

SPECIAL FORUM

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NEW WOMEN IN RED: REVOLUTIONARY RUSSIA,  
FEMINISM, AND THE FIRST RED SCARE

This essay seeks to reinterpret both the gendered rhetoric of the First Red Scare as well as the reasons why many feminists came under attack in the years following World War I. It underscores the ways in which women's activist concerns were de-legitimized through accusations of Bolshevism, but also highlights the very real attractions that the Soviet system held for American women seeking peace, economic independence, voting rights, professional opportunity, and sexual freedom. Although a number of historians have demonstrated the ways in which a focus upon gender and women offers important insights into the First Red Scare, they have given only minimal attention to the Soviet Union's appeal, presumably wishing to avoid giving credence to inflammatory and exaggerated right-wing rhetoric. However, this tendency has the effect of distorting the historical record and, in particular, of eliding revolutionary Russia's role in fostering the American feminist imagination. Attention to several prominent targets of the First Red Scare, including Louise Bryant, Emma Goldman, and Rose Pastor Stokes, helps to clarify these dynamics.

In January of 1919, the journalist Louise Bryant published what was apparently intended to be the first in a series of "Fables for Proletarian Children" in the journal *The Revolutionary Age*: it was called "How the Revolution Began in America." Bryant, now remembered mainly thanks to Diane Keaton's portrayal of her in the 1981 film, *Reds*, had recently gained significant attention for her coverage of the Russian Revolution, in newspapers and in her book, *Six Red Months in Russia* (released in October of 1918).

Bryant's fable opens as the first-person narrator, easily read as Bryant herself, tries to keep herself warm on a chilly winter's night, "reading garbled and absurdly serious accounts of the spread of the Bolshevik movement in America ... Anarchy, Red Terror, and sentimental stories of Mr. Wilson's visits to the King of Italy." Nodding off, the narrator finds herself (or her "spirit") in Moscow, "almost certainly a century from the present time"—that is to say, right about now.<sup>1</sup>

Hurrying along the "crooked streets," trying to get her bearings, Bryant's protagonist comes upon a "snow covered cottage on the edge of the beautiful old city." Peering through a window, somehow she is able not just to see but also to hear as the great grandchildren of Nikolai Lenin huddle around a "cozy fire" with the grandson of Scott Nearing, a prominent American radical who had been arrested in April of 1918 (and would be tried in February of 1919) under the Espionage Act for his outspoken criticism of

U.S. involvement in World War I and, implicitly, for his work in a peace organization—the People’s Council of America—that openly aligned itself with the Revolutionary Soviets in Russia.<sup>2</sup> In town as a delegate from the “All-American Republic of Soviets,” Nearing’s descendant is saying good night to the little Lenins, who, demanding a story, ask to hear about how the revolution came to America.

We learn from Nearing’s tale that in the years immediately following the Bolshevik coup, most countries throughout the world, in rapid succession, quickly embraced Communism. The United States, however, was the one holdout: “American workers were at this time and for a long time afterwards the most credulous and the least class-conscious of any workers in the world and they had been told that all Russia had gone mad and that the Red Terror was an orgy of depraved and degenerate people. They were also afraid of Internationalism,” Nearing’s descendant explains. And so, as one monarchy after another was toppled, the former rulers of the world sought refuge in the United States, which forced newspapers to print “fake evidence” ostensibly proving “that each new revolution was the work of German agents and all the leaders paid by German gold.” Such news fanned the flames of reaction.

“Feeling ran high in America among those few not in prison who still championed any sort of freedom,” Bryant’s narrator hears Nearing tell the children. “Intolerance was exhibited on all sides. One day a company of militant suffragists stormed the executive mansion and treated President Wilson so roughly that the diamond-studded wrist-watch given him by the Queen of England was broken. He even became so meek that he committed the first and only impulsive act of his life by offering to go straightway with the ladies before Congress, without even the formality of stopping to get his high silk hat.” Though Wilson, thus prodded, asked Congress to grant women the vote, the idea of *extending* suffrage was inconceivable to most members of Congress. No votes for women!

Congress, in the story, struggled to levy enough taxes to keep all the kings and queens living in the United States comfortable and to keep the American people properly deferential: “Americans of all classes were ordered by imperial ukase to step off the side-walk and remove their hats in the presence of foreign aristocracy. There was much discussion of removing statues of our revolutionary fathers and substituting such arch defenders of divine right as Napoleon, Bismark, and Peter the Great.”

In the meantime, the displaced kings and queens got tired of just hanging out and decided they wanted to rule. Each of the forty-eight states might well be handed over to a monarch, it seemed. In the midst of congressional debates about how to best divide the country into kingdoms, the workers finally got fed up and revolted, successfully. Lenin, still alive, cabled to the victors: “America was certainly a hard nut to crack! For us one Tsar was enough but for you it took over forty regular monarchs and 2500 relatives. But remember that the deposing of a monarch is only the first step in a real revolution... .”

Moments after this, Bryant’s narrator hears a crash, wakes up, and realizes she was dreaming.

Indeed. What makes Bryant’s tale of a tale, or, rather, tale of a storytelling spectacle witnessed and overheard (or dreamed), feel familiar nowadays is not the reference to a successful revolution in the United States but, rather, the discussion of income inequality, workers, and Congress giving deference to tyrants, manipulation of the media to

delegitimize those supporting social change (“fake evidence”), isolationism/fear of internationalism, and women’s concerns being shunted to the side as the rich demand not just continued wealth but also power. And, of course, plans to remove statues, as battles over the past reflect deep social divisions.

Bryant’s fable offers an apt starting point for thinking about the gendered dimensions of the First Red Scare and, in particular, about the ways in which anxieties related to women’s changing role in society coincided in concrete ways with anxieties about the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia. Bryant’s piece was published a week before she would speak at a Washington, DC, meeting sponsored by the National Woman’s Party on “The Truth About Russia”—a meeting that precipitated investigations of Bolshevik propaganda by the U.S. Senate—and just over two weeks before she was arrested with twenty-four other militant suffragists for burning an effigy of President Wilson in front of the White House.<sup>3</sup> As the more confrontational of the two principal U.S. suffrage organizations of the time, the National Woman’s Party, or NWP, fashioned itself as the voice of radical feminism. Although the organization itself did not formally declare support for the Bolshevik Revolution, its publications regularly praised elements of the Russian Revolution (after both the initial revolution in February and following the Bolshevik coup in October), and a significant proportion of its members were open in their praises of Soviet policies vis-à-vis women.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, a group that grew directly out of the NWP in the wake of the Bolshevik Revolution, the American Women’s Emergency Committee (AWEC), was a vocal advocate for recognition of Bolshevik Russia and for aid to its women and children.<sup>5</sup>

Although Bryant’s fable seems to only incidentally mention suffragists storming the White House, making demands that would remain unfulfilled, this detail is essential to the counterfactual history it predicted: while American women *did* successfully win the vote within a couple of years, and the revolution *did not* come to the United States, a large part of what made the Bolshevik Revolution appear so threatening to many conservatives was that, like woman suffrage itself, it challenged the very foundations of a patriarchal, bourgeois gender order. And this is part of what made it attractive to many feminists.<sup>6</sup>

This essay makes a case for revolutionary Russia’s real appeal to American feminists and suggests the significance of that appeal for understandings of the First Red Scare. By way of a few exemplary individuals, I explore the ways in which women working for peace (i.e., “internationalism”); sexual freedom; racial solidarity; and basic rights including professional opportunity, independence, and free speech, were drawn to revolutionary Russia for the models it provided. Especially to the extent that their concerns could be tied to this foreign or “un-American” influence, women paid considerable costs for their activism, in the form of surveillance, arrest, or even exile. Although other scholars have explored the repression faced by American feminists during the First Red Scare, insufficient attention has been given to the very real inspiration that the Bolshevik Revolution offered many of those women.

A number of historians have demonstrated the ways in which a focus upon gender and women offers important insights into the First Red Scare. Kathleen Kennedy, for instance, has argued that the attack upon female peace activists that began during the First World War in many ways set the terms of the Red Scare that immediately followed it. These attacks, she says, cannot be understood apart from the dramatic changes

occurring at this time in relation to women's social role and legal standing, especially vis-à-vis citizenship: she says the ability of the Women's Peace Party, for instance, to "fundamentally question and redefine the relationships among citizenship, democracy, and militarism sharpened attacks on the values that white middle-class women brought to politics."<sup>7</sup> Kim Nielsen, similarly, examines the confluence of anti-radicalism and anti-feminism among women's organizations and female activists from the end of World War I through the 1920s. In doing so she makes clear that the First Red Scare, which repeatedly linked reforms that conservatives saw as undesirable to "Bolshevism," was as much about maintaining patriarchy as it was about limiting the influence of political radicals. Nielsen's work also offers a plausible explanation for why women's impact on the political landscape following the passage of the suffrage amendment in 1920 was thwarted. Indeed, passage of the suffrage amendment is typically used to designate the *end* of feminism's "first wave"; hence Nancy Cott's now-classic formulation about the "grounding of modern feminism" and the role that the First Red Scare played in this dynamic.<sup>8</sup> Finally, Erica J. Ryan has examined the impact of the First Red Scare on sexual norms in the United States, arguing that "anxious Americans saw in radicalism a threat to the social order, and they positioned the heterosexual, monogamous family as a bulwark against radicalism."<sup>9</sup>

Ryan is well attuned to the connection between fear of political radicalism and fears about uncontrolled sexuality, and she likewise notes the tradition of "free love" within radical movements like socialism and anarchism, which stoked fears on both fronts. Still, the attacks upon women who praised elements of the Bolshevik Revolution were so vicious that historians have tended to focus almost entirely upon how out of proportion the attacks were in relation to the threat that radicals posed. It is easy to roll our eyes at paranoid reactionaries calling any woman who advocated for progressive reforms, or who strayed from dominant sexual norms, a "Bolshevik." But it is also worth examining the extent to which and reasons why American women were looking toward revolutionary Russia in the 1910s and 1920s. Moreover, doing so adds new complexity to our understandings of how gender inflected the First Red Scare.

The Bolshevik Revolution highlighted class inequities in the United States, inspiring a wave of labor unrest and radical agitation around the world. It also brought attention to gender disparities and galvanized radical feminists, even as it created a panic around the supposed "nationalization" of Russian women (and children). As was widely reported in the feminist press here, following the Bolshevik Revolution, Soviet women gained property rights, barriers to their education and professional advancement were officially eliminated, and they were promised equal pay for equal work. Along with creating public laundries, dining halls, and childcare facilities to free women from what Lenin called "the old household drudgery and dependence on men," a new family code passed in 1918 made divorce easy, abolished the category of illegitimate children, and provided working women with a generous maternity leave before and after giving birth, whether or not they were legally married. Abortion, though discouraged, was legalized and made available for free. And although birth control was difficult to obtain, Soviet women were encouraged to learn everything about it that they could, in contrast to the situation in the United States, where just arming women with *information* about birth control was illegal (and even today birth control, and certainly abortion, remain controversial). According to historian Wendy Goldman, "In its insistence on individual rights

and gender equality,” the Soviets’ first marriage code “constituted nothing less than the most progressive family legislation the world had ever seen.”<sup>10</sup> Or as Lenin himself noted in 1919 (in a speech that was reprinted in *The Nation*), “Not a single democratic party in the world, not even in any of the most advanced bourgeois republics, has done in this sphere in tens of years a hundredth part of what we did in the very first year we were in power.”<sup>11</sup>

Thus, although it terrified capitalists, isolationists, and conservatives eager to maintain a system that upheld male privilege and male supremacy, revolutionary Russia appealed to American women who called for economic independence as well as satisfying work, who sought sexual freedom and access to birth control, who craved more egalitarian intimate relationships; who wanted a means of balancing motherhood and career and avenues of creative expression that would be both fulfilling and a real contribution to society.

Official Soviet policies toward “national minorities” made the revolution particularly appealing to Jewish and African American women from the United States, which only added to popular fears of Bolshevism. Russian Jews, who had been confined to a region of Russia known as “the Pale” and had been victims of violent pogroms under Czarist rule, were now allowed access to all realms of Russian society, with Jews playing prominent roles in the Bolshevik Party (that Jews were disproportionately targeted in the purges that began in the late 1930s demonstrates how much easier it is to change laws than attitudes).<sup>12</sup> African Americans in the Soviet Union, though never large in number, enjoyed a singular status as an exemplary national minority. Beneficiaries of a 1928 Comintern policy identifying African Americans not just as colonized peoples but also as “the germ of a ‘national revolutionary movement,’” in the eyes of the Bolsheviks, African Americans in the United States, especially those in the rural South, were now “‘indispensable in the battle to change the world.’”<sup>13</sup>

In pointing to the very real appeal of the Bolshevik Revolution, I build on a legacy of historical work, much of it originating during a Cold War political climate that made it (and, arguably, continues to make it) difficult to acknowledge the appeals of the Soviet system without immediately dismissing those even partly under its spell as deluded. Typical of work in the latter realm are studies by Paul Hollander, Sylvia Margulies, Ludmilla Stern, and, to some degree, David Caute.<sup>14</sup>

My work more directly builds upon studies that refuse to minimize the horrors endemic to the Bolshevik regime but that also explores the very real appeal of Soviet policy and practice in many realms. Groundbreaking in this regard is a classic essay by Lewis Feuer, “American Travelers to the Soviet Union, 1917–1932: The Formation of a Component of New Deal Ideology”; Peter Filene’s work is also significant, although it is notable (and typical) that Filene would exempt actual communists from his analysis, noting that “in the case of the Communists, their attitudes represented Moscow’s views rather than their own.” Somewhat more recently, David Engerman has acknowledged the appeal of Soviet planning to a range of American intellectuals. David Foglesong’s discussion (employing Michael Rogin) of Russia’s long-running role as a “dark double” or “imaginary twin” for the United States has also been key to my own understandings, along with Foglesong’s attention to faith, religious and otherwise. More directly relevant to issues I discuss here, Alan Dawley emphasizes the important role that the Bolsheviks played in inspiring the international peace movement, and identifies a stream of thought

that he calls “progressive realism, that is, support for progressive aspects of the revolution along with acceptance of the reality of Bolshevik power,” as a “lost alternative” that might have changed the course of twentieth-century history, undermining the impetus to the Cold War and the hot wars that erupted around the world as a result of it.<sup>15</sup>

The relationship between women’s growing assertiveness in the United States and the Russian Revolution has been touched upon, directly or indirectly, in a number of works. Christine Stansell’s *American Moderns* points to the influence of books like Russian novelist Nikolai Chernyshevsky’s *What Is To Be Done*, which was popularized by Jewish immigrant radicals in the United States, and to the Russian Revolution more generally, among the radical, bohemian milieu in New York’s Greenwich Village, where “events in Russia acquired an immediacy almost unimaginable today,” affecting the “collective sense of possibility” in profound ways.<sup>16</sup> Stansell’s discussion of the Russian Revolution is quite limited, however, and is unusual for mentioning it at all in relation to the development of American feminism and changing sexual norms. Christina Simmons’s *Making Marriage Modern* acknowledges the significance of figures like Emma Goldman, V. F. Calverton, and, of course, Margaret Sanger, but does not go on to link these individuals via their shared interest in Russia. Choi Chatterjee, a historian of Russia, has produced work most directly related to my own on American women’s attraction to the Soviet Union, especially with useful discussion of female journalists from the United States who reported on the Russian Revolution.<sup>17</sup>

It is possible, certainly, to overemphasize the place of the Soviet Union in the eyes of women in revolt, even those avowedly on the left. Anarchist women, for instance, though interested in Russia’s revolutionary tradition, were highly critical of the Bolsheviks; Emma Goldman’s transformation from supporter (immediately following the Bolshevik Revolution) to vocal critic (after experiencing Bolshevik rule directly) is probably the most famous example.<sup>18</sup> The socialist movement, entirely apart from the Soviet Union (and prior to its existence) was key to the development of feminism, as a number of historians have argued, most importantly Mari Jo Buhle: she says that this politically active minority who embraced socialism in the 1910s “issued the direct challenge that sex be made a major issue of revolutionary politics and women’s liberation its substance.” Buhle does include a limited discussion of Communist policy and practice vis-à-vis the “woman question,” but her book’s focus elsewhere suggests an eagerness to make a clear separation between socialism and Soviet-style communism.<sup>19</sup> Likewise, and more pointedly, Ellen Carol DuBois argues that the rise of Bolshevism served to weaken the feminist movement in the United States not only because “those who refused to repudiate the Left were relentlessly rebaited” but also because of the Bolsheviks’ limited commitment to feminism.<sup>20</sup> Both Buhle and DuBois make important points about the radical influence of socialism on early American feminists, and DuBois is correct in citing both the Bolsheviks’ limited commitment to feminism and the negative effects of rebaiting on the movement. However, whether or not the Bolsheviks were truly committed to feminism, the fact of an actual revolution in Russia, a revolution that dramatically changed the legal standing of and social expectations for women, provided essential fuel to the radical wing of the feminist movement in the United States. As Kate Baldwin has noted of the inspiration the Soviet project offered to African Americans in the United States and the limitations of existing scholarship, if the Soviet project is “primarily definable by its destructiveness to Soviets, it is occluded as a narrative of

possibility for non-Soviet others.”<sup>21</sup> As I discuss in more detail elsewhere, the radical impetus provided by the Russian Revolution was a necessary ingredient in feminist efforts to gain the most basic access to power (via voting rights).<sup>22</sup> But it is also clear that feminists’ association with Bolshevism robbed the movement of radical possibility for decades, as all demands that resonated with Soviet practice could be tarred as subversive.

It is widely understood that both the Russian Revolution itself and the First Red Scare in the United States were fundamentally linked to the First World War. The war undermined the authority of Russia’s Imperial government, as soldiers lost the will to fight. It also created both an official and an unofficial apparatus of surveillance and repression in the United States. Historians have begun to explore the ways in which gender inflected this link, for the disruptions caused by the war and revolution coincided with dramatically shifting norms and legal codes surrounding women: the struggle for woman suffrage was also heating up at this same moment, and sexual mores were undergoing a dramatic transformation as birth control became a subject of open debate in the United States.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, the rise of female conservatism in the United States as a vital force has been associated with the Bolshevik Revolution and the reaction it provoked.<sup>24</sup>

What is less understood is the extent to which the Russian Revolution also animated feminist sentiments. Although the vast majority of public figures in the years following World War I were men—who were, thus, disproportionately targeted in the First Red Scare—women such as Louise Bryant (who testified before the Overman Committee, the Senate body that anticipated the House Committee on Un-American Activities), Rose Pastor Stokes (who was arrested under the Espionage Act and sentenced to ten years in prison for her statements about World War I), and Emma Goldman (who was deported to Russia in 1919 after being arrested for violating the Selective Service Act), were among the most visible targets of the First Red Scare. These women have been discussed by scholars of the First Red Scare, but mainly in examinations of the extent to which they were subject to repression and surveillance.<sup>25</sup> I am interested not just in what made women like Bryant, Goldman, and Stokes seem threatening to some, but also in what made their ideals appealing to many others as examples of feminist agency and resistance. These women did not just criticize the war: they openly advocated for women’s political rights, for birth control and for sexual freedoms. And they publicly praised the Bolsheviks (Goldman later condemned them, but by that time she was already *persona non grata* in the United States). The fact that praises of Bolshevik policy and practice vis-à-vis gender resonated across a wide spectrum of American women has been obscured by the extent to which accusations of “Bolshevism” became a convenient foil for those opposed to feminists’ most revolutionary demands. This, in turn, led to a historical amnesia: about the widespread interest in revolutionary Russia among American feminists, and about the truly radical character of American feminism in the years prior to the First Red Scare.

Bryant was one of several female journalists from the United States—most of them, like Bryant, quite ardent feminists—who reported on the Russian Revolution. At the time, it was clear to many people why American women would be especially drawn to events in Russia: “this is preeminently the age of woman in revolt: and whoever has the courage to rebel against oppression, in actuality or only in spirit, is an object of intense interest to women in general,” notes the writer of a 1919 review essay discussing

“Russia Through Women’s Eyes.” The reviewer goes on to note, “This strongly developed social sense in the best type of modern woman explains why they have responded to the appeal of Russia in Revolution.”<sup>26</sup>

American “women in revolt” had kept a close eye on Russia for years, in fact. Although Bryant’s husband John Reed famously wrote of the Russian Revolution as “ten days that shook the world,” it was in reality an event that lasted decades, going back at least to the 1870s, when populist groups began going “to the people” to rally Russian peasants against the cruel injustices of the Czarist regime. Even in those early days, women occupied an active and visible role in Russian revolutionary movements, and gained attention in the American press. Russian women such as Vera Zasulich, Sophia Perovskaya, and Vera Figner joined “terrorist” organizations like the People’s Will—which orchestrated the assassination of Czar Alexander II in March of 1881—and wound up in prisons and in Siberian exile. They also became legendary in the United States both because of the significant role they played in revolutionary movements and because their very “tenderness” had driven them to violence against perpetrators of injustice.<sup>27</sup> A significant number of the female revolutionaries were daughters of the nobility who had renounced their privilege in support of the masses; most visible among these women in the United States was Ekaterina Breshko-Breshkovskaya, known here as Catherine Breshkovsky, the “Little Grandmother of the Russian Revolution,” or, simply, “Babushka,” who toured the country in 1904–1905.

American women feeling shackled by convention were impressed by the sacrifices that privileged Russian women were willing to make on behalf of their cause, and some suggested that U.S. women could learn from their example. Anna Strunsky Walling, a Russian-born, Jewish socialist from San Francisco, celebrated women, like Breshkovsky, who had been born into the nobility but renounced their wealth:

They would have none of the blood money which their fathers accumulated. They scourged themselves with hunger and cold, and such hunger and cold was warmth and meat to them. They preferred the attic with its one pane through which to watch the stars and the Alpine clouds, to the palace in Russia built by tortured peasants, and held together by the forces of oppression and hypocrisy. These women, who had the clean minds of youth, shuddered back from ease acquired at the cost of the suffering of others. Their eyes were not blinded by the money glitter. They saw taint, and held aloof.<sup>28</sup>

Emma Goldman (also a Russian-born Jew), referring to revolutionary women’s stature in the eyes of their male comrades in Russia, noted in 1911 that “In the darkest of all countries, Russia, with her absolute despotism, woman has become man’s equal.” This happened, she claimed, “not through the ballot, but by her will to be and to do.” Pointing to Russian women’s achievements in education and in the professional realm, she insisted that the Russian woman had not only gained the “respect” and “comradeship” of Russian men (and by this she meant male revolutionaries), but also, “has gained the admiration, the respect of the whole world ... by her wonderful heroism, her fortitude, her ability, willpower, and her endurance in her struggle for liberty.”<sup>29</sup>

The destruction of hundreds of Jewish homes and businesses and the death or serious injury of hundreds of Jews in a series of pogroms in Russia helped bring concern for Russia to new heights among Americans, especially following the particularly destructive Kishinev pogrom of 1903. Taking advantage of sympathy in the United States for those challenging the Czarist regime, two Russian-speaking socialist revolutionaries



living in exile in the United States had asked Emma Goldman to help them bring Breshkovsky to the United States. Using a fake name (for she knew her radical reputation would not help the cause), Goldman convinced the Friends of Russian Freedom, a prominent organization founded in the United States mostly by children of abolitionists, to sponsor Breshkovsky's visit to the United States in 1904. Breshkovsky's extended tour, and the relationships she forged with well-connected women such as settlement house leaders Lillian Wald, Ellen Gates Starr, and Helena Dudley; suffragist Alice Stone Blackwell; and prison reformer Isabel Barrows, contributed to a feeling among women in the United States that they had a personal connection to struggles in Russia.

In addition to spreading the word in the United States about revolutionary activism among Russian women, Jewish immigrants to the United States from the Pale also helped popularize ideas about women's rights that were common among Russian revolutionaries, most notably expressed in Nikolai Chernyshevsky's *What Is to Be Done?* This enormously influential book, whose title Lenin adopted for one of his most famous treatises, frames women's liberation—including sexual liberation—as fundamental to the creation of "new people" in a transformed society. Emma Goldman was so influenced by *What Is to Be Done?* that she tried to set up her own living and working arrangements to echo those of the book's protagonist, Vera Pavlovna, and likewise publicly promoted the book's ideal of free love: "All true revolutionaries had discarded marriage and were living in freedom," she wrote in her autobiography.<sup>30</sup>

The ostensibly higher morality of Russian revolutionary women, whose struggles could be positioned as a stand-in for resistance to oppression in general, provided an attractive model for the rejection of bourgeois sexual mores that became a standard element of the burgeoning feminist movement.<sup>31</sup> A 1914 tribute in Margaret Sanger's birth control journal, *Woman Rebel*, to the revolutionary Maria Spironovna, who was brutally tortured after her arrest by Russian authorities, makes the Czarist regime a stand-in for all "vicious diseases of the spirit of man" and Spirodonovna a kind of Everywoman representing human freedom: "They knew thee, Woman, the living and the dead/ Knew thee, that thou art Liberty!"<sup>32</sup>

Many in the United States rejoiced when the czar was overthrown in March of 1917 (February on the Russian, or Julian calendar). The dancer Isadora Duncan, hearing word of the revolt, danced to the music of the Marseillaise, the revolutionary anthem of freedom, "with a terrible fierce joy." Lillian Wald, who had hosted a stream of Russian exiles over the years in her Henry Street Settlement House on New York's Lower East Side, wrote to Alice Stone Blackwell, "Rejoicing with you over news so wonderful it strains the power of realization." Hundreds of thousands of Russian immigrants, most of them Jews who had left Russia to escape pogroms, held mass rallies all over the United States to celebrate the revolution that would allow them to return to their homeland.<sup>33</sup> And African American newspapers made much of the idea that "Russia has decided to abolish the ghetto and eliminate all racial lines."<sup>34</sup>

By the time the United States entered World War I a month later, a sizable peace movement was already in place in the United States, with women playing a prominent and arguably a dominant role, and with Russia's revolution conspicuously figuring into peace activists' rhetoric. Feminist peace activists, according to Harriet Hyman Alonso, articulated a critique of all war as "an exaggerated microcosm of [male] power and abuse."<sup>35</sup> Many of the same feminist activists praised Russia's Provisional Government

for granting women the vote, and they also reiterated calls being made by members of the Petrograd Soviet for peace “without annexation or indemnities.”<sup>36</sup>

As Kathleen Kennedy has argued, female peace activists who protested against the First World War posed a radical challenge to basic definitions of women’s citizenship: The Selective Service Act, passed in May of 1917, gave the state an increased stake in defining and enforcing a particular vision of women’s proper role in society.<sup>37</sup> Women who, literally or metaphorically, “did not let their sons grow up to be soldiers,” disrupted the draft and failed to perform their patriotic duty, Kennedy notes.<sup>38</sup> What was more, the Espionage Act, passed in June 1917, and initially focused narrowly on intent to interfere with military recruitment or operations, made the peace movement, and women active in that movement, targets of surveillance and repression. It also put increasingly militant suffrage activists in dangerous territory as they picketed the White House and reminded their government that “darkest Russia” had granted women the vote before the supposedly more enlightened United States. Indeed, Ida Waters of the National Woman’s Party testified before the House Judiciary Committee during consideration of the Espionage Act (in April of 1917), to express concern that the act would affect suffragists’ right to free speech. She was assured that the law would only impact those making “false” statements.<sup>39</sup>

When members of the Women’s Peace Party and several other peace organizations formed the People’s Council of America, which directly echoed the Petrograd Soviet’s calls for “peace without annexations or indemnities,” the peace movement might be said to have shown its truly radical colors: the group demanded a “speedy and universal peace” grounded in “general principles outlined by the President of the United States and endorsed by the revolutionary government of Russia.” They said that peace should involve “no annexation of territory, no punitive indemnities, and a reorganization of international affairs.” But they wanted more than just peace. The People’s Council also called for “the repeal of the conscription laws,” and for a society that would “defend free speech ... protect our fundamental American liberties ... [and] safeguard labor standards and the rights of working women and children.”<sup>40</sup> In addition, they wanted high taxes on war profits, a progressive income tax, and public control of the production and distribution of food and war supplies.<sup>41</sup> As Roland Marchand notes of the Council and its rhetoric, a “common theme” throughout “was the insistence that lasting international peace could only be obtained through the internal democratization of political life, especially in the United States.” And although the revolutionary government in Russia was by no means democratic, “the ‘new Russia’ became a symbol and a beacon of hope for those convinced of the impossibility of establishing peace without the overthrow of the ‘industrial plutocracy’ in America.”<sup>42</sup>

This remained the case after the Bolshevik Revolution. A group calling itself the “Friends of the Russian Revolution”—one of the first organizations to publicly support the Bolshevik Revolution—included some of the most prominent American feminists of the era, including sex educator Mary Ware Dennett, suffragists Crystal Eastman and Vida Millholland, and birth control advocate Margaret Sanger. They organized a mass meeting in Madison Square Garden in support of the “Soviet demand for an immediate peace without annexations or indemnities.”<sup>43</sup>

A wide range of peace organizations and individual activists came under scrutiny during and also after the war, especially as women with openly socialist inclinations,

some of whom had vocally praised the Russian Revolution, assumed visible positions in the peace movement. New York City's Joint Legislative Committee to Investigate Seditious Activities (popularly known as the Lusk Committee, after its chair, Senator Clayton Lusk) was created in 1919 in response to calls by the Union League Club, a private men's association, to investigate radical activity in New York City; the committee's four thousand-page report, *Revolutionary Radicalism: Its History, Purpose and Tactics with an Exposition and Discussion of the Steps being Taken and Required to Curb It*, highlighted the peace movement's radical nature, noting, "it will be seen that the old method of federating radicals with pacifists was again followed."<sup>44</sup> The only real support for this claim is a list of women active in the peace movement, as though these names would speak for themselves. The list includes:

Crystal Eastman, Mrs. Amos Pinchot [Ruth Pickering, a writer, birth control advocate, and suffrage activist], Mrs. James Warbasse [a leader in the cooperative movement], Madeline [*sic*] Doty [a socialist, journalist, and founder of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, who at that time was married to Roger Baldwin, a draft resistor and civil libertarian], Mary Austin [a writer], Mrs. Frederic Howe [Marie Jenney Howe, the founder of Heterodoxy, a long-running feminist salon], Carrie Chapman Catt [head of the National American Woman's Suffrage Association, the NWP's more liberal counterpart], Mrs. Florence Kelley [a labor reformer, settlement house leader, and translator of Engels], Mary Shaw [an actress, playwright, and early suffrage activist], Lillian Wald, Anna Strunsky Walling, [etc.]<sup>45</sup>

Two years after the Lusk report was published, the even more notorious "Spider Web Chart" specifically targeted the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, an organization, founded by Jane Addams, which grew out of an International Women's Congress held in The Hague in 1915 in opposition to World War I. This chart, originally published by the Chemical Warfare Service of the War Department (in reaction to peace activists' efforts to ban the use of chemical weapons), listed the names of dozens of women and women's organizations, with crisscrossing lines connecting them. At the top of the chart are words from the Lusk report itself, in large letters: "THE SOCIALIST-PACIFIST MOVEMENT IN AMERICA IS AN ABSOLUTELY FUNDAMENTAL AND INTEGRAL PART OF INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM." The chart was circulated widely thanks to its reproduction in the March 1924 issue of Henry Ford's *Dearborn Independent*, alongside an article entitled, "Are Women's Clubs Used by Bolsheviks?" Answer: yes, "to an alarming extent." Indeed, the *Dearborn Independent* article claims that "... women who would quickly resent being called Socialists or Bolsheviks are blithely passing resolutions and voting for a program that was inaugurated by Madam Alexandria [*sic*] Kollontay in her Soviet 'Department of Child Welfare' in Russia."<sup>46</sup> Kollontai was the leading Bolshevik feminist and was appointed Commissar of Social Welfare immediately following the revolution, and she established the Zhenotdel or Women's Bureau of the Communist Party in 1919. She was a frequent target of anti-feminists in the United States, but she also attracted the admiration of feminists.<sup>47</sup>

It is somewhat ironic that Henry Ford's newspaper would be impugning the women's peace movement, given Ford's own outspoken support of peace efforts just a few years earlier, including donating \$10,000 to the Women's Peace Party and funding a "peace ship" that brought a number of prominent peace activists to Sweden in 1915 to negotiate an end to the war.<sup>48</sup> Ford had been rebuffed in his efforts to enlist peace activists in at least

one instance: responding to his invitation to join the “peace ship” with other distinguished Americans, Rose Pastor Stokes claimed that she had “become deeply convinced that the system of production for private profit is the basic cause of the European war,” adding, “If I felt you saw eye to eye with me on this matter, I would be glad to join you in a propaganda [*sic*] among the belligerents for the establishment of a permanent peace, but I feel, on the contrary, that you stand for and foster the very conditions that have caused this war, conditions which, if fostered further, will make for future wars, plunging even the United States into a violent conflict.”<sup>49</sup>

Stokes, a Russian-Jewish immigrant who had famously gone from being a poor factory worker (turned radical journalist) to marrying the wealthy socialist Graham Phelps Stokes, would later be indicted by the United States government under the Espionage Act for “knowingly and feloniously ... attempt[ing] to cause insubordination, disloyalty, mutiny, and refusal of duty in the military and naval forces of the United States, ... obstruct[ing] the recruiting and enlistment service of the United States,” and “making[ing] and convey [ing] certain false reports and false statements with intent to interfere” in military operations and recruitment.<sup>50</sup> She was also, not incidentally, a birth control advocate, a vocal supporter of the Bolshevik Revolution, and a critic of racial discrimination.

Stokes, arguably, was arrested because of her stubbornly forthright outspokenness. The Kansas City *Star* had published an article about an address she’d given at the Woman’s Dining Club of Kansas City; the article’s headline was “Mrs. Stokes for Government and Against War at the Same Time.” In response, Stokes wrote in a letter to the editor: “I am *not* for the government. ... No government which is *for* the profiteers can also be for the people, and I am *for* the people, while the government is for the profiteers.”<sup>51</sup> Her letter was published March 19th, 1918; a day later she was arrested. At stake, ultimately, was whether Stokes had made a false statement in declaring that “the government is for the profiteers.” Because it was impossible to prove this either way, prosecutors attempted to demonstrate that Stokes was disloyal to the United States. They did so, primarily, by highlighting positive statements she had made, at various times, about the Bolsheviks. As one witness for the prosecution noted, Stokes had said the government of the Russians “was an ideal government, that their’s [*sic*] was a true democracy and a pure democracy, that they offered to the world this idea.”<sup>52</sup>

Despite the fact that Stokes was indicted after just three days and sentenced to ten years in prison; and, indeed, despite the fact that President Wilson himself, in a letter to Attorney General A. Mitchel Palmer, described Stokes—who had gone on to become a founder of the Communist Party of America late in the summer of 1919—as “one of the most dangerous influences of the country,” the case was ultimately dismissed on appeal: Stokes may have been pro-Bolshevik, but she had not, in fact, violated the Espionage Act.<sup>53</sup> As to her Bolshevik sympathies, they were quite unequivocal: she would serve as a delegate to the Fourth Congress of the Communist International in Moscow and as a member of the Negro Commission. In the latter capacity she’d insist (in her “minority report,” which she penned as the only white member of the Negro Commission), that it was essential for white radicals to rid themselves of their natural tendency toward racism: “Other things being equal (that is, our equal class-consciousness and revolutionary purpose established) it is absolutely essential to our true unity that the white comrades—especially those who are to make contact with the Negro Communist groups—get the bourgeois color psychosis completely, as it is now only partially, uprooted from their systems.”<sup>54</sup>

Emma Goldman likewise praised the Bolsheviks and vocally condemned the war, although she would change her tune about the Bolsheviks after being forced to live under their regime. At her trial in the summer of 1917 (that is, after the February revolution and before the Bolsheviks had taken power), Goldman assumed the jury would be biased against her because she was a known anarchist and radical who had for many years vocally praised the revolutionaries in Russia. Goldman proclaimed that “no new faith—not even the most humane and peaceable, has ever been considered ‘within the law’ by those who were in power.” In other words, she knew that, as in Stokes’s case, she was being tried for more than just her statements about the war. “The story of human growth is at the same time the history of every new idea heralding the approach of a brighter dawn, and the brighter dawn has always been considered illegal, outside of the law,” she maintained.<sup>55</sup>

After the Bolsheviks took power, Goldman publicly voiced her support for them. In January 1918, on a lecture tour undertaken prior to serving prison time, Goldman insisted, in words recorded by an agent of the American Protective League, a wartime organization of anti-subversive vigilantes, “Even if the ideals of the Bolsheviks shall fail, the ideal and effect will still remain. It is just as though one were born color blind and suddenly were able to see beautiful sights. We can never be the same again.”<sup>56</sup>

Goldman, too late to win her re-entry into the United States as a citizen, would vocally condemn the Bolsheviks not long after being forced to live under their regime in Russia.<sup>57</sup> In a 1924 letter to British sexologist Havelock Ellis, she compared the Bolshevik government in Russia to the Christian Church, saying the government “in monopolizing the ideals of the Russian people as expressed in the Russian Revolution, has actually crushed the ideal and is now maintaining itself by the mere shadow of the ideal.”<sup>58</sup> Goldman was right to condemn the Bolshevik regime’s violent actions against all opposition, but she had also been prescient early on in recognizing the power of the ideals they claimed to support. Although she now shared with most of those holding power in the U.S. government a belief that the Bolsheviks were dangerous, she did not share the U.S. government’s concerns about the threats to private property and conventional morality posed by the Bolsheviks. These concerns emerged more vividly as the war was winding down and the First Red Scare proper began to heat up.

The Sedition Act, an extension of the Espionage Act that passed in May of 1918, forbade “any disloyal, profane, scurrilous, or abusive language about the form of government of the United States.” The act essentially made it illegal not just to object to the war but also to criticize the United States government more generally. Both feminists reprimanding the government for not granting them the vote and African Americans demanding a voice in peace negotiations were now legitimate targets of “100% Americans” in the government and outside it.<sup>59</sup>

In what might be taken as one of the first official acts of the Red Scare proper, the Overman Committee of the United States Senate, which began during the war as a subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee to investigate pro-German propaganda and interests, started investigating Bolshevik influence in the United States in response to two meetings organized by members of the National Woman’s Party in February of 1919, one of which featured Louise Bryant as a speaker, and both of which argued against American intervention against the Soviets in the Russian Civil War.<sup>60</sup> As Senator Charles S. Thomas of Colorado told his colleagues, “... under the shadow of the Capitol and

in the center of the Nation's activities a meeting largely attended was yesterday held which applauded propaganda hostile to the Constitution and institutions of the United States and addresses advocating the overthrow of both."<sup>61</sup> The hearings, undertaken in response to comments like those of Thomas, revealed an obsession with the supposed nationalization of women in the Soviet Union, an obsession that highlights the ways in which fear of communism was inseparable from fears about loss of control over women.

American newspapers published dozens of stories between 1917 and 1922 pointing to the horror of "nationalized" women under communism, a theme Erica J. Ryan explores further in *Red War on the Family*, whose title is taken from a 1922 volume by Samuel Saloman. Saloman's book, dedicated to exposing socialism's danger to marriage, the nuclear family, and, implicitly, patriarchy, put "nationalization" of women by the Bolsheviks at the center of its critique.<sup>62</sup> Pointing to what was at stake in the nationalization discourse, Landon Storrs notes that "Conservative anti-Communists projected an apocalyptic vision of a Communist world in which men's proper control over wives and daughters was disrupted—particularly their prerogative to control with whom their wives and daughters had sexual relations."<sup>63</sup>

Citing supposedly verified edicts specifying that "every girl on reaching the age of 18 must register her name in the Bureau of Free Love, after which she is compelled to select a partner from among men between 19 and 50," the *New York Times* and dozens of other news outlets fanned a moral debate about Bolshevism by proclaiming that young women, along with other private possessions, had now become common property in Soviet territory. The *Times* goes on to claim, "Enthusiasts for nationalization, naturally all males, raid whole villages, seize young girls, and demand proof that they are not over 18. As this proof is difficult to give, many of the girls have been carried off, and there have been suicides and murders as a result."<sup>64</sup> Although reports were themselves stranger than fiction, popular media's incorporation of the nationalization theme suggests how widely it was accepted as truth. In the 1919 film, *New Moon*, for instance, Norma Talmage played a Russian princess who escapes from Bolshevik control by taking cover with a storekeeper in a small village. She "leads the women in the village in a rebellion against sexual communism" before escaping Russia with her lover.<sup>65</sup>

Reports about women's nationalization in the Soviet empire were widely disputed, not only by supporters of the Bolsheviks but also by critics who suggested that outrageous rumors like these made verifiable accounts of Soviet treachery less believable.<sup>66</sup> The usual explanation for why various decrees were actually circulating was that critics of the regime had published them in order to discredit the new government. At least a few historians have credited widely recirculated testimony about women's supposed nationalization to a single proclamation in Vladimir in 1918 that was penned by overenthusiastic but also confused cadres in the hinterland attempting to reconcile doctrines about sexual liberation as espoused by Bolshevik theorists like Alexandra Kollontai with widely debated comments in the *Communist Manifesto* about a "community of women" that Marx and Engels claimed would replace the exploitative "system of wives" whereby bourgeois proponents of the family oppressed women under the guise of protecting them.<sup>67</sup> The idea that the rumor came from confused Marxists in one locality is complicated by references I've found to decrees in Saratov, Smolensk, and elsewhere. In any case, the alleged decrees are confusing. Although most sources mention women

becoming property of the state, very often they also note, in a variation of language cited above, that *women* were able to “choose for themselves men 19 to 50 years old for cohabitation,” whether or not the men consented.<sup>68</sup>

In any case, despite no proof of their veracity, and no evidence that such decrees were ever actually followed, in the United States tales of Soviet women’s “nationalization,” along with attendant but seemingly contradictory stories about “free love Russia,” were set forth as clear reasons why Communism posed a danger to the very fabric of Americanism. And on the far Right, both woman suffrage, as well as a larger feminist agenda, were repeatedly linked to Bolshevism.<sup>69</sup>

The Overman Committee’s report on “Bolshevik Propaganda” concluded, in text reprinted by the anti-feminist *Woman Patriot*, “The apparent purpose of the Bolshevik government is to make the Russian citizen, and *especially the women and children, the wards and dependents of that government.* Not satisfied with the degree of dependency incurred by the economic and industrial control assumed by its functionaries, it has destroyed the natural ambition and made *impossible of accomplishment the moral obligation of the father to provide, care for, and adequately protect the child of his blood and the mother of that child against the misfortunes of orphanhood and womanhood.*”<sup>70</sup>

In other words, whether the Soviet woman was made freely available to men, or was able to choose any man *she* desired, or was, simply put, legally bound to shift her loyalties from her husband or family to the state, the upshot was that any and all of these arrangements deeply threatened basic patriarchal relations that fundamentally undergirded American capitalism. Quoting a Workers’ Party reprint of Alexandra Kollontai’s “Communism and the Family,” the *Woman Patriot* presented a portrait of family life under communism, which combined “free love,” internationalism, and the loss of male autonomy:

Henceforth the worker-mother, who is conscious of her social function, will rise to a point where she *no longer differentiates between yours and mine*; she must remember that there are henceforth only *our children, those of the Communist State, the common possession of all workers.* ... In place of the individual and egotistic family, there will arise the great universal family of workers, in which all the workers, men and women, will be, above all, workers, comrades. ... These new relations will assure to humanity all the joys of the so-called *free love* ... joys which were unknown to the commercial society of the capitalist regime ... The red flag of the social revolution, which will *shelter*, after Russia, *other countries of the world* also, already proclaims to us the approach of the *heaven on earth* to which humanity has been aspiring for centuries.<sup>71</sup>

In her testimony before the Overman Committee, Bryant not only dismissed the “nationalization of women” reports as efforts to sabotage the new regime, but also used her testimony as an opportunity to explain why the Soviet system might even be a model for the United States to follow. According to Bryant:

They do not have child labor in Russia. Women are accepted on an equal basis with men, getting equal pay for equal work. They have an equal place in the labor unions. They are not excluded from any kind of work. I have never been in a country where women are as free as they are in Russia and where they are treated not as females but as human beings. When a woman gets up at a public meeting and makes a speech nobody thinks about her being a lady or about what kind of hat she happens to wear. They just think of what she says. It is a very healthy country for a suffragist to go into.<sup>72</sup>

Bryant's testimony was widely reported, precisely because it challenged popular suppositions about Russia and about women: where they should be, what they should be doing, and how they should present themselves in public. As Erica Ryan has pointed out, "Bryant reflected a thriving and perhaps alarming feminism in American culture in 1919"; her connection to Soviet Russia had a great deal to do with what made her appealing to some and threatening to others.<sup>73</sup> When asked by the committee whether she was paid by the Russians, Bryant replied that she did not work for pay. "You were there for love?," a member of the committee asked provocatively. "No," she insisted. "I was not there for love. I was there because I wanted to see the revolution, and because I am a reporter, and because the revolution caught my imagination."<sup>74</sup>

Bryant (along with her husband John Reed and their friend, the journalist Albert Rhys Williams) had actually personally demanded that Senator Overman give her the opportunity to testify before the committee; as she complained in the hearings, "the witnesses who know the most about Russia are not called."<sup>75</sup> Bryant and others in sympathy with the revolution were eager to keep the United States from intervening against the Bolsheviks in the Russian Civil War, something Catherine Breshkovsky was now touring the United States to promote. After the Bolsheviks' defeat of Kerensky's Provisional Government, in which Breshkovsky had played a role, "Babushka" had gone into hiding and later fled Russia. Breshkovsky's very public stance had earned her an invitation to testify before the Overman Committee, which she did. It also brought hand-wringing from old friends like Alice Stone Blackwell, Lillian Wald, and Bryant herself, who feared that Babushka was being unwittingly used by forces of reaction in the United States; Bryant said as much in her testimony, which followed Breshkovsky's.<sup>76</sup>

During Bryant's testimony, members of the Overman Committee did everything they could to discredit not just Bryant's testimony but also her character and morals, and judgment. When she complained that she was being treated like "a traitor," Senator Overman responded, "You seem to want to make a martyr of yourself, when you have not been treated unfairly that I can see. You are a woman and do not know anything about the conduct of an examination such as we have in hand here. We are going to treat you fairly and treat you like a lady." To this Bryant had responded, "I do not want to be treated as a lady but I want to be treated as a human being."<sup>77</sup>

The artist Boardman Robinson, a friend of Bryant's, drew a cartoon of her testifying before the committee that was printed in *The Liberator*; Bryant hung the cartoon on the wall of her apartment in Greenwich Village. The reporter Vincent Sheehan described the cartoon, fifty years after seeing it in Bryant's apartment, as "a hum-dinger, Louise looking small, shy and frightened (which of course she wasn't), seated on the edge of a chair while a long-haired senatorial giant looms over her with a menacing finger pointed. The caption: 'Be you a Soviet, Miss Bryant?'"<sup>78</sup> (See [Figure 1](#).)

Bryant described her experience of testifying before the committee in a letter to Frank Harris, editor of *Pearson's Magazine*; her words merit quoting at some length:

On an afternoon of last week I found myself in a rather dark room before a long table at which sat six men with cold eyes and harsh, angry voices. They were my countrymen but they were also my enemies. Their hate was naked and ugly, the flame of it burned away the mist before my eyes and I came away with old, vague fears suddenly turned into vivid realities. And I shall not forget.





FIGURE 1. Cartoon by Boardman Robinson showing Louise Robinson testifying before the Overman Committee, 1919.<sup>79</sup>

The men I write you about are old men—not so old in years as in thoughts. They have determined to fight stubbornly for a world as it was before the great war—and that world exists no longer. They have decided to crush unmercifully all defenders of Change. Each aged Senator, mouthing his everlasting expansive cigar, sees in himself a Marquis de Lantenac, a strong man of the hour. . . .

How stupid of me, or of anyone, to go humbly before a Committee investigating Bolshevism with the naïve purpose of explaining it. They have shut their ears and their eyes and their hearts. They know only that they despise it. The fact that unemployment is growing at an alarming rate, strikes are increasing, that we have no adequate reconstruction program does not interest them.<sup>80</sup>

She noted committee members' efforts to discredit her as a witness, and also remarked that one senator "referred constantly and with a peculiar pleasure to the disgusting and impossible story that Russian women, who have sacrificed more than the women of any country for freedom, have become public property."

Bryant concluded her letter by mentioning a *New York Herald* editorial that contended many people would regret that Bryant had not died in prison. She clarified: "I went to prison with a band of Suffragists, and I have never met a group of finer women. I went with them of my own accord because I believe in political and economic freedom for women as well as for men. And I love my country enough to protest against its most foolish sin." Bryant added that if she *were* to wind up in prison again, she would "at least find myself in splendid company," given the fact that "if the reactionaries have their way it will not be unusual for those who love liberty to find themselves behind iron bars."<sup>81</sup>

On a return visit to Russia in 1921, Bryant told Alexandra Kollontai that stories about Russian women's nationalization were being widely circulated in U.S. media and widely believed. Kollontai was predictably dismissive and turned the tables back on

news about what American men had been doing to American women: “‘If your statesmen had been sincerely interested in finding out about us,’” she reportedly told Bryant, “‘they would have discovered that Russian women after the revolution never had to go to the capital and beg for political freedom and they were never thrown into jail for picketing. There never was a question after the revolution about equal suffrage. We were all emancipated together. We were spared the humiliation American men forced on American women.’”<sup>82</sup>

Kollontai’s statement was not entirely accurate (Russian women *did* have to explicitly demand that the “universal suffrage” promised in the February revolution actually include women), and Kollontai’s claim that “we were all emancipated together” also belied the fact that there were serious divisions among women in Russia, even among revolutionary women.<sup>83</sup> Bryant herself had tried to make this clear in attempting to explain why Catherine Breshkovsky, the “Little Grandmother of the Russian Revolution” would have told the Overman Committee, in testimony contradicting Bryant’s, that the Bolsheviks were “destroying Russia.”<sup>84</sup>

In *Six Red Months in Russia*, Bryant had described the friendship she established with Breshkovsky before the Bolsheviks came into power and her lack of surprise about Breshkovsky’s opposition to the Bolsheviks:

There is nothing strange in the fact Babushka took no part in the November revolution. History almost invariably proves that those who give wholly of themselves in their youth to some large idea cannot in their old age comprehend the very revolutionary spirit which they themselves began; they are not only unsympathetic to it, but usually they offer real opposition. And thus it was that Babushka, who stood so long for political revolution, balked at the logical next step, which is class struggle. It is a matter of age.<sup>85</sup>

In her testimony before the Overman Committee, Bryant would attempt to dispute Breshkovsky’s negative statements about the Bolsheviks by asserting, “I think she is an old lady with a grand past and a pitiful present,” adding, “she really does not know about the Soviet government.” Despite such claims, one senator, insisting on calling Bryant by the married name she did not use, would assert, “Mrs. Reed, I will honestly tell you that I think you are more deluded than Mme. Breshkovskaya.”<sup>86</sup>

Bryant mentioned in her Overman Committee testimony that Babushka had gone to the Henry Street settlement in search of Emma Goldman, only to be told that Goldman was in prison and it was impossible to see her. Goldman had joined the chorus of Breshkovsky’s American friends who condemned her for aiding American reactionaries with her vocal condemnations of the Bolsheviks: “our Babushka is being unfurled as a banner for the glory of world imperialism,” Goldman wrote from prison to her old friend, “I simply cannot believe that you realize the ghastly picture.”<sup>87</sup> But Goldman would later change her tune: “Poor Babushka, how we all criticized her,” she wrote in 1922 to Alice Stone Blackwell, the woman with whom she’d conspired, eighteen years earlier, to bring Breshkovsky to the United States. Though Goldman still wished Babushka had not supported American intervention in the Russian civil war, she now concluded “every word she said two years ago was based on facts. ... Now I know, after I myself have fought against the truth, that Babushka spoke the truth, and no one would hear her.”<sup>88</sup>

Notably, although Bryant dismissed Breshkovsky's condemnation of the Bolsheviks, she would herself, in confidence, admit to being "entirely out of sympathy with Communism" (according to a surveillance report sent from Riga, where Bryant was waiting in the spring of 1921 to return to the United States after her second trip to Russia). However, it is not clear if by "communism" she meant the ideal that was being (temporarily) replaced by Lenin's New Economic Policy, which introduced elements of capitalism to the Soviet system, or Communist Party bureaucrats and particularly their association with the *Chresvychaika* (or *Cheka*), the secret police, which carried out horrific violence against opponents and suspected opponents of the regime.<sup>89</sup> The agent reporting on Bryant's comments distinguished her alleged disillusionment with "Communism," which he accepted as genuine, from her feelings about the revolution, however, for she'd claimed that Lenin was poised to rescue the revolution from the Communists. Another surveillance report, upon which the one quoted above expanded (and which, like the Overman Committee, identifies Bryant by the married name she did not use), concluded, "Mrs. Reed is inclined to allow herself to see only the good side of the Russian Revolution, and to close her eyes at its bad features. She attaches too little importance to the propaganda campaign of the Bolsheviks and to Lenin's part in this campaign."<sup>90</sup>

Radical women were in a difficult bind when it came to staking out a position on the Soviet Union. Notwithstanding Emma Goldman's attempts to find a position that would allow her to criticize the Bolsheviks without aiding the forces of reaction (as Breshkovsky had done)—attempts that would alienate Goldman from many of her former allies—in fact, most of those claiming the feminist label would dramatically attenuate the radicalism of their agenda precisely because they wished to avoid being associated with Bolshevism in the eye of the public. Indeed, though history would prove the wisdom of Goldman's critiques of the Bolsheviks, in the United States, fear of Bolshevism almost certainly did more damage to American democracy than Bolshevism itself.

In 1920 the National Woman's Party would reject Crystal Eastman's proposed platform, which had unmistakable resonance with Soviet policy. Eastman called "to remove legal and customary barriers to women's self-realization, to remake marriage laws and public opinion to eliminate the homemaker-child-rearer's economic dependence, to end laws prohibiting birth control, and to remove laws of inheritance, divorce, child custody and sexual morality on the basis of sexual equality."<sup>91</sup> By this time the truly radical voices of American women had dropped out of public discourse: partly through self-censorship by organizations like the National Woman's Party, whose members feared being unable to accomplish even very basic reforms if snared in a "spider web" created by self-proclaimed patriots; and partly through effective surveillance and repression on the part of official or unofficial red hunters.

Despite the fact that as late as 1919 it was easier for Louise Bryant to imagine a revolution in America than to imagine women gaining the vote, by 1920 a constitutional amendment granting women suffrage was adopted in the United States. Even so, Emma Goldman had been basically right in arguing that suffrage itself would not solve many problems for women, and would, indeed, make them more enmeshed in a system that oppressed them. ("Life, happiness, joy, freedom, independence—all that, and more, is to spring from suffrage," she had proclaimed sarcastically in 1911.)<sup>92</sup> Neither suffrage nor revolutionary Russia would fulfill the promises that both held in

the eyes of many American women. The First Red Scare exaggerated a tie between the two and made basic demands—not just for political representation, but also for access to birth control, abortions, child care, satisfying work at a decent wage, a humane social welfare system, peace, and equitable treatment before the law—all seem radical. Perhaps that is why women today are still fighting for them even as they're told that they now can "have it all."

## NOTES

The author wishes to acknowledge research assistance from Chloe Caswell and editorial suggestions from Adam J. Hodges.

<sup>1</sup>The version of the story that I consulted was in typescript: "Fables for Proletarian Children: How the Revolution Began in America," n.p. In Louise Bryant papers, Yale University Special Collections, box 12, folder 42. Also see "Fables for Proletarian Children: How the Revolution Began in America," *The Revolutionary Age* 25 (Jan. 1919): 6+. Transcribed at marxists.org, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/bryant/works/fables.htm> (accessed July 12, 2018).

<sup>2</sup>United States District Court for the Southern District of New York, *The Trial of Scott Nearing and the American Socialist Society*, New York City, Feb. 5 to 19, 1919 (New York: Rand School of Social Science, 1919).

<sup>3</sup>"Bolsheviki Meetings Arranged by Suffragists Arouse Senate to Investigate Radical Propaganda," *Woman Patriot* 2:6 (1919): 1–3. Regin Schmidt, *Red Scare: FBI and the Origins of Anticommunism in the United States 1919–1943* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press, 2000); "Five Days in Jail for 25 Militants," *New York Times*, Feb. 11, 1919, 5.

<sup>4</sup>See, for example, "Women in Russia," *The Suffragist* 5:95 (1917): 3; "The Dawn of Democracy in Russia," *The Suffragist* 5:64 (1917): 3; "Woman Officials in Russia," *The Suffragist* 5:72 (1917): 3; "Women Officials in Russia," *ibid.* 5:72 (1917): 3; Basil Manly, "Woman in the New Russia," *ibid.* 5:61 (1917): 9; Maria Moravsky, "A Challenge from Russia," *ibid.* 5:99 (1917): 12; Ruby A. Black, "Women In Russia," *Equal Rights* 11:50 (1925): 395; Anonymous, "Position of Women in the Soviet Union," *Equal Rights* 14:39 (1927): 307.

<sup>5</sup>For further discussion of AWEC, see Julia Mickenberg, *American Girls in Red Russia: Chasing the Soviet Dream* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017), 73–75, 85–86. For further discussion of suffragists' relation to the Russian revolutions of February and October 1917, see Julia L. Mickenberg, "Suffragettes and Soviets: American Feminists and the Specter of Revolutionary Russia," *Journal of American History* 100:4 (2014).

<sup>6</sup>Ellen Carol DuBois points out that the demand for woman suffrage posed a radical challenge to the social organization of gender, undermining the idea of fundamental sex differences and implicitly making the case that women's individuality and women's rights were as basic as those of men. Ellen Carol DuBois, "Woman Suffrage and the Left: An International Socialist Feminist Perspective," *New Left Review* 186 (1991): 25.

<sup>7</sup>Kathleen Kennedy, *Disloyal Mothers and Scurrilous Citizens* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 4.

<sup>8</sup>Kim E. Nielsen, *Un-American Womanhood: Antiradicalism, Antifeminism, and the First Red Scare* (Columbus: Ohio State Press, 2001). Nancy Cott, *The Grounding of Modern Feminism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987).

<sup>9</sup>Erica J. Ryan, *Red War on the Family: Sex, Gender, and Americanism in the First Red Scare* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2015).

<sup>10</sup>Barbara Alpern Engel, *Women in Russia, 1700–2000* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 142 (quotation). The Lenin quotation is from a 1920 interview with Clara Zetkin; see <http://sfr-21.org/zetkin.html> (accessed Apr. 6, 2011). Wendy Z. Goldman, *Women, the State, and Revolution: Soviet Family Policy & Social Life, 1917–1936* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 51. On the "General Decree on Wages," see Elizabeth A. Wood, *The Baba and the Comrade: Gender and Politics in Revolutionary Russia* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997), 50. The decree may have been passed as early as December 1917, but certainly by 1920. E. P. Frenkel, *Polovye Prestupleniia* (Odessa: Svetoch, 1927), 12.

<sup>11</sup>Nikolai Lenin, "Women in Soviet Russia," *The Nation* 110 (1920): 185–86.

<sup>12</sup>On the Soviet Union's appeal to Jewish Americans, I've found work by Daniel Soyer and Tony Michaels especially valuable. See Daniel Soyer, "Back to the Future: American Jews Visit the Soviet Union in the 1920s and 1930s," *Jewish Social Studies* 6:3 (2000): 124–59. Tony Michaels, "The Russian Revolution in New York, 1917–1919," *Journal of Contemporary History* 52:4 (Oct. 2017): 959–79. On ways the revolution impacted Jewish women reformers, there is useful discussion in Marjorie N. Feld, "An Actual Working Out of Internationalism: Russian Politics, Zionism, and Lillian Wald's Ethnic Progressivism," *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 2:2 (2003): 119–49. For further references, see Mickenberg, *American Girls in Red Russia*.

<sup>13</sup>Mark I. Solomon, *The Cry Was Unity: Communists and African Americans, 1917–36* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1998), 146. There is a significant body of scholarship of the Soviet Union's attractions to African Americans. Kate Baldwin's analyses are theoretically sophisticated and compelling, and Mark Solomon is especially attentive to the particulars of Soviet and CPUSA policy. Erik McDuffie has explored the Soviet Union's attraction to African American women in particular, and Glenda Gilmore has essentially rewritten the long history of the civil rights movement by including attention to the influence of American communists who were engaging directly with Soviet policies. Kate A. Baldwin, *Beyond the Color Line and the Iron Curtain: Reading Encounters between Black and Red, 1922–1963* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002). Solomon, *The Cry Was Unity*. Erik S. McDuffie, *Sojourning for Freedom: Black Women, American Communism, and the Making of Black Left Feminism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press 2011). Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, *Defying Dixie: the Radical Roots of Civil Rights, 1919–1950*, 1st ed. (New York: W. W. Norton, 2008).

<sup>14</sup>Paul Hollander, *Political Pilgrims: Western Intellectuals in Search of the Good Society*, 4th ed. (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1998). Also see Sylvia R. Margulies, *The Pilgrimage to Russia: The Soviet Union and the Treatment of Foreigners, 1924–1937* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968); David Cauter, *The Fellow-Travelers* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press 1988; repr., 1988); Ludmila Stern, *Western Intellectuals and the Soviet Union: 1920–40: From Red Square to the Left Bank* (New York: Routledge, 2006).

<sup>15</sup>Lewis S. Feuer, "American Travelers to the Soviet Union, 1917–1932; The Formation of a Component of New Deal Ideology," *American Quarterly* 24 (1962): 119–49; Peter Filene, *Americans and the Soviet Experiment* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967), 7; David C. Engerman, *Modernization from the Other Shore: American Intellectuals and the Romance of Russian Development* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003). Also see David C. Engerman, "John Dewey and the Soviet Union: Pragmatism Meets Revolution," *Modern Intellectual History* 3:1 (2006). David S. Foglesong, *The American Mission and the "Evil Empire": The Crusade for a "Free Russia" Since 1881* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 11. Alan Dawley, *Changing the World: American Progressives in War and Revolution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 165, 75, 77, quotations from 75 and 77.

<sup>16</sup>Christine Stansell, *American Moderns: Bohemian New York and the Creation of a New Century*, 1st ed. (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2000), 321.

<sup>17</sup>For Simmons's larger and very useful discussion, see Christina Simmons, *Making Marriage Modern: Women's Sexuality from the Progressive Era to World War II*, Studies in the History of Sexuality (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009). See Choi Chatterjee, "'Odds and Ends of the Russian Revolution,' 1917–1920: Gender and American Travel Narratives," *Journal of Women's History* 20:4 (2008): 10–33. Also see Choi Chatterjee and Beth Holmgren, eds., *Americans Experience Russia: Encountering the Enigma, 1917 to the Present* (New York: Routledge, 2013).

<sup>18</sup>Emma Goldman, *My Disillusionment in Russia* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Page & Co., 1923). For further discussion of anarchist women, see Margaret S. Marsh and Paul Avrich Collection (Library of Congress), *Anarchist Women, 1870–1920*, American Civilization (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1981).

<sup>19</sup>Mari Jo Buhle, *Women and American Socialism, 1870–1920* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981), 259, 317–27.

<sup>20</sup>DuBois, "Woman Suffrage and the Left: An International Socialist Feminist Perspective," 43.

<sup>21</sup>Baldwin, *Beyond the Color Line and the Iron Curtain*, 8.

<sup>22</sup>Mickenberg, "Suffragettes and Soviets: American Feminists and the Specter of Revolutionary Russia."

<sup>23</sup>Lynn Dumenil, *The Second Line of Defense: American Women and World War I* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017). Also see Linda Gordon, *Woman's Body, Woman's Right: Birth Control in America* (New York: Penguin Books, 1990); Stansell, *American Moderns*. The Kinsey report, "Sexual Behavior in the Human Female," concluded that a dramatic change occurred in the sexual mores of women born after

1900, that is, women coming of age sexually during World War I. Alfred C. Kinsey and Institute for Sex Research, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 244.

<sup>24</sup>Kirsten Delegard, *Battling Miss Bolsheviki: The Origins of Female Conservatism in the United States*, 1st ed., Politics and Culture in Modern America (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012).

<sup>25</sup>Kennedy devotes chapters to both Goldman and Stokes, and Ryan provides extensive discussion of Bryant.

<sup>26</sup>Margaret Ashmun, "Russia Through Women's Eyes," *The Bookman* 48:6 (1919): 755.

<sup>27</sup>Leroy Scott, "Women of the Russian Revolution," *The Outlook* 90 (1908): 918.

<sup>28</sup>Anna Strunsky Walling, "Woman and the Russian Revolutionary Movement," *California Woman's Magazine* 12 (Aug. 1905): 1–2.

<sup>29</sup>Emma Goldman, *Anarchism and Other Essays* (New York: Mother Earth Publishing, 1911), 225–26.

<sup>30</sup>Emma Goldman, *Living My Life* (New York: Cosimo Classics, 2011), 36. On her desire to set up a cooperative like Vera's, see *ibid.*, 26.

<sup>31</sup>Shannon Smith, "From Relief to Revolution: American Women and the Russian–American Relationship, 1890–1917," *Diplomatic History* 19:4 (1995). Chelsea Gibson, "'American Women, Revolutionary Kin': Female Russian Radicals and the Women's Rights Movement in America, 1880–1920" (PhD thesis, SUNY Binghamton, 2018). Work on Russian revolutionaries themselves includes Amy Knight, "Female Terrorists and the Russian Socialist Revolutionary Party," *Russian Review* 38:2 (1979). See also Ana Siljak, *Angel of Vengeance: The "Girl Assassin," the Governor of St. Petersburg, and Russia's Revolutionary World*, 1st ed. (New York: St. Martins, 2008).

<sup>32</sup>Marie Spiridonova, "The Woman Rebel 1:2 (Apr. 1914): 13.

<sup>33</sup>Lillian Wald, letter to Alice Stone Blackwell, Mar. 1917. Lillian Wald papers, Columbia University, microfilm reel 2. *Cleveland Gazette*, Mar. 24, 1917, 4.

<sup>34</sup>"Russia Ahead of United States," *St. Paul Appeal*, Apr. 7, 1917, 2.

<sup>35</sup>Harriet Hyman Alonso, *Peace as a Women's Issue: A History of the U.S. Movement for World Peace and Women's Rights* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1993), 8–9.

<sup>36</sup>Vladimir Lenin, "Decree on Peace," Oct. 26 (Nov. 8) 1917, Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. <https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1917/oct/25-26/26b.htm> (accessed Aug. 1, 2018).

<sup>37</sup>Kennedy, *Disloyal Mothers and Scurrilous Citizens*, xvi–xvii.

<sup>38</sup>*Ibid.*, xvi. "I Didn't Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier" was a 1915 anti-war song that became popular in the United States among pacifists (and isolationists) before the United States entered the First World War.

<sup>39</sup>Mickenberg, "Suffragettes and Soviets," 1036.

<sup>40</sup>People's Council of America for Democracy and Peace, "Resolutions of the First American Conference for Democracy and Terms of Peace." New York, May 30 and 31, 1917. Roger Baldwin papers, Princeton University Library, box 18, folder 20.

<sup>41</sup>Roland Marchand, *The American Peace Movement and Social Reform, 1898–1918* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1973), 307.

<sup>42</sup>*Ibid.*, 310, 311.

<sup>43</sup>"Bolsheviks' Peace Plan Urged on Senate," *New York Evening Call*, Dec. 3, 1917, quoted in Philip Foner, *The Bolshevik Revolution: Its Impact on American Radicals, Liberals, and Labor: A Documentary Study* (New York: International, 1967), 56–57.

<sup>44</sup>For further discussion of the Lusk committee see Todd J. Pfannestiel, *Rethinking the Red Scare: The Lusk Committee and New York's Crusade Against Radicalism, 1919–1923*, Studies in American Popular History and Culture (New York: Routledge, 2003).

<sup>45</sup>Archibald E. Stevenson, ed., *Revolutionary Radicalism: Its History, Purpose and Tactics with an Exposition and Discussion of the Steps Being Taken and Required to Curb It: Filed April 24, 1920, in the Senate of the State of New York*, 4 vols. (Albany, NY: Lyon, 1920). Part I (vols. I–II), "Revolutionary and Subversive Movements Abroad and at Home," 1001.

<sup>46</sup>Lucia Maxwell, "Spider Web Chart: The Socialist-Pacifist Movement in America Is an Absolutely Fundamental and Integral Part of International Socialism," *The Dearborn Independent*, XXIV (Mar. 22, 1924): 11. In "How Did Women Peace Activists Respond to 'Red Scare' Attacks during the 1920s?" *Women and Social Movements*, <http://womhist.alexanderstreet.com/wilpf/doclist.htm> (accessed June 4, 2018). Nick Fischer, *Spider Web: The Birth of American Anticommunism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2016), 77. An American Citizen, "Are Women's Clubs 'Used' by Bolshevists?," *The Dearborn Independent*, Mar. 15, 1924, 2–5,

reprinted in Gillian Swanson, ed. *Antifeminism in America: A Historical Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 146. For further discussion of the chart's origins in conservative women's activism, see Delegard, *Battling Miss Bolsheviks*, chap. 2.

<sup>47</sup>See, for instance, Anonymous, "Kollontay and Our Children's Bureau," *Woman Patriot* 9:9 (1925): 66. The article makes much of the fact that a U.S. Children's Bureau report praised child welfare efforts in Russia under Kollontai's direction. For a portrait of Kollontay by Louise Bryant, see <https://www.marxists.org/archive/bryant/works/1923-mom/kollontai.htm> (accessed June 4, 2018).

<sup>48</sup>Susan Goodier, "The Price of Pacifism: Rebecca Shelley and Her Struggle for Citizenship," *Michigan Historical Review* 36:1 (2010): 82. (As Goodier notes, the \$10,000 actually came from Henry Ford's wife, Clara.)

<sup>49</sup>Rose Pastor Stokes, letter to Henry Ford, Nov. 29, 1915. Rose Pastor Stokes papers, Beineke Library, Yale University, box 2, folder 36.

<sup>50</sup>Brief for Plaintiff in Error, *Rose Pastor Stokes vs. United States of America*. United States Court of Appeal, Eight Circuit, 1918, 2–3.

<sup>51</sup>*Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>52</sup>*Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>53</sup>Arthur Zipser and Pearl Zipser, *Fire and Grace: The Life of Rose Pastor Stokes* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1989), 217.

<sup>54</sup>Rose Pastor Stokes papers, Yale University, box 6, folder 20.

<sup>55</sup>Emma Goldman, Address to the Jury, *United States vs. Emma Goldman*, July 9, 1917. <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/goldman/Features/unitedstatesvsemmagoldman.html> (accessed Feb. 1, 2018).

<sup>56</sup>E. J. Bamberger, Report on speech in Chicago by Emma Goldman on "The Bolsheviks: Their True Nature and Aim," Jan 5, 1918; Agent report dated Jan. 8, American Protective League, National Archives RG 165. In Emma Goldman Papers (microfilm). Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, 1990, reel 60. For further discussion of the APL, see Joan M. Jensen, *The Price of Vigilance* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1969).

<sup>57</sup>Goldman, *My Disillusionment in Russia*. The book was based on a series of articles that Goldman published in the *New York World* and led to a break with many of her former friends, including Rose Pastor Stokes.

<sup>58</sup>Emma Goldman, letter to Havelock Ellis, Dec. 27, 1924. Emma Goldman papers, Tamiment Library, NYU. Series 2, box 4, folder 1.

<sup>59</sup>On the United States government's refusal to grant passports to African Americans, including prominent women such as journalist Ida B. Wells and entrepreneur Madame C. J. Walker, wishing to travel to Paris for the conference at which the final terms of the peace treaty would be negotiated, see Ann Hagedorn, *Savage Peace: Hope and Fear in America, 1919* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2007). Many of these same individuals had also planned to attend the Pan-African conference in Paris the same year, and for this reason also were denied passports. Adriane Lentz-Smith, *Freedom Struggles: African Americans and World War I* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), 162. The term 100% Americanism is part of the founding charter of the American Legion, but the term originated earlier, in reaction to anti-German sentiment. See Christopher Joseph Nico-demus Capozzola, *Uncle Sam Wants You: World War I and the Making of the Modern American Citizen* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 211, 1–2. For further discussion, see John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860–1925* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1955), 204–5.

<sup>60</sup>Bryant testimony before the Overman Committee, quoted in Virginia Gardner, "Friend and Lover": *The Life of Louise Bryant* (New York: Horizon, 1982), 150.

<sup>61</sup>Congressional Record, Feb. 3, 1919, quoted in "Bolshevik Meetings Arranged by Suffragists," 3.

<sup>62</sup>Ryan, *Red War on the Family*, chap. 2.

<sup>63</sup>Landon R. Y. Storrs, "Attacking the Washington 'Femocracy': Antifeminism in the Cold War Campaign against 'Communists in Government,'" *Feminist Studies* 33:1 (2007): 129.

<sup>64</sup>"Red Law on Women Fiercely Resisted," *New York Times*, Ap. 23, 1919, 3.

<sup>65</sup>Bush, W. S. (1919, May 17). FILMS REVIEWED: THE NEW MOON.

The Billboard (Archive: 1894–1960), 31, 81. Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/login?url=https://search-proquestcom.ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/docview/1031573352?accountid=7118> (accessed Dec. 20, 2017). Ryan cites a number of films that perpetuated the nationalization rumor. See Ryan, *Red War on the Family*, 56.

<sup>66</sup>See, for instance, Frank Comerford, "Problems Facing Stricken World: Why Bolshevism Is Menace," *Washburn Leader* (North Dakota), Aug. 20, 1920, 6 (<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85000631/1920-08-20/ed-1/seq-6/#date1=1917&index=2&rows=20&words=nationalization+women&searchType=basic&sequence=0&state=&date2=1932&proxtext=%22nationalization+of+women%22+&y=13&x=10&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>) (accessed Dec. 22, 2017), and printed in other newspapers as well.

<sup>67</sup>Barbara Evans Clements, "The Effects of the Civil War on Women and Family Relations" in *Party, State and Society in the Russian Civil War: Explorations in Social History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), 105. For debates about how to interpret Marx and Engels' "community of women" comment in *The Communist Manifesto*, see, for instance, Matthew Holt, "Capital as Fiction: The Communist Manifesto" in *Literature and Politics: Pushing the World in Certain Directions*, ed. Peter Marks (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2012), 11–22; Phil Gasper, *The Communist Manifesto: A Roadmap to History's Most Important Document* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2005), 66. Beyond the *Manifesto*, Marxist ideas about women, marriage, and the family were further explored in German socialist August Bebel's *Woman under Socialism* (1879), which argued that socialism aimed to eliminate all forms of dependency, starting with women's economic dependence on men, and in Engels's *The Origins of the Family, Private Property, and the State* (1884), which pointed to the bourgeois family's basis for the capitalist mode of production.

<sup>68</sup>See "The Nationalization of Women," *The Woman Patriot* 3:11 (June 28, 1919): 4.

<sup>69</sup>The richest source for this discourse is *The Woman Patriot*. See, for instance, "The Fallacy of Federal Suffrage," *Woman Patriot* 1:21 (Sept. 14, 1918): 7–8; M.C.R., "Shall We 'Catch up' with Russia!," *ibid.*, 1:15 (Aug. 3, 1918): 7; "Woman Suffrage Russia Instituting Female Slave Markets!," *ibid.*, 1:10 (June 29, 1918): 7; Anonymous, "Bureaus of Free Love Established by Feminist and Socialists in Russia," *ibid.*, 1:28 (Nov. 2, 1918): 2–3.

<sup>70</sup>United States Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, Brewing and liquor interests and German and Bolshevik propaganda. Report of the Subcommittee on the Judiciary, United States Senate, pursuant to S. res. 307 and 436, Sixty-Fifth Congress, relating to charges made against the United States Brewers' Association and Allied interests, 1919, 36–37, quoted in "Nationalization of Children" in *Woman Patriot* 6:17 (1922): 4–5, emphasis in *Woman Patriot*.

<sup>71</sup>Quoted in *ibid.*, emphasis in *Woman Patriot*.

<sup>72</sup>Louise Bryant testimony. United States Congress, Senate. Committee on the Judiciary. "Bolshevik Propaganda: Hearing Before a Subcommittee of the Committee on the Judiciary," 65th Congress, 3rd session and thereafter, pursuant to S. Res 439 and 469, Feb. 11, 1919 to Mar. 10, 1919, [https://archive.org/stream/cu31924030480051/cu31924030480051\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/cu31924030480051/cu31924030480051_djvu.txt) (accessed Jan. 29, 2018). Hereafter cited as Overman committee hearing.

<sup>73</sup>Ryan, *Red War on the Family*, 51. Ryan primarily gives attention to the ways that Bryant's Soviet connection made her appear threatening, rather than appealing.

<sup>74</sup>Louise Bryant, Overman committee hearing.

<sup>75</sup>On Bryant's asking for the opportunity to testify, see Gardner, "*Friend and Lover*": *The Life of Louise Bryant*, 148. Quotation from Louise Bryant, Overman committee hearing.

<sup>76</sup>See Alice Stone Blackwell letter to Lazarev Feb. 22, 1920 and May 28, 1922, f. 5824, op. 1, d. 190, State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF), Moscow, Russia; Lillian Wald to Catherine Breshkovsky, Feb. 27, 1919, box 93, folder 1.1, Lillian Wald papers, Columbia University Special Collections. Louise Bryant testimony before Overman committee.

<sup>77</sup>Louise Bryant, Overman committee hearing.

<sup>78</sup>Vincent Sheehan, letter to Virginia Gardner, Sept. 8, 1971, quoted in Gardner, "*Friend and Lover*": *The Life of Louise Bryant*, 225.

<sup>79</sup>*The Liberator* 2:4 (Apr. 1919): 27. <http://www.marxists.org/history/usa/culture/pubs/liberator/1919/04/v2n04-apr-1919-liberator.pdf> (accessed Nov. 27, 2018).

<sup>80</sup>Louise Bryant, letter to Frank Harris (n.d., 1919), Louise Bryant papers, Yale University, box 13, folder 63.

<sup>81</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>82</sup>Louise Bryant, "Woman's Place in Russia" (typescript), Louise Bryant papers, box 13, folder 64.

<sup>83</sup>Rochelle Goldberg Ruthchild, *Equality & Revolution: Women's Rights in the Russian Empire, 1905–1917*, Pitt series in Russian and East European studies (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2010).

<sup>84</sup>Catherine Breshkovskaya, Overman committee hearing.

<sup>85</sup>Louise Bryant, "Katherine Breshkovsky," *Six Red Months in Russia*, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/bryant/works/russia/ch10.htm> (accessed Jan. 29, 2018).

<sup>86</sup>Overman committee testimony.

<sup>87</sup>Emma Goldman, letter to Catherine Breshkovsky, Mar. 19, 1919, quoted in "A Lost Leader" in "[Open Forum?, Los Angeles]. [April? 1930?]." Emma Goldman papers, [https://archive.org/stream/goldmanwriting-s9101emma\\_4#page/n155/mode/2up/search/Babushka](https://archive.org/stream/goldmanwriting-s9101emma_4#page/n155/mode/2up/search/Babushka) (accessed Jan. 29, 2018).



<sup>88</sup>Emma Goldman, letter to Alice Stone Blackwell, Mar. 5, 1922. Emma Goldman papers, [https://archive.org/stream/correspondence9101emma\\_10#page/n505/mode/2up/search/Babushka](https://archive.org/stream/correspondence9101emma_10#page/n505/mode/2up/search/Babushka) (accessed Jan. 29, 2018).

<sup>89</sup>Matthew C. Smith letter to J. Edgar Hoover, June 10, 1921. United States, Department of the Army, General Staff, Military Intelligence Division, *U.S. Military Intelligence Reports: Surveillance of Radicals in the United States*. Microfilm. Frederick, MD: University Publications of America, 1984, reel 33.

<sup>90</sup>May 17, 1921, surveillance report from Riga, report number 1424, United States. Department of the Army, General Staff, Military Intelligence Division, *U.S. Military Intelligence Reports: Surveillance of Radicals in the United States*. Microfilm, reel 33.

<sup>91</sup>See Nancy Cott, "Feminist Politics in the 1920s: The National Woman's Party," *Journal of American History* 71:1 (1984): 48.

<sup>92</sup>Emma Goldman, "Woman Suffrage," in *Anarchism and Other Essays*, 2nd revised edition (New York: Mother Earth Publishing, 1911). Reprinted by Marxist Internet Archive, <https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/goldman/works/1911/woman-suffrage.htm> (accessed Jan. 29, 2018).