“To Care for Him Who Shall Have Borne the Battle”:

Ex-Servicewomen and Gendered Discourse, 1918-1929

BY

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DISSERTATION

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This dissertation is dedicated to Keaton and Nolan, whose combined influence has transformed my life in countless ways. The world is more meaningful because you are in it.

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I was never able to climb the rope in gym class. It seemed like all the other children could do so with relative ease. I remember watching in awe as one student climbed all the way to the top and touched the gymnasium ceiling. Unfortunately, I lacked the upper body strength to do anything more than a perfunctory rope mount. It was a shortcoming that haunted me for years. Imagine my dismay when, years later, I was confronted by a rope-themed obstacle during my Army basic training at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. I had survived numerous humiliations up to that point, but I was certain this otherwise innocuous obstacle would be my downfall. Unlike my experiences in grade school – where most of my classmates had seemed largely disinterested in my climbing prowess – something remarkable happened that day. My fellow soldiers cheered me on with such overwhelming support that I accomplished the impossible. I made it up the rope.

Over the last few years, I have struggled to conquer a different rope. Academia has required less physical strength and more mental and emotional resilience. At times, my decision to pursue a doctoral degree has been arduous. I have battled waves of uncertainty, depression, and anxiety. Along the way, I have doubted my qualifications for being in a doctoral program in the first place. In such moments, I have been besieged by negative thoughts: *Am I an imposter? Was my acceptance into the program an accident? Will someone discover the mistake?*

The stressors of higher education have also been complicated by the often more pressing obligations of everyday life. Like many graduate students, I have had recurrent concerns over financial solvency. Common banalities such as these have been punctuated by unexpected crises. Loved ones have fallen ill and died. There has been a global pandemic, forcible isolation, and social upheaval stemming from longstanding racial injustices. All the uncertainty in the world can bring a sense of futility to the dissertation process.

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AIR

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SUMMARY

Historians have long neglected ex-servicewomen's contributions to the veterans' welfare state. This trend has been exemplified by widespread inattention to the postwar struggles of thousands of primarily White women who served during World War I as nurses, clerical workers, telephone operators, and welfare workers. Although feminist scholars have begun to revise the narrative to reconsider the first World War with their military service at the forefront, there has been little attention to ex-servicewomen's struggles during demobilization and reconstruction in the interwar years. As a result, there has been no analysis of the subsequent emergence and activism of women veterans' organizations. Yet, these organizations struggled to elevate the status of ex-servicewomen by claiming entitlement to the equal rights associated with military service. Despite these efforts, the influence of women veterans' service organizations on the development of the modern veterans' welfare state remains largely ignored.

The present dissertation addresses this gap by focusing on the interwar activism of the Women's Overseas Service League (WOSL) – a group of primarily White Anglo-Saxon Protestant ex-servicewomen. It sought to identify the ways in which traditional discourses surrounding gender and citizenship influenced the context for the WOSL's interwar activism, 1918-1929. A thematic analysis of purposively selected historical data items from physical and online sources revealed influences in four areas, which affected the organization's initial decision to seek equal rights through formal channels; its failure to obtain them; its decision to seek alternative activist strategies and objectives; and its success at earning and maintaining equal rights through alternative means. These results are explained in the backdrop of policy feedback theory. Key findings, contributions, and limitations are discussed. This study concludes with recommendations for future social work research, education, policy, and practice.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background & Rationale

Throughout U.S. history, the prospect of women's inclusion in the military has been politically problematic. A key obstacle to women's participation has been the gendered nature of military service, which was originally framed as an inherent obligation of White male citizenship (Segal, 1989). Despite the constraints of longstanding gender and racial biases, the state has required women's wartime service during every period of the nation's history (National Center for Veterans Analysis & Statistics, 2011). To resolve this dilemma, the state has at times circumvented women's formal exclusion by limiting their participation to informal roles. This strategy has enabled the state to solicit women's voluntary contributions in times of crisis without requiring the recognition and reward of expanded citizenship rights. It has also reinforced a version of history wherein women have been cast as secondary actors (MacKenzie, 2015). The resulting pattern of ahistorical discourse has minimized the longstanding contributions of military servicewomen and perpetuated differential versions of citizenship.

In recent decades, feminist scholars have turned their attention to U.S. military servicewomen's struggles for expanded participation in the military during World War I (Grayzel, 2002; Jensen, 2008; Zeiger, 1999). Beginning in 1917, the military oversaw the nation's first expansive campaign to recruit White women. Opportunities were racially restricted due to the institutionalized racism of the period. An estimated 40,000 White servicewomen joined the Army, Navy, and Marines, while many more served as contractual workers with the Army and auxiliary welfare organizations on the home front and overseas. After the armistice, however, many of these ex-servicewomen discovered that their time overseas had not been recognized as military service. Women of the U.S. Army Signal Corps, Ordinance Corps, and

Medical Corps had been enlisted, uniformed, and served under military command, but were not granted military discharges. Instead, they were classified as civilian employees and denied veteran status. This downgrade coincided with extensive efforts to contain the narrative on women's wartime service by reducing their contributions "into a version of domestic caring labor" (Zeiger, 1999, p. 140).

Scholars are conflicted over the ultimate meaning of servicewomen's contributions during World War I. For some, the military was a site of social struggle wherein the example of White women's service represented a form of collective activism that linked to the broader suffragist movement (Gavin, 1997; Jensen, 2008). Others have argued that White suffragist leaders were largely disconnected from the needs of rank-and-file servicewomen (Zeiger, 1999). This lack of collective support for military servicewomen enabled the state to contain their achievements by withholding recognition. By extension, it also permitted their exclusion from entitlement to many of the rights that were proliferating in the emergent veterans' welfare state.

Historians have largely failed to explore the factors affecting ex-servicewomen's organized activism for equal standing as veterans in the interwar years. Yet, this period provides the necessary context to undertake an introductory analysis of ex-servicewomen's struggles for equal veterans' rights. The post-war era corresponds with the formation of the modern veterans' welfare state, which provided a nationally coordinated system of veteran-specific benefits and services for the first time in U.S. history. Prior to the war, there was no uniform system to administer veterans' entitlements (Ridgway, 2013). Competing bureaus oversaw a sporadic and outdated array of benefits and services. After the Armistice, servicemembers with disabilities returned to find existing veterans' programs insufficient to meet their needs (Stevens, 2012). The nation's inability to fulfill its commitment to care for its veterans directed the activism of

veterans' service organizations such as the American Legion (Cox, 2001). These consumer-driven organizations lobbied for veteran-specific legislation that contributed to the creation of a consolidated U.S. Veterans' Bureau in 1921.

Ex-servicewomen faced unique challenges as society attempted to revert to prewar gender relations (Jensen, 2008). Growing numbers of women veterans reported disabilities due to exposure to diseases such as influenza and tuberculosis (Ebbert & Hall, 2002; Zeiger, 1999). At the same time, they had limited access to government benefits and services. Male-led veterans' service organizations were often sympathetic to the needs of women veterans, but they were more concerned with establishing a system of benefits to elevate the status of White male veterans (Kinder, 2015). For these reasons, the Women's Overseas Service League (WOSL) – a group of primarily White Anglo-Saxon Protestant ex-servicewomen – organized for continued service in 1921 (Sillia, 1978). Despite evidence of many achievements, there has been little scholarly work featuring the organization's activism in the interwar years (Finkelstein, 2015).

The present dissertation contributes to the literature by bringing the WOSL's interwar activism to the forefront. Its purpose is to revise the historical narrative to reveal broader factors affecting White ex-servicewomen's contributions to the development of the veterans' welfare state. It accomplishes this aim by considering the influence of the constructs of gender and citizenship on the WOSL's organized activism in the first decade of the interwar years, 1918-1929. Research occurred within a critical paradigm, which was informed by postmodern ontology, subjectivist epistemology, and the discourse-historical approach to critical discourse analysis methodology (Reisigl & Wodak, 2016). Policy feedback theory served as the backdrop to explore the influence or key study concepts (Mettler & SoRelle, 2014). A thematic analysis of

data collected from physical and online archival sources was conducted to assess the contextual influences of gender and citizenship on the WOSL's activism for the study period.

B. **Relevance**

How are historical factors that affected a group of primarily White Anglo-Saxon Protestant ex-servicewomen in the interwar years relevant today? The same forces are actively operating in contemporary society. Indeed, history is more than a static reproduction of past occurrences. It is a dynamic process that continuously interacts with the present to impede or facilitate the distribution of citizenship rights and responsibilities. Historical biases are embedded and maintained through formal policies and laws. They are also reproduced in less tangible ways through repeated interactions between individuals, groups, and social institutions. As Berger and Luckmann (1967) explained:

> It is impossible to understand an institution adequately without an understanding of the historical process in which it was produced. Institutions also, by the very fact of their existence, control human conduct by setting up predefined patterns of conduct, which channel it in one direction as against the many other directions that would theoretically be possible. (p. 54-55)

By extension, historical discourse facilitates opportunities for institutional membership. Consider the present controversy over the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) gender-biased motto, "To care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan" (VA, 1991, p. 1). The motto was originally adapted from Abraham Lincoln's second inaugural address by Sumner G. Whittier in 1959 – head of what was then known as the U.S. Veterans' Administration (VA, n.d.). Since that time, veterans' advocacy groups have denounced the VA's use of masculine pronouns (Shane, 2017, 2020). In 2016, the Iraq and Afghanistan

Veterans of America (IAVA) spearheaded efforts to amend the motto (IAVA, 2016). The organization later partnered with Yale Law School's Veterans Legal Services Clinic, the Service Women's Action Network (SWAN), and New York Veterans Alliance to submit a formal petition to change the VA's motto (IAVA, 2018). These efforts gained the attention of lawmakers like U.S. Representative Kathleen Rice (D-NY), who subsequently sponsored the Honoring All Veterans Act (2019), which seeks to reword the VA's mission in a more inclusive way. Despite the pending legislation and a crescendo of disapproval, the VA has been resistant to change (Lawrence, 2020). VA Secretary Robert Wilkie (2020) recently announced the department's decision to install plaques engraved with the contested motto at all National Cemetery Administration cemeteries.

Gendered assumptions of the servicemember construct are at odds with current military workforce trends. As it stands, women account for nearly 18% (n = 375,617) of the U.S. Department of Defense's total force, representing 17% (n = 215,834) of the active duty population, and about 20% (n = 160,847) of the Selected Reserve (U.S. Department of Defense, 2018). Moreover, the nation's nearly 2 million women veterans account for roughly 10% of the total veterans' population (VA, 2020). Although ex-servicewomen remain statistically underrepresented, their numbers are expected to increase by 0.6% annually through 2045 – even as the total veteran population is projected to decline to half its current size over the same period (National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics, 2019).

Historically embedded biases influence today's military culture, which can adversely impact the wellbeing of ex-servicewomen. A growing body of research has suggested that women veterans have greater odds of developing posttraumatic stress disorder and depression than their male counterparts, and have a higher prevalence of mental health issues than civilian

women in the general population (Goldzweig et al., 2006; Rivera & Johnson, 2014). Moreover, ex-servicewomen are diagnosed with posttraumatic stress disorder at twice the rate of male veterans (VA, 2019b). One reason for this disparity is that women are at higher risk of exposure to military sexual trauma. Recent studies have suggested that as many as one in four women have experienced military sexual trauma compared to one in 100 men (Turchik & Wilson, 2010; VA, 2015a). This is significant because several studies have indicated a relationship between military sexual trauma and the development of posttraumatic stress disorder in women (Himmelfarb et al., 2006; Yaeger et al., 2006). And while male veterans have higher suicide rates, the suicide rate among women veterans increased by 62% from 2001-2014, compared to a 30% increase for male veterans over the same period (VA, 2017a). Ex-servicewomen are also more than twice as likely to commit suicide as women in the general population.

The military institution's biases are replicated in the VA. The resulting organizational culture has implications for ex-servicewomen's healthcare utilization. It is true that women veterans' utilization rates for VA benefits have surpassed those of male veterans over the last decade – albeit by a slim margin (National Center for Veterans Analysis & Statistics, 2020). However, nearly half of the nation's 2 million ex-servicewomen do not utilize VA services. This trend is concerning because women veterans have lower median incomes and are more likely to have no health coverage compared to male veterans (Carlson et al., 2013; National Center for Veterans Analysis & Statistics, 2016; Walker & Borberly, 2014). Previous research has suggested that ex-servicewomen may avoid care at Veterans Health Administration facilities because they perceive services to be gender-inappropriate (Washington et al., 2006). By extension, younger women veterans may be deterred by the Veterans Health Administration's

lack of obstetrics care (West & Lee, 2013), absence of childcare supports (VA, 2015b), or the male-dominant environment (Cheney et al., 2014).

Awareness of history's role in institutionalizing inequity along the lines of gender should be of especial concern to social workers. Indeed, it is a distinct obligation of social workers to understand the importance of diverse identity characteristics, which would be impossible without knowledge of historical context. The National Association of Social Workers' (NASW; 2017) *Code of Ethics* outlines social workers' ethical responsibilities to clients, which includes a responsibility to "obtain education about and seek to understand the nature of social diversity and oppression with respect to race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, and mental or physical ability" (NASW, 2017, sec. 1.05c). The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE; 2015) takes this guidance further by expecting aspiring social work students to "also understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power" (p. 7).

Beyond its general relevance for all social workers, this study is of particular interest to the numerous social workers who specialize in practice with military servicemembers, veterans, and their families. The VA is the nation's leading source of employment for social workers (VA, 2017b). The institution's widespread utilization of social workers may be attributed to an increased need for veteran-specific social services over the last two decades. Since September 11, 2001, the Global War on Terror has strained the nation's relatively small forces through repeated and prolonged deployments. Servicemembers' recurrent exposures to trauma have resulted in a growing demand for properly trained social workers (Rubin, 2012).

Social work's professional and educational oversight organizations were initially slow to recognize demands from the field. It was not until 2010 that the CSWE (2010) released its curricular guidelines for advanced practice with military, veterans, and their families. Shortly thereafter, the NASW (2012) followed with practice guidelines. Since that time, there has been recognition of the importance of social workers' awareness of history and diversity. In the CSWE's (2018) recently updated curricular guide, aspiring military social workers are responsible for awareness of "the complex historical context of the military, which has provided meaningful opportunity for upward social mobility for historically discriminated groups" (CSWE, 2018, p. 7). Additionally, a revised policy-related competency standard requires students to understand "the military's evolving policies toward women, minorities, LGBTQ populations, and people with disabilities and how these policies have affected service members' military experience and their experience as veterans" (CSWE, 2018, p. 32).

Although several schools of social work have established military social work specializations or certificates in recent decades (Wooten, 2015), there is evidence of a deficit of military social work concentrations in schools of social work. A recent report suggested that only 1.5% of direct practice Master of Social Work graduates surveyed had military specializations (Salsberg et al., 2019). Furthermore, there has been limited attention to the importance of historical content in both generalist and advanced social work curricula. Historical research was once relatively common in the profession, but it was nearly obsolete by the end of the Twentieth Century (Fisher & Dybicz, 1999). Despite attempts to revive historical research methods in social work (Danto, 2008), there has been little sign of a resurgence.

C. **Research Question**

The present dissertation contributes to the social work literature by addressing the following research question: In what ways, if any, did traditional discourses surrounding gender and citizenship influence the context for the Women's Overseas Service League's activism in the first decade of the interwar years, 1918-1929?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A comprehensive literature review was conducted to assess the state of knowledge on World War I era ex-servicewomen's interwar activism. The search began with a broad exploration of the literature on U.S. women during the war and shifted to more focused searches through continuous refinement. Published books from academic presses served as the initial source of relevant literature. New literature was located through a snowball approach in which key studies were identified by combing in-text citations, annotations, and bibliographies. Targeted Boolean keyword searches were also used to locate full-text, peer-reviewed articles in *Academic Search Complete* and the University of Illinois at Chicago Library's *Multiple Resources Search* databases. Abstracts and tables of contents were reviewed to determine relevance. This review was augmented by a selective summary of literature relating to citizenship, military service, veterans' benefits systems, and the activism of veterans' service organizations. The resulting review is presented as a narrative synthesis of the literature.

A. Historical Background

1. Citizenship Biases and Military Service

World War I was the first conflict in U.S. history in which the military recruited White women to serve in uniformed roles on a large scale. To understand the rationale for this racial restriction, it is useful to recall the inequitable construction of citizenship during this period. Formal opportunities for military service and its related rewards were traditionally tied to biased conceptualizations of citizenship. Throughout U.S. history, the construct of citizenship has been fashioned in the image and interests of the nation's White Anglo-Saxon Protestant founders. The associated rights and responsibilities of citizenship have been distributed unevenly across time with a bias toward the interests of White male citizens. As a result, underrepresented

populations of diverse identity characteristics have often been barred from formal military service, as well as from the right to equal protection under the Constitution. This marginalization is most poignantly demonstrated by the state's support of slavery and its longstanding complicity in structural violence against Black citizens. The differential standing of Black citizens was codified at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia in 1787, when it was determined that political representation in the House of Representatives would be apportioned by population (Ballingrud & Dougherty, 2018). Initial disagreements over apportionment were resolved with James Wilson's recommendation for a Three-Fifths Compromise. The compromise specified that

> Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective Numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including those bound to Service for a Term of Years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three fifths of all other Persons. (U.S. Const. art. I., §2, cl. 3)

Legislation regarding Black citizenship did not change significantly until the Civil War era. During the war, President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation (1863), which declared slaves within rebellious states to be liberated. The order was followed by more extensive Constitutional amendments that abolished slavery (U.S. Const. amend. XIII), codified equal citizenship protections (U.S. Const. amend. XIV), and prohibited interference with the right to vote "on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude" (U.S. Const. amend. XV, §1). Unfortunately, the promises of equal citizenship rights were unrealized in the aftermath of the Civil War. One reason for this failure may be found in the short-lived U.S. Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands (Freedmen's Bureau). From 1865-1872, the Freedman's Bureau oversaw Reconstruction efforts aimed at providing aid to former slaves and

White refugees in the southern states (National Archives, 2016). However, White refugees ultimately pursued mainstream public welfare supports, leaving the underfunded bureau supports to Black citizens (Colby, 1985). To some, this outcome enabled segregation to take root and resulted in "a dual welfare system based on race" (p. 228). It established a foundation that was later formalized in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), when the Supreme Court upheld the Constitutionality of states' rights to mandate separate spaces for persons of color, provided that accommodations were equal. This decision foreshadowed the rise of the racist Jim Crow policies of the Twentieth Century, which unfolded amid the resurgence of the racially-motivated domestic terrorism of the Ku Klux Klan – another byproduct of the Civil War (Roberts, 2019). Widespread beliefs about racial difference were replicated in social institutions such as the U.S. military, which remained segregated until after World War II (Exec. Order No. 9981, 1948).

In addition to racial segregation, the U.S. military was also divided along the lines of gender until after World War II (Women's Armed Services Integration Act, 1948). Before that time, opportunities for women's military service were limited by mainstream biases toward citizenship. Prior to the 1920 ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment (U.S. Const. amend. XIX), the U.S. Constitution codified civil and political citizenship for the nation's males, while simultaneously excluding women from consideration. In the absence of legislative decree, women's formal citizenship rights and responsibilities were mediated by their relationships to male family members (Kerber, 1998). At the same time, a male-dominant, White Anglo-Saxon Protestant society defined women's roles in terms of subservience and domesticity. As a result, it was not until 1901 that limited military roles opened for White women as nurses (Army Reorganization Act, 1901). Dominant society's acceptance of women's citizenship was further affected by the intersection of numerous identity factors such as race. For this reason, it took an

additional four decades before restrictions to Black women's formal inclusion in the military were rescinded at the beginning of World War II (Women's Army Auxiliary Corps Act, 1942).

Despite the coexistence of diverse identity characteristics, historians have often described Nineteenth Century society in the metaphoric language of separate spheres (Kerber, 1988). In principle, dominant society considered White men – regardless of socioeconomic class – to be the rightful heirs to public life. They were expected to contribute to society by earning wages, paying taxes, voting, and providing military service. White women, on the other hand, were relegated to the private sphere of domesticity. Within the confines of the separate sphere, femininity was measured by adherence to the tenets of True Womanhood, a social convention that prescribed behavioral expectations in accordance with the four virtues of "piety, purity, submissiveness and domesticity" (Welter, 1966, p. 152). The True Woman was idealized as inherently virtuous and religious. She was expected to remain sexually chaste until marriage, accept subservience to men, and master the caretaking functions associated with home life. Although this gendered convention was fashioned after White Anglo-Saxon Protestant values, its predominance in mainstream society also affected persons of diverse racial identities.

Within this racist and gendered historical context, military service has been constructed as a civic duty for White Anglo-Saxon Protestant men. Before the advent of the all-volunteer force in 1973, military service was an explicit obligation of U.S. citizenship (Segal, 1989). In the nation's early years, however, citizenship was not easily defined. The U.S. Constitution's formulation of the concept remained vague until the passage of the Fourteenth Amendment in 1868 (U.S. Const. amend. XIV, §1). Before that time, legislation gradually constructed the boundaries of citizenship rights and responsibilities. The Militia Act of 1792, for example, established military service as an obligation of citizenship and constructed formal barriers to

participation that lasted until the World War I era (U.S. War Office, 1924). The statute provided a narrow definition of the citizen that included "every free able-bodied White male citizen of the respective states, resident therein, who is or shall be of the age of eighteen years, and under the age of forty-five years" (Militia Act, 1792, 1 Stat. 271). In times of crisis, diverse populations were formally restricted from the civic duty of military conscription. This policy allowed the state to portray White men as society's rightful protectors, while marginalizing women and other underrepresented populations as subordinate objects of protection (MacKenzie, 2015). This strategy also enabled the state to exploit the service of excluded groups without requiring equal recognition or reward.

2. Veteran Status and Associated Rights

Prior to the expansion of the welfare state in the 1960s, military service had an exchange value in which the rights of citizenship were earned through military service (Segal, 1989). Citizens who fulfilled the military obligations of citizenship experienced an elevated status upon return to civilian life. In effect, the veteran emerged from war as a privileged class of citizen with unique claims in relation to the state (Ortiz, 2012a). Following the Revolutionary War, for example, veterans were awarded with pensions and public lands for their service (Kelly, 1997). By the mid-Nineteenth Century, Congress added domiciliary care to the list of veterans' disability programs through the establishment of the U.S. Soldiers' Asylum in Washington, D.C. (Byerly, 2012). However, the fledgling veterans' welfare state was ill-equipped to handle the large numbers of casualties inflicted by the Civil War.

From 1861-1865, more than three million service members mobilized, one half-million perished, and countless others were injured on both sides of the conflict (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2019a). In recognition of the limitations of extant veterans' welfare programs,

President Lincoln (1865/2002) pledged “to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan” (para 4). This commitment solidified the nation’s obligation to reward those who had fulfilled the obligations of military service and simultaneously formalized the construct of the male soldier. Earlier in the war, the General Pension Act of 1862 had been passed in anticipation of a new generation of soldiers with disabilities. Political parties quickly capitalized on the issue to recruit voters through promises of more liberal eligibility requirements, wider distribution, and higher benefits payments (Skocpol, 1995). Progressive Era reformers blamed Republicans for widespread abuses that contributed to fraudulent pension claims and expensive entitlement payouts. A less controversial initiative came in 1865 with the creation of the National Asylum for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers (Kelly, 1997). The National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers (NHDVS), as it was later renamed, placed the state in a caregiving role, which provided Civil War veterans with disabilities options for permanent care, housing, and vocational programming designed to restore the masculine work ethic (Kinder, 2012).

Although formally excluded from fulfilling the obligations of military conscription, marginalized populations have long challenged situated social norms through voluntary military service in every conflict in the nation’s history – often without the accompanying benefits of veteran status. In the nation’s early years, women accompanied men to battle as camp followers, functioning “as nurses, water bearers (‘Molly Pitcher’), cooks, laundresses, and saboteurs” (National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics, 2011, p. 1). However, participation in the armed forces went beyond supportive roles. Following the Revolutionary War, Margaret Cochran Corbin became the first woman in the nation’s history to receive a veterans’ disability pension (Lieberman, 1999). After Hessian mercenaries fatally wounded her husband at the Battle

of Fort Washington in 1776, Corbin retaliated with cannon fire. She was wounded in the process and ultimately awarded a soldier's half-pay for life.

Few women received Corbin's level of recognition in their own lifetimes. One reason for this oversight involves the state's historical tendency to utilize the labor of marginalized populations in times of crisis without extending the associated rewards of service once the emergency has subsided (Segal, 1989). In one well-documented example, Harriet Tubman filed a claim for a veterans' pension as compensation for her service to the Union during the Civil War as "a nurse and cook in hospitals, and as commander of several men (eight or nine) as scouts during the late war of the Rebellion, under directions and orders of Edwin M. Stanton Secretary of War, and of several Generals" ("General Affidavit," 1898, p. 1). Tubman only received partial and fleeting recognition for her nursing services when the House passed a pension bill in her name (H.R. Rep. No. 55-1774, 1899). However, the Senate ultimately opted to increase her existing Civil War widow's pension instead of formally recognizing her military service (H.R. 4982, 1899). It took another century for legislation to be introduced to recognize Tubman's military service (S. Con. Res. 111, 107th Cong., 2002).

Despite these persistent barriers to formal military service, women of diverse backgrounds have served the nation throughout history. Prior to the Twentieth Century, most did so without the accompanying recognition and benefits that enabled men to aspire to enhanced civic standing under veteran status. The situation began to change following the state's widespread utilization of White women in formal and informal military roles overseas during World War I. After the war, sufficient numbers of ex-servicewomen were finally available to organize for equal entitlement to benefits within the emergent veterans' welfare state.

B. Women and the First World War

1. Total War, Crisis, and Opportunity

The U.S. formally entered the first World War on April 6, 1917 (S.J. Res. 1, 1917). The nation's involvement represented a reversal of President Woodrow Wilson's previous commitment to neutrality and a departure from historically isolationist tendencies (Kennedy, 1980). Once committed, however, the U.S. required rapid mobilization. An immediate response was necessitated by delayed involvement and the war's magnitude as "the first modern, total war, one requiring the mobilisation of both civilians and combatants" (Grayzel, 2002, p. 3). Total war demanded far more personnel than could be obtained through voluntary enlistment alone (Segal, 1989). Therefore, the U.S. Congress passed the Selective Service Act on May 18, 1917, authorizing a national draft that would ultimately account for more than half of the estimated 4.7 million U.S. military personnel who served during the war (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2019a). The legislation also broke from tradition by avoiding racially restrictive wording in its registrant criteria. As a result, Black men – for the first time at the national level – were required to register for potential conscription (Mennel, 1999).

Although all women were excluded from the draft, total war required women's increased voluntarism, workforce participation, and voluntary military enlistment. Opportunities for Black women in mainstream welfare organizations and the military were limited due to the situated racism of the period. Opposition to White women's expanded participation was circumvented by military and political claims that their inclusion would free men to fight overseas (Ebbert & Hall, 2002; Zeiger, 1999). For many White women, the most socially acceptable means of support came through home front voluntarism with the American Red Cross (ARC). Founded in 1881 as an independent relief organization, the ARC grew exponentially as a quasi-governmental

organization under emergency federal control during the first World War (Jones, 2013). Its membership base increased from approximately 20,000 adults in 1915 to more than 20 million by 1919. Throughout the war, more than eight million home front volunteers worked in the ARC's Production Corps and produced over 370 million war relief items such as surgical dressings, medical supplies, and garments (American National Red Cross, 2016; Davison, 1920).

World War I also temporarily influenced White and Black women's workforce participation. However, women's collective employment trends varied little from prewar conditions (Greenwald, 1990). Black women had a longstanding history of work outside the home (Jensen, 2008). By the turn of the twentieth century, industrialization and urbanization had also drawn many White women into the workforce (Treadwell, 1954). However, their employment increased less than seven percent from 1910-1920, suggesting "that the First World War primarily occasioned a shift within the female labor force, rather than a movement of non-wage earning women into categories of paid labor" (Greenwald, 1990, p. 13). The workforce was temporarily restructured as White women shifted from "the garment industry to work in steel, chemical, and munitions plants" (Zeiger, 1999, p. 17). In turn, many Black women transitioned from domestic work into factory positions during the war (Spaights & Whitaker, 1995).

Total war also opened new avenues for White women's participation in the military (Zeiger, 1999). Prior to U.S. entry in the war, there were few official opportunities for White women in the armed forces. The first approved pathways were in contractual caregiving roles. During the Spanish-American War of 1898, approximately 1,500 nurses were contracted from nongovernmental organizations such as the Daughters of the American Revolution and the ARC (National Center for Veterans Analysis & Statistics, 2011). Logistical challenges to recruitment and a lack of protection for contractual nurses led to the Army Reorganization Act of 1901,

which provided the first formal authorization for White women's inclusion in the military through the creation of the Army Nurse Corps (31 Stat. 753). The Navy followed with its own nurse corps seven years later (Gavin, 1997).

A shortage of skilled labor during the first World War prompted the military's first large-scale recruitment campaign for White women (Zeiger, 1999). Unfortunately, racial biases of the era limited the opportunity to White women alone. The scope of the crisis drove the military's need to recruit large numbers of White women beyond familiar nursing roles into new positions as stenographers, typists, and telephone operators (Treadwell, 1954). These occupational roles, while available to for the first time in a military context, had already been feminized in the civilian sector prior to the war (Zeiger, 1999). The military's tardiness in adopting rational management policy did not affect its ability to recruit more than 40,000 White women to serve on the home front and overseas as nurses, Navy Yeomen (F), Marine Corps Reserve (F), Army contractual workers, and welfare workers (see Tables 1-2). However, visceral debates about their place in the military led to limited roles and inequitable military status.

2. White Women's Struggles for Military Inclusion

Political opposition resulted in White women's varied utilization in the military institution (Zeiger, 1999). On one side of the debate was Secretary Josephus Daniels and the Navy Department, who recognized the value of White women's skilled labor and pushed for their full inclusion (Ebbert & Hall, 2002). On the other side stood Secretary of War Newton D. Baker, who vehemently opposed their participation. The War Department's resistance remained steadfast even as U.S. military officials in Europe sent repeated requests for White female personnel (Treadwell, 1954). In the end, the War Department compromised by authorizing contractual service for a limited number of personnel. This arrangement would ultimately create

Table 1

Estimates of U.S. Military and Naval Servicewomen in World War I

Organization	Date	Role	Duties	Peak Enlistment	Overseas	Military Status
U.S. Army Nurse Corps	1901	Nurses	Nursing	21,480	10,000	Partial. No rank, equal pay, or retirement.
U.S. Navy Nurse Corps	1908	Nurses	Nursing	1,386	325	Partial. No rank, equal pay, or retirement.
U.S. Navy Reserve (F)	1917	Yeoman (F)	Clerical: Stenography and typing	11,880		Full, but barriers to healthcare
U.S Marine Corps Reserve (F)	1918	Marine Reservists (F)	Clerical: Stenography and typing	305		Full, but barriers to healthcare
U.S. Army Signal Corps (F)	1918	Telephone Operators (F)	Telephone operation	450	223	No, but sworn in and uniformed
U.S. Army Medical Corps	1918	Reconstruction Aides	Physical and Occupational Therapy	2,000	300	No, but sworn in and uniformed

Note. Rough estimates compiled from the following sources: Ebbert & Hall (2002); Gavin (1997); Jensen (2008); Zeiger (1999).

Table 2

Estimates of U.S. Women in Auxiliary Welfare Organizations in World War I

Organization	Established	Roles	Women Overseas
Young Men's Christian Association	1844	Canteen workers; Welfare and moral uplift; Entertainment	3,198
American Red Cross	1881	Nursing and public health; canteens	2,503
Young Women's Christian Association	1855	Welfare and moral uplift for servicewomen	260
Salvation Army	1865	Canteen workers; Welfare and moral uplift; Money exchange	104
Jewish Welfare Board	1917	Welfare services for Jewish soldiers	76

Note. Rough estimates compiled from the following sources: Ebbert & Hall (2002); Gavin (1997); Jensen (2008); Zeiger (1999). The Women's Overseas Service League placed the total number of overseas civilian women between 12,000-13,000, but this appears to have included the many who served after the Armistice (Smith, 1931).

confusion over the status of Army women. Political leaders viewed them as civilians, while overseas military officials and servicewomen themselves believed they were full military personnel (Zeiger, 1999).

Only the Navy and Marines offered White women full military status with equal rank, pay, and postwar benefits equivalent to their male counterparts (Gavin, 1997). Before the U.S. entered the war, Navy Secretary Josephus Daniels exploited a loophole in the Naval Service Appropriations Act of 1916 to formally enlist servicewomen. As Ebbert and Hall (2002) explained, the legislation created a Naval Coast Defense Reserve Force, which contained gender neutral wording in its enlistment criteria. After clarifying the legality of the maneuver, the Navy opened enlistment to White women in March 1917, and the Marine Corps followed suit in August of the following year. This led to the enlistment of nearly 12,000 servicewomen over the course of the war. Both Navy Yeomen (F) and Marine Corps Reserve (F) worked almost exclusively on the home front in clerical capacities as stenographers and typists, although other roles were available. Only a handful of Navy servicewomen served overseas with the medical department. Most servicewomen were restricted to the home front during the war. However, approximately 16,500 servicewomen served in France with General John J. Pershing's American Expeditionary Force (AEF; Zeiger, 1999). More than half of overseas servicewomen were nurses, but thousands of Army contractual workers also served abroad (Treadwell, 1954). Additionally, thousands of White women worked with the AEF in France as canteen workers with auxiliary organizations such as the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), Salvation Army, ARC, Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), Knights of Columbus, and the Jewish Welfare Board (Zeiger, 1999).

In contrast to the Navy and Marine Corps Reserves, most servicewomen of the first

World War did not share equally in full military status. Nurses with the Army and Navy Nurse Corps were enlisted with partial military status. Despite being the first formally incorporated group within the military, nurses faced differential status that was unaccompanied by rank, equal pay, or retirement benefits (Jensen, 2008). Other servicewomen lacked military status altogether. They were uniformed and sworn-in as military service members, but subsequently categorized as contractual civilian employees with the U.S. Army (Treadwell, 1954; Zeiger, 1999). This group of servicewomen included the telephone operators known as the "Hello Girls" of the Signal Corps (F), clerical workers with the Quartermaster Corps and Ordinance Department, and reconstruction aides and dieticians with the Medical Corps (Gavin, 1997). Each branch's conflicting interpretations presented challenges during the war, demobilization, and postwar reconstruction (Ebbert & Hall, 2002; Gavin, 1997; Jensen, 2008; Zeiger, 1999).

3. **Black Women's Struggles for Inclusion**

While White women faced significant political opposition to their inclusion in the armed forces during the first World War, there was even less support for the prospect of Black women's enlistment. Under the Wilson administration, military leaders supported the broader pattern of racial segregation that was inherent in civil society (Ebbert & Hall, 2002). To this end, coordinating Black servicewomen's separate lodging presented logistical challenges that the military was unwilling to address (Zeiger, 1999). Thus, most Black women were turned away as they attempted to enlist as Navy Yeomen (F), nurses, and welfare workers. Rejected applicants wrote to Black government officials and civil rights organizations such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP; Ebbert & Hall, 2002). Despite widespread criticism in the Black press, these efforts were largely unsuccessful in swaying

historically engrained patterns. Black women were forced to support the war by developing mutual aid networks in Black communities on the home front (Jensen, 2008).

Still, some Black women breached military racial barriers. Although the Navy formally excluded their enlistment, a Black civilian employee covertly hired 14 Black women beginning in August of 1918 to work as apprentice Yeomen (F) at the Navy Department's enrollment office in Washington, D.C. (Ebbert & Hall, 2002). Additionally, several other Black women worked as welfare workers with auxiliary organizations (Gavin, 1997). This was a significant accomplishment given organized White resistance. As Zeiger (1999) explained, competitive application processes were overseen by cooperating auxiliary organizations that accommodated to nativist and nationalist policies of the Committee on Women's Defense Work of the Council of National Defense (Woman's Committee). The Woman's Committee had been established by the Wilson administration to lead home front civilian mobilization programs. The 11-woman committee was composed of elite, White Anglo-Saxon Protestant women who sought to uphold Victorian standards of True Womanhood. Auxiliary organizations recruited welfare workers in line with this philosophy. For this reason, only three Black women were selected by the YMCA to serve an estimated 200,000 Black soldiers in France before 1919 (Gavin, 1997).

Resistance to Black women's inclusion was symptomatic of a broader debate among White suffragist leaders (Jensen, 2008). White women leaders of the suffragist movement had a paradoxical history with race. Issues of racial equality and abolition were key forerunners to the suffrage movement (Kemp & Brandwein, 2010). From its inception in the Nineteenth Century, White women utilized social beliefs about their inherent moral qualifications to justify their right to accompany men to anti-slavery meetings. In the process, they became aware of their own oppression. In one account, Lucretia Coffin Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton recognized the

need for women's rights activism after experiencing gender-based discrimination at the 1840 World Anti-Slavery Convention in London (Freedman, 2007).

During the Civil War, Stanton and Susan B. Anthony established the Woman's Loyal National League and petitioned for the immediate abolition of slavery – an effort which contributed to the work of Black reformers to pass the Thirteenth Amendment in 1865 (Ward, 2001). In the Reconstruction Era that followed, however, the wording of the proposed Fifteenth Amendment created a schism among White women's rights leaders. Ward (2001) suggested that some, such as Stanton, opposed the amendment because it failed to recognize women's right to vote. Stanton and allies feared that this would lead to suffrage for Black men at the expense of women. Others, including Frederick Douglass and Lucy Stone, supported the amendment. They felt that Black enfranchisement would serve as a stepping-stone for women's suffrage. This caused a rift that divided the leading women's rights organization of the period, the American Equal Rights Association, into two rival factions: Stanton and Anthony's National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA) and Lucy Stone's American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA).

Two decades after the Fifteenth Amendment codified Black men's right to vote, White suffragist leaders of the NWSA and AWSA agreed to merge as the National American Woman Suffrage Association in 1890 (Moore, 1996). The newly formed organization quickly adopted a White supremacist ideology to gain political support in the south (Jensen, 2008). Moore (1996) described the ways in which racism and persistent exclusion of Black women's interests in White organizations led to the creation of parallel Black organizations. For years, the General Federation of Women's Clubs had refused to include Black women's clubs. In response, Mary Church Terrell established the National Association of Colored Women in 1896. Similarly, Ida

B. Wells established the Alpha Suffrage Club in Chicago in 1913 to give voice to the Black women after years of exclusion from the White suffragist movement.

Another challenge to Black women's wartime participation stemmed from the institutionalized racism of White women's professional associations. Prior to the war, professional organizations such as the American Nurses Association struggled to establish nursing as a legitimate profession (Jensen, 2008). Nursing leaders distanced themselves from historical stereotypes associated with nurses. They attempted to counter these images by idealizing a code of conduct that upheld Victorian notions of True Womanhood, measuring femininity in terms of White middle-class standards. According to Jensen (2008), longstanding racist stereotypes about Black women conveyed a sexualized imagery that the nursing profession wished to avoid. Since the Nineteenth Century, working-class and Black women had been viewed as sexually immoral simply because economic conditions had necessitated their participation in the public domain of male wage earners (Meyer, 1996). Dominant society feared public women would lose their inherent virtues by assuming the attributes of men. The legacy of slavery and the failures of Reconstruction programs had forced many Black women to perform agricultural and domestic caregiving labor outside the home. As Jensen (2008) elaborated, nursing leaders also feared that Black women would tarnish efforts to portray an image of highly-educated professionals. The historical basis for this concern was a racist stereotype in which Black women "symbolized the primitive role of women as healers to White nursing leaders, a role that was antithetical to their 'modern,' professional goals" (p. 119).

In this context, racism within the White nursing profession contributed to the development of parallel Black nursing organizations. The National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses (NACGN) was established in 1908 to improve the quality of Black nursing

training, attract high quality students, and challenge racial exclusion (Hine, 1989). During World War I, Black nurses faced federal discrimination by the ARC and the Armed Forces Nurse Corps. As a result, no Black women were accepted as Army nurses during the first World War (Jensen, 2008). An estimated 1,800 Black nurses registered with the ARC, but none served during the war due to political resistance and the logistical difficulties of providing separate quarters (Gavin, 1997). Black civil rights leaders such as Emmett J. Scott, Robert Russa Moton, and the Black press criticized the War Department and ARC, but these efforts proved unsuccessful (Zeiger, 1999). Hine (1989) explained how the NACGN was also initially active in the struggle for military inclusion, but ultimately abandoned the effort to form the Circle for Negro War Relief in 1917. Adah B. Thoms, a Black graduate nurse and member of the NACGN, led the Blue Circle initiative of the Circle for Negro War Relief. Blue Circle nurses were the Black community's equivalent to the ARC, which had refused to endorse the organization because it claimed it lacked the necessary leadership and training. It was only after the war that a handful of Black nurses were accepted into the Army Nurse Corps to assist with the Spanish Influenza epidemic of 1918. These nurses served Black soldiers at segregated Army reconstruction hospitals in Ohio, Illinois, and South Carolina (Zeiger, 1999).

4. **White Servicewomen's Wartime Activism**

As Black women struggled for inclusion, White servicewomen vied for equality within the military institution. Evidence of servicewomen's activism was present at all phases of the war (Jensen, 2008). Often individually and sometimes collectively, servicewomen asserted the right to fulfill the traditionally male obligations of military service and – when achieved – claimed entitlement to recognition for their service by agitating for full military status with rank, equal pay, and postwar benefits. However, the meanings White women assigned to their military

experiences were individualized and there remains a debate within the literature about the extent of servicewomen's collective consciousness in the struggle for equality (Zeiger, 1999).

For some scholars, women's wartime contributions influenced a shift in President Wilson's support for the Nineteenth Amendment (Gavin, 1997). To this end, Jensen (2008) argued that the examples of primarily White U.S. women physicians, nurses, and women-at-arms during the first World War reflected a form of antiviolence activism that redefined traditional understandings of military service and linked to the broader suffragist struggle for full citizenship. During the war, groups of home front women-at-arms challenged conventional notions of the protector/protected dichotomy by forming rifle clubs such as the New York-based American Women's League for Self-Defense. At the same time, White women physicians of the Medical Women's National Association formed a War Service Committee – later renamed American Women's Hospitals (AWH) – to conduct surveys, register physicians for war, and lobby for commissions in the Army Medical Corps. Although the campaign was unsuccessful, the AWH and the Women's Overseas Hospitals mobilized to provide services for women and children overseas. Similarly, professional nursing associations fought unsuccessfully to secure rank for nurses of the armed forces and formed the National Committee to Secure Rank for Nurses in 1918. Proponents felt that rank would protect nurses from a hostile workplace by empowering them with authority, while opponents argued that higher standards of individual behavior alone would provide nurses with protection. A compromise was not reached until after the war that granted nurses relative rank, which authorized the right to wear rank insignia without corresponding pay or official authority.

Others have questioned the link between servicewomen's activism and the broader suffragist movement. Zeiger (1999) suggested that traditional historical accounts have tended to

overemphasize the exceptional patriotic efforts of elite White women's war work. These accounts have ignored the fact that most overseas servicewomen were middle-class wage earners who were single, independent, and had previous work experience. Aside from Harriot Stanton Blatch's support for the nurse rank campaign, this demographic was of little interest to mainstream suffragists. Their efforts were primarily reserved for the elite ideal represented by the White women physicians' campaign for commission. As a result, rank-and-file servicewomen struggled for workplace equality through individual rather than collective acts of resistance.

With limited intervention from leading suffragists, White women's advances in the traditionally male military institution were systematically contained by state officials through a discursive strategy of domestication (Zeiger, 1999). As Zeiger (1999) explained, domestication portrayed servicewomen's work in subordinate homemaking terms designed to preserve the status quo through "the reframing of women's military roles in feminized, familial terms" (p. 6). To this end, the meaning of service was articulated in terms of moral uplift and nurturance. The author argued that servicewomen were portrayed in popular discourse as surrogate sisters, mothers, or sweethearts whose sole function was to ensure the comfort of homesick soldiers. Yet, AEF women brought their own varied meanings to service and often recognized and resisted domestic categorizations. They viewed themselves as equal partners whose skilled labor was necessary to win the war. However, the state's strategies of containment persisted after the war and White women's service brought no immediate transformation as the nation sought to return to normalcy.

C. Demobilization

1. Struggles for Returning Service Members

Women's struggles for military inclusion and equality were nullified by the brevity of the nation's involvement with the war. On November 11, 1918, the Armistice came and effectively ended the Great War. U.S. political and military leaders turned their attention to the challenges of demobilizing American forces. With more than two million military personnel stationed overseas, officials feared that service members' rapid return to an unfamiliar homeland would challenge their readjustment and contribute to social disorder (Jensen, 2008). In the aftermath of war, the popular media reflected widespread concerns over service members' readjustment by focusing on fears of increased violence and crime, shell-shock, unemployment, and the potential for labor radicalism. As Jensen (2008) observed, advice columns argued that the best course of action was a return to normalcy. This normalcy, again, reflected White Anglo-Saxon Protestant standards spread large. White women were encouraged to focus on marriage, family, consumerism, and a return to traditional gender roles, while politicians focused on the matter of reintegrating returning service members.

The nation's immediate concerns centered on the economy. Ford (2012) argued that the desired return to normalcy was threatened by unemployment, economic crisis, and labor unrest. Demobilization planners drew parallels between U.S. labor union activism and the recent example of Russia's Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. In popular discourse, American unionism was equated with Bolshevism. Thus, demobilization strategists feared that labor radicals would attempt to recruit unemployed veterans. At the same time, existing programs were insufficient to counter the threat of unemployment. The author explained how service members' workforce reintegration was initially handled by the U.S. Employment Service's Bureau for Returning

Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines. The bureau was underfunded and ill-equipped to handle the task. In response, the War Department created a new office to coordinate employment for returning service members. In March of 1919, the newly appointed Assistant Secretary established "'the Emergency Employment Committee for Soldiers, Sailors and Marines of the Council of National Defense'" (Ford, 2012, p. 126). The committee orchestrated a well-coordinated outreach campaign to garner the support of Congress, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, local businesses, and the media. Before its disbanding at the end of 1919, the committee's initiatives helped an estimated one million ex-service personnel gain employment.

There was a less immediate response in coordinating health care for newly returned service members. This delay was a significant problem given the large volume of returning veterans in need of hospitalization and rehabilitation. Mechanized warfare and advancements in medical care enabled soldiers to survive injuries that would have been fatal in previous eras (Pols & Oak, 2007). While medical progress was a boon, survival left more than 200,000 American soldiers wounded and in need of medical care (Gavin, 1997). Additionally, more than 70,000 soldiers were discharged with war neuroses, or shell-shock in the common vernacular, that required neuropsychiatric services that were largely unavailable (Cox, 2001). Many more service members contracted diseases in the line of duty. Indeed, less than half of the nearly 120,000 service members' deaths were combat-related (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2019a). Disease was a greater threat to military personnel and civilians alike. The most prominent example was the Spanish Influenza epidemic of 1918, which killed approximately 555,000 Americans including an estimated 43,000 service members (Ebbert & Hall, 2002).

Politicians were slow to address returning service members' needs for long-term health care and rehabilitation. This delay was problematic because existing veterans' programs were

uncoordinated and lacked the capacity to meet increased needs (Stevens, 2012). Before the 1921 creation of the Veterans' Bureau, ex-service members were forced to navigate a confusing array of overlapping services from the Army, the Bureau of War Risk Insurance (BWRI), the Public Health Service (PHS), and the Federal Board of Vocational Rehabilitation (FBVR). Although legislation guaranteed hospital care for veterans with disabilities, services were often unavailable. As Stevens (2012) concluded, a shortage of hospital space and interagency competition between the BWRI, PHS, and Army left many veterans underserved. In response, veterans' interest groups formed and lobbied Congress to elevate the issue at the political level.

Veterans' service organizations such as the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), and the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) were highly effective at politicizing the veterans' cause in the postwar years (Stevens, 2012). Of these, the American Legion was most influential in activism for federal hospitals. Founded in 1919 by U.S. servicemen during the demobilization in Paris, the American Legion distinguished itself from competing organizations in size and influence (Pencak, 1989). In contrast to the VFW, the American Legion did not restrict its membership to overseas personnel. The American Legion's large membership base, along with influential political alliances, contributed to its role in overseeing hospital inspections at existing Army and PHS hospitals (Stevens, 2012). Additionally, the American Legion and the DAV campaigned to transform the definition of disability to include tuberculosis and mental health care (Kinder, 2015). Their activism sought to improve the care of shell-shocked veterans and shift public perceptions of mental illness (Cox, 2001). In this regard, the American Legion's activism helped to construct a positive public image of shell-shocked World War veterans and improve treatment conditions through the establishment of neuropsychiatric hospitals. This collective activism – combined with President Warren G. Harding's desire for business

efficiency – resulted in the consolidation of existing veterans' services into a single bureau with the creation of U.S. Veterans' Bureau on August 8, 1921 (Stevens, 2012).

2. Struggles for Returning Black Servicemen

The proliferation of primarily White-led veterans' service organizations and a rapidly modernizing veterans' welfare state did little to change historically engrained patterns of discrimination (Kinder, 2015). Immediately after discharge, Black ex-servicemen had difficulty accessing federal veterans' employment, rehabilitation, and hospital services (Keene, 2012). A significant barrier to medical care involved obtaining disability determinations. Keene (2012) described how southern White doctors often demanded bribes from Black veterans in exchange for signing the paperwork required for veterans' disability benefits. Even those veterans who could afford the fees had difficulty obtaining hospitalization. Black veterans frequently traveled long distances to seek care only to be told that there were no beds available. When space was available, Black veterans were segregated and often placed in unfinished basements and areas of hospitals that were unfit for medical care.

Individual veterans wrote directly to Black leaders who were quick to link Black veterans' struggles for equal access to benefits with the broader campaign for civil rights (Keene, 2012). In fact, the issue of Black veterans' health care momentarily united the NAACP and the National Urban League (NUL; Daniel, 1970). These Black civil rights organizations had historically opposing strategies for the advancement of the Black cause in general and the Black health care movement in particular (Smith, 1995). At its height in the 1920s, proponents of the Black hospital movement had established nearly 200 Black hospitals and nurse training schools throughout the U.S. (Hine, 1989). The NAACP, founded in 1909 by W. E. B. Du Bois, represented a more confrontational approach in its push for integration. As Hine (1989)

explained, NAACP leaders felt that progress was best achieved through the integration of Black physicians, nurses, and patients within the existing hospital system. By way of contrast, the more conservative NUL, established in 1910 by Ruth Standish Baldwin and George Edmund Haynes, operated through accommodation. The NUL supported the Black hospital movement's work toward separate training and health care facilities as a steppingstone for equality.

The precedent of the Black hospital movement and widespread dissatisfaction with the Veterans' Bureau's handling of Black veterans' health care led to a proposal to donate land at the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama for an all-Black hospital in 1921 (Daniel, 1970). Tuskegee Institute was a historically Black college established in 1881 and headed by Booker T. Washington until his death in 1915 (Smith, 1995). Washington's successor, Robert Russa Moton, arranged to donate land on the school's campus for an all-Black veterans' hospital (Keene, 2012). Despite initial promises from the Veterans' Bureau, the hospital opened in 1923 under White leadership. Whereas Washington had been criticized by his more conflict-oriented contemporaries at the NAACP, Moton proved less polarizing (Daniel, 1970). Under Moton's leadership, the NAACP, the National Medical Association, and the southern Black press united to pressure the Veterans' Bureau and President Warren G. Harding's administration to keep their initial commitment to staff the hospital with Black physicians (Keene, 2012). However, the proposition was unpopular with the southern White community and an organized resistance to Black leadership culminated in threats of violence and a highly-publicized Ku Klux Klan demonstration on campus grounds (Daniel, 1970). A compromise came when the Veterans' Bureau's second director, Frank T. Hines, implemented a gradual plan to shift the hospital to all-Black leadership (Keene, 2012). However, three interim White supervisors were left in charge during the transition. This move caused the NAACP to withdraw its support and return to its

previous views that Black hospitals represented federally funded segregation. Nonetheless, the Tuskegee Veterans Hospital was under Black leadership by 1924 with the appointment of Joseph H. Ward as its first Black director.

3. Struggles for Ex-servicewomen and Subsequent Activism

After the armistice, White ex-servicewomen returned from Europe to find their service unrecognized and unrewarded (Sillia, 1978). Their claims to equal rights to veterans' benefits were complicated by differential definitions of their military service and the nation's attempts to return to prewar gender relations (Zeiger, 1999). In the immediate postwar years, officials sought to contain women's wartime achievements. At the same time, the modern veterans' welfare state and independent veterans' service organizations continued to expand around the construct of the White male soldier (Kinder, 2015). As a result, ex-servicewomen struggled to access veterans' benefits from a system that was not designed to serve them.

During the demobilization, government officials implemented new strategies of gender containment that affected White women's advancement and future participation in the military (Zeiger, 1999). The nurse rank campaign, which had been revived after the war, came to an anticlimactic end with the Army Reorganization Act of 1920. The legislation granted nurses relative rank without any true authority or equal pay. Additionally, the Naval Reserve Act of 1925 revised the ambiguous wording of earlier legislation that had permitted nearly 12,000 White women to enlist in the Navy and Marines (Zeiger, 1999). After the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, military leaders feared that the newly enfranchised voting bloc would push for the elimination of the military in the hopes of promoting peace (Meyer, 1996). To counter this threat, Secretary Baker of the War Department created the Director of Women's Relations position to function as an intermediary between the military and primarily White

women's organizations (Treadwell, 1954). The position was created in 1920 to disseminate state propaganda that simultaneously emphasized the necessity of the military and sought to reaffirm women's domesticity (Moore, 1996). Following the first director's brief stay, Anita Phipps was appointed as the second director in 1921. For nearly a decade, Phipps struggled to clarify her role and gain military authority, but her requests were dismissed. Toward the end of her tenure, Phipps also created a plan for a Women's Army Corps, but military leaders did not seriously consider the matter until World War II (Meyer, 1996).

In addition to containing women's future encroachment in the military institution, the state was reluctant to acknowledge and reward ex-servicewomen's contributions during the first World War. This presented challenges to many poverty and disease-stricken ex-servicewomen. Nurses of the armed forces had been disproportionately affected by illness due to daily exposure to "contagious diseases such as meningitis, measles, typhus, scarlet fever, dysentery, and the Spanish Influenza" (Zeiger, 1999, p. 127). In fact, disease was the primary cause of death for most of the nearly 300 servicewomen who died in service during the first World War. In the Navy alone, approximately 60 servicewomen were among the estimated 5,000 service members who died in the wake of the Spanish Influenza epidemic of 1918 (Ebbert & Hall, 2002). For those who survived, influenza weakened the immune system and led to higher risks of pneumonia and tuberculosis. Women with military status, such as those in the Navy and Marines, initially stayed on active duty under military care until they could be medically cleared. However, servicewomen's health care presented logistical challenges due to limited space. As a result, most servicewomen received care from private hospitals under federal contract or sought their own civilian physicians. Once medically cleared, they were discharged and turned over to

the BWRI. Yet, ex-servicewomen struggled to find care at Veterans' Bureau hospitals due to a lack of space and limited funding for mixed facilities.

In response to these institutional barriers, ex-servicewomen with recognized military status turned to the newly established American Legion to lobby for veteran-specific legislation (Ebbert & Hall, 2002). At the national level, the American Legion supported the inclusion of White ex-servicewomen from the Navy and Marine Corps – as well as Black ex-servicemen – but its policy of deference to states' rights frequently resulted in resistance to both groups at state and local levels (Pencak, 1989). For Black veterans, southern states denied membership and blocked charter requests for all-Black posts (Keene, 2012). Support for ex-servicewomen also varied locally, but a limited number of all-female and mixed posts were established. The first women's American Legion post was formed by Navy Yeoman (F) Daisy Pratt Erd in Boston (Gavin, 1997). It was chartered with 200 members and focused on the issue of state-level bonuses.

A key area of American Legion support centered on ex-servicewomen's inclusion in the World War Adjusted Compensation Act of 1924. The law authorized soldiers' bonuses for each day of service with four percent accumulated interest for service between 1917-1918 (Ebbert & Hall, 2002). As policymakers pushed to exclude ex-servicewomen from eligibility, the American Legion mobilized and successfully lobbied for their inclusion in the legislation. However, adjusted compensation proved controversial because it was not redeemable until 1945 or upon death. The American Legion's support of deferred payment was later challenged by the VFW, which argued for immediate cash payment (Ortiz, 2012b). While the VFW's restricted membership alienated most ex-servicewomen, its political activism around the issue of immediate cash payment was well-coordinated and resonated with rank-and-file male veterans. It

laid the groundwork for the 1932 Bonus March on Washington, D.C., where more than 20,000 veterans gathered to demand immediate payment of adjusted compensation.

Because of the American Legion's restrictive eligibility requirements and the state's efforts to return to the status quo, ex-servicewomen formed their own organizations in the postwar years. Early organizations were differentiated by military occupational specialty and varied in extent of political activism. Some ex-servicewomen, such as those of the Navy, maintained membership in the American Legion while establishing parallel organizations concerned with commemoration. Former naval servicewomen established the National Yeomen F in 1926 to preserve their legacy of service following the Navy's legislative opposition to women's enlistment (Ebbert & Hall, 2002). The National Yeomen F promoted sorority consciousness through annual conventions, memorial campaigns, and distribution of an official journal, *Note Book.*

By way of contrast, contractual workers of the Army, ARC, and auxiliary welfare organizations did not qualify for veterans' benefits and were ineligible for American Legion membership (Rumer, 1990; Sillia, 1978; Zeiger, 1999). This group included contractual servicewomen who served overseas as telephone operators and reconstruction aides. They were sworn-in, uniformed, and believed themselves to be full members of the military (Gavin, 1997). After the war, these ex-servicewomen were appalled to learn that they had been classified as civilians and were therefore ineligible for veterans' benefits (Treadwell, 1954). They contested this classification and organized to claim equal recognition for their military service. In 1921, reconstruction aides established the World War Reconstruction Aides' Association (WWRAA; Gavin, 1997). The WWRAA lobbied for retroactive rights of service and developed a quarterly

newsletter, the *Re-Aides' Post.* However, individual veterans' service organizations such as this were small and lacked political influence.

In 1921, the Women's Overseas Service League (WOSL) was established to unify the nation's smaller groups of World War I ex-servicewomen into one service-driven organization. Membership was extended to all women who served overseas as officially enlisted servicemembers, contractual civilian employees, and auxiliary welfare workers (Sillia, 1978). The organization pursued a vigorous program of continued service. It initially prioritized service to White male veterans, but soon redirected its focus to caring for ex-servicewomen. Throughout the interwar years, the WOSL was legislatively prolific. It lobbied for hospitals to accommodate ex-servicewomen, legislation to grant military status and benefits to contractual women of the Army, and hospitalization for auxiliary welfare workers. The organization also had longstanding involvement with the movement to establish a permanent Women's Army Corps. After the War Department dismissed the plan developed by Anita Phipps, Massachusetts Congresswoman Edith Nourse Rogers assumed the cause. Rogers – a WOSL member who had previously served in the ARC – was mindful of the fact "that the women who had served and suffered in World War I had not received veterans' benefits because they had not had regular military status" (Segal, 1989, p. 116). Still, these efforts were not seriously considered until World War II.

Most of the WOSL's ambitious objectives were blocked in the context of a general retrenchment of liberties and the numerous crises of the interwar years (Zeiger, 1999). However, the organization achieved a key success in earning ex-servicewomen's access to care in the NHDVS. In 1923, two branches were opened to eligible ex-servicewomen with disabilities: the Danville Home in Illinois for general and domiciliary care, and the Milwaukee Home for tuberculosis care in Wisconsin (Sillia, 1978). This achievement stands as the WOSL's most

significant accomplishment of the period. Yet, there has been limited analysis of the factors that influenced the organization's progress in this or similar efforts during the interwar years.

Zeiger's (1999) study of servicewomen's resistance to state-sponsored gender containment during the war contained an epilogue-style chapter that included a succinct, two-page summary of the WOSL's activism. In addition to outlining several of its key challenges and accomplishments, the author suggested that the League's quest for veterans' benefits in the interwar years was "a struggle over definitions of citizenship and the impact of wartime service on women's postwar civic status" (p. 170). Moreover, the organization was classified as a special interest group that embraced a militarized version of citizenship focused on earned rights. However, a deeper analysis of factors related to these observations was not the focus of the work.

D. **Limitations**

Despite evidence of challenges and accomplishments, the study of ex-servicewomen's interwar activism is in its infancy. Contemporary historians have instead focused on White servicewomen's experiences in the military during the first World War. Consequently, scholars have made only fleeting references to their organized activism as veterans in the interwar years (Ebbert & Hall, 2002; Gavin, 1997). To date, the WOSL has received little scholarly attention. Consideration has been limited to passing references in studies featuring women's wartime contributions (Jensen, 2008; Zeiger, 1999). Aside from a descriptive organizational history and a dissertation on the organization's commemorative practices, the League's contributions to ex-servicewomen and the veterans' welfare state have seldom been featured (Sillia, 1978; Finkelstein, 2015). To this author's knowledge, no analytical studies have focused exclusively on its strategies for equal rights in the context of state-sponsored gender containment following the

first World War (Zeiger, 1999). Therefore, the proposed study will contribute to the literature by bringing the League's interwar activism to the forefront of analysis.

E. **Conclusion**

This chapter presented a narrative synthesis of the limited literature on the interwar activism of ex-servicewomen of the World War I era. It began with a broad overview citizenship biases and military service. In this context, military service was constructed as an extension of White male citizenship that was accompanied by specialized veterans' rights. Though formally excluded from participation, historically marginalized populations have offered their voluntary military service throughout history. However, the state has often shirked its obligation to reward such service. After the first World War, veterans' service organizations mobilized and pushed for a consolidated veterans' welfare state. While these efforts were largely successful, the resulting programs were developed to serve the needs of White male soldiers. As a result, ex-servicewomen were often overlooked by state actors and male-led veterans' organizations. In response, ex-servicewomen established their own organizations to pursue the equal rights and recognition afforded by their military service. The primarily White Anglo-Saxon Protestant overseas members of these disparate groups of military, contractual, and welfare workers were united under the WOSL. Although the organization secured a landmark victory in earning the right to care in the NHDVS, scholars have tended to focus on servicewomen's experiences during the war rather than on their organized activism in the interwar years. To address this gap, the proposed study will explore the influence of the broader constructs of gender and citizenship on the WOSL's activism for the years, 1918-1929.

III. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter outlines the conceptual framework used for the present dissertation study. After a brief discussion of paradigmatic considerations in qualitative research, this study's framework is situated within a critical research paradigm. This paradigm incorporates postmodern ontology, subjectivist epistemology, and methodological concepts drawn from the discourse-historical approach to critical discourse analysis. Policy feedback theory is then presented as a(n) useful analytical tool for explaining the influence of the key study concepts of gender and citizenship, which are subsequently defined. This chapter closes by acknowledging the importance of ongoing reflexivity to mitigate inherent biases in qualitative research.

A. Research Paradigm

There is a longstanding debate over the place of paradigm, theory, and concept in qualitative research. Qualitative purists have argued that studies should be wholly inductive, with concepts and theories emerging from data rather than preexisting frameworks (Glaser, 1992). These views have been contested by a growing number of scholars who recognize that "qualitative studies do not take place in a conceptual vacuum" (Padgett, 2008, p. 11). Although this shift has been associated with calls for increased attention to theory in qualitative research designs, the incorporation of conceptual frameworks remains erratic (Anastas, 2004; Jabareen, 2009). This neglect has been attributed to inconsistent language in textbooks and scholarly literature (Green, 2014). As a result, there has been no agreement on a systematic approach to the development of conceptual frameworks for qualitative research (Leshem & Trafford, 2007).

The lack of consensus on conceptual frameworks is emblematic of broader disputes over the supremacy of competing research paradigms, which include "the researcher's epistemological, ontological, and methodological premises" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 24). At

the core of debates is the extent to which researchers subscribe to the existence of a mind-independent reality (Arnd-Caddigan & Pozzuto, 2006). At one end of the spectrum, quantitative researchers have traditionally espoused positivist and post-positivist views of an objective reality. They strive for objectivity in an observable universe governed by measurable phenomena with generalizable findings (Creswell, 2014). At the other extreme, qualitative researchers presume a mind-dependent reality grounded in relativism (Heppner & Heppner, 2004). They recognize research as "a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 3).

While both research traditions – and combinations of the two – are useful in the proper contexts, quantitative and qualitative purists alike have tended to view their preferred approaches as clearly delineated and mutually exclusive (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). However, there is great diversity among individual research paradigms and persistent disagreement on the rigidity of boundaries between them. This is particularly true of qualitative research. In recent decades, there has been increasing recognition that boundaries between paradigms are permeable. The fluidity between approaches has been succinctly summarized by Hartman's (1990) suggestion that "there are many truths and there are many ways of knowing" (p. 3). Although the issue of paradigmatic compatibility remains unsettled, a growing number of qualitative scholars have acknowledged the necessity of pragmatism and openness to multidisciplinary approaches in research (Guba & Lincoln, 2005; Padgett, 2008; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

In adopting a pragmatic approach, the present historical case study is informed by a critical research paradigm that draws from postmodern ontology, subjectivist epistemology, and the discourse-historical approach to critical discourse analysis methodology (Reisigl & Wodak, 2016; see Table 3). A critical research paradigm embraces historical realism, which recognizes

Table 3

Elements of a Conceptual Framework

Focus	Element	Sub-Element	Purpose	Study Specification
Broad	Paradigm		To clarify researcher worldview	Critical
		Ontology	To clarify researcher perspective on nature of reality	Postmodern: Historical realism
		Epistemology	To clarify researcher perspective on nature of knowledge	Subjectivism
		Methodology	To clarify researcher perspective on context for research	Dialectical: Discourse-historical approach to critical discourse analysis
Intermediate	Theory		To clarify relationships between concepts	Policy feedback theory
Specific	Concept(s)		To clarify specific constructs of interest	Gender & citizenship

Note. Framework moves from abstract researcher influences to specific concepts.

the role of values in shaping reality (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). The critical perspective is influenced by the conflict-oriented philosophers of the Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt, Germany (Salas, Sen, & Segal, 2010). In the early Twentieth Century, German philosophers used critical investigation to expose historical oppression and promote social transformation. This approach acknowledges the subjective nature of knowledge, which is investigated through dialectical methodologies. One such methodology is critical discourse analysis, which "focuses on the role of discursive activity in constituting and sustaining unequal power relations" (Phillips & Hardy, 2002, p. 25). Researchers strive to expose "the way discourse (re) produces social domination, that is mainly understood as power abuse of one group over others, and how dominated groups may discursively resist such abuse" (Wodak & Meyer, 2016, p. 9).

Critical discourse analysis builds on the work of poststructuralists such as Michel Foucault, who favored a contextual understanding of discourse that recognized the influence of language and action in constructing historical topics (Hall, 2001). In the 1960s, poststructuralism emerged as a reaction to the work of the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, who advocated an objective view of semiotic systems. He argued that "language is simply a mental system with no necessary relationship to the 'world' of 'reality,' an arbitrary system of signs whose meaning is created through their relationship to one another, and to one another alone" (Howell & Prevenier, 2001, p. 103). This view was rejected by poststructuralists, who saw language as a dynamic and constitutive aspect of social reality (Livholts & Tamboukou, 2015).

The discourse-historical approach is a version of critical discourse analysis whose "historical orientation permits the reconstruction of how recontextualization functions as an important process of linking texts and discourses intertextually and interdiscursively over time" (Reisigl & Wodak, 2016, p. 32). Discourse is generally understood "as an interrelated set of

texts, and practices of their production, dissemination, and reception, that brings an object into being" (Phillips & Hardy, 2002, p. 3). The discourse-historical approach further specifies that discourse depends upon context, connection to a macro-topic, the involvement of multiple perspectives, and argumentation (Reisigl & Wodak, 2016). Texts are viewed as constituents of discourse that represent "sites of struggle in that they show traces of differing discourses and ideologies contending and struggling for domination" (Wodak & Meyer, 2016, p. 12). Thus, the methodology is less concerned with micro-linguistic features than broader context (Phillips & Hardy, 2002). Context refers to the ways in which different texts and discourses reference one another across time through intertextuality and interdiscursivity. Disparate texts and discourses draw from one another through recontextualization, which is "the process of transferring given elements to new contexts" (Reisigl & Wodak, 2016, p. 28). Textual and discursive elements assume new meanings as they are shifted to different settings (Fairclough, 2015).

B. **Theory**

In addition to the broad ontological, epistemological, and methodological influences of this research paradigm, the present dissertation is also informed by policy feedback theory. As an outgrowth of Historical Institutionalism, policy feedback theory gained prominence in the late 1980s and early 1990s as scholars undertook detailed case studies to show "how policies affect politics over time" (Béland, 2010, p. 569). Policy feedback theory offers a useful lens to explore the ways existing policies affect political action, and how such action influences subsequent policy formation (Mettler & SoRelle, 2014). As such, it reverses traditional policy approaches by considering the initial policy as an independent variable that influences political outcomes.

Policy feedback theory has featured in numerous studies on welfare state formation, but it is perhaps best illustrated by the work of social welfare historian Theda Skocpol. Skocpol's

(1995) influential study on the history of U.S. social policy incorporated policy feedback as part of a larger polity-centered framework of analysis, which recognized the centrality of the nation-state in historical analysis. Her comprehensive framework considered the process of state formation, the politicization of social identities in political institutions, the fitness of group capacities within such institutions, and the capacity of policies to generate feedback and influence subsequent political action. It helped explain how widespread abuses of the Civil War pension system impeded later efforts of male-led labor reform organizations, while facilitating primarily White women's activism to secure protective legislation for women and children.

In the first part of her landmark work, Skocpol (1995) considered the ways in which veterans and organized groups such as the Grand Army of the Republic agitated for veterans' pension liberalization throughout the Civil War era. Politicians soon realized the political power of the issue and pledged to support pension expansion in exchange for votes. The resulting system of political patronage instilled skepticism over the state's ability to oversee a largescale system of social welfare benefits. This negative feedback, combined with a lack of collaboration, constrained subsequent male-led labor reform efforts of organizations like the American Association for Labor Legislation and the American Federation of Labor during the Progressive Era. At the same time, federated associations of primarily White Anglo-Saxon Protestant women like the General Federation of Women's Clubs achieved significant reforms. They did so by uniting under a common cause and recontextualizing dominant beliefs about their inherently maternal natures. This strategy yielded numerous legislative victories on behalf of women and children, including state-level labor legislation, mothers' pensions, the Children's Bureau, and the Sheppard-Towner Act.

Skocpol's (1995) work has influenced numerous studies on welfare state formation. However, early policy feedback studies were criticized for their limited focus on political elites and failing to explain the mechanisms by which feedback occurred (Campbell, 2012; Mettler & SoRelle, 2014). For this reason, Pierson (1993) identified two explanatory mechanisms: resource and interpretive effects. Resource effects included tangible goods like money and services, while interpretive effects encompassed "the impact of policies on the cognitive processes of social actors" (Pierson, 1993, p. 610). Since that time, policy feedback scholars have considered a wide array of specific mechanizations such as interpretive effects on the meaning of citizenship (Mettler & SoRelle, 2014). For example, research has suggested the G.I. Bill's effects on social mobility and increased civic participation among World War II veterans (Mettler, 2002; Mettler & Welch, 2004). Additional studies have broadly considered various aspects of welfare state formation around specific identity characteristics such as gender (Leroux, 2005), sexual orientation (Canaday, 2009), ability (Krainz, 2015), and military status (Mittlestadt, 2015). Although this body of literature continues to grow, there has been little consideration thus far for the potential influence of policy feedback on ex-servicewomen's interwar activism for rights in the emergent veterans' welfare state.

C. **Conceptual Constructs**

To address this gap, the present study incorporates conceptualizations of gender and citizenship. In recent decades, gender has emerged as a discursive topic of historical interest (Newman, 1991). Feminist scholars have begun to deconstruct traditional representations of gender to reveal women as active agents (Scott, 1987). This revision aims to dismantle ahistorical narratives that contribute to the gendered structure of society, in which "advantage and disadvantage, exploitation and control, action and emotion, meaning and identity, are

patterned through and in terms of a distinction between male and female, masculine and feminine" (Acker, 1990, p. 146). To this end, Joan Scott (1986) offered a multilayered definition in which "gender is a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes, and gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power" (p. 1067).

Contemporary scholarship recognizes the potential for a wide array of possible gender identities. However, dominant society has historically treated gender dichotomously. In the early Twentieth Century, for instance, a binary construction of gender was apparent in mainstream society's recontextualization of the separate sphere metaphor (Skocpol, 1995). In this White Anglo-Saxon Protestant construction that disregarded diverse identity characteristics, men and women were prescribed inequitable positions based on perceived differences between their physical bodies and inherent capabilities. As such, White men were assigned wage-earning responsibilities in the public domain, while White women were confined to the private sphere of home life (Kerber, 1988). The separate sphere also entailed behavioral prescriptions. Women were expected to conduct themselves as pious, pure, submissive, and domestic, "True Women" (Welter, 1966, p. 155). Although these racially biased norms were inherited from a bygone Victorian era, dominant society projected them unto society-at-large. Their persistence across time has obscured awareness of the intersection of diverse identity factors (Crenshaw, 1991). They have been structured into the fabric of society and presented persistent barriers to marginalized populations' opportunities for full citizenship.

The concept of citizenship suggests a formal relationship between an individual or groups of individuals and the state. In a broad sense, "All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside" (U.S. Const. amend. XIV, §1). However, dominant assumptions about full

citizenship in the early Twentieth Century reflected the values of economically advantaged, White Anglo-Saxon Protestant, men. As a result, access to full citizenship has been stratified along diverse identity characteristics including – but not limited to – gender, race, and class.

The historically inequitable distribution of citizenship has necessitated its nuanced consideration (Jensen, 2008). To this end, the British sociologist T.H. Marshall (1950/1996) provided a threefold definition that includes civil, political, and social citizenship. Civil citizenship encompasses individual liberties protected by the courts. Political citizenship refers to rights of suffrage and representation in the processes of government. Social citizenship relates to social justice and a concern for an equitable standard of living and a share of society's resources. These aspects have traditionally been underscored by a civic republican understanding of citizenship rights and responsibilities. At times, the idealized citizen has been exemplified by the masculine construct of the citizen-soldier, which has required a dual obligation of civic participation and military service in local and state militias (Snyder, 2003). In exchange for military service in times of crisis, the state has rewarded veterans with specialized benefits (Segal, 1989). As the U.S. attained nationhood, these benefits gradually proliferated into a veterans' welfare state. For this reason, Kelly (1997) articulated a specialized variant of social citizenship known as "martial citizenship" (p. 2). The author argued that martial citizenship emerged during the Civil War era, when the state assumed a caregiving function by establishing the NHDVS. In contrast to the universal entitlements associated with social citizenship, the benefits of martial citizenship could only be earned through military service.

D. **Reflexivity**

This conceptual framework carries the extrinsic influences of its critical research paradigm, policy feedback theory, and traditional conceptualizations of gender and citizenship.

Moreover, it is also affected by this researcher's lived experiences and preexisting worldview. Although critical research recognizes the importance of the researcher's worldview as part of the analytical process, the interpretive nature of qualitative research requires awareness of personal biases. For this reason, qualitative researchers have increasingly stressed the importance of reflexivity. According to Finlay (2002), "Reflexive analysis in research encompasses continual evaluation of subjective responses, intersubjective dynamics, and the research process itself" (p. 532). To this end, it is important to acknowledge that this study's topic, conceptual framework, and methods were all informed by subjective biases stemming from this author's lived experiences as a White, cisgender, heterosexual, able-bodied, male veteran – one who is more than a century removed from this study's historical actors and events. Throughout this process, it has been necessary to work overtime to maintain awareness of how this positionality has influenced my perspective on the historical material and the resulting narrative, which features primarily economically privileged, White ex-servicewomen.

The decision to focus on veterans' service organizations was likely affected by experiences in youth – when special events were frequently celebrated with grandparents in American Legion halls. Interest in this topic was perhaps further influenced by later experiences as a one-time member of the organization. Moreover, the specific interest in ex-servicewomen's organizations may have originated with personal experiences gained during military service. After spending several years in an all-male combat arms unit, this author reclassified to a gender-integrated supply unit where servicewomen outnumbered men. The stark contrast between the two contexts undoubtedly influenced perspectives on gender biases in the military. It has been necessary to remain sensitive to these inherent biases throughout the dissertation process.

IV. RESEARCH METHODS

This chapter outlines this study's research methods. After introducing its overarching historical case study design, subsequent sections describe this dissertation's primary data sources, collection methods, and selection procedures. Primary data sources included the WOSL's journal, *Carry On*, government records, and popular media for the years, 1918-1941. Data were collected from online and physical archives. Physical items were scanned, converted to PDF, and transcribed when necessary. Items retrieved from online sources were downloaded. Potential data items related to the constructs of gender and citizenship were identified through an iterative process. This process began with a pilot analysis of all issues of *Carry On,* 1922-1941 (N = 81). A manifest content analysis was conducted to refine the sample and generate specific categories of interest for further sampling. This multistage process generated four categories and narrowed the overall study period to 1918-1929. These items directed subsequent rounds of purposive sampling from popular media, organizational documents, and government records, which continued until the point of saturation. All data were read, annotated, categorized, and analyzed thematically using Atlas.ti. Trustworthiness was promoted by incorporating an audit trail, triangulation, and reflexivity throughout the research process. All phases of research were conducted in compliance with the University of Illinois at Chicago's Institutional Review Board.

A. **Research Design**

This dissertation implements a nonexperimental historical case study design, which is commonly employed in historical research (Danto, 2008). Traditional qualitative case studies "draw on the ability of the qualitative researcher to extract depth and meaning in context. … [and] on multiple perspectives and data sources to produce contextually rich and meaningful interpretation" (Padgett, 2008, p. 33). Case studies are typically incorporated when an in-depth

understanding of specific phenomena is desired. They have been recognized for their ability to produce "a detailed historical account" (Blatter, 2008, p. 68). For this reason, the historical case study evolved as a specific design for gaining "a deep knowledge of a subject matter and making theoretical sense of issues surrounding timing, sequence, and configuration" (Amenta, 2009, p. 364). This design has featured in classic policy feedback studies (Mettler & SoRelle, 2014). As such, it fits well with this study's conceptual framework.

B. **Data Sources**

Primary data sources for this study came from digitized and physical archival collections of historical records covering the interwar period, 1918-1941. Priority was given to naturally-occurring texts, which refers to those written "in the normal day-to-day activities of the research subjects" (Phillips & Hardy, 2002, pp. 70-71). This study's initial data source was the WOSL's journal, *Carry On*, 1922-1941. A pilot analysis of its contents directed selection from subsequent data sources such as popular media and government records. These additional data sources came primarily from *Newspapers.com* (Ancestry, 2021), *ProQuest Congressional Publications* (ProQuest, 2021), *HathiTrust Digital Library* (HathiTrust, 2021), the Library of Congress' (2021) *Statutes at Large*, and the *American Legion Digital Archive* (American Legion, 2021). However, other physical and online data sources were consulted as necessary.

C. **Data Collection**

This study began by collecting all available issues of the WOSL's periodical, *Carry On*, 1922-1941, which were secured from May-August 2017 (N =81). A total of 20 volumes were collected, consisting of 78 regular issues and three special issues. Most issues were received in hardbound format through interlibrary loan from the Wisconsin Historical Society's collection at the University of Wisconsin-Madison Library. These issues were either scanned or

photographed, depending on the tightness of the binding, and converted to portable document format (PDF). Images were then converted to editable and searchable text using Adobe Acrobat Pro's optical character recognition (OCR) capacity. Several electronic issues were also obtained through interlibrary loan from the University of Minnesota and the Library of Congress. All missing issues for the years of interest were collected onsite at the Illinois State Library in Springfield, where issues were digitized as described above. Supplementary data items were collected primarily from online archives containing historical popular media, organizational documents, and government records. These digital data items were typically available in PDF format, which were downloaded, saved, and organized using an external storage device.

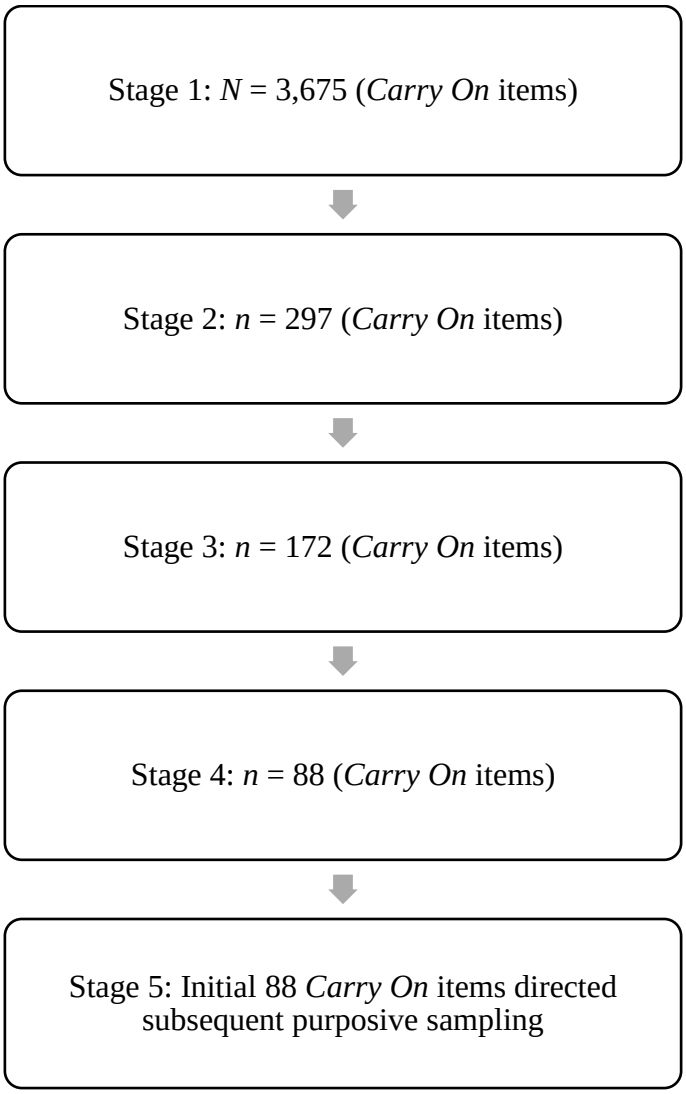
D. **Data Selection**

Potential data items relating to the constructs of gender and citizenship were identified through an iterative process. Data collection, selection, and analysis occurred through a process of recursive oscillation rather than linear progression. However, sampling was driven by a systematic pilot analysis of all issues of *Carry On*, which was conducted to identify initial categories of interest and to inform subsequent rounds of targeted sampling. As Wodak and Meyer (2016) suggested, "After the first data collection one should perform first pilot analyses, find indicators for particular concepts, expand concepts into categories and, on the basis of these first results, collect further data" (p. 21). This method is similar to theoretical sampling in Grounded Theory, in that "the analyst jointly collects, codes, and analyzes his data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 45).

A manifest content analysis was conducted on all issues of *Carry On* for the initial years of interest, 1922-1941 (N = 81; see Figure 1). This process began by skimming the contents of each issue to assess potential relevance. During the initial review, author names, article titles,

Figure 1

Data Selection Iterations



Note. A manifest content analysis of baseline data items informed subsequent rounds of unquantified sampling from historical records. These subsequent data items directed further rounds of purposive sampling. This process continued until the point of saturation.

page numbers, topical categories, and notes for each item were documented in an interactive table of contents using Microsoft Excel (*N* = 3,675; see Table 4). Preliminary determinations on inclusion were also recorded. Upon completion, this table was converted to a statistical dataset using Stata 16.1 (StataCorp, 2019). Data items marked for preliminary inclusion were encoded and categorized using the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This process yielded seven potential topical categories of interest (*n* = 297; see Table 5). After continued refinement, the total number of categories was reduced to four (*n* = 172; see Table 6).

To further narrow the pilot sample, the proportions of potential data items were analyzed by publication year-range. Data items were encoded as a categorical variable based on their publication date (1922-1931 or 1932-1941). A contingency table was subsequently run for year-range by initial determination (0 = excluded, 1 = included). Sixty-three percent (*n* = 108) of potential data items were concentrated in the 1922-1931 category, compared to 37% (*n* = 64) in the 1932-1941 range. Thus, articles were restricted to the 1922-1931 range. Further comparison between potential data items revealed that most substantive articles related to categories of interest fell within 1922-1929. This was a logical endpoint given the stock market crash and subsequent onset of the Great Depression. Therefore, the final pilot sample was limited to those data items that fell within this date range (*n* = 88; see Table 7).

The 88 baseline articles and four categories generated during the pilot analysis served as the basis for subsequent rounds of ongoing purposive sampling for the remainder of the study. Additional data items were collected, selected, and analyzed in an abductive process of constant comparison between the extant literature and data items. New data were obtained from targeted keyword searches in online digital archives. In turn, these data informed further sampling and

Table 4

Taxonomy of the Contents of Carry On, 1922-1941 (N =3,675)

Content Type	n	*%*
Society, birth, marriage, & obituaries	524	*14*
Advertisements, reviews, & corrections	506	*14*
Rosters, announcements, & resolutions	446	*12*
Membership updates & profiles	289	*8*
Features, narratives, & stories	277	*8*
Unit activities, profiles, & meetings	269	*7*
Miscellaneous committee reports & materials	255	*7*
Essays, letters, & speeches	252	*7*
Humor, poems, aphorisms, & quotes	182	*5*
Tourism, travels, & travelogues	175	*5*
Cover materials & images	160	*4*
Fundraising, memorial, & commemorative activities	125	*3*
Convention materials	117	*3*
WOSL presidential messages	70	*2*
Legislative materials	21	*< 1*
Organizational histories	7	*< 1*

Table 5

Stage 2: Initial Contextual Categories of Interest from Carry On, 1922-1941 (N =297)

Category	n	*%*
Failing to obtain a charter	11	*4*
Embracing Americanism	74	*25*
Shifting focus to ex-servicewomen	23	*8*
Winning care in the National Home	64	*22*
Failing to secure expanded hospitalization	53	*18*
Supporting national defense	59	*20*
Failing to expand military roles	13	*4*

Note. Percentages are rounded.

Table 6

Stage 3: Refined Contextual Categories of Interest from Carry On, 1922-1941 (N =172)

Category	n	*%*
Failing to obtain a charter	11	*6*
Embracing Americanism	74	*43*
Shifting focus to ex-servicewomen	23	*13*
Winning care in the National Home	64	*37*

Note. Percentages are rounded.

Table 7

Stage 4: Final Contextual Categories of Interest from Carry On, 1922-1929 (N =88)

Category	n	*%*
Failing to obtain a charter	7	*8*
Embracing Americanism	45	*51*
Shifting focus to ex-servicewomen	8	*9*
Winning care in the National Home	28	*32*

selection after references to new potential data items were discovered. This snowball approach continued throughout the research process until each category was conceptually saturated.

E. **Data Analysis**

Physical data were prepared for analysis by creating digitized PDF files of selected items as previously described. Because the PDF text recognition feature in Adobe Acrobat Pro was often unsatisfactory due to poor image quality or archaic font usage, some documents were manually transcribed in Microsoft Word. Data from online sources were already prepared in PDF format. All data items were read for overall content before beginning annotation. Annotation alternated between hard copy documents and Microsoft Word. Relevant quotes were highlighted and openly annotated in the right margins by noting "explicit issues raised in the data that may become codes" (Hennink et al., 2011, p. 221). Following annotation, each item was summarized and organized by category in an annotated bibliography using Microsoft Word. Item entries with relevant data extracts were coded and categorized in Atlas.ti (2019), a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software.

A thematic analysis of selected data extracts began with open coding. Codes were assigned and grouped into larger categories based on similarities and differences using the constant comparative method, which involved "taking one piece of datum and examining it against another piece of datum both within and between documents" (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). Latent themes were generated following an analysis of similarly situated code groupings (Braun & Clarke, 2006). As Saldaña (2016) explained, "A theme can be an *outcome* of coding, categorization, or analytic reflection, but it is not something that is, in itself, coded" (p. 15). This method has been compared to latent or interpretive content analysis (Drisko & Maschi, 2016).

Analysis continued until saturation, the point at which data ceased to contribute to the expansion of each conceptual category's attributes (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

1. Trustworthiness

Data trustworthiness was enhanced through the use of an audit trail, triangulation, and reflexivity. The audit trail involved thoughtful annotation throughout the research process, which included "memos noting decisions made during data collection, coding, and analysis" (Padgett, 2008, p. 191). Additionally, triangulation was also implemented to assess the integrity of different data sources. As Padgett explained (2008), "When data from field notes, interviews, and/or archival materials are convergent, one has greater confidence that the observations are trustworthy" (p. 188). Finally, reflexivity occurred on an ongoing basis to mitigate this author's inherent biases as a White, cisgender, heterosexual, able-bodied, male veteran.

2. Protection of Human Subjects

This study did not involve research with human subjects. Historical textual data were collected online and onsite at archival repositories, which were open to research in the public domain. For this reason, the University of Illinois at Chicago's Institutional Review Board (IRB) determined that this study did not involve human subjects on May 9, 2016 (Protocol # 2016-0512). After minor study alterations, a second IRB determination reaffirmed this decision on April 12, 2017 (Protocol # 2017-0378). A final IRB decision reiterated this determination after a title revision on January 22, 2021 (Protocol # 2021-0076; see Appendix A).

V. FINDINGS

This chapter presents findings related to the research question, "In what ways, if any, did traditional discourses surrounding gender and citizenship influence the context for the Women's Overseas Service League's activism in the first decade of the interwar years, 1918-1929?" A thematic analysis of purposively selected historical data items revealed influences in four areas, which affected the organization's initial decision to seek equal rights through formal channels; its failure to obtain them; its decision to seek alternative activist strategies and objectives; and its success at earning and maintaining equal rights through alternative means.

The first section argues that the WOSL's initial decision to seek congressional recognition through formal channels was influenced by the precedent of the American Legion, a predominantly male veterans' service organization. In keeping with the Legion's example, the WOSL sought validation through federal, rather than state or district-level, incorporation. League members framed Congressional recognition as an equal citizenship right that had been earned through equal exposure to danger overseas during the World War. Moreover, they also argued that a federal charter was necessary to enable the organization's plans for continued service as a national reserve corps of trained crisis responders for the government to tap in national crises.

The second section suggests that latent feedback effects from the nation's recent experiences with primarily White women's antiwar activism influenced the Senate's rejection of the organization's federal charter request. Before, during, and after the war, supporters of national preparedness struggled with women pacifists, anarchists, and Bolshevists. Mainstream society increasingly categorized these groups as radical – a label that was broadly applied to reflect noncompliance with the centralized state's expectations of unquestioning loyalty. The term was often used to categorize nonviolent pacifists and their propaganda. The WOSL

inadvertently rendered itself vulnerable to conflation with such women when it sided with a left-leaning pacifist group, the Women's Committee for World Disarmament, and resolved support for disarmament without any accompanying record on national defense.

The third section suggests that the Senate's refusal to consider the WOSL's federal incorporation, combined with its resolution to reject any such requests for organizations without an ability to assist the government in its constitutional duties, influenced the League's decision to pursue recognition through alternative methods. This determination corresponded with a twofold shift in the organization's approach to activism. First, it implemented a program of strategic accommodation through increased collaboration with the American Legion and War Department. It soon joined the Legion's war on radical propaganda, while increasing involvement with the War Department's national preparedness initiatives. To this end, the League supplied the Army Hostess Service with volunteer hostesses for summer Citizens' Military Training Camps. These experiences helped clarify the League's formal positions on peace and national defense, which served to further distinguish its members from potential confounding with radical women. At the same time, the WOSL initiated a covert program of strategic resistance to advance its own causes. It shifted its service focus from ex-servicemen to ex-servicewomen, while seeking the equal right to care for ex-servicewomen in the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers.

The final section describes how the WOSL's experiences with seeking and failing to obtain a congressional charter through official channels influenced its successful attempt to earn care in the National Home through the backdoor. Once the right was won, the League struggled to overcome underutilization, administrative barriers, and gender-inappropriate accommodations at the Danville Branch. These concerns were sidelined when ex-servicewomen's right to care in the National Home was threatened by the U.S. Comptroller General. Because access had been

granted through informal channels, extant legislation had not been updated to reflect ex-servicewomen's entitlement. After succeeding in passing formal codification of ex-servicewomen's right to care in the National Home, the WOSL's authority within the home was marginalized into traditional gender roles. As a result, it gradually shifted its energies for expanded rights to other areas. These efforts were unsuccessful given the gender retrenchment and crises of the interwar years. For this reason, earning the equal right to care in the National Home stands as the League's crowning contribution to the formation of the veteran's welfare state in the interwar years. It demonstrated progress in the quest to validate ex-servicewomen's standing as full veterans.

A. Seeking Equal Rights Through Formal Channels

1. Background

On March 9, 1921, a group of 17 primarily White Anglo-Saxon Protestant ex-servicewomen who would come to be known as the Women's Overseas Service League (WOSL) met at the American Red Cross' Overseas Service League's clubroom in New York (Chew, 1928). Over the previous two years, local membership organizations of White women who served overseas during World War I had emerged independently across the nation ("War Women," 1920). This phenomenon was prompted by the fact that less than half of women who served overseas during the war were eligible for membership in larger male veterans' organizations like the American Legion, which only accepted women who served in formally approved roles in the Army, Navy, and Marines. There were no equivalent associations that included the thousands of women who served overseas with civilian welfare organizations such as the American Red Cross. To address this gap, local representatives from seven cities and the District of Columbia gathered in New York to formalize plans to unite their respective groups

into a national organization for the estimated 24,000 White ex-servicewomen who served overseas in military or civilian roles (Chew, 1928; Smith, 1931).

Inspiration for the prospective nationalization came from Ada Knowlton Chew (Women's Overseas Service League, 1931c). Chew was a native New Englander whose roots stretched back to Colonial times (Frost, 1926; Stocking, 1897; Vinton, 1876). After graduating from Smith College in 1897, she studied music in New York and Germany before achieving some success as a concert pianist with performances in Carnegie Hall ("Mrs. Ada K. Chew," 1948b). The recitals slowed following her marriage to Oswald Chew in 1908, when she relocated to her husband's native Radnor, Pennsylvania. Before World War I, she taught piano lessons and stayed involved with the Women's Committee of the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Women's Committee of the Social Service Department at the University of Pennsylvania Hospital, and the Equal Suffrage Society of Philadelphia ("Chew," 1914; "Knowlton, Ada Caroline," 1916). During the war, Chew joined her husband during his tenure in Holland with the Commission for Relief in Belgium ("Oswald Chew," 1949; "Record for Ada C Knoulton Chew," 1916). The couple spent the remainder of the war in France, where Chew volunteered in diverse roles including ambulance driver, nurse's aide, and hostess (Sillia, 1978).

After returning from Europe on May 20, 1919, Chew formed the Philadelphia Women's Overseas Legion, a local association of overseas women that grew to 75 members in its first year ("Record for Oswald Chew," 1919; "War Women," 1920). She soon learned about the existence of similar organizations and became determined to unify them under one national organization. To assess interest, she contacted leaders across the nation in the winter of 1920 (Chew, 1928). She also published announcements in local papers, but the rush to publicize the intended nationalization had unanticipated consequences. The women were ridiculed for their initial

efforts to unite as the "American Women's Overseas Legion" ("Our Women," 1920, p. 4). The name was an ironic choice for an aspiring veterans' service organization, since the abbreviated form resulted in the undesirable acronym, AWOL – a military term used to describe one who has gone absent without leave. The humor was not lost on the press. A writer for the *New York Evening Post* joked, "The initials are hardly an inspiring call to duty" ("Editorial," 1920, p. 10).

The fledgling organization's branding gaffe may have been minor, but it highlighted the need for strategic planning. It was for this reason that local representatives had assembled in New York. Delegates sought to determine how best to unite their individual groups into a coherent whole through formal processes ("Social," 1921). Leaders approved a draft constitution and selected Chew as chairwoman of an exploratory committee to oversee the process of formalization (Chew, 1928). The committee was tasked with determining the proper procedure for advancing the organization's desired goal of incorporation, which could come through an individual state, the District of Columbia, or federally through Congress. Of the available options, the WOSL recognized that a Congressional charter was most prestigious, having "many advantages over a State or District of Columbia charter" ("Congressional," 1922, p. 4). It was also the most difficult to obtain. Fortunately, the WOSL benefited from the recent example of the American Legion, which provided a tangible template from which to operate.

2. **Influence of the American Legion's Congressional Incorporation**

The WOSL's desire for national incorporation was influenced by the precedent of the American Legion, which received its Congressional charter in 1919 and quickly became the nation's foremost veterans' service organization through major advocacy victories including the creation of the U.S. Veterans' Bureau (Act of August 9, 1921). The organization was conceptualized by officers of the American Expeditionary Forces in France during the idle

winter months following the Armistice (“American Legion,” 1919). Influential founders such as Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., envisioned the creation of a massive fraternal organization for all honorably discharged U.S. servicemembers of the World War that would “correspond to the Grand Army of the Republic and the Confederate Veterans arising out of the Civil War” (“A History,” 1919, p. 12). Unlike its Civil War era predecessors, however, the Legion would go on to obtain a Congressional charter (Act to Incorporate the American Legion, 1919).

The American Legion first articulated plans for incorporation at its second caucus in St. Louis on May 8-10, 1919 (*Bill to Incorporate American Legion*, 1919). Two former politicians, Senator Luke Lea (D-TN) and Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Woodnutt Miller (R-DE), were selected to head a legislative committee tasked with preparing a charter. Once completed, they solicited the assistance of a fellow Legionnaire to sponsor the bill. The committee was fortunate to secure a worthy steward in the form of Representative Royal Cleaves Johnson (R-SD), a celebrated veteran who had taken leave from Congress to serve with the 313th Infantry during the war (“Johnson,” n.d.). Shortly after his return, the congressman introduced the organization’s charter legislation in the House, where it would embark on a nearly seamless three-month legislative journey (H.R. 6808, 1919a; 58 Cong. Rec. 1944, 1919; see Table 8).

Although Congress was generally receptive to the Legion’s charter request, several concerns arose throughout the ensuing phases of the legislative process. These potential stumbling blocks first surfaced during Lieutenant Colonel Miller’s appearance as the organization’s sole witness at the House Judiciary Committee hearing on July 25, 1919 (*Bill to Incorporate American Legion*, 1919). The Legionnaire faced repeated inquiries as to why the Legion’s proposed activities necessitated Congressional incorporation. He was initially unable to

Table 8

Chronology of Events Leading to American Legion Charter, H.R. 6808

Year	Month	Day	Legislation	Event	Outcome	Actors
1919	Jun	27	S. 2281	Introduced	Referred to Senate Judiciary Committee	Sen. Charles B. Henderson (D-NV); Sen. Josiah O. Wolcott (D-DE)
1919	Jun	27	H.R. 6808	Introduced	Referred to House Judiciary Committee	Rep. Royal Cleaves Johnson (R-SD)
1919	Jul	25	H.R. 6808	Hearing, House Judiciary Committee		Rep. Royal Cleaves Johnson (R-SD)
1919	Jul	31	H.R. 6808	Report, House Judiciary Committee	Report, Amendments Referred, House Calendar	U.S. House of Representatives
1919	Aug	20	H.R. 6808	Debate, Full House	Adjourned prior to vote on bill	U.S. House of Representatives
1919	Aug	27	H.R. 6808	Passed House	Referred to Senate	U.S. House of Representatives
1919	Aug	29	H.R. 6808	Introduced to Senate	Referred, Senate Judiciary Committee	U.S. Senate
1919	Sep	4	H.R. 6808	Reported favorably w/o Amendment, Senate	Read three times, passed	Sen. Knute Nelson (R-MN)
1919	Sep	6	H.R. 6808	Bill enrolled	Enrolled bill signed	U.S. House of Representatives
1919	Sep	9	H.R. 6808	Presented, President	Pending approval	President Woodrow Wilson
1919	Sep	16	Pub. L. No. 66-47, 41 Stat. 284	Signed, H.R. 6808	American Legion granted Federal Charter	President Woodrow Wilson

offer any compelling evidence of need. When pressed further, the Lieutenant Colonel referred the committee to the organization's purpose, which was outlined in section three of the bill:

> That the purposes of this corporation shall be to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America; to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom, and democracy for which the members of the military and naval services of the United States contended in the War of 1917-1918; to maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate a 100 per centum Americanism; to inculcate the duty and obligation of the citizen to the community, State, and Nation; to preserve and develop equality of right and opportunity in the United States; to promote the social and industrial welfare of the citizens of the United States; to make right the master of might both in domestic and international affairs; and to promote peace and good will among the people of the United States and the nations of the earth; to cement the ties of comradeship formed in service; to preserve the memories and incidents of the Great War, and to consecrate the comradeship of its members by their devotion to mutual helpfulness and service to the Nation. (H.R. 6808, 1919a, pp. 3-4)

One committee member, Representative Warren Gard (D-OH), criticized the pronounced absence of specific business objectives in the statement: "Those are, as I see them, very striking and proper definitions of the Americanism of the day and what we hope will be the Americanism of the future, but they in nowise deal with any business for which an incorporation might be made" (*Bill to Incorporate American Legion*, 1919, p. 10). Lieutenant Colonel Miller conceded that the rationale for a Congressional charter was to obtain "recognition of the four million and a half men who went out both in this country and in France and other lands to fight in this war. It is more or less based on sentiment, I admit" (p. 11). After further prodding for tangible evidence of

business need, he cited several examples from section two of the charter (H.R. 6808, 1919a, pp. 2-3). However, it was apparent that such routine tasks could be conducted without national incorporation. To this end, Representative Wells Goodykoontz (R-WV) questioned the Lieutenant Colonel's earlier suggestion: Was the true reason for the American Legion's desire for a Congressional charter "to get the prestige and dignity that would come… by recognition of the federal government?" (*Bill to Incorporate American Legion*, 1919, p. 30). Once again, the witness agreed. This rationale was recapitulated in Representative Johnson's closing remarks:

> I think Col. Miller has thoroughly explained the fact that this organization is sentimental and not commercial, and it is simply the desire of the men who are going into it to get recognition by the duly constituted legislative body of the United States, so that it will be known throughout the world that those men have been recognized by that body. (p. 34)

With the American Legion's aim of Congressional recognition clarified, there remained uncertainty over the larger question of whether it should be incorporated by an act of Congress. To address this concern, representatives considered the matter of precedent. Even the Legion's staunchest allies acknowledged the lack of precedent among analogous veterans' organizations of the past (*Bill to Incorporate American Legion*, 1919). Civil War veterans' organizations such as the Grand Army of the Republic, the United Confederate Veterans, and the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States had never obtained Congressional incorporation. Lieutenant Colonel Miller acknowledged disappointment at lacking "the precedent of the Grand Army" (p. 14). Without a comparable example, the Legion invoked the precedent of the American National Red Cross and the Boy Scouts of America, which had served as models for its original draft of the charter legislation. Objections over the incongruous missions of these organizations were momentarily quelled when Representative Gard unearthed the lesser-known

example of the Society of the Army of Santiago de Cuba, a small Spanish-American War organization that was chartered in the District of Columbia by an Act of July 1, 1902. However, the issue of precedent resurfaced during debates before the full House, owing largely to a lack of consensus on the meaning of incorporation in the District of Columbia.

The existence of limited precedent also seemed to provoke uncertainty over the extent of Congress' authority to incorporate private organizations. To some, such as Representative Warren Gard (D-OH), Congressional incorporation represented an encroachment on states' rights and should only be granted in rare cases in "the territory over which it has unquestioned authority, to wit, the District of Columbia, and incorporate within that territory" (58 Cong. Rec. 4067, 1919). Others argued that Congress' jurisdiction extended wherever federal law applied. Even so, there remained disagreement over the distinction between federal and district levels of incorporation. Opinions varied as to which would be appropriate for the present case.

The controversy stemmed from a dispute over preposition usage in the Legion's initial draft legislation. In the original bill, the organization was "created a body corporate and politic in the District of Columbia" (H.R. 6808, 1919a, p. 2). Representative Gard insisted that the bill, as submitted, intended incorporation through the District of Columbia rather than at the national level (*Bill to Incorporate American Legion*, 1919). For this reason, he concluded that Congressional approval would require the Legion to establish headquarters in the District of Columbia. However, Representative Joseph Walsh (R-MA) inferred a distinction in preposition usage. The incorporation was national because it was created *in* and "not of the District of Columbia" (p. 22). An organization incorporated *in* the District of Columbia was considered national, whereas an organization *of* the District of Columbia was limited to the district.

The incorporation clause was addressed along with other amendments during a closed-door session following the House Judiciary Committee hearing (H.R. Rep. No. 66-191, 1919). While there were few substantive amendments, the original bill was struck through and rewritten entirely because "the amendments changed the phraseology or verbiage of the bill; so much so that we concluded to strike out all in the bill after the enacting clause and insert a new one entirely" (58 Cong. Rec. 4063, 1919). One amendment stood out: The contentious reference to the Legion's incorporation in the District of Columbia was removed. Instead, the amended bill created the organization as "a body corporate" (H.R. 6808, 1919b p. 7). The wording was altered to clarify the charter's national nature. As Representative Dick Thompson Morgan (R-OK) later confirmed:

> Ordinarily organizations incorporated by acts of Congress are made corporations of the District of Columbia. This kind of a provision was in the original bill. We decided we would make this a national corporation with its headquarters at any place it chose to have them. We therefore omitted the words declaring it should be a corporation of the District of Columbia. (58 Cong. Rec. 4063, 1919)

The subcommittee's decision to amend the incorporation proved controversial. Opposition centered on the Legion's potential lack of situs – a term reflecting an organization's legal positionality with respect to accountability in the courts. Representative Finis James Garrett (D-TN) highlighted the importance of situs during a subsequent discussion before the House:

> A corporation in certain ways is a citizen either of a State or of the District of Columbia… It may sue and be sued, but where—in a Federal court or in a State court? …

> The distinction is very clear. You must give a corporation situs, a residence, unless you intend to make it a corporation above all law – that is, all State law or all District law. (58 Cong. Rec. 4065, 1919)

Members of Congress were concerned because, without situs, the Legion could only be held accountable in federal court. Upon further consideration, Representative Leonidas Carstarphen Dyer (R-MO) agreed that there was "no provision in this bill touching that. … In the past corporations having a national charter have been incorporated under the laws of the District of Columbia largely, so that they would have their headquarters here, so that they might be reached" (58 Cong. Rec. 4065, 1919). Representative Gard proposed several amendments to restrict the Legion's incorporation to the District of Columbia, but none were successful.

Efforts to downgrade the Legion's incorporation proved fruitless in the face of the prevailing sentiment that the organization was "an exception to the rule" (H.R. Rep. No. 66-191, 1919, p. 2). Many shared House Judiciary Committee Chair Andrew John Volstead's (R-MN) opinion that a district charter would be less prestigious and, therefore, insulting:

> I do not see any good reason why we should make this an incorporation of the District of Columbia, or why we should provide for its having its main office in the city of Washington. There is no question, it seems to me, in view of the decisions I have called attention to, of our power to give these people an incorporation that is national, and if we propose to give them anything, let us give them an act that shows that we recognize their object as patriotic and an aid to the national spirit that it will foster. It seems to me we ought to be willing to give them a national incorporation instead of granting them a measly District of Columbia charter. (58 Cong. Rec. 4074, 1919)

Despite these points of contention, most members of Congress supported the Legion's charter request. Some felt incorporation was an earned right. As Representative Morgan argued, "It is highly appropriate that Congress should grant this national charter to these men in recognition of the great service they have already rendered and to aid them in the good work of future years" (58 Cong. Rec. 4065, 1919). Representative George Scott Graham (R-PA) took it further, insisting that "if they ask for it, it is a mark of honor and respect for this Congress to grant to them not grudgingly but whole-heartedly the whole measure of their request" (58 Cong. Rec. 4077, 1919). Still others feared being perceived as being hostile toward veterans. The Legion's membership base was sizeable. It had already exceeded one-quarter of its membership goal of four million members in its first year ("A History," 1919). As Representative Goodykoontz observed, "Any man who opposes that measure is opposing a bill that the soldiers themselves have dictated and which they ask to be crystallized into law" (58 Cong. Rec. 4083, 1919). Nobody – in the words of Representative Frank Lester Greene (R-VT) – wanted "to put himself on record, much less to wish in his own mind, to do anything to the disadvantage of these brave young men who have come here for this purpose" (58 Cong. Rec. 4076-4077, 1919).

In the end, Representative William Brockman Bankhead (D-AL) offered a successful compromise amendment to require each state's Legion representative to file contact information with their respective states to address the issue of legal accountability (58 Cong. Rec. 4084, 1919). The Legion's charter passed the House and was referred to the Senate (H.R. 6808, 1919c). One week later, Senator Knute Nelson (R-MN), Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, reported favorably on the bill, which passed without amendment (58 Cong. Rec. 4823, 1919). On September 16, 1919, the Legion was incorporated at the national level as "a body corporate" (Act to Incorporate the American Legion, Pub. L. No. 66-47, 41 Stat. 284, 1919).

3. **Pursuing a Congressional Charter**

With the Legion's example as confirmation of both the relative prestige and feasibility of securing a national charter, the WOSL's exploratory committee began contacting Philadelphia-based law firms shortly after its formative meeting in March 1921. Further investigation revealed that any external assistance would cost as much as $1,000 ("Organization," 1931). The prospect of paying such a sum made little sense given the ex-servicewomen's free access to high caliber legal talent. Indeed, Chew was related to two high-profile lawyers. Her husband, Oswald, was an accomplished lawyer who belonged to one of Philadelphia's oldest and most prominent families ("Chew Family," 1911). He graduated from Harvard University in 1903 before completing his law degree at the University of Pennsylvania Law School two years later ("Oswald Chew Dies," 1949). At Harvard, Oswald met his future brother-in-law, Daniel Waldo Knowlton, Jr. ("Knowlton," 1921; Wallace, Foote, & Smith, 1903). Knowlton earned his law degree from Harvard Law School and subsequently enjoyed a distinguished career as chief legal counsel for the Interstate Commerce Commission in Washington, D.C. ("Former ICC Official," 1969). Chew ultimately persuaded the pair – along with Arthur Hutchinson, a lawyer and spouse of Philadelphia Unit member Magdeleine Carret – to draft the articles of incorporation, pro bono, over the next month (Chew, 1928; *Incorporation of Women's Overseas Service League*, 1922).

The legal documents were formally approved on May 2-3, 1921, when one dozen representatives met at the Emergency Aid of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia for the WOSL's first national convention (Chew, 1928; Wynne, 1921). In addition to authorizing the constitution, bylaws, and charter, delegates also elected national officers ("Women's Service League," 1921).

With Chew as the WOSL's first national president, the organization was poised to begin work toward its overarching purpose of continued service, which was outlined in its mission statement:

> To keep alive and develop the spirit that prompted overseas service; to maintain the ties of comradeship born of that service and to assist and further any patriotic work; to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation; to work for the welfare of the Army and Navy; to assist, in any way in their power, the men and women who served and were wounded or incapacitated in the World War; to foster and promote friendship and understanding between Americans and the Allies in the World War. (Women's Overseas Service League, 1931c, p. 3)

Once the draft charter was approved, the WOSL formulated a plan for its introduction in Congress. This task inevitably fell to the chair of the young national organization's legislative committee, Jeanette Smith Kyle. Kyle was a native Philadelphian and Daughter of the American Revolution through her maternal great-great-grandfather, Captain Herman Stout, who served at Valley Forge (Gadsby, 1908). She was also the recent widow of the renowned laryngologist, Dr. D. Braden Kyle. Prior to the couple's marriage in 1900 ("Wedding," 1900), the doctor had established himself as one of the nation's foremost experts in diseases of the ear, nose, and throat, after authoring the definitive text on the subject (American Climatological and Clinical Association, 1916; Kyle, 1899). In addition to scholarship, Kyle's husband had several prominent patients including President Woodrow Wilson's daughter, Margaret, and Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. ("Dr. D. Braden Kyle," 1916a, 1916b; "Specialist Dead," 1916). Following her husband's death in 1916, Kyle volunteered overseas for several years with the *Association des Dames Françaises, Croix Rouge Française* at *Hospital Auxiliaire #203* in Cannes, France ("Jeanette S. Kyle," 1918, p. 715). After the war, she became involved with the

Philadelphia Women's Overseas Legion and served as Chew's vice president ("War Women Meet," 1920).

Under Kyle's leadership, the WOSL secured an ally in a fellow Pennsylvanian, Representative George Scott Graham (R-PA). The congressman introduced the WOSL's charter legislation in the House on June 21, 1921 (H.R. 7299, 1921; 61 Cong. Rec. 2879, 1921). The bill mirrored language from the Legion's charter in seeking to incorporate the WOSL nationally as "a body corporate" (H.R. 7299, 1921, p. 3). Representative Graham later explained the organization's desire for federal incorporation: "Under a national charter they can do more helpful and efficient work than under a special or local charter of some State or the District of Columbia" (H.R. Rep. No. 67-715, 1922, p. 3). The bill was referred to the House Judiciary Committee, where it fell dormant for six months before further consideration (see Table 9).

The WOSL's charter resurfaced on January 12, 1922, when it came up for consideration at a hearing before the House Judiciary Committee (*Incorporation of Women's Overseas Service League,* 1922). Chew and colleagues arrived in the nation's capital in advance to prepare for their testimonies ("Overseas Women Organize," 1922). Although nine witnesses testified on the League's behalf, the organization's president was its predominant voice. Throughout the hearing, Chew utilized a two-pronged argument to justify the WOSL's request for national incorporation. First, congressional recognition was framed as an equal right that had been earned through women's equal contributions overseas during the war. Second, a national charter was deemed necessary to enable the organization to fulfill its equal responsibility of continued service. As Chew summarized, "The league is asking for Federal recognition first and foremost because of the peculiar service it has rendered the United States Government, and because of the purpose of

Table 9

Chronology of Action on the Women's Overseas Service League's Charter Request (H.R. 7299)

Year	Month	Day	Item	Action	Outcome
1921	Jun	21	H.R. 7299	Introduced, U.S. House of Representatives (House)	Referred, House Judiciary Committee
1922	Jan	12	H.R. 7299	Hearing, House Judiciary Committee	Reported favorably (17 Jan 1922)
1922	Feb	21	H.R. 7299	Submitted, House Judiciary Committee Report	Referred, House Calendar
1922	Mar	13		Resolution, Senate Judiciary Committee	Placed restrictions on national incorporation
1922	Jun	01	H.R. 7299	Vote, Full House	Passed as corporation of the District of Columbia; Referred to Senate
1922	Jun	02	H.R. 7299	Introduced in Senate	Referred, Senate Judiciary Committee
1923	Mar	04	H.R. 7299	67th Congress Ends (4th Session)	Died in committee
1924	Jul	13	State Charter	4th Annual WOSL Convention, San Francisco, CA (July 13-16)	Resolved, pursue state charter
1925	Jul	02	State Charter	Submitted, Articles of Incorporation	Notarized, Marion County, IN
1926	Jun	14	State Charter	Incorporation, Indiana	Certificate of Incorporation

its formation, that is, to serve as a reserve corps of the American Government, in case of great national need or disaster" (*Incorporation of Women's Overseas Service League,* 1922, p. 5).

a. **Framing as Equal Right**

The WOSL's claim to the equal right of Congressional recognition was premised on servicewomen having shared equally in exposure to dangers faced by servicemen overseas. This rationale permitted the organization to compare women's service to men's, while differentiating overseas women from those who served on the home front. Tens of thousands of servicewomen of the armed forces and welfare organizations served overseas. As Representative Graham noted, "Very many of these women passed through perils equal to the men in the service" (H.R. Rep. No. 67-715, 1922, p. 2). While the specific number of deaths was difficult to ascertain, Chew estimated that "there were about 150 women—more than that—that we know that were either killed or died in service, and many of them have not been recognized" (*Incorporation of Women's Overseas Service League,* 1922, p. 4). Later tallies placed the total higher (Givenwilson, 1923; "Report," 1924; Sillia, 1978). In contrast to women who served on the home front, "Overseas women underwent hardships and dangers, away from the protection and comforts of their homes and country" ("Congressional," 1922, p. 3). As Chew elaborated:

> Of course the women who went overseas went over with the idea of devoting all their time to this work, and they knew, in a way, that they were taking great chances. A great many women would not want to cross the seas in those days. And a great many of those women over there were under fire. In 1918 most of the French, or a great many of those who could, left Paris, and as a rule the American women stayed where they were sent. They did not think of leaving Paris, although Paris was bombarded every night. Some nights we spent most of the time in the cellars. We were bombarded by the aeroplanes

> and then the Big Bertha was making herself very much heard. … Those are the things, of course, which the women over here did not face. (*Incorporation of Women's Overseas Service League*, 1922, p. 8)

Unlike their counterparts on the home front, overseas welfare workers were also subject to Army regulations. On August 28, 1917, General Order No. 26 placed women who served with the American Red Cross and YMCA in France under military control (Center of Military History, 1948/1992). At the same time, overseas relief workers faced the same hazards as those who served overseas with the Army Nurse Corps – without equal recognition. As one newspaper observed, "Army nurses were the only ones to be given the Victory medal for service under fire, while the only nurse wounded at Chateau Thierry was a Red Cross nurse not entitled to this recognition" (Taaffe, 1921a, p. 4). Army nurses had the added benefit of membership in the American Legion. Still, the WOSL counted military and welfare workers alike among its 2,100 members because, Chew surmised, overseas women shared "a feeling of sistership among those who went over there. … a certain feeling, a fraternal feeling, or sisterly feeling, toward each other" (*Incorporation of Women's Overseas Service League*, 1922, p. 13). Therefore, all U.S. servicewomen who served the Allied cause overseas were eligible for membership, provided their service occurred between August 1, 1914, and January 1, 1920. As Chew clarified:

> Most of us are not entitled to the Legion because we were not under the Navy or the Army. You see, most of us were not Army nurses. Some of us were. Some were Army nurses, but most of us were not. But we included all organizations, the Salvation Army, the Y. M. C. A., the Y. W. C. A., the Red Cross, the Jewish Welfare, the Catholic Council, and every other organization that sent organizations of women abroad.

> There is not a woman who worked abroad who is not entitled to come in under our organization and we are the only organization in the country that does look after those women, all of the women who went abroad. And we do not want to have this simply for the Red Cross or simply for some other organization, but we want to have it for all women. We want every woman to come in who worked overseas. We want them to come into our organization. We want the members from each and every body of women. (pp. 12-13)

The WOSL's members had risked bodily harm overseas on a level comparable to their male counterparts, but they had not shared in equal recognition. Since ex-servicemen had received congressional backing in the form of national incorporation, the League benefited from comparisons to the Legion. To this end, the WOSL was frequently compared to the Legion in the press ("Service," 1922). One newspaper article described it "as the feminine prototype of the American Legion" ("Women Who Served," 1921, p. 4). Such analogies strengthened the organization's claim to entitlement based on precedent. Moreover, the WOSL's charter request also had the Legion's endorsement (*Incorporation of Women's Overseas Service League*, 1922). For these reasons, Representative Graham often drew parallels between the two groups, and urged incorporation "to give the brave women who volunteered their services prior to and during the war up to the time of the armistice a recognition at the hands of Congress similar to that which is given to the American Legion" (H.R. Rep. No. 67-715, 1922, p. 2). From his perspective, the WOSL's request was "simply a corollary to the recognition of the American Legion" (62 Cong. Rec. 7984, 1922). Given the perceived similarities between the two groups, the representative cited a Congressional obligation for equal recognition:

> They appeal to the highest sentiments of us all with almost the same force as those which caused this committee to recommend the granting of a charter to the American Legion by the Congress. The granting of national charters should be confined to such case as this and the legion or kindred unselfish patriotic organizations and be a recognition of great services rendered in great peril and under circumstances of danger for the preservation of the country. (H.R. Rep. No. 67-715, 1922, p. 4).

Unfortunately, national awareness of most overseas ex-servicewomen's sacrifices remained obscure. Beyond commendations for the women of the Army and Navy Nurse Corps, there was little appreciation for the full range of women's overseas efforts during the war. More than three years had elapsed since the Armistice. The American Legion had received a national incorporation. There was no comparable recognition for organized ex-servicewomen, military or otherwise. Louise Wells, president of the Chicago Unit and a future president of the national organization, voiced the League's frustration:

> We would like to have the recognition, perhaps, I should say, of the kind of service that we have done; we want recognition, of what we have done, and we still want to work. We want the recognition which everybody except ourselves seems to be getting. We seem to be forgotten. (*Incorporation of Women's Overseas Service League*, 1922, p. 16)

The WOSL recognized Congressional incorporation as an important step toward remedying the nation's ignorance of ex-servicewomen's contributions. The recent experience of the Legion had demonstrated the significance of a federal charter as a symbol of Congressional validation. League members likely shared in the sentiment of the Cincinnati Unit's Mary E. Johnston, that, "If we are recognized by the Government by being given a national charter[,] we will feel that we are being recognized as well as the others" (*Incorporation of Women's Overseas*

Service League, 1922, p. 20). Representative Graham reiterated this rationale to justify the bill's support in subsequent comments on the House floor:

> It seems to me, without taking up the time of the House and desiring to finish this matter briefly, that the object of this can be stated in a sentence. It is to grant to these women recognition. They have had no cross of honor. They have had no records of their achievement and their work, and yet, like the men who went over and engaged in the conflict on the other side, they exposed themselves and their lives in the service of their country, and this recognition of incorporation is, as it were, an act of Congress recognizing their patriotism and saying to them: You women shall receive this mark of honor at our hands. We regard the work which you did on the other side as of vastly great importance, and we want to give recognition of it by this expression of our good will toward you as an organization. (62 Cong. Rec. 7984, 1922)

b. **Framing as Necessary for Continued Service**

Along with its claim to the equal right of congressional recognition, the WOSL also argued that national incorporation was necessary to fulfill its members' perceived civic duty of continued service. Throughout its existence, the League framed itself as a ready reserve of highly trained crisis responders from which the government could draw in the event of a national emergency. The organization's members were uniquely "*trained* as physicians, nurses, social workers, executives, secretaries, business women [*sic*], librarians, entertainers and workers in other special fields" ("Congressional," 1922, p. 3). They were, in Chew's words, "'At the beck and call of the government for duty during national emergencies'" (as cited in "Service," 1922, p. 27). Chew explicated the potential nature of this arrangement during the WOSL's hearing:

> The purpose of the organization is primarily to be of service to the American Government, and in case of future wars, catastrophes, or need of any kind, to have a body of women, trained in the Great War, in service of every kind; organized and ready for action, so that they can be called upon at a moment's notice. … Of course, all of these women have been trained, perhaps, as well as any other women in the United States, for this particular need to assist the Government in future catastrophes or wars. … They are organized and ready for action. In other words, it is a reserve army for the United States Government. And, in this connection, I want to say that it would not cost the United States Government anything. It probably will save the United States Government considerable money. (*Incorporation of Women's Overseas Service League*, 1922, p. 4)

The WOSL had already demonstrated its usefulness in responding to crises through its program of cooperation with local, state, and federal organizations. On September 16, 1920, unidentified anarchists bombed Wall Street, killing dozens and wounding hundreds more ("Wall Street," 1920). The League was deployed to assist in the attack's aftermath. Ethel Boyd Bowers of New York's All-England Unit described the organization's response:

> In the city of New York, through the Women's Overseas Service League at the time of the bomb explosion in front of Morgan's office, the Women's Overseas League was approached. They wanted women to drive motors and they asked if we could help. They knew that we could do that sort of work. There were a great many wounded people in the street. It was a terrible condition, worse than people think. Many people were cut and hurt terribly. They called on the Women's Overseas Service League because they knew that we could do that sort of thing. (*Incorporation of Women's Overseas Service League*, 1922, p. 11)

By all accounts, the WOSL was an effective corps of skilled interventionists during national crises. In its first decade, the League responded to a wide array of natural disasters including fires ("Pasadena," 1924), earthquakes ("Red Cross," 1925; "Thanks," 1925), tornados (Spencer, 1926; "St. Louis," 1927), and floods (Smith, 1928). However, the organization's main body of work involved assisting ex-servicemembers who were wounded or unemployed due to the war ("Women Who Served," 1921). As Chew acknowledged, service to veterans was "the principal thing they have undertaken so far… They have assisted the men who are in the hospitals, or the men who are out of work, or our own members who have been incapacitated in the war, as so many of them have" (*Incorporation of Women's Overseas Service League*, 1922, p. 4).

The WOSL's early veteran-specific activities centered on unemployment services and hospital visitation. Initial efforts included collaborating in the Legion's work with veterans experiencing unemployment in Kansas City, as well as assisting with the conversion of an old hotel into a half-way house for job-seeking ex-servicemen in Chicago (*Incorporation of Women's Overseas Service League*, 1922). Moreover, most of the League's 24 units had hospital visitation programs. Margaret Lambie shared her unit's work in the District of Columbia, which entailed "going out to the hospitals—Mount Alto, Walter Reed, and St. Elizabeth's—and doing what we could for the men and helping also the overseas women who can not help themselves" (p. 14). The League also cooperated with the Bureau of War Risk Insurance's initiative to inform veterans of their rights under the War Risk Act ("Philadelphia," 1922). In addition to benefits, employment, and hospital services, the WOSL's prolific schedule of activities subsequently included fundraising through entertainment benefits (Kober, 1924; "Overseas Service League,"

1924; Stahl, 1923; Valentine, 1923), as well as memorial initiatives ("A Memorial," 1924; Givenwilson, 1923; "Report of Memorial," 1924).

The broad scope of the WOSL's work reinforced its argument that its activities were inherently national. Representative Graham agreed with this position. Along with his initial support of the organization's claim to an equal right to recognition, the Congressman endorsed national incorporation because it would aid the organization's continued service:

> There is no reason why these women should not be granted the charter which they seek, as a recognition of their services and as furnishing a more efficient method for continuing their work of "carrying on," and also for the purpose of creating them a great patriotic body of noble-minded American women with practical ideals of service yet to be rendered, and with a purpose to continue their patriotic work by example and influence and in the rendering of such services as are yet sorely needed by the ex-service men. (H.R. Rep. No. 67-715, 1922, p. 4)

c. **Justifying National Incorporation**

The WOSL's arguments for national incorporation were not universally accepted. Representative Joseph Walsh (R-MA) sought additional examples of activities that required a federal charter (*Incorporation of Women's Overseas Service League*, 1922). Chew initially cited plans to fund a memorial for the Joffre Institute for French Orphans, but the congressman was unconvinced. Representative Walsh countered, "Of course you would not need a national charter to secure that fund" (p. 6). The congressman's near antipathy for the League was later revealed during debates in the House, when he minimized WOSL members' overseas service and categorized them pejoratively as "a lot of society women" (62 Cong. Rec. 7986, 1922). Toward the end of the hearing, he attempted to recast the organization's activities as mere

"social functions, luncheons, teas, dances, receptions" (*Incorporation of Women's Overseas Service League,* 1922, p. 10). Chew offered an even-tempered response before one of the representative's colleagues intervened on her behalf. Representative Israel Moore Foster (R-OH) interjected, "Well, the legion posts out in my district have dances right along, and if these people want to hold dances that would not be any reason why they should not be given a charter" (p. 10).

Throughout the hearing, representatives occasionally argued that the WOSL's service activities and business operations could be accomplished with a state charter. The organization's inability to satisfy the issue of national need led Representative Earl Cory Michener (R-MI) to ask whether the true reason for the WOSL's request was to earn the prestige associated with a congressional charter (*Incorporation of Women's Overseas Service League*, 1922). Chew was reluctant to concede fully: "The prestige that it will give us, and enable us to carry on; that is the chief reason we want it, because we want to be of service, want to go on with our service" (p. 9). Still, Representative Michener remained skeptical and contended that a state charter would be sufficient. As the congressman insisted, "We have many appeals before this committee for a Federal charter, and when we get right down to the last analysis the real purpose in all of those people in asking for this Federal charter is for the national prestige" (p. 9).

In contrast to the Legion's willingness to abandon early claims of necessity and acknowledge the desire for prestige, the WOSL maintained its need for federal incorporation for continued service, while acknowledging prestige solely as an ancillary benefit. A national charter was necessary because a state charter would be insufficient. As Chew argued, "A State charter would not be satisfactory or fitting for a national organization, and would not be acceptable to the members (*Incorporation of Women's Overseas Service League*, 1922, p. 5). One reason for

resisting a state charter was the organization's federated structure. The League was configured as a national organization composed of local units, which Chew described at length:

> They desire to be organized nationally as well as locally, so that they may be managed nationally, even as the several States of the Union are under the national supervision and management of the Federal Government.
>
> Local matters are chiefly managed by local bodies and national matters by the national body, in a national way, under a national charter.
>
> To give a local or State charter to a national organization would be to give undue advantage to the organizations of that State which created the charter. To operate without a charter places them under a disability which prevents their operating a truly national body. They are limited in their financial transactions, in the power which centralizes and controls the vires of the main body, defining and limiting the scopes of those powers, first as regards the national body; secondly, as regards the local organizations.
>
> We hope to achieve through a national charter the same strength, unity of purpose, definition of powers, and safety from attack, as are provided to our country, the several States and its citizens by the Constitution of the United States. (p. 5)

A national charter would also liberate the organization from the constraints of situs, as it had learned from congressional debates during the American Legion's incorporation (58 Cong. Rec. 4062, 1919). To counter potential challenges, the WOSL had preemptively embraced the Legion's example by including a section in its charter that required a representative from each state to record contact information with their corresponding Secretary of State's office (H.R. 7299, 1921, §10). This leeway would permit the WOSL to rotate its national headquarters and share power among different states on an annual basis. As Chew suggested:

> No one of these leagues is predominant. In other words, we have no regular headquarters, because we thought it was better to divide the honors between the different States, one year perhaps the president coming from Philadelphia and the headquarters will be in Philadelphia and the following year the president may be from Chicago, or may be in San Francisco, or may be in Seattle or any one of the different local units may be chosen as the headquarters. … Of course, that is one of the reasons that a national charter seems very necessary. (*Incorporation of Women's Overseas Service League*, 1922, p. 4)

Lastly, federal recognition would also unite units from the various states and provide a sense of national identity. As such, it would validate the WOSL's federated structure, while anchoring international units. As Ethel Boyd Bowers elaborated, "We want to function as a whole. We do not want to function as a little group here, there, and everywhere. We want to function as a whole, and we can not unless we are given the power" (*Incorporation of Women's Overseas Service League*, 1922, p. 4). In other words, national incorporation would help to ensure members were – to borrow a phrase from Miss Blanton of Richmond, Virginia – "all working for the same purpose" (p. 19). By extension, the prestige of a congressional charter would benefit the organization in its subsequent membership recruitment and retention efforts.

d. **Downgrading Extent of Recognition**

The WOSL's attempts to justify a national charter request may not have appeased all critics, but they were sufficient to persuade the House Judiciary Committee to report favorably on the bill on January 17, 1922 ("Congressional," 1922). Committee members were perhaps concerned about the potential political fallout from opposing the League's request, much as they had been during debates over the Legion's incorporation (58 Cong. Rec. 4062, 1919). On this point, Oswald Chew had cautioned the congressmen against placing themselves "in a

position where they could be asked why they could not get a national charter" (*Incorporation of Women's Overseas Service League*, 1922, p. 18). One month later, Representative Graham submitted the committee's report along with the amended bill for consideration in the House (62 Cong. Rec. 2870, 1922; H.R. Rep. No. 67-715, 1922). With few amendments, the bill retained most of the WOSL's original wording, including the organization's standing as a nationally chartered "body corporate" (H.R. 7299, 1922a, p. 3). The League's ambitions for equal congressional recognition inched one step closer to realization when the legislation was placed on the House calendar and ultimately scheduled for full consideration in June.

Ahead of deliberations on the charter's fate, the WOSL selected the District of Columbia as the location for its second annual convention scheduled for April 30-May 2, 1922. The impetus for the gathering was to promote the League's "effort to obtain a Federal charter" ("Service," 1922, p. 27). In the months following the House Judiciary Committee hearing, local members had "become successful 'lobbyists' for Bill H. R. 7299" ("Washington," 1922, p. 13). The convention represented an opportunity to mobilize reinforcements before debates. The organization "hoped that all who can possibly attend the Convention will do so, as it is necessary to show the Congressmen at the Capitol that as a body of women we have a definite work to perform and accordingly should have a charter" ("Amendments," 1922, p. 3). In addition to the mass assembly, the WOSL asked its members to participate in a direct-action campaign:

> As the Bill may come up on the floor of the House at any time, *every member of the League is urged to communicate soon with the Representative from her district* and with other Representatives with whom she has any point of contact. *Personal calls* at the House Office Building are preferable, but if that is impossible, letters should be written. ("Congressional," 1922, p. 3)

The WOSL's lobbying efforts seemed to contradict its earlier public-facing statements against involvement with legislative activism. During the House Judiciary Committee hearing, Representative Michener had inquired as to whether the organization would "attempt to influence legislation" (*Incorporation of Women's Overseas Service League*, 1922, p. 10). Chew assured the congressman that the League had no such ambitions. However, her husband, Oswald, had mistakenly contradicted this position in later testimony. He suggested the organization "may very easily wish to initiate national measures themselves, such as the legion in its bonus proposition … There might be measures which for the good of the country or for the good of their members they wish to initiate" (p. 18). Kyle and Chew interjected to defuse this statement, while Oswald apologized for his misstep: "I seem to have said something that I should not have said. I am sorry if I have done that" (p. 18).

One reason for the apparent confusion stemmed from the WOSL's distinction between political and legislative activism. As the organization described itself, "The League is *non-political,* and will undertake *no legislative program*" ("Congressional," 1922, p. 3). The political facet of the self-imposed embargo was outlined in section six of its charter, which stated "that the organization shall be nonpolitical and, as an organization, shall not promote the candidacy of any person seeking public office" (H.R. 7299, 1922a, p. 5). The League's understanding of legislative interventionism was less clearly restricted. Its statements in the press seemed to permit some flexibility. As one newspaper article suggested, "No legislative program will be initiated, the league being non-political and non-sectarian, but measures, introduced by other bodies and meeting with its approval may receive its active support" ("Women Who Served," 1921, p. 4).

The WOSL's interpretation was likely influenced by the Legion's position, revealed several years earlier during its hearing with the House Judiciary Committee (*Bill to Incorporate American Legion,* 1919). The Legion's perspective emerged after an inquiry regarding section five of its original charter draft, which specified that "the organization shall be absolutely nonpartisan and shall not be used for the dissemination of partisan principles or for the promotion of the candidacy of any person seeking public office or preferment" (H.R. 6808, 1919a, p. 5). Representative Morgan inquired, "This non-partisanship does not prevent you from taking part in politics in the sense that you have the right to assist and promote certain national policies and certain legislation?" (*Bill to Incorporate American Legion,* 1919, p. 26). Lieutenant Colonel Miller acknowledged that the Legion would "undoubtedly take an interest in public affairs, just the same as the Spanish War Veterans, the National Grange and all quasi-public corporations" (p. 27). After further discussion, the Legionnaire advised committee members that the section in question reflected the organization's interdiction against supporting political candidates rather than prohibiting legislative work. As he assured, "We do not intend that the American Legion shall ever be used by any one in any political party running for office or public preferment. We are very strong about that" (p. 30). The Legion's positions on political and legislative activism were accepted– despite Representative Volstead's warning that the organization's legislative meddling would cause "all sorts of trouble almost at once" (p. 28).

Whether or not the WOSL was concerned with potential trouble, the organization initially made a conscious effort to contain the appearance of aggressive legislative activism. It publicly minimized the extent of its plans for involvement in legislative activism, while privately encouraging its members' activism. This strategy had had mixed results. On June 1, 1922, Representative Volstead summoned H.R. 7299 for consideration in the House (62 Cong. Rec.

7982, 1922). Representative Graham summarized the bill and recommended Congressional incorporation because the League would "function better as a national organization than otherwise" (62 Cong. Rec. 7984, 1922). After the synopsis, there were brief discussions with arguments generally mirroring the more elaborate themes that had arisen during the House Judiciary Committee hearing (*Incorporation of Women's Overseas Service League*, 1922). Most inquiries were for minor issues regarding the language surrounding the WOSL's incorporators, membership eligibility, and dates of service. However, one significant challenge emerged. Representative Finis James Garrett (D-TN) questioned the bill's absent provision for organizational situs – a concern he had also voiced during House debates over the Legion's charter (58 Cong. Rec. 4065, 1919). He asked Representative Graham:

> Of course, the gentleman is one of the best lawyers in the country and will recognize the distinction at once that this bill does not give this corporation a situs, and, so far as I can recall, all these special bills of incorporation have made them corporations of the District of Columbia. Does the gentleman have any objection to suggesting an amendment in line 18, page 3, after the word "corporate" to inserting the words "of the District of Columbia"? (62 Cong. Rec. 7984, 1922)

Over the previous legislative year, Representative Graham had been the WOSL's most loyal supporter through his consistent endorsement of the organization's desired national incorporation. Suddenly, he offered no resistance to his colleague's suggestion for a lesser charter. He replied, "I have no objection to that. … I think it is a perfectly legitimate amendment and we are willing to accept it" (62 Cong. Rec. 7984, 1922). The amendment was subsequently offered and accepted without further debate. In the end, H.R. 7299 (1922b) passed the House with the WOSL chartered as "a body corporate of the District of Columbia" (p. 3).

e. **Lacking a Constitutional Purpose**

News of the WOSL's legislative victory rapidly hit the press ("A.E.F. Women," 1922). However, there was a pervasive unawareness of the charter's relative degradation. As one columnist proclaimed, "Women who served overseas for the United States or the Allies during the World war will be glad to hear that their organization known as the Women's Overseas Service league was granted a national charter by a bill passed through the house of representatives [*sic*]" (Drexel, 1922, p. 9). A sense of optimism followed the bill's referral to "the Senate where, it is indicated, sufficient support can be mustered up to secure passage" ("Overseas Women Hope," 1922, p. 4). The press expected the Senate to embrace the House's position, "That as congress [*sic*] gave the American Legion a national charter, why should not one be given to the women who served overseas, many of them in hospitals and in posts of danger?" (Drexel, 1922, p. 9). This auspicious outlook was unfounded. The WOSL's federal charter request had been reduced to the District of Columbia. In effect, the organization had already received inequitable recognition when compared to the Legion.

Even in diminished form, the bill's prospects in the Senate were grim. Shortly after the House Judiciary Committee had submitted its favorable report on the WOSL's national incorporation three months earlier (H.R. Rep. No. 67-715, 1922), a parallel situation unfolded in relative obscurity in the Senate. On March 13, 1922, the Senate Judiciary Committee passed a blanket resolution restricting "all legislation proposing federal charters for private organizations which are not formed for the purpose of executing some power granted in the Constitution" ("Judiciary," 1922, p. 13). The decision was merely the latest development in a succession of debates over Congress' authority to incorporate.

The incorporation controversy stemmed from disputes over the government's ability to grant specific versus general charters, which was later summarized by the Chief Clerk of the House Judiciary Committee. According to Guilford S. Jameson (1927), precedent had been established in *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819), when Chief Justice John Marshall determined that Congressional incorporation was permissible if the petitioning organization was perceived to support the execution of the federal government's Constitutional powers. The Chief Justice's opinion was premised on the authority of the Necessary and Proper Clause, which empowered Congress "to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof" (U.S. Const. art. I, § 8, cl. 18).

Jameson (1927) also rejected the popular claim that the authority to incorporate for general purposes was supported by the General Welfare Clause, articulated in Congress' constitutional "Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States" (U.S. Const. art. I, § 8, cl. 1). The clerk maintained that the clause was intended to limit, rather than enumerate, Congressional powers. For these reasons, he concluded that Congress lacked constitutional authority to approve federal incorporation for general purposes, but possessed the power to "grant charters to organizations designed to carry out some function of the federal government" (Jameson, 1927, p. 625).

Opponents of national incorporation remained skeptical because – in addition to broader concerns over states' rights – general and specific charters were frequently conflated and inconsistently awarded, creating a "wide latitude of precedents" (Jameson, 1927, p. 624). The

mere existence of organizations with national incorporations ensured that Congress would be burdened by as many as 20 new charter requests each session. As Jameson (1927) explained:

> Every new charter adds further impetus to the demands of others for charters. It is surely sound reasoning to maintain that if the "A" society has been "recognized by Congress" then the "B" society which is doing some worthy charitable or other work, is just as deserving of the same recognition. And so, if further grants are made, Congress will find itself engaged in constructing an endless chain of federal corporations. (p. 626)

Questions regarding the potential consequences of setting precedent had arisen during previous House debates on the Legion's charter, when Representative John F. Miller (R-WA) asked whether it was "the disposition of the committee to likewise incorporate that corporation and all subsequent ones that may be organized" (58 Cong. Rec. 4064, 1919). On this point, Representative Dyer subsequently urged circumspection in establishing new precedent because "out of the war just ended there may be 12 or 15 such organizations growing up in addition to this one, and we shall be called upon, gentlemen, to incorporate these others" (58 Cong. Rec. 4064, 1919). House members recognized the importance of consistency. As Representative Gard cautioned, "If this organization is to be incorporated, then we should play fair. We should incorporate, as we do this, other honest associations of honorably discharged soldiers, sailors, and marines to which the Federal incorporation is necessary" (58 Cong. Rec. 4066, 1919).

Although the WOSL had entered the legislative process armed with the precedent of the American Legion and a Congressional commitment to fairness, it had also come prepared to defend itself against concerns over establishing further precedent. In the House Judiciary Committee's report on the League's incorporation, Representative Graham insisted, "It can not and ought not to be objected as a reason for refusing this charter that it may become a precedent

for granting national charters, for the conditions in this case can not easily be duplicated, nor the circumstances, which are altogether unique, be repeated" (H.R. Rep. No. 67-715, 1922, p. 4). As had been the case with the Legion, the WOSL framed its situation as an exception to the rule.

Despite perennial discord over the issue of national incorporation, the Senate Judiciary Committee's moratorium on congressional charters was yet surprising. Two years earlier, it had fully supported the Legion's national incorporation. In fact, the committee's chairman, Senator Knute Nelson (R-MN), had returned the bill to the Senate with a statement of endorsement and expectation of full cooperation, saying, "I report back favorably without amendment the bill (H. R. 6808) to incorporate the American Legion, and I ask unanimous consent for its present consideration. I do not think it will lead to any extended debate" (58 Cong. Rec. 4823, 1919). The Senate Judiciary Committee's unanticipated reversal on national incorporation presented a double standard with clear implications for the WOSL's charter legislation, which reached the Senate floor and was immediately referred to the committee on June 2, 1922 (62 Cong. Rec. 7996, 1922).

The WOSL's initial unawareness of the Senate Judiciary Committee's resolution against national incorporation was short-lived. By February 1923, Kyle (1923a) acknowledged that the committee's previous ruling had made the organization's federal incorporation "an almost impossible task" (p. 6). The League ceased agitating for the bill during the summer and recommitted in January after signs of support from Senator Samuel Morgan Shortridge (R-CA). Once again, the organization resumed legislative activism and urged member involvement through direct-action:

> Each and every unit should bring all possible pressure of the most influential kind on their senators and on any other senators with whom there is a personal friendship. It is the

> message from home that counts, so lose no time in sending that message to our senator, addressing him at the Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. … As this Congress ends on March 4th it is necessary that not a day be lost for if we fail this time, every bit of work will have to be done over again if we are to be granted a National Charter" (p. 6).

The WOSL's chances for support in the Senate were minimal. H.R. 7299 (1922b) was never seriously considered by the Senate Judiciary Committee. By Chew's (1928) account, "We were advised … to give up the idea of a Charter, as the Judiciary Committee of the Senate refused to grant us a hearing" (p. 15). The organization's opportunity for federal incorporation ended with the 67th Congress on March 4, 1923. Kyle (1923b) expressed "great regret that … our bill for a Federal Charter was not favorably reported" (p. 9). However, she remained publicly optimistic, assuring, "We are … prepared to start our campaign for a Charter at the opening of the 68th Congress, and if our units will work unitedly, we believe that it will be successful" (Kyle, 1923b, p. 9). The charter's promised resurgence never dawned. Instead, the WOSL's quest for national incorporation would ultimately be abandoned in favor of alternative methods of obtaining Congressional recognition.

B. Failing to Obtain Equal Rights Through Formal Channels

1. Latent Feedback from White Women's Antiwar Activism

The Senate Judiciary Committee's sudden opposition to Congressional incorporation contradicted its previous endorsement of the American Legion. Its resolution came little more than two years after its unanimous support for the Legion's incorporation, and mere weeks after the WOSL's comparable request was reported favorably by the House Judiciary Committee. Members of both groups had sacrificed personal safety in service to the nation. Their organizations shared a similar mission. Yet, the Senate Judiciary Committee had approved the

Legion's national charter, while refusing to extend the League the courtesy of a hearing (Chew, 1928). Several latent factors are useful in contextualizing the inequitable treatment of the two groups. First, there were latent negative feedback effects from the nation's longstanding struggles with primarily White women's organized antiwar activities. Pacifist activism became increasingly unpopular once the U.S. entered the war and its adherents were perceived as even more radical. Senator Nelson – who had been chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee for the incorporation requests of both organizations – had firsthand dealings with the subject during his investigations of un-American propaganda with the Overman Committee. By extension, the WOSL's request for incorporation coincided with contentious national debates over the virtues of international arms limitation versus total disarmament. The Legion's strong record on national defense gave it the credentials to weigh in on the matter. Conversely, the League's initially underdeveloped position, combined with ambiguous public statements on disarmament, rendered it vulnerable to conflation with the memory of White women's antiwar activism of the recent past.

a. **Peacetime Pacifism**

Even before the U.S. entered the World War I, the actions of prominent pacifist women like Jane Addams had provoked controversy. Arguably the Progressive Era's most renowned social reformer, Addams was perhaps best known for her pioneering work in the U.S. settlement house movement. In the fall of 1889, Addams and Ellen Gates Starr established Hull-House on Chicago's near west side, where a team of prominent social reformers lived and worked to elevate the interests of immigrants, women, and children (Addams, 1910). Over the years, the collective secured countless landmark victories in social, economic, and environmental justice initiatives. Addams's prolific record led one editor to dub her, "'Chicago's foremost

citizen'" (as cited in Butman, 1907, p. 5). The epithet stuck in the press until former President Theodore Roosevelt promoted her to "'America's foremost citizen'" ("Jane Addams' First Vote," 1916).

Addams (1907) expanded her influence from social reform circles into the area of peace in the first decade of the Twentieth Century. Her pacifist writings stressed a moral imperative to prevent war by addressing its underlying causes. After war broke out in Europe, she became a leader in a burgeoning women's peace movement. On January 10, 1915, she was appointed national chairman of a new organization known as the Woman's Peace Party, which was formed at a two-day peace conference in Washington, D.C. (Mead, 1916). The group's 11-point platform envisioned international peace through measures such as disarmament, arbitration, shared power among nations, and economic sanctions over military intervention. The organization asserted moral authority based on women's inherent maternal potentiality, arguing, "As human beings and the mother half of humanity, we demand that our right to be consulted in the settlement of questions concerning not alone the life of individuals but of nations be recognized and respected" (Woman's Peace Party, 1916b, p. 2).

At an emergency conference in Chicago a month after the organization's formation, representatives of the Woman's Peace Party were invited to attend an International Congress of Women at the Hague (Mead, 1916). Addams reluctantly agreed to chair the meeting and subsequently accompanied nearly 50 delegates and individuals from the U.S. to Europe. Between April 28 to May 1, 1915, delegates formed the International Women's Committee of Permanent Peace, which was later renamed to the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF; 1919). Members adopted a series of 20 resolutions aimed at promoting peace, many of which resembled the earlier agenda of the Woman's Peace Party. The organization's final

resolution authorized delegates to embark on a tour of 14 nations to share findings from the congress (Mead, 1916). Addams and Emily Greene Balch were selected as representatives from the U.S. During their visits, pamphlets were distributed to European leaders outlining a plan for a standing conference of neutral nations to provide continuous mediation in times of war (Wales, 1915). The women were received respectfully (Henning, 1915). However, some European officials seemed disinterested in their perspectives on military policy. When Addams visited Rome, for example, "The ministers of the Italian government listened respectfully to her peace propaganda [but] they gave her little encouragement" ("Jane Addams Talks," 1915).

Addams returned to the states that summer to a full schedule of events ("Jane Addams to See," 1915). It was at one such gathering that the pacifist leader stumbled into controversy. On July 9, 1915, Addams delivered a speech on her experiences overseas at a reception at New York's Carnegie Hall. In the midst of her monologue, she shared reports from Europe that soldiers were given intoxicants before entering battle:

> We heard in all countries similar statements in regard to the necessity for the use of stimulants before men would engage in bayonet charges – that they have a regular formula in Germany, that they give them rum in England and absinthe in France; that they all have to give them the 'dope' before the bayonet charge is possible. (Addams, 1915, p. 359)

Addams's comments were circulated in the press and proved unintentionally controversial. An editorial in *The Survey* – on which Addams served as assistant editor – attempted to defend her words as "wholly misunderstood by some newspapers and letter writers" ("Editorials," 1915, p. 430). However, this support was insufficient to counter the swift and visceral public backlash. A representative example may be found in a letter submitted to the *New*

York Times by Richard Harding Davis (1915), which protested Addams's claim as an "insult, flung by a complacent and self-satisfied woman at men who gave their lives for men" (p. 10). According to the noted journalist, "Miss Addams denies him [the soldier] the credit of his sacrifice. She strips him of honor and courage. She tells his children, 'Your father did not die for France, or for England, or for you: he died because he was drunk'" (p. 10).

Other criticisms descended into more blatant personal attacks, as was the case with an editorial in the *Booneville Standard*:

> Jane Addams headed a delegation of busy-bodies from the United States on a mission to Europe to stop the war – and incidentally to advertise themselves. Following her return from this silly exploit the ancient spinster gave out the story that the soldiers in the European war are stimulated with alcohol and drugs when they enter battle in order to make them fight. Manifestly this was a deliberate fabrication or else the product of a diseased imagination. The kindest interpretation of this is to ascribe it to the result of twisted mentality. Likely it is true that Miss Addams did a good service for the unfortunates of the Chicago slums. But this cannot justify all her recent lunatic performances. ("From the Washington," 1915, p. 4)

b. **Pacifism Versus Preparedness**

Many were offended by Addams's remarks, but her position on national preparedness was of greater concern to military readiness advocates. Her deliberate activism for disarmament was particularly injurious to her relationship with one longtime ally, former President Theodore Roosevelt. On August 7, 1912, Addams had made history by seconding Roosevelt's nomination as presidential candidate for the Progressive Party at its national convention in Chicago ("Brief Speech," 1912). In her convention speech, Addams characterized

Roosevelt as “one of the few men in our public life who has been responsive to the social appeal and who has caught the significance of the modern movement” (as cited in Progressive Party, 1912, p. 196). For many voters, Addams’s endorsement carried sufficient evidence of the Progressive Party’s merits (“Jane Addams,” 1912).

Roosevelt’s campaign was ultimately unsuccessful, but he distinguished himself from the other candidates of 1912 by supporting women’s suffrage. His endorsement of the franchise was credited to Addams. According to one newspaper, “He said he had not been influenced to this view by the women who devoted their time to promoting the cause of suffrage, but rather through his acquaintance with women like Miss Jane Addams, whom he had come to know through their interest in sociological work” (“Why Roosevelt’s,” 1912, p. 4). The former President also defended Addams from attacks in the press. An editorial in the *New York Times* had suggested she was an unacceptable role model for the nation’s women because she was unmarried and childless (“Why Roosevelt’s,” 1912). In response, Roosevelt denounced this attack as “‘foolish and wicked for a man to slur the unmarried woman, when he would not dream of slurring the unmarried man’” (as cited in “Why Roosevelt’s,” 1912, p. 4).

The relationship between Addams and Roosevelt soured in the summer of 1914 as the World War unfolded in Europe. The former president was a vocal proponent of the preparedness movement in the U.S., which he had supported long before his entry in public service. Shortly after graduating from Harvard, he authored, *The Naval War of 1812*, in which he argued that the nation’s lack of naval preparedness in the war of the same name had lengthened the conflict, exacerbated losses, and nearly resulted in total defeat by the superior British naval forces (Roosevelt, 1882/1900). Roosevelt’s later interest in military preparedness was influenced by his friendship with the future Army Chief of Staff, Major General Leonard Wood. During his brief

tenure as Assistant Secretary of the Navy in 1897, Roosevelt befriended then Colonel Wood, a Harvard Medical School alumnus and Army surgeon who had received the Congressional Medal of Honor (Wood, 1920). Colonel Wood had been stationed in the District of Columbia as medical advisor to the Secretary of War and President McKinley. Once the Spanish-American War developed, Roosevelt left his position as Assistant Secretary of the Navy to serve under Colonel Wood with the First Volunteer Cavalry in Cuba (Roosevelt, 1899).

With a new global conflict raging in Europe, Roosevelt and allied preparedness advocates turned their attention to inadequacies in U.S. ground forces under the guidance of Major General Wood, who was then retiring as Army Chief of Staff. Major General Wood (1914) criticized the nation's traditional reliance on untrained citizen soldiers to supplement its relatively small standing Army. He argued that the sudden outbreak of national emergencies often left little time for adequate training. Such unpreparedness often translated to mass deficiencies on the battlefield. To make matters worse, the U.S. trailed competing world powers not only in the size of its total force, but also in its relative arsenal of field artillery assets ("How Artillery," 1914). These shortcomings inspired the retiring Army Chief of Staff to issue an influential report recommending peacetime military training, adequate armament, and reorganization of reserve forces ("Start a Fire," 1914; Wood, 1914).

Peacetime military training was a cornerstone of Major General Wood's vision for national preparedness. Work toward this end had begun a year earlier with the creation and implementation of experimental students' military instruction camps, which offered voluntary training to college and university students (Kington, 1995). As Major General Wood (1914) explained, the purpose of the camps was to provide male citizens with "the opportunity for a short course in military training, in order that they may be better fitted to discharge their military

duty to their country should it ever stand in need of their service" (p. 27). After two pilot camps proved popular in the summer of 1913, training was extended to four camps the following year.

Major General Wood's training camp model and military readiness strategies provided a foundation for a newly formed preparedness organization's policy platform ("Start a Fire," 1914). The New York-based National Security League (NSL) was established in in December 1914 by S. Stanwood Menken to investigate deficiencies in national defense and lobby for preparedness ("Country's Security," 1915). The organization quickly found allies among existing preparedness enthusiasts such as former U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt and Representative Augustus P. Gardner (R-MA; Ward, 1960). Additional support came from former Secretaries of War, Senator Elihu Root (R-NY) and Henry Lewis Stimson, as well as prominent citizens such as Charles E. Lydecker and George Haven Putnam. The NSL built on the successes of the voluntary training camp model to advocate for universal military training and quickly found a legislative sponsor in Senator George Chamberlain (D-OR). Although the NSL's recurrent efforts to secure legislation for universal military training were ultimately unsuccessful, its propaganda was effective at politicizing the issue of preparedness, which it deemed necessary given the Wilson administration's perceived weakness on military readiness ("Edison," 1915).

On May 7, 1915, the Preparedness Movement gained momentum after a German submarine downed the ocean vessel, *Lusitania*, which killed 128 U.S. citizens along with approximately 1,200 passengers and crew members (Library of Congress, n.d.). In the backdrop of perceived inaction by the Wilson administration, prominent New Yorkers organized to institute a citizens' training camp system based on Major General Wood's experimental summer camps, "but to be opened to business and professional men" (Perry, 1921, p. 27). These collective efforts resulted in the Plattsburg Movement, which was the forerunner to the better-

known Citizens' Military Training Camps of the interwar years (U.S. Army, 1922). On August 8, 1915, approximately 1,200 recruits attended the first voluntary camp at the Plattsburg barracks in New York. Over the next year, tens of thousands of primarily college-educated citizens were trained in Plattsburg-style camps around the country. The camps had limited success in converting citizens to commissionable officers, but they inspired camp graduates to form the Military Training Camps Association, which lobbied for Congressional appropriations to formalize the training camp system (Kington, 1995). Federal support for the camps was later authorized in section 54 of the National Defense Act of 1916, but implementation was rendered impossible by the nation's subsequent entry in the war.

The attack on the *Lusitania* came mere weeks after the Congress of Women in the Hague. It also coincided with Addams's mediation efforts with leaders of belligerent nations. The presence of U.S. women overseas opposing military intervention did not sit well with preparedness advocates. Shortly after the Woman's Peace Party envoy returned in July 1915, Roosevelt addressed the subject at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition at San Francisco (International News Service, 1915). The former president's talking points came from a recently authored article, which had been widely reprinted in the press ("'Peace-At-Any-Price,'" 1915). In the original essay for *Metropolitan*, Roosevelt (1915) argued that "preparedness against war is the only efficient form of national peace insurance" (p. 68). He advocated for an enhanced Army and Navy, while endorsing universal military training. However, a related aim of his piece was to discredit pacifists, which included veiled insults toward his former ally, Jane Addams. He especially resented the pacifist work of American women in Europe:

> Some of the women in question were abroad, actively engaged in exciting contempt and derision for themselves and their country by crying for peace without justice and without

> redress of wrongs, at the very time that the *Lusitania* was sunk. … these amiable peace prattlers had not one word of effective sympathy for any of the women and children who had suffered … dreadful fates. All they did was to utter silly platitudes, which were of comfort to the wrongdoers, and which, in so far as they had any effect, confounded right and wrong and put a premium upon wrongdoing by making it evident that, if successful, it would escape condemnation; because the condemnation was so uttered as, if anything, to bear more heavily on those who resisted wrong than upon those who inflicted wrong. (Roosevelt, 1915, p. 11)

At first, Jane Addams did not publicly address Roosevelt's criticisms. She proceeded to discuss the Woman's Peace Party's antiwar platform in a meeting with President Wilson (Henning, 1915). Accompanied by Lillian Wald, Addams shared her experiences in Europe and urged the President to build an international congress of neutral world powers. After the meeting, reporters descended upon Addams to inquire about Roosevelt's recent comments, to which "Miss Addams smiled and said: 'I believe in free speech'" (as cited in Henning, 1915, p. 2).

Addams and the Woman's Peace Party were initially undeterred by attacks from preparedness advocates such as Roosevelt. Instead, the women fortified themselves for further opposition to the movement. On October 29, 1915, the organization sent a letter to President Wilson protesting military preparedness. As its authors explained, "We believe in real defense against real dangers, but not in a preposterous 'preparedness' against hypothetical dangers" (Addams et al., 1915, p. 1). The women were also concerned that aggrandizement of U.S. military capabilities would trigger similar actions by competing nations. These positions were formalized one month later, when the Woman's Peace Party (1916a) opposed increased expenditures for preparedness at its preliminary meeting of delegates in New York. The women

endorsed the use of arbitration and economic sanctions, while rejecting military training in the schools and urging "propaganda against it" (Woman's Peace Party, 1916a, p. 57).

Addams continued to represent the Woman's Peace Party's anti-preparedness interests over the ensuing months ("Jane Addams and Preparedness," 1915). On January 13, 1916, she testified on behalf of the organization at a hearing before the House Committee on Military Affairs (*To Increase the Efficiency of the Military Establishment of the United States,* 1916). In her testimony, Addams urged Congress to postpone military or naval enlargement until after the war, arguing that any increases would compromise the nation's credibility in international disarmament efforts. She also reiterated opposition to military training in the schools, support for which had been growing among preparedness enthusiasts like Roosevelt, Major General Wood, and the NSL. When asked for her opinion on the ex-President's recent criticisms of the Wilson administration's inaction in Europe and Mexico, she replied, "There are people of a certain type of mind, such as Col. Roosevelt, who are ready for a challenge and who think that the only way to defend the national honor is to fight for it. I do not think that type represents a large body of people" (p. 206).

Addams's relationship with Roosevelt was further strained when she announced her intention to vote for Woodrow Wilson on November 7, 1916 ("Jane Addams' First Vote," 1916). Reporters questioned her perceived shift in allegiance, and she jested that "she and the Colonel 'parted company two years ago'" (as cited in "Jane Addams' First Vote," 1916, p. 4). Addams supported President Wilson's initial maintenance of U.S. neutrality and opposition to unnecessary preparedness efforts. He had run for reelection with the slogan, "He kept us out of war" ("Voices," 1916, p. 1). This phrase was popularized on the campaign trail by William Jennings Bryan, President Wilson's former Secretary of State and an ardent advocate of

neutrality (Shankle, 1941). Although other leaders in the Woman's Peace Party organized a campaign against President Wilson due to his stance on women's suffrage, Addams dissented to endorse him precisely "because he had kept the country out of war" ("Suffrage First," 1916).

President Wilson's record on neutrality earned him a second term ("Women a Great Factor," 1916). However, his position on preparedness had long-since shifted due to events in Mexico and Europe. South of the border, the Mexican Revolution had occasionally spilled into the U.S. Pancho Villa's forces raided border towns in New Mexico and Texas during the spring and summer of 1916. At the same time, Germany persisted in sinking commercial vessels of neutral nations. These conditions led President Wilson to reorganize and strengthen the National Guard as a tappable federal reserve force and to create the Reserve Officers' Training Corps in secondary and post-secondary schools (National Defense Act, 1916). In August, he authorized a significant expansion of the country's naval forces (Naval Services Appropriations Act, 1916). The President's reluctance to enter the World War persisted until January of 1917, when the U.S. received word that the British had intercepted and decoded a telegram from Arthur Zimmermann, German Secretary of State on Foreign Affairs. The telegram advised the German ambassador in Mexico of the nation's plans to begin unrestricted submarine warfare and attempted to draw Mexico into the war (U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, 2020). On April 2, 1917, President Wilson requested a declaration of war on Germany, arguing that "neutrality is no longer feasible or desirable" (H.R. Doc. No. 65-1, 1917, p. 7). The request was authorized and the nation entered the war four days later (S.J. Res. 1, 1917).

c. **Wartime Pacifism**

Once the U.S. entered the war, Addams struggled to defend an increasingly unpopular pacifist ideology. On May 15, 1917, she presented a speech at the City

Club of Chicago entitled, *Patriotism and Pacifists in War Time*, in which she countered prevalent claims that pacifists were passive, unpatriotic, isolationist, and cowardly (Addams, 1917). She reiterated the Woman's Peace Party's position that the U.S. should lead efforts to organize an international organization for arbitration. However, her perspective was increasingly unwelcomed. On June 10, 1917, she presented the speech at a class at the First Congregational Church in Evanston, Illinois ("Pacifist Speech," 1917). She was interrupted by Orrin C. Carter, Chief Justice of the Illinois Supreme Court. Although the Chief Justice was Addams's lifelong friend, he objected to the comments, saying, "'I think anything that may tend to cast doubt on the justice of our cause in the present war is very unfortunate. No pacifist measures, in my opinion, should be taken until the war is over'" (as cited in "Pacifist Speech," 1917, p. 1).

Popular support for pacifism diminished as new pieces of legislation strengthened the federal government's control over virtually all aspects of civil society. On August 10, 1917, for example, the Food and Fuel Control Act (1917) authorized federal control of the nation's food supply. This measure enabled President Wilson to establish the U.S. Food Administration, on which future President Herbert Hoover was appointed administrator to oversee national food conservation strategies (Exec. Order No. 2679-A, 1917). The New York branch of the Woman's Peace Party quickly responded with a propaganda campaign against federal initiatives such as food control, conscription, and war bonds ("Women Organize," 1917). The branch's journal, *Four Lights,* declared Herbert Hoover a dictator. Two issues were suppressed by the U.S. Post Office and the organization's members were investigated for connections to Germany.

The success of the nation's food conservation program depended on coordination between government officials, organizations, and communities. This aim would have been impossible without the U.S. Food Administration's Educational Division (Dickson, 1942). The

Educational Division contained numerous specialty sections designed to control popular opinion and promote food conservation, including a Speakers' Bureau under the leadership of Mina C. Van Winkle. Addams (1922) later recognized this as "a line of activity into which we might throw ourselves with enthusiasm, and if we were not too conspicuous we might be permitted to work without challenge" (p. 74). By late September of 1917, Addams joined Van Winkle's roster of talent and toured across the country to support the cause ("Arm of Uncle Sam," 1917). The following month, she represented the U.S. Food Administration at the State Federation of Women's Clubs of Michigan, by which time she had "agreed to speak at various places in the country for this department and is practically accepting no other speaking engagements" ("Women in Wartime," 1917, p. 2). As one editorial observed, Addams's contributions redeemed her reputation in the eyes of many in the public:

> Were it not irreverent we would call Miss Jane Addams 'a good sport.' Miss Addams' views on war are well known, and we entirely disagree with them. But instead of sitting down with them in silent resentment in Hull House, Miss Addams is going about the country speaking to women in favor of Hoover's plan of food conservation. Again she is an example to the rest of us. ("Miss Addams' Example," 1917, p. 8)

d. **Wartime Radicalism**

After the U.S. entered the war, pacifism became increasingly unpopular. The anti-pacifist sentiment was cultivated by federal intervention. On April 13, 1917, President Woodrow Wilson created the Committee on Public Information to control public opinion (Exec. Order No. 2594, 1917). The four-man committee included Secretary of State Robert L. Lansing, Secretary of War Newton D. Baker, Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels, and an enthusiastic civilian journalist named George Creel. Despite the committee's assurances that it opposed

censorship, its pro-American and anti-German propaganda overtook the media. The committee's influence gradually expanded through the creation of three divisions for pictures, films, and publications "for the purpose of stimulating recruiting and patriotic interest in the war; to the end that the utmost cooperation of all citizens in the successful prosecution of the war be secured" (Exec. Order No. 2708, 1917). The Division of Foreign Picture Service was later added to create sympathetic motion pictures for distribution at home and abroad (Exec. Order No. 2774-A, 1917). As Creel (1920) later reflected:

> There was no part of the great war machinery that we did not touch, no medium of appeal that we did not employ. The printed word, the spoken word, the motion picture, the telegraph, the cable, the wireless, the poster, the sign-board – all these were used in our campaign to make our own people and all other peoples understand the causes that compelled America to take arms. (p. 5).

Pacifism soon went from unpopular to potentially criminal. On June 15, 1917, the Espionage Act (1917) prohibited and punished the reproduction and exchange of sensitive information and interference with activities related to national security during wartime. Section 3 criminalized all activities that "cause or attempt to cause insubordination, disloyalty, mutiny, or refusal of duty, in the military or naval forces of the United States, or … willfully obstruct the recruiting or enlistment service of the United States, to the injury of the service or of the United States" (40 Stat. 219, 1917). Political and military leaders were especially concerned with attempts to interfere with conscription. The nation's small standing Army was insufficient to meet the needs of the World War. U.S. participation required an ample supply of inductees. Previous efforts to secure universal military service never gained traction. Instead, President Wilson had settled on a compromise with Selective Service, which initially required able-bodied

men between the ages of 21-30 to register for potential induction into military service, until the age range was expanded to 18-45 the following year (Selective Service Act, 1917; Act of August 31, 1918).

On the day Espionage Act was signed, two prominent anarchists were arrested. Emma Goldman and her partner, Alexander Berkman, were arrested for conspiring to oppose the nation's draft efforts. Goldman was a Russian-born intellectual and anarchist leader who had previously gained notoriety for her arrest and release in connection with Leon Czolgosz's assassination of President William McKinley ("Leon Czolgosz Guilty," 1901; "Local," 1901). After the U.S. entered the war, the pair had formed the No-Conscription League to agitate against the draft. On June 15, 1917, police raided Goldman and Berkman's headquarters in New York and arrested the couple ("Emma Goldman," 1917). They were charged with distributing their anti-conscription manifesto, which outlined the organization's purpose to encourage "conscientious objectors to affirm their liberty of conscience and to make their objection to human slaughter effective by refusing to participate in the killing of their fellow men" (*Transcript of Record, Goldman & Berkman v. U.S.*, 1917, pp. 451-454). Goldman and Berman were convicted and sentenced to two years in prison, after which they were deported to the Soviet Union along with nearly 250 radicals on December 21, 1919 ("249 'Reds,'" 1919).

The increasingly centralized authority of the federal government during World War I reinforced the importance of an already pervasive sense of Americanism – a specialized form of nationalism espousing loyalty to the nation, its history, and institutions (Minott, 1962). The Espionage Act of 1917 had made certain disloyal antiwar activities illegal. The range of potentially criminal offenses was broadened the following year under the Sedition Act (1918), which outlawed virtually any perceived effort to interfere with the country or its institutions –

including sympathizing with enemy nations. Offensive activities were expanded to include uttering, printing, writing, or publishing "any disloyal, profane, scurrilous, or abusive language" (Sedition Act, 1918, 40 Stat. 553). As the war progressed, national efforts shifted to preventing mainstream society's infiltration by un-American interest groups.

On September 19, 1918, fears of a covert foreign campaign in the U.S. led to the formation of a special subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee to investigate pro-German propaganda in the brewing industry (S. Res. 307, 1918a, 1918b). It authorized an inquiry into a longstanding federation of German brewers known as the United States Brewers' Association. The group was accused of procuring a newspaper to manipulate political opinion to strengthen its hold on the liquor industry and advance its pro-German agenda. The resolution authorized the formation of a five-member committee chaired by Senator Lee Slater Overman (D-NC). The Overman Committee's other members were Senators Knute Nelson (R-MN), William Henry King (D-UT), Josiah Oliver Wolcott (D-DE), and Thomas Sterling (R-SD). The committee's interest in the German phase of the investigation was short-lived. After the Armistice on November 11, 1918, resources were soon redirected toward Bolshevik propaganda, which was by then a far greater concern (S. Res. 439, 1919a, 1919b).

In the fall of 1917, the imperial rule of czarist Russia was overturned by Vladimir Lenin and the Bolshevik Party, resulting in years of civil war and social upheaval before the Red Army emerged victorious. After World War I, many feared a similar radical uprising could overturn democratic society in the U.S. The Overman Committee's interest in Bolshevik propaganda was largely influenced by Archibald E. Stevenson's testimony during the pro-German phase of inquiry. Stevenson was a lawyer from New York who had served as chair of the Committee on Aliens for the Mayor's Committee on National Defense during the war and volunteered to assist

the Department of Justice and Military Intelligence Department's investigation into German propaganda (People's Freedom Union, 1920). He would later gain notoriety as an associate legal counsel for the controversial Lusk Committee, which investigated seditious activities and conducted raids in New York from 1919-1920. During his three-day testimony in January 1919, Stevenson argued that intellectuals associated with the pacifist movement had been responsible for much of the pro-German propaganda during the war and had now shifted sympathies to Russia. These radicals were now producing Bolshevik propaganda:

> The corollary of the propaganda which was mentioned this morning, and in which a large number of the persons engaged in the pacifist organizations have taken part and now take part, is what may be generally classified as the radical movement, which is developing sympathy for the Bolsheviki movement, and which in many quarters constitutes a revolutionary movement among the radical element in this country. (S. Rep. No. 66-62, 1919, p. 2729)

Pacifism, Bolshevism, and anarchy were further conflated when Stevenson raised accusations of radical misdeeds by the nation's intelligentsia – a group Senator Nelson defined as "anarchists who confine their operations to brain storms [*sic*] and not to physical force" (S. Rep. No. 66-62, 1919, p. 2716). The witness provided a list of 62 pacifist intellectuals turned radical, which included prominent women such as Jane Addams, Emily Greene Balch, Sophonisba Breckinridge, and Lillian Wald (S. Rep. No. 66-62, 1919, pp. 2782-2785). Stevenson's list experienced extensive reproduction in the press ("62 Are Named," 1919). However, the publicity also came with criticism. Secretary of War Newton D. Baker issued an immediate statement denouncing Stevenson's list and defending Jane Addams:

> In the particular list accredited to Mr. Stevenson there are names of people of great distinction, exalted purity of purpose, and life-long devotion to the highest interests of America and of mankind. Miss Jane Addams, for instance, lends dignity and greatness to any list in which her name appears. (as cited in Fox, 1917, p. 1)

The Overman Committee's investigations did little more than stoke public fears of radicalism in the immediate post-war years. They fueled anti-Russian sentiment in the press and effectively hybridized intellectuals, pacifists, anarchists, and Bolshevists into a common radical enemy in the public consciousness. Allegations directed toward Jane Addams and associates may have been baseless, but they contributed to a residual disdain for radicalism that would hinder women's work in areas such as universal disarmament in the coming years.

2. Post-War Arms Control Debates

a. Limitation of Armament Versus Total Disarmament

In the aftermath of World War I, the allied powers and Germany attended the Paris Peace Conference at Versailles to negotiate terms for peace. Under the chairmanship of U.S. President Wilson, the resulting Treaty of Versailles included a provision to create a League of Nations "to promote international cooperation, and to achieve international peace and security by the acceptance of obligations not to resort to war" (U.S. Department of State, 1947, p. 72). President Wilson fully supported the nation's signing of the Treaty of Versailles, but it was never ratified due to Republican opposition in the Senate by opponents like Senator Henry Cabot Lodge (R-MA; Fox, 1920). As a result, the U.S. never joined the League of Nations. This outcome jeopardized the nation's international credibility in future dialogues on peace and arms control.

The country's failure to join the League of Nations prompted renewed debates over its possible role in leading an international conference on disarmament. This objective was advanced by a corresponding resurgence of activity among pacifist women's groups. Two competing policies had emerged by the end of President Wilson's administration. The first recommended a conference to limit armaments, which was promoted in the Senate and supported by conservative women's organizations. The second plan for total disarmament was advocated in the House and found favor among the more left-leaning pacifist organizations.

The Senate's arms control plan was introduced by Senator William Edgar Borah (R-ID) on December 14, 1920 (S.J. Res. 225, 1920). The resolution authorized President Wilson to initiate a conference between the U.S., Great Britain, and Japan for the specific purpose of reducing naval armaments. Senator Borah's plan was reported favorably from the Committee on Foreign Relations, but progress was interrupted by the end of the 66th Congress (S.J. Res. 225, 1921; S. Rep. No. 66-709, 1921). A new resolution was introduced at the beginning of the 67th Congress as President Warren G. Harding's administration took office (S.J. Res. 17, 1921). The plan was ultimately submitted as an amendment to the Naval Service Appropriations Act of 1922, which passed the Senate with unanimous support on May 25, 1921 (67 Cong. Rec. 1757-1758, 1921).

Members of the press predicted the House would acquiesce and pass Senator Borah's amendment without delay ("Borah Amendment," 1921). They had not anticipated the actions of House Majority Leader Frank Wheeler Mondell (R-WY). A week after passing the House, Representative Mondell made headlines for leading a revolt against Senator Borah's amendment ("House Chief," 1921). The subject had come up during the House's consideration of the Naval Services Appropriations Act of 1922 (67 Cong. Rec. 2089, 1921). Future Vice President John N.

Garner (D-TX) had asked for unanimous consent to reject all Senate amendments excluding Senator Borah's, but Representative Mondell argued this would be impossible because the plan was too "narrow, restricted, and unsatisfactory" (67 Cong. Rec. 2090, 1921). He insisted the conference should include all nations and consider military as well as naval disarmament.

Representative Mondell's position reflected an earlier House blueprint for universal disarmament. On December 21, 1920 – a week after Senator Borah had submitted his original plan in the Senate – Representative Edwin Bruce Brooks (R-IL) introduced a parallel resolution in the House (H.R.J. Res. 424, 1920). The House version was general enough to have authorized the president to convene a conference for all nations to arbitrate universal disarmament. A hearing was held the following month and the plan was soon reported favorably by the House Committee on Foreign Affairs (*Disarmament*, 1921; H.R. Rep. No. 66-1283, 1921; H.R.J. Res. 424, 1921). As the Naval Service Appropriations Bill of 1922 was being discussed in the House, however, Representative Brooks offered an amendment that threatened to withhold funding for the construction of battleships until the President called a disarmament conference (66 Cong. Rec. 3150, 1921; "House Passes Naval Bill," 1921). The strategy was unsuccessful. Initial House efforts for a disarmament plan ended with the 66th Congress. Representative Brooks made a final attempt to advance his plan at the beginning of the next Congress (H.R. 4595, 1921), but his bill was sidelined by the overwhelming support for Senator Borah's amendment in the Senate.

The more liberal White women's organizations of the day rejected Senator Borah's narrow proposal in favor of the House plan for universal disarmament (*Disarmament*, 1921). On January 11, 1921, representatives from organizations such as the WILPF and Women's Peace Society testified at a hearing before the House Committee on Military Affairs (*World Disarmament*, 1921b). Delegates called for decreased defense appropriations and endorsed

Representative Brooks's resolution for an international conference on universal disarmament. Representative John C. McKenzie (R-IL) inquired skeptically whether "the attitude of the women of the country in regard to war and the Army has changed since the adoption of the Nineteenth Amendment" (*World Disarmament*, 1921b, p. 4). In response, Jessie Hardy MacKaye of the Women's Peace Society conceded that women's attitudes had not shifted, but their "possible influence upon Congress has changed" (p. 4).

The threat of a united vote was a favorite tool of another hearing witness – journalist and WILPF member, Harriet Connor Brown. One month before either chamber of Congress considered a formal resolution, Brown authored an article that would later enjoy broad readership during its circulation as propaganda for the WILPF's disarmament efforts (WILPF, 1921). Brown's (1920) essay called on women to use their newly won political enfranchisement to oppose increases in military and naval spending. She especially contested the recent post-war growth of the Army and Navy (National Defense Act, 1920; Naval Service Appropriations Act, 1920). The journalist was outraged that 88% of total appropriations for fiscal year 1921 went to national defense, while only 12% of the budget went to all other expenditures. Federal waste prevented desired reforms in the areas of labor, education, and public health. Thus, Brown (1920) called for women "to eliminate from our parliaments and congresses all those who will not help in the cause of disarmament" (p. 12). This message was reiterated in her testimony for the WILPF, in which she promised to "spend the next two years in an effort to enlighten the women of the world, so that when Congress convenes two years from now it will be a Congress of people pledged to disarmament" (as cited in *World Disarmament*, 1921a, p. 10).

Despite the best efforts of women's pacifist organizations and resistant members of the House, Senator Borah's plan prevailed. Even during moments of opposition in the House,

Representative William Allan Oldfield (D-AR) had noted that attempting to broaden the amendment to include land forces would have been disastrous (67 Cong. Rec. 2090, 1921). In fact, Senator Borah suspected this was the intent of his opponents. Borah criticized the blockade and argued that attempting "to broaden the amendment is to kill the whole amendment" (as cited in "Borah Assails," 1921, p. 2). Representative Stephen Geyer Porter (R-PA) introduced a compromise resolution in an attempt to settle the matter (H.R.J. Res. 143, 1921; H.R. Rep. No. 67-140, 1921). However, Representative Mondell retreated from his former resistance after receiving a letter from President Harding urging action ("Senate's Naval Holiday," 1921). The Borah amendment passed the House on June 29, 1921 (67 Cong. Rec. 3226, 1921). It was signed into law weeks later as section nine of the Naval Appropriations Act of 1922 (42 Stat. 141).

b. **Washington Naval Conference**

President Harding wasted little time in beginning preparations for what would be the Conference on Limitation of Armament. In July 1921, he authorized Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes to invite leaders from Great Britain, Japan, Italy, and France to attend the conference at the nation's capital from November 12, 1921 to February 6, 1922 (S. Doc. No. 67-126, 1922). Most mainstream women's organizations supported the approaching conference. Millions of women endorsed the conference by proxy through their representatives with the General Federation of Women's Clubs, National League of Women Voters, Women's Christian Temperance Union, Women's Trade Union League, National Congress of Mothers, Parent-Teacher Association, YWCA, and American Association of University Women ("Women at Arms Parley," 1921; "Women to Voice," 1921). However, the conference was not universally embraced. Women's pacifist groups like the WILPF, the Women's Peace Society, and the Women's Committee for World Disarmament (WCWD) demanded broader action.

The press dismissed the few dissident women's pacifist organizations as "small groups compromising the extreme left, whose program is complete and immediate disarmament, and who stand for a policy of non-resistance" ("Women at Arms Parley," 1921, p. 2). In truth, the WILPF had initially taken a cautious approach. News of the Secretary of State's invitations broke just before its third Congress of Women in Vienna. The organization endorsed the administration's efforts, but sent President Harding a telegram expressing "hope that in calling this Conference a big step will be taken in direction total international disarmament" (WILPF, 1921, p. 123). The group's optimism dwindled as the conference drew near without any corresponding evidence that universal disarmament would be featured on the agenda.

Proponents of universal disarmament across the nation grew more defiant as the conference approached. In New York, 1,000 women marched down Fifth Avenue on the conference's opening day demanding "immediate, universal and complete disarmament" (Associated Press, 1921, p. 4). The following day, representatives from mainstream women's groups gathered in a mass meeting in the District of Columbia to vote on conference resolutions ("Women to Voice," 1921). Most pledged support for the Harding administration, but the WILPF, Women's Peace Society, and WCWD "tried to stampede the meeting and adopt a drastic resolution calling on President Harding to effect complete disarmament" ("Pacifists Plan Demonstrations," 1921, p. 9). Alice Ames Winter – one of only four official women delegates to the conference – intervened to avert the coup. The following day, representatives from six women's organizations delivered their favorable resolutions to the President ("Women See Harding," 1921). Still, the pacifist groups pledged "to work with undiminished vigor for further radical reductions in army and navy appropriations, and to exert increasing pressure on the Administration to abandon 'half measures' and disarm as the first move toward the abolition of

war" ("Women See Harding," 1921, p. 4). The apparent insubordination was unpopular amid international scrutiny. One editorial criticized the women's lack of support as "inexplicable to those who do not understand the workings of the complex mind of a hysterical pacifist-socialist" ("Pacifists Plan Demonstrations," 1921, p. 9).

Negative feedback failed to deter women's activism for universal disarmament. Jane Addams called a meeting of the American Section of the WILPF once the conference was well underway ("Women to Confer Here," 1921). On December 11, 1921, the WILPF held a mass meeting in Washington, D.C. ("Pacific Agreement," 1921). The organization passed resolutions that opposed the Four-Power Treaty, demanded immediate and universal disarmament, and urged arbitration to resolve disputes. After the meeting, "Officers of the league and members of the audience, led by Miss Jane Addams of Chicago, who presided, marched out of the hall at the conclusion of the meeting carrying banners of protest which they bore in the procession and left on the steps of the Pan-American Building" ("Pacific Agreement," 1921, p. 7).

c. **Supporting Disarmament Without a Record on National Defense**

The WOSL's incorporation hearing before the House Judiciary Committee convened against the backdrop of the Conference on Limitation of Armament, and the related activism of organized women pacifists, on January 12, 1922. The League entered the hearing with a poorly defined record on national defense and a commitment to refrain from agitating for legislation. However, one member's testimony presented a potential contradiction. During the hearing, Margaret Lambie testified that, "While we are talking of disarmament and the horrors of war and hoping that they will never be repeated, we can to some extent influence public opinion of our own country toward the prevention of any future wars" (*Incorporation of Women's Overseas Service League*, 1922, p. 14). The apparent digression came after her brief description

of the District of Columbia unit's hospital visitation work and speculation about the grand possibilities that might be afforded under a national charter. The statement ended Lambie's testimony – seemingly prematurely – as Jenette Smith Kyle abruptly introduced the next speaker.

The significance of Lambie's otherwise innocuous remark is best revealed by earlier events in the organization's quest for Congressional incorporation. Days after the WOSL's charter bill was first introduced in the House (61 Cong. Rec. 2879, 1921; H.R. 7299, 1921), the League met with a representative from the WCWD. The WCWD was established by Emma Wold in the District of Columbia on March 15, 1921. It rapidly joined the WILPF and the Women's Peace Society as one the nation's most influential total disarmament groups. The organization was created specifically "to make the national demand for universal disarmament politically apparent and to focus it upon Congress" ("Woman Army Against War," 1921, p. 15). It sought to accomplish this objective through two activist strategies: "To demand Presidential action in calling an international Conference on World Disarmament … [and] to demand of Congress a reduction of expenditures for armaments" (p. 15). State-level branches formed throughout the spring of 1921 and one such affiliate reached out to the WOSL during its two-day special meeting in Minneapolis (Taaffe, 1921b).

On June 24, 1921, the WOSL attended a lecture on disarmament given by Helen Camp Thomsen, secretary for the Minnesota WCWD ("Russell Urges," 1921; Taaffe, 1921b). Thomsen had been conducting outreach with local women's clubs to persuade them to send disarmament resolutions to President Harding (Dillon, 1921; "Women to Urge Disarmament," 1921). Her efforts were effective. The following day, the WOSL voted to comply with Thomsen's request (Taaffe, 1921a, 1921b). The League ultimately approved a motion to adopt the WCWD's recommendations and thus sent disarmament resolutions to President Harding and Congress.

The WOSL was not alone in endorsing an international disarmament conference, but it aligned itself with an overtly critical organization that viewed the Washington Naval Conference as a half-measure. In following the WCWD's lead, it had inadvertently joined the more radical side of the arms control debate. The League likely had limited affiliation with the group, but it had the disadvantage of being a new women's organization without a public record on national defense to clarify its position. As a result, the WOSL was vulnerable to conflation with the WCWD and allied pacifist groups like the WILPF and Women's Peace Society.

By way of contrast, the Legion waited until two weeks before the conference to announce its support, which it offered with a caveat. In October 1921, it passed a resolution endorsing "the idea of an international armament limitation agreement" (American Legion, 1921c, p. 43). However, its Committee on Naval Affairs immediately issued an important clarification:

> While heartily in favor of the International Conference for the limitation of armaments soon to be held in Washington, D. C., your committee believes that the American Legion demands an adequate navy for the maintenance of our country as a world power and the protection of those policies which are distinctly American. (American Legion, 1921b, p. 44)

Unlike the WOSL, the Legion had been transparent in its support for military and naval preparedness since its beginning. During the war, its members had endured "a bitter experience in the cost of unpreparedness for National defense and the lack of proper training on the part of officers and men" (American Legion, 1919d, p. 36). In less than two years, more than 100,000 U.S. servicemembers had died and twice as many were seriously injured (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2019a). For this reason, the Legion had long advocated for an adequately trained, organized, and strengthened reserve force to supplement a relatively small standing

Army and Navy (American Legion, 1919d, 1920a). The organization was especially persistent in its endorsement of universal military training and compulsory service (American Legion, 1922d, 1922g, 1923e, 1924e). To this end, the Legion endorsed draft legislation throughout the interwar years, while supporting voluntary military training for civilians in Citizens' Military Training Camps and Reserve Officers' Training Corps programs (American Legion, 1920a, 1924e).

After the Washington Naval Conference, organized pacifist women remained frustrated. It was clear that world peace had never been an immediate objective of the conference. Rather, the nation's weak position in the Pacific was a more pressing concern. Japan had ostensibly dominated the Far East for years. Its alliance with Great Britain – which maintained the world's largest Navy – was pending renewal (Earle, 1998). Thus, while the conference included the five Principal Allied and Associated Powers along with several other nations, the U.S. was mostly interested in the naval assets of Great Britain and Japan. The key outcome of the conference was the Five-Power Treaty, which limited the total relative capital ship tonnage of each nation by a fixed ratio of five tons each for the U.S. and Britain, three for Japan, and 1.75 each for France and Italy (Ziemke, 1992). Japan was only persuaded to sign after a non-fortification clause was included to prevent western powers from expanding in the Pacific.

In the end, the Washington Naval Conference did little to promote the universal disarmament. Therefore, some pacifist groups continued to agitate for decreased military and naval appropriations. On April 18, 1922, members of the WILPF testified before the Senate Subcommittee on Appropriations to protest increases to the Army (*War Department Appropriation Bill,* 1922). During the hearing, Mary Winsor of the Religious Society of Friends summarized the pervasive sense of disappointment over the conference's outcomes:

> Now, if you want to know how some of us felt about the Conference for the Limitation of Armament, to us the disarmament conference looked like an international rummage sale. You ransacked the garrets of the Nation and found some worthless old junk in the shape of battleships that were useless some 15 or 20 years ago and scrapped them. We do not consider that limitation of armament. We consider that it might, indeed, mean that the Nation was free to devote themselves to the real business of the world; that it was much more effective to kill off people by poison gases and disease germs than by these antiquated battleships, and that was the chief reason they were scrapped" (*War Department Appropriation Bill,* 1922, p. 5).

There was perhaps an element of truth in Winsor's critique. By 1922, U.S. Navy officials sought the Legion's support in urging appropriations for aggrandizement of naval provisions (American Legion, 1922b). The organization's Naval Affairs Committee argued that, "We condemn ourselves for our passive attitude relative to preparedness of our country's first line of defense, the navy. No Congressman or Senator who has not come forward for a strong navy should receive the support of a single Legionnaire" (American Legion, 1922f, p. 22). Resolutions calling for robust naval appropriations were passed annually (American Legion, 1923a, 1924d, 1925c). The Legion continued to advocate for preparedness because, in the words of U.S. Navy Admiral William S. Simms, "We can be safe against aggression only by being sufficiently prepared to defend ourselves against aggression" (as cited in American Legion, 1924b, p. 11). The organization later formed a World Peace Committee to formulate a position on peace. Its final report recommended an eight-point peace program built on a foundation of military preparedness. Its first two points called for "the maintenance of adequate forces for internal and

external national defense … [and] the prompt enactment into law of the principle of the universal draft" (American Legion, 1925a, p. 30).

C. Finding Alternative Activist Strategies and Objectives

The Senate Judiciary Committee's restriction on Congressional charters – and subsequent refusal to consider the WOSL's request – influenced a pronounced shift in the organization's activism. This transformation was characterized intermittently by strategic accommodation and strategic resistance. Strategic accommodation related to the organization's enhanced loyalty in its execution of public-facing responsibilities. This change included formal revisions to the League's policies on peace and national defense, which were accompanied by an abandonment of its quest for a Congressional charter and an acceptance of a less desirable state charter. Conversely, strategic resistance reflected the organization's calculated planning to obtain congressional recognition and associated rights through alternative means. This redirection was exemplified by the WOSL's new service focus on ex-servicewomen over ex-servicemen, and a willingness to pursue the equal right to care through backdoor, rather than public, channels.

1. Strategic Accommodation

The WOSL's initially amorphous policies on peace and national defense took shape under the leadership of its second national president, Louise Wells. During the war, Wells had served for 16 months as a canteen worker with the YMCA in France ("Louise Wells," 1924). She returned to her native Los Angeles and became the inaugural president of the city's WOSL unit (Sillia, 1978). She soon joined her parents in their move to Chicago, where her father had relocated for his new position as vice president of the Santa Fe Railroad ("Noted Rail Man," 1932). Once there, she became the first president of the WOSL's Chicago Unit and was subsequently nominated for the office of national president ("Overseas Veteran," 1922). Wells

was elected president at the second annual convention in the District of Columbia and began the first of two yearlong terms of service on May 2, 1922 (Clarkson, 1928).

Once in office, Wells immediately sought to demonstrate the WOSL's pledged commitment to Americanism through enhanced public cooperation with more-established external nonprofit organizations and the War Department. To this end, one of her first objectives was to strengthen the League's relationship with the American Legion by pushing "for greater knowledge and acquaintance between the two organizations" ("New Orleans," 1923, p. 9). Her persistence was rewarded. The Legion's commander, Hanford MacNider, invited Wells to deliver an address at the organization's fourth convention in New Orleans on October 19, 1922 (American Legion, 1922f). By all accounts, this arrangement "helped to establish the friendly relations which have ever since been maintained" (Clarkson, 1928, p. 15).

While the WOSL celebrated its improved standing, the Legion wielded its renewed influence to recruit the organization in its struggle "to protect the United States of America against insidious forces which today threaten to undermine our fabric of society" (Owsley, 1923, p. 1). Commander Alvin M. Owsley (1923) invited the League's participation in its war against radical propaganda, appealing "to our sisters who fought with us and who caught the patriotic spirit of 1917 for assistance in our fight" (p. 1). The Legion's struggle against radicalism stretched back to its formative year, when it denounced conscientious objectors and condemned their supporters (American Legion, 1919b, 1919g). The organization's anti-radical zeal ripened after members of the leftist labor union, the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), opened fire on unarmed veterans at the 1919 Armistice Day Parade in Centralia, Washington (Owen, 1919). The subsequent deaths of four Legionnaires prompted calls for "immediate action by every American Legion post for Congressional action on un-American individuals and organizations

and for a national publicity campaign to carry on Americanism" (American Legion Grant Lodge Post No. 17, 1919, p. 25). These events led to the creation of a commission on Americanism, the first objective of which was to "combat all Anti-American tendencies, activities and propaganda" (American Legion, 1919c, p. 39).

The WOSL welcomed the Legion's invitation to join in combat against radicalism. Wells had previously foreshadowed a potential struggle with a new peacetime danger, though she had described it ambiguously as a "subtle undermining of the principles on which the greatness of our nation is founded" (Weeks, 1923, p. 5). Under the Legion's tutelage, the perpetrators of this impending threat were specified as "the forces of radicalism, bolshevism, sovietism and anarchy" (Owsley, 1923, p. 6). The enemy gained further dimension in an essay by WOSL member Mary Roberts Rinehart – a pioneering mystery novelist who had served overseas as war correspondent for the *Saturday Evening Post*. Rinehart (1923) argued that democracy was imperiled by attacks "being largely furthered by women" (p. 9). According to the author, many well-intentioned pacifist women were spreading false propaganda on disarmament and defense appropriations, which ultimately served the radical Bolshevist cause. She urged a program of preparedness to ensure national security, while calling for women's vigilance in identifying radical propaganda.

The Legion's general distaste for radicalism initially made little reference to women. It applied broadly to anarchist, Bolshevist, and pacifist groups (American Legion, 1919c, 1921a, 1922a, 1922e, 1923d). However, the organization subsequently agreed of pacifists that "the most dangerous of these organizations is made up, not of men, but of women. This is the 'Women's International League for Peace and Freedom'" (Powell, 1924, p. 147). On this point, the Legion warned that "the American people should be especially aroused to the disloyal activities of such organizations and agencies as the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, the

Youth Movement, the so-called Workers' Party of America, and the Third Internationale" (American Legion, 1924c, p. 37). The organization's official manual on Americanism later urged counterpropaganda against the WILPF's "un-American, unpatriotic, biased, foolish, dangerous" activities (Powell, 1924, p. 147).

With a multifaceted peacetime enemy articulated, the WOSL's relationship with the Legion flourished under the shared banner of anti-radicalism. The organizations supported each other through resolutions and attendance at conventions (Sturgis, 1923; "WOSL at American Legion," 1923). However, the League's most tangible opportunities to counter radicalism came through its cooperation with the War Department via the Army Hostess Service. During the war, hostesses from civilian welfare organizations such as the American Red Cross, YMCA, and Salvation Army had provided recreational services for servicemembers. This arrangement ended on September 15, 1919, when the War Department assumed responsibility for its own educational and recreational activities under General Order No. 109 (U.S. War Office, 1919). Secretary of War Newton D. Baker soon created the position of Director of Women's Relations to oversee the formation of a peacetime Army Hostess Service. The Director was tasked with implementing a system of recruiting, screening, and training qualified hostesses, who would go on to serve at regular Army posts and summer camps for Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) and Citizens' Military Training Camp (CMTC) programs (Phipps, 1927). Hostesses were intended to offer wholesome alternatives for the recreation, entertainment, and welfare needs of servicemembers, their families, and friends. They also conducted outreach to neighbors surrounding Army facilities to improve popular opinion of training camps.

The Director of Women's Relations also served as a "a medium between the Army and the women of civilian life in all matters connected with military affairs which concern women"

(Phipps, 1927, p. 9). In fact, a key rationale for creating the position was to counter anti-military sentiment among the nation's women. After the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, military leaders feared the political influence of organized women against national defense (Treadwell, 1954). Thus, the Director of Women's Relations was created to "liaison between the War Department and the women of the country and to secure their co-operation by explaining to them that the Army was 'a progressive, socially minded human institution' and that women voters should not 'fanatically demand the dissolution of a ruthless military machine'" (p. 11).

The Army Hostess Service was initially well-liked by soldiers and military leaders ("Official Chaperon Boon," 1921). Early signs of difficulty appeared when Cecelia Cudahy Casserly, the first Director of Women's Relations, resigned after one year (U.S. Army Recruiting Publicity Bureau, 1921). She was quickly replaced by a capable leader in the form of Anita Evans Phipps, the daughter of a retired brigadier general. Phipps had previously worked with the American Red Cross before becoming a departmental supervisor for the Bureau of Women's Relations. Once promoted, she wasted little time in advancing the work of the Army Hostess Service, but she struggled with the recurrent challenge of limited funding. Perennial financial constraints forced her to innovate by relying heavily on recruiting temporary volunteer hostesses – many of which came from within the ranks of the WOSL ("Army Hostess Service," 1923).

The WOSL's relationship with the War Department was solidified through Phipps at its third annual convention in Chicago, June 14-17, 1923 ("Third Annual Convention," 1923). After Phipps addressed the League, Wells recognized the value of increased collaboration with the War Department and cited the Army as a "natural ally" (Third Annual Convention," 1923, p. 3). As a result, the League immediately reorganized itself into nine corps areas to mirror the Army's structure, which was done specifically "to co-operate more closely and efficiently with the

Bureau of Women's Relations of the Army and other government branches" (p. 3). It also formally resolved to serve active servicemembers in response to "the War Department having invited members of the League to be hostesses in the Summer Training Camps" (p. 22).

Many of the WOSL's volunteer hostesses served at summer CMTCs, which trained approximately 35,000 men in 1923 alone (James, 1924). CMTCs offered citizens one month of summer training with no subsequent obligation of military service. They had been authorized by §47d of the National Defense Authorization Act of 1920, which empowered the Secretary of War to establish training camps to prepare for "appointment as reserve officers or noncommissioned officers, of such warrant officers, enlisted men, and civilians as may be selected upon their own application" (National Defense Act, 1920, 41 Stat. 779). At first, training was available to men between the ages of 16-35, but the minimum age was soon raised to 17 (War Department, 1922a, 1922c). Courses were offered at three levels: Red, White, and Blue, which corresponded to preliminary, intermediate, and advanced levels, respectively (U.S. War Office, 1921). The introductory camp was ideal for civilians with no military training, while the intermediate course prepared lower-enlisted reservists to be noncommissioned officers, and the advanced program developed participants into potential officers (U.S. Army, 1922).

After the convention, Wells continued to urge full cooperation with the Army Hostess Service (Wells, 1923). Phipps increasingly depended on League members to supply temporary hostess aides for summer camps as funding continued to dwindle (Phipps, 1924). Annual appropriations had steadily declined since 1921, which left fewer hostesses per Army post (Phipps, 1927). For this reason, the WOSL functioned as a crucial hostess reserve for the summer CMTC and similar ROTC programs (Clarkson, 1928; "Hostess Work," 1926; "Summer Camps," 1926). However, the relationship was not one-sided. It helped to elevate the League's

public profile. For example, the organization enjoyed national publicity after it co-sponsored a national essay contest entitled, "'Why a Young Man I Know Should Attend a Citizens' Military Training Camp'" ("National Essay Contest," 1924, p. 14). In exchange, the WOSL was afforded free press, including a total of "5,460 lines amounting to $27,286" ("Brief Summary," 1924, p. 5). As Wells later reflected, "The contest was a fine piece of service and meant publicity and prestige for the League" (Clarkson, 1928, p. 60).

In addition to its support of CMTCs, the WOSL also collaborated with the War Department in other preparedness measures. One such instance was Defense Test Day. On September 12, 1924, the War Department conducted a National Defense Test, which featured the nation's first simultaneous coast-to-coast radio broadcast (O'Dell, 2006). Throughout the day, military leaders spoke on national preparedness, citizens hosted parades, and pacifists protested. The League supported the occasion from the start ("Defense Test Day," 1924). It pledged full cooperation at its fourth national convention in San Francisco, when it resolved to "endorse the Defense Test and urge all units to co-operate to the fullest extent in their local communities and that an attempt be made to mobilize all overseas women" ("Brief Summary," 1924, p. 5). When Defense Test Day arrived, local WOSL units performed countless patriotic duties – marching in parades, working in canteens, and staffing registration booths ("Defense Day," 1924).

The WOSL's efforts to tighten its association with the American Legion, combined with its increasingly cooperative role in the War Department's activities, began to strengthen its standing as a reputable patriotic organization. Yet, Wells recognized the tenuous nature of such gains. In her final presidential message, she envisioned the League at a crossroads, where it could "become a purely reminiscent organization, or … go on the way appointed by her constitution and become a positive force in the nation for patriotic education, and international

friendship" (Wells, 1924a, p. 36). She saw the war on radicalism as the nascent organization's pathway to a higher purpose. It also provided members with an opportunity to differentiate themselves from pacifist women. In the end, Wells (1924a) acknowledged a shared desire for peace, while advocating a program of military and naval preparedness: "Let us work for peace – and guard against war, not by rendering ourselves supine and impotent before others who may not be so kindly disposed as we are, but by being prepared to enforce peace" (p. 4).

The WOSL's positions on national preparedness and peace were formalized at its fourth annual convention in San Francisco, July 13-16, 1924. Once assembled, Wells "made an earnest appeal to the members not to allow peace movements organized in charge of a few to dictate in America. She urged the members to clarify the issue involved in the question of peace and defense, which she stated was confused by 'wolves in sheep's clothing' supporting ultra-pacificism" (Irwin, 1924, p. 4). Moreover, she implored the League to lead by example:

> It seems to me that it is time that some woman's organization clarify the issue involved in peace and defense, and not allow the movement for peace to be captured by disillusionists who insist that the movement for peace shall be controlled by patriots. It is hoped that the League will see its way clear to render that type of patriotic service which, without flags flying or trumpets sounding, will be commensurate with our service rendered during the World War and equally as important to the preservation of our liberties and our country. (Wells, 1924b, p. 20)

The outgoing president's pleas were embraced by WOSL members. Consequently, the organization's previous ambiguity on matters of peace and national defense were refined through a series of resolutions. The first resolution averted any possible conflation of League women with pacifists-at-large by endorsing national preparedness as the best means of ensuring peace:

> Whereas, the Women's Overseas Service League, an organization with full knowledge of the horrors of war, realizes that universal peace is the paramount issue before the world and is convinced that an adequate National Defense program is an absolute necessity to insure that peace; therefore
>
> BE IT RESOLVED that the Women's Overseas Service League in convention assembled at San Francisco, California, July, 1924, go on record as affirming its belief in the principles of arbitration as a means of settling international disputes, while pledging its support to the United States government in carrying on its program of National Defense. (WOSL, 1924a, p. 11)

The WOSL further differentiated its members from pacifists through additional mandates. Subsequent resolutions codified the organization's obligation to combat pacifism, while vowing to cooperate with all national preparedness efforts. By extension, the League also pledged to broadly support the government in its execution of constitutional duties:

> BE IT RESOLVED, That each member of the Women's Overseas Service League inform herself accurately as to the provisions of the constitution and the function of each branch of the Government, and that each member shall recognize her duty as a citizen and shall be alert to discover false propaganda and active in counteracting it with truth;
>
> And, further, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Women's Overseas Service League assist all efforts of the government to preserve peace and promote good citizenship and, as a means declare itself in favor of an adequate Army and Navy; that it keep constantly before its vision and that of the youth of this nation the old American ideals, respect for the rights of others, protection of the weak, obedience to law and unselfish devotion to

the nation; and that we reiterate our national policy and work with our government along all constitutional lines" (WOSL, 1924b, p. 27).

In a final act of accommodation, the organization officially relinquished its former quest for a congressional charter when it resolved "that the W. O. S. L. proceed to [be] incorporated under the laws of state" ("Brief Summary," 1924, p. 5). During the convention, a special committee was formed to determine the relative advantages of chartering through the various states. Members ultimately discovered favorable provisions under Indiana state law (Act for Incorporation of Societies, 1889). Thus, the League decided to incorporate through Indiana (WOSL, 1931c). The incorporation process was overseen Adah Bush – a member of the Indiana Unit and secretary to the state's governor (Seward, 1929). Less than a year after the articles of incorporation were notarized, a certificate of incorporation was awarded on June 14, 1926 (WOSL, 1931b). Aside from a subsequent scare over a filing error (Taubles, 1930d, 1931c), the WOSL was chartered as a nonprofit organization through the state of Indiana without incident.

2. **Strategic Resistance**

The WOSL's new willingness to accommodate to the needs of the Legion and the War Department corresponded with a subtler shift toward a policy of strategic resistance in activism for its own causes. From its inception, the WOSL considered service to the nation's veterans to be a core aspect of its work. This intent was formalized by a clause in its mission statement, which aimed "to assist in any way in their power men and women who served and were wounded or incapacitated in the World War" (H.R. 7299, 1921, §3). Although the organization was concerned with the wellbeing of all veterans, it described the care of its own ex-servicewomen as the "matter which lies nearest our own hearts" ("Philadelphia," 1922, p. 9). However, this preference was initially supplanted by pressure to cooperate with national efforts

to assist ex-servicemen. For this reason, the organization often highlighted its service to male veterans in the press. As an early newspaper article explained, “The League, as a whole, will lay special emphasis on work for the ex-service men, particularly the wounded, giving individual attention to such needs as allotment, back pay, and employment” (“Women Who Served,” 1921, p. 4).

The WOSL only gradually introduced the idea of ex-servicewomen’s needs into the realm of public consciousness. Statements on service gaps afflicting women veterans were often paired in subordinate relation to the organization’s work with male veterans. For example, Chew utilized this strategy to summarize the group’s focus in an early newspaper interview:

> “Wounded veterans and the unemployed soldiers… we consider our especial care, and we are lending our best efforts to remedy the present bad condition among the unemployed and the lack of sentiment in dealing with wounded heroes. Agencies for service must be established, there is much work to be done, and we hope people have not failed to see that women, too, have suffered from unemployment, some war veterans among them.” (as cited in “Service,” 1922, p. 27)

Chew used a similar strategy with political leaders during the WOSL’s charter hearing before the House Judiciary Committee. After outlining the organization’s work on behalf of ex-servicemen, she reminded representatives of ex-servicewomen’s needs:

> As I said, the purpose is to assist chiefly the wounded veterans of the Great War, and there are a great many of them still in the hospitals. Each local league assists the men in those hospitals. They assist also the women of their own organization who have been incapacitated as a result of service in the war. And we find there are a great many of

> those women who are not assisted sufficiently by the organization with which they worked. (*Incorporation of Women's Overseas Service League,* 1922, pp. 5-6)

A radical shift occurred when the WOSL resolved to elevate the wellbeing of its own ex-servicewomen as its "major interest" (Courtenay, 1923, p. 1). This decision emerged from the organization's third annual convention in Chicago on June 14-17, 1923. In a departure from its previous prioritization of male veterans, the League approved resolutions to undertake a national program in support of ex-servicewomen with disabilities. The organization resolved to pressure the government for a national home and hospital for women, to hold welfare organizations accountable for the care of women they sent overseas, and to assume personal responsibility for all those who could not be served by the government or welfare organizations.

The strategic pivot is largely credited to the advocacy of Alice Fleenor Sturgis, who had come to the convention as a representative from the San Francisco Unit to report on "the tremendous problem of the disabled ex-service woman" (Courtenay, 1923, p. 1). Sturgis was a highly educated former American Red Cross worker who would go on to achieve acclaim as one of the nation's leading experts in parliamentary procedure (McKinney, 1969). She was later described as "the woman who made Robert's 'Rules of Order' obsolete" (Hamilton, 1973, p. 5). Her legacy work, *Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure,* was first published in 1950 and enjoyed longevity in several editions with support by the American Institute of Parliamentarians (Sturgis, 2001). As an experienced educator and lecturer, Sturgis utilized the Chicago convention to share the San Francisco Unit's struggles to serve a growing population of ex-servicewomen in need. There were approximately 200 cases in California alone, accounting for one-third of the nearly 600 cases known to exist throughout the west coast (Courtenay, 1923).

Many League members found news of the increasing demand for relief shocking because the extent of ex-servicewomen's needs was virtually unknown at the time. One reason for this uncertainty was a lack of data. Estimates from the period suggested that there were more than 50,000 women veterans throughout the nation, but this number only included women who had served in formally approved government roles during the Civil War, Spanish-American War, and the recent World War ("Confer," 1923; "National Home," 1924; "U.S. Approves," 1923). It was difficult to determine how many women served overseas during the World War, but later estimates placed the total between 23,000-24,000 (Smith, 1931). Of these, less than half were eligible to receive benefits and hospitalization from the U.S. Veterans' Bureau.

After presenting this new evidence of need, Sturgis persuaded the national organization to reconsider its service priorities, arguing "'that our foundation is not solid so long as we are going on with our own members or women eligible to be members around us in such numbers, actually in need'" (as cited in Courtenay, 1923, p. 1). By all accounts, Sturgis was an effective orator. As Louise Wells Clarkson (1928) later recalled, "Mrs. Sturgis made not only a stirring appeal but practical suggestions as well which quite swept the Convention off its feet, and steps were taken to inaugurate what has ever since been the chief concern of the League – the care of its own disabled women" (p. 16). The decision would bring "a new and stronger interpretation of our reason for being. To care for our own, both now and in the future! A challenge, this, and a tug at the heart of every one of us!" (Wells, 1923, p. 8).

In keeping with Sturgis's recommendations, the WOSL resolved not only to hold external welfare organizations and the federal government accountable for ex-servicewomen's wellbeing, but also to "undertake the care of all disabled overseas women who for some technical reason are debarred from receiving aid from the United States, or from a welfare organization, and also of

those whose disability may not be directly traceable to their service overseas" (Courtenay, 1923, p. 10). This care was made possible by the establishment of an emergency relief fund to provide grants and loans to ex-servicewomen in need. The organization also hoped to create a home for overseas welfare workers with disabilities in Palo Alto ("U.S. Approves," 1923), but such plans never materialized. Without a dedicated home, the fund would become an increasingly important tool for mutual aid after its formalization as the Fund for Disabled Overseas Women (FDOW) at the WOSL's fourth annual convention at San Francisco in 1924 ("Brief Summary," 1924).

The WOSL's program of financial assistance was devised as a last recourse. Prior to tapping its own reserves, the League looked to ex-servicewomen's respective welfare organizations to ensure "that each organization shall definitely undertake to provide for the disabled women who served with it the same care that is extended to the women who served with the United States Army by the Government of the United States" (Courtenay, 1923, p. 10). This provision was overseen by Sturgis as chair of the newly created Committee on Relief of Disabled Ex-Service Women. The committee quickly began a national survey to assess the scope of need among ex-servicewomen who were ineligible for government relief (Sturgis, 1924). The survey's success depended on cooperation by local units, but participation seems to have been mixed. At one extreme, the Wisconsin Unit had advertised in newspapers and mailed more than 300 letters to "postmasters, Y.M.C.A. secretaries, Red Cross secretaries, ex-service women, prominent newspapers, hospitals, etc." ("Wisconsin," 1924, p. 23). Other units contributed little. In the end, the committee reported that only 1,788 of 12,000 surveys were returned, of which only 240 ex-servicewomen reported need resulting from disabilities ("Brief Summary," 1924). From the League's perspective, "The results were gratifying in that they showed the problem to be not so

great as at first feared, California's health-giving climate having attracted the major portion of those who were disabled" (Clarkson, 1928, p. 16).

The League also sent letters of inquiry directly to the Salvation Army, YMCA, American Red Cross, National Council of Catholic Women, Knights of Columbus, and the Jewish Welfare Board to determine each organization's procedures for caring for its own ("What Welfare," 1924). Responses indicated a wide variety in perceived need and services offered. The YMCA was of the opinion "that only the government has resources to care for women disabled as a result of overseas service" (p. 20). Most other organizations reported low need and handled sporadic cases as they arose. However, the American Red Cross had a comprehensive insurance system that paid workers who were disabled overseas $20 per week for up to 100 weeks, as well as allotting permanently disabled workers and survivors a one-time payment of $1,000.

Perhaps the most challenging aspect of the WOSL's new focus was its attempt to hold the government accountable for the care of the nation's women veterans. This aim was first formalized in the organization's 1923 resolution to agitate for "a national home and hospital for disabled and sick ex-service women which shall be open to ex-service women exclusively, upon the same terms that such national homes maintained by the United States Government are open to men at the present time" (Courtenay, 1923, p. 10). The League soon realized that its initial desire for a private branch was untenable and redirected its efforts toward claiming a space from within the existing network of facilities of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers. This objective was complicated by the home's history as an inherently masculine institution. At the same time, male residents were frequently cited for disciplinary violations that clashed with residual Victorian notions of True Womanhood. Concerns over gender appropriateness, combined with persistent uncertainty over extent of need, presented distinct obstacles to securing

ex-servicewomen's equal right to admission to the National Home. The WOSL's success would require a new strategy. Whereas the organization had favored a public-facing approach to activism during its unsuccessful push for a congressional charter, its victory in securing rights for ex-servicewomen at the National Home would depend on backdoor diplomacy.

D. Earning and Maintaining Equal Rights Through Alternative Means

1. Background

The National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers was established at the end of the Civil War to provide long-term domiciliary and hospital care for Union veterans who were, or would become, "totally disabled by wounds received or sickness contracted in the line of their duty" (Act of March 3, 1865, 13 Stat. 510). Originally incorporated as the National Military and Naval Asylum, the organization was renamed as the National Asylum for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers after authorization for the Naval component was rescinded (Act of March 21, 1866). The wording was changed several years later to "National Home" to remove the stigma associated with the word "Asylum" (Act of January 23, 1873, 17 Stat. 417). Over the years, membership was gradually extended to male veterans from other branches and service eras (see Table 10). Criteria were further loosened in 1884 to permit members with non-service-connected disabilities including old age (Act of July 5, 1884). By 1920, membership in the National Home was extended to honorably discharged ex-servicemen from all branches and components who had served the nation during virtually every previous war, campaign, extraterritorial assignment, or period of federal activation, provided they were "disabled by diseases or wounds and by reason of such disability… either temporarily or permanently incapacitated from earning a living" (Act of June 5, 1920, Pub. L. No. 66-246, 41 Stat. 905, 1920).

Table 10

Chronology of Key Veterans' Welfare Legislation, 1789-1930

Year	Month	Day	Legislation	Effect
1789	Sep	29	Act of September 29, 1789 (1 Stat. 95)	Authorized federal pensions for service-connected veterans.
1811	Feb	26	Act of February 26, 1811 (2 Stat. 650)	Authorized funding for naval hospitals. Provided authority for Philadelphia Naval Asylum (Home). Construction began 1827. Opened in 1834. First federal care for veterans.
1851	Mar	03	Act of March 3, 1851 (9 Stat. 595)	Created Military Asylum in Washington, D.C.
1855	Mar	03	Act of March 3, 1855 (10 Stat. 682)	Created Government Hospital for the Insane (St. Elizabeth's) in Washington, D.C. First federal psychiatric hospital.
1859	Mar	03	Act of March 3, 1859 (11 Stat. 434)	Changed name of Military Asylum to U.S. Soldiers' Home.
1862	Jul	14	General Pension Act of 1862 (12 Stat. 566)	Disability payments for veterans, dependents, and survivors for service-connected disabilities. Included tuberculosis and other diseases incurred in service.
1865	Mar	03	Act of March 3, 1865 (13 Stat. 509)	National Military and Naval Asylum established.
1866	Mar	21	Act of March 21, 1866 (14 Stat. 10)	National Military and Naval Asylum renamed to National Asylum for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers.
1866	Jun	06	Act of June 6, 1866 (14 Stat. 56)	Amended Civil War pension system.
1872	Jun	08	Act of June 8, 1872 (17 Stat. 335)	Amended Civil War pension system.

Table 10 (continued)

Chronology of Key Veterans' Welfare Legislation, 1789-1930

Year	Month	Day	Legislation	Effect
1873	Jan	23	Act of January 23, 1873 (17 Stat. 417)	National "Asylum" changed to National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldier to avoid stigma.
1873	Mar	03	Act of March 3, 1873 (17 Stat 566)	Consolidation Act. Amended Civil War pension system to focus on disability rating. Created aid and attendance benefits.
1873	Mar	03	Act of March 3, 1873 (17 Stat. 605)	Authorized federal burial benefits for veterans.
1884	July	05	Act of July 5, 1884 (23 Stat. 120)	Liberalized National Home eligibility to include non-service-connected diseases including old age.
1890	Jun	27	Dependent Pension Act of 1890 (26 Stat. 182)	Liberalized Civil War pension benefits further.
1900	May	26	Act of May 26, 1900 (31 Stat. 217)	Expanded National Home membership to veterans of any war
1901	Jan	28	Act of January 28, 1901 (31 Stat. 745)	Expanded National Home membership to Spanish-American War veterans
1908	May	27	Act of May 27, 1908 (35 Stat. 372)	Expanded National Home membership to veterans of "Indian campaigns"
1912	May	11	Sherwood Act of 1912 (Pub. L. No. 62-155, 37 Stat. 112)	Provided old age pensions to veterans at age 62 regardless of disability.

Table 10 (continued)

Chronology of Key Veterans' Welfare Legislation, 1789-1930

Year	Month	Day	Legislation	Effect
1914	Sep	02	War Risk Insurance Act of 1914 (Pub. L. No. 63-193, 38 Stat. 711)	Created Bureau of War Risk Insurance inside Treasury Department to insure maritime activities.
1915	Mar	03	Act of March 3, 1915 (38 Stat. 853)	Expanded National Home membership to veterans of additional wars and campaigns
1917	Jun	12	Act of June 12, 1917 (Pub. L. No. 65-20, 40 Stat. 102)	Extended War Risk Insurance to merchant officers and crews.
1917	Oct	06	Act of October 6, 1917 (40 Stat. 368)	Expanded National Home membership to veterans of additional wars and campaigns
1917	Oct	06	Act of October 6, 1917 (Pub. L. No. 65-90, 40 Stat. 398)	Extended War Risk Insurance to veterans. Authorized and vocational rehabilitation to veterans with disabilities.
1918	Jun	27	Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1918 (Pub. L. No. 65-178, 40 Stat. 617)	Created Federal Board for Vocational Education. Authorized vocational rehabilitation for honorably discharged veterans.
1919	Mar	03	Act of March 3, 1919 (Pub. L. No. 65-326, 40 Stat. 1302)	Public Health Service assumed care for veterans through government and privately contracted hospitals.
1920	June	05	Act of June 5, 1920 (41 Stat. 905)	Expanded National Home membership to veterans of additional wars and campaigns
1921	Aug	09	Act of August 9, 1921 (Pub. L. No. 67-47, 42 Stat. 147)	Veterans' Bureau established. Assumed veteran-specific services of Bureau of War Risk Insurance, Public Health Service, and Federal Board for Vocational Education.

Table 10 (continued)

Chronology of Key Veterans' Welfare Legislation, 1789-1930

Year	Month	Day	Legislation	Effect
1921	Aug	24	Act of August 24, 1921 (Pub. Res. No. 67-19, 42 Stat. 202)	Renamed Veterans' Bureau to U.S. Veterans' Bureau.
1924	May	19	World War Adjusted Compensation Act of 1924 (Pub. L. No. 68-120, 43 Stat. 121)	Authorized soldier bonuses by location and duration of service.
1924	Jun	07	Act of June 7, 1924 (43 Stat. 519)	Finalized National Home eligibility.
1924	Jun	07	World War Veterans Act of 1924 (Pub. L. No. 68-242, 43 Stat. 607)	Reformed Pension Bureau; claims process; added tuberculosis and other diseases as service-connected if onset before 1925.
1925	Mar	04	Act of March 4, 1925 (Pub. L. No. 68-628, 43 Stat. 1302)	Amended World War Veterans Act of 1924.
1926	Jul	02	Act of July 2, 1926 (Pub. L. No. 69-448, 44 Stat. 790)	Amended World War Veterans Act of 1924. Extended benefits to Spanish-American War nurses.
1928	Mar	26	Act of March 26, 1928 (Pub. L. No. 70-184, 45 Stat. 366)	Amended Act of June 7, 1924. Expanded National Home eligibility to women, nurses who served under contract since April 21, 1898.
1930	Jul	03	Act of July 3, 1930 (Pub. L. No. 71-536, 46 Stat. 1016)	Authorized President Hoover to consolidate U.S. Veterans' Bureau, Pensions Bureau, and National Home into a Veterans' Bureau. No longer subject to articles of War (46 Stat. 1018).
1930	Jul	21	Exec. Order No. 5398 (1930)	Created Veterans' Administration from U.S. Veterans' Bureau, Pensions Bureau, and National Home.

Oversight of the organization fell to the Board of Managers of the National Home, which consisted of three high-ranking ex-officio members (the President of the United States, the Secretary of War, and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court), and nine Congressionally appointed civilian members (Act of March 21, 1866, 14 Stat. 10). The board was authorized to secure property, establish regulations, and appoint local officials to govern regional branch sites. Local officials at each site included

> a governor, a deputy governor, a secretary, and a treasurer, and such other officers as the board of managers may deem necessary, to be appointed from disabled officers serving as before mentioned, and they may be appointed and removed from time to time, as the interests of the institution may require, by the board of managers. (Act of March 21, 1866, 14 Stat. 11)

By the early 1920s, the Board's structure had become a subject of concern in the press. An article in the *Dayton Herald* attributed a series of deficiencies in National Home facilities to the neglectful leadership of the board and its president, General George H. Wood ("Bad Conditions," 1922). In December of 1916, shortly after the board elected General Wood as its new president, the Inspector General had issued a critical report about conditions at the National Home. He cited a laundry list of offenses including misappropriation of funds, cockroach-infested dining facilities, and maltreatment of deceased veterans' bodies. Instead of intervening, General Wood was criticized for being more concerned with accepting reappointment as Adjutant General of Ohio. According to the author, General Wood's unchecked inaction revealed a de facto autocracy that resulted from the inherently honorific nature of board membership:

> All of the powers of the board are delegated to the president of the home between meetings which are dangerously infrequent. The members of the board, such as it is,

> ratify his action and seek the first train home. The President, the Secretary of War and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court are ex-officio members of the board. They have not attended a meeting in years. They are a mere set piece scenery. It is absurd to assume that it is possible for them to devote any time or to take any action in the workings of the Soldiers' home organization or any part in the administration of the home. ("Bad Conditions," 1922, p. 6)

At the time of the article, the board had been in the spotlight over its lack of transparency in the sudden transfer of Colonel Frederick E. Bury, governor of the Dayton Home at the Central Branch in Ohio ("Col. Bury," 1921). Colonel Bury had been an apparently well-liked official until December of 1921, when he was unceremoniously transferred to the Danville Branch in Illinois ("New Governor," 1921). The situation was perhaps exacerbated because it occurred in General Wood's own backyard. Shortly after his appointment as board president in 1916, he had moved the National Home's headquarters from Kansas City to Dayton ("New Soldiers' Home," 1916). After the Board's seemingly arbitrary reassignment of Colonel Bury, approximately 2,500 members and employees of the Dayton Home signed and submitted a petition asking President Warren G. Harding to intervene in his capacity as ex-officio board member ("Unanimous," 1921). The letter objected to what was perceived as a politically motivated transfer:

> We consider Colonel Bury as being possessed of ability and believe that his removal will be harmful to the disabled ex-service men of the various wars, for whom he has shown much solicitude. We believe that the present action of the board of managers, N.H.D.V.S., in causing removal of Colonel Frederick E. Bury is due to partisan politics, and we pray for a prompt reversal of said action in the interests of all of the disabled veterans of all wars. ("Unanimous," 1921, pp. 1-2)

General Wood assured the public that the transfer was apolitical and stemmed from the need to fill vacancies caused by resignations ("Unanimous," 1921). Danville's former governor, Colonel Marcus W. Collett, had purportedly resigned to attend to business interests in Indiana ("Col. Bury," 1921). Still, the public remained unconvinced that this explanation justified removing an otherwise popular official ("Many Protests," 1921). Senator Frank Bartlett Willis (R-OH) and Representative Roy Gerald Fitzgerald (R-OH) were bombarded by "telegrams and letters from Dayton citizens protesting against the arbitrary action of the board in ordering the removal of Colonel Bury" ("Bill in Congress," 1921, p. 1). Even before the recent controversy, Representative Fitzgerald had "been besieged with complaints about the president of the board of managers and the conduct generally of affairs at the central branch home ever since taking his seat in congress" (p. 10). Such criticisms led to investigations and talks of restructuring the National Home's administration, which culminated in legislation before the House ("Bill in Congress," 1921). A joint Congressional committee report to President Harding recommended dissolving the Board of Managers ("Wood Silent," 1922). The report proposed consolidating the National Home – along with other departments such as the U.S. Veterans' Bureau – into a new department. These recommendations were ignored. The Board of Managers retained power and Colonel Bury became governor of the Danville Home on January 1, 1922 ("Col. Bury," 1921).

2. **Entering the National Home Through the Backdoor**

Leaders of the WOSL were determined to forge a niche for ex-servicewomen in the National Home – regardless of its occasional struggles with adverse press coverage. One reason for its appeal was that membership in the National Home promised expanded recognition of veteran status. In 1923, the WOSL found that many of the nation's women veterans were being served by "the county poor farm and the Associated Charities, and certainly no woman

who has served her country should find it necessary to know either of these latter" (Courtenay, 1923, p. 6). Securing the right to space in the National Home would both differentiate ex-servicewomen and bring them closer to equal recognition as bona fide members of the emergent veterans' welfare state. For these reasons, Sturgis deployed Eudora Clover – one of the San Francisco Unit's most well-connected members – to Washington, D.C, in June of 1923. As the decision was later explained, "She went first at the request of Mrs. Eugene Sturgis, President of the San Francisco Unit, her mission being officially sanctioned by the national body, shortly afterwards, in its annual convention" ("National Home," 1923, p. 1).

Eudora Clover was the ideal operative for the WOSL's mission. Born and raised in Washington, D.C., she enjoyed a prestigious heritage that afforded her a privileged upbringing at the center of early Twentieth Century society in the nation's capital ("Pioneer," 1954). In her youth, Clover belonged to a tightly-knit assemblage of Washington society debutantes known as the Big Six – a group that included the future Princess Margaret Draper Boncompagni of Rome ("Society," 1921). The inseparable childhood friends made their debuts during the winter of 1909-1910 ("In the World," 1909; "Cotillion," 1910). As preeminent socialites of their day, "The other debutantes were glad to follow in their wake… and eagerly picked up a few crumbs of attention now and then when needed for a big ball or such affair" (Brooks, 1923, p. 62).

Clover's father was Rear Admiral Richardson Clover, a career officer with 22 years in the Navy, who was well-connected to the political and military elites of Washington society ("Rear Admiral Clover," 1919). Her mother, Mary Eudora Miller, was the sole daughter and heiress to the estate of the late U.S. Senator John Franklin Miller of California ("Mrs. Mary E. Clover," 1920). Senator Miller was an abolitionist, lawyer, Civil War hero, and wealthy businessman who made his fortune with the Alaska Commercial Company ("Senator Miller,"

1886). Despite the risk of being lost in the shadows of such notable ancestors, Clover was highly regarded in her own right. According to one contemporary writer, she was a credit to her distinguished heritage and served as an exemplar of "the type of woman produced by the times and by the dignities conferred on her sex by the nineteenth amendment" (Downing, 1921, p. 11).

During the war, Clover's proficiency in French enabled her to serve as translator – first for the Army War College on the Home Front, and then with the Red Cross in Paris from 1918-1919 ("Midsummer," 1918; "Return," 1918, "Society," 1919a). Her wartime service was characterized in glowing terms:

> She won golden opinions, both from the officers down there, many of whom were her personal friends, and from the humblest of the war workers, not one of whom was more regular and more faithful at her desk, for her 'lack of frills' and her friendly readiness to do any one of them a kindness. ("Washington Society," 1922, p. 12)

Clover's parents died shortly after her return from Europe ("Rear Admiral Clover," 1919; "Mrs. Mary E. Clover," 1920). She relocated to California after inheriting her maternal grandfather's sprawling ranch at Cloverdale. Once there, she dedicated herself to completing a program at the California College of Agriculture to ensure the efficient management of her new property (Downing, 1921; "Society," 1921). It was around this time that Clover connected with the San Francisco Unit of the WOSL, which had been contemplating a solution to the problem of the growing number of ex-servicewomen with disabilities in California ("U.S. Approves," 1923).

In June of 1923, Clover travelled to the nation's capital "committed to one great purpose: Securing a separate national sanitarium for disabled ex-service women" ("National Home," 1923, p. 1). Since moving to California, Clover had maintained relationships with her network of influential acquaintances back home by spending summers in the District of Columbia (Hunt,

1922; Eliot, 1922a, 1922b; Love, 1922). During the previous summer, for example, she had attended the National Capital Horse Show at Arlington Park alongside numerous dignitaries, including the object of her present mission, Secretary of War John Wingate Weeks ("Harbell," 1922). Appointed by President Harding in 1921, Secretary Weeks was a veteran naval officer and former politician who had served as both U.S. Representative and Senator from Massachusetts ("Weeks," n.d.). As an ex-officio member of the Board of Managers, the Secretary of War was a logical point of contact with which to begin a dialogue about the WOSL's ambitions.

Throughout the summer of 1923, Clover worked with the Secretary of War and countless other "government officials" ("U.S. Approves, 1923, p. 6). According to one account, "Secretary of War Weeks… showed a very splendid attitude of co-operation but the burden of proof was upon the Women's Overseas Service League" ("National Home," 1923, p. 1). To this end, Clover appears to have been a skilled diplomat. An anonymous official later testified to her finesse in persuading bureaucrats to embrace her cause:

> Miss Clover not only provided the data showing the need for government action, but also tactfully and thoroughly presented the matter to the Secretary of War, and aroused in him a live interest in the matter.
>
> During her stay in Washington, Miss Clover showed tact, resourcefulness, knowledge of facts, and keen appreciation of what was needed, all of which resulted in obtaining this privilege for disabled ex-service women. ("A Peace Time," 1923, p. 5)

The rapid effects of Clover's influence can be detected in a U.S. Veterans' Bureau bulletin that described proceedings of the July meeting of the Board of Managers:

> The board, after discussion, were unanimously of the opinion that such honorably discharged ex-service women came fully under the eligibility clause of home membership, and while fully appreciating the fact that the present facilities of the home had not been designed nor intended for the care and treatment of women, instructed the executive officers that every effort must be made to meet this new demand on the service and to care for the honorably discharged ex-service women who are in need of the home.
>
> While at each branch there will be a local situation to meet and it is quite probable that different plans will have to be adopted at the different branches, still it is the wish of the board of managers that the governors and medical directors of the various homes should bend every effort to meet this situation and to furnish the proper facilities for the care and treatment of ex-service women. (Rogers, 1923, paras. 1-2)

A key challenge to domiciling ex-servicewomen related to uncertainty over the extent of need. The Secretary of War's office estimated that approximately 1,000 ex-servicewomen were eligible for care at the National Home ("National Home," 1923). The WOSL believed the need was much greater, arguing that one-quarter of the 52,000 eligible ex-servicewomen of the Army, Navy, and Marines had some level of disability ("U.S. Approves," 1923). However, only two ex-servicewomen had applied for relief up to that point ("Confer," 1923). Thus, the League's original desire to obtain a separate home and hospital for ex-servicewomen was abandoned early on "in view of the comparatively few women claiming such attention at this time" ("U.S. Will Aid," 1923, p. 10). Instead, Clover worked to secure dedicated space at an existing branch.

Immediate action was delayed due to the logistical challenges associated with providing domiciliary care for ex-servicewomen. As one writer put it, "Since the homes were designed for men veterans [,] an interesting situation might develop, unless a segregated barracks be

provided" ("Confer," 1923, p. 5). Clover and Secretary Weeks worked to resolve logistical considerations throughout the summer before calling General Wood to finalize arrangements in September. The trio agreed on the plan to dedicate barracks for ex-servicewomen at one of the National Homes, which was subsequently approved at the September meeting of the Board of Managers. Shortly thereafter, the San Francisco Unit received the news in separate telegrams from Clover, Secretary Weeks, and General Wood ("National Home," 1923). Sturgis and Mildred Bloomfield Taubles, a fellow Californian and future president of the WOSL, quickly contacted the media to announce the organization's victory in obtaining care in the National Home ("U.S. Approves," 1923). Clover's efforts had resulted in swift victory – nearly three months since the WOSL's resolution at the Chicago convention. As Louise Wells confessed, "We little dreamed, at the Convention, that this part of our program would be so speedily and almost miraculously accomplished" (Weeks, 1923, p. 8).

a. **Settling the Danville Home**

The Danville Branch of the National Home in Illinois was selected as the primary location "for the care of ex-service women… entitled to admission to the home and in need of general hospital treatment or domiciliary care" ("National Home," 1923, p. 1). While additional space was allocated for advanced cases at the new tubercular hospital at the Northwestern Branch in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the WOSL prioritized activities at Danville. Authorized as the eighth branch of the National Home in 1897 (Act of June 4, 1897), the site was developed the following year on approximately 325 acres in Danville, Illinois – in the central part of the state near its eastern border with Indiana. The campus would ultimately house a complex of nearly 60 buildings, "including 14 barracks, all brick, [with a] maximum capacity [of] 2,016 members; [and] 1 hospital building, brick, [with a] maximum capacity [of] 288

patients" (H. R. Rep. No. 71-546, 1931, p. 165). On average, there were 1,338 members present at Danville between July 1, 1922, and June 30, 1923 (H.R. Rep. No. 70-84, 1928).

As was the case at other branches of the National Home, Danville's residents were clad in government-issued uniforms and subject to the Articles of War until the National Home's absorption by the Veterans' Administration in 1930 (Act of July 3, 1930, 46 Stat. 1018). Throughout its history, disciplinary issues at the National Home often involved alcohol. During Danville's first year of operation, for example, nearly two-thirds of arrests for major and minor offenses involved drunkenness (H. R. Rep. No. 56-106, 1899). In the years leading up to Prohibition, contraband liquor and drunkenness remained the most prevalent member offenses (H. R. Rep. No. 65-577, 1917; H. R. Rep. No. 65-1560, 1918; H. R. Rep. No. 66-365, 1919). These infractions became more serious once the Eighteenth Amendment and related legislation were enacted (U.S. Const. amend. XVIII; National Prohibition Act, 1919).

In December of 1921, shortly after the initial controversy over the Board of Managers' lack of transparency in transferring Colonel Bury from Dayton, a new scandal surfaced when Danville's canteen manager and janitor were arrested, along with a member of the home, for alcohol-related offenses ("Manager," 1921). Garland Stone, a resident of the home, had been arrested for intoxication. Once sober, he led authorities to his supplier, which happened to be the Danville Home's canteen, where "straight alcohol, white mule and alcohol… [had] been on sale for some time" ("Manager," 1921, p. 3). The case was turned over to federal authorities to investigate the Home's potential connection to bootlegging operations in Chicago.

The controversy was perhaps an ill omen for Colonel Bury's prospects as governor. Drunkenness and ties to the bootlegging industry remained serious concerns. The situation had become unmanageable in the weeks preceding the Board of Managers' selection of Danville as

the site for ex-servicewomen's domiciliary care. In August of 1923, William O'Brien, a resident of the Danville Home, was abducted and tortured by bootleggers ("News Nuggets," 1923). The Spanish-American War veteran, who had purportedly served as an informant for authorities, was "dumped from an automobile nude in front of the entrance to the National Home grounds" (p. 7). Colonel Bury was uncooperative in subsequent investigations and attempted to scapegoat Danville's chaplain ("Soldier Home Officers," 1923). According to one article, "The governor is said to have charged that the chaplain was failing to cooperate with him in the administration of affairs in the home and the chaplain had testified that drunkenness and immorality existed to an alarming extent in the home" (p. 1). In the end, the Board asked for the resignations of both officials. Colonel Bury complied and was replaced briefly by an interim governor until a permanent replacement could be transferred ("Soldiers Home Governor," 1923).

b. **Preparing the Home**

Danville's troubles did not deter the WOSL from proceeding with preparations for ex-servicewomen's inclusion in the home. The organization worked with officials from the U.S Veterans' Bureau and the National Home throughout the fall of 1923 to ensure a smooth transition (Associated Press, 1923; "Overseas Women Hear," 1923; "Women Are Made Eligible," 1923). One potential challenge to this objective was making ex-servicewomen aware of their eligibility. Prior to the Board's decision to authorize the equal right to care in the National Home, honorably discharged ex-servicewomen were only entitled to assistance from the U.S. Veterans' Bureau – and only if they had a service-connected disability rating of at least 10% ("Soldier's Homes to Admit," 1923). The National Home was an entirely separate institution with its own eligibility criteria. After the WOSL's victory, ex-servicewomen were, in a sense, "on an equal footing with ex-service men" ("U.S. Will Aid," 1923, p. 10).

However, this applied only to the National Home. There remained potential for confusion over the fact that the organization was separate from the U.S. Veterans' Bureau. Moreover, the National Home's longstanding reputation as an exclusively male domain, combined with its recent publicity for administrative and legal scandals, served as further barriers to attracting ex-servicewomen in need.

Concerns over awareness of the new eligibility criteria were set aside momentarily when Lucretia Davis's admission to the Danville Home was announced in October of 1923 ("U.S. Soldiers' Home," 1923). Davis – whose husband had purportedly been an undertaker involved with Abraham Lincoln's funeral services in 1865 – had served the Union Army as a nurse during the Civil War. Her admission to the Danville Home was heralded as "a precedent, as she… [was] the first woman to be granted such a privilege" (p. 1).

The WOSL had reason to believe that Davis's admission would be the first of many. The government had previously estimated that approximately one thousand ex-servicewomen would be eligible for admission to the National Home due to disability or old age ("National Home," 1923). This estimate was reinforced by subsequent data from the U.S. Veterans' Bureau that revealed that 1,357 ex-servicewomen were receiving service-connected disability compensation, of which 11% of cases were for permanent total disability and 62% were for temporary partial disability compensation (Red Cross Courier, 1924). Thus, the WOSL readied itself for a potential onslaught of admissions to the Danville Home.

In early November of 1923, the WOSL formed a committee under the leadership of Louise Wells to work with General Wood, "to perfect arrangements for the reception of disabled women comrades" ("Women Are Made Eligible," 1923, p. 1). Direct contact with the president of the Board appears to have been rare. The organization likely had more frequent dealings with

Danville's local officers. In the early months, the WOSL made several visits and reported that things were "progressing nicely" ("National Home," 1924, p. 7). On one occasion, the WOSL invited a local dignitary, former U.S. Speaker of the House, Joseph Gurney Cannon (R-IL). Uncle Joe, as he was affectionately known, had been responsible for securing Danville as the site for the National Home's eighth branch in 1897 ("Calhoun," 1897). The organization also invited a photographer to publicize the event. Despite such media savvy strategies, only three ex-service women had applied to Danville by August of 1924 ("Does Your Community," 1924). As a result, the WOSL issued the following appeal to its members:

> Probably though lack of information, only three ex-service women have as yet applied for quarters in the National Military Home at Danville, Illinois. The home is available for women of the Army, Navy and Marine[s], who have no means of support, and who have some disability that prevents them from earning their living. They must have an honorable discharge.
>
> Are you sure that the women in your state know this? It would be advisable to check up with your local newspapers and social welfare agencies, so that no one will be without this valuable information. (p. 19)

The WOSL was convinced that low utilization stemmed from a lack of information rather than a lack of need. However, the National Home faced vacancy issues beyond Danville. In its annual report before the U.S. House Committee on Military Affairs, the Board of Managers revealed that "there were in the various branches of the home on June 30, 1925, 2,765 vacant beds in barracks, 1,008 vacant beds for general patients in the hospitals, and 912 vacant beds for tuberculosis patients" (*National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers*, 1926, p. 38). A similar trend was occurring at the new specialty hospital at the Northwestern Branch of the National

Home in Milwaukee, where space had been dedicated for ex-servicewomen with tuberculosis. The hospital had been constructed on more than five acres of a 55-acre apple orchard between 1922 and 1923 and featured a library, movie theater, and occupational therapy department (Patten, 1924). As such, it was described as "more of a home and less of an institution" (p. 13). Yet, only 254 of the hospital's 662 beds had been filled in its first year, and only four ex-servicewomen had been admitted since becoming eligible in September 1923.

In constructing the new tubercular hospital at its Northwestern Branch, the National Home had likely anticipated a situation similar to the one occurring at U.S. Veterans' Bureau hospitals, where the demand for hospitals specializing in tuberculosis treatment outweighed supply. Tuberculosis was a leading cause of hospitalization among all veterans. In fiscal year 1924, a total of 19,127 U.S. Veterans' Bureau patients were admitted to government hospitals for tuberculosis, representing approximately 30% all 64,053 hospital admissions for the year (H. R. Rep. No. 68-451, 1924). Although 15 of the bureau's 44 hospitals specialized in the tuberculosis treatment, it soon became apparent that there was insufficient space to handle growing needs. Three new specialty hospitals were authorized over the following year. The rationale was explained in further detail by the U.S. Veterans' Bureau's annual report for fiscal year 1925:

> During the past fiscal year, Hospital No. 96, Tupper Lake, N. Y, Hospital No. 98, Castle Point, N. Y., and Hospital No. 102, Livermore, Calif., were opened, making an addition of 1,117 beds for tuberculosis beneficiaries to the 6,386 beds which were already available. The opening of the two hospitals in New York state relieved an excessive demand for hospitalization in that section of the country which has the largest ex-service population. The new hospital in California relieves the pressure in the southwest, not only

> from the native population, but also from the large number of migratory patients. (H. R. Rep. No. 69-59, 1925, p. 51)

By 1924, data suggested disproportionate rates of hospitalizations for tuberculosis among ex-servicewomen (Red Cross Courier, 1924). Nearly 40% of the U.S. Veterans' Bureau's 373 female beneficiaries were due to pulmonary or other forms of tuberculosis (H. R. Rep. No. 68-451, 1924). In recognition of this trend, a building was reserved for nurses afflicted with tuberculosis at the new U.S. Veterans' Bureau's Hospital No. 102 in Livermore, California. Colonel Rawls, the commanding officer, is credited with making the determination to offer dedicated space to ex-servicewomen (Taubles, 1925). Incidentally, the commander also asked the San Francisco Unit of the WOSL to assist with decorating and furnishing the ward. The unit raised $2,000 and set about "transforming the first Veterans' Hospital Building for disabled nurses in the West, from a 'hospital' in to a 'real home'" (p. 10). Livermore Cottage was dedicated during a ceremony held in September of 1925, which was attended by approximately 500 people including the facility's 20 new patients ("Livermore Cottage," 1925).

c. **Overcoming Administrative Barriers at the Home**

Undeterred by initially low utilization rates, the WOSL proceeded with plans to improve conditions for current and future ex-servicewomen at the two National Home facilities. While direct involvement with the Northwestern Branch was typically left to the local Wisconsin Unit, the Danville Branch was foremost in the national organization's heart. The League's ambitions for the latter were constrained early on by an apparently poor working relationship with the home's new governor (Mankin, 1929). Colonel John A. Hadley had been transferred to Danville from the Eastern Branch at Togus, Maine, on January 1, 1924 ("News," 1923). After his reassignment to fill the vacancy left by Colonel Bury's departure, the new

commander spent the next two years attempting to restore the order and discipline that had been lacking in his predecessor's troubled administration. To this end, a 1926 report by the Inspector General's office testified that "the governor is forceful and energetic and the branch under his able administration has become a smooth-running institution" (H. R. Rep. No. 69-563, 1926 p. 20).

Colonel Hadley's rigid leadership style may have pleased government officials, but it left little room for the WOSL's innovations. It was likely with a measure of relief that the organization received news of the governor's transfer to the Sawtelle Home of the Pacific Branch on December 1, 1926. (H.R. Rep. No. 70-84, 1928). According to officials, the transfer was "made in conformity with the rule of the board of managers to rotate the commanders" ("Marshall," 1926, Part II, p. 8). Regardless of the rationale, the WOSL's president, Helen Douglas (1927), wasted little time in meeting with the incoming governor, Colonel Oliver K. Marshall. Any optimism about the League's prospects with the new governor must have faltered when she was informed

> very firmly, but courteously, that he was running the Home. In other words, he did [not] care to have our organization or any other interfering with his administration. However, he said that if we had any suggestions to make that he would always be glad to receive them, but I pretty jolly well knew that if he should not consider such suggestions practical or constructive, that they would soon rest calmly in the trash basket. (pp. 9, 37)

Fortunately for the WOSL, Douglas's first impressions were quelled during a subsequent visit by the organization's liaison to the home. Ethel Mills was a member of the local Chicago Unit who had served as the League's representative at Danville over the previous year. After her

own meeting with Colonel Marshall, Mills (1927) described the new governor in more encouraging terms:

> It didn't take me long to realize that Gov. Marshall truly lives up to his first two initials; I found him a man with the kindest interest and intentions for the disabled ex-service women in his charge — willing to listen to their seeming needs and to grant them insofar as it seemed consistent to him with a military-run home. Gov. Marshall extended me a most cordial welcome and a hearty invitation to return. (Mills, 1927, p. 11)

Mills's instincts proved accurate. Little by little, the WOSL "re-established diplomatic relations with the Home in Danville" (Mankin, 1929, p. 24). The organization's relationship with Colonel Marshall improved throughout his tenure and he later confided that the League's "interest and efforts toward the social contentment and pleasure of the women here… [were] deeply and most sincerely appreciated" ("Gov. Marshall," 1928, p. 23).

d. **Struggling with Gender-Inappropriate Accommodations**

The WOSL may have been energized by its strengthened relations with Danville's new administration, but it remained disappointed that it had not been possible to seek a separate home and hospital "open to ex-service women exclusively" (Courtenay, 1923, p. 10). By 1927, the organization was frustrated by the challenges of working with a second-hand space that was not originally designed for ex-servicewomen's benefit. As Mills (1927) vented:

> The National Home for Disabled Voluntary Soldiers at Danville is designed and planned as a home for ex-service MEN. They make women as comfortable as they can in buildings especially designed for men. Some day I hope we will have a National Home for Disabled Voluntary WOMEN soldiers, designed and especially planned for WOMEN. I know, however, this will take time. It is so interesting to see the look of surprise that

> comes to the face of the average person when disabled ex-service WOMEN are mentioned. I don't think it has ever occurred to people that there might be disabled ex-service WOMEN as a result of the war…
>
> Think of the years of service some of these army nurses have given our country! Several of the members of the Home are both Spanish American and World War nurses. It does not seem to me that we are expecting too much of our Government when we hope some day to have comfortable and appropriate quarters for these 'women soldiers' who have served the country — some of them through two wars— and given their best years to nursing our soldiers. (p. 11)

One reason for the WOSL's dissatisfaction with existing accommodations was that they failed to consider ex-servicewomen's privacy needs. The layout of the women's barracks at Danville had been a recurrent concern since its allocation at the end of 1923. Women were domiciled together in Barracks Number 6, which was an existing structure that had once housed male veterans (Stratton & Mansberger, 2003). The building had been selected with seemingly little forethought for ex-servicewomen's unique needs. For example, the women's rooms were not properly enclosed by floor-to-ceiling walls. This open floor plan was a common feature of "the old barrack type, built for soldiers" ("Danville Home Demands," 1926). Douglas (1927) described how the space had been adapted using dividers to create makeshift rooms:

> The women have a barrack to themselves. Their sleeping quarters are on the first floor of this barrack. An effort has been made to give each woman some privacy. Beaver board partitions have been erected in one part of the first floor to form small bedrooms. These do not extend all the way to the ceiling, and therefore while they do afford privacy, they do not give the occupant quiet.

> The women do not eat with the men. They do not have do [*sic*] go outside for their food. One of the women's barrack has been fitted with a kitchen and dining room…
>
> Most of the women in the Home are elderly and nervous. I wish it were possible for each to have a room to herself. This would not only be good for the women, but would react to the benefit of the authorities at the Home as it would diminish some of the internal misunderstandings that are bound to exist in every institution.
>
> It would give each woman a place in which she could get away from the rest of the world when she wanted to be absolutely alone. But with the building constructed as it is makes the construction of individual rooms a very difficult proposition. (p. 9)

The WOSL remained hopeful that the future would bring "a large HOME especially designed for women – a home where each can have her own little corner, her own little window" ("Hospitalization Sought," 1927, p. 39). However, there was little indication that this outcome would arrive anytime soon. Danville's utilization trends remained underwhelming. On August 1, 1927, during a visit by the Inspector General, there were only "18 women, of whom 14 were present— 4 in hospital and 10 in barracks" (H. R. Rep. No. 70-155, 1928, p. 18). Thus, it was with an awareness of the impossibility of the vision for the time being – rather than any external opposition – that the organization shelved its long-range goals for a separate home and hospital.

e. **Saving and Formalizing Women's Right to Care in the Home**

The WOSL was soon confronted by a more pressing concern when the eligibility of the National Home's previously admitted female members was questioned. On August 10, 1927, the Assistant Comptroller General, Lurtin R. Ginn, issued a surprise ruling that reversed the original decision on women's entitlement to care at the National Home (A-19062, 7 Comp. Gen. 101, 1927). After assessing extant legislation, he found that Army nurses were

ineligible for membership. This interpretation was based on the premise that the relevant law only authorized care for "honorably discharged officers, soldiers, sailors, or marines" (Act of June 7, 1924, 43 Stat. 519, 1924). Ginn cited previous legislation to demonstrate that nurses were distinct from the aforementioned personnel. He announced that "unless more specific authority than now contained in the statutes is granted for the admission of nurses to the home, credit will not be allowed for such expenditures after June 30, 1928" (A-19062, 7 Comp. Gen. 101, 1927).

The ruling presented an obvious problem for the ex-servicewomen who had been granted admission to the home since 1923. Senator David A. Reed (R-PA) summarized the situation during a subsequent debate in the House: "There are about 30 of these old ladies in the home now, and it was believed by everybody that they had a right to be there, but the Comptroller General recently ruled that a strict construction of the law would not permit them to be there" (69 Cong. Rec. 5049, 1928). Ginn's ruling was also troublesome for the Board of Managers, which had previously authorized care for ex-servicewomen. As General Wood explained, the original determination had been made only after he and Secretary Weeks had received "an opinion from the Judge Advocate General that they [Army nurses] were clearly covered by the eligibility clause, because there was nothing masculine in our eligibility clause" (*National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers*, 1928, p. 25). Without legislative amendment, officials feared now that the women members of the National Home "would 'get the gate'" (p. 25).

To avoid what would likely amount to a public relations nightmare, Secretary of War Dwight F. Davis submitted a letter to the House Committee on Military Affairs requesting an amendment on October 18, 1927 (H. R. Rep. No. 70-249, 1928). The Secretary of War's bill was introduced by Representative John Mary Morin (R-PA), chair of the House Committee on Military Affairs, on December 5, 1927 (H.R. 232, 1927). The legislation was amended after

consultation with Major Julia C. Stimson, the Superintendent of the Army Nurse Corps (H. R. Rep. No. 70-249, 1928). With additional support by the WOSL in collaboration with the Committee of Nursing Heads of Government Departments ("National Headquarters Corner," 1928), the bill passed both chambers rapidly and without objection. It was signed into law in an Act of March 26, 1928 – months ahead of the Assistant Comptroller General's deadline.

The new law formalized eligible ex-servicewomen's equal right to care in the National Home for the first time in U.S. history. As the WOSL assured, "This bill prevents any woman being deprived of her home rights in any national soldiers' home, and that all such women who are living in such homes at present, or who go to them in the future, are safe from now on if they desire to remain in such homes" ("Domiciliary Care," 1929, p. 3). On a deeper level, it also authorized veteran status for a wide array of ex-servicewomen under one law. After the Act of March 26, 1928, women veterans who were eligible for care in the National Home included

> "Honorably discharged officers, soldiers, sailors, or marines, including women commissioned or enlisted, and Army and Navy nurses under commission, enlistment, appointment, assignment, or contract since April 21, 1898, who served in the regular, volunteer, or other forces of the United States, or in the Organized Militia or National Guard when called into Federal service, and who are disabled by disease or wounds and who have no adequate means of support, and by reason of such disability are either temporarily or permanently incapacitated from earning a living" (Pub. L. No. 70-184, 45 Stat. 366, 1928).

f. **Maintaining the Home**

Earning formal entitlement to care in the National Home was the crowning achievement of the WOSL's efforts to ensure government responsibility for ex-servicewomen in

the interwar years. Once legislation was secured, the WOSL's subsequent involvement with the home was primarily concerned with transforming the existing space at Danville into a more hospitable environment. The organization had long aspired to redress the home's dismal interior decoration, citing the "need for home-y furnishings, the kind which mean joy and comfort to a woman" ("Danville Home Demands," 1926, p. 17). This sentiment was recalled when Douglas (1927) observed drab rugs throughout the barracks and "asked the Governor if he would mind our giving some livelier and gayer rugs for these compartments" (p. 37). She took Colonel Marshall's approval as a sign that he also would not "mind if we put up gay little curtains at the windows" (p. 37).

In addition to brightening the home's décor, the WOSL attempted to improve the morale of ex-servicewomen through entertainment and visitation – especially on birthdays and holidays ("Danville Birthday," 1928; "Danville Celebrates," 1928). During Christmas of 1927, for example, WOSL units contributed funds to purchase gifts for Danville's residents. Presents included items like magazine subscriptions, candlesticks, bar pins, and silk stockings ("News," 1928). The League also hosted a winter birthday dinner featuring a Dominoes tournament, where the winner walked away with a leather sewing kit and the runner-up won a fortune telling book.

Arts and crafts had always featured prominently in ex-servicewomen's daily lives at the Danville Home (Wells, 1923). Residents created a steady stream of products during their vocational rehabilitation and occupational therapy programs (Mills, 1927). The WOSL supported them by procuring raw materials and helping to sell their finished products. The demand for supplies increased when the women took up rug-making in 1929 ("News of Danville," 1929). This need inspired one of Edna Braun's first actions as Danville's new liaison, which was to solicit old silk garments to support the women's craft. Her initial request became a full-fledged

campaign spanning several years (Braun, 1929). Appeals for donations were published regularly in the pages of *Carry On*. As one advertisement proclaimed, "No longer need you sigh with regret when you discover a run in your silk stockings or a rough chair pulls a thread and starts matters going. Instead, you can sooth [*sic*] your economic soul with the thought that they will do somebody some good" ("Don't Throw Away," 1929, p. 16). Upon receipt, Braun washed and dyed all donated fabrics before presenting them to the women at Danville. Subsequent visits confirmed that the garments were being utilized to their full potential ("Danville Report," 1929).

The WOSL also worked to interest other veterans' organizations in collaborating at Danville, but outside support appears to have been limited to a few local groups such as the Danville American Legion Auxiliary, the Jane Delano Post No. 185, and the Mars-sur-Allier Post No. 270 of the American Legion ("Danville Winds Up," 1928). The limited attention from regions beyond Illinois did not go unnoticed. As one of Danville's residents shared, "'Some of the biggest states never remember us at all'" ("Danville Has Easter," 1929, p. 23). Still, the WOSL remained hopeful "that more organizations… [would] become interested in the Danville work and that units especially who have no pressing home service work… [would] take an interest in Danville, particularly by helping the women sell their handiwork, or in other ways" (p. 12). However, the League soon acknowledged the difficulty of getting its own local units to participate at Danville. A passage in *Carry On* went so far as to argue that "the greater majority of units [had] 'passed the buck' to the national" ("Headquarters Corner," 1929, p. 22).

g. **Outgrowing the Home**

In 1930, the National Home – along with the U.S. Veterans' Bureau and the U.S. Pension Bureau – were consolidated into the newly created U.S. Veterans' Administration (Act of July 3, 1930; Exec. Order No. 5398, 1930). The restructuring effectively

ended the reign of the Board of Managers, which had overseen the care of more than 550,000 unique members at 11 regional branches since the National Home's creation (H. R. Rep. No. 71-546, 1931). Shortly thereafter, the WOSL received news that Danville's women were to be relocated to Miller Cottage at the Central Branch in Dayton. In the spring of 1931, the League described the transfer "as a great surprise, but a welcome one, for from all accounts the new quarters are more comfortable than the old ones, and the surroundings are very beautiful and much more accessible" ("Danville Becomes," 1931, p. 12). Members from the WOSL's Hoosier Unit, along with the local American Legion Auxiliary, greeted approximately 20 ex-servicewomen from Danville's domiciliary and hospital programs in Indianapolis during a two-hour layover from their voyage to the new home ("Entertainment," 1931). At length, the ex-servicewomen resumed their transport and reached their destination safely. Once the women had settled, the WOSL continued its previously established activities. However, the extent of its interest had long-since dwindled.

In the years leading up to the transfer to Miller Cottage, the League's attention had shifted to other legislative concerns. Beginning in 1927, for example, the organization had launched an initiative to secure hospitalization in U.S. Veterans' Bureau hospitals "for those who fought the battles of camp, canteen, Red Cross field hospital, base hospital, civilian relief, and the trenches" ("Hospitalization Sought," 1927, p. 39). As many as 13,000 civilian women had served overseas as welfare workers with civilian organizations such as the American Red Cross, YMCA, YWCA, and Salvation Army, but none were eligible for hospitalization benefits ("Broadcast," 1930; Smith, 1931). The WOSL was "not prepared to say that this really could be accomplished, but… felt it was quite worth while [*sic*] to have a committee look into the matter" ("Brief Summary," 1927, p. 23). Prospects for such legislation looked promising in 1929, when

Representative Joseph Crail (R-CA) introduced two bills on the WOSL's behalf ("Headquarters Corner," 1929). The first sought hospitalization benefits for civilian women who served overseas during the war, while the second requested hospitalization and disability compensation for the estimated 1,000 women who served overseas with government departments.

After making little progress, the original bills were reintroduced several times under different names ("Hospitalization Bills," 1929; Dennis, 1930). A key challenge to support for the bill that sought hospitalization for civilian women was the question of eligibility for their male counterparts. The WOSL seems to have been aware of this problem from the outset. By way of solution, the organization contradicted its longstanding position on equal rights and urged a gendered double standard. To accomplish this objective, it asked members to lobby representatives directly

> *Without outside publicity.* This is *most important* because if newspaper or organization publicity is given these Bills, those others who served with organizations in the United States, and the men who served with the Welfare Organizations Overseas may and probably would defeat the Bills by clamoring for similar legislation for themselves. We have been informed that the later [*sic*] would not be granted under any circumstances. ("Headquarters Corner," 1929, pp. 22-23)

Despite its crafty attempts to elevate hospitalization rights for civilian women alone, the corresponding issue of entitlement for male overseas welfare workers did not escape politicians. Faustine Dennis (1930), the WOSL's legislative chair, summarized the problem accordingly:

> This bill has been strongly opposed because, for one thing, it opens up the whole question of all the other people who have equal right for consideration as, for instance, all the men who served under the American Red Cross and the Y.M.C.A. It has been officially

> estimated that the passage of this bill might make the government liable for the care of the load of one million people. (p. 52)

The timing of the WOSL's hospital legislation was unfortunate. The stock market crashed in October 1929, and the nation spent the next decade struggling with the economic fallout of the Great Depression. There was little room for extra line items on the federal budget. Patriotic organizations everywhere reprioritized to provide crisis relief wherever possible. For the WOSL, this involved amplifying and expanding its already impressive mutual aid regimen, which included offering financial assistance through its national Fund for Disabled Overseas Women (FDOW). The fund retained a healthy balance during the Depression because local units typically served as the first line of assistance. Between 1924-1931, local units served an estimated 1,456 ex-servicewomen (Smith, 1931). As a result, less than 20 grants and loans totaling $4,500 were allocated from the national fund over the same period. For this reason, the national FDOW had a reserve of $17,496.62 in November 1931– roughly equivalent to $310,000 in September 2020 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020). The WOSL's financial acumen not only allowed it to remain solvent during the Depression, but also enabled it to establish a temporary emergency loan fund for ex-servicewomen in need ("Summary," 1933).

While the WOSL's attention to mutual aid activities redoubled during the Depression, its legislative vision for expanded hospitalization for overseas women was interrupted. At first, the organization dropped its quest for hospital rights for civilian women and focused exclusively on authorization for the estimated 1,000 "women who served with the Signal Corps, the Quartermaster Corps, the Air Corps and with various other branches of the Army" (Dennis, 1930, p. 12). However, support was limited by the questionable nature of ex-servicewomen's discharges, which officials had interpreted as civilian rather than military. The bill suffered a

protracted cycle of defeat and resubmission before the WOSL resolved to halt its efforts in 1933 (Dennis, 1931, 1932; "Summary," 1933). Years of unfavorable reception, combined with the economic crisis of the Depression, had caused the organization to reason that it

> would gain more in prestige and be in a better position to ask support for the bill at a later time, if we withdrew it now on the ground that, as a patriotic organization, we were ready to stand behind the President's Economy Program to the extent of refusing to ask for any governmental expenditure even to the small amount involved in this bill. ("Summary," 1933, p. 16)

The WOSL resumed its legislative push for expanded veterans' benefits in 1939 ("Summary," 1939), but its efforts to secure expanded hospitalization for overseas women in the U.S. Veterans' Administration remained unsuccessful during the interwar years. It took more than six decades for Army ex-servicewomen such as the 223 veterans of the U.S. Army Signal Corps (F) Telephone Operators Unit to be recognized, at which time the few surviving members were aged 80 to 91 ("World War I Veteran," 1979). The long overlooked World War I veterans were covered in a vague clause of the GI Bill Improvement Act (1977), which suggested their eligibility, after World War II Women's Air Forces Service Pilots, as "the service of any person in any other similarly situated group the members of which rendered service to the Armed Forces of the United States in a capacity considered civilian employment or contractual service at the time such service was rendered" (91 Stat. 1449). In 1979, more than 60 years after the armistice, the former telephone operators were finally granted honorable discharges, veterans' benefits, and World War I Victory Medals ("Hello Girls" Congressional Gold Medal Act, 2019). Sadly, most World War I ex-servicewomen who served overseas with the Army died before the recognition.

The WOSL had also embraced Phipps's plans to leverage its civic service with the Army Hostess Service into lasting workforce opportunities for women in the military throughout the interwar years (Phipps, 1925; Treadwell, 1954). It made numerous legislative attempts to parlay its work into a permanent Women's Service Corps in the Army. These efforts were fruitless until the World War II era. Even then, success was only partial. Women's auxiliary components were created by the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps Act of 1942, followed by the Women's Army Corps Act of 1943. However, the Women's Army Corps remained detached from the Army until its integration after World War II (Women's Armed Services Integration Act, 1948).

E. **Conclusion**

Earning the equal right to domiciliary and hospital care in the National Home was a landmark victory for ex-servicewomen in the interwar years. It was made possible by the WOSL's experiences with seeking and failing to obtain congressional recognition through official avenues. To combat residual distrust stemming from women's antiwar activism, the League seized opportunities to demonstrate loyal cooperation with the American Legion and War Department. Collaboration with these male dominant organizations afforded the League an opportunity to clarify its policies on peace and defense, while distancing itself from the more controversial women's groups. Moreover, its public accommodation masked a secondary aim of expanded citizenship rights for ex-servicewomen. This goal was achieved through the covert practice of strategic resistance, which reprioritized the organization's service focus toward ex-servicewomen and pursued care in the National Home through backdoor diplomacy. Following its success, the organization sought to expand women's rights to equal workforce opportunities in the military, as well as to veterans' benefits, through official channels. These public efforts were largely unsuccessful. Therefore, the organization's victory in the National Home stands

worthy of consideration as an anomaly in the history of ex-servicewomen's quest for full recognition as rightful beneficiaries within the veterans' welfare state.

VI. Discussion

This chapter discusses the present dissertation's key findings. It begins with an overview of study results, which are subsequently framed against the backdrop of policy feedback theory. It next considers the ways in which traditional discourses on gender and citizenship were recontextualized to facilitate or impede the WOSL's objectives. Thereafter, it reviews the resulting resource and interpretive effects on ex-servicewomen's citizenship. Successive sections address theoretical contributions and study limitations. This chapter concludes by highlighting study implications for future social work research, education, policy, and practice.

A. Discussion of Study Findings

George Herbert Mead (1934/1967) once observed, "It is the particular function of history to enable us to look back and see how far social reconstruction has taken place – reconstruction that people at the time did not recognize, but which we can recognize because of our advantage of greater distance" (p. 297). It is beneficial to consider any such progress on two fronts. First, there is the relative advancement of the situated historical case in relation to the context of its past. Second, there is the measure of progress from the time of the historical case to the present. The present study's findings on the influence of gender and citizenship on the WOSL's interwar activism suggest different levels of progress with respect to each front.

In retrospect, it is useful to recall that the WOSL's formation coincided with the development of the modern veterans' welfare state. New and repurposed veteran-specific institutions inherited gendered and racist ideas about martial citizenship from the bygone Civil War era. These notions were reflected in Lincoln's (1865/2002) well-intentioned commitment "to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan" (para 4). Women's dependent status was formalized alongside the masculine veteran construct. Dominant

society's biases were institutionalized in Civil War era veterans' benefits and services, which were further replicated in the veterans' institutions of the interwar years. It is also important to note that this process occurred parallel to a broader strategy of structural violence against Black citizens that took root following unsuccessful Civil War Reconstruction programs (Colby, 1985). Racial segregation was formalized by the Supreme Court at the turn of the Nineteenth Century (Hoffer, 2014; *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 1896). Jim Crow doctrine flourished in tandem with the formation of the modern veterans' welfare state. As a result, the gendered veteran construct was further stratified along the lines of race through primarily White Anglo-Saxon Protestant interests.

On one hand, the WOSL's attainment of the right to care in the National Home was a significant achievement when viewed *in situ*. It challenged prevalent assumptions about gender by securing an equal right for ex-servicewomen earned independently from any relationship to male counterparts. This victory is perhaps more striking when considering the potent symbolism of ex-servicewomen disrupting the National Home's half-century of exclusively masculine structuration. A century later, the WOSL's accomplishment is no less impressive. However, the advantage of time has revealed significant limitations. For example, it must be acknowledged that the WOSL's activism during the interwar years was racially monolithic. There is no evidence that the organization served Black ex-servicemen or advocated for expansion of formal service opportunities for women of color during the study period. Early on, the League supported the broader institution of racial segregation when it resolved that any prospective members of color would be required to form separate units ("Minutes of the First Convention," 1921; WOSL, 1931a). Thus, the WOSL reinforced primarily White Anglo-Saxon Protestant interests, which aligned it with the male-dominant veterans' service organizations of the period (Kinder, 2015).

Time has also revealed the incremental nature of the WOSL's contribution to ex-servicewomen's broader struggle for full citizenship. Unfortunately, gendered interpretations of the veteran construct have persisted. This is manifestly evident in the VA's resistance toward attempts to phrase its motto in a more inclusive way (Honoring All Veterans Act, 2019; Lawrence, 2020; Shane, 2020; Wilkie, 2020). Ex-servicewomen's access to membership in the veterans' welfare state remains incomplete. Yet, it is precisely because such barriers persist that lessons from the WOSL's interwar experiences can offer meaningful lessons for the present. The relative advantage of hindsight allows us to ascertain what happened, how it happened, and what it meant – not only in the situated historical case, but also for present and future contexts.

Findings from this study suggested four ways in which the WOSL's interwar activism was affected by traditional constructions of gender and citizenship (see Figure 2). Dominant discourses influenced the organization's decision to seek the equal right to congressional recognition through formal channels, its failure to obtain that right, its decision to shift to alternative activist strategies and objectives, and its ultimate success at earning and maintaining the equal right to care in the National Home. The net effect of mainstream biases was to constrain the League's public attempts to legislate its objectives through formal channels, while facilitating its capacity to explore alternative approaches through informal channels.

This study's findings are best understood in the context of policy feedback theory (see Figure 3). To this end, the WOSL's desire for a Congressional charter was influenced by the precedent of the American Legion's successful federal incorporation (Act to Incorporate the American Legion, 1919). This policy affected the League's decision to mirror the predominantly White male organization's example in its quest for federal incorporation (H.R. 7299, 1921). These aspirations were adversely influenced by latent feedback from the nation's struggles with

Figure 2

Themes Related to the Influences of Gender & Citizenship on the WOSL's Activism, 1918-1929

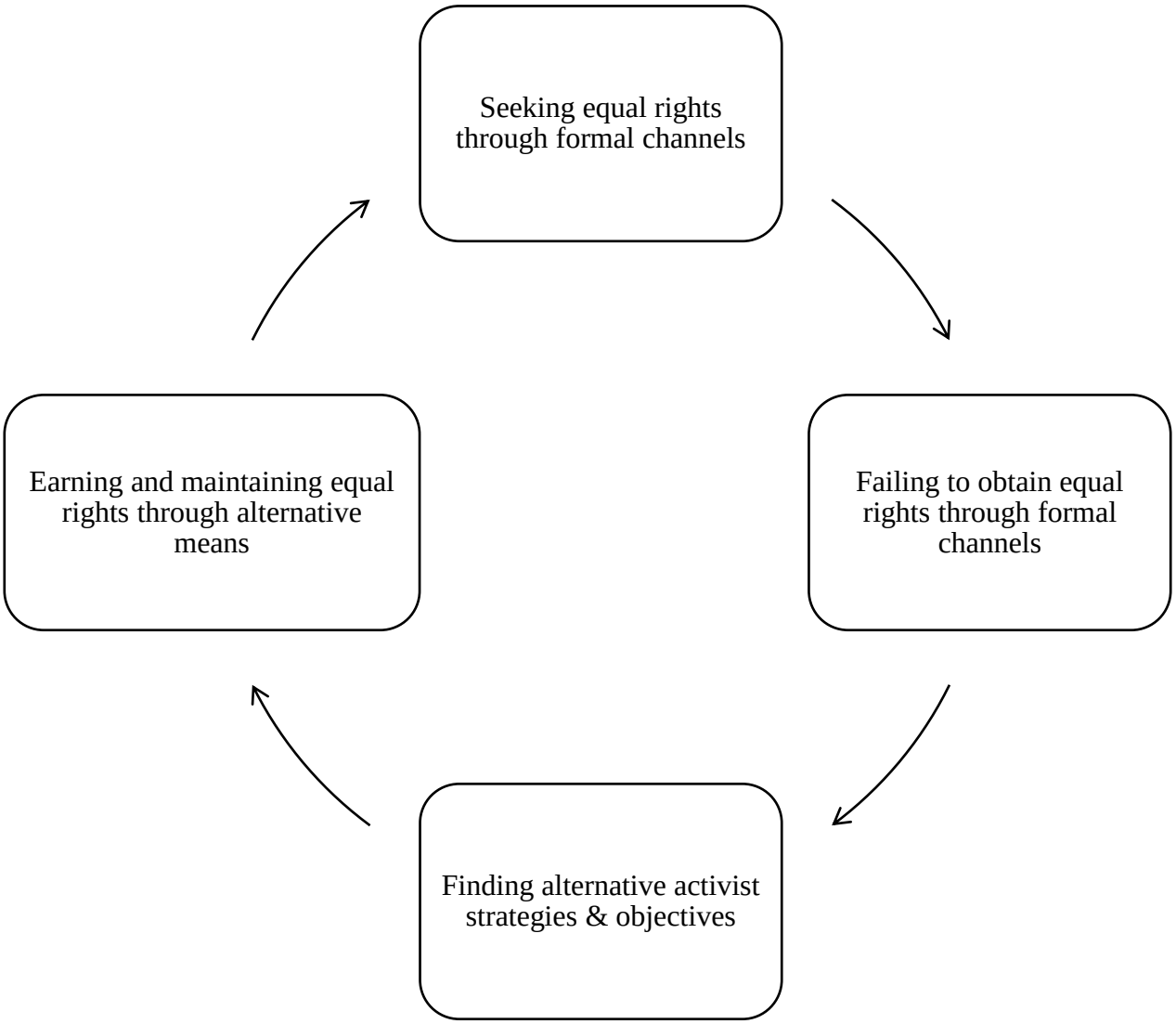
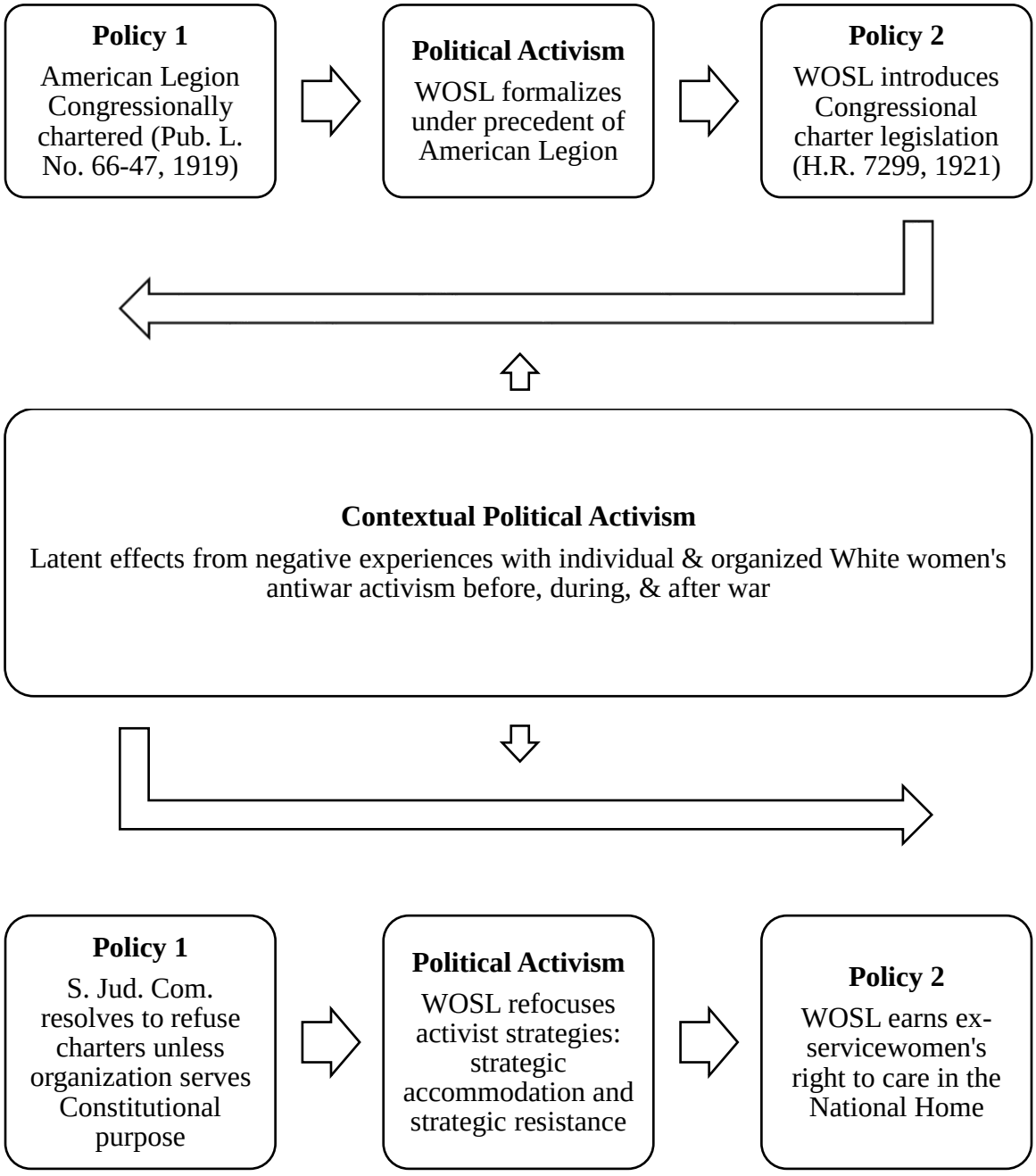


Figure 3

Main Policy Feedback Effects Influencing the WOSL's Activism, 1918-1929



Note. WOSL = Women's Overseas Service League; S. Jud. Com. = Senate Judiciary Committee.

White women's antiwar activism, with which the organization had briefly become entangled after taking the WCWD's lead on the issue of disarmament.

All prospects for Congressional incorporation ceased with the Senate Judiciary Committee's decision to reject all such requests – excluding those that served a constitutional purpose. This new policy influenced the organization's shift to alternative strategies and objectives. The WOSL embraced a public policy of accommodation by reorganizing itself for increased cooperation with the American Legion and the War Department. These efforts resulted in the League's formalization of positions on peace and national defense (WOSL, 1924a, 1924b). At the same time, the organization abandoned its ambitions for federal incorporation and resolved to pursue a state-level charter ("Brief Summary," 1924). Beyond this seemingly conciliatory approach, the League also operated through a simultaneous undercurrent of strategic resistance. The group refocused its service emphasis to prioritize its own ex-servicewomen over ex-servicemen. Shortly thereafter, it earned the equal right to care in the National Home through a program of backdoor diplomacy.

Against this backdrop, the WOSL frequently recontextualized traditional discourses on gender and citizenship to serve its objectives. At times, it reconfigured gendered discourse fragments to resist the trappings of the separate sphere and its related tenets of True Womanhood. At other times, it embraced them. Throughout the interwar years, League leaders also adopted a civic republican perspective on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, which they incorporated to liken themselves to traditionally male citizen-soldiers. In its unsuccessful push for federal incorporation, the WOSL reframed ex-servicewomen's service to justify expanded rights in the public sphere. In citing and mirroring the precedent of the American Legion, the organization asserted an equal right to congressional recognition for

having fulfilled the equal responsibility of military service.

Ex-servicewomen compared their overseas service to men's by claiming equal exposure to danger due to proximity to combat, which has historically been the most prestigious form of military service and the exclusive domain of male soldiers (MacKenzie, 2015). This strategy helped differentiate overseas women from those who served on the home front. In this way, the League also reimagined the separate sphere metaphor. The private sphere of domesticity was represented by the home front, where women performed supportive roles in relative safety. Conversely, overseas women risked personal safety in the public sphere, which was characterized by participation in international warfare. The WOSL also presented its need for federal incorporation as necessary to enable it to function as a peacetime reserve corps of emergency workers. In this way, White ex-servicewomen fashioned themselves as parallels to the citizen-soldiers of the military and naval reserve systems.

After the WOSL's efforts were dashed by the Senate Judiciary Committee, the organization renewed its emphasis on the civic responsibility facet of citizenship. It did so through an enhanced public display of Americanist loyalty to the nation through strategic accommodation. This aim was initiated by the American Legion's invitation to combat radicals. In accommodating, the League recontextualized the central Americanist value of loyalty, which corresponded with the submissive tenet of True Womanhood. However, the organization also seized the opportunity to differentiate its members from the pacifist women with which it had previously aligned. It further distinguished itself by clarifying its support of national preparedness and launching a comprehensive program of cooperation with the War Department and the U.S. Army Hostess Service. In effect, mainstream society provided the WOSL with a proverbial straw (wo)man against which it could contrast its own members as loyal citizens. Its

policy of public accommodation also doubled as a smokescreen within which the group could launch advocacy efforts on behalf of ex-servicewomen. This strategy may have brought the organization public credibility, but it also reinforced the White Anglo-Saxon Protestant hegemony. In fact, the widespread support of Americanism during this period bolstered what would today be classified as White Nationalism (Roberts, 2019).

Traditional discourses pertaining to gender and citizenship were mutually exploited by ex-servicewomen and government officials. On one hand, the WOSL recontextualized aspects of True Womanhood and civic republicanism to gain credibility in the public sphere, which resulted in the right to care in the National Home. On the other, government officials tapped longstanding assumptions about White women's inherent morality to counter male deviance in Army training camps. Officials utilized Army Hostesses not only to influence women's opinions about national defense, but also to provide wholesome alternatives to longstanding camp problems such as prostitution and drinking. As Phipps (1927) explained:

> By providing clean, decent recreation and normal association with women, which the young men segregated on military posts naturally desire; they, to a large extent, remove the temptations of other forms of abnormal diversion disastrous to their health and to the health of their future wives and children; they inculcate better standards of living and thinking, and improve morale. (Phipps, 1927, p. 53)

Additionally, ex-servicewomen may have represented a potential solution to persistent challenges with inebriated male residents of the National Home. As was the case with the War Department's use of women in Army training camps, residual assumptions about women's inherently superior capacity for morality may have factored in the decision to grant ex-servicewomen access. By extension, the Board of Managers' recent scandals and subsequent

leadership turnover may have influenced its decision to select Danville as the host site for ex-servicewomen's care. From this perspective, ex-servicewomen's inclusion may have been viewed as a way to improve the National Home's tarnished public image.

In the final analysis, the WOSL's failure to obtain federal incorporation, as well as its ultimate success in obtaining care in the National Home, had an impact on the meaning of ex-servicewomen's standing in relation to the state. The League's inability to obtain a Congressional charter resulted in interpretive effects on ex-servicewomen's citizenship that reinforced their secondary status next to male veterans. This outcome conveyed an implicit message from Congress that ex-servicewomen's service – in war and peace – was inferior to ex-servicemen's. The League's subsequent decision to abandon its future aspirations for federal incorporation in favor of a less desirable state charter further minimized ex-servicewomen's status as martial citizens when compared to contemporary veterans' service organizations like the American Legion. In terms of tangible goods, withholding the charter represented a form of resource deprivation in which ex-servicewomen were denied the equal right of recognition. This influenced the WOSL's decision to accept a state charter, which had lower relative worth as a status commodity.

The WOSL's decision to seek care through informal channels reflected a lesson drawn from its previous unsuccessful experiences. This strategy led to formal recognition and material aggrandizement of ex-servicewomen's status as martial citizens in the veterans' welfare state. The immediate resource effects were hospital and domiciliary care in the National Home. While this entitlement was enabled by the League's activism through backdoor channels, it was also nearly lost due to the informal nature of the arrangement. Fortunately, this potential crisis presented an opportunity to formalize ex-servicewomen's right to membership (Act of March 26,

1928). As a result, entitlement to care at the National Home was ensured. However, it should also be noted that the organization's activism around White Anglo-Saxon Protestant interests also embedded racial biases in the construct of the ex-servicewoman.

The WOSL's differential treatment during its struggle for federal incorporation reinforced ex-servicewomen's second-class status. Its liberating experience with the National Home promised upward mobility. However, the League's influence within the home was increasingly forced into traditional gender roles. Its subsequent attempts to seek additional rights through formal activist channels revealed the incremental nature of its progress. The League's failure to yield equal veterans' benefits for women who served overseas with government organizations like the Army Signal Corps, as well as civilian welfare organizations, were unsuccessful during the remainder of the interwar period. Instead, the positive effects of its victory in the National Home were mitigated by prolonged deprivation amid a larger period of retrenchment as the state attempted to return to pre-war gender relations (Jensen, 2008).

B. **Theoretical Contributions**

These study findings are the first to articulate the complex ways and mechanisms by which dominant society's biases toward gender and citizenship influenced the WOSL's activism in the interwar years. Previous scholarship has largely focused on servicewomen's struggles during World War I (Ebbert & Hall, 2002; Gavin, 1997; Grayzel, 2002; Jensen, 2008; Zeiger, 1999). Postwar struggles with gender containment have featured only as secondary epilogues to this primary wartime focus (Jensen, 2008; Zeiger, 1999). Few analytical studies have featured the WOSL's interwar activism (Finkelstein, 2015). None have provided a full-length analysis of the broader influences of gender and citizenship on the organization's contributions to ex-servicewomen's membership in the veterans' welfare state.

This study builds on Zeiger's (1999) brief, two-page, assessment of the WOSL's activism. Its findings affirm and expand several of the author's observations, including the League's tendency to justify claims for earned rights by equating ex-servicewomen's wartime service with that of their male counterparts, as well as its strategy of differentiating members from women on the home front. Conversely, this dissertation challenges and clarifies the scholar's suggestion that the organization simply embraced a "highly masculine vision of citizenship" (p. 172). Results from this dissertation revealed the complex interplay of gender and citizenship on the WOSL's activism. Rather than clinging to dominant discourses about their inherent attributes or status as citizens, the League strategically selected those aspects that furthered its cause. It made informed decisions based on lessons drawn from past experiences. The organization was flexible, rather than rigid. It accommodated when cooperation was deemed necessary. It resisted when transformation seemed possible.

This dissertation also contributed by providing an in-depth analysis of the influences of dominant discourses and policies on the WOSL's activism, which has previously been lacking. To this end, it adds to the growing body of policy feedback and welfare state formation literature (Canaday, 2009; Krainz, 2015; Leroux, 2005; Mettler, 2002; Mettler & Welch, 2004; Mittlestadt, 2015). To date, no studies have incorporated policy feedback theory to investigate the influence of gender and citizenship on ex-servicewomen's interwar activism. By extension, this study also expands Skocpol's (1995) influential work on the development of the maternalist welfare state during the Progressive Era. In the process, it raises new questions and insights about the landmark study and White women's organized activism in the Progressive Era and beyond.

Skocpol's (1995) study suggested that the crisis of the Civil War brought an initial inflation of citizenship rights for veterans. This situation was exemplified by the General Pension

Act of 1862, which initiated a Civil War pension policy that ultimately influenced political activism. Pension liberalization became a platform item for the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) and its one half-million members. A resulting system of political patronage led to widespread abuses of the pension system. Negative feedback from these experiences created barriers for later male labor reform efforts in the Progressive Era, while facilitating White women's activism for protective legislation for women and children. However, findings from the current study raise questions about aspects of this argument. For instance, it seems counterintuitive that negative feedback from abuses of Civil War pensions would prevent the success of male labor reform organizations, while enabling another large veterans' service organization to form in the overlapping historical context. Yet, another politically powerful veterans' group emerged unscathed at a time when it should have been viewed with skepticism. In fact, the American Legion was established in the GAR's image ("A History," 1919). It paralleled the GAR in many aspects – though it was arguably larger and more effective at securing expanded veterans' rights.

This dissertation also identified key differences between Progressive Era reformers and the WOSL's approaches to activism. The League's activist strategies differed drastically from Progressive Era groups described by Skocpol (1995). Maternalist reformers emphasized their differences from men by embracing dominant discourses about their inherently maternal natures and focusing on protective legislation for women and children. This was done to make their activism in the public sphere more palatable to dominant society. By way of contrast, members of the WOSL remained flexible. At times, they cited similarities to their male counterparts. At other times, they reframed dominant discourses about True Womanhood to differentiate their wartime service from that of home front women, and to distinguish their peacetime service from

the disloyal antiwar activism of pacifist women. They claimed entitlement to specialized rights for federal status and care within the emergent veterans' welfare state.

In contrast to successful maternalist reforms in the public sphere, the WOSL's formal legislative efforts were largely unsuccessful in the interwar years. It was only through backdoor diplomacy that the right to care in the National Home was obtained. Ironically, the League's difficulties may have been influenced by Progressive Era reformers' attempts to capitalize on their successes. Maternal authority was disavowed by popular culture when Progressive Era reformers such as Jane Addams and allied interests attempted to encroach on the traditionally male sphere of warfare. For example, the Woman's Peace Party (1916b) advocated for disarmament based on its authority as "the mother half of humanity" (p. 2). These antiwar stances grew increasingly unpopular as the nation entered the war. Thus, while maternalist reformers benefited from negative feedback from abuses of the Civil War pension system, the WOSL was disadvantaged by the overlapping adverse effects from the former's perceived overreach on national defense.

C. **Limitations**

Despite its contributions to the theoretical literature, this study was not without limitations. First, research was informed by an overarching conceptual framework that incorporated a critical research paradigm that acknowledges researcher biases in data selection and analysis. This critical orientation also influenced the definition of the study's discursive constructs of gender and citizenship, which were shaped by this author's lived experiences – particularly as a White, heterosexual, cisgender, male veteran. Subsequent researchers may articulate these concepts differently. This study was also limited by its use of policy feedback

theory as a preexisting framework within which to situate research findings. Interpretation of results may vary with alternative theoretical contexts.

Additionally, this dissertation was limited by its nonexperimental, historical case study design. It was further constrained by its reliance on a purposive sample of historical documents pertaining to one organization. Findings are not generalizable beyond the case of the WOSL's activism in the first decade of the interwar years, 1918-1929. Needless to say, the League was not the sole veterans' service organization of the period. Other historical cases and eras offer equally compelling cases for analysis. By extension, data items often featured the perspectives of League officers and may not have encompassed the views of rank-and-file members. To this end, it should also be mentioned that the group featured primarily upper-middle-class, White Anglo-Saxon Protestant, leadership. Data items may not have captured the experiences or perspectives of women from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds.

Lastly, this study's analytical process was subject to researcher biases. These predilections likely influenced the decision to limit this study's focus to the significance of two specific events: The WOSL's failure to obtain a Congressional charter and its success at gaining access to care in the National Home. The League was a legislatively prolific organization. This study's narrow focus may have obscured alternative findings on the influences of gender and citizenship. As concerns this study's other results, it should also be acknowledged that the Senate Judiciary Committee's moratorium on Congressional charters likely affected other patriotic organizations beyond the WOSL. Thus, the narrow focus may have clouded broader understandings of the full impact and duration of this decision.

D. Implications for Social Work Research, Education, Policy, and Practice

Aside from its limitations, this study offers useful guidance for future social work research, education, policy, and practice. Future research on ex-servicewomen's activism should explore the WOSL's agitation for other specific rights in the interwar years and beyond. The League made numerous attempts to legislate expanded rights for uniformed women with the Army, as well as overseas welfare workers. It also sought to establish a permanent Women's Army Corps. How did dominant society's biases toward gender and citizenship facilitate or impede these efforts? Subsequent research would also benefit from a comparative case study of the experiences of the WOSL and other veterans' service organizations. How did experiences compare? For example, the Disabled American Veterans was formed contemporaneously and ultimately chartered (Kosar, 2011). A longitudinal comparison might shed light on whether the League's decision to accept a state charter was a strategic error in the long run. Moreover, there is a particular shortage of scholarship on the organized activism of ex-servicewomen from diverse sociodemographic backgrounds. A comparative case study between the WOSL and organized ex-servicewomen of color would significantly enrich the literature. What was the relationship between the WOSL and ex-servicewomen of color in World War II and beyond? Additional research might also compare the experiences of nonveteran women's groups.

This study also has implications for social work education. In recent decades, historical research has declined in the social work literature (Danto, 2008; Fisher & Dybicz, 1999). This comes at a time of increasing expectations for students to understand the marginalizing contexts of oppression (CSWE, 2015). Publications from this study will benefit generalist and concentration-specific social work syllabi. This study is especially suited for macro-oriented courses on social welfare history or policy. At the same time, it has concentration-specific

appeal. Specifically, it addresses calls for increased attention to historical context in military social work education (CSWE, 2018). This awareness is important for aspiring social workers given the VA's status as the nation's leading employer of graduate social workers (VA, 2017b).

Findings from this dissertation also have policy implications for social work. The CSWE's (2015) policy competency specifies that "social workers recognize and understand the historical, social, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy" (p. 8). To this end, results from this study expose key historical biases in the veteran construct. These antiquated biases are perpetuated in policies such as the VA's refusal to update its gendered motto (Lawrence, 2020; Wilkie, 2020). This policy decision reinforces a secondary status for women veterans of diverse backgrounds, which also creates a potential barrier to ex-servicewomen's VA healthcare utilization. As it stands, women veterans are disproportionately affected by Military Sexual Trauma (VA, 2015a). Although VA services may be beneficial, some ex-servicewomen may avoid them rather than risk retraumatization in the male-dominant environment (Cheney et al., 2014). Awareness of the historical roots of such biases can inform social workers' future advocacy efforts to transform oppressive policies.

By extension, this study's findings also offer potential lessons for contemporary macro social work practice. In recent decades, there has been growing recognition that policy "lessons can be sought by searching across time or across space" (Rose, 1991, pp. 5-6). Lesson-drawing has featured prominently in political science research on policy transfer, which is the "process in which knowledge about policies, administrative arrangements, institutions etc. in one time and/or place is used in the development of policies, administrative arrangements and institutions in another time and/or place" (Dolowitz & Marsh, 1996, p. 344). Transference is not limited to traditional policy objects. Rather, it may include "policy goals, policy content, policy

instruments, policy programs, institutions, ideologies, ideas and attitudes and negative lessons" (Dolowitz & Marsh, 2000, p. 12). These objects can be transferred by diverse actors ranging from political elites to organized activists (Hoberg, 1991; McAdam & Rucht, 1993). Moreover, the potential for transfer transcends contemporary contexts, as lessons are frequently drawn from history (Rose, 1993).

Lessons from this study can inform social workers' responses to professional obligations to society-at-large (NASW, 2017). In particular, macro social work practitioners can learn from the historical context in which the League was embedded, as well as its specific struggles therein. The organization's failures and successes offer instructional lessons that are especially relevant for future policy activism. As Dolowitz and Marsh (1996) reminded, these "lessons can be negative as well as positive" (p. 351). To this end, this study identifies six key insights to inform future macro practice activism. These lessons emphasize the importance of attention to context; appropriate timing; adaptation; resource networks; vigilance; and persistence.

Successful activism requires attention to context. Failure to consider contextual factors can lead to strategic error. This fact is evidenced by the WOSL's initial lack of appreciation for context during its push for federal incorporation. The organization deviated from its otherwise strategic course of action by making an uninformed foray into matters of national preparedness. The League revealed an absence of sensitivity to the potential impact of mainstream society's recent experiences with White women's antiwar activism when it ostensibly cosigned the WCWD's disarmament lobby. Likewise, the WCWD and allied pacifist organizations such as the WILPF overestimated the bargaining power of the vote with respect to national defense. They failed to adjust activist strategies to account for the broader context of national sentiment. This is

not to say that controversial issues should be avoided. Rather, organizations must adjust their strategies in skillful ways with appropriate attention to context.

The WOSL's failure to obtain a congressional charter was also connected to the related issue of timing. The nation's involvement in World War I presented an immediate national emergency that initiated a cycle of crisis, exploitation, reward, and retrenchment. During the war, the state became an increasingly centralized authority. It retracted civil liberties and expanded civic responsibilities – often by exploiting the labor of traditionally marginalized populations. Once the crisis subsided, there was a brief inflationary period of citizenship rights for certain groups. For male veterans' organizations, this was symbolized by the precedent of the American Legion's federal incorporation in 1919. For women, it peaked with the Nineteenth Amendment's ratification in 1920. The opportunity for additional rights narrowed as the distance from the crisis widened. The retrenchment period was followed by a resurgence of traditional gender roles. This coincided with a rise in Americanism and expectations of civic loyalty. The WOSL's campaign for equal congressional recognition was complicated by poor timing, which occurred within this retrenchment period. As a result, the League missed what Kingdon (2003) might classify as a policy window. Its public activist objectives were a poor fit for the time. The organization's subsequent attempts to legislate additional objectives through formal channels were also unsuccessful throughout the interwar years.

The League's interwar activism also illustrates the importance of the ability to adapt to changing circumstances. The organization learned from its previous missteps with context and timing. It remained flexible and innovated a program that oscillated between public accommodation and covert resistance. Its public conformity appeased and strengthened relations with the American Legion and War Department. These efforts demonstrated the League's

newfound attention to context, which neatly buffered its off-grid efforts to secure expanded rights for ex-servicewomen in the National Home. The ultimate success of this two-pronged strategy is a testament to the organization's capacity for adaptation. Conversely, it could also be argued that such success came by elevating White Anglo-Saxon Protestant interests at the expense of traditionally underrepresented populations.

The WOSL's ability to adapt to change was enhanced through the use of resource networks. In pursuing the right to care in the National Home, Eudora Clover cultivated and exploited an intricate network of formal and informal contacts, which included high-ranking government officials. The organization admittedly benefited from a level of access that would have been unavailable to women of diverse backgrounds. The League's representatives were well-connected, primarily White Anglo-Saxon Protestant, women of higher economic strata. They were, in the words of Representative Walsh, "A lot of women of means" (62 Cong. Rec. 7986, 1922). Yet, the League's case exemplifies the importance of recruiting mainstream allies to a cause. Social transformation – at least by the peaceable means protected under the First Amendment –requires support from actors within the majority power structure.

The WOSL's case also highlights the need for organizational vigilance. The security of ex-servicewomen's rights to domiciliary and hospital care in the National Home was jeopardized by an overzealous Comptroller General. This situation exposed the temporal nature of earned rights. Ongoing scrutiny was the only safeguard to ensure their protection. The League's vigilance helped avert a potential catastrophe. In the process, it transformed the previously informal arrangement into a legitimate entitlement for ex-servicewomen.

Lastly, analysis of the WOSL's interwar struggles suggests the significance of persistence in the face of adversity. Although the organization made a major contribution in expanding ex-

servicewomen's citizenship rights in the National Home, it perhaps conceded something of greater value by abandoning its pursuit of federal incorporation. The League was disadvantaged by the initial context and timing of its request. However, it prematurely resigned itself to a lesser state charter. As a result, it traded public validation as equal members of the veterans' welfare state for a short-term gain through the backdoor of the National Home. In the end, the League's acquiescence inadvertently reinforced gendered and racist assumptions of the veteran construct. This negative lesson stresses the importance of weighing long-term consequences of organizational decision-making and prioritizing informed caution over eagerness to compromise. Fortunately, the League learned the lesson of persistence. More than a half-century after the Armistice, it earned equal veteran status for uniformed women of the Army Signal Corps.

E. **Conclusion**

In closing, it is important to acknowledge that the WOSL's initial approaches to overcoming traditional gender biases within the veterans' welfare state were racially biased toward White Anglo-Saxon Protestant interests. As such, the organization recontextualized many of the mainstream biases of its day. However, it should also be remembered that the League has been fortunate to have had the benefit of a full century of existence to evolve with the times. In that time, the organization has proven itself to be a prolific force in its work for all ex-servicewomen. The extent of its inclusivity must be left to future research. As of this writing, the WOSL continues to survive, though "recruitment remains an issue as the World War II members are dying at a rate faster than younger members are being added" (Women's Overseas Service League, 2021, para. 6). In the end, the case of the WOSL's early activism demonstrates the need for strategic activism – even if its initial gains were only incremental. Insights from this case study are especially informative for activism in similar contexts of crisis, which tend to recur

across time. For this reason, these lessons should prove informative for future social work research, education, policy, and practice.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

IRB Approval Notice

Notice of Determination
Activity Does Not Represent Human Subjects Research

January 22, 2021 20210076-138128-1

Andrew Repp, MSW
Jane Addams College of Social Work
Phone:

RE: **Protocol # 2021-0076**
""To Care for Him Who Shall Have Borne the Battle": Ex-Servicewomen and Gendered Discourse, 1918-1929"

Sponsor: None

Dear Andrew Repp:

The UIC Office for the Protection of Research Subjects received your Determination application and has determined that this activity **DOES NOT meet the definition of human subject research** as defined by 45 CFR 46.102(e)/ 21 CFR 50.3(g) and 21 CFR 56.102(e).

Specifically, the proposed historiography will be based on a thematic analysis of publicly available secondary data items. Data will be collected from physical and digitized issues of the the Women's Overseas Service League's journal, Carry On, for the years 1918-1929. Subsequent data will be collected from government records and popular media of the period. All data for this study are public domain. Relevant materials will be captured in accordance with each archival repository's guidelines. All documents will be digitized, coded, and analyzed for latent themes.

You may conduct your activity without further submission to the IRB.

Please note:

- If this activity is used in conjunction with any other research involving human subjects, prospective IRB approval or a Claim of Exemption is required.
- If this activity is altered in such a manner that may result in the activity representing human subject research, a NEW Determination application must be submitted.

cc: Creasie Hairston, Jane Addams College of Social Work

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO
Office for the Protection of Research Subjects
201 AOB (MC 672)
1737 West Polk Street
Chicago, Illinois 60612
Phone (312) 996-1711

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VITA

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EDUCATION

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Jane Addams College of Social Work
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PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

Repp, A. I., Watson, A.C., Burns, J., & Jones, L. (2019). The West Side Community Outreach Pilot Project: A mental health outreach initiative in urban communities of color. *Social Work in Mental Health, 17*(6), 662-681. doi:10.1080/15332985.2019.1625477

Repp, A. I., & Geiger, J. M. (2018). Invisible parents: Foster home licensing transparency on state-level websites. *Child Welfare, 96*(4), 1-21.

Repp, A. I. (2015). Book review [Review of the book *Poverty in America: A Handbook*, by J. Iceland]. *Journal of Community Practice, 23*(3-4), 529-531. doi:10.1080/10705422.2015.1096185

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Repp, A. I. (2020). *Rethinking military culture* [Manuscript in preparation]. Chicago. Jane Addams College of Social Work.

Repp, A. I. (2020). *"I am sorry Miss Addams is not to be here": The emergence of social work in the U.S. Veterans' Bureau, 1917-1926* [Manuscript in preparation]. Chicago. Jane Addams College of Social Work.

PEER-REVIEWED PRESENTATIONS

Repp, A. I. (2016, January 13-17). *Gender, race, and veteran health care utilization* [Poster presentation]. 20th Annual Conference of the Society for Social Work and Research, Washington, D.C. https://sswr.confex.com/sswr/2016/webprogram/Paper25389.html

TECHNICAL REPORTS

Repp, A. I., & Leathers, S. J. (2020). *Educational supports and needs of youth in care at age 19-20* [Report submitted for publication]. Illinois Department of Children & Family Services.

Watson, A. C., & **Repp, A. I.** (2020). *Public mental health training initiative evaluation* [Report submitted for publication]. Jane Addams College of Social Work, University of Illinois at Chicago, & Kennedy Forum Illinois.

Kennedy Forum Illinois. (2018). *Improving crisis response for individuals with mental health challenges: West Side Community Outreach Pilot Project.* http://thekennedyforumillinois.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/KFI-Westside-Community-Outreach-Pilot-Project_r7.pdf

Dettlaff, A. J., McCoy, H., Holzman, J., Fulambarker, A., **Repp, A**., & Ibrahima, A. (2017). *Outcomes of interventions for youth experiencing homelessness in stable housing, permanent connections, education, employment, and well-being: A systematic review.* Chicago, IL: Jane Addams College of Social Work, University of Illinois at Chicago. https://www.340blueprintproject.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Systematic-Review-of-Interventions_10.pdf

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

2017 – 2020 **Graduate Research Assistant to Amy Watson**
The West Side Community Outreach Pilot Project;
CIT & Mental Health Service Access in Police Contacts
Jane Addams College of Social Work
University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, IL

2020 – 2020 **Graduate Research Assistant to Sonya Leathers**
Countdown to 21; Illinois DCFS D-CIPP Assessment
Jane Addams College of Social Work
University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, IL

2017 – 2018 **Graduate Research Assistant to Jennifer Geiger**
National Foster Parent Shortage Study
Jane Addams College of Social Work
University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, IL

2017 – 2017 **Graduate Research Assistant to Sonya Leathers**
Integrated Behavioral Health Care
Social Work Training Program
Jane Addams College of Social Work
University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, IL

2015 – 2016 **Graduate Research Assistant to Henrika McCoy**
3/40 BLUEPRINT:
Creating the Blueprint to Reduce LGBTQ Youth Homelessness
Jane Addams College of Social Work
University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, IL

2015 – 2016 **Graduate Research Assistant to Von Nebbitt**
Public Housing Study: Washington, DC
Jane Addams College of Social Work
University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, IL

2015 **Principal Investigator**
Gender, Race, and Veteran Health Care Utilization
Jane Addams College of Social Work
University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, IL

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2019 **Adjunct Professor**
Human Behavior in the Military Environment: Military Culture, Customs, & Traditions (Graduate asynchronous online course)
School of Social Work
Dominican University, River Forest, IL

2019 **Adjunct Professor**
Policy Impact within Military Systems (Graduate asynchronous online)
School of Social Work
Dominican University, River Forest, IL

2016 **Instructor**
Social work with Military Service Members,

Veterans, and Their Families (Graduate in-person course)
Jane Addams College of Social Work
University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, IL

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2014 – 2016 **Program Consultant**
Field Foundation of Illinois, Inc., Chicago, IL

2013 – 2014 **Field Foundation Fellow**
Field Foundation of Illinois, Inc., Chicago, IL

2012 – 2013 **Family Services Intern**
Fox Valley Habitat for Humanity, Montgomery, IL

2010 – 2013 **Veteran Case Manager/Aftercare Case Manager**
New Horizons, TLS Veterans, Hebron, IL

2009 – 2010 **Board Member**
Transitional Living Services for Veterans, McHenry, IL

MILITARY EXPERIENCE

2002 – 2007 **United States Army, Enlisted**

Unit Supply Specialist
Ft. Lee, VA

Military Police
Ft. Leonard Wood, MO

Cannon Crewmember
Ft. Sill, OK

ACADEMIC SERVICE

2016 – Present **Doctoral Student Peer Mentor**
Jane Addams College of Social Work
University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, IL

2017 **HBSE Accreditation Committee (Consultant)**
Jane Addams College of Social Work
University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, IL

2017 **Narrator**
PhD in Social Work Program Overview [PowerPoint]

Jane Addams College of Social Work
University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, IL
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EZcbZngBcOQ#action=share

2015 – 2017 **Doctoral Committee, Student Representative**
Jane Addams College of Social Work
University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, IL

HONORS AND AWARDS

2017 **Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society**
Jane Addams College of Social Work
University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, IL

2013 **Summa Cum Laude**
George Williams College of Aurora University, Williams Bay, WI

2013 **Outstanding Undergraduate**
Social Work Student Award
George Williams College of Aurora University, Williams Bay, WI

2011 – 2013 **Zeta Epsilon of Phi Alpha**
National Social Work Honor Society
George Williams College of Aurora University, Williams Bay, WI

PAST AFFILIATIONS

Association for Community Organization and Social Administration
National Association of Social Workers
Society for Social Work and Research