any skepticism as to any lingering hierarchical constructions.

The Women's March of 2017 soon emerged as a social justice protest focused on basic feminist issues that recognized the need to change ongoing sexism and misogyny in society. Though the march was originally imagined by two white women, Teresa Shook and Bob Bland, the creators passionately sought out an intersectional group to plan the protest, realizing that all women "shared [in a common] humanity and pronounce our bold message of resistance and self-determination" (Gantt-Shafer et al. 222). The idea of shared commonalities is arguably why the Women's March, through the use of submersion, was so successful and why the Board of Lady Managers failed in their quest

to disrupt marginalization within the Woman's Suffrage Movement. Realizing that identity can universalize rather than divide the Women's March is an example of collective action. It is Professor Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw who first conceptualizes the frameworks for intersectionality, where she argues that when society finally negates the privileging of one identity over another—in the form of race, gender, or socioeconomic status—then a true woman's experience is not individualistic but instead amplified in shared experiences (Gantt-Shafer 226). In 2017, the Women's March was a communal construction; it embodied Abigail Adam's notion that *ladies* was a mutual, pluralistic idea. There is force, there is power, when we recognize exclusion and prevent ourselves from being blind to elitist constructions. Creating camaraderie within a protest movement, such as the Women's Suffrage Movement or the 2017 Women's March, should not be difficult. For when identity becomes a uniting point of access into a movement, then representation becomes a tool for power. And submersion reflects a tool to counterweigh your opposition.

Let us take a moment and return once again to the pamphlet: the media that began this process. Looking at Appendix A one quickly observes the juxtaposition between text and image. The images of the parades and rallies balanced with information of the history of the movement reflects the magnanimity in the scale of influence. But. Take one careful look at the scale in imagery of white suffragists and the one image of the Black civil rights activist Sojourner Truth. Full page dedications are given to Susan B. Anthony and other white suffragists, and the woman who dared to ask "Ain't I A Woman?" is given a quarter of a page. This is the Library of Congress's 2019 pamphlet; this is not 1893. Now take a moment and examine Appendix B. Was it necessary to engulf ten of the twelve

panels with the well-known map “The Awakening,” or was it just easier to literally sideline these four Black suffragists to the back corner of a pamphlet? Marginalization continues even in our most unassuming aspects of society and by our more unbiased institutions of society.

In 1893, the Black suffragists contextualized their anger through submersion. They heightened their arguments by amplification, circulation, and multimodal techniques. Using the Fair as a vessel for their anger, they flooded the public: “Specifically, volume illuminates how anger waxes and wanes through public life along raced, gendered, and classed lines that too often elevate the righteous expression of privileged anger while ignoring or silencing the anger of those most marginalized” (Winderman 329). The Board of Lady Managers did not expect the Black suffragists to harness their anger in speeches, pamphlets, and bodily force. The Board of Lady Managers did not expect that there would be public support for the Black suffragists. The Board of Lady Managers constituted a majority that oppressed a minority, the Black suffragists. Movements are composed of a collective idea, where minorities come together to unsettle the majority.

The idea to unsettle or disrupt is paramount to the effectiveness of submersion. The agitator must be able to get attention from the settled mindset of an audience. Which is why we cannot evaluate the success of submersion based on the success of a movement; this comparison does not work. Submersion was used in the Black Lives Matter Movement but still police brutality is exacted on men and women of color to this day. Submersion was used in #MeToo, but still physical violence is exacted on women to this day. We must look instead to the reach of the message to the complacent audience as

a tool in evaluating the success of submersion. Social injustices will continue to pollute American streets but when agitators utilize the rhetorical weapon of submersion they will find a tool that reaches the oblivious or, worse, neutral listener. That is the basis of successful submersion: collecting more agitators in order to overthrow an establishment.

Submersion calls attention to the marginalized. It gives volume and voice to the pain behind an agitator. The white suffragists expected to contain the Black suffragists; the white suffragists expected that after pushing the Black suffragists to the back of rally parades for years the white suffragists would continue to establish their dominance in the movement. Justifiable anger prompted women of color to amplify and circulate. The Black suffragists reclaimed their physical space by establishing rhetorical space. They leveraged and weighed their marginalization. The Black suffragists realized their racialized identity, they were Black and female, was in their power to mold and define. They had no choice but to set aside complacency and caused a ruckus that inched its way towards a common femininity. They had the ability to submerge at their fingertips and knew that their place in the movement and society would soon change, for women of color recognized that exhausting an establishment through submersion wages a war that forces a dominator to recognize, not their prejudices, but instead, the power behind an unrelenting flood of reason.

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Appendix A

THE CAMPAIGN for women's voting rights lasted more than seven decades. Considered the largest reform movement in United States history, its participants believed that securing the vote was essential to achieving women's economic, social, and political equality. Culminating 100 years ago in the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, the fight for women's suffrage was not for the fainthearted. Determined women organized, lobbied, paraded, petitioned, lectured, and picketed for years. Suffragists were ridiculed, patronized, and dismissed by opponents, yet they persisted. Some were assaulted and endured the harsh confines of prison for daring to claim rights equal to men, but they would not be denied.

THE MOVEMENT questioned the country's commitment to democracy, exposed the nation's longstanding class, regional, and racial divides, and challenged existing gender stereotypes. Arguments and strategies for and against women's suffrage varied over time and place. Proponents forged uneasy alliances and overcame countless controversies. Although few of the women who began the suffrage campaign before the Civil War lived long enough to witness its final victory in August 1920, their work was carried on by their daughters, granddaughters, and other women whom they had inspired, nurtured, and taught. Their collective story is one of courage, perseverance, savvy, creativity, and hope that continues to inspire women today. #SHALLNOTBEDENIED




SENECA FALLS AND BUILDING A MOVEMENT 1776-1890

NOTIONS OF EQUALITY that inspired America's war for independence from Great Britain brought only modest and fleeting change to the status of women, most of whom remained "civilly dead." Women had no legal identity separate from their husbands and were unable to sign contracts, own property, obtain access to education, obtain divorces easily, and gain custody of their children after divorce well into the nineteenth century. The desire to address this inequality and challenge the country to live up to its revolutionary promise led to a two-day convention in Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848, where 300 women and men gathered to debate Elizabeth Cady Stanton's Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions. Modeled after the Declaration of Independence, it outlined women's inferior status and included a radical demand for suffrage.

AFTER SENECA FALLS, women's rights conventions became annual events, where women met to discuss educational opportunities, divorce reform, property rights, and sometimes labor issues. Women lent their support to abolishing slavery believing universal suffrage would follow, but both the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments ignored their demand for suffrage. National leaders responded differently, leading to a split in the movement and contrasting campaigns for voting rights at the local, state, and national levels. In 1878 the first federal women's suffrage amendment was introduced but was soundly defeated later in a full Senate vote. As the nineteenth century neared an end, competing national suffrage groups reunited as the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), and groundwork was laid for a national movement.

We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal... In entering upon the great work before us, we anticipate no small amount of misconception, misrepresentation, and ridicule; but we shall use every instrumentality within our power to effect our object.

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON
Declaration of Sentiments, 1848



Elizabeth Cady Stanton
1815-1902

Image 3: The beginning of the movement



NEW TACTICS FOR A NEW GENERATION 1890-1915

The old battle cries no longer stir our souls. Give us new banners for our times, let us have new leaders, and what we need most is undoubtedly a new battle cry to stir the dormant souls of American men and women.

ANNA HOWARD SHAW
1911

BEFORE THE END OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, suffragists achieved victories in four western states and partnered with new organizations, including the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) and the National Association of Colored Women (NACW), which expanded the reach of their message. Challenging the status quo, suffragists worked to persuade women across the nation that they deserved the same rights that men took for granted, while also appealing to male political leaders to support their cause. They used a variety of tactics, including traditional approaches like petitioning and lobbying, but also innovative techniques such as parades and public demonstrations, political art, and the use of planes, automobiles, motion pictures, and other emerging technologies to spread their message. These creative strategies and tools helped garner media attention, raise money, apply political pressure, and attract new recruits, including more working-class and college women. A flurry of activity led to more suffrage wins in the West, while leaders of the newly formed Congressional Union (CU), later the National Woman's Party (NWP), focused on Washington, D.C. The first national suffrage parade occurred on March 3, 1913, to coincide with President Woodrow Wilson's inauguration. The parade put the president-elect and Congress on notice that suffragists would hold the Democratic Party responsible if it failed to pass a women's suffrage amendment.

Our Roll of Honor
Given at the
Squares in the "Declaration of Sentiments"
to the Women's
Woman's Rights Convention,
July 19-20, 1848, Seneca Falls, N.Y.

LADIES:

GENTLEMEN:

ABOVE: "Our Roll of Honor," Cataloging all the Signatures to the "Declaration of Sentiments" Set Forth by the First Woman's Rights Convention held at Seneca Falls, New York, July 19-20, 1848." 1848.

RIGHT: American Press Association, "Paraded Parade" in New York City Suffragist Parade. Photograph, May 4, 1912.



MORE TO THE MOVEMENT



**NANNIE HELEN
BURROUGHS**



**ADELINA
OTERO-WARREN**



**FANNIE BARRIER
WILLIAMS**



**ANNA JULIA
COOPER**

While Seneca Falls is considered the first American convention to focus exclusively on women's rights, the first convention to consider women's rights as an issue was the May 9, 1837, Anti-Slavery Convention of American Women in New York City. Several African American women attended this convention, but no known African American women attended Seneca Falls. The first and second generation of African American suffragists, of which Mary Ann Shadd Cary, Harriet Forten Purvis, and Sarah Parker Remond are a part, had strong ties to the abolitionist movement and believed in universal suffrage—voting rights without regard to race, gender, education, or economic status.

The passage of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920 did not guarantee full voting rights for all women—women of color especially had additional struggles ahead. Recent and ongoing scholarship has uncovered detailed and complex histories of African American women in the suffrage movement, but there is still much work to be done regarding all women of color. The contributions of Asian American, Latina, and Native American suffragists are just beginning to be examined by scholars.

Image 2(a): The Women of Color

For African American suffragists the links between racial justice and women's rights were central to their activism. In the early twentieth century, relatively few black women participated in (or were permitted to participate in, due to racism) the primarily white women's suffrage associations of the NAWSA and the NWP. Instead, black suffragists organized within the National Association of Colored Women (NACW); religious organizations such as the Woman's Convention of the National Baptist Convention; and local women's clubs and suffrage leagues.

The Library of Congress's vast collections can be mined creatively in order to make fresh discoveries related to the participation of women of color in the suffrage movement. By asking new questions of existing collections, materials related to women of color in the early twentieth-century women's suffrage movement can be recovered. Community archives projects and community contributions to crowdsourced transcription, such as at crowd.loc.gov, can also uncover different perspectives within the collections.

Top, left: Portrait of Nannie Helen Burroughs (1879–1961) and unidentified companion, ca. 1900.

Nannie Helen Burroughs Collection, Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress

Top, right: Portrait of Adelina Otero-Warren (1881–1965).

George Grantham Bain Collection, Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress

Bottom, left: Portrait of Fannie Barrier Williams (1855–1944), ca. 1885.

William Henry Richards Collection within the Robert H. McNeill Family Collections,

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress

Bottom, right: Portrait of Anna Julia Cooper (1858–1964), between 1901 and 1903.

C. M. Bell Collection, Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress

Left: Henry Mayer. *The Awakening*. New York: Puck Publishing Corporation, 1915.

Offset photomechanical print.

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress

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Image 2(b): The Women of Color

Appendix C



Map of the World's Columbian Exposition at Jackson Park and Midway Plaisance,
Chicago, 1893

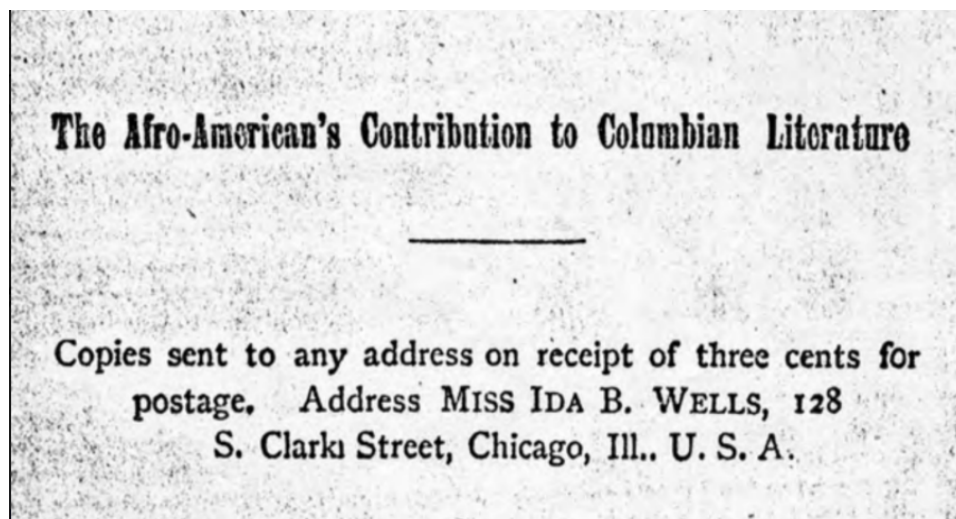
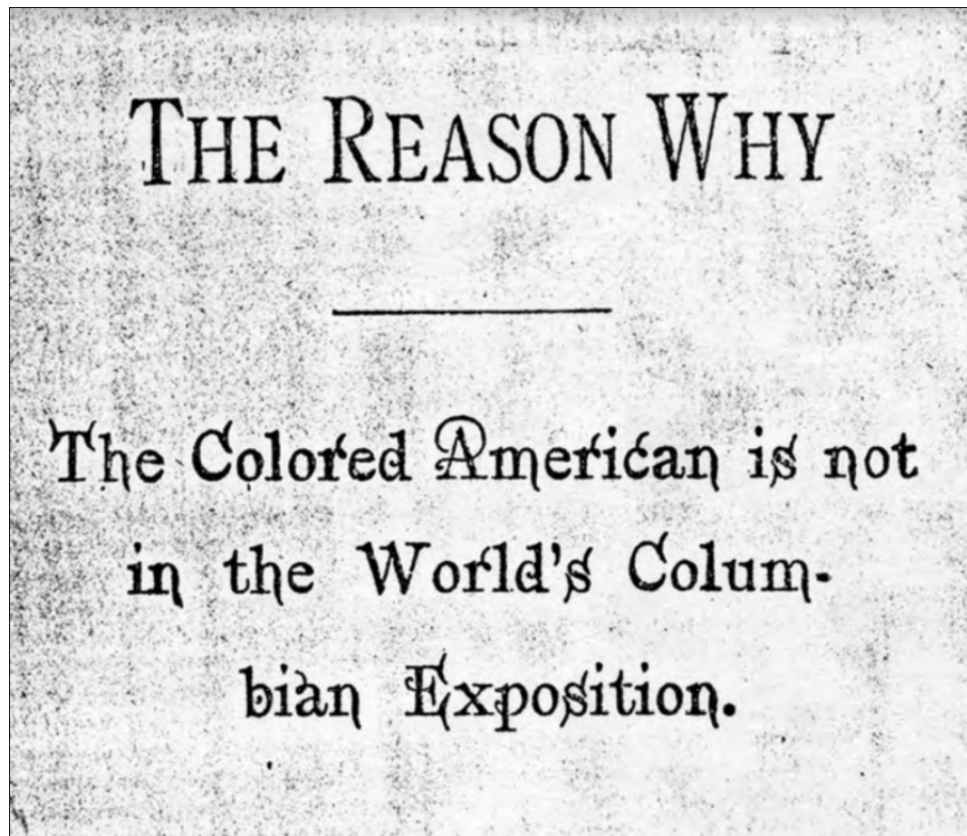


Image 1: The cover of the 1893 Wells Pamphlet

PREFACE.

TO THE SEEKER AFTER TRUTH:

Columbia has bidden the civilized world to join with her in celebrating the four-hundredth anniversary of the discovery of America, and the invitation has been accepted. At Jackson Park are displayed exhibits of her natural resources, and her progress in the arts and sciences, but that which would best illustrate her moral grandeur has been ignored.

The exhibit of the progress made by a race in 25 years of freedom as against 250 years of slavery, would have been the greatest tribute to the greatness and progressiveness of American institutions which could have been shown the world. The colored people of this great Republic number eight millions—more than one-tenth the whole population of the United States. They were among the earliest settlers of this continent, landing at Jamestown, Virginia in

1619 in a slave ship, before the Puritans, who landed at Plymouth in 1620. They have contributed a large share to American prosperity and civilization. The labor of one-half of this country has always been, and is still being done by them. The first credit this country had in its commerce with foreign nations was created by productions resulting from their labor. The wealth created by their industry has afforded to the white people of this country the leisure essential to their great progress in education, art, science, industry and invention.

Those visitors to the World's Columbian Exposition who know these facts, especially foreigners will naturally ask: Why are not the colored people, who constitute so large an element of the American population, and who have contributed so large a share to American greatness,—more visibly present and better represented in this World's Exposition? Why are they not taking part in this glorious celebration of the four-hundredth anniversary of the discovery of their country? Are they so dull and stupid as to feel no interest in this great event? It is to answer these questions and supply as far as possible our lack of representation at the Exposition that the Afro-American has published this volume.

Image 2: Wells wrote the Preface to the Pamphlet

The men who make these charges encourage or lead the mobs which do the lynching. They belong to the race which holds Negro life cheap, which owns the telegraph wires, newspapers, and all other communication with the outside world. They write the reports which justify lynching by painting the Negro as black as possible, and those reports are accepted by the press associations and the world without question or investigation. The mob spirit has increased with alarming frequency and violence. Over a thousand black men, women and children have been thus sacrificed the past ten years. Masks have long since been thrown aside and the lynchings of the present day take place in broad daylight. The sheriffs, police and state officials stand by and see the work well done. The coroner's jury is often formed among those who took part in the lynching and a verdict, "Death at the hands of parties unknown to the jury" is rendered. As the number of lynchings have increased, so has the cruelty and barbarism of the lynchers. Three human beings was burned alive in civilized America during the first six months of this year (1893). Over one hundred have been lynched in this half year. They were hanged, then cut, shot and burned.

The following table published by the *Chicago Tribune* January, 1892, is submitted for thoughtful consideration.

1882,	52	Negroes	murdered	by	mobs
1883,	39	"	"	"	"
1884,	53	"	"	"	"
1885,	77	"	"	"	"
1886,	73	"	"	"	"
1887,	70	"	"	"	"
1888,	72	"	"	"	"
1889,	95	"	"	"	"
1890,	100	"	"	"	"
1891,	169	"	"	"	"

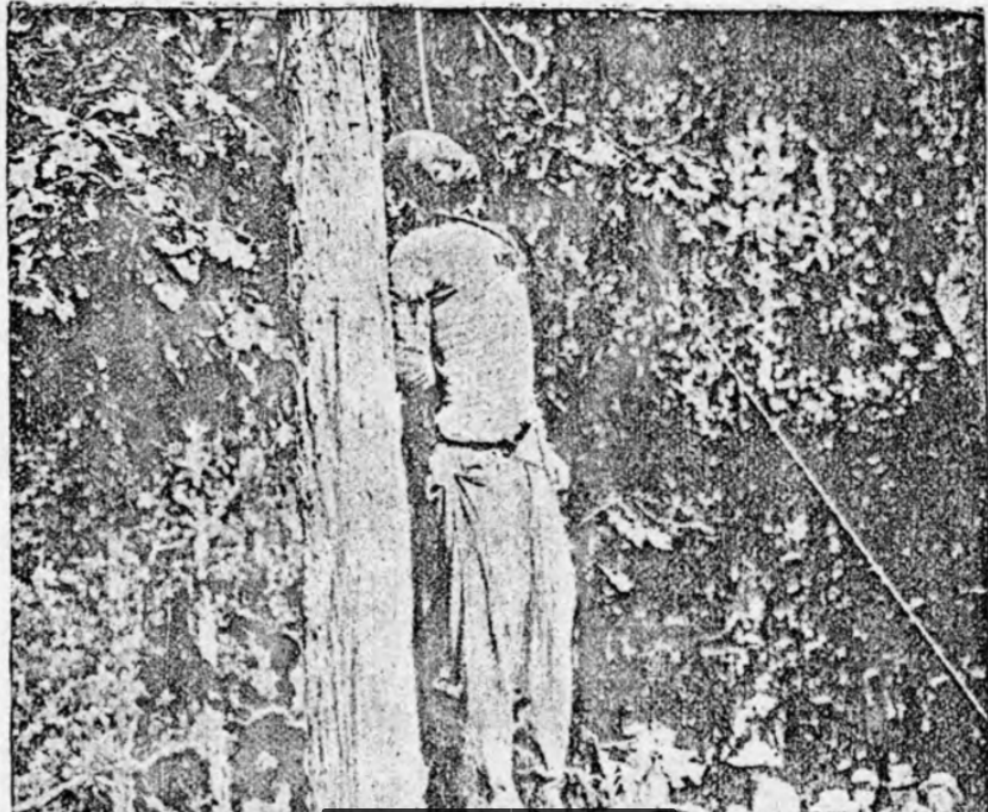
Of this number

269 were charged with rape.

253 " " " murder.

44 " " " robbery.

Image 3: Lynching statistics from 1882-1891



SCENE OF LYNCHING AT CLANTON, ALABAMA, AUG. 1891.

Image 4: A lynching in 1891 Clanton, Alabama