THE ANTEBELLUM WOMEN'S MOVEMENT, 1820 TO 1860

A UNIT OF STUDY FOR GRADES 8 - 11

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AND THE
NATIONAL CENTER FOR HISTORY IN THE SCHOOLS
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INTRODUCTION

APPROACH AND RATIONALE

The National Center for History in the Schools (NCHS), working in collaboration with The Organization of American Historians (OAH), has developed the following collection of lessons titled *The Antebellum Women's Movement, 1820 to 1860*. This adds to nearly 50 NCHS teaching units that are the fruit of collaborations between history professors and experienced teachers of both United States and World History. They represent specific dramatic episodes in history and allow you and your students to delve into the deeper meanings of selected landmark events and explore their wider context in the great historical narrative.

By studying a crucial episode in history, the student becomes aware that choices had to be made by real human beings, that those decisions were the result of specific factors, and that they set in motion a series of historical consequences. We have selected dramatic moments that best bring alive that decision-making process. We hope that through this approach, your students will realize that history is an ongoing, open-ended process, and that the decisions they make today create the conditions of tomorrow's history.

Our teaching units are based on primary sources, taken from documents, artifacts, journals, diaries, newspapers and literature from the period under study. By using primary source documents in these lessons we hope to remove the distance that students feel from historical events and to connect them more intimately with the past. In this way we hope to recreate for your students a sense of "being there," a sense of seeing history through the eyes of the very people who were making decisions. This will help your students develop historical empathy, to realize that history is not an impersonal process divorced from real people like themselves. At the same time, by analyzing primary sources, students will actually practice the historian's craft, discovering for themselves how to analyze evidence, establish a valid interpretation and construct a coherent narrative in which all the relevant factors play a part.

CONTENT AND ORGANIZATION

Within this unit, you will find: 1) Unit Objectives, 2) Correlation to the National Standards for History, 3) Teacher Background Materials, and 4) Lesson Plans with Student Resources. This unit, as we have said above, focuses on certain key moments in time and should be used as a supplement

to your customary course materials. Although these lessons are recommended for use at middle schools, they can be adapted for other grade levels.

The Teacher Background section should provide a good overview of the entire unit and the historical information and context necessary to link the specific Dramatic Moment to the larger historical narrative. You may consult it for your own use, and you may choose to share it with students if they are of a sufficient grade level to understand the materials.

The Lesson Plans include a variety of ideas and approaches for the teacher which can be elaborated upon or cut as needed. These lesson plans contain student resources which accompany each lesson. The resources consist of primary source documents, any hand-outs or student background materials, and a bibliography.

In our series of teaching units, each collection can be taught in several ways. You can teach all of the lessons offered on any given topic, or you can select and adapt the ones that best support your particular course needs. We have not attempted to be comprehensive or prescriptive in our offerings, but rather to give you an array of enticing possibilities for in-depth study, at varying grade levels. We hope you will find the lesson plans exciting and stimulating for your classes. We also hope your students will never again see history as a boring sweep of inevitable facts and meaningless dates but rather as an endless treasure of real life stories and an exercise in analysis and reconstruction.

TEACHER BACKGROUND MATERIALS

I. UNIT OVERVIEW

This unit introduces students to the pre-Civil War women's movement through primary source documents. The documents are grouped into four separate but interrelated categories. Those in Lesson One describe the economic and cultural systems of the United States between 1820 and 1860 which created both a "doctrine of separate spheres" and a "cult of true womanhood." Lesson Two examines the lives of American women who worked outside the home. The documents of Lesson Three analyze women's roles in antebellum reform movements such as abolition and temperance, experiences which later served as catalysts for the women's rights movement. Finally, Lesson Four addresses the grievances, goals, and social impact of the female reformers who attended the Seneca Falls Convention of 1848 and wrote the "Declaration of Sentiments." Since antebellum women of various races, classes, and regions had widely divergent experiences, various perspectives are presented throughout the unit.

Comprehending the lives of American women is fundamental for understanding the entire antebellum period. At a time in which females were encouraged to be pure, pious, domestic, and submissive, women's roles reached outside the home and family. Young New England farm women provided the bulk of the labor for the expanding textile industry. African-American slaves, female as well as male, produced the cotton spun and woven in mills, both in the North and abroad. Middle-class, northern matrons championed diverse causes such as abstinence from liquor and the abolition of slavery. As female roles changed, women's rights advocates became aware of the gender inequities present in their society, chafed under these limits, and established a movement which is still with us today.

Lessons One and Two can be taught as students begin studying the Second Great Awakening and the Industrial Revolution. These documents will help students better understand how changing religious beliefs and new ways of producing and marketing goods affected the roles and status of black and white, middle-class, working-class, and slave women. Lesson Three may be introduced later, as students learn about the problems associated with industrialization, growing sectional tensions, and various antebellum reform movements. Teachers can conclude the unit with Lesson Four. Students can then analyze how the aforementioned forces encouraged antebellum women into launching a women's rights movement.

II. CORRELATION TO THE NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR HISTORY

Antebellum Women's Movement, 1820 to 1860 provides teaching materials to support *National Standards for History, Basic Edition* (National Center for History in the Schools, 1996). The unit specifically addresses Standards 2A and 4C of Era 4, *Expansion and Reform (1801-1861)*. Lessons in this unit have students investigate how slavery and the northern factory system affected the lives of women; examine the activities of women in the reform movements for education, abolition, temperance, and women's suffrage; and analyze the goals expressed in the Seneca Falls "Declaration of Sentiments."

The unit likewise integrates a number of Historical Thinking Standards such as analyzing cause-and-effect relationships, identifying the central questions in historical narratives, and supporting interpretations with historical evidence.

III. UNIT OBJECTIVES

1. To describe how the Industrial Revolution led to changes in women's roles both within and outside the home.

2. To explain how economic and cultural change created a "separate spheres" ideology and "cult of true womanhood."

3. To evaluate how the "cult of true womanhood" affected women's influence in both their homes and the larger society.

4. To analyze women's roles in antebellum reform movements such as temperance and abolition.

5. To compare and contrast the differing experiences of women of various racial, social, and regional groups.

6. To analyze and evaluate the impact of the antebellum women's rights movement on American society, past and present.

IV. LESSON PLANS

1. The "Separate Spheres" and "Cult of True Womanhood" Doctrines

2. Women's Work Outside Their Homes

3. Antebellum Temperance and Abolitionist Movements

4. The Antebellum Women's Movement

Woman's Holy War
Library of Congress

V. INTRODUCTION TO THE ANTEBELLUM WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

In the early nineteenth century the United States underwent massive economic and social change. Although the overall birthrate declined from about seven children per family in 1800 to five at mid-century, immigration helped to dramatically increase population, causing it to nearly double every twenty years. Five million immigrants, primarily from Ireland and Germany, became new consumers and workers for the growing nation. At the same time, Americans moved westward. They built canals, steamboats, and railroads to open up new areas of the continent, link various regions, and allow farmers and manufacturers to specialize and produce for a growing market. These changes encouraged industrialization—the use of machinery, wage labor, and the factory system. Other transformations occurred as well. A Second Great Awakening emphasized individual responsibility, personal salvation, and societal reform. As more states adopted white, manhood suffrage, politics became increasingly democratized.

These extensive changes had important consequences for American women. White, middle-class, native-born families abandoned home-based production units. Instead, men went out to work in factories, warehouses, stores, and offices. The home and family became the middle-class woman's domain. The Industrial Revolution, however, affected females of other classes and races differently. Working-class and farm women sought employment in the growing factories. The demand for cotton by New England and British textile manufacturers also had implications for the slave women who labored with their families in the plantation fields of the South. Slave families from the economically stagnant Upper South became extremely vulnerable to separation as masters sold them to planters in the cotton-producing areas of the Lower South. The profitability of cotton and the need for slave labor to produce it made emancipation increasingly less likely.

In this rapidly changing society, Americans sought an area of stability. The separation of work and home, along with the psychological need to preserve an ideal family, led to a belief that men and women lived in separate but complementary spheres. Aggressive, rational, enterprising men were best suited for the rough-and-tumble, sometimes sordid, public worlds of business and politics. Women, who were by nature gentle, emotional, and sensitive, belonged in the private world of the home. There, they provided a haven for husbands and children from the rigors of modern capitalism. Those who espoused these views wrote and published a wealth of proscriptive literature urging "true women" to be pious, pure, submissive, and domestic. Although the "separate spheres doctrine" and the "cult of true wom-

This is an excerpt from an OAH-NCHS teaching unit entitled *The Antebellum Women's Movement, 1820 to 1860: A Unit of Study for Grades 8-11* by Susan Leighow and Rita Sterner-Hine. The complete teaching unit may be purchased online from the Organization of American Historians: http://www.indiana.edu/~oah/tunits/ or by calling (812) 855-7311.

anhood"[1] held little validity for working-class, immigrant, and African-American women, this cultural ideal pervaded antebellum society.

"The cult of true womanhood" both empowered and limited women. Educational opportunities expanded as reformers like Catharine Beecher argued that American wives and mothers needed more schooling in order to properly rear sons and influence husbands. This same reasoning opened up teaching as a suitable occupation for females who were morally superior to men, as well as innately fitted to deal with children.[2] Women's piety, morality, and concern for their families also provided the impetus for their involvement in antebellum reform movements. At the same time, males in medicine, law, and the ministry barred women on the grounds they were "too delicate." States' legal system did not always protect wives' rights to their property, wages, or children. Even within the temperance and abolition movements, men tried to constrain women's activities. In her 1852 letter to Amelia Bloomer, Susan B. Anthony complained about male colleagues who did not believe ". . . that women may speak and act in public as well as in the home circle . . . ."[3]

By the 1840s a nascent women's rights movement emerged. By then, American females had perceived the inconsistencies between their alleged superiority and their very real powerlessness. Education gave them the ability to articulate their problems and propose alternatives. Their reform activities provided them with the ideologies and skills necessary to establish this cause. The documents and lessons in this unit provide the resources necessary to understanding this antebellum women's movement that would set women on a course leading in zigzag fashion to modern feminism of the late twentieth century.

[1]Barbara Welter originated the phrase "cult of true womanhood" in an article published in the *American Quarterly* in 1966 ("The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860," Vol. 18 (2:1), 151–74.

[2] School boards hired more women as teachers; however, their pay was one-third to one-quarter that of a male teacher.

[3] Ellen Carol DuBois, ed., *The Elizabeth Cady Stanton-Susan B. Anthony Reader* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1981), 40.

LESSON III: ANTEBELLUM TEMPERANCE AND ABOLITIONIST MOVEMENTS

A. OBJECTIVES

1. To analyze the forces which propelled antebellum women into the temperance and abolitionist movements.

2. To describe the rhetoric and tactics used by antebellum women in these reform movements.

3. To evaluate the successes and frustrations of the women involved in the temperance and abolitionist movements.

B. LESSON ACTIVITIES (These activities will take 2 days.)

1. Ask students to use a dictionary to define the terms temperance and abolition. Have students brainstorm the ways antebellum women might have participated in temperance and anti-slavery organizations. List on the chalkboard.

2. Hand out **Document M**, "Fair Handbill," and **Document N,** "Excerpt from the Convention of American Women." Have students read the documents silently and then ask them how free black women raised funds for abolitionism and what sort of help African American women wanted from their white allies in the movement.

3. Hand out **Document O**, "Proceedings from the 1837 Anti-Slavery Convention" and the accompanying Word / Phrase Bank. Have the students read the document aloud. Discuss the steps which Lydia Maria Child, Angelina Grimké, and Sarah Moore Grimké proposed and how these would improve the lives of oppressed African Americans. Ask students why Child would specifically appeal to the wives and daughters of clergymen? How does this tie in with what they learned about "ideal women" in Lesson One? Why do they think white, Northern women were involved in abolitionist activities?

4. Have students use their history texts, reference books, or the Internet to identify Susan B. Anthony and Amelia Bloomer.

5. Hand out **Document P**, "Susan B. Anthony, 'Letter on Temperance, August 26, 1852' " and the accompanying Study Questions. Have students read the letter and answer the questions in small groups. Compare and contrast the options of an alcoholic's wife in both the antebellum period

and the 1990s. Ask them what contemporary groups might support a temperance movement today?

6. Conclude by having students pretend that they are attending an antebellum abolitionist or temperance convention and write a series of resolutions presenting their views. Create a poster with an illustration and slogan expressing their views. Display the posters in the classroom as students read their resolutions.

C. EXTENDED ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

1. Read six to eight contemporary newspaper articles dealing with men and women and categorize how the genders are presented. Categories could be hero / victim, active / passive, etc.

2. Construct a map of the United States in 1850 showing free and slave states.

Word/Phrase Bank for Document O

inalienable	not capable of being transferred
sacred	divine, holy, consecrated
usurpation	to seize and hold
perseverance	to persist
importunate	urgent
extermination	to eliminate
desecrate	treat with sacrilege, treat with disrespect

Study Questions for Document P

1. List the activities in which temperance women were involved.

2. Why was Anthony frustrated with some of the men involved in the temperance movement? Why did she feel as though "women's voices were suppressed."

3. What is the New York State Women's Temperance Society advocating as grounds for divorce?

4. What does Anthony suggest a woman do if her husband "becomes a confirmed drunkard?"

5. Why might antebellum women be reluctant to follow Anthony's advice?

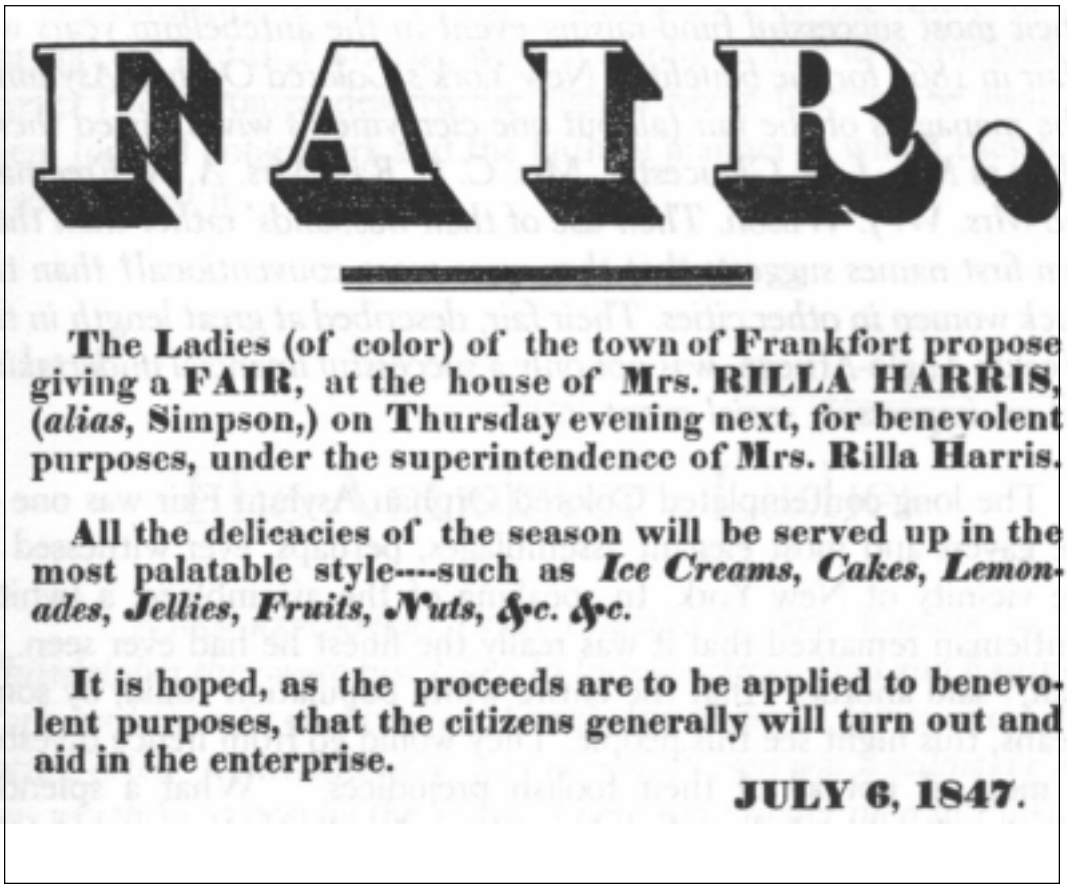
6. According to Anthony, what fate often befalls the wife of an alcoholic?

7. What is the temperance movement encouraging women to do? What are women beginning to realize?

8. Are the members of the New York State Women's Temperance Society acting outside the boundaries of the cult of true womanhood? If so, how?

Susan B. Anthony
Mary S. Anthony, *Inside front cover of her scrapbook*,
Rochester, NY, 1892–1901
Library of Congress

Fair Handbill
The Ladies of color of the town of Frankfort
July 6, 1847



FAIR.

The Ladies (of color) of the town of Frankfort propose giving a FAIR, at the house of Mrs. RILLA HARRIS, (*alias*, Simpson,) on Thursday evening next, for benevolent purposes, under the superintendence of Mrs. Rilla Harris.

All the delicacies of the season will be served up in the most palatable style----such as *Ice Creams, Cakes, Lemonades, Jellies, Fruits, Nuts, &c. &c.*

It is hoped, as the proceeds are to be applied to benevolent purposes, that the citizens generally will turn out and aid in the enterprise.

JULY 6, 1847.

Clements Library, University of Michigan, Courtesy of Clements Library.

Convention of American Women
Clarissa C. Lawrence

During the 1838 Convention of American Women meeting in Philadelphia, a mob threatened delegates and burned Pennsylvania Hall because of the presence of African American women, two of whom were chosen as officers. Not to be silenced, the women responded by passing a resolution against racism. Before the convention was to meet the following year, the mayor of Philadelphia called upon the women to "avoid unnecessary walking with colored people." During the convention delegates published a four page "Appeal to American Women on Prejudice Against Color" that conveyed the indignities of prejudice and discrimination. On the final day of the convention, Clarissa C. Lawrence, vice president of the Salem Female Anti-Slavery Society, spoke to the gathering about her feelings as a black woman hounded by prejudice.

> We meet the monster prejudice *everywhere*. We have not power to contend with it, we are so down-trodden. We cannot elevate ourselves. You must aid us. We have been brought up in ignorance; our parents were ignorant, they could not teach us. We want light; we ask it, and it is denied us. Why are we thus treated? Prejudice is the cause. It kills its thousands every day; it follows us everywhere, even to the grave; but, blessed by God! it stops there. You must pray it down. Faith and prayer will do wonders in the anti-slavery cause. Place yourselves, dear friends, in our stead. We are blamed for not filling useful places in society; but give us light, give us learning, and see then what places we can occupy. Go on, I entreat you. A brighter day is dawning. I bless God that the young are interested in this cause. It is worth coming all the way from Massachusetts, to see what I have seen here.

Source: Sterling, *We Are Your Sisters*, 116–17.

Turning the World Upside Down
The Anti-Slavery Convention of American Women
May 9-12, 1837

Delegates proposed a series of resolutions at the 1837 Anti-Slavery Convention of American Women. The following are among those debated at the convention.

> RESOLVED, That the right of petition is natural and inalienable, derived immediately from God, and guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States, and that we regard every effort in Congress to abridge this sacred right, whether it be exercised by man or woman, the bond or the free, as a high-handed usurpation of power, and an attempt to strike a death-blow at the freedom of the people. And therefore that it is the duty of every woman in the United States, whether northerner or southerner, annually to petition Congress with the faith of an Esther, and the untiring perseverance of the importunate widow, for the immediate abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia and the Territory of Florida, and the extermination of the inter-state slave-trade.

On motion of Sarah Moore Grimké the following resolution was adopted:

> RESOLVED, That we regard those northern men and women, who marry southern slaveholders, either at the South or the North, as identifying themselves with a system which desecrates the marriage relation among a large portion of the white inhabitants of the southern states, and utterly destroys It among the victims of their oppression.

The movers of the previous resolutions, sustained them by some remarks. On motion of Lydia Maria Child the following resolution was adopted:

> RESOLVED, That we recommend to the women of those states where laws exist recognizing the legal right of the master to retain his slave within their jurisdiction, for a term of time, earnestly to petition their respective legislatures for the repeal of such laws; and that the right of trial by jury may be granted to all persons claimed as slaves.

S. M. Grimké offered the following resolution:

> RESOLVED, That whereas God has commanded us to "prove all things and hold fast that which is good,"—therefore, to yield the right, or

> exercise of free discussion to the demands of avarice, ambition, or worldly policy, would involve us in disobedience to the laws of Jehovah, and that as moral and responsible beings, the women of America are solemnly called upon by the spirit of the age and the signs of the times, fully to discuss the subject of slavery, that they may be prepared to meet the approaching exigency, and be qualified to act as women, and as Christians, on this all important subject.

The resolution was supported by the mover, Angelina Emily Grimké, and Lucretia Mott.

A. E. Grimké offered the following resolution:

> RESOLVED, That as certain rights and duties are common to all moral beings, the time has come for woman to move in that sphere which Providence has assigned her, and no longer remain satisfied in the circumscribed limits with which corrupt custom and a perverted application of Scripture have encircled her; therefore that it is the duty of woman, and the province of woman, to plead the cause of the oppressed in our land, and to do all that she can by her voice, and her pen, and her purse, and the influence of her example, to overthrow the horrible system of American slavery.

On the motion of L. M. Child,

> RESOLVED, That we believe it to be the duty of abolitionists to encourage our oppressed brethren and sisters in their different trades and dealings by employing them whenever opportunities offer for so doing.
>
> RESOLVED, That we, as abolitionists, use all our influence in having our colored friends seated promiscuously in all our congregations; and that as long as our churches are disgraced with side-seats and corners set apart for them, we will, as much as possible, take our seats with them.
>
> RESOLVED, That the contribution of means for the purchase of men from their claimants, is an acknowledgment of a right of property in man, which is inconsistent with our principles, and not sanctioned

by true humanity, unless it be accompanied by an absolute denial of the right of property, and a declaration that we contribute in the same spirit as we would do to redeem a fellow-creature from Algerine captivity.

RESOLVED, That we hail with heartfelt gratitude to God, and high approbation of man, the noble example which the colored slaveholders in Martinique have set the slaveholders of the United States, in sending up a petition to the French Chamber of Deputies for the immediate abolition of slavery in that island, it being the first instance [in] which slaveholders have themselves petitioned for the breaking of the yoke of the enslaved; and we earnestly recommend it to the prayerful consideration and speedy imitation of our Southern brethren and sisters.

RESOLVED, That we recommend to the wives and daughters of clergymen, throughout the land, to strengthen their husbands and fathers to declare the whole counsel of God on the subject of slavery, fearing no danger, or prejudice, or privation, being willing "to suffer persecution with them for Christ's sake."

RESOLVED, That we have beheld with grief and amazement the death-like apathy of some northern churches on the subject of American slavery and the un-Christian opposition of others to the efforts of the Anti-Slavery Society; and that as long as northern pulpits are closed against the advocates of the oppressed, whilst they are freely open to their oppressors, the Northern churches have their own garments stained with the blood of slavery, and are awfully guilty in the sight of God.

RESOLVED, That we recommend to all whose consciences approve of appointed seasons for prayer, a punctual attendance upon the monthly concert of prayer for the slaves; and that around the family altar, and in their secret supplications before God, they earnestly commend to his mercy the suffering slave and the guilty master.

RESOLVED, That laying aside sectarian views, and private opinions, respecting certain parts of the preceding resolutions, we stand pledged

to each other and the world, to *unite* our efforts for the accomplishment of the holy object of our association, that herein seeking to be directed by divine wisdom, we may be qualified to wield the sword of the spirit in this warfare; praying that it may never return to its sheath until liberty is proclaimed to the captive, and the opening of the prison doors to those that are bound.

Source: Dorothy Sterling, ed., *Turning The World Upside Down: The Anti-Slavery Convention of American Women Held in New York City, May 9-12* (New York: The Feminist Press, 1987), 12–13; 24–25.

The American Anti-Slavery Society, *The American Anti-Slavery Almanac for 1844* (Boston and Philadelphia, 1844), frontispiece.
Library of Congress

Letter on Temperance
Susan B. Anthony
August 26, 1852

Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton formed the New York State Women's Temperance Society in April, 1852. A few months later, Anthony wrote a letter to Amelia Bloomer, editor of The Lily*, describing the activities of the new temperance society. The following is an excerpt from Anthony's letter.*

Rochester, August 26, 1852

Dear Mrs. Bloomer:

I attended the great Temperance demonstration held at Albion [New York], July 7th, and as I took a view from a different stand point, from any of those who have heretofore described that monster gathering, I will say a few words. Messrs. Barnum, Cary and Chapin, were the speakers for the day. They talked much of the importance of carrying the Temperance question into politics, but failed to present a *definite* plan, by which to combine the temperance votes and secure concert of action throughout the State and country. . . .

According to long established custom, after serving strong meats to the "lords of creation," the lecturers dished up a course of what they doubtless called delicately flavored soup for the ladies. Barnum said it was a fact, and might as well be owned up, that this nation is under *petticoat* government; that every married man would acknowledge it, and if there were any young men who would not now, it was only necessary for them to have one week's experience as a husband, to compel them to admit that such is indeed the fact;—all of which vulgarity could but have grated harshly upon the ears of every intelligent, right-minded woman present.

At the close of the Mass Meeting, the women, mostly Daughters of Temperance—were invited to meet at the Presbyterian Church, at 3 o'clock P.M., to listen to an address from Susan B. Anthony, of Rochester. The Church was filled,—quite a large number of men, (pos-

sessed no doubt of their full share of Mother Eve's curiosity,) were in attendance. They were reminded, that they ought highly to appreciate the privilege which woman permitted them to enjoy,—that of remaining in the house and being silent lookers on.

It was really hopeful to see those hundreds of women, with thoughtful faces—faces that spoke of disquiet within,—of souls dissatisfied, unfed, notwithstanding the soft eloquence, which had been that A.M., so bounteously lavished upon "*angel woman*." I talked to them in my plain way,—told them that to merely relieve the suffering wives and children of drunkards, and vainly labor to reform the drunkard was no longer to be called temperance work, and showed them that woman's temperance sentiments were not truthfully represented by man at the Ballot Box. . . .

In the evening, S. F. Cary, T. W. Brown, and Mr. Chapin addressed a large audience in the Presbyterian Church. Most excellent addresses, all of them, if they had only omitted the closing paragraphs to the *Ladies.* Oh! I am sick and tired of the senseless, hopeless work that man points out for woman to do. Would that the women of our land would rise, *en masse*, and proclaim with one united voice, that they repudiate the popular doctrine that teaches them to follow in the wake of the sin and misery, degradation and woe, which man for the gratification of his cupidity, chooses to inflict upon the race, to minister to their wretched victims words of comfort, and kindly point out to them how they may again enjoy the blessings of a good conscience. Such work is vain, worse than vain;—if woman may do nothing toward removing the CAUSE of drunkenness, then is she indeed powerless—then may she well sit down, and with folded hands weep over the ills that be. . . .

. . . I hope you have told your readers . . . of the first Women's Temperance Meeting, on the evening of the 6th [in Elmira]. Miss Clark spoke on the 7th and 8th. I again addressed the citizens of that village. The meetings were all fully attended and much interest was manifested. While stopping at the Depot, the A.M. of the 10th, a lady addressed me and said, "It is rude to thus speak to a stranger, but I want to say to you, that you have done one thing in Elmira." "And what is that?"

"You have convinced me that it is proper for women to talk Temperance in public as well as in private. . . ."

The women of Elmira formed a woman's temperance society, auxiliary to the State society—obtained about one hundred members, and forthwith appropriated their funds to the purchase of Temperance tracts and newspapers for gratuitous circulation. . . . By the way, Mrs. Bloomer, the temperance newspapers are trying to work themselves and their leaders into the belief that the position which we, as a temperance society, take, "that Confirmed Drunkenness is a just ground of Divorce," is all wrong and calculated to produce much evil in society. Now I am a firm believer in the doctrine which man is continually preaching, that woman's influence over him is all powerful; hence I argue that for man to know, that his pure minded and virtuous wife, would, should he become a confirmed Drunkard, assuredly leave him, and take with her the property and the children, it would prove a powerful incentive to a correct, consistent life. As public sentiment and the laws now are, the vilest wretch of a husband knows that his wife will submit to live on in his companionship, rather than forsake him, and by so doing subject herself to the world's cold charity, and be robbed of her home and her children. Men may prate on, but we women are beginning to know that the life and happiness of a *woman* is of equal value with that of a *man*; and that of a woman to sacrifice her health, happiness and perchance her earthly existence in the hope of reclaiming a drunken, sensualized man, avails but little. . . .

During last week I visited Palmyra, Marion, Walworth, Farmington and Victor. . . . Auxiliary Temperance Societies have been formed in very nearly all the towns I have visited and the women are beginning to feel that they have something to do in the Temperance Cause—that woman may speak and act in I public as well as in the home circle—and now is the time to inscribe upon our banner, NO UNION WITH DISTILLERS, RUMSELLERS, AND RUMDRINKERS."

Yours for Temperance without Compromise,
S. B. ANTHONY

Source: DuBois, *The Stanton-Anthony Reader*,. 37–40.