Stirring up Suffrage Sentiment: The Formation of the State Woman Suffrage Organizations, 1866-1914
Author(s): Holly J. McCammon
Source: *Social Forces*, Vol. 80, No. 2 (Dec., 2001), pp. 449-480
Published by: University of North Carolina Press
Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/2675586
Accessed: 15/02/2009 17:38

Stirring Up Suffrage Sentiment: The Formation of the State Woman Suffrage Organizations, 1866–1914*

HOLLY J. MCCAMMON, *Vanderbilt University*

Abstract

In nearly every state around the turn of the twentieth century, suffragists mobilized in grassroots suffrage organizations to secure the vote for women. While movement researchers have theorized that political opportunities are important in explaining why movements emerge, the results from an examination of the emergence of the state suffrage movements show that the mobilization of various resources along with the way in which pro-suffrage arguments were framed were instrumental in stirring up suffrage sentiment. Political opportunities did little to explain the emergence of the suffrage movements. The article concludes that movement researchers need to consider that historically contingent circumstances may determine which factors bring about movement mobilization.

As they passed through Nevada in 1895 on a western speaking tour, Susan B. Anthony and Anna Howard Shaw lectured numerous times on why women should have the right to vote. They urged those attending their talks to form their own state-wide suffrage organization to work toward broadening the franchise to women. Not too long after their visit, a sizable group met in Reno to form the Nevada State Equal Suffrage Association (Earl 1976; Smith 1975). In the decades around the turn of the twentieth century across the U.S., individuals — mainly women, but some men as well — joined together, just as did the women and men of Nevada,

* *This work benefited from funding from the National Science Foundation (SBR-9631520), the University Research Council at Vanderbilt University, and the Carrie Chapman Catt Center for Women and Politics at Iowa State University. In addition, I am grateful to Karen Campbell, Wayne Santoro, and anonymous reviewers at* Social Forces *for helpful comments and to Ellen Granberg and Chris Mowery for their careful research assistance. Please direct correspondence to Holly McCammon, Department of Sociology, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN 37235. E-mail: mccammhj@ctrvax.vanderbilt.edu.*

to seek formal political rights for women. In fact, in every state except Wyoming, suffragists organized state suffrage associations.[1] In some states, like South Carolina, these organizations remained relatively small with at most 500 dues-paying members in the 1910s, but in other states, like Massachusetts and New York, thousands joined state organizations to work for woman suffrage (National American Woman Suffrage Association 1912, 1915-19).

This state-level, grassroots suffrage organizing presents an opportunity for a comparative study of the circumstances in which individuals decide to mobilize to pursue a collective goal. An examination of suffrage organizing across states shows that some suffragists organized early in the overall movement, while others organized later (greater detail on this is given below). In the work here, I compare the emergence of these state-level suffrage movements to explore the circumstances that foster movement formation. Although social movement researchers have long been interested in movement emergence (McAdam, McCarthy & Zald 1988), there are surprisingly few empirical studies that offer extensive comparisons to explore why collective action occurs in some circumstances but not in others (for exceptions see Amenta & Zylan 1991; Hedstrom, Sandell & Stern 2000; Khawaja 1994; McCarthy and Wolfson 1996; Minkoff 1995, 1997; Soule et al. 1999).

On the other hand, in the theoretical literature on movement emergence a theme of growing prominence is that political opportunity is an important — if not the most important — circumstance that allows organized movements to arise (McAdam, McCarthy & Zald 1996). Tarrow (1994:17–18) argues simply that "people join in social movements in response to political opportunities," even those with "mild grievances and few internal resources." Kriesi et al. (1992:239) seem also to imply that political opportunities provide the best explanation of why movements emerge when they state that "overt collective action . . . is best understood if it is related to political institutions, and to what happens in arenas of conventional party and interest group politics." Amenta and Zylan's (1991) empirical study offers support for these claims. These researchers compare multiple movements and consider the influence of a variety of factors on movement mobilization. They conclude that political opportunities are highly important in fostering collective action.

While political opportunities currently play a dominant role in the theorizing on movement emergence, resource mobilization theorists (Jenkins 1983; McCarthy & Zald 1977) have long argued that the amount of resources individuals and groups are able to draw on explains why and when movements arise. Empirical studies support this assertion (Khawaja 1994; McCarthy et al. 1988). Minkoff (1995), in her examination of the organization of various women's and racial-ethnic organizations, finds that not only did political opportunities spur organizing, but movement resources did as well. McCarthy and Wolfson (1996) find that skilled leadership in local organizations of Mothers Against Drunk Driving was pivotal in increasing membership and activism in these groups. Soule and her colleagues (1999) compare the influences of the political context and movement resources

on protest activities for various women's groups. They find only mixed support for the role of political opportunities but substantial evidence that the organizational resources of movements led to a greater level of protest activities. These last findings run counter to claims that political opportunities are the best predictors of movement mobilization.

In addition, recently researchers have turned their attention to the ways in which activists frame the arguments that justify their goals (for a review, see Benford & Snow 2000). Movement actors construct arguments to appeal to specific audiences — for instance, potential movement members or those with the power to grant movement demands. Yet, in the literature on movement emergence, to my knowledge, no comparison of the emergence of multiple movements considers the role of framing.[2] Koopman and Duyvendak (1995:241) state that "an important issue to be resolved concerns the success or failure of framing efforts by social movements," particularly the impact that ideas have in launching movements.

At this juncture, then, even after much scholarly attention has been devoted to movement formation, we continue to have few systematic and comprehensive assessments of the dynamics shaping movement emergence (see the exceptions listed above), and, of the few empirical investigations that exist, none have simultaneously examined the roles of political opportunities, resource mobilization, and ideological framing. In the work that follows, I investigate the impact of all three of these factors on the formation of the state suffrage organizations. Although suffrage organizations formed in all states except Wyoming, there are many points in time included in the analysis here in which no state suffrage associations emerged, allowing for a comparison of the circumstances that did and did not foster mobilization.

Organizing a state suffrage association typically was one of the first steps in launching a suffrage movement in a state. In fact, in most states there was little or no suffrage activity before the state association was formed, but once the organization existed suffragists engaged in a myriad of activities designed to promote suffrage (McCammon et al. 2001). The focus of this paper then is on one measure of movement mobilization, *organizational mobilization* (Kurzman 1998 also uses this term), that is, the formation of significant movement organizations committed to working toward broadening the vote to women. Gamson (1975:15) says that "mobilization is a process of increasing the readiness to act collectively," and forming state-wide suffrage organizations positioned the suffragists to engage in various strategies designed to persuade lawmakers and the electorate that women should have voting rights.

Other researchers have concentrated on other possible indicators of the emergence of collective action. For instance, McCarthy and Wolfson (1996) and Soule et al. (1999) both consider the activities of movement participants, typically after initial movement organizing has occurred. Others (e.g., McAdam & Paulsen 1993) concentrate on the micro mobilization processes involved in recruiting specific individuals into the movement. Organizational mobilization, however, has

received scant empirical attention. Three studies provide exceptions. McCarthy et al. (1988) examine the formation of local groups against drunk driving. Minkoff (1995) studies the organizational foundings of women's and racial-ethnic groups in the late twentieth century, and Hedstrom et al. (2000) investigate the organization of local groups of the Social Democratic party in Sweden at the turn of the twentieth century. But, again, none of these studies offers a comprehensive assessment of all factors currently theorized as important in spurring movement organizing. Minkoff's scope is the most inclusive, but she does not consider cultural framing. Yet, as she tells us, "the expansion of organizations represents a particularly important dimension of movement strength and effectiveness" (p. 3).

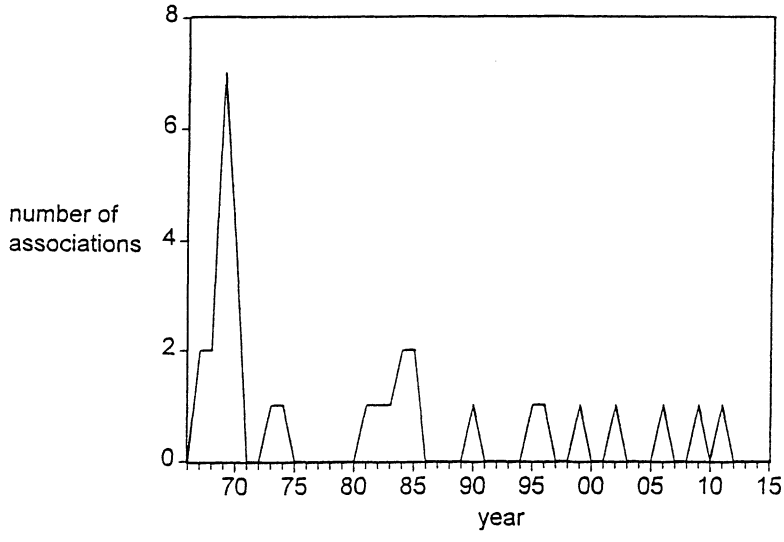
In the following discussion, I first describe the organizational mobilization of the suffragists as they established state suffrage associations. I then outline in greater detail the various theoretical understandings of the circumstances expected to result in movement emergence, discussing them in light of the suffrage movements. Finally, I use event history analysis to examine the utility of these various explanations and draw theoretical conclusions toward building a model of movement emergence.

Organizing to Win the Vote

While there are numerous accounts of the national suffrage movement and its appeals to Congress to pass the federal suffrage amendment (e.g., DuBois 1978; Flexner 1975; Graham 1996), researchers have yet to compare the state-level mobilizations of the suffragists.[3] In fact, some passing references to grassroots suffrage mobilization in the general histories suggest that suffragists were active especially in the earlier years of the movement *only* in the eastern states (Flexner 1975:162; Giele 1995:136). This is not entirely true. Although the eastern states, including the Northeast and the Midwest, organized earlier on average, a number of western states and even a few southern states also spawned early organizations. Figures 1–3 plot the total number of state associations formed in any given year for the East, West, and South respectively.[4] In some states, a state suffrage association organized and then later disbanded but in a still later year reorganized; thus the figures may include the formation of more than one organization per state.

The earliest state organizations formed in 1867 when suffragists established state associations in four states: Kansas, Maryland, Missouri, and New Jersey. A number of eastern states followed suit in these early years, and, in fact, the bulk of organizing in the East took place in these earliest years of the movement, just after the Civil War (Figure 1). The West was somewhat different. Organizing in the western states occurred throughout most of the years of suffrage activism (Figure 2), although a peak in organizing occurred there in 1895, when state associations emerged in four states.[5] The South, while most of its suffrage organizing was after

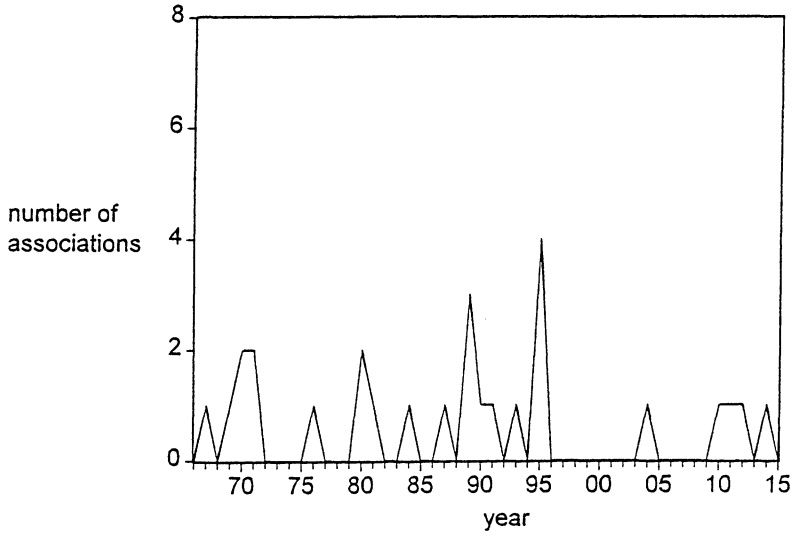
FIGURE 1: Number of State Suffrage Associations Organized per Year, in the East, 1866–1915



1885, can point to a handful of early organizations (Figure 3). Of these, however, only the Kentucky Woman Suffrage Association, founded in 1881, lasted until 1920 when the federal amendment was ratified ending suffrage activism (Fuller 1992). The other early southern organizations lasted only a few years, but suffragists in those states organized again in later years, many in the 1890s. By the end of 1914, all states that had not yet enacted woman suffrage had a state suffrage organization.[6] The data in these figures show that substantial variation exists in terms of when state suffragists organized.

Although from just after the Civil War until the Nineteenth Amendment was ratified *national* suffrage organizations existed working in part to convince Congress to give women formal political power, throughout the period of suffrage activism a substantial portion of the effort to secure the vote was exerted at the state level. Attempts were made to convince state lawmakers and state electorates that state laws and constitutions ought to be changed to enfranchise women. Before 1890, the national movement was led by two competing organizations, the American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA) and the National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA). The explicit policy of the AWSA was to focus its efforts at the state level, encouraging state-level suffrage organization and activism (Flexner 1975:156). With the merger of these two organizations in 1890 to form the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), efforts at the state level became even more pronounced. NAWSA leaders appointed vice presidents from each state to build the movements in their respective states (Grammage 1982), and in 1893, NAWSA decided to hold its annual conventions outside Washington, D.C., every

FIGURE 2: Number of State Suffrage Associations Organized per Year, in the West, 1866–1915

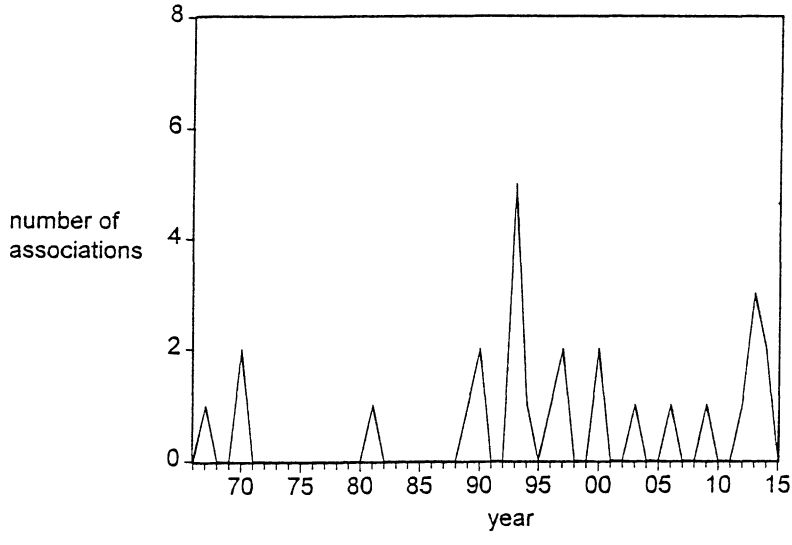


other year in order to use the annual convention to mobilize other parts of the country. Much of the dynamism, therefore, of suffrage activism occurred at the state level, indicating the importance of studying mobilization in the states. The question for the purposes here then becomes: what prompted individuals in particular states to begin mobilizing for the cause; in particular, what circumstances led them to form state suffrage organizations? Also, the various states did not organize all at once; in fact, the West and South did lag behind the East in many respects, suggesting that there may be regional differences in the dynamics of organizing.[7]

Theoretical Understandings of Why Movement Mobilization Occurs

As noted, researchers have pointed to three general circumstances that give rise to social movements (Amenta & Zylan 1991; Koopmans & Duyvendak 1995; Zuo & Benford 1995): political opportunities and the resources and ideological arguments that actors are able to mobilize and utilize to recruit participants. I discuss each of these in turn.

FIGURE 3: Number of State Suffrage Associations Organized per Year in the South, 1866–1915



Political Opportunities

Political opportunities, which have been widely discussed recently in the movements literature, are characteristics of states and of party politics that can indicate to potential activists that the time is ripe for challenge (McCammon et al. 2001). A number of theorists outline the types of political circumstances that suggest such a conduciveness to reform (e.g., Kriesi et al. 1992; McAdam, McCarthy & Zald 1996; Tarrow 1994). One key circumstance is when powerful political elites show a willingness to consider and perhaps even act on the sorts of issues with which the movement would be concerned (Schennink 1988). Often political opportunity theorists say that this form of opportunity exists when potential movement members have allies in the polity (Kriesi 1989; Tarrow 1994). There are a number of ways in which such a circumstance may have existed during the years of suffrage activity.

For instance, some state legislatures debated woman suffrage bills and resolutions prior to the formation of state suffrage organizations. Sometimes such bills and resolutions were introduced in the legislature by individual suffragists; in other cases they were introduced by a particular legislator. Either way, the very fact that lawmakers were willing formally at least to consider granting women the vote may have suggested to potential movement recruits that the polity was "open"

to such a demand and that there were suffrage allies in the legislature. This may have prompted suffrage organizing.

State governments may also have indicated that they were open to reform by previously passing a suffrage bill granting women some form of partial suffrage. Skocpol (1992:58) refers to this as a policy feedback effect. Quite simply, state legislatures that had already expanded voting rights to women may have suggested to potential suffragists that the legislature would be receptive to further demands. A number of states gave women the right to vote in school elections prior to suffrage organizing (NAWSA 1940). The Montana territorial government, in fact, allowed women to vote for school officials beginning in 1887 and in 1889 the new state government allowed women to vote on tax issues, but the Montana Woman's Suffrage Association was not formed until 1895 (Anthony & Harper [1902] 1985). No one lobbied the legislature for voting rights when school suffrage was passed and only a few individuals attempted to sway the 1889 Constitutional Convention that conferred tax suffrage (Larson 1973). But as Larson (1973:27) states, the passage of partial suffrage "whetted the appetite" of individuals in the state and, in time, a state organization was formed.

Finally, legislatures may also have signaled openness to the idea of woman suffrage when third parties held a significant number of legislative seats. In later years, after the state suffrage movements were established and seeking political support, the Populists, Progressives, Prohibitionists, and Socialists were substantially more likely to endorse woman suffrage than were the major parties (state-specific sources [see below]; Berman 1987; Marilley 1996). Third parties typically were challengers themselves, attempting to wrest political control from either the Democrats or Republicans. Their presence in the state legislature, therefore, in addition to signaling a readiness to act on suffrage, also may indicate a period of political realignment — another circumstance that political opportunity theorists (Piven & Cloward 1977; Tarrow 1994) say may encourage movements to form. During such periods of political instability, not only may potential movement recruits perceive an opportunity to be heard, but government or party officials themselves may search for greater political support by revising their stance on a contentious issue. This, too, may spur organizing.

Political opportunity theorists (Cuzan 1990; Koopmans 1996) also suggest that periods of political conflict may spark movement organization. Third party successes in a two-party system, in addition to indicating political instability and realignment, also can imply a period of political conflict as third parties compete with major parties for votes. Party competition, of course, can also take place between the two major parties. Perhaps when races were close between Democrats and Republicans, suffragists were more likely to organize because competitive politics suggested that those in power would be more receptive to demands for reformed voting rights because of a need among politicians to build their constituency base. Periods of party competition, then, may also lead to movement organization.

A third type of political opportunity theorized by movement scholars exists when outsiders to the polity have greater institutional access to participation in the polity (Brockett 1991; Tarrow 1994). During the years of suffrage activity, states were similar in many ways in terms of access points for their citizens. All states, even the territories, had elected legislative bodies debating and determining law. While women in most cases did not possess full voting rights and thus were formally excluded from politics, they sometimes lobbied and otherwise informally pressured state officials. But aside from these similarities in institutional access to lawmaking, there were important differences in the processes involved in reforming suffrage laws in the states. For instance, to change suffrage laws in Pennsylvania, a resolution in the legislature needed favorable votes in two consecutive legislative sessions and the legislature met only every other year. Then, the reform had to be voted on positively by the electorate in a referendum. In Delaware, on the other hand, an easier reform process existed. Voting rights could simply be changed by a single vote of the legislature and no public referendum was required (state-specific sources). It may be that where the process of reforming suffrage laws was simplest, suffragists were more likely to organize, anticipating an easier time in winning the franchise.

One final political opportunity for suffrage organizing in a state may have occurred when a neighboring state enacted voting rights for women. Some individuals in the particular state (in the state without voting rights) may have felt that if the legislature or the electorate in the neighboring state was willing to broaden democracy to women, the time had come when their own legislature or electorate would be willing to do the same, and thus these individuals formed a suffrage association to agitate for the vote.[8]

Resource Mobilization

A number of resource mobilization theorists (Freeman 1973; Oberschall 1973; Tilly 1978) argue that movements are likely to emerge where preexisting networks and collectivities exist, particularly those whose members hold beliefs and values that are consonant with those of the incipient movement. Such organizations and the actors participating in them can offer the necessary resources such as members, money, leaders, skills, and knowledge to launch collective action.

A number of suffrage historians, particularly those writing about the western and southern suffrage movements, have linked the rise of the state suffrage movements to the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), the General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC), and other religious and civic women's groups of the time (Scott 1970, 1987; Stefanco 1993; Stone-Erdman 1986). In such organizations, women's political consciousness grew, and more women became aware not only of current societal problems but of women's lack of formal political power to address the problems. Activity in these organizations also provided civic-minded leaders trained in the art of collective action, whether it be directed toward

reforming liquor laws or improving public education for children. The move from working for these sorts of reforms to agitating for woman suffrage was not difficult, and where such organizations existed, state suffrage associations may have been more likely to spring up, particularly so in the West and South. This was less likely to be the case in the East, however, because many (but not all) eastern suffrage associations formed before these other women's organizations. For instance, many eastern state suffrage associations organized in the late 1860s, but the WCTU did not organize until the 1870s.

It is possible that other groups in the East facilitated suffrage organizing there in the early years, for instance, abolitionist groups and various moral and religious reform organizations. Unfortunately, data on the presence of these groups are unavailable by state. However, McDonald (1987), in a detailed study of the New York suffrage movement, finds that prior to the 1880s, New York suffragists had few ties to other groups, in large part because their ideas concerning political equality for women and men were perceived as too radical. Moreover, Merk's (1958) examination of the northeast movement shows that while the AWSA and the NWSA emerged from an abolitionist organization (the American Equal Rights Association), the *state-level* organizations in the Northeast were largely the result of the efforts of these national suffrage organizations and were not outgrowths of non-suffrage groups. Thus, it may be that these other organizations did not prompt suffrage organizing.

The suffrage histories, however, are replete with instances of the national suffrage organizations helping to form state suffrage organizations, typically with the assistance of one or a few local suffrage proponents (e.g., Graves 1954; James 1983; Knott 1989; Larson 1973; Reed 1958). Thus, the national movement itself can also be considered a preexisting organization that fueled state-level mobilization. Freeman (1973:806), theorizing generally about key resources, mentions the importance of organizers in movement emergence. The National and American Woman Suffrage Associations and, beginning in 1890, NAWSA all sent paid organizers to the states in attempts to bring about suffrage organizing. In addition, leaders of the national organizations — such as Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Anna Howard Shaw, and Carrie Chapman Catt — routinely traveled to the states giving speeches to promote suffrage activism. In addition, the national organizations sent money, literature for public distribution, press releases for newspapers, and other resources to the states to aid organization and the suffrage cause there. And, as mentioned, beginning with its formation in 1890, NAWSA began a concentrated effort to mobilize at the state level (Catt & Shuler [1923] 1969; Graham 1996). Frustrated with a U.S. Congress unwilling to grant voting rights to women, NAWSA began holding its annual conventions every other year outside Washington, D.C., to promote organizing elsewhere. NAWSA leaders paid particular attention to the South where they perceived staunch resistance to woman suffrage. In 1892 NAWSA established a Southern Committee to focus on that region and in 1895 Susan B. Anthony and Carrie Chapman Catt embarked on a lengthy

tour of the South, in addition to touring the West (Larson 1972a; Wheeler 1993:115–16). In all regions, then, resources from the national movement should increase the likelihood of state-level organizing.

In addition to preexisting organizations that can lead to movement mobilization, mobilization theorists, especially those who have studied women's movements, sometimes consider demographic shifts that can produce a potential resource for movements, specifically, a population that is willing to join a movement (Buechler 1990; Chafetz & Dworkin 1986; McCarthy et al. 1988). In the decades around the turn of the century, women in the U.S. were increasingly attending colleges and universities with their male counterparts and were moving into the world of paid employment, including into the professions of law and medicine. Women were divorcing more, marrying less, and having fewer children.[9] This "new woman," in many cases, provided the ready audience for those espousing the suffragist agenda (Giele 1995). DuBois (1998:39) states that suffrage could only become a mass movement when women led more independent lives and when they were already moving into the public sphere, which allowed them to become more receptive to the idea of woman suffrage. Where these trends were most pronounced, then, suffrage mobilization should be greater.

Moreover, specific regions may have provided populations more willing and/or able to mobilize. More urban as opposed to more rural states may have fostered mobilization. As a number of scholars (Furer 1969; Johnson 1970; Young 1982) have noted, urban areas afforded nascent suffrage movements greater resources with which to organize. Flexner ([1959] 1975:162), speaking of the rural West, says that "[g]eography made the problems of arranging conventions and establishing a cohesive organization nearly insuperable." Urban areas, on the other hand, offered denser communities of middle- and upper-class women who typically had more leisure time than their rural (and working-class) counterparts, and their proximity to one another in cities facilitated discussions and, in many cases, ultimately suffrage organizing.

Ideological Framing

Another circumstance that may have influenced where and when the suffragists organized state associations concerns the types of pro-suffrage arguments that were used. Movement researchers (Snow & Benford 1988; Snow et al. 1986; Zuo & Benford 1995) theorize that the way in which actors frame ideological arguments, that is, arguments that justify the demands of those seeking change, may influence the mobilization of movements. Snow et al. (1986:477) state that not all frames are equally likely to mobilize movements. Yet researchers have not systematically compared mobilization attempts to determine which frames are more likely to spur individuals to movement activism. Koopmans and Duyvendak (1995:242) also raise the question of whether framing efforts have an independent effect on movement formation or whether the power of such argumentation works in

conjunction with structural opportunities. That is, they ask whether movements are more likely to form when, for instance, a political opportunity exists in combination with effective frames of discourse — when, in their words, activists can "translate structural conditions, constraints, or opportunities into articulated discontent and dispositions toward collective action." It may also be the case that framing efforts are more effective in bringing about movement organizing when resources to launch a movement are plentiful, for instance, when co-optable networks exist. The mobilization of the state-level suffrage movements provides an opportunity to assess the utility of the different kinds of arguments used by the suffragists to justify their demand for voting rights and to explore whether the role of framing works independently of or in combination with other circumstances.

Representatives from the national suffrage organizations, including its top leaders, journeyed to the states and spoke in public forums about why women should have the vote. In some states, one or a few local suffragists also traveled the state attempting to raise interest in woman suffrage. For instance, Abigail Scott Duniway, a well-known western suffragist, traveled in Idaho, Oregon, and Washington spreading the word about suffrage (Moynihan 1983). As Kraditor ([1965] 1981) points out, the suffragists used different types of arguments in their attempts to convince possible participants that they should join the movement. One argument (or frame) that was widely used was the "justice" argument. This argument held that women were citizens just as men were and, therefore, deserved equal suffrage. Suffrage was simply their natural right.

Another type of argument used by the suffragists is what Kraditor calls the "expediency" argument. With this, suffragists argued that women should have the vote because women would bring special, "womanly" skills to the voting booth. Because of their traditional roles as wives, mothers, and housekeepers, women would know how to solve societal problems, particularly problems involving women, children, and families. Women could bring their nurturing abilities into the political realm to help remedy poverty, domestic abuse, child labor, and inadequate education. Also, in keeping house at the turn of the century, women were increasingly participating in the public sphere in that they were purchasing more and more commercial goods and services. Suffragists argued that women ought to have a say in how these businesses were regulated. One suffragist put it in these terms: "The woman who keeps house must in a measure also keep the laundry, the grocery, the market, the dairy, . . . and in asking for the right to vote they are following their housekeeping in the place where it is now being done, the polls" (quoted in Turner 1992:135).

Justice and expediency arguments, however, may not have been equal in their ability to mobilize potential suffragists. Justice arguments — unlike expediency arguments — directly challenged widely held, traditional beliefs about the separation of women's and men's roles into the private and public spheres. This separate spheres ideology held that women should be confined to the duties of the private sphere, such as child rearing and housekeeping; men, on the other hand,

should be engaged in the public sphere activities of business and politics (Kerber 1997). Justice arguments took the bold step of attempting to convince individuals to support woman suffrage by positing that women, too, had a right to participate in the public (in this case, political) sphere. But such an argument may not have resonated with those subscribing to the separate spheres ideology — and many at the time believed in it quite firmly.

Expediency arguments, on the other hand, did not present such a direct challenge to these traditional beliefs. Expediency arguments stressed women's unique and feminine abilities, extolling the virtues that women would bring to politics, because women were different from (and not necessarily equal to) men. Expediency arguments also pointed out that increasingly the private and public spheres overlapped, with women turning to the marketplace for many items and services for the household. Expediency arguments simply did not challenge the separate spheres ideology with the same directness that the justice arguments did. For this reason, in a time when many still subscribed to the separate spheres ideology, expediency arguments may have been more successful in mobilizing suffrage movements.

Data and Methods

I use discrete-time event history analysis to examine the utility of these various explanations of suffrage organizational mobilization. Event history analysis allows one to assess the impact of various measures on the likelihood of a state suffrage association being organized in a state. Years included in the analysis are from 1866, just after the Civil War and one year prior to the formation of the first state suffrage associations, to 1914, the last year in which any associations were organized. Arkansas, New Mexico, and South Carolina were the last states to form associations in 1914. (All three, however, had had prior state organizations.)

The dependent variable used in these analyses is an indicator of whether a state suffrage association existed within a state in a given year. The measure equals 0 for years in which no association existed and 1 for the year in which an association was formed.[10] Years following the year of organizational formation are excluded from the analysis because the state is no longer "at risk" of forming a state association.[11]

Information on the organization of the state suffrage associations comes from an extensive review and content analysis of over 650 secondary and primary accounts of suffrage activities in the states (see McCammon et al. 2001).[12] In some states, prior to the formation of the state association, a few individuals worked for woman suffrage. In other states, local organizations were formed. The locals were concentrated only in particular communities, however, and often had only a few members. The formation of state associations is the best measure of widespread organizing in a state.

As noted, however, in some states state organizations disbanded and reorganized at a later date. After the disbanding, the state again becomes at risk of forming a state association and thus is again included in the analysis with the dependent variable equal to 0 until a new state suffrage association is formed. Allison (1984) warns, however, that if repeated events occur for a unit (in this case, a state) and if the repeated events are not independent of one another, the standard errors for the coefficients may be biased. The formation of multiple state suffrage associations in a state may not be independent events because the organization of an earlier association may influence the likelihood of the formation of a later association. Allison recommends including two measures indicating the past history of the state (or unit) in the model to control for this interdependency. I include, therefore, two variables as controls in the models below: (1) *the number of prior state suffrage associations formed* and (2) *the number of years since the last state association existed.*

Six measures indicating political opportunities for suffrage mobilization are examined in these analyses. The first, an indicator of how receptive state legislatures are to the demand for voting rights for women, is a dichotomous measure indicating *years in which suffrage bills or resolutions were introduced into the state legislatures* (equal to 1 in years suffrage was introduced and 0 otherwise; state-specific sources). This measure is lagged one year because the reverse causality is possible: newly formed state suffrage associations themselves might be responsible for the introduction of a suffrage bill. The second measure, also an indicator of the openness of state legislatures to woman suffrage, is a count of *the number of types of partial suffrage passed in a state.* This measure is also lagged one year, again because newly formed state suffrage associations could be instrumental in winning a form of partial suffrage. Types of partial suffrage included in the measure are tax and school suffrage, the only forms enacted prior to the formation of suffrage organizations (state-specific sources).

The third measure, an indicator of periods of political realignment and party competition, is the *percentage of seats in both houses of the state legislature held by third parties* (Burnham n.d.; World Almanac 1868–76, 1886–1918).[13] The fourth political opportunity indicator, also a measure of party competition, is a dichotomous variable indicating *years in which the Republican party held more than 40 percent but fewer than 60 percent of the seats in both houses of the state legislature* (Burnham n.d.; World Almanac 1868–76, 1886–1918). The measure equals 1 if the percentage falls between 40 and 60 and 0 otherwise. This is a measure of the legislative outcome of a period of electoral competition between the Democratic and Republican parties in a state.[14] The fifth political opportunity variable is a measure of *the ease or difficulty in a state of reforming voting rights.* The measures varies from 1 to 5, where 1 designates the easiest reform process (one legislative vote and no referendum) and 5 indicates the most difficult type of process (typically involving the legislature calling a constitutional convention) (state-specific sources). The final measure of political opportunity is *the proportion of neighboring*

states passing suffrage for women, including both full and partial suffrage (NAWSA 1940).

Preexisting organizations that may have fueled suffrage organizing are indicated with two sets of measures. The first set includes (1) *a dichotomous variable indicating whether the WCTU was organized in a state* (coded 1 where such an organization exists and 0 otherwise; state-specific sources) and (2) *a count of the number of other prominent women's organizations existing in a state.* The organizations included in this latter measure are: the Consumers' League (Nathan 1926), the General Federation of Women's Clubs (Skocpol 1992), and the National Congress of Mothers (Mason 1928).

The national suffrage organizations were also preexisting organizations that may have fostered mobilization in the states, particularly by sending resources to assist organizing. These resources are measured dichotomously in three ways: (1) *whether the national sent an organizer to the state*, (2) *whether the national organization sent other resources to the state, such as speakers, literature, and money*, and (3) *whether the national organization held its annual convention in the state.* These measures equal 1 if the national sent an organizer or other resources to the state or held its convention in the state in a particular year and 0 otherwise. I also include an indicator of *the years in which NAWSA existed* (equal to 1 for those years, 0 otherwise). The measure is constant across states.

Demographic shifts among women are captured with two measures: (1) *percentage of all women who are college and university students* (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1975; U.S. Department of Commerce 1919, 1920, 1922, 1923; U.S. Office of Education 1872–1914, 1916, 1917) and (2) *the percentage of all women who are physicians or lawyers* (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1872, 1883, 1897, 1902, 1914, 1923, 1975). Data for these measures are only available beginning in 1872 and 1870 respectively. A number of state suffrage organizations were formed before these years (see Figures 1–3). Including these measures in the analysis left-censors the data and this can result in biased parameter estimates (Yamaguchi 1991). Analyses including these measures thus must be viewed with some caution.[15] The final demographic measure is *the percent of a state's population living in urban areas* (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1975).[16]

Two dichotomous measures of the type of argument or frame used to convince potential suffragists to join the cause are (1) *suffragists' use of a justice argument in a public forum, such as in a public speech or in a newspaper column* and (2) *suffragists' use of an expediency argument in a public forum* (state-specific sources). Both of these variables are coded 1 if the argument was used publicly in a given year and 0 otherwise. Both measures are also lagged one year to avoid confounding the analysis with justice and expediency arguments made by suffragists in a newly organized state association.

One final control measure is included in these models. It is possible that through a diffusion process suffrage mobilization in a neighboring state influenced

TABLE 1: Event History Analysis of the Impact of Political Opportunities, Resource Mobilization, and Ideological Framing on the Emergence of State Suffrage Associations, 1866–1914

	(1) U.S.	(2) East	(3) West	(4) South	(5)[b] U.S.	(6) U.S.	(7) U.S.
Political opportunities							
Suffrage bills and resolutions (lagged)	.231	.785	−.537	.252	.503	.228	.231
	(.37)	(.60)	(.70)	(1.1)	(.44)	(.37)	(.37)
Partial suffrage (lagged)	.416	1.28	.620	−1.46	.296	.499	.416
	(.33)	(.82)	(.69)	(1.3)	(.38)	(.34)	(.33)
Third parties	.000	−.202	-.018	.046*	.002	.000	.000
	(.01)	(.17)	(.02)	(.03)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Party competition	.092	.227	.042	-5.93	.021	.087	.092
	(.37)	(.61)	(.71)	(28.5)	(.48)	(.37)	(.37)
Reform procedure	.069	.135	.313	−.648	−.082	.078	.069
	(.14)	(.33)	(.29)	(.45)	(.19)	(.14)	(.14)
Neighboring states passing suffrage (lagged)	−.823	1.86	−6.28*	.082	−.652	−.797	−.827
	(.62)	(1.5)	(1.8)	(1.8)	(.77)	(.62)	(.63)
Resource mobilization							
WCTU	−.461	−1.12	1.99*	−1.80	1.97*	−.443	−.465
	(.45)	(1.0)	(1.1)	(1.3)	(1.0)	(.45)	(.46)
Women's organizations	.068	−.999	1.56*	.191	.040	.053	.067
	(.22)	(.68)	(.69)	(.35)	(.22)	(.22)	(.22)
Suffrage organizer	1.73*	2.03*	2.45*	1.20	2.75*	1.74*	1.72*
	(.61)	(1.21)	(1.1)	(1.3)	(.80)	(.61)	(.61)
National convention	2.23*	1.970*	—[a]	14.3	3.72*	2.22*	2.23*
	(.90)	(1.13)		(164.3)	(1.39)	(.90)	(.90)
Resources from national	3.07*	3.64*	3.28*	3.08*	2.72*	3.06*	3.07*
	(.34)	(.63)	(.83)	(.79)	(.43)	(.34)	(.34)
NAWSA	1.23*	.505	−1.36	3.18*	1.26*	1.26*	1.23*
	(.47)	(1.1)	(1.2)	(1.2)	(.50)	(.47)	(.47)
Percent of women in higher education	—	—	—	—	−.009	—	—
					(.31)		
Percent of women in the professions	—	—	—	—	1.28	—	—
					(2.5)		
Urbanization	3.47*	5.43*	16.1*	5.70	2.29	3.48*	3.47*
	(1.10)	(2.3)	(4.9)	(3.8)	(1.6)	(1.1)	(1.1)

TABLE 1: Event History Analysis of the Impact of Political Opportunities, Resource Mobilization, and Ideological Framing on the Emergence of State Suffrage Associations, 1866–1914 (Continued)

	(1) U.S.	(2) East	(3) West	(4) South	(5)[b] U.S.	(6) U.S.	(7) U.S.
Ideological framing							
Justice argument (lagged)	−.301	−.523	.058	−.982	−.516	−.269	−.300
	(.56)	(.91)	(1.0)	(1.3)	(.73)	(.56)	(.56)
Expediency argument (lagged)	1.86*	2.38*	1.66*	3.23*	1.79*	2.21*	1.82
	(.63)	(1.3)	(1.0)	(1.3)	(.73)	(.77)	(1.2)
Expediency x Partial suffrage (lagged)	—	—	—	—	—	.637	—
						(.87)	
Expediency x WCTU (lagged)	—	—	—	—	—	—	.056
							(1.3)
Controls							
Organizing in neighboring states (lagged)	−.406	−.326	3.42	−.032	−.477	−.448	−.404
	(.61)	(1.2)	(2.3)	(.58)	(.75)	(.61)	(.61)
Number of previous organizations	-.354	.458	−2.31*	−1.99*	−.120	−.366	−.351
	(.33)	(.63)	(.96)	(.72)	(.36)	(.34)	(.34)
Years since previous organization	.115*	−.042	.062	.213*	.116*	.113*	.115*
	(.04)	(.10)	(.10)	(.07)	(.04)	(.04)	(.04)
Constant	−4.54*	−5.82*	−6.56*	−3.50*	−6.55*	−4.57*	−4.54*
	(.50)	(1.4)	(1.5)	(1.3)	(1.1)	(.50)	(.50)
N	923	243	242	438	723	923	923
Likelihood-ratio χ^2	210.2*	81.9*	80.5*	88.4*	171.6*	210.7*	210.2*

Note: Standard errors are in parentheses.

[a] No conventions were held in the West during these years.

[b] Data for higher education and the professions are available only beginning in 1872 and 1870 respectively. This left-censors a number of events.

* $p < .05$ (one-tailed test)

organizing in a particular state. For instance, Illinois organized its state association in 1869. Iowa organized the following year. Perhaps the activities in Illinois influenced those in Iowa. To gauge the impact of this diffusion process, I include a measure of *the proportion of neighboring states in which state suffrage associations have been formed.* This measure is lagged one year on the assumption that diffusion would take some time to have an effect.[17]

Results

Table 1 provides the results of an event history analysis of the factors influencing state-level suffrage organizing. Column 1 contains results for the entire U.S.[18] and columns 2–4 provide separate analyses for the eastern, western, and southern regions respectively to determine whether the processes leading to movement mobilization differed by region. Columns 5–7 contain variations on the U.S. model which I discuss below.

Beginning with the results for the whole U.S. in column 1, one can see a clear pattern. Political opportunities seem not to influence suffrage movement mobilization. None of the measures are significant in this model. But looking across the columns at the regional analyses, one can see that there are two exceptions to this. In the West (col. 3), the greater the proportion of neighboring states that passed either full or partial suffrage, the *less* likely a particular state was to form a state suffrage association. This, though, is the opposite effect of that predicted by the theory of political opportunities. The theory predicts that passage of suffrage in a neighboring state — a political opportunity — should increase the likelihood that suffragists will mobilize in the particular state. The finding is puzzling, but it may reflect the fact that while some western states granted rights to women quite early (e.g., Colorado, Idaho, and Utah), a number of others did not even organize for suffrage until later, and thus these two dynamics in the end are negatively related.

The other exception to the lack of results for the political opportunity measures is in the southern model (col. 4). Here, the results show that in the South suffrage associations were likelier to emerge when third parties held legislative office, and this is predicted by the political opportunity model. The Populist and, to a somewhat lesser extent, the Progressive parties were active in the South during the years in which much suffrage activism occurred there, the Populists in the 1890s and the Progressives primarily after the turn of the century (Goodwyn 1978; Tindall 1967). The Populist party, a party supported by small farmers, in fact, was able to secure numerous legislative seats in southern state governments (Woodward [1951] 1971). The successes of this third party in the 1890s coincide with heightened suffrage organizing in the South. Southern Populists, though, unlike their western and midwestern counterparts, were unlikely to endorse the demands of the suffragists (state-specific sources; Jeffrey 1975; Marilley 1996). Thus, while the presence of the Populists in political office in southern states in the 1890s may have fueled suffrage organizing because it defined a period of political instability and conflict — particularly as Democrats tried to reassert their dominance in the South — it is unclear that the Populists were willing allies of the suffrage cause. What appears to have helped stir suffrage activism was the period of political uncertainty.

This finding for the South, however, should not detract from the larger pattern in the findings for the political opportunity measures. With one exception, none of the political opportunity measures indicate that political opportunities fueled

suffrage organizing. Political circumstances had little and, in many cases, no influence on suffragists' decisions to organize.

On the other hand, the results show substantial support for resource mobilization theory. For instance, one claim made by resource mobilization theorists is that movements emerge where preexisting organizations pave the way for movement formation. The results show evidence of this. The findings, though, reveal that most (although not all) of this catalyst effect stems from the presence and activities of the national suffrage organizations, rather than from the WCTU and other women's organizations. States with WCTU organizations or with other women's organizations (the General Federation of Women's Clubs, the Consumers' League, and the National Congress of Mothers) were no more likely to organize suffrage associations than were states without these organizations (cols. 1, 2, and 4), *except* in the West (col. 3).

In the West, both the WCTU and other women's organizations helped ignite suffrage organizing. Both measures are positive and statistically significant. The historical record coincides with these findings. In South Dakota, for instance, the WCTU gathered hundreds of signatures on a pro-suffrage petition in the 1880s, just before the state association was organized (Reed 1958), and in Kansas in the early 1880s just prior to the formation of a state association there, the WCTU was responsible for converting many to the suffrage cause (Stanton, Anthony & Gage [1886] 1985:703).

But, the WCTU variable is not significant in the southern model. A number of southern suffrage historians have commented that the suffrage movement in the South grew out of the WCTU with a shared leadership and membership (Goodrich 1978; Scott 1970). But Turner (1992:146-48; see also Wheeler 1993:11) suggests that this may not have been the case everywhere in the South. Turner draws upon evidence from the Texas woman suffrage movement and finds that in some regions tension rather than collaboration existed between the WCTU and suffrage activists. The WCTU agenda, particularly in the South, remained far more conservative and religion-based than the suffragists' more progressive demands for political equality. The results from the current analysis appear to support Turner's claim. The presence of the WCTU in the southern states had no impact on whether the suffragists organized there. It may be that in some regions the WCTU did motivate individuals to get involved in suffrage activism. But in other areas of the South, just the opposite may have occurred. The WCTU's conservative influence may have even stymied suffrage organizing. The net effect in the analysis, then, is no effect of the presence of the WCTU on suffrage organizing. Perhaps a similar dynamic was at work producing the lack of effect for the other women's organizations.

In the East as well, women's organizations did not help suffrage mobilization (col. 2). This is probably the case because many of the eastern suffrage associations organized earlier than did the WCTU, GFWC, and other organizations. A number of the eastern suffrage organizations were the earliest to form in the U.S., coming

together in the late 1860s. Most eastern WCTUs, on the other hand, organized a bit later in the 1870s. The GFWC made its greatest inroads in the eastern states in the 1890s, and the Consumers' Leagues and the National Congress of Mothers often did not organize at the state level until after the turn of the century. While some suffragists did mobilize later in the eastern states and evidence shows that, at least in some cases, they benefited from prior organizing among these other women's groups (e.g., McBride 1993:102-3), many other suffragists simply organized too early in the East to have profited from these groups.

What is clear from the results in Table 1 is that the activities and resources of the national suffrage movement played an important role in state-level suffrage mobilization. For the U.S. as a whole and in each of the separate regions, national organization variables are significant. From column 1 we learn that when the national organizations sent organizers to a state, when they sent resources such as suffrage speakers, literature, and funding to a state, and when they held their annual conventions in a state, a state suffrage organization was significantly more likely to form in the state. Moreover, during the years in which NAWSA was organized, states were more likely to mobilize for the vote.

Both the presence of organizers and resources increase the likelihood of mobilization in the East and West (cols. 2 and 3). While the convention measure is significant in the eastern model, it drops out of the western model because no national convention was held in a western state prior to the formation of state suffrage organizations there. In the South, only the resource and NAWSA measures are significant; national organizers and conventions had no impact on mobilization in the South. It may be that during the years of suffrage activism, when the Civil War, in many ways, still influenced southern thinking about northerners, literature and funding from the (northern) national movement was effective in fostering organizing in the South. But organizers and conventions (and maybe even speakers as well) — that is, the presence of northerners in the South telling southerners what to do — still caused discomfort among southerners. This may have lessened the impact that these activities of the national could have on mobilization in the South (Goodrich 1978).

But the general pattern in the results is clear: assistance from the national, at least in some form in all regions, fostered state suffrage organizing. This makes the national suffrage movement a key preexisting organization for the state-level movements. The national movement in most states, however, was not an "indigenous" organization; that is, it came from outside the state.[19] Although some movement researchers have found that indigenous organizations provide an important resource for movement emergence, such as the black churches and colleges in southern states during the civil rights movement (McAdam 1982), the results here suggest that prior organizations that provide the resources and skills that fuel mobilization do not have to be indigenous to a particular community or region. They can come from outside that community. McCarthy (1987), for instance, suggests that in circumstances of "social infrastructure deficits," that is,

where local social networks are unlikely to join the movement spontaneously and easily, professional movement organizers may be necessary to ignite movement activism. The national suffrage organizations, typically coming from the outside, indeed, played this role in the state-level movements. All of this, though, suggests a need in future research for particular attention to the circumstances in which different kinds of organizational networks may aid movement formation.

Because the indicators of shifts in women's demographic circumstances are available beginning only in the early 1870s (rather than in 1866), measures of the percentage of women in college and the professions are included in a separate analysis in column 5. This analysis censors the formation of state associations in a number of states and thus the results must be viewed with caution (Yamaguchi 1991). But the results reveal that neither variable is significant. State organizations were not more likely to emerge where there were more women in these less traditional arenas (i.e., in higher education and in the professions of law and medicine). This pool of women, these results suggest, did not provide a resource that particularly helped advance suffrage organizing in the states.

However, in the noncensored models (cols. 1-4), the results show that suffragists were, for the most part, more likely to organize in the more urban states. The urbanization measure is significant and positive in the U.S. model (col. 1) and in the eastern and western models (cols. 2 and 3). The variable narrowly misses being significant in the southern model (col. 4). Urban areas were more likely to foster organizing simply because they offered a denser population, often a population with more middle- and upper-class women with greater leisure time, all of which made it easier for women to get together and share their ideas (Furer 1969). In rural areas during this time period, especially in the West, traveling distances to meet with just one or two neighbors could be quite difficult.

Finally, the results also provide a clear indication that the way in which activists framed ideas also mattered for suffrage organizing, and, moreover, the results show that justice and expediency arguments did not have the same effect on suffrage organizing (cols. 1-4). Where expediency arguments were used as the rationale for woman suffrage, individuals were more likely to organize state suffrage associations. But where justice arguments were used, individuals were not more likely to mobilize. Justice arguments had no significant effect on suffrage mobilization. This pattern in the results holds true for the U.S. model and for each of the regional models. The likely reason for this is the challenge that justice arguments presented to existing beliefs about women's and men's roles in society. Such arguments called for equal voting rights for men and women and questioned the accepted wisdom of separate spheres for women and men. Justice arguments held that women, just like men, had a natural right to participate in politics. Expediency arguments, on the other hand, did not present the same kind of direct challenge to a separate spheres ideology. Rather, expediency arguments held that women's unique abilities, developed through their work in the home and in child rearing, could be an asset in politics. Women would bring knowledge to the ballot box about how to solve

social problems that concerned families and children. Rather than a direct challenge of separate spheres for women and men, such arguments gently blurred the distinction between public and private spheres. And this is likely why they were more successful in mobilizing suffragists.

Koopmans and Duyvendak (1995) raise the possibility that for ideological arguments to work in mobilizing movements, activists must offer such arguments in circumstances where structural opportunities or organizational resources that will also foster recruitment exist. I constructed a set of interaction terms by multiplying the expediency measure by each of the political opportunity measures and by each of the resource measures and, in separate analyses, examined whether any of these interaction terms significantly predicted when the suffrage movements organized. None of the terms, however, were significant. Examples are presented in columns 6 and 7. In column 6, the interaction term gauges whether the movement was more likely to organize when activists used an expediency argument in the period just after the state legislature had passed a form of partial suffrage (a political opportunity for suffrage mobilization). As with the other interactions, this measure is not significant. The results in column 7 show that movements were not more likely to mobilize where expediency arguments were used and where the WCTU was organized. The findings then tell us that framing efforts can and do have an independent influence on movement emergence. To be effective in recruiting suffragists, the expediency argument did not require particular conditions to be present.

Among the control variables (cols. 1-4), mobilization in one state does not influence whether the suffragists mobilized in a neighboring state. On the other hand, the number of previous suffrage organizations and the length of time since a previous suffrage organization do sometimes influence organizational mobilization. The significant results for these measures suggest that organizing "events" within a state are dependent to some degree. Controlling for this dependency with the inclusion these two measures minimizes the chances of bias in the standard errors.[20]

Discussion and Conclusions

In the years around the turn of the twentieth century, women and men came together to form state suffrage associations. They hoped through their work in these organizations to broaden democracy by winning the formal inclusion of women in the polity. This grassroots organizing occurred in nearly every state in the union. By 1920 when the federal amendment giving women the vote was ratified, the movement had lasted well over 50 years, making it one of the longest lasting social movements in U.S. history. Rarely, though, have researchers investigated the reasons why individuals mobilized in all parts of the country to work for woman suffrage. Was it simply because, in a nation that prides itself on being democratic, the cause

was a just one? Interestingly, the evidence here suggests otherwise. The reasons individuals across the U.S. came together to fight for woman suffrage appear to be rooted largely in the very instrumental ways in which the national suffrage organizations worked to mobilize state-level constituencies. Where and when the national suffrage organizations sent resources — including skilled organizers, rousing speakers, and financial help — this grassroots organizing caught on. In fact, it may well be the activities of the national that explain, at least to some degree, why the South and the West often lagged behind the East in organizing to win the vote: the national organizations simply arrived to foment activism in these regions later than they did in the East. The data show that this is the case when comparing the East to both the West and South (state-specific sources). It was, for example, not until the 1890s that the national organizations began a conscious effort to mobilize southern women.

Moreover, the analyses here show that justice arguments for suffrage — that is, the argument that women should be allowed to vote because it was their natural right as citizens to do so — did not bring about movement mobilization. When these arguments were used, individuals were no more likely to organize than they were otherwise. Rather, what lured individuals to the cause were expediency arguments about women's special place in politics. When organizers and leaders of the national movement argued that women would bring their unique "womanly" perspective to the ballot box to help solve the country's social ills, individuals were far more likely to be persuaded to join the suffrage bandwagon. The results here make clear that to launch a movement, activists need to use arguments that will resonate with widely held beliefs (Snow et al. 1986). Arguments that do not resonate in this way are simply not as effective in spurring mobilization.

Although social movement researchers have pointed to the importance of political opportunities in explaining the emergence of movements (McAdam, McCarthy & Zald 1996), the analyses here show that the political context played at best only a minor role in suffrage organizing, leaving the emergence of these movements to be explained by other factors. It may be that researchers need to rethink how they conceptualize the processes that lead to movement formation. Perhaps there is no one set of factors that can always explain when movements arise. For those joining the suffrage cause — most of whom were women in a time when women were formally excluded from politics — party politics, past legislative actions, and the degree of difficulty in voting rights reform appear to have had little influence on decisions about mobilization. Other factors had a more definite impact. The suffragists, in fact, had a widely stated nonpartisan approach to their efforts to win the vote (Kraditor [1965] 1981). It may be that their separation from much of formal politics of the time simply made political opportunities for the suffragists less relevant than they have been shown to be for other movements (Amenta & Zylan 1991). McGerr (1990:881) states that women were "cut off from the parties [and] cut off from the ballot." Other scholars have also noted women's isolation from party politics, especially during the nineteenth century (e.g., Clemens

1993; Freeman 2000). Perhaps social movement researchers need to consider that the effects of particular circumstances on movement emergence, such as political opportunities, may be *contingent* on historical circumstances (Quadagno & Knapp 1992). That is, in some situations political opportunities may be crucial in determining when movements arise. In other circumstances, where there is "distance" between the activists and the state and politics (Davis 1999), for instance, political opportunities may be far less important. The same may be true for organizational resources. This leaves researchers with the task of discerning in which sorts of contexts the different factors will be instrumental.

Researchers should also consider that there are a variety of indicators of movement mobilization. The emergence of movement organizations, which is examined here, is only one measure of collective action. Other forms of mobilization include protest events (Soule et al. 1999; Minkoff 1997) and even volunteering and contributing financially to a cause (McCarthy & Wolfson 1996). The research literature is at a juncture now where we need to explore whether the same dynamics that produce organizational mobilization also foster protest activity and other forms of collective action.

What clearly mattered, however, for grassroots suffrage organizing were two things: the way in which early activists framed rationales for voting rights for women and the resources offered particularly by the national suffrage organizations. And this pattern varied little across regions. In fact, the similarities in the circumstances leading to movement formation were quite striking across the eastern, western, and southern regions. Moreover, these analyses reveal some of the specific features of the way in which these two dynamics work. First, framing efforts have an impact on mobilization independent of that of contextual opportunities. The success of the use of expediency arguments in recruiting members to the cause did not depend, for instance, on the existence of a political opportunity or the presence of pre-existing networks. Second, indigenous organizations, such as a state WCTU, did not provide the spark that launched suffrage organizing. Rather, for the most part, outsiders to the state, from the national suffrage organizations, provided the initiatives that induced organizing. The organizational networks and resources that can lead to movement formation then, these results suggest, do not have to be home-grown, they can come from outside the region.

But perhaps even most importantly, the strong role of the national suffrage organizations and that of ideological framing shows that *agency* matters in the formation of movements. Just as McCarthy and Wolfson (1996) have found, I find, too, that the resources and arguments that actors use to motivate others to join in a collective effort to bring about social change can have a decided impact. The efforts and arguments of Susan B. Anthony and other suffrage leaders, organizers, and supporters as they traveled across the country along with the other resources that the national used to stir up suffrage sentiment were largely responsible for the

grassroots organizational mobilization of the movement. These women did not need to wait for opportunities to emerge. They made the movement happen.

Notes

1. Wyoming was the first state to grant women full voting rights, although it was a territory when it did so in 1869. No state suffrage organization was ever formed in the state, but a handful of individuals were active in seeking woman suffrage there (Larson 1965).

2. There are, however, a number of case studies of collective action framing in this literature (e.g., Jasper 1999; Zuo & Benford 1995).

3. A number of studies explore the development of suffrage activism in particular states (e.g., Clifford 1979; Larson 1972b; McBride 1993; Tucker 1951). These studies primarily give coverage of the main events of the state-specific suffrage campaigns; few, however, provide focused accounts of movement emergence per se. Some exceptions to this, however, are for the southern states, where historians have attempted to explain why the South generally lagged behind the East and West in mobilizing for the vote (Green 1997; Scott 1970; Turner 1992).

4. The information in these figures comes from a variety of state-specific sources on the suffrage movements which I discuss below. The East includes: Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wisconsin. The West includes: Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. The South includes: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia.

5. A zero value on these plots does not mean that no associations existed, only that no new organizations were formed in a particular year.

6. Prior to 1915, eleven states passed full voting rights for women (Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming) and there was little or no suffrage activity after this in these states until the campaigns to ratify the federal amendment (state-specific sources).

7. There could also be differences in the processes leading to organizing in the earlier years compared with organizing in the later years. This, too, is explored below.

8. When a neighboring state passed suffrage, some individuals in adjacent states may have experienced an intensification of their frustration in not having voting rights and thus a sense of relative deprivation as they compared their circumstance to that of their neighbors (Geschwender 1964). While such grievance theories have not fared well empirically (Amenta & Zylan 1991; Khawaja 1994) and thus they are not considered further here, it is possible that the mechanism underlying the workings of a political opportunity of this nature is that the opportunity increases grievances and frustrations

in a segment of the population. I thank a *Social Forces* reviewer for pointing out this possibility.

9. Sources for these trends include: Giele 1995; Matthews 1992; U.S. Bureau of the Census 1872, 1883, 1897, 1902, 1914, 1923; U.S. Department of Commerce 1919, 1920, 1922, 1923; U.S. Office of Education 1872–1914, 1916, 1917.

10. In the analysis, this binary dependent variable is transformed into the hazard rate of organizational formation (McCammon 1998).

11. Wyoming, which did not form a state association, is excluded from the analysis after the passage of full voting rights for women in that state in 1869.

12. Additional measures used in the analysis come from this data collection effort. Such sources are labeled "state-specific sources."

13. This measure has missing data for the early years for some states, but the missing data do not censor any events.

14. Voting data for all legislative races in states for this time period, a more direct measure of electoral competition, are unavailable. I also examined a similar measure for the percentage of seats held by Democrats but the results were no different than those for the Republican measure (analyses not shown).

15. Also, data on female professionals are available only in census years. The values for intervening years are linearly interpolated.

16. The U.S. Census defines urbanization as the percentage of the population living in cities with more than 2,500 residents. The Census figures for urbanization are available only in decennial years. Intervening years were linearly interpolated.

17. Results from analyses including a spatial effect term suggested by Deane, Beck, and Tolnay (1998) did not differ in any meaningful way from those in which the more straightforward neighboring states term was included.

18. Alaska and Hawaii are not included in these analyses due to a lack of data.

19. The national organizations originated in the East, primarily in Massachusetts and New York (DuBois 1978).

20. Correlations among all independent variables in the analyses show that multicollinearity is not present. In addition to the interaction terms discussed above, other interactions (e.g., between the political opportunity and resource measures) were examined and found not to be significant predictors of suffrage organizing. The impact of a number of additional factors was examined, including: the presence of suffrage opposition organizations (or "antis"), the role of the liquor industry (which also opposed woman suffrage), and the percentage of women in paid employment. None of these measures were significant (analyses also not shown). Finally, I also compared results from an analysis of suffrage organizing in only the earliest years (1866–79) and all later years (1880–1914). The results of these two analyses are substantively the same, suggesting that little over time variation exists in the processes shaping suffrage organizing.

References

Allison, Paul D. 1984. *Event History Analysis: Regression for Longitudinal Event Data*. Sage Publications.

Amenta, Edwin, and Yvonne Zylan. 1991. "It Happened Here: Political Opportunity, the New Institutionalism, and the Townsend Movement." *American Sociological Review* 56:250-65.

Anthony, Susan B., and Ida Husted Harper. [1902] 1985. *The History of Woman Suffrage*, vol. 4. Ayer Company.

Benford, Robert D., and David A. Snow. 2000. "Framing Processes and Social Movements: An Overview." *Annual Review of Sociology* 26:611-39.

Berman, David R. 1987. "Male Support for Woman Suffrage: An Analysis of Voting Patterns in the Mountain West." *Social Science History* 11:281-94.

Brockett, Charles D. 1991. "The Structure of Political Opportunities and Peasant Mobilization in Central America." *Comparative Politics* 23:253-74.

Buechler, Steven M. 1990. *Women's Movements in the United States: Woman Suffrage, Equal Rights, and Beyond*. Rutgers University Press.

Burnham, W. Dean. N.d. "Partisan Division of American State Governments, 1834–1974." Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research.

Catt, Carrie Chapman, and Nettie Rogers Shuler. [1923] 1969. *Woman Suffrage and Politics: The Inner Story of the Suffrage Movement*. University of Washington Press.

Chafetz, Janet Saltzman, and Anthony Gary Dworkin. 1986. *Female Revolt: Women's Movements in World and Historical Perspective*. Rowman & Allanheld.

Clemens, Elisabeth S. 1993. "Organizational Repertoires and Institutional Change: Women's Groups and the Transformation of U.S. Politics, 1890–1920." *American Journal of Sociology* 98:755-98.

Clifford, Deborah P. 1979. "The Drive for Women's Municipal Suffrage in Vermont, 1883–1917." *Vermont History* 47:173-90.

Cuzan, Alfred G. 1990. "Resource Mobilization and Political Opportunity in the Nicaraguan Revolution: The Theory." *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 49:401-12.

Davis, Diane E. 1999. "The Power of Distance: Re-theorizing Social Movements in Latin America." *Theory and Society* 28:585-638.

Deane, Glenn, E.M. Beck, and Stewart E. Tolnay. 1998. "Incorporating Space into Social Histories: How Spatial Processes Operate and How We Observe Them." *International Review of Social History* 43:57-80.

DuBois, Ellen Carol. 1978. *Feminism and Suffrage: The Emergence of an Independent Women's Movement in America, 1848–1869*. Cornell University Press.

———. 1998. *Woman Suffrage and Women's Rights*. New York University Press.

Earl, Phillip I. 1976. "The Story of the Woman Suffrage Movement in Northeastern Nevada, 1869–1914." *Northeastern Nevada Historical Society Quarterly* 6:3-76.

Flexner, Eleanor. 1975. *Century of Struggle: The Women's Rights Movement in the United States*. Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Freeman, Jo. 1973. "The Origins of the Women's Liberation Movement." *American Journal of Sociology* 78:792-811.

———. 2000. *A Room at a Time: How Women Entered Party Politics*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Fuller, Paul E. 1992. *Laura Clay and the Woman's Rights Movement*. University Press of Kentucky.

Furer, Howard B. 1969. "The American City: A Catalyst for the Women's Rights Movement." *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 52:285-305.

Gamson, William A. 1975. *The Strategy of Social Protest*. Dorsey Press.

Geschwender, James A. 1964. "Social Structure and the Negro Revolt: An Examination of Some Hypotheses." *Social Forces* 43:248-56.

Giele, Janet Zollinger. 1995. *Two Paths to Women's Equality: Temperance, Suffrage, and the Origins of Modern Feminism*. Twayne Publishers.

Goodrich, Gillian. 1978. "Romance and Reality: The Birmingham Suffragists, 1892–1920." *Journal of the Birmingham Historical Society* 5:4-21.

Goodwyn, Lawrence. 1978. *The Populist Moment: A Short History of the Agrarian Revolt in America*. Oxford University Press.

Graham, Sara Hunter. 1996. *Woman Suffrage and the New Democracy*. Yale University Press.

Grammage, Julie Karen Walton. 1982. "Quest for Equality: An Historical Overview of Women's Rights Activism in Texas, 1890-1975." Unpublished Ph.D. diss., North Texas State University.

Graves, Lawrence Lester. 1954. "The Wisconsin Woman Suffrage Movement, 1846–1920." Unpublished Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin.

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

Hedstrom, Peter, Rickard Sandell, Charlotta Stern. 2000. "Mesolevel Networks and the Diffusion of Social Movements: The Case of the Swedish Social Democratic Party." *American Journal of Sociology* 106:145-72.

James, Louise Boyd. 1989. "Woman's Suffrage, Oklahoma Style, 1890–1918." Pp. 182-98 in *Women in Oklahoma: A Century of Change*, edited by Melvena K. Thurman. Oklahoma Historical Society.

Jasper, James M. 1999. "Recruiting Intimates, Recruiting Strangers: Building the Contemporary Animal Rights Movement." Pp. 65-82 in *Waves of Protest: Social Movements since the Sixties*, edited by Jo Freeman and Victoria Johnson. Rowman & Littlefield.

Jeffrey, Julie Roy. 1975. "Women in the Southern Farmers' Alliance: A Reconsideration of the Role and Status of Women in the Late Nineteenth-Century South." *Feminist Studies* 2:72-91.

Jenkins, J. Craig. 1983. "Resource Mobilization Theory and the Study of Social Movements." *Annual Review of Sociology* 9:527-53.

Johnson, Kenneth R. 1970. "Florida Women Get the Vote." *Florida Historical Quarterly* 48:299-312.

Kerber, Linda K. 1997. *Toward an Intellectual History of Women: Essays*. University of North Carolina Press.

Khawaja, Marwan. 1994. "Resource Mobilization, Hardship, and Popular Collective Action in the West Bank." *Social Forces* 73:191-220.

Knott, Claudia. 1989. "The Woman Suffrage Movement in Kentucky, 1879–1920." Unpublished Ph.D. diss., University of Kentucky.

Koopmans, Ruud. 1996. "Explaining the Rise of Racist and Extreme Right Violence in Western Europe: Grievances or Opportunities?" *European Journal of Political Research* 30:185-216.

Koopmans, Ruud, and Jan Willem Duyvendak. 1995. "The Political Construction of the Nuclear Energy Issue and Its Impact on the Mobilization of Anti-Nuclear Movements in Western Europe." *Social Problems* 42:235-51.

Kraditor, Aileen S. [1965] 1981. *The Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement, 1890-1920.* Norton.

Kriesi, Hanspeter. 1989. "The Political Opportunity Structure of the Dutch Peace Movement." *West European Politics* 12:295-312.

Kriesi, Hanspeter, Ruud Koopmans, Jan Willem Duyvendak, and Marco Guigni. 1992. "New Social Movements and Political Opportunities in Western Europe." *European Journal of Political Research* 22:219-44.

Kurzman, Charles. 1998. "Organizational Opportunity and Social Movement Mobilization: A Comparative Analysis of Four Religious Movements." *Mobilization: An International Journal* 3:23-49.

Larson, T.A. 1965. "Woman Suffrage in Wyoming." *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 56:57-66.

———. 1972a. "Susan B. Anthony's Women Suffrage Crusade in the American West." *Journal of the West* 21:5-15.

———. 1972b. "Woman's Rights in Idaho." *Idaho Yesterdays* 16:2-19.

———. 1973. "Montana Women and the Battle for the Ballot." *Montana* 23:24-41.

Marilley, Suzanne M. 1996. *Woman Suffrage and the Origins of Liberal Feminism in the United States, 1820–1920.* Harvard University Press.

Mason, Martha Sprague. 1928. *Parents and Teachers: A Survey of Organized Cooperation of Home, School, and Community.* Ginn.

Matthews, Glenna. 1992. *The Rise of Public Woman: Woman's Power and Woman's Place in the United States, 1630–1970.* Oxford University Press.

McAdam, Doug. 1982. *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930–1970.* University of Chicago Press.

McAdam, Doug, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald. 1988. "Social Movements." Pp. 695-737 in *The Handbook of Sociology*, edited by Neil J. Smelser. Sage Publications.

———. 1996. "Introduction: Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Framing Processes — Toward a Synthetic, Comparative Perspective on Social Movements." Pp. 1-20 in *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Oppotunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings*, edited by Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald. Cambridge University Press.

McAdam, Doug, and Ronnelle Paulsen. 1993. "Specifying the Relationship between Social Ties and Activism." *American Journal of Sociology* 99:640-67.

McBride, Genevieve G. 1993. *On Wisconsin Women: Working for Their Rights from Settlement to Suffrage.* University of Wisconsin Press.

McCammon, Holly J. 1998. "Using Event History Analysis in Historical Research: With Illustrations from a Study of the Passage of Women's Protective Legislation." *International Review of Social History* 43:33-55.

McCammon, Holly J., Karen E. Campbell, Ellen M. Granberg, and Christine Mowery. 2001. "How Movements Win: Gendered Opportunity Structures and U.S. Women's Suffrage Movements, 1866–1919." *American Sociological Review* 66:49-70.

McCarthy, John D. 1987. "Pro-Life and Pro-Choice Mobilization: Infrastructure Deficits and New Technologies." Pp. 49-66 in *Social Movements in an Organizational Society: Collected Essays*, edited by Mayer N. Zald and John D. McCarthy. Transaction Publishers.

McCarthy, John D., and Mark Wolfson. 1996. "Resource Mobilization by Local Social Movement Organizations: Agency, Strategy, and Organization in the Movement against Drinking and Driving." *American Sociological Review* 61:1070-88.

McCarthy, John D., Mark Wolfson, David P. Baker, and Elaine Mosakowski. 1988. "The Founding of Social Movement Organizations: Local Citizens' Groups Opposing Drunken Driving." Pp. 71-84 in *Ecological Models of Organizations*, edited by Glenn R. Carroll. Ballinger.

McCarthy, John D., and Mayer N. Zald. 1977. "Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory." *American Journal of Sociology* 82:1212-41.

McDonald, David K. 1987. "Organizing Womanhood: Women's Culture and the Politics of Woman Suffrage in New York State, 1865–1917." Unpublished Ph.D. diss., Department of History, State University of New York, Stony Brook.

McGerr, Michael. 1990. "Political Style and Women's Power, 1830–1930." *Journal of American History* 77:864-85.

Merk, Lois Bannister. 1958. "Massachusetts and the Woman-Suffrage Movement." Unpublished Ph.D. diss., Radcliffe College.

Minkoff, Debra C. 1995. *Organizing for Equality: The Evolution of Women's and Racial-Ethnic Organizations in America, 1955–1985*. Rutgers University Press.

———. 1997. "The Sequencing of Social Movements." *American Sociological Review* 62:779-99.

Moynihan, Ruth Barnes. 1983. *Rebel for Rights: Abigail Scott Duniway*. Yale University Press.

Nathan, Maud. 1926. *The Story of an Epoch-Making Movement*. Doubleday, Page.

National American Woman Suffrage Association [NAWSA]. 1912, 1915–1919. *Proceedings of the Annual Convention of the National American Woman Suffrage Association*. National American Woman Suffrage Association.

———. 1940. *Victory: How Women Won It*. H.W. Wilson.

Oberschall, Anthony. 1973. *Social Conflict and Social Movements*. Prentice-Hall.

Piven, Frances Fox, and Richard Cloward. 1977. *Poor People's Movements: Why They Succeed, How They Fail*. Vintage Books.

Quadagno, Jill, and Stan J. Knapp. 1992. "Have Historical Sociologists Forsaken Theory? Thoughts on the History/Theory Relationship." *Sociological Methods and Research* 20:481-507.

Reed, Dorinda Riessen. 1958. *The Woman Suffrage Movement in South Dakota*. State University of South Dakota Press.

Schennink, Ben. 1988. "From Peace Week to Peace Work: Dynamics of the Peace Movement in the Netherlands." *International Social Movement Research* 1:247-79.

Scott, Anne Firor. 1970. *The Southern Lady: From Pedestal to Politics, 1830–1930*. University of Chicago Press.

———. 1987. "Foreword." Pp. x-xiv in *Citizens at Last: The Woman Suffrage Movement in Texas*, edited by Ruthe Winegarten and Judith N. McArthur. Ellen C. Temple.

Skocpol, Theda. 1992. *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States.* Belknap Press.

Smith, Ann Warren. 1975. "Anne Martin and a History of Woman Suffrage in Nevada, 1869-1914." Unpublished Ph.D. diss., Department of History, University of Nevada.

Snow, David A., and Robert D Benford. 1988. "Ideology, Frame Resonance, and Participant Mobilization." Pp. 197-217 in *International Social Movement Research*, vol. 1, edited by Bert Klandermans, Hanspeter Kriesi, and Sidney Tarrow. JAI Press.

Snow, David A., E. Burke Rochford Jr., Steven K. Worden, and Robert D. Benford. 1986. "Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation." *American Sociological Review* 51:464-81.

Soule, Sarah A., Doug McAdam, John McCarthy, and Yang Su. 1999. "Protest Events: Cause or Consequence of State Action? The U.S. Women's Movement and Federal Congressional Activities, 1956–1979." *Mobilization: An International Journal* 4:239-55.

Stanton, Elizabeth Cady, Susan B. Anthony, and Matilda Joslyn Gage. [1886] 1985. *History of Woman Suffrage,* vol. 3. Ayer Company.

Stefanco, Carolyn J. 1993. "Harvest of Discontent: The Depression of 1893 and the Women's Vote." *Colorado Heritage* 1993:16-21.

Stone-Erdman, Janet Gail. 1986. "A Challenge to Southern Politics: The Woman Suffrage Movement in North Carolina, 1913–1920." Unpublished master's thesis, North Carolina State University.

Tarrow, Sidney. 1994. *Power in Movement: Social Movements, Collective Action and Politics.* Cambridge University Press.

Tilly, Charles. 1978. *From Mobilization to Revolution.* Addison-Wesley.

Tindall, George Brown. 1967. *The Emergence of the New South, 1913–1945.* Louisiana State University Press.

Tucker, Jeanne F. 1951. *The History of the Woman's Suffrage Movement in North Dakota.* North Dakota Institute for Regional Studies.

Turner, Elizabeth Hayes. 1992. "'White-gloved Ladies' and 'New Women' in the Texas Woman Suffrage Movement." Pp. 129-56 in *Southern Women: Histories and Identities*, edited by Virginia Bernhard, Betty Brandon, Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, and Theda Perdue. University of Missouri Press.

U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1864, 1872, 1883, 1895, 1897, 1901, 1902, 1913, 1914, 1922, 1923. *Eighth-Fourteenth Censuses of the U.S. Population, vols. 1, 2, and 4.* Government Printing Office.

———. 1975. *Historical Statistics of the United States Colonial Times to 1970.* Government Printing Office.

U.S. Department of Commerce. 1912, 1919, 1920, 1922, 1923, 1939. *1911, 1918, 1919, 1921, 1922, and 1938 Statistical Abstracts of the United States.* Government Printing Office.

U.S. Office of Education. 1872–1914, 1916, 1917. *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Education.* Government Printing Office.

Wheeler, Marjorie Spruill. 1993. *New Women of the New South: The Leaders of the Woman Suffrage Movement in the Southern States.* Oxford University Press.

Woodward, C. Vann. [1951] 1971. *Origins of the New South, 1877–1913*. Louisiana State University Press.

World Almanac. 1868–1876, 1886–1918. *The World Almanac*. Press Publishing Company.

Yamaguchi, Kazuo. 1991. *Event History Analysis*. Sage Publications.

Young, Janine A. 1982. "'For the Best Interests of the Community': The Origins and Impact of the Women's Suffrage Movement in New Mexico, 1900–1930." Unpublished master's thesis, University of New Mexico.

Zuo, Jiping, and Robert D. Benford. 1995. "Mobilization Processes and the 1989 Chinese Democracy Movement." *Sociological Quarterly* 36:131-56.