



**Cottey College
&
the Cottey College English
Department
present**

Write On, Sister

**Winners of the
Merry Ann DeVaney Sauls
Academic Writing Contest
2025**

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About the Contest

The Merry Ann DeVaney Sauls Academic Writing Contest was developed to enhance the prestige of academic writing in the disciplines at Cottey College. The contest is financed through a generous endowed fund established by Merry Ann DeVaney Sauls, a 1959 Cottey graduate. Ms. Sauls sees writing as fundamentally important to success in any endeavor and sponsors the writing contest as a way of furthering that vision.

All students are invited to submit writing composed in Cottey courses to the contest. Internal judges from Cottey College perform initial assessments of the pieces. Then, finalist external judges, typically professors or professionals in the relevant disciplines at other colleges, universities, and workplaces, rank the best pieces in each category.

The winners are honored at a public ceremony. The full texts of the winning pieces are shared online via this publication.

For more information about the contest and its past winners, visit the contest section of the [English Department's portion of the Cottey website](#).

The co-sponsors of the contest, Dr. Jonathan Green and Dr. Sarah Polo, wish to thank the internal and external judges for their service and commitment to recognizing exemplary student writing.

Contest Judges

External Judges

Dr. Julie Perino

Caroline Dohack

Joaquin Gavilano

Internal Judges

Professor Theresa Spencer

Professor Lauren Sanders

Dr. Julie Tietz

Dr. Sarah Quick

Dr. Sarah Polo

Dr. Jon Green

Dr. Sandy Chaney

Dr. Tracy Lanser

Professor Laura Chaney

Dr. cody page

Dr. Claire Mills

Dr. Jorge Dioses

Introductory Writing

2nd Place:

Puja Kharel, “Generational Legacy or Red Curse”

Link to recorded episode:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1loUYDy9qaCHSx1XpEF5m8pzDkmiA3FXq/view?usp=drivesdk>

OR

<https://podcastle.ai/editor/project/67174277c39b3b48370fad50>

Full episode transcript:

[Intro Music]

“If your actions create a legacy that inspires others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more, then you are an excellent leader.” Those are the words of Dolly Parton, and they truly resonate with me.

Good morning and namaste, everyone! You’re listening to Puja Kharel, a freshman at Cottey College, all the way from the beautiful country of Nepal. I’m so excited to have you here today for this episode titled “Generational Legacy or Red Curse.”

In today’s episode, we’re diving into something deeply personal—something that isn’t just about me, but about the power we all have to make a real impact in the world. We’ll be talking about leadership, and I believe leadership is an important trait that inspires and empowers others to enact ethical change to improve the world, and how that has been the heart of my advocacy work in Nepal.

For me, true leadership isn’t about power or position; it’s about lifting others up, giving them the tools to thrive, and creating lasting, meaningful change. And that’s exactly what I’ve been working toward.

But first, let me share a little story about my life.

[Music]

When I was born as the second daughter in my family, something painful happened. My grandparents, who lived in the same house as us, didn’t bother to see me for the first

three months of my life. Why? Because they had been expecting a grandson. From the very beginning, I was faced with gender discrimination. But instead of letting that break me, it gave me the drive to prove something important: your gender or sexuality doesn't define you. What matters is how you shape your life and the change you create in the world.

"Remember this—whoever you are, however you are, you are equally valid, equally justified, and equally beautiful." That quote by Juno Dawson is one I hold close to my heart.

So, if you've ever wondered how you can make a difference or what it means to lead with purpose, stick with me. Today, we're going to talk about how we can inspire, empower, and transform our communities for the better by using our leadership traits.

Fasten your seatbelts, because I'm about to take you back to a moment that changed my life.

"Mom! Save me!" I screamed, standing in my washroom, covered in blood. My white clothes had turned red, and I had no idea what was happening. It was the day I first learned about my "impurity," as they called it, the day my period started. My mother took me to the shed and told me, "You're going to stay here for 13 days. I'll bring you your clothes. "Superstitious beliefs regarding menstruation prohibited me from touching plants, drinking milk, performing religious activities and looking at male. That innocent 14-year old me was told that if I disobeyed the rules, the god would be angry and curse the family.

I became the victim of Chhaupadi Pratha, a social tradition where women are isolated as considered "impure" during menstruation. I was locked inside the loft with no natural light. The flickering kerosene lantern mutated my agony into perplexity. "What if I die here, like the victims from the far-western part of Nepal? What if the lack of air suffocates me?" If I choose to end this curse, will that make me an outcast with untamed character? However, I was labeled as a 'good daughter' - a daughter who was obliged to obey without regard for herself just to meet parental and societal-expectations.

On the 5th day, Didi (sister), Where are you? My 3 year-old brother was searching me with tearful eyes. His affection made me bang the door and scream, so that he could follow my voice. He opened the door by climbing on the chair to hug me. His love and tiny efforts gave me a spark to speak out for myself. However, my voice was suppressed in the ocean of stereotypical femininity. This little boy who didn't even know the meaning of leader, became my leader.

But society labeled me as an unfaithful granddaughter because I disobeyed their menstruation rules and was blamed for my grandmother's illness. Isn't it stupid and conservative? Yes, it is.

Home, the place where I should have learned about equality, was instead filled with gender stereotypes. My birth as a second daughter was seen as a curse. But I realized if I wanted to see change, I have to be a change.

Why should society control me based on what my underwear holds- whether it's menstrual blood or my identity?

My zeal for empowering young girls - to not tolerate this cultural atrocity and gender inequality- encouraged me to form a youth club 'We For All' in collaboration with my municipality. During pandemic, I hosted virtual campaigns by connecting like-minded peers. This casual-exchange evolved into Bleed-Freely-project and drafting presentations involving weeks of collaboration. School, my best place, supported me in all my endeavors. As I started conducting educational workshops to empower girls, I heard their stories of being blocked by a glass ceiling. With the motive of reducing gender-inequality and sexual abuse, we collaborated with VDC & Judicial-Committee and gave self-defense training to the young girls from rural areas.

I felt successful, not when I bagged the 'Country Winner' award in Peace by Gender-Equality category but when I received 'Thank You' Notes from school students where I delivered Bleed-Freely sessions. That's when I knew I was making a real difference.

With this, I found my effort to combat the behavior of my family and school environment was, at its core, an effort to end [Student's Country Name]'s regressive ideas about gender and menstrual taboos. Starting from my home to society, I have witnessed the decline of the Chaupadi system and gender-stereotypes.

A free-spirited woman was born from the victimization of the Chaupadi system. I am now the social engine driving change, and education is my fuel to end this harmful practice.

What's interesting is that I hear people often say, "We need to help girls find their voice." But you know what? I disagree. Women don't need to find their voice—they already have it. They need to feel empowered to use it. And people need to be encouraged to listen.

That's what leadership means to me- not power or position, but lifting others up and giving them the strength to stand tall.

That's all for this episode, my friends. I hope today's story has inspired you to think about how you can make a difference because leadership isn't just about leading; it's

about empowering others. Thank you so much for listening. I'll catch you all in the next episode. Until then, stay strong, stay kind, and remember - you have the power to change the world.

[Outro Music]

Attributions for music or other sounds:

- Song: Podcast Intro By Snail Music (Loop)
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Reflection

What specific principle of leadership is the basis of your episode?

The leadership principle that forms the basis of my episode is Leadership Principle 5, which focuses on leadership as a way to inspire ethical change and improve the world. My podcast emphasizes how leadership is not about control or authority, but about empowerment - lifting others up and inspiring them to take action for the greater good. My advocacy work in [Student's Country Name], particularly against the Chaupadi system, has centered on this principle of leadership.

Describe your decisions for quoting, paraphrasing, and/or acknowledging the FWS leadership document in your script and recorded version. How did you ultimately decide to acknowledge/not acknowledge this document in each version?

In my podcast, I intentionally chose not to directly quote from the FWS leadership document in the script itself. Instead, I paraphrased the essence of the document's ideas in my storytelling and personal experiences. By integrating its concepts into my advocacy narrative, I connected leadership to real-life events like my work with the

Bleed Freely Project. However, in the reflection, I acknowledge the document's influence on shaping the message of ethical leadership.

What did you learn about “This I Believe” stories while completing this project, and in what ways were you able to successfully compose one yourself? Please discuss several decisions, such as its structure, use of sounds, use of evidence, etc.

While creating this podcast, it allowed me to dive deeply into the structure of “This I Believe” stories, especially focusing on the thesis. I learned that these stories rely heavily on personal experiences, honest emotions, and a powerful connection to beliefs. I started with a personal anecdote about gender discrimination and Chaupadi, then led into how these experiences shaped my leadership journey. This structured my story with an emotional arc as a key aspect in my podcast. The use of sound, like music transitions will heighten the emotional impact, and the inclusion of direct quotes like Juno Dawson’s reinforced the story’s message of self-worth and empowerment.

What did you learn about the podcast genre while completing this project, and in what ways were you able to successfully compose one yourself? Please discuss several decisions, such as its structure, use of sounds, use of evidence, etc.

In producing my podcast, I learned that the podcast genre thrives on relatability, emotion, and simplicity. To successfully compose a podcast episode, I had to ensure the language was conversational and engaging, and the flow of the episode was smooth. I also discovered that sounds and music are crucial elements in creating an immersive listening experience, as they help to punctuate key moments and guide listeners through the narrative. My choice of background music will enhance the emotional depth of my story without overpowering it, creating a balanced and engaging episode.

In what ways have you made use of rhetoric in your podcast; specifically, describe how you have made use of ethos, logos, pathos, and kairos (you should discuss each of these individually!) and what effects each of these are intended to have on your audience (general podcast listeners).

I established my credibility by introducing myself as someone who has personally experienced gender discrimination and by sharing my advocacy work in [Student’s Country Name]. My involvement with the Bleed Freely Project and leadership in ending Chaupadi further built my ethos as a responsible and empathetic leader. I used logical reasoning when I explained the harmful effects of Chaupadi, not only on an individual level but also on a societal scale. By providing examples of how I organized youth clubs and workshops, I demonstrated how leadership can bring change in communities. I shared deeply personal and emotional moments, like being isolated during menstruation

and my brother's small act of love that gave me strength. These moments were intended to evoke empathy from the audience and inspire them to take action or reflect on their own leadership potential.

I personally believed that issues like gender inequality and menstrual taboos are still very much relevant today, making it an ideal moment to raise awareness. In my podcast, I talked about my personal experience and related it to one of the harmful societal issues with a hope to connect listeners on a deeper level, making the need for leadership and ethical change more urgent. Hence, the main motive of combining the rhetorical strategies was to engage the audience emotionally, ethically, and logically. This might encourage them to think about leadership and change in a new light for the betterment of the world.

Introductory Writing

1st Place:

Rachel Ewing-Merrill, “Gender and Politics: A Rhetorical Comparison of Two Perspectives on the Gender Gap”

“The Gender Election,” a podcast episode from *The Daily*, and Tiffany Barnes and Erin Cassese’s academic article, “American Party Women: A Look at the Gender Gap within Parties,” both analyze how gender influences political affiliation and voting behavior. “The Gender Election,” aimed at a broad public audience—particularly youth—explores the growing political divide between young men and women, with more young men shifting towards the right and young women becoming increasingly left-leaning. The episode highlights how economic concerns shape young men’s political choices, particularly their concerns about traditional gender roles and financial stability. Barnes and Cassese’s article, written for an academic audience, discusses the gender gap within political parties, arguing that Republican women are more moderate than their male counterparts, particularly on social issues and government involvement. While both texts address the gender disparity in political views, the texts have many differences; they differ in their appeal to ethos as well as their tone and modes, but they have a similar appeal to kairos.

One notable comparison between the two texts is how they show credibility. “The Gender Election” builds credibility through personal anecdotes. They do use data from voting polls to back up their claim that young voters are becoming more divided by gender, but they reinforce it by providing countless examples through interviews. The hosts interviewed several young voters and asked who they planned to vote for and why. This approach appeals to their broad audience. Even though, logically, physical data should be more convincing, many people are more inclined to believe something if they hear personal testimonies. This strategy also makes the data more “real.” Hearing individual perspectives makes it easier to understand the mindset of young voters from both genders. For example, the interviewers found that many young men plan to vote for Trump because of economic concerns, particularly about grocery prices, and how they feel unable to do their duty as men to provide for their families or partners because of inflated costs (Tavernise and Miller 12:17–14:22). Hearing this personal account helps the audience better understand the mindset of young male Republican voters. In contrast, “American Party Women” almost exclusively uses data to build credibility.

Unlike the podcast, they do not have to shape their argument to make it easy to understand; their audience is primarily scholars who are already interested in the topic and do not need extra motivation to keep reading. Instead of interviews or personal stories, the article relies on data, like survey results from the 2012 American National Election Study, to show how Republican women tend to be more moderate than Republican men on issues like social welfare, gun control, and taxation (Barnes and Cassese 129). Their argument is built on facts and analysis because they do not need to ensure comprehension and keep the audience engaged. The article builds its credibility primarily through data, focusing on survey results and statistical evidence to support its claims. This approach aligns with its academic audience, who are more likely to value actual data over personal narratives.

A further comparison between the two texts is their tone and modes. “American Party Women” has a very formal, academic tone. It delivers its argument through analysis and visual data. The article almost exclusively uses textual and visual modes, with detailed written explanations and statistical charts. When introducing the topic of the article, Barnes and Cassese write, “Building on the burgeoning body of research on partisan sorting, we develop expectations regarding the intersection between gender and party” (Barnes and Cassese 127). The formal tone reflects its scholarly audience, who expect evidence-based arguments that do not rely on personal opinion or emotional appeal. The use of textual and visual modes works well with the article's academic nature, where clarity and objectivity are key. “The Gender Election,” on the other hand, uses a wide range of modes and a more informal tone. The medium alone, being a podcast, provides an entirely different approach. A podcast needs to be engaging and pleasant to listen to. *The Daily*, particularly, aims to be educational while still entertaining. The hosts use conversation to make the information more approachable. For instance, one of the hosts explains, “So a lot of the men I talked to, and we’ve heard this throughout this election, said they were worried about economic issues” (Tavernise and Miller 12:09–12:16). Instead of just using data, interviews with actual voters make the topic feel more real and important. This makes complex political ideas easier to understand and more relatable for the average listener. The aural mode also engages the audience. The hosts strategically use tone to emphasize specific points or convey emotion in their voice. For example, a shift in tone can emphasize a key point or highlight an important detail. This adds meaning beyond the spoken words themselves. The informal tone, combined with the aural mode, creates a more engaging experience.

While the differences in these texts are pronounced, the texts are similar in their appeal to kairos. Both texts were written during election years—2016 and 2024—when women were presidential candidates, and gender was a prominent issue. Both texts use the increased attention on the topic to attract their audience and highlight gender differences in politics. “American Party Women” was published just before the 2016

presidential election, a time when the role of women in politics was especially relevant. Gender became a significant issue during the 2016 election because of Hillary Clinton, the first female candidate of a major political party, running against Donald Trump, who received significant media attention for his views on women. This made gender a particular focus of the election. Leading up to the 2024 election, when “The Gender Election” was published, gender was, again, a key issue. Another woman, Vice President Kamala Harris, was running against Donald Trump. Additionally, the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, the Supreme Court decision that federally protected the right to abortion, made women’s reproductive rights a major issue in the 2024 election. Kamala Harris campaigned heavily on protecting women’s health, especially when it came to reproductive freedoms, while questions were raised over whether Trump would further reproductive restrictions. This created a clear divide between male and female voters, with the degree of urgency they felt on the issue of reproductive rights becoming a key factor in how each gender aligned with the candidates. Both texts took advantage of the political situation of their respective times, making their arguments feel urgent. They used *kairos* to highlight how gender shapes political beliefs, an extremely relevant issue during the time.

In conclusion, looking closely at both “The Gender Election” podcast and “American Party Women” gives us a better understanding of how gender influences political views and voting behavior. It also shows how different rhetorical strategies are used to connect with different audiences. By comparing their use of credibility, tone, modes, and *kairos*, we get a clearer picture of how these texts communicate the same issue, gender’s role in politics, through very different approaches. This analysis highlights how important it is for rhetors to adjust their strategies depending on their audience, whether that is the general public or academics. Ultimately, it helps us see how these choices shape how we interpret a message. This is especially important when looking at political messages.

Works Cited

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Tavernise, Sabrina, and Claire Cain Miller. “The Gender Election.” *The Daily*, New York Times, 23 October 2024, <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/10/23/podcasts/the-daily/gender-election.html?showTranscript=1>.

Academic Writing (Short)

2nd Place:

Ren Sawyer, “The Image of AIDS”

Marketing and journalism are incredibly important aspects of any movement or organization, and the role that they play in queer activism is unique from other forms of the genre. Queer activists have to grapple with their own biases and serve a role in the movement that sets them apart from other activists. They must recognize that they are never just an activist. They have to be paying attention to the events they attend, and to always be considering the image they want to portray because their choices and behavior reflect on the entire movement. Marketing and journalism are the most important aspects of organizing because they determine the image of the movement. They have to be used wisely to decide what rhetoric will have the intended effect. The image of the LGBTQ+ movement has always been aimed at humanization and changing the narrative of being dirty or wrong, which is such a deeply ingrained belief for some that the message is difficult to break through. The urgency of the LGBTQ+ mission adds a sense of desperation, because people are constantly fighting for visibility and human rights and being killed for their lifestyles. The fight for LGBTQ+ rights has always been a desperate cry to be seen as humans that deserve to live.

Donna Binder is an ACT-UP member who participated in most of the ACT-UP New York events throughout the 80's and 90's, including the needle exchange, the Stop the Church protest, the kiss-ins, and the office raids. However, she did not consider herself an activist in most of these events because she participated mainly as a photographer. She took photos that were published in mainstream and alternative newspapers and magazines all around the world, and had a great influence on the image of AIDS. In her interview she discusses what it was like being a women photographer, and a lesbian photographer at that, trying to photograph a movement that she blends into. She discusses her interactions with the police, who often could not tell if she was a journalist or an activist because, in a way, she was both. She was trying to strike a balance between participating in an organization that she believes in, and bringing their message to the world in the form of photographic journalism. Those identities do not sound like they would conflict, but in many ways they did. She could not consider herself a participant in many of the organized efforts she attended. She traveled separately from other activists, and she had to remember that she was on the job and

her livelihood depended on her getting good pictures and knowing what the news outlets wanted to publish. News outlets often wanted to paint a different picture than what she wanted to photograph, so at many points she had to decide whether she wanted to photograph a truthful outlook or stretch the parts of the story that she knew would sell. She worked to dismiss the “helpless AIDS victim” narrative that was pushed by many outlets and photographers, instead trying to capture the strength of those who suffered from AIDS, and the message that society was attempting to ignore: that these were real people who were being ignored and left to die for the sake of convenience and “values.” She also referenced the way that grief played into the AIDS movement, reminiscing on people that she photographed who are all long dead by now. She spent time in a hospice home for people with AIDS called the Bailey House. She bonded with the people staying there and photographed them quite a bit, but the photographs she took played into the “helpless victim” image that she was trying to avoid. She chose to instead photograph activist activities because many of the people fighting in this were people with AIDS whose lives depended on the movement.

In the book *When We Were Outlaws* by Jeanne Cordova she discusses a lot of the politics of journalism from the perspective of the writers. The fight to get certain things published, as well as the dangers of recording certain stories intertwine very well with Donna Binder’s perspective of this experience of a photographer. While they may have been working at different times and for slightly different movements, their experiences are a reflection of what it is like to be engaging with a cause that you care about both as an activist and as a journalist. People like this are essential to any movement, because they control the narrative that is being pushed about the movement. They have a say in how they are viewed, and what they choose to report reflects on them as a member of that disadvantaged community. They have to live with the reality of knowing that they are part of this big picture, and their work is to convince others that they are worth seeing as people. These sources also both reflect the importance of alternative media, such as small newspapers and magazines, in getting information to the people who care about it. Alternative media has been vital to the cause for LGBTQ+ rights, and the community has historically relied on sources like that to get information to the broader community and get people involved. Jeanne Cordova worked for two different alternative papers, *The Free Press* and *The Lesbian Tide*, which she herself founded. While *The Tide*’s readership may not have been very large, that piece of media was very important to its readers. It held them together and helped them to feel like part of something bigger. It helped lesbians with less access to media keep up-to-date with events within their community. Alternative media like *The Lesbian Tide* gets people involved and disperses information to those who care to know. Cordova’s novel also expresses the importance of garnering media attention to create an image with an agenda in mind. Intentionally controlling how people view and talk about your movement determines the success of the movement, and Cordova does just that by reporting on

the events of her own political endeavors to contribute her own perspective to the narrative.

The documentary *United in Anger* is the story of ACT-UP, an organization aimed at ending the AIDS crisis and saving their own lives and those of their loved ones and community. This was the organization that Donna Binder took part in. Much of the documentary is simply a first-person retelling of the events that took place, but there is also a lot of discussion about their image. It was stated a few times by several different interviewees that they were not aiming to be liked, they were trying to save lives. They pushed the FDA to release drugs faster, and they protested the Catholic Cardinal's anti-condom and anti-abortion messaging. Their protest in the Catholic church received a lot of backlash for interrupting the time that people dedicated to prayer and praise and thus infringing on people's religious freedom, however their goal was not to disrupt religion. Their enemy was not the faith, but rather the institution. They had to show that they were the ones trying to save lives, and they accused the Cardinal of putting people's lives at risk. AIDS was, at the time, the #1 killer of women in New York. They managed to gather 7,000 people outside of the church, organize a "die-in" within the church to block the aisles with their bodies, and several other protestors stood in the audience delivering their message that people were dying and the church was encouraging it. This gave them the image that they needed: desperation. Their actions were calculated, but reflected the urgency of their message and the pointed criticism toward the Cardinal. Their goal to humanize themselves and deliver an ominous and vital message was a success, as some would consider this action a turning point in the movement. They received media attention at that point that allowed them to accomplish more of their goals. Their ability to market themselves as desperately human combined with the media coverage shows the impact of their marketing as well as journalism toward the success of their movement. Both were necessary to achieve their goals. They had to market themselves by making themselves heard, and they had to achieve media attention to push their movement forward. Choosing to sacrifice the idea of being liked to instead force people to recognize their humanity and the role that each individual played in the lives of these people was a choice that reflected the urgency and desperation of the movement, and an effective one.

These three texts together form a statement on the nature of activism and its relationship with journalism. The AIDS movement and LGBTQ+ history has been a constant battle for humanity. The main goal has always been to be viewed as more than "sinners" or "degenerates," but as human beings. To be a journalist in the LGBTQ+ community is to constantly be arguing for your own humanity and having to sell yourself to those who believe otherwise. Binder highlights the bias within publishing companies to push a particular narrative that the greater movement does not necessarily agree with, and Cordova shows an alternative route that is communicating directly to the

audience of your choosing. Both routes, communicating to the general public and to your own community, are equally vital to the success of the movement. However, when communicating to the general public, you have to fight to get your words published and recognized in the exact way that you need them to be said. Communicating to the enemy, as ACT-UP so often did, is a route that is not typically successful in forcing the enemy to act or change, but it is instead successful because it sends a message to the general public that can then create larger scale change. The Stop the Church protest was not successful in changing the Catholic church or the Cardinal, but it was successful in discrediting them and making the public aware of the danger that they pose to the lives of those who listen to them. Journalism and communication are imperative to the success of a movement, and a combination of talents in different fields of communication is what has made the LGBTQ+ movement so successful throughout history. Getting your message out is just as important as the way it gets out, and the people who can do that are vital resources to make change.

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Córdova, Jeanne. *When We Were Outlaws: A Memoir of Love & Revolution*. Spinsters Ink, 2011. *United in Anger*. Directed by Jim Hubbard, ACT-Up, 2012.

Academic Writing (Short)

1st Place:

Estelle Audette, “Policy Letter”

November 26, 2024

Min. Todd Loewen
9820 107 St NW,
Edmonton, AB T5K 1E7,
Canada

Minister Matt Loewen:

The wildfire in Alberta is an ongoing issue that Albertans are fighting every year. This issue affects more people than you might think. Jasper is a touristy area; therefore, many people wanting to vacation there won't have the chance to do so. Unfortunately, the wildfire seasons do not consider the countless memories made in Jasper. This past wildfire season was record-breaking, surpassing the previous one in 2023. The unfortunate events that happened in Jasper and took 30% of the town's structure is a good example of the magnitude of the 2024 season (Alberta Land Institute, 2024). As you know, this is only one example amongst others. The 2016 wildfire in Fort McMurray where people had to be airlifted during the car evacuations is another example to show the magnitude of this issue (Public Safety Canada, 2016). I am reaching out to you because I strongly believe you can positively impact the future upbringing of this issue. You have been the Minister of Forestry, Parks, and Tourism before being sworn in in 2023 as the Minister of Forestry and Parks. With this kind of background, you have a good understanding of the position the province of Alberta is currently standing with the wildfire seasons. Because it is fair to say your decision making upon this issue will impact the voters to elect you as the MLA for Central Peace-Notley (Moore, 2023). Which is why I will tackle the government's actions on the matter and propose my proactive solution called HNVF+ FirESmart for the betterment of this issue.

The wildfires are nothing new to the province of Alberta. Jasper is unfortunately another example of what is being done is not enough or simply not the right approach for an

issue of that magnitude. According to the Alberta Land Institute, what the government has done so far for the province of Alberta, among the solutions, a 55 million dollar increase in the budget that contributed to hire 100 more seasonal firefighters (Alberta Land Institute, 2024). But the addition of those firefighters came after the cut from the provincial government of the wildland firefighter rappel program in 2019 (Alberta Land Institute, 2024). That program was shut down after 40 years of service and made a difference across the province.

The 2024 fire season in Alberta has caused a lot of damage and “the season ranks among the top six over the last half century” (Williams, 2024). According to the Insurance Bureau of Canada, the total of the damages comes to a total of C\$880 million in insured damages alone (Balu, 2024). These numbers give a small taste of how many people were affected in the province of Alberta. In the town of Jasper, there were over 25,000 people who fled the town including an estimate of 5,000 residents from Jasper according to an article from CBC news channel made on August 10, 2024 (Frew, 2024).

In general, in the province of Alberta, First Nations are usually located in remote areas situated to the north of the province where the emergency resources are limited, and unfortunately, it is usually where the wildfires occur according to the Alberta fire danger map made by the government of Alberta in date of May 11, 2024 (Charbonneau, 2024). The First Nations are more likely to be targeted due to their geographical situation and leads to massive evacuations happening every year (Mottershead et al., 2020). But the impact of the wildfires goes far beyond the regular population. Healthcare services will be affected by the wildfires and so will social worker professionals (Drolet et al., 2021). I like to mention them because their work sometimes goes unnoticed by the population, but they are needed resources during the wildfire seasons. Social workers will be overworked with the need for psychological recovery and plans for the rising number of affected people. In their line of work, they will need to provide short-term care but also long-term care for their clients to promote psychosocial stability after the disaster. The healthcare system receives a great demand and at times, some hospitals must be evacuated just like in 2016 in the wildfires in Fort McMurray where the regional hospital was evacuated (CBC, 2017). This puts a lot of stress on the healthcare providers.

As for wildfires, people will often lose their jobs, businesses, homes and more. For example, “the wildfires in Jasper that claimed 30% of the town’s structures” (Alberta land institute, 2024). Many owners saw their businesses burn to the ground. I am sure you already know how tourism is particularly important for the town of Jasper; therefore, you can understand the extent of the damage it will have to the town's economy. In a survey made by Delaney, he asked questions to more than 80 businesses, “Of the more than 80 businesses surveyed, 37 percent said that their businesses were either entirely or partially lost in the Jasper wildfire complex.” (Delaney, 2024). In the state the town of Jasper currently is, visitors have already fled the town and are not likely to come back

anytime soon. This has already impacted and will continue to impact the town of Jasper in the near future, leaving the economy on a decline.

There are multiple factors that play into the causation of the fires and their dimension. The mountain pine beetle infestation, dry soil, extreme heat waves and human pollution are a few examples of the root of the problem (Higgins, 2024). But one crucial factor that plays a significant role is the help of the government being in the wrong place. Most of the new programs the government has put in place have been in response to the damage already caused by the fire (Higgins, 2024). Adding funds to the budget is one thing, but using it has a band-aid effect is not a proactive approach. Families want to feel safe as the fire season approaches, by having resources that can help prevent fires and not simply being given a compensation check for the loss of their house. What if a part of the budget was used for prevention like improving the buffer zone system? Having prevention policies in place, the need for an aftermath solution will decrease drastically. An innovative approach needs to be evaluated and thought through.

Like I mentioned above, the government is acting on the problem at hand, but is the government doing the right thing and investing millions of taxpayers' dollars in the right place, or is this all for nothing? Let me talk about what the government is doing on the problem of wildfires in Alberta. The wildfires are nothing new to the province of Alberta. Jasper is unfortunately another example of what is being done is not enough or simply not the right approach for an issue of that magnitude. According to the Alberta Land Institute, what the government has done so far for the province of Alberta, among the solutions, a 55 million dollar increase in the budget that contributed to hire 100 more seasonal firefighters (Alberta Land Institute, 2024). But the addition of those firefighters came after the cut from the provincial government of the wildland firefighter rappel program in 2019 (Alberta Land Institute, 2024). That program was shut down after 40 years of service and made a difference across the province.

If according to the government of Alberta “The 2019 wildfire season was one of the worst on record in terms of hectares burned (over 880,000 hectares or over 2 million acres)” (wildfire reviews, 2020). Maybe if the program like firefighter rappel program had been still running fully, the damages would have been less dramatic. However, the cut in the budget in 2019 resulted in closing some programs, knowing the conditions were prone to an intense wildfire season. Because looking at the graph from Project Calgary, the smoke per hour spiked from the low 300 to the mid 400 smoke hours in 2019 compared to the years before (UCP, n.d.).

In 2023, according to Mr. Loewen “this past year, we spent, I believe, 839\$ million fighting wildfires and this was an unprecedented season,” following with an explanation of the Alberta funds should be around 250\$ million (Heidenreich, 2024). Therefore, the solutions currently in place aren’t sufficient for the needs of the province and not

structured well enough to ensure the budget will cover all expenses. This then puts the government in a debt position by awarding more money than originally planned in the year. After a season like the one in 2023, the government knew they were going to expect another strong season in 2024. Therefore, why wasn't a part of the said budget of 250\$ million awarded for a proactive approach coming into the 2024 season? By waiting with the necessary resources, and already having a plan in function, the fire wouldn't spread as fast as it did during this summer.

But on the bright side, there are programs for the communities to reach out to, the minister Todd Loewen has mentioned in an interview with CTV News the announcement of two programs that have recently been added, the community fire program and the fire guard program (Higgins, 2024). Due to their new integration, there is yet to be data on the success of these programs. In terms of preventing action, the government has put in place buffer zones in many areas, but the results are not what was expected (Alberta Land Institute, 2024). Plus, the buffer zones of 30 meters have not been approved compared to the 70-meter ones (Alberta Land Institute, 2024). The concerns were with the 30-meter buffer zone, it would not be enough to keep the fire away, while the 70 meter one would provide more wiggle room according to the Alberta land Institute.

After doing a lot of research on the problem, one thing kept coming up to me as something particularly important to incorporate in the solution for the management of the wildfires in Alberta: more preventative actions need to be taken. It is time to be proactive instead of putting a band-aid to the problem that occurred year after year. This is why I am proposing an approach that will involve two parts. The solution I am proposing is called HNVF + fire smart. This project includes an increase in agricultural areas acting as a fire suppression. With all the past fires, there is a lot of land that has been completely burned down, using a part of those areas as farmland would act as a type of buffer zone and act as fire suppression. The goal of the Fire Smart project "aims to reduce fire damage while ensuring biodiversity conservation" (Regos et al., 2016). This project has been used in two different areas in Spain and in Portugal where they both are mountain rural areas (Regos et al., 2016). The results have shown a potential to "be reduced from 20,000 hectares under the "business-as-usual" scenario to 10,000 hectares under the HNVf scenario" (Regos et al., 2016). This shows a potential of 50% decrease in burned areas.

The second act to this plan would be the integration of bur oak, a remarkably similar type of tree as the native oak forest woodland as the original plan shows. The reason it would be changed from the original fire smart plan, is because native oak woodland would have harder time growing in Alberta as it is marked a zone 2 and zone 3 type of hardiness zones (Gamache, n.d.). The native oak grows well in zones 4 to zones 7. Therefore, the need to find a type of tree to have similar benefits such as having "corky

bark that is able to withstand the immense heat and pressure of prairie fires” was particularly important for the completion of the plan (Hokanson, 2018). Also, the benefits the tree would have to the soil in the instance of a fire are being seen in the prairies (Pyne, 2017). To support my findings, I investigated the case study made in southern Europe using the HVNF + fire smart project. The conclusion that came out of the case study was “HNVf and its combination with more fire-resistant tree species, i.e. HNVf +fire-smart, generate the best suppression cost outcomes, which is consistent with the fact that these two scenarios generate the largest avoided burned area” (Lecina-Diaz Et Al., 2023). In the case of Alberta, the cost benefit would be an additional positive for the government who spent close to a billion-dollar last fire season. This project would take time and is a long-term investment which could be a potential negative aspect of the solution. But I am asking you, would you rather have presentative policies in place or keep spending over budget every year because the fire seasons keep getting worse year by year, therefore slowly draining the province economically, but also the taxpayers.

Wildfires are a yearly concern for everyone in Alberta who risk losing their homes, jobs and loved ones. It is time to act upon the problem. A proactive solution to provide a good future for Alberta. Ending the fear that consumes the residents of many towns, like the people of Jasper who fled their homes. Which is why I believe my solution would put forward a proactive plan that can make a difference in the dimension of the problem but also be cost effective as the budget already in place of \$250 million would be split in two: reactive solutions and proactive solutions. The HNVF + fire smart project has been shown in many cases to be successful like in southern Europe. It showed how it reduced the amount of ground affected by the fires, but it also was the most cost-effective solution.

You are Alberta’s best chance at finding a proactive solution and exploring avenues that might be what Alberta needs. You are the voice people will listen to, which is why I wanted to reach out to you. You have been hands-on the topic of wildfires in Alberta which gives you an advantage by knowing the matter at hand. Please take a minute to consider the impact this solution could have on wildlife, government funds and the livelihood of residents of Alberta.

Sincerely,

Estelle Audette

(Enclosed: Work Cited)

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Academic Writing (Long)

2nd Place:

Nina Kantorek, “The Importance of Achievement: The Life History of an Indian American Immigrant”

For my life history, I chose to interview my grandmother. The interview was conducted via Zoom Workplace on the evening of Thursday, February 13, 2025. I decided to interview my grandmother because, as the last remaining close family member of mine who grew up in India, I wanted to use this opportunity to preserve a record of what her life was like and the cultural differences between growing up here and in another country.

We began the interview by discussing her early childhood. She was born on June 24, 1944, in Bangalore, Mysore (now known as Karnataka). Before she was born, her mother had two sons, but the first lived for about two years and the second only lived for ten days, so she was born after they had already passed away. When she was born, her mother, who was still only twenty years old, faced a lot of disappointment and shame from her community because her child was a girl. It was talked about as though her mother “failed” by losing the two sons and then only having daughters, especially because she ended up having two younger sisters. This community reaction caused her mother to have depression, which she would sometimes take out on her daughter. Because of losing her brothers, her parents were very anxious about something happening to her.

Two stories which her parents told her later in her life showcased this concern. The first consisted of her crying intensely until they discovered that an ant had bitten her armpit. When telling me this story, she referred to her armpit as her axilla, which demonstrates the impact her time as a doctor has had on her word choice. The other story was about her choking on a piece of candy in a movie theater, but luckily, she coughed it up. The fact that her parents chose to tell her these stories when she was older shows how their main memories of her early life were about their anxiety that something would happen to her.

Luckily, once her younger sister was born when she was two and a half years old, her parents stopped worrying about her as much and she was more free to do things she enjoyed. Some of her earliest memories are playing a game where she would run in the street and be chased by street dogs and traveling by buses and trains due to her family moving a lot for her father's work.

Before continuing, I would like to explain a cultural difference we uncovered later in the interview. We had gone through her elementary school years, and through connecting other facts, we determined that she must have begun fourth grade when she was seven or eight years old, meaning she would have skipped some grades. However, when we got to the birth of her youngest sister, who is eleven years younger than her, we discovered that she would have been ten when she started fourth grade, meaning she did not skip any grades. This confusion seems to have stemmed from two things. First, in India, there were only ten grades instead of twelve, and we had previously mentioned that she was sixteen years old when she graduated high school, which would mean she graduated early if there were twelve grades. Additionally, they likely did not understand homeschooling as a concept back then, so they referred to her beginning her elementary school years in fourth grade as "skipping" the first, second, and third grades. I have explained this cultural difference here so that I can use the factual ages going forward while also acknowledging the importance of this confusion.

Her family continued to move often for her father's work until she was ten years old, at which point they settled in Cannanore, Kerala. During this time, her mother homeschooled her. She began fourth grade in a convent and, in the process of completing her school paperwork, her birthday became switched with her cousin, whose birthday was September 25, and it was never legally changed back. She noted that this practice of mixing up people's birthdays was common back then.

The most memorable part of her elementary school years was when her fourth-grade teacher made an agreement where she could skip fifth grade and go straight to sixth grade if she came first in the class in fourth grade. Her mother put a lot of pressure on her because of this agreement. She ended up ranking second and was too afraid to show her mother her report card, so she tore it up and hid the pieces inside of one of the bricks of her house. A day or two later, her teacher told her she needed to get the report card signed by her mother, so she ended up having to confess to hiding it. She got a "double beating" (or two sets of spankings) because she did not come in first and she tried to lie about it. Spanking was a much more common and acceptable method of punishing children back in those days. The spankings and her fear of her mother were a large part of her elementary school years overall, but this particular incident was the most memorable.

Another story she brought up from fourth grade was her first Easter at the convent. Her parents had to go to Mumbai for two weeks for a work trip, which was around 150 miles away. Thus, they decided to have her stay at the boarding school at the convent for the first time, seeing as she had been commuting to school. Soon after her parents left, she went to the beach and ended up catching double pneumonia, which likely referred to pneumonia in both lungs. She distinctly remembered running up to the window in the infirmary and exclaiming, "Look out the window, the world is on fire!" She was delirious from the fever and interpreted the Easter fireworks as the world burning. Her parents rushed back when they received word about her high fever, and her mother was very worried, especially because they needed to get antibiotics for her from abroad. Their trip ended up only being one week. It would have been even shorter, but it took time for them to receive the telegram and travel back since there were not phones or planes back then.

She also mentioned some of her extracurriculars in elementary school. Also in fourth grade, her school obtained a reel of *The Wizard of Oz*, and she was very moved by the child actress who played Dorothy. This memory stuck with her because she went on to have a role as a nurse in a school production of "Sleeping Beauty," where she had the line "I feel like I had slept for a hundred years" and she was able to recite this line word for word for me in our interview. Part of why she still remembers this experience is because the audience said she was very cute and showed promise of being a good actress, but she told me that "maybe it was just cute because a child did it," and that self-deprecation was a common theme throughout our interview.

She also began learning violin in her late elementary school years. Initially, she was taking singing lessons, but her teacher thought that she did not have a good singing voice, so he decided to teach her an instrument instead, and they chose the violin because it was easy to carry. I also learned the violin in middle school, but the way we are taught to play the violin here is quite different from how she was taught. I was given sheet music to learn with, and we played standing up with the scrolls pointed to the left. Conversely, she was taught to play by ear, sitting down with the scroll pointed straight down to the floor.

As stated previously, her youngest sister was born when she was eleven years old. Shortly after her sister was born, she started middle school, and their father got a job at a new company, the Bhilai Steel Plant in Madhya Pradesh, but there were no schools in Bhilai, so she went to the closest boarding school convent, Saint Joseph's Convent in Nagpur, Maharashtra. Interestingly, she pointed out in our interview that her mother needed to go with her father because men did not cook, clean, etc. This comment shows how she grew up believing women did not get to have equal say in where a family went, which was typical in her culture. That belief eventually led her to the same conclusion in her own marriage.

In middle school, she “found a lot of mental peace” because her mom was not there to spank her and the nuns were kind to her. At this time, she told her mother that she would be a nun when she was older. She came to this decision based on two things. The first was that her parents’ relationship was very discordant, so she felt that being a nun seemed more peaceful. The other reason was that she believed that being a nun would bring her closer to God, but her mother told her that she was also close to God, and she did not need to become a nun to become close to God. Despite attending a Christian school, her parents were both Hindu and she was also raised to be Hindu, which has been an important aspect of her life. She went to Christian schools because in India, every state has a different language, so it was less difficult for her to learn if she attended a school that was in English instead. Since the convents were the main schools that instructed in English, her mother sent her and her sisters there. Since India already had a strong religious culture of its own, the schools did not force them to become Catholics.

At one point in middle school, her period stopped coming because the food and environment at the boarding school was different from what her body was used to, which caused her mother to become suspicious she was pregnant. Eventually, they went to a doctor who was able to explain to her mother that menstrual cycle changes are natural when changes in the environment occur, and she no longer believed that her daughter was pregnant. When conducting the interview, she was initially hesitant to share this story because she felt it would be embarrassing and make her mother appear unintelligent. However, we discussed it, and we determined that it was actually helpful in demonstrating the lack of understanding about women’s health in those days. It seemed to me that her initial reaction that it was something that should not be shared came from a cultural belief that women’s health should not be discussed, which is what caused the lack of understanding in the first place.

Because her high school was a newly built school in Bhilai, there were only a dozen students in her year, so they formed a close friendship. At the start of high school, she chose to become a PCB (Physics, Chemistry, Biology) student. She no longer took violin lessons in Bhilai, but she brought her violin with her and played at the “school day” (something like the anniversary of the school) in high school. People said she played very well, but she said “that may have just been because I was a kid and people say that kind of thing for encouragement” during our interview, which is another instance of her self-deprecation when faced with compliments. At the end of the three years of high school, 22,000 Madhya Pradesh students took the secondary school graduation exam, and she “stood eleventh rank” which made her the only PCB student to make the top 25. The others were all PCM (Physics, Chemistry, Math) students, who had different, easier questions on their exams.

Perhaps the most interesting part of my interview was that as soon as she finished talking about high school, she stopped talking about anything related to her personal life without a significant amount of prompting. Instead, she listed all the places she studied and worked. She eventually admitted that it was because her professional life was very successful, but her personal life was not so successful. It seems that her cultural background taught her to only talk about things in your life that are going well instead of being open about your struggles as well.

When she graduated, she decided to be a pre-science major in pre-college to eventually become a doctor. Bhilai still did not have any colleges, so she would bike to Durg, the next town over, each day. After pre-college, she had five years of medical school in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh, and she received a gold medal in pathology (one of the required classes) during the graduation ceremony because she “was standing first” in the subject. She was originally admitted to medical school in Vellore, Tamil Nadu, one of the most difficult Indian medical schools to be accepted to. However, she left because it was very expensive and took half of her father’s salary, which made her feel guilty because her sisters still lived at home. After medical school, she had a six-month long internship in Jabalpur where she got experience in various medical specialties, and then she returned home to Bhilai.

Once she returned home, her parents introduced her to many eligible bachelors to arrange her marriage, and she chose her husband because he was the only one who would allow her to work after marriage, the one condition she required them to agree to. After her marriage, she finally returned to Bangalore and worked in pediatrics at the hospital where she was born. Initially, she wanted to work as an Ob-Gyne because her role model in medical school was a spinster with that specialty, and she wanted to also be a spinster who would help women. Since her family made her get married, she would not have time to work the long night shifts required of an Ob-Gyne, so she decided to specialize in pediatrics because it would help her learn to take care of her own children.

After working in pediatrics for about six months, she and her husband both received promotions to work at Bellary Medical College in Mysore. She worked as a registrar, and her husband worked as a surgeon. While in Bellary, she gave birth to her older child, a son, and had severe hemorrhage during childbirth, resulting in a c-section which she survived with a blood transfusion. It took her a long time to recover from the anemia caused by the bleeding, and after 48 hours, she was brought back to the OR to remove her uterine pack. While she was going on the stretcher, she saw the sun and said if she came back out of the OR without any problems, she would name her son after the sun. Her son’s name means sunlight in Sanskrit.

After his birth, they returned to Bangalore because they received promotions again. She worked as an assistant professor of pediatrics, and her husband worked as an assistant

professor of surgery. Despite being told not to have a second child too soon after her operations, she wanted to make sure she would live through a second delivery before committing herself to more years of study, so she went against their advice and had another child, a daughter, also by c-section, a year and a half later.

A month later, her husband left to go to Melbourne, Australia for work. After four months of living apart, she and her children followed him to Melbourne, and they lived in the suburbs there for eighteen months before moving to the United States. In the US, she worked as a pediatric hematologist-oncologist, was a Professor of Pediatrics and gave many guest lectures, and brought in almost \$2M in research grants as the principal investigator. She retired in 2019.

After some prompting, she finally discussed her volunteer work at the Hindu Temple of Greater Chicago. In 1980, she was introduced to the members and became a member herself, eventually becoming a patron member. She has served in many capacities, such as being secretary for one two-year term and serving two one-year terms as president. She has also been the chair of various committees, including the Sunday School (Vidyalaya) committee and the Emergency Preparedness Committee, in which she brought in over \$500,000 for the security of the temple from FEMA.

At this point, I finally asked why she was listing her accomplishments instead of discussing her personal life. Then, she explained about feeling like her personal life was unsuccessful and elaborated that it was primarily because she got divorced, something that is still quite taboo in Indian culture. In 1988, the year his daughter became an adult, her husband decided he wished to be “private and alone” so he moved away, and she could not bring him back despite her best efforts, so they officially divorced ten years later, in 1998. She said, “I don’t think he ever gave me a reason why he left, he just wanted to be by himself” and that he assured her that “he had not left because of me.” Even though they separated, they always had mutual respect, and they maintained a friendship throughout their lives. When he passed away at age 88, he seemed to have waited until she came to visit him to let his soul go and had his last breath with her in the room.

Her children did well in school, with her son receiving an MD, PHD, and MED, and her daughter receiving an MSW. Her son had many health issues throughout his life, and he unfortunately passed away at age 54, which has made her value life and time more and inspired her to do a lot in the little time she feels she has left. When he was alive, he wrote many poems, and part of how she coped with her grief was by compiling these poems into a book which she published. On the other hand, her relationship with her daughter has suffered because she pressured her into marrying her boyfriend despite her concerns. Because this marriage was ultimately unhealthy, she feels responsible that her daughter had to struggle in this way. She hopes that her daughter will have a

brighter future now that she has completed her divorce. Her granddaughter (me) has inspired her to live on so that she can see me graduate college and support me through the end of my education. After I went to college, she entered an assisted living facility to have more support in her final years of life.

In conclusion, it seems that her culture has influenced her to place more emphasis on positive memories than negative ones, and she considers her life prior to her marriage more positive than her later years. She also seems to be weighed down by guilt when it comes to her family members and what they have experienced.

Academic Writing (Long)

1st Place:

Kaylan Ann Davis, “Gender Bias in Healthcare: How Diagnostic Treatment Differs for Men and Women”

Historically, men have been more likely than women to seek medical intervention; despite this fact, women are less likely to receive comprehensive care for their medical concerns. The constant under and misdiagnosis of female patients, a lack of representation in academic medicine, and lower levels of women graduating from medical schools are all effects of a medical system built by men for men. There is work that can be done to create a more equitable environment for female patients, physicians, and researchers; however, men in all positions, higher and lower level, must be willing to acknowledge and address their internal and external biases.

Although gender biases in the medical field affect women at all levels, female patients are most often faced with the dangerous consequences of this discrimination. According to Arena et al. (2024), physicians are more likely to inquire about the family situations of a female patient. Not only does this show their biases and beliefs that family matters are a “women’s issue,” it can also be incredibly reckless. When more time is spent on physicians pushing narratives and stereotypes, patients on the other end spend more time in pain and undiagnosed. This has been seen time and time again, more recently in a study by Chen et al. (2008), wherein it was discovered that women, even those who score themselves the same as their male counterparts on a pain scale, are less likely to receive analgesic treatment and often have to wait longer for their care. Women are also more likely to be misdiagnosed, as seen in a study by Maserejian et al. (2009), where middle-aged women experiencing cardiovascular distress were twice as likely to be diagnosed with a mental illness than men of the same age. While issues of stereotyping, misdiagnosis, and medical gaslighting are already prevalent for women, they become worse when women are a part of another disadvantaged group. A 2022 study found that while women had longer waiting times to be triaged with chest pains, people of color waited longer for a physician's evaluation (Banco et al., 2022). The same goes for overweight patients, who are more often looked down upon and

misdiagnosed by medical professionals (Arena et al., 2024, pg. 2). Beyond race and body type, people of different socioeconomic statuses, sexual orientations, and levels of able-bodiedness struggle to receive comprehensive medical care— a fact that is only exacerbated by the intersectionality of women with these identities. Women receive, on average, a lower level of medical care than men. Women are more likely to be ignored, misdiagnosed, and even turned down for care than their male counterparts are, a fact that becomes noticeably worse when the woman is part of another disparaged group. This trend of brushing off female patients is not only dangerous but is a large contributing factor to the higher mortality rates for women of color, queer women, and women from other marginalized groups.

Patients are not the only people suffering from these biases, however; women remain underrepresented in not only the medical field as a whole, but academic medicine in particular. Despite men and women enrolling in medical schools at an equal rate, women only make up 32% of associate professors, 20% of full-time professors, 14% of department chairs, and 11% of deans in U.S. medical schools (Kaatz & Carnes, 2014, pg. 1). Jackson and Drolet (2021) contribute this fact to physician burn out, something female physicians tend to experience at a higher rate than their male counterparts (37% to 13%). Burn out makes female medical students and doctors overall less likely to seek employment at a higher level or even complete medical school in the first place. Jackson and Drolet (2021) also explore why women are more likely to experience physician burn out, finding that women are more likely to be faced with discrimination and harassment in the workplace. Ninety-three percent of women reported that they were treated differently based on their gender, with many stating they received comments about their appearance, questions on family planning, and unwanted sexual advances from their coworkers. Almost half (44%) of female physicians stated that they were faced with these biases frequently from their peers and patients, and women are twice as likely to question their decision to become a physician (Jackson & Drolet, 2021, pg. 2). While physician burnout is a good explanation as to why women are less likely to advance in their medical careers, it is not the only reason. Many women may become stationary in their careers, not by choice, but because they face many implicit biases in the workforce. Women are generally required to show an impossibly high level of work effort and competency when their work is being compared to male peers, as research shows that evaluators will consistently rate identical work lower when they believe it was completed by a woman. (Kaatz & Carnes, 2014, pg. 1). Overall, women in medicine are more likely to be harassed, overlooked, and discriminated against than their male peers, leading to drastic underrepresentation of women in academic and advanced medical careers. Without female representation at every level of medicine, it is unlikely that female patients will be able to receive comprehensive medical care, meaning sexism within the medical field is a top-down issue that should be dealt with in order to provide proper care to all.

With how deeply ingrained misogyny seems to be in our medical system, it may seem impossible to create a truly equitable medical field for physicians and patients alike. However, research by Morgan et al. suggests that if biases are confronted and weeded out at an early stage, such as during medical school, students are more likely to be receptive to these lessons. Hurdles that women in the medical field face are vast and include things such as a general lack of awareness or training, no informational transparency, and power dynamics that are almost impossible to overcome (Morgan et al., 2018, pg. 1). Morgan et al. (2018) state that the first step in eliminating gender biases in medical schools is to acknowledge the systematic nature of the issue, and prompt those in power to encourage a culture of equity. It is a necessary step that male medical students and physicians must face their own biases and actively learn to better themselves, otherwise change cannot be brought about on every level of the medical field. The introduction of anti-bias training would likely bring about a total restructuring of medical programs, a necessary step in bringing about systematic change. While it is difficult to target an individual's internal biases, it is not impossible when these biases are viewed as incorrect and unacceptable, or even completely removed from all aspects of the curriculum. Another important step in the equity of female physicians is requiring gender parity within decision making boards. More equally incorporating women into committees is a surefire way to ensure that misinformation and stereotypes about female patients and their medical experiences are not utilized to deny care (Morgan et al., 2018, pg. 2). Women working in higher positions in the medical field would open doors for younger women in the same field and give all women a voice in important decisions that may affect not only them, but also their patients. By working from the ground up on eliminating internal biases within medical students, programs can ensure that they are setting up both their male and female students to enter a more equitable field.

Our current medical system is simply flawed on multiple levels. The systematic suppression of female physicians from seeking higher level positions in academic medicine, becoming researchers, or ever graduating medical school is an issue that has a great effect on female patients who are in turn unable to receive equitable care. Implementation of new training and the acknowledgement of the internal biases of medical students may seem like a simple and small-scale solution, but it is the first step in ensuring that all patients receive comprehensive, unbiased care. This should not only be the goal for female physicians, but all doctors who should strive for a higher quality of care for every patient, regardless of their identity.

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Professional Writing

2nd Place:

Finn McAdams, “Supporting Document for Exhibit ‘A History Written by Its Actors’: How Suffragists Took Control of Their Narrative”

Abstract

The exhibit detailed in this document, titled “A History Written By Its Actors:” How Suffragists Took Control of their Narrative,” is a digital exhibit contained in Canva presentation slideware. The slideshow consists of a title slide, a slide introducing the topic, and one slide for each artifact for a total of five slides. The exhibit covers historiography created by the suffrage movement. “Historiography” is the study of historical writing, or how the way history has been written about over time. Specifically, the exhibit focuses on artifacts which were intended to act as historical documents or memorials and were created by members of the suffrage movement. Control over the historical narrative is a theme consistent through the exhibit. This theme is created through artifact labels, which explain the way an artifact changes the historical narrative based on its rhetorical appeals.

This document is intended to support the design decisions of the exhibit. In this document, I provide the focus, the purpose, and the imagined audience for the exhibit to rationalize why the exhibit is necessary. I also include detailed information about each of the five artifacts included in the exhibit, including their metadata and an expanded rationale for their inclusion. In the second half of this supporting document, I provide reasoning for rhetorical decisions made in the creation of the exhibit, and, if applicable, a text from the WRI 353: Rhetoric of Public Memory course syllabus to support said reasoning. I describe the way I chose to write my exhibit labels, how I chose to have users navigate the exhibit, and how I chose to organize the exhibit. I then discuss the design decisions I made to increase the accessibility of my exhibit for visually-impaired people.

Focus, Purpose, and Audience

Focus

The focus of this exhibit is the early historiography and memorialization efforts of women suffragists, ranging from the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention to the decade

following the 1920 adoption of the 19th Amendment. Specifically, the artifacts included were selected because they were intentionally created for the purpose of contributing to the historical narrative of the suffrage movement from the creator's perspective. As a result of these parameters, material culture created by suffragists between 1848 and 1930 were excluded because they were often created with the intention of sharing information or persuading readers to the suffrage cause, not to last for decades to come.

Purpose

The purpose of this exhibit is to educate the general public how suffragists recognized historical biases against powerful women. The general public will also learn about how these women tried to counter this bias by creating their own historical artifacts, ranging from books to plaques and statues. This exhibit also educates the public about how suffragists used historical control to alter the narrative according to their image. For example, it shows how privileged women exclusively shared their experience, excluding the stories of Black and working-class suffragists. This shows users how oppression can be intersectional by offering examples of racism within the suffrage movement.

Audience

The intended audience for this exhibit are members of the general public who already have an understanding of the suffrage movement. This understanding involves its historical context, goals and tactics, and key figures. This basic information of the suffrage movement is required for full enjoyment of the digital exhibit, as names are sometimes provided with little to no explanation of the individual or their relevance to the movement.

Lists of items & metadata

This section is a list of each artifact displayed in the digital exhibit and metadata for that artifact. Information regarding metadata is from Dartmouth Library's "What is Metadata? Building Digital Exhibits with Omeka-S" article.

Item #1: History of Woman Suffrage, vol. I

Class	Image
Identifier	FM35301
Title	History of Woman Suffrage, vol. I, edited by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Matilda Joslyn Gage, published in 1881

Description	The front cover of History of Woman Suffrage, vol. I.
Creator	Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Matilda Joslyn Gage.
Date created	1881
Publisher	Library of Congress
Bibliographic citation	<p>Frontispiece of volume one of the History of Woman Suffrage, 2nd edition, edited by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Matilda Joslyn Gage. Rochester, NY: Susan B. Anthony, 1887. Carrie Chapman Catt's copy in the NAWSA Collection, Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress (006.00.00).</p> <p>https://www.loc.gov/exhibitions/women-fight-for-the-vote/about-this-exhibition/seneca-falls-and-building-a-movement-1776-1890/early-feminist-inspirations/free-love-socialism-and-womens-rights/.</p>

Item #2: Juniper Ledge bronze plaque

Class	Image
Identifier	HOLLIS number: 8001309695 FM35302
Title	Juniper Ledge bronze plaques, created for Carrie Chapman Catt c.1919 to commemorate world suffrage leaders
Description	One of a set of eight bronze plaques that were mounted on trees at Carrie Chapman Catt's farm around 1919. These plaques memorialize other woman suffrage leaders by describing their name, contribution to suffrage, and years.
Creator	Unknown; Owned by Carrie Chapman Catt.
Date created	1919
Publisher	Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America, Radcliffe Institute

Bibliographic citation	<p>“Eight bronze plaques, belonging to Carrie Chapman Catt, commemorating women suffrage leaders. They were mounted on trees at Catt's residence Juniper Ledge.” HOLLIS number 8001309695. Folder: Carrie Chapman Catt suffrage forest plaque. Edna Lamprey Stantial Papers. Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America, Radcliffe Institute, Cambridge, MA. 12 December 2024. https://images.hollis.harvard.edu/primo-explore/viewallcomponentmetadata/L/HVD_VIA8001309695?vid=HVD_IMAGES&tab=default_tab&search_scope=default_scope&adaptor=undefined.</p>
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Item #3: Portrait monument to Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Susan B. Anthony.

Class	Image
Identifier	FM35303
Title	“Portrait Monument to Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony,” sculpted by Adelaide Johnson in 1920
Description	A white marble statue created by Adelaide Johnson depicting Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Susan B. Anthony.
Creator	Adelaide Johnson
Date created	1920
Publisher	Architect of the Capitol
Bibliographic citation	<p>“Portrait Monument to Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony.” Architect of the Capitol. https://www.aoc.gov/explore-capitol-campus/art/portrait-monument-mott-stanton-anthony. Accessed 11 December 2024.</p>

Item #4: The Story of the Women’s Party by Inez Haynes Irwin

Class	Image
Identifier	FM35304

Title	The Story of the Women's Party by Inez Haynes Irwin
Description	An image of the front cover of "The Story of the Women's Party" by Inez Haynes Irwin.
Creator	Inez Haynes Irwin
Date created	1921
Publisher	Project Gutenberg
Bibliographic citation	Irwin, Inez Haynes. The Story of the Women's Party. Project Gutenberg, 7 March 2018, https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/56701/pg56701-images.html .

Item #5: Crusade for Justice: Ida B. Wells Autobiography

Class	Image
Identifier	FM35305
Title	Crusades for Justice: An Autobiography of Ida B. Wells
Description	Front page of Crusades for Justice: An Autobiography of Ida B. Wells.
Creator	Ida B. Wells, Alfreda M. Duster
Date created	1970
Publisher	Internet Archive, University of Pennsylvania School of Arts and Sciences.
Bibliographic citation	Wells, Ida B. Crusade for Justice: The Autobiography of Ida B. Wells, edited by Alfreda M. Duster. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970. https://www.sas.upenn.edu/~cavitch/pdf-library/Wells_Crusade.pdf#page=7.14 .

Exhibit Text

I used text in my digital exhibit persistently. The title slide has text with the title of the exhibit, my name, and the class code and title. The second slide has a header at the top and a body section in the middle, acting as the introduction.

The remainder of the slides contain three forms of text. These three forms of text can be seen in Figure 1 below. They contain the title of the artifact, the description of the artifact, and the alternative text for the image of the artifact. The description of the artifact explains who created the artifact, their purpose in creating it, and how the artifact informs our contemporary understanding of the suffrage movement. This description text is on the right side of the slide entirely, making it easy for the user to visually navigate the single slide. The alternative text for the image is available in the form of a textbox below the image or embedded within the image, accessible with a screen reader.

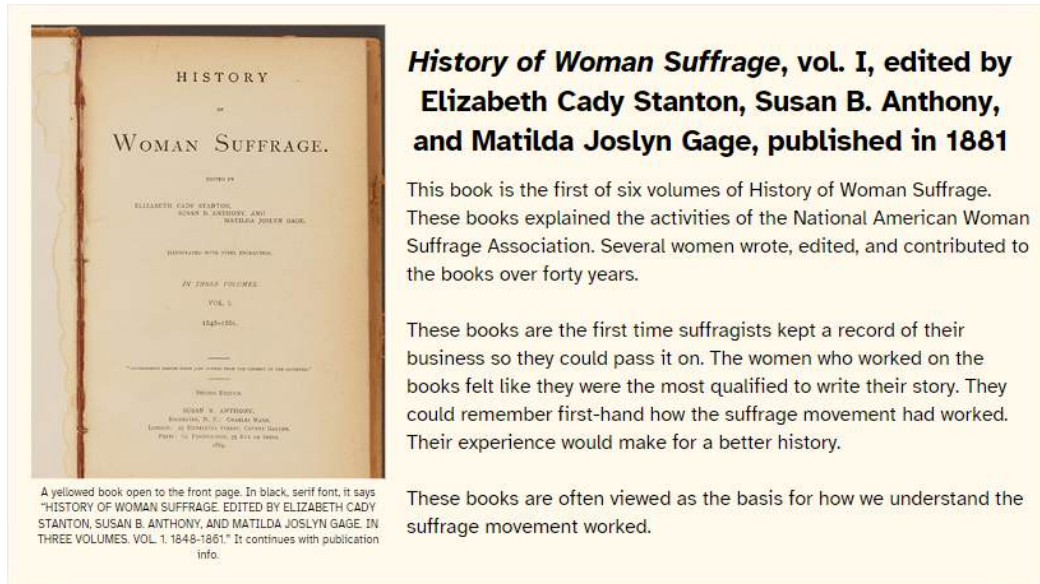


fig.1

The last slide of the exhibit is the works cited page. This slide uses text which contains MLA citations, including manually-entered hanging indents.

The introduction slide and the descriptions of each artifact are between 100-120 words each. The Association of Independent Museums (AIM) recommends that graphic panels have less than 150 words. AIM also has several other recommendations for text writing in museums, including keeping language simple, keeping one idea per sentence, and

using the active form of the verb (AIM 19). Each of these recommendations are followed as well as possible within the digital exhibit.

Format

In the creation of my digital exhibit, I decided to create a presentation-style slideshow using the slideware Canva. This slideware is free to use with an optional professional subscription, which was a factor in my decision. The public presentation mode available when Canva is used to create slideshows is very user-friendly and intuitive. This was important in my decision because I wanted to make sure as many people as possible could work with and learn from my exhibit as possible.

Canva also has built-in tools that help to ensure a document's accessibility. It views contrast between background and text colors, and checks all images for alternative text, alerting the user if there are any elements that would lead to an inaccessible document. In my exhibit, I utilized all of these tools, including applying alternative text to each artifact image.

Navigation and Organization

I organized my exhibit based on an anticipated user experience.

The first slide of my exhibit is a title slide, introducing the user to the exhibit and giving a brief overview of the subject matter.

The second slide is an introductory slide, which provides the user with further understanding of the purpose and the aim of the exhibit, that being to illustrate readers about how the suffrage movement controlled their historical narrative. The final sentence of this slide sets their expectations as to what the common theme between each artifact will be.

The next five slides are artifact slides. Each slide introduces the artifact, who created it, why it was created, and how that artifact alters the way historians understand the suffrage movement.

I do not use any form of self-guided slide linking in this digital exhibit. Each artifact is in chronological order, showing the user how the historiography of the suffrage movement has changed over time.

Accessibility and Sustainability

Readability

When creating my digital exhibit, I wanted to make sure that they were accessible to the general public, including those who are not native English speakers. This is

recommended in Gaylord Archival's article, "6 Tips for Writing Effective Exhibit Labels." To do this, I made sure that each of my exhibit labels scored a 5.9 or less on the New Dale Chall Readability formula. I chose this Readability formula because it is intended for the general audience and uses word familiarity to determine which grade level a text would be readable by. On the New Dale Chall Readability formula scale, 5.9 or less is a 5th or 6th grade reading level. I used the website <https://www.wordcalc.com/readability/> to calculate where my exhibit labels scored. An example of one of my exhibit labels in the word calculator can be seen in figure 2. I also used the website <https://hemingwayapp.com/readability-checker> to check my readability as I wrote, because it displayed sentence complexity and allowed me to visualize where in each label I needed to simplify language.

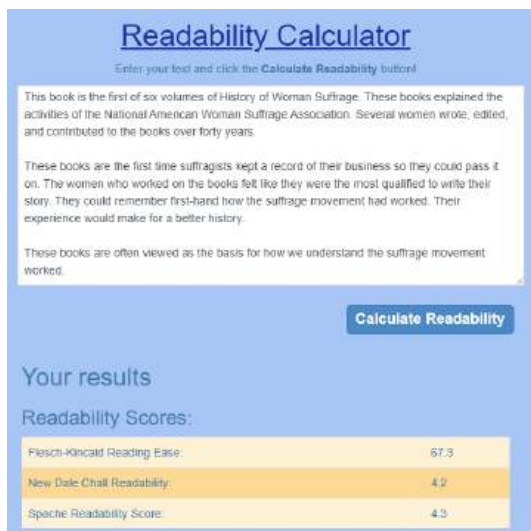


fig. 2

Contrast

When designing my exhibit, it was also a priority for me that everybody would be able to see my text. To ensure my text was visible, I used a background color that would contrast highly with the color of my text. For my background color, I used the color #ffffaeb, a very light beige, and for the text, I used the color #000000, which is black. In order to check for contrast, I used the website WebAIM (Web Accessibility in Mind), which measures the colors against Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. Figure 3 shows the contrast ratio between my background color and my text color, which earned a 20.12:1, meaning I could use the combination in small text, large text, and graphics.



fig. 3

Font Selection

I wanted to ensure that my text was accessible to individuals with reading disabilities or low vision. To do this, I initially utilized sans-serif fonts. However, during the creation of my digital exhibit, I discovered the font Atkinson Hyperlegible, which had been developed by the Braille Institute in 2019. This font has unique displays for each letter, which makes it easier for people to tell letters apart and read.

Alternative Text

As previously detailed in the Exhibit Text section, I used features on Canva to embed alternative text for my artifact images.

Rewards and Challenges

Rewards

I found this exercise very rewarding because it gave me an opportunity to take content that I was very familiar with and share it in a unique way. I had never created any sort of digital exhibit, and it was fun to get to see it come together. I also was able to expand on my previous knowledge by applying the concepts and ideas of this class to it, adding complexity to what I already knew. It was also a generally rewarding experience seeing my digital exhibit adjust and change as I continued to work on it and grow confident in my ability to create an educational slideshow.

Challenges

I feel the most difficult challenge for me was placing constraints on the artifacts that I allowed myself to add to the exhibit. I did not want any artifacts that were not made by suffragist women. I did not want any artifacts that had been made by suffragist women, but too far out of the suffrage movement. I also did not want to use artifacts that were not created with historical intention to be passed on through the generations, so this ruled out visual art, poetry, speeches, and literature.

This assignment challenged me to expand on previous experience rather than create an exhibit out of historical trends and knowledge that I am already aware of. While I already knew quite a bit about the suffrage movement, really honing in on the historiographical aspect of the movement pushed me in new directions.

It was difficult to create an entirely new exhibit, rather than cutting and pasting from other online digital material culture exhibits. There are several material culture suffrage exhibits out there, but I wanted the challenge of curating my own collection, so I did my best to avoid those.

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Professional Writing

1st Place:

Puja Kharel, “Policy Letter/Proposal”

1000W Austin Blvd
Nevada, Missouri, USA, 64772
20th November, 2024

Honorable Ramesh Lekhak
Minister of Home Affairs
Singha Durbar
Nepal

Dear Honorable Minister Lekhak,

My name is Puja Kharel, and I am an International Relations student at Cottey College originally from Nepal. I am reaching out to you today to discuss what we can do to reduce the risks of natural calamities like floods and landslides which have affected millions of Nepalese citizens. These are natural disasters that get increasingly devastating, especially during the monsoon season, and they always take away lives, displace families, and damage critical infrastructure yearly. With such challenges, it is paramount that we act with urgency.

I am writing to you with this letter because of your leadership and your demonstrated concern for taking care of environmental and humanitarian issues that reach deep into the lives of all people everywhere in the country. Your power to shape policies and protect those communities most in need identifies you as an ideal candidate to champion this issue. Your Ministry holds the power for safeguarding people's lives either by natural or non-natural disasters. Also, as the Department of Risk Management comes under the Ministry of Home Affairs and your position as Home minister itself ensured me that you are the best fit for me to write my policy letter.

I propose comprehensive policy on renovating stormwater infrastructure, reforestation, formulating early warning systems, and educating communities through disaster preparedness. This holistic approach, in fact, significantly diminishes the impact of flooding and landslides that have been claiming innocent human lives and helps to rebuild better communities. In Nepal floods and landslides persist as a concern that haunts the nation's inhabitants continuously. Over the ten years these calamities have

forced more than 3 million individuals out of their homes and led to damages exceeding \$2 billion. With this consistent pattern of events little has been done to tackle the underlying issues. The main reasons behind the continuous loss by flood and landslides are unplanned urbanization, deforestation, and the worsening effects of climate change. The vulnerable communities face challenges in areas such as Sindhupalchowks hilly regions and urban centers with inadequate drainage systems exacerbating the situation further. People from low income backgrounds are the most affected by this disaster and struggle to bounce back. Women, kids and elderly individuals are particularly vulnerable to injuries, displacement or lack of services, in times of emergencies.

There are individuals invested in addressing this issue. The local governments must take responsibility for disaster preparedness and response, besides the national authorities like the Ministry of Home Affairs and organizations such as the UNDP for resources and guidance. The NGOs are very important at the level of community mobilization, while businesses, in particular agriculture, also bear most of the economic impact.

The symptoms of such a crisis are immediately evident through loss of life, destruction of homes, and disruption of essential services. In the long term, the economic impact is devastating, with higher poverty rates and reduced productivity. The social fabric of affected communities is strained as people struggle to rebuild their lives amidst ongoing threats. These have been brought about by numerous factors like deforestation caused by agricultural expansion and wood extraction, which makes the soil more loose and causes soil erosions which results in landslides. Also because of the unplanned urban growth in cities such as Kathmandu, there are high chances of getting floods since drainage systems are not properly constructed. Hence, climate change is the major reason for this problem too as it causes unstable and extreme weather patterns.

In the present scenario, our country Nepal has a Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act, 2017, which is a second Act for the country after the Natural Calamity Relief Act, 1982. This Act addresses natural disasters in a comprehensive approach and works towards providing aid to the people and reducing the causes of the natural disasters. And this Act is a positive side but it has not been effectively implemented due to a lack of appropriate funding, coordination and corruption among the stakeholders. Though, 5% of annual budget for infrastructural development is allocated for disaster risk management council and local committees, it should be used properly without any corruption. While the law focuses on emergency response, it does small works or barely nothing to reduce the root causes of these disasters. While this policy is in existence, it does not stress how to prevent the disaster: strengthening stormwater systems, reforestation, and enhancing early warning systems. In addition, there is not much coordination among local governments, NGOs, and the private sector. These all combine to make efforts fragmented and inefficient.

I would now like to present a comprehensive policy addressing the root causes of floods and landslides. A multi-faceted policy proposal is what is actually needed to address the emerging issues of floods and landslides in Nepal, especially in cities such as Kathmandu. First, there should be the proper construction of the infrastructures related to stormwater management. And that can be done by enhancing the drainage mechanisms in flood-prone urban areas, such as Kathmandu and terai regions. The flood that occurred in Kathmandu a few months ago has clearly showcased the importance of constructing proper dams and drainage systems. If we do this then we can deal with heavy rainfall properly and reduce the risk of widespread flooding. Then the next step that we can take is large-scale reforestation especially in vulnerable hilly areas. As we know, tree planting helps control soil erosion and minimizes the risk of landslides, common occurrences in these regions. Besides these prevention methods, an early warning system nationwide is essential. It provides ample time for the concerned communities to vacate before the disaster strikes, reducing loss of life. Secondly, more investment in educating communities is essential. These should include disaster preparedness training, evacuation plans, and first-aid education that would empower the local population in effectively responding to disasters. Hence, if we invest on general expenses focusing on our outputs then we would receive a great outcome, where there will be huge reduction in the impacts of these calamities, ensuring safe lives to the people. Thus, if you adopt my policy output then both the costs and benefits will be distributed which will strengthen governance directly or indirectly.

There are so many cases and examples that highlight the potentiality of these initiatives or policy plans. For example, in Bangladesh early warning systems have reduced the death tolls of floods by more than 75% between 2000 and 2020 (Environmental Science and Policy, 2021). Also, reforestation efforts in the large scale in the Philippines have significantly reduced the occurrences of landslides. So to make it a successful policy, a task force should be formed that includes all relevant stakeholders who will oversee and implement such efforts. Hence, I believe this approach offers immediate and long-term solutions by addressing both their root causes and consequences to the flood and landslide issues of Nepal.

Thank you for taking your valuable time and reading my policy letter. I know you have a lot of responsibilities on your plate but I have a huge hope for you and I believe that you will consider my proposal to make a difference in the lives of millions of Nepali citizens. If you like my proposal outputs, you can feel free to contact me. I will be more than happy to answer your queries and work with you to solve these issues. Thank You!

Sincerely,

Puja Kharel

(Enclosed: Work Cited)

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Creative Writing

2nd Place:

Finn McAdams, “I Wish I Met Adrienne Rich Earlier”

Picture this: You're me. I'm you (sorry). You're some sixth grade loser in a Missouri public school. You have a weird pixie cut. You haven't quite put the pieces together that the poetry that you're writing in your TARDIS notebook about seeing some pretty girl with hair of gold and eyes of caramel isn't quite from the perspective of a boy, but you're pretty darn close to it. You'll put one and one together and get two in a matter of a few months. You know that you don't want to be a wife and mother, but whenever you tell your mom, she assures you that you can feel that way now, but later on, you'll change your mind. Or, rather - and she doesn't tell you this - something will change your mind. You shake your head and tell yourself that you will not be committed to the same fate. You will go out there and become a prolific writer, curating worlds of fantasy and love and spreading your ideas from sea to shining sea.

Well, if I were suddenly granted the ability to go back in time and just put a book in your hands, it would be *Adrienne Rich's Poetry and Prose*. There are a handful of reasons for this: first of all, you need to read poetry that doesn't only exist on a microblogging website and framed in #36465D blue. While that free-form lyricism sounds pretty, has a lot of reading level Z words, and does have its own value, it would honestly probably be a lot better for your intellectual development if you could name a poet or an author by their name rather than their handle. While you can put those free verse poems in your pocket, telling yourself you'll look at them later, you'll only remember them when you're pulling waterlogged shreds of paper out of your freshly-washed jeans. Being able to have that art in a book rather than a digital void means that you have a literal object to return to whenever you need to remind yourself what's important or how to put words to your feelings and ideas.

Second of all, you have a lot of feminist beliefs rattling around in your head, and your heart belongs to the women in your life, so why not put those thoughts and feelings into words? Rich will take your hand and walk you through them, from your heart to your head. It will be a little longer before you take your eyes off of the present and look towards the past for your role models, women who felt as frustrated as you do now by the path that society has laid out before you. If you keep walking with Rich, she'll introduce you to these women that feel the same way you do, an eternal flame burning

in your chest when you feel the pressure to sit in your chair and be a “good student” while your male classmates make fools of themselves. Rich will sit you down and talk to you about the plights of trying to fit within the glass box that patriarchy builds around you, tell you that it’s good - and encourage you - to smash it to bits, even if you nick yourself in the process. She’ll point out Emily Dickinson, furiously writing poetry in Amherst, Massachusetts, and you’ll realize that you have plenty of things in common, least of which being your love for dashes. She’ll mention Boadicea and you’ll come to the realization that women have been waging war against oppressive forces long before Joan of Arc that women didn’t just wake up one day in 1848 and decide to lash out against patriarchal institutions. She can teach you the power of looking into the past from the future, of placing yourself in the perspective of those who lived through them. There is power in this shared perspective, where you can see through the eyes of Elvira Shatayev or Ethel Rosenberg - she’ll tell you that it is “an act of survival”, a way of knowing that you are not alone nor have you ever been.

Finally, Rich will help you discover your affection for the same “gender” (what is that, anyway? - we’ll talk later) isn’t a new phenomenon, isn’t rare, is as old as poetry itself. She can point out that this discovery isn’t just for the young, either - that you can find your truest self time and time again, that you aren’t born only once. She can tell you that you can publish your first collection of lesbian love poems at the age of forty-four after being married to a man for seventeen years. Even doors that seem closed are a little bit ajar, and if they don’t seem to have a knob, there’s always a window. You tell her about that one time in elementary school when you noticed all of your friends making up code names for the boys in your class and decided to *choose* who you had a crush on, picking out the nicest kid. She might laugh, reaching up to tap the sign, bearing the first half of the title of her 1980 essay: “Compulsory Heterosexuality”! Your brain would probably explode with the realization that most of those girls had probably learned about having crushes on boys from their older family members and had decided that that was the mature thing to do, so you had to make a concentrated effort to pick a nice boy from your class roster in order to feel like you fit in.

As you go through middle school and high school, your interactions with Rich would change your preference for female friendships from a subconscious happening to a conscious choice. While the girls in your class would claim that they preferred to be friends with boys, that they were less “drama”, you would have words to explain the reasons that you felt differently. You could mention how your friendships with your girl friends are refreshing, that they provide you with the energy that you need to get through the day, and the idea that female friendships were rife with conflict was an idea posited by patriarchal society which wanted to prevent connections between women that would allow them to see the cracks in the dominant structures. You might not

mention that your heartbeat sped a little faster whenever you could make one of your friends laugh and fill the room with the sound of windchimes.

Creative Writing

1st Place:

Ren Sawyer, “Poetry Workshop”

Ophelia

I sink to the depths of the purity
from which I once did prosper
and water invades mine own body
filling my lungs with new life
as death itself encapsulates
what is remaining of my weary soul.
My honor, my love, my life,
taken by cold, cold water.
Verily! Colder than his own love for me.

Laertes, I beg of you, grieve not for me!
Let not absinthe scar thy blood,
or a blade pierce thy heart of lapis.
Weep, but fall not thither toward me;
where I lie is not for a man such as you
who lives,
and lives for honor, and is spellbound
by the sword that takes that of thy enemy.

Father! Your eyes gaze upon me where I lie!
I feel your scornful touch,
and I cringe at the shame you cast upon me.
yet banish me not to the nether world
in which flames lick the deceit
from the souls of the damned.
Embrace me. For shameful I am no more!
In this life I will live anew, free from
the bonds Hamlet hath bore me.
And call me once again your daughter.

Hamlet, I cast upon thee:
My sorrows. My madness. My love.

I vex thee that thy mind doth never escape the shackles
which thee hath brought upon thyself
in thine cackling and sinister lust;
for thy lust aches not for me,
but for blood.

Icarus

Icarus graced the sky
with a most radiant smile
fixed on his face.
No such freedom as his has been felt before or since.
And as he fell and his father reached for him
he whispered with tears in his eyes
"Live well and know that I have been free enough for a lifetime.
I have tasted the sun
and great Zephyrus hath blest me
with a kiss
and I shant need for more."
As he hurtled toward the sea, grasping at the sun,
He was beholden to the gods that he was three and four times blest:
once to love
twice to fly
thrice to fall
and a fourth time to live at all.

An Old Photo in the Thrift Store

Look at her eyes
Her beautiful brown eyes
Or maybe they were blue
Who can tell anymore?
Her floral dress is wrinkled
And coated in pollen.
The springtime brings her joy,
Just as her memory brings me.
Her face sagged and scrunched over time, I'm sure,
But here she is
Preserved as she used to be—
As I have only known her.
I've known her so little,
Just this old dusty glimpse

Into her lovely spring.
This picture is likely all that remains of her,
But the feeling it encapsulates is eternal in that frame.
I love her happy springtime
And her old floral dress
And her rickety glasses.
I love her past,
Though I do not know her present.

the littler me

i miss her.
i miss being little.
i miss being a big sister.
i miss *my* big sister.
i don't know where she went.
she was supposed to teach me to be a woman
and now i may never feel like one
i miss when life was simple enough that i could truly miss people without a "*but*"
i miss the houses i grew up in
they're all sold now
painted millennial gray beyond recognition
not one is the same
i wish i missed my home
it's been so long since i missed home
i miss when missing home was simple
and at the end of the day
there was nowhere else to be
my tinder dates don't understand
that i'm regressing into her
but i'm not her
and this isn't kindergarten
so maybe they'll want me this time
maybe it will be okay

it has hit me that i neglected her
she stands before me
shorter
and her hair is lighter
her bangs are crooked
and so is her smile

but it is more real than any smile i've given in over 13 years
she looks nothing like me now
but i see myself
somewhere in there
she feels like someone i raised
i feel the disappointment of a parent
but i feel the shame for myself

i scold her
and she cries
but i don't care
i feel nothing for her
but she feels so much for me
she sees my victories
knowing that i don't believe she has a place in the celebration
but she is all that i am
deep down i am her and i will never understand why they hurt her
and why i never forgave her for it

The Wanderer

his gravelly smoker's voice rings clear in my memory as watermelon drips down my chin and arms, making the floor sticky and staining my shirt a soft wet pink and we are all lost in dancing and giggles. He was never like this before, but it feels so good to see him singing.

the tires grind away at the dirt and the grass is torn to bits. we rake through the okra flowers and plow down the carefully stacked wood. he worked so hard on it all, but he watches with so much pride as we tear it up driving in circles just to go anywhere. we drove miles in circles, clinging to anything we could find as we navigated the brakes. The steering wheel tasted like summer and the van smelled like sweat.

waking up to the smell of sweet rolls and breakfast potatoes that he worked so hard on every morning, and seeing the love in his eyes when asking for a fork, knowing if you asked him to die for you in that moment he would do it without hesitation.

they were still pure then. like idols of silver packed in the boxes that lined the hallway until christmas when you may finally learn what was inside them.

i want to lay out in the grass with him and gaze up at the stars. i want to tell him that i love him. I want to be together again, with him and my dad. they're so similar, more than i'd realized before.

but he is so fragile. why does he let his life go by without him?

i hope he knows all of the things i can't say to him.

he's right there. why can't i see him? what if he's gone before i can tell him i love him?
the watermelon stains ache to return to a home that is lost to me now.

Capstones

2nd Place:

Finn McAdams, “‘You Are Home to Me’: The Sanctuary of Romantic Friendships for American Suffragists”

The women involved in the suffrage movement in the United States had a variety of familial backgrounds. Widows, wives, and unmarried women alike participated in various organizations dedicated to the cause. Anti-suffragists often focused on the unmarried suffragists in their cartoonish depictions, illustrating them as lonely, bitter spinsters who aimed to disrupt gender norms.¹ However, despite the absence of a male partner in their lives, unmarried and widowed suffragists were not lonely by any means. Many of them enjoyed the company of other women, creating friendships that sometimes developed into intimate partnerships. Several national leaders of the suffrage movement were involved in romantic friendships with other women, including Susan B. Anthony (1820-1906), Anna Howard Shaw (1847-1919), and Carrie Chapman Catt (1859-1947). The relationships these women sustained have been overlooked by scholars, who viewed them as exclusively platonic partnerships until recently. In recent years, women's historians have recognized these connections between women as romantic in nature, citing suffragists' long- and short-term cohabitation and analyzing the terms of endearment and desire for physical intimacy expressed in their letters. These shared living arrangements and correspondence contain strong evidence that national American suffrage leaders' friendships provided them with long-term support and a physical and emotional sanctuary from the demands movement.

At the turn of the century, there were no terms that women who participated in these romantic friendships self-identified with. However, many of these women would have been labeled as “sexual inverts” by sexologists such as Havelock Ellis (1859-1939).² The term “sexual invert” described women who displayed masculine behavior and desires and men who were considered feminine. Sexual inversion was considered to be a biological abnormality. Sexologists viewed female homosexual behavior and desire as a symptom of sexual inversion as well as a defect on its own. Many sexologists

¹ Wendy L. Rouse, *Public Faces, Secret Lives: A Queer History of the Women's Suffrage Movement* (New York: New York University Press, 2022), 17, 23.

² Rouse, 19.

suggested an association between sexual inverts and the suffrage movement, because female sexual inversion was supposedly marked by high intelligence. Well-educated women were more likely to be involved in women's rights campaigns.³ This association with sexual inversion, as well as other social pressures, meant that many suffragists had to present themselves as heterosexual, whether they were single, in a relationship with another woman, or widowed. For example, the premier pioneer suffragist Susan B. Anthony provided a different answer each time she was asked why she was unmarried. She sometimes claimed that men had no interest in her or that she had no interest in the men who had proposed marriage.⁴ One of Anthony's successors, Carrie Chapman Catt, retained the surnames of her first and second husbands until her death, presenting herself to the public as a grieving widow.⁵

Although conformity to social norms prevented committed, passionate relationships between girls and women from being openly expressed, they were consistent through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Relationships between women were rarely studied until the field of women's history emerged out of second wave feminism in the 1960s.⁶ The significance of romantic relationships, specifically, were first detailed in Carroll Smith-Rosenberg's article, "The Female World of Love and Ritual" (1975) and Lillian Faderman's book, *Surpassing the Love of Men* (1981).⁷ The romantic intensity of these relationships, Smith-Rosenberg claims, often mirrored or exceeded those that they had with men. As one girl stated about another, for example, "I love her as wives do love their husbands." In many instances, these romantic friendships began in the women's youth and continued throughout their lives.⁸ These intimate relationships between women were often considered socially acceptable, as they represented one

³ Lillian Faderman, *To Believe in Women: What Lesbians Have Done for America - A History*. (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1999), 4-5; Lillian Faderman, *Surpassing the Love of Men: Romantic Friendship and Love Between Women from the Renaissance to the Present* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1981), 241-243; Rouse, 18-19.

⁴ Lynn Sherr, *Failure is Impossible: Susan B. Anthony in Her Own Words* (New York: Times Books, 1995), 13.

⁵ Faderman, *To Believe in Women*, 63.

⁶ Cornelia H. Dayton and Lisa Levenstein, "The Big Tent of U.S. Women's and Gender History: A State of the Field," *Journal of American History*, 99, no. 3 (December 2012): 793, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jahist/jas454>.

⁷ Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations between Women in Nineteenth-Century America," *Signs* 1, no. 1 (Autumn 1975): 1, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3172964>; Faderman, *Surpassing the Love of Men*, 15.

⁸ Smith-Rosenberg, 3.

facet of the complex female world that existed in the private sphere.⁹ However, these women's ability to live with one another without male attachments, in arrangements often called "Boston marriages," was limited to upper-class women who were able to support themselves financially without the wages of a man. These relationships were quite common among suffragists and other social reformers, because these women's common goals and values formed a foundation for their relationship.¹⁰

Romantic friendship between women existed in a world prior to the emergence of a "lesbian" identity. However, in response to Rosenberg's findings, women's historians began to label romantic friendships of the period as either purely platonic or lesbian, although the women themselves may not have identified in the latter way.¹¹ Romantic friendship was distinct from purely platonic friendship and, at the same time, it was compatible with heterosexual marriage.¹² Many suffrage historians use the word "lesbian" to denote a woman's "intense woman-to-woman relating and commitment," or the word "queer" to describe women who "were not strictly heterosexual or cisgender."¹³ These scholars recognize that the women they describe would not have chosen the label themselves, only using the terms for ease of communicating complex ideas. However, using modern terminology obscures how same-sex desire between women has become more clearly defined over time.¹⁴

To avoid a presentist perspective, I used a model of historical analysis developed by queer theorist Jack Halberstam. In his book, *Female Masculinity* (1998), he presents the perverse presentism model, which encourages scholars to avoid projecting contemporary understandings of romance and sexuality onto the past. Rather, scholars should apply contemporary cluelessness onto the past.¹⁵ For example, there is very little awareness of a strong boundary between romantic and platonic behavior between women today. Without this awareness, we cannot assume to know where the boundary between romantic and platonic behavior lied for women in the past. In researching romantic friendships in the suffrage movement, this model encourages analyzing the

⁹ Smith-Rosenberg, 7-9.

¹⁰ Faderman, *Surpassing the Love of Men*, 190; Faderman, *To Believe in Women*, 60-61; Michael Bronski, *A Queer History of the United States* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2011), 72-73.

¹¹ Leila J. Rupp, "'Imagine My Surprise': Women's Relationships in Historical Perspective," *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 5, no. 3 (Autumn 1980): 62-63; Jack Halberstam, *Female Masculinity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998), 54.

¹² Smith-Rosenberg, 26.

¹³ Faderman, *To Believe in Women*, 1-3; Rouse, 2.

¹⁴ Rupp, 67; Halberstam, 50.

¹⁵ Halberstam, 52-53.

relationships in their historical context, rather than seeking to view them through a modern lens.

Susan B. Anthony, who is likely the most well-known suffragist, is just one of many who enjoyed romantic friendships with other women.¹⁶ However, romantic elements in these relationships did not develop until she was more established as a leader in the suffrage movement. Anthony was raised in a Quaker household, where she was introduced to the major reform issues by guests in her family's house, such as Frederick Douglass and Wendell Phillips. In this environment, she became familiar with abolition and temperance. Her mother, father and sister attended the 1848 Women's Rights Convention at Seneca Falls because of their involvement in reform.¹⁷ Her family's recollections of the convention piqued her interest in women's rights. It became clear to her that temperance could not be put into law without empowering women to vote.¹⁸ In 1851, Anthony met fellow reformer Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815-1905), and the two developed a powerful platonic friendship with women's rights at the center.¹⁹ In 1869, Anthony and Stanton aided in the founding of the National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA).²⁰ This organization opposed the Fifteenth Amendment, which enfranchised all men, including newly freed African American men, because it failed to enfranchise women as well. Its members also supported a Sixteenth Amendment, which aimed to secure the ballot for women.²¹ In 1890, NWSA combined with the American Woman Suffrage Association to form the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA). Stanton was the president of NAWSA for its first two years, and Anthony became president in 1892, remaining in office until 1900.²²

¹⁶ Susan Ware, *Why They Marched: Untold Stories of the Women Who Fought for the Right to Vote* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2019), 161; Faderman, *To Believe in Women*, 25-27.

¹⁷ Ida Husted Harper, *The Life and Work of Susan B. Anthony; Including Public Addresses, Her Own Letters and Many From Her Contemporaries During Fifty Years* (Indianapolis: The Bowen-Merrill Company, 1899), 59.

¹⁸ Harper, *The Life and Work of Susan B. Anthony*, 72.

¹⁹ Alma Lutz, "Anthony, Susan Brownell," in *Notable American Women, 1607-1950: A Biographical Dictionary*. Vol. I, A-F., eds. Edward T. James, Janet Wilson James, and Paul J. Boyer (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971), 51-52; Theodore Stanton and Harriot Stanton Blatch, eds., *Elizabeth Cady Stanton as Revealed in Her Letters, Diary and Reminiscences*, Vol. I (New York: Harper & Bros, 1922), 151.

²⁰ Lutz, "Anthony, Susan Brownell," 54.

²¹ Harper, *The Life and Work of Susan B. Anthony*, 327.

²² Marjorie Spruill Wheeler, "A Short History of the Woman Suffrage Movement in America," in *One Woman, One Vote: Rediscovering the Woman Suffrage Movement*, ed. Marjorie Spruill Wheeler

The relationship between Stanton and Anthony focused mainly on the suffrage movement. For example, throughout their partnership, Stanton often wrote the speeches that Anthony gave at her speaking engagements.²³ This arrangement worked to both of their strengths, as Anthony was a slow writer and Stanton was a mediocre public speaker.²⁴ Anthony once spoke of their friendship, “She forged the thunderbolts and I fired them. She composed the speeches, and I rocked the cradle for her.”²⁵ To allow Stanton the time and space to write, Anthony often tended to her seven children.²⁶ She even once offered to care for Stanton’s children so that their mother could take a trip abroad for three months.²⁷ Both women compared their friendship and working partnership to a marriage. For example, in 1869, Stanton had described the strength of their connection, claiming, “No power in heaven, hell or earth can separate us, for our hearts are eternally wedded together.”²⁸ In 1870, rumors that their partnership had ended reached an amused Stanton, who wrote to Anthony, “Have you been getting a divorce out in Chicago without notifying me?”²⁹ The passion and intensity that the two women shared for their work encouraged them, as well as other suffragists, to compare their relationship to a marriage.

Although the language that they use to describe their relationship and the strength of their connection may suggest it, Anthony and Stanton did not have a romantic friendship. Careful analysis of their letters reveals that they did not refer to one another using nicknames. Stanton typically referred to Anthony by her first name, and Anthony typically referred to Stanton as “My Dear Mrs. Stanton.”³⁰ This was typical of non-

(Troutdale, OR: NewSage Press, 1998), 12; Susan B. Anthony and Ida Husted Harper, *History of Woman Suffrage*, Vol. IV (New York: Arno Press Inc. 1969), 164.

²³ Noelle A. Baker, *Stanton in Her Own Time: A Biographical Chronicle of Her Life, Drawn From Recollections, Interviews, and Memoirs by Family, Friends, and Associates* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2016), 132.

²⁴ Alice S. Rossi, “A Feminist Friendship: Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony,” in *One Woman, One Vote*, 46; Sherr, 168.

²⁵ N. Baker, 147.

²⁶ Sherr, 167; N. Baker, 123, 132; Faderman, *To Believe in Women*, 23.

²⁷ Harper, *The Life and Work of Susan B. Anthony*, 213.

²⁸ Rossi, 46.

²⁹ Rossi, 51; Stanton and Blatch, eds., 127.

³⁰ Ann D. Gordon, *The Selected Papers of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony: Their Place Inside the Body-Politic, 1887 to 1895* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2009), 9. For additional examples of this term of endearment, see pages 208, 499, 502, 638, 641, 709; Ann D. Gordon, *The Selected Papers of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony: An Awful Hush, 1895 to 1906*

romantic relationships. Additionally, neither woman wrote of a desire for physical intimacy with the other. While their friendship empowered both women to contribute more to the suffrage movement than they would have been able to individually, it did not contain any of the indicators of a romantic friendship.

However, Anthony's relationships with younger women's rights activists, such as Anna E. Dickinson (1842-1932), sometimes involved mutual desire for physical intimacy as well as mentorship.³¹ At the turn of the twentieth century, this mixture of maternal and sensual emotions was common in relationships between younger and older women.³² This was certainly the case for the relationship between Anthony and Dickinson, as Anthony was twenty-two years older than the younger orator. In fact, in one of her letters to Dickinson, Anthony described the longing that she felt for the younger woman as "real Mother yearnings."³³

Anthony met Anna E. Dickinson in the spring of 1862, when the younger woman was giving a speech in support of abolition at Cooper Union in New York.³⁴ Dickinson had recently made her debut as a lecturer and had been nicknamed "The Girl Orator," and "America's Joan of Arc," due to her stirring speaking ability at only twenty.³⁵ In the year prior, Dickinson had been touring the nation, persuading her audiences to cast a Republican ballot so their governments would send troops and funds to aid the Union's Civil War efforts. During her Cooper Union speech to a crowd of 5,000 people, Dickinson had "moved them alternately to laughter and tears, to bursts of applause and the most profound silence," showcasing her oratory talents.³⁶ This experience inspired

(New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2013), 38. For additional examples of this term of endearment, see pages 101, 160, 179, 250, 433, 451.

³¹ Jean Baker, *Sisters: The Lives of America's Suffragists* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2006), ch. 2.

³² Faderman, *Surpassing the Love of Men*, 210-211.

³³ Faderman, *To Believe in Women*, 27; Susan B. Anthony to Anna E. Dickinson, n.d., Anna E. Dickinson Papers, Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/resource/mss18424.mss18424-006_0155_0325/?sp=124&st=text.

³⁴ Alma Lutz, *Susan B. Anthony: Rebel, Crusader, Humanitarian* (Washington, DC: Zenger Publishing Co., 1959), 94.

³⁵ James Harvey Young, "Dickinson, Anna Elizabeth," in *Notable American Women, 1607-1950: A Biographical Dictionary*, Vol. I, A-F, eds. Edward T. James, Janet Wilson James, and Paul J. Boyer (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971), 475; Frances Willard and Mary Livermore, eds., *A Woman of the Century: Fourteen Hundred-seventy Biographical Sketches Accompanied by Portraits of Leading American Women in All Walks of Life* (Buffalo, NY: Moulton, 1893), 241.

³⁶ Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Matilda Joselyn Gage, eds., *History of Woman Suffrage*, Vol. II (New York: Arno Press, 1969), 44; National Women's History Museum, "Anna Dickinson (1842-1932)," accessed 17 April 2024,

Anthony with hope and pride for the future of women, and stirred up her maternal instincts for the young woman.³⁷

Anthony began exchanging letters with Dickinson after hearing her speak, and would sustain a close relationship with her for the next decade. In their correspondence, Anthony often referred to the younger woman using pet names, such as "Dicky Darling Anna," "Darling Dicky, Dicky," and "Dear Chick a dee dee."³⁸ Their relationship seemed to calm Anthony's nerves at the same time that it revitalized her spirit. In an undated letter, she wrote to Dickinson, "Your very breath gives me new hope and new life."³⁹ As early as 1862, Dickinson sent Anthony messages that she wanted to see her in person, writing in one letter, "I want to see you very much indeed, to hold your hand in mine, to hear your voice, in a word, I want *you*."⁴⁰ They looked forward to whenever their paths and schedules crossed and they could hold one another. Anthony also requested Dickinson stay with her in her "plain quarters" at 44 Bond Street or in her "nice hall bedroom" at 116 East Twenty-third Street.⁴¹ In a letter to Dickinson dated March 31, 1868, Anthony wrote "I want to give you one awful long squeeze. Are you coming to New York to get it - or shall I go to Philadelphia?"⁴² If Dickinson ended up in New York when Anthony was working at *The Revolution*, the newspaper that Anthony established, the younger woman was said to enter the office with a dramatic flourish, kiss Anthony, and hypnotize the entire staff with her conversational prowess.⁴³

Many of the letters that Dickinson received from Anthony were requests to hear her speak at suffrage meetings and attempts to entice her entirely to the cause of women's

<https://web.archive.org/web/20161108020740/https://www.nwhm.org/education-resources/biography/biographies/anna-dickinson/>.

³⁷ Lutz, 94.

³⁸ Susan B. Anthony to Anna E. Dickinson, October 23, 1866, Anna E. Dickinson Papers, https://www.loc.gov/resource/mss18424.mss18424-006_0155_0325/?sp=17&st=text; Faderman, *To Believe in Women*, 26; J. Baker, ch. 2.

³⁹ Faderman, *To Believe in Women*, 16; Susan B. Anthony to Anna E. Dickinson, n.d., Anna E. Dickinson Papers, https://www.loc.gov/resource/mss18424.mss18424-006_0155_0325/?sp=163&st=text.

⁴⁰ Faderman, *To Believe in Women*, 25-26; J. Baker, ch. 2.

⁴¹ Lutz, 144.

⁴² Susan B. Anthony to Anna E. Dickinson, March 31, 1868, Anna E. Dickinson Papers, https://www.loc.gov/resource/mss18424.mss18424-006_0155_0325/?sp=80&st=text.

⁴³ Lutz, 144.

suffrage.⁴⁴ However, Dickinson refused to step away from fighting for rights for Black men to fight solely for the rights of women. In 1867, Anthony wrote to Dickinson, "The enclosed slips will indicate *my alarm* lest you, the Anna Dick, are *off the track*... For I see your speech is not *The New Republic*, is not *Woman*, but only the *black man*."⁴⁵ Their relationship began to grow apart by the early 1870s, as the fervor following the Civil War cooled, the Fifteenth Amendment was ratified, and Dickinson began to move from the lecture circuit to the theater stage. Despite the distance that grew between the two women, when Dickinson wrote to Anthony in 1895 to ask for money after falling from the spotlight, Anthony responded with warmth and excitement. Within this letter, she wrote that "none of [her nieces] - ever has or ever can fill the niche in my heart that you did - my dear."⁴⁶ This response shows a fond affection for Dickinson on Anthony's part that had sustained roughly twenty-five years of distance. This sustaining devotion, combined with their shared desire for physical intimacy and terms of endearment, illustrate the importance that this relationship had to Anthony, regardless of how long their closeness lasted. Because their relationship lasted only a decade, during which they did not share a living arrangement or travel together for long periods of time, it is an example of a brief romantic friendship or a flirtation within the suffrage movement.

Anna Howard Shaw, the fourth president of NAWSA, was one of Anthony's protégées and the partner to her niece, Lucy Elmira Anthony (1859-1944), for thirty years.⁴⁷ Shaw met Susan B. Anthony in 1888 and was strongly encouraged to use her speaking talents for the cause of suffrage. Shaw had been preaching sermons since she had converted to Methodism in 1870 and was an eloquent and powerful lecturer.⁴⁸ By 1890, Shaw had been named the national lecturer of NAWSA. She also served as vice president under Anthony and Carrie Chapman Catt between 1892 and 1904. Like many suffrage leaders, her personal life and the cause had become inseparable. She attended annual conventions and Congressional hearings regarding a federal amendment, and participated in innumerable suffrage campaigns in forty-eight states.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ J. Baker, ch. 2; Faderman, *To Believe in Women*, 26.

⁴⁵ Sherr, 39.

⁴⁶ J. Baker, ch. 2; Susan B. Anthony to Anna E. Dickinson, November 5, 1895, Anna E. Dickinson Papers, https://www.loc.gov/resource/mss18424.mss18424-006_0155_0325/?sp=141&st=text.

⁴⁷ Trisha Franzen, *Anna Howard Shaw: The Work of Woman Suffrage* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2014), 63.

⁴⁸ Franzen, 37.

⁴⁹ Eleanor Flexner, "Shaw, Anna Howard," in *Notable American Women, 1607-1950: A Biographical Dictionary*, Vol. III, P-Z (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971), 274-277.

By 1906, she had made over 10,000 speeches across the United States and Europe.⁵⁰ When Catt stepped down from the presidency in 1904, Shaw stepped up and served until 1915. Shaw's time as president of NAWSA was marked by internal conflict, especially whether to fight for a federal amendment or continue to fight for suffrage state-by-state. This conflict was because there were no successful state suffrage campaigns between 1896 and 1910.⁵¹ Shaw continued to lecture throughout her presidency, contributing to the stress that she experienced within the position. Thankfully for her, she had gained a partner in Lucy Anthony.

Lucy Elmira Anthony was the eldest child of Susan B. Anthony's brother, Jacob Merritt Anthony, and Mary Elmira. In 1880, she was sent from Kansas to Rochester, New York, to live with Susan and her sister, Mary Anthony, to attend the Rochester Free Academy, a secondary school.⁵² Not much is known about Lucy Anthony's early life. She had little desire for the spotlight of the suffrage movement, and she documented little about her personal life compared to her aunt or Shaw. She was introduced to Shaw at the International Conference of Women in 1888 through her aunt, who encouraged Shaw to hire her as business manager. The two women became close partners quickly, both in a professional and personal capacity. In 1889, Anthony offered to do Shaw's chores, such as purchasing tickets and checking baggage, so long as she could travel with her.⁵³ Only two years after they met, Shaw decided that she would pay Anthony a regular salary of \$50 a month. Later, she decided that half of what she earned would become her companion's, as well.⁵⁴ Anthony served as secretary and manager for Shaw and Susan B. Anthony for the rest of their lives.⁵⁵ Shaw appreciated Anthony's assistance as well as her company immensely. In an 1890 letter to Anthony, recounting a conversation she had had with her aunt regarding Anthony's salary, Shaw wrote, "No amount of money could ever repay you for all you had done for me."⁵⁶ Although both women struggled to earn money, Shaw had the freedom of mobility and was paid a

⁵⁰ Barbara Finn, "Anna Howard Shaw and Women's Work," *Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies* 4, no. 3 (Autumn 1979): 22, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3346144>.

⁵¹ Franzen, 96.

⁵² Franzen, 63; Gordon, *Their Place Inside the Body-Politic, 1887 to 1895*, 7.

⁵³ Franzen, 63; Faderman, *To Believe in Women*, 5-6, 49.

⁵⁴ Franzen, 75.

⁵⁵ "Lucy E. Anthony Is Dead at 83," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, July 6, 1944.

⁵⁶ Anna Howard Shaw to Lucy Anthony, August 15, 1890, Anna Howard Shaw Papers, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Cambridge, MA, https://hollisarchives.lib.harvard.edu/repositories/8/archival_objects/2571848.

small amount of money to lecture, while Anthony was frail and unable to travel as often, so it was a priority for Shaw to be able to compensate her partner.⁵⁷

In addition to supporting her administratively, Anthony supported Shaw emotionally. By living with her and serving as her housekeeper, she allowed Shaw to enjoy a domestic life and work as a traveling lecturer for the suffrage movement.⁵⁸ This domestic life provided an escape from Shaw's nomadic lifestyle. In 1890, Shaw wrote to Anthony, "Just think of the blessed future we hope to have when we get into our little home life.... I long for it with all my heart, and I want you to feel the rest of it now."⁵⁹ From an early point in their relationship, the two women dreamed of living together and finding solace in that domestic lifestyle. They had moved into their first home by 1892 in Wianno, Massachusetts, a cottage with two-and-a-half stories that they called "The Haven." Shaw and Anthony stayed here over the summer, and the cottage provided them with retreat from civilization.⁶⁰ They often filled the home with their friends and family and took advantage of the isolation, wearing shorts and pants and spending the days outdoors. This refuge was interrupted one day when a female reporter visited the cottage. Although Shaw and Anthony had changed into "proper" clothing for the guest, the visitor still wrote that they lived in an "Adamless Eden." The article was also "illustrated with pictures showing us all in knickerbockers," as Shaw details in her autobiography. This violation of privacy, along with changing demographics in the area, dulled their enjoyment of the cottage.⁶¹ In 1908, they moved into a Dutch Colonial home in Moylan, Pennsylvania, where they lived for the rest of their lives.⁶² For Shaw, who had grown up on the frontier, living outdoors and working the land that she lived on gave her a real sense of satisfaction. The relative isolation that the forest surroundings offered them also benefited the women by providing them with privacy.⁶³

Shaw frequently wrote of her appreciation of Anthony's companionship. After a successful tour through California in 1896, during which the movement earned the vocal support of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, she wrote to Anthony, "If I am of any use under the sun, it is because you have given me courage and hope, and the

⁵⁷ Faderman, *To Believe in Women*, 50.

⁵⁸ Franzen, 75.

⁵⁹ Faderman, *To Believe in Women*, 49.

⁶⁰ Franzen, 76.

⁶¹ Anna Howard Shaw, *The Story of a Pioneer* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1915), 267.

⁶² Shaw, 273; Franzen, 111.

⁶³ Shaw, 268.

triumph of last week was due as much to you as to myself.”⁶⁴ In addition to giving Anthony credit for Shaw’s success, she also noted whenever her partner’s presence gave her the spirit to continue on in the dark moments of the movement, those years when no new states gained suffrage.⁶⁵ In her letters to Anthony, Shaw provided details about the disturbing accommodations she endured while traveling. She described seeing louse crawling over her body, staying in cramped seven-by-eight feet rooms, and resorting to sitting in heated hotel offices rather than sleeping in freezing bedrooms.⁶⁶ In an 1892 letter to Anthony, she wrote, “It is hard to live this homeless life with no hope of its ending. Year after year of constant toiling like a galley slave and no chance of release, and for what? Just merely to work to help others who do not want to be helped.” In this excerpt, she is referring to men who were resistant to woman suffrage despite the reasoning that it would improve the lives of everybody, not just women. However, Shaw coaxed herself out of her pessimistic mindset, writing, “I wish we could just sit and not speak but rest and help each other to feel the peace of perfect trust,” suggesting that merely sharing space with Anthony would restore her energy.⁶⁷

Alongside the discouraging aspects of her activism, Shaw also struggled with depression and suicidal thoughts.⁶⁸ In 1913, when a young woman died by suicide and Shaw found herself identifying with her hopelessness, she reminded herself, “Well, we have each other, and a lot of good friends, and our beautiful home, and with all these things there is no limit to the good helpful work we may do. How glad I am that we both want to do it and that we are both able, in many ways, to do much.”⁶⁹ In letters to Anthony, Shaw often expressed a melancholy thought or feeling that she was having, only to change topics to gratitude for Anthony’s companionship or their shared home life, either at the Haven in Massachusetts or at Moylan in Pennsylvania. Shaw called Anthony her “dear, dear Balance,” indicating the impact that her presence in her life had on her mental state.⁷⁰ Their relationship offered Shaw solace in the fact that neither her suffrage efforts nor her life in general was for nothing. Shaw also felt comfortable telling

⁶⁴ Faderman, 51.

⁶⁵ Shaw, 191.

⁶⁶ Wil A. Linkugel and Martha Solomon, *Anna Howard Shaw: Suffrage Orator and Social Reformer* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 37.

⁶⁷ Faderman, *To Believe in Women*, 52.

⁶⁸ Franzen, 231, n. 11.

⁶⁹ Faderman, *To Believe in Women*, 52.

⁷⁰ Faderman, *To Believe in Women*, 51; Franzen, 65.

Anthony about the more complicated aspects of her life, likely expecting to be responded to with kindness and understanding.

The relationship between Anthony and Shaw lasted thirty years, coming to an end when Shaw passed away on July 2, 1919, a year before the nineteenth amendment was ratified by Congress. She had been in Springfield, Illinois, on a tour to raise support for President Wilson's peace treaty and the League of Nations, when she fell sick with pneumonia and shortly returned home to Moylan, Pennsylvania. Anthony, along with one of their friends, Caroline Reilly, cared for her in the days following her return from the tour. While Shaw was sick, Anthony read to her and provided her with news from the suffrage movement, including the news that the Senate had passed the nineteenth amendment. When Shaw passed away, Anthony organized her memorial service.⁷¹ In a pamphlet published about her death, Ida Husted Harper claimed that the cause of her death was "overwork."⁷² Anthony was one member of a small group of women who committed themselves to memorializing Shaw. The most notable of Anthony's attempts was a biography, which was to be written by Ida Husted Harper, who had authored Susan B. Anthony's biography and had worked on the *History of Woman Suffrage* volumes. However, the book was never written due to disagreement between Harper and Anthony, and Anthony was unable to find a suitable author to replace her.⁷³ While there are no letters from Anthony to Shaw still in existence, the care that Anthony showed for Shaw during her sickness and death shows a lifelong commitment, one that was common for romantic friendships within the suffrage movement.

Carrie Chapman Catt, another NAWSA president who worked alongside Shaw, and her partner, Mary Garrett Hay (1857-1928), were involved in a close romantic friendship for roughly forty years. Catt became involved with NAWSA in 1890, when she was invited as an Iowan delegate to the annual convention. Prior to this, she had been a member of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union since 1887 and had been heading the women's suffrage department for her local chapter.⁷⁴ In 1895, Catt proposed an Organizational Committee that would coordinate national, state, and local chapters of NAWSA, as well as send out lecturers on behalf of the organization to facilitate the creation of these chapters and provide civic education for women. She became the chairwoman of this committee following its creation, and began to direct and organize

⁷¹ Faderman, *To Believe in Women*, 60; Franzen, 179-180.

⁷² Ida Husted Harper, *The Passing of Anna Howard Shaw* (New York: National Woman Suffrage Publishing Co., Inc., 1919): 5, <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/012476426>.

⁷³ Franzen, 182.

⁷⁴ Jacqueline Van Voris, *Carrie Chapman Catt: A Public Life* (New York: Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 1987), 15-18.

fieldwork.⁷⁵ In 1900, Catt was elected president of the organization following Susan B. Anthony's resignation at the national convention, serving until 1904 when Catt stepped down due to weariness.⁷⁶ Catt organized the foundation of an International Woman Suffrage Alliance (IWSA) in 1902, and seven out of the eight countries with suffrage associations sent delegates to the initial meeting.⁷⁷

Catt was married twice in her life. She married Leo Chapman (1857-1886), the editor-owner of the *Mason City Republican*, in February 1885 after a two-week whirlwind romance. Before getting married, Catt had resigned her position as superintendent and assisted her husband in editing the newspaper while maintaining their home.⁷⁸ However, in August 1886, Catt received a telegram while at her parents' home, informing her that her husband had come down with typhoid fever. She took the first train to see him, but he had passed away by the time she arrived.⁷⁹ Her second husband was George Catt (1860-1905), a civil engineer living in San Francisco, California.⁸⁰ They were wed in June 1890, moving to Seattle, Washington, soon after. This marriage operated differently than her previous one. A story circulated about the couple having a contract that allowed her two months in the spring and two in the fall to work for the suffrage cause, and he often traveled to oversee construction of bridges and railroad lines.⁸¹ In September 1905, Mr. Catt fell sick while at work and underwent treatment for gallstones and an ulcer. Treatments failed and he passed away that October.⁸² Following his death, Mary Garrett Hay, one of Catt's closest friends and confidants, moved into her apartment to support her. It is difficult to determine the nature of their relationship prior to cohabitation.

Catt first met Hay at the 1890 NAWSA annual convention, and the two later became close friends and later life partners. Hay became the secretary of the Organizational

⁷⁵ Mary Gray Peck, *Carrie Chapman Catt: A Biography* (New York: Octagon Books, 1944), 83-84; Van Voris, 43-46; Faderman, *To Believe in Women*, 62.

⁷⁶ Peck, 107; Van Voris, 50; Susan B. Anthony and Ida Husted Harper, *History of Woman Suffrage*, Vol. IV (New York: Arno Press Inc. 1969), 389.

⁷⁷ Van Voris, 57.

⁷⁸ Peck, 38-40.

⁷⁹ Van Voris, 13.

⁸⁰ Susan Cloud, "Catt, George W.," in *Iowa State University Biographical Dictionary*, eds. Alison Sheridan and Benjamin Mayer (2021): <https://isubios.pubpub.org/pub/zbkd3vy1>.

⁸¹ Van Voris, 19-20; Peck, 58-61.

⁸² Van Voris, 64-65.

Committee and stayed with Catt in New York the summer of 1895 to assist her.⁸³ Hay later moved to New York from her home state of Indiana in order to be closer to Catt.⁸⁴ Hay often accompanied Catt on her travels, acting as business manager when Catt lectured at state suffrage conventions.⁸⁵ When Catt rose to the presidency in 1900, the executive board voted to dissolve her Organizational Committee based on the concern that Hay would be her successor as chairwoman.⁸⁶ Hay was unpopular within the organization because she was, as Mary Gray Peck wrote in a personal letter, “a red rag to a bull to many suffragists,” and, as described by a Dutch suffragist, “a perpetual source of dissention.”⁸⁷ Many suffragists felt negatively toward Hay due to her loyalty and close relationship with Catt, but also because she could seem indelicate in personal interactions. When the decision to dissolve the Organizational Committee was made, Catt was said to have locked herself in her bedroom, thrown herself onto the bed, and cried for three hours. She briefly considered resigning from the presidency, but in the end refused to allow conflict between personalities to cause any more disruption. She had witnessed many divisive issues, including racism and the *Women’s Bible*, that put suffragists at odds with one another, and her dedication to the cause overruled her personal attachment to Hay.⁸⁸

Although Hay resigned from the committee, she continued her work in the women’s suffrage movement by shifting her focus to women’s clubs, New York suffrage efforts, and the New York Republican Party.⁸⁹ Hay served as the director for the General Federation of Women’s Clubs from 1914 until 1918, during which she influenced the group to further consider and support women’s suffrage. At the same time, she served as President of the New York Equal Suffrage League, where she assisted in organizing parades, street rallies, and brochures which urged for the state to enfranchise women in 1917. She was also an active participant in the Republican Party. In 1918, she served as a delegate to the New York Republican Convention, where she became chairman of their strategic platform committee and used that position to endorse the federal suffrage

⁸³ Peck, 57, 86; Faderman, *To Believe in Women*, 62-63.

⁸⁴ Faderman, *To Believe in Women*, 63.

⁸⁵ Peck, 100-101.

⁸⁶ Van Voris, 50; Faderman, *To Believe in Women*, 64.

⁸⁷ Van Voris, 227, n.12; Leila J. Rupp, “Sexuality and Politics in the Early Twentieth Century: The Case of the International Women’s Movement,” *Feminist Studies* 23, no. 3 (Autumn 1997): 585, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3178388>.

⁸⁸ Van Voris, 50, 294.

⁸⁹ Peck, 110.

amendment.⁹⁰ Hay was a force in national, regional, and local suffrage politics, regardless of her relationship with Catt.

Catt and Hay permanently moved in with one another in a New York City apartment following the death of Catt's second husband in 1905.⁹¹ The two women often traveled with one another, campaigning for women's suffrage in both the United States and across the world. Hay's dedication to suffrage efforts and politics in New York often meant that Hay and Catt spent months apart. During these periods, they kept in close communication, sending letters about Catt's travels, progress in the suffrage movement, and personal matters such as family and sickness. These letters, in addition to their informational value, held emotional value as they connected the two women across the distance. In 1912, Catt wrote to Hay, "your letters are the best part of my trip and if I have to wait a whole day and two nights to get them I'll be pretty impatient."⁹² Although Catt traveled with her close friends, including Dutch suffragist Rosa Manus, she wrote often about how she was homesick, and letters from Hay offered her comfort.⁹³

Catt especially lamented the distance whenever Hay was ill. When the women were both at home, they were able to care for one another, as when Hay cared for Catt as she recovered from an operation on her abdomen in 1910.⁹⁴ As both women aged and continued to restlessly work toward the cause of suffrage, both sickness and general exhaustion became a recurring issue. For example, Hay suffered from frequent colds and discomfort with her gallbladder.⁹⁵ Catt also fell sick frequently during her international travels, summing up both of their ailments in the signature of a December 1911 letter, "to Gall Bladder Hay from Diarrhea Catt!"⁹⁶ When Catt traveled, the long distance between the two women meant that she had to have faith in the physician who cared for Hay, as well as their friends who would drop by their home to check in on her.

⁹⁰ James P. Louis, "Hay, Mary Garrett," in *Notable American Women, 1607-1950: A Biographical Dictionary*. Vol. II, G-O, eds. Edward T. James, Janet Wilson James, and Paul J. Boyer (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971), 163-165.

⁹¹ Peck, 145.

⁹² Carrie Chapman Catt to Mary Garrett Hay, n.d., Carrie Chapman Catt Papers, Library of Congress, Washington D.C., <https://www.loc.gov/item/mss154040147/>.

⁹³ Van Voris, 174.

⁹⁴ Van Voris, 80; Faderman, *To Believe in Women*, 76.

⁹⁵ Carrie Chapman Catt to Mary Garrett Hay, November 21, 1911, Carrie Chapman Catt Papers, <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/ms998018.mss15404.0146>. For other examples of Hay's gallbladder issues, see letters from October 1, 1911, November 10, 1911, March 13, 1912, and April 12, 1923.

⁹⁶ Carrie Chapman Catt to Mary Garrett Hay, December 25, 1913, Carrie Chapman Catt Papers, <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/ms998018.mss15404.0146>.

During one bout of illness in 1923, Catt referred to herself as Hay's nurse, writing to her on March 21, "I am so sorry that you have had such a doleful winter. I am not much of a nurse but I'm better than none and I know what to do for you."⁹⁷ Each woman was invested in the health of the other and viewed it as their responsibility, which illustrates the bond that they shared.

In an effort to promote their health, rest, and relaxation, the two women purchased a farm in Westchester County, New York, which they called Juniper Ledge in 1919. Catt was passionate about gardening, and took pride in caring for the land.⁹⁸ Similar to Shaw and Anthony's homes in Wianno and Moylan, Juniper Ledge provided Catt with a sanctuary from the business of the suffrage movement. However, Hay did not share this love for the outdoors, and disliked living so far from the city. While Catt was on her second international tour to promote women's suffrage in 1922, she moved to an apartment in New York during the cold months to avoid illness and to be closer to her work. While she was gone, Catt received several questions regarding the farm and its upkeep from Hay, as Catt was the main caretaker for the property. In 1928, Catt sold the property, citing Hay's distaste for country life, the costly upkeep, and health reasons. The couple moved to New Rochelle, which was much closer to the city.⁹⁹ Despite Hay's dislike of the farm, they lived there for nine years because she recognized that Juniper Ledge offered Catt comfort. Above all, Hay preferred to be where Catt was.

The two women shared a relationship for the rest of their lives. In 1928, on Hay's seventy-first birthday, Hay passed away suddenly in their new home from cerebral hemorrhage. She was buried in Woodlawn Cemetery in The Bronx, where Catt was buried nineteen years later, under a marker Catt had inscribed with the words, "Here lie two, for thirty-eight years united in service to a great cause." The stormy night following Hay's burial, Catt lit a candle and went to Hay's room, sitting there until the lightning had passed just as she had done during her partner's life. Following Hay's death, Catt was more frequently struck with illness, such as shingles and heart attacks, and struggled with sleeplessness. It was clear that the loss of her lover had devastated her, and her friends were concerned for her wellbeing. Shortly after Hay's death, Alda Wilson, an old family friend, came to live with Catt and attempted to relieve her of the mental stress that Catt experienced as a result of Hay's death.¹⁰⁰ Catt struggled because she had

⁹⁷ Carrie Chapman Catt to Mary Garrett Hay, March 21, 1923, Carrie Chapman Catt Papers, <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/ms998018.mss15404.0148>.

⁹⁸ Van Voris, 162; Peck, 310-311; Faderman, *To Believe in Women*, 75-77.

⁹⁹ Van Voris, 256, n. 22; Peck, 420; Faderman, *To Believe in Women*, 77.

¹⁰⁰ Van Voris, 208, 218-219; Peck, 436; Faderman, *To Believe in Women*, 78.

been deeply connected to Hay, as they offered one another support, comfort, and domesticity.

These influential women developed passionate relationships through the suffrage movement. Connection went beyond their activism and became intimate. Some of these relationships, such as Anna Dickinson and Susan B. Anthony's, ended a few years after they started; theirs fizzled out over a disagreement over ideology and a difference in life paths. For Anna Howard Shaw and Lucy E. Anthony, and Carrie Chapman Catt and Mary Garrett Hay, they lived with one another as couples for a majority of their lives. They shared a roof and practiced domesticity together. They cared for one another while they were sick, and comforted one another when negative thoughts crept in. They exchanged letters when they were away, lamenting the distance and expressing that they desired one another's presence. In contrast to the suffrage cause, which often demanded emotional fortitude and physical endurance, these relationships were restorative and provided women within them with much-needed sanctuary.

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Capstones

1st Place:

Alex Lay, “When Surgery Calls Upon Art: Identity, Alienation, and Plastic Surgery During World War One”

On June 28, 1914, a fateful attack against Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the throne of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, sent a newly industrialized world careening toward a war different from the one that had preceded it. World War One’s (WWI) industrialization led to an advancement in military technology with weaponry becoming refined and widespread. The practice of medicine saw a shift as well. In the words of historian Fiona Reid, “a systematized military health service was required to deal with systematized military slaughter.”¹⁰¹ Medical staff had to do their jobs under the heavy hand of the military, often losing their personal and professional autonomy to the system they worked in.¹⁰² This is the landscape in which New Zealander Dr. Harold Gillies (1882–1960) and his hospital of international doctors revolutionized facial surgery by developing the new specialty of plastic surgery. During a time in which the field of medicine was becoming industrialized by the cyclical pattern of war, Gillies and his team of diverse medical professionals and artists went against the tide with a multidisciplinary, patient-centric approach.¹⁰³ In a war that led to explicit dehumanization of soldiers, plastic surgery became a necessity for helping to restore soldiers’ dignity and identity.

Between eight and ten million soldiers died during The Great War, and over twice as many were wounded.¹⁰⁴ This is in large part due to technological advances like the machine gun, which could fire 450-600 rounds a minute. When combined with barbed wire to slow advancing soldiers, it made the front a killing field. Artillery shells also contributed to the large casualty count, since they had become more mobile and more

¹⁰¹ Fiona Reid, *Medicine in First World War Europe: Soldiers, Medics, Pacifists* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017), 20.

¹⁰² Reid, *Medicine in First World War*, 7.

¹⁰³ Andrew Bamji, “Faces of War,” *The Lancet* 381 (March 2013): 719, doi: 10.1016/s0140-6736(13)60570.

¹⁰⁴ Leo van Bergen, *Before My Helpless Sight: Suffering, Dying and Military Medicine on the Western Front, 1914–1918* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2009), 16.

accurate and whose shrapnel shells killed or maimed more men in the trenches than any other armament. Chemical weapons like chlorine or mustard gas, permanently damaged men's lungs, even sometimes blinding them, also became a tool of psychological terror.¹⁰⁵ These iconic weapons of WWI changed how war was waged, but this industrialization went far beyond just the creation of new weaponry; it extended to the view and treatment of the soldier. As Reid writes, "The male body became reduced to a standardized unit to be measured, assessed, and used as an industrial component in an industrial war."¹⁰⁶ It also frequently meant that doctors were forced to abide by military rules first and patients' best interests second. This relationship had significant consequences for patients, as WWI was the first war in which doctors treated and returned soldiers to the front in unprecedented numbers.¹⁰⁷ Medical practitioners often had to send their freshly healed charges back to battlefields, where they had sustained wounds in the first place.

In England, the initial declaration of war was received with excitement, and men quickly made their way to the recruiting office. By the end of 1914, slightly over one million men had enlisted.¹⁰⁸ To the civilian population, being a soldier took on an abstract quality as proof of whether a man was patriotic and brave, or a coward. However, the military was not the only way to serve. Civilian service organizations became an important part of the war effort, giving those at home an outlet through which they, too, could get involved. These volunteers became a vital part of the increased need for medical personnel to treat the growing number of enlisted men. Historian Lindsay Fitzharris writes that women turned out in the thousands to become volunteer nurses, and organizations like the International Red Cross and Friends Ambulance Unit became popular methods of assisting the war effort.¹⁰⁹

Among these young men clamoring for a chance to serve their country was Harold Gillies. A New Zealander by birth, Gillies studied medicine at Cambridge University. He remained in England for his clinical studies, eventually marrying a nurse and going on to join a prestigious medical practice in London. Gillies specialized in surgical otorhinolaryngology, a subspecialty more commonly known as ear, nose, and throat

¹⁰⁵ Martin H. Levinson, "World War I: The Closing Period of the Childhood of Humanity," *ETC: A Review of General Semantics* 72, no. 2 (April 2015): 150-151, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24762115>.

¹⁰⁶ Reid, *Medicine in First World War*, 7.

¹⁰⁷ Reid, *Medicine in First World War*, 5.

¹⁰⁸ P. E. Dewey, "Military Recruiting and the British Labour Force during the First World War," *The Historical Journal* 27, no. 1 (March 1984): 1, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2639348>.

¹⁰⁹ Lindsey Fitzharris, *The Facemaker: A Visionary Surgeon's Battle to Mend the Disfigured Soldiers of World War I* (New York: Farrar, Straus And Giroux, 2022), 44.

(ENT).¹¹⁰ His comfortable life did not last; shortly after Britain declared it was going to war, thirty-two-year-old Harold Gillies signed on with the Red Cross.¹¹¹ Initially just another doctor among a sea of eager volunteers, Gillies and his team's work during the war resulted in revolutionary new developments in multiple surgical specialties, such as plastic surgery, dental surgery, and anesthesiology.

While most of the modern progress regarding plastic surgery occurred during WWI, it existed well before. The term “plastic surgery” was coined in 1798 by Pierre-Joseph Desault in reference to the plasticity of a person's skin, or soft tissue, that allows it to be sculpted or shaped.¹¹² In fact, facial surgery has a long history, with some operations, like rhinoplasty, an operation to alter the appearance of the nose, having been first developed in 600 BC in India.¹¹³ The number of facial surgeries was few due to the inherent risk of infection that came with surgery. There was also significant social stigma due to the growing association of some forms of facial disfigurement with syphilis, which had started to gain a foothold in Europe during the sixteenth century.¹¹⁴ As Suzannah Biernoff writes in her book, *Portraits of Violence*, “Nineteenth-century observers often described the disfiguring effects of syphilis— especially the deformed or missing nose— as a sign of moral corruption.”¹¹⁵

This stigma was one of the reasons these more cosmetically focused surgeries had faded in popularity by the 1800s. Prior to WWI, use of plastic surgery, especially in a military setting, was sporadic at best, with the most relevant efforts having been conducted in the 1860s during the American Civil War. Steady improvements in weapons and their accuracy had led to more frequent and more damaging injuries. The Civil War proved a rude awakening to medical professionals who realized their practice had been outpaced by weaponry. A new form of ammunition, the Minié ball, with its conical shape and hollow base, was wildly effective at not only hitting their target but

¹¹⁰ Fitzharris, *The Facemaker*, 29.

¹¹¹ Andrew Bamji, “Sir Harold Gillies: Surgical Pioneer,” *Trauma* 8, no. 3 (July 2006): 144. doi:10.1177/1460408606072329.

¹¹² Fitzharris, *The Facemaker*, 56.

¹¹³ David A. Shaye, “The History of Nasal Reconstruction,” *Current Opinion in Otolaryngology & Head and Neck Surgery* 29, no. 4 (August 2021): 259–264, <https://doi.org/10.1097/MOO.0000000000000730>.

¹¹⁴ Fitzharris, *The Facemaker*, 120-121.

¹¹⁵ Suzannah Biernoff, *Portraits of Violence: War and the Aesthetics of Disfigurement* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2017), 65.

also at shredding it.¹¹⁶ This led to a rise in facial injuries. In the 1870s, a report on Civil War casualties assembled by the Surgeon General's Office recorded that there were roughly ten thousand cases of gunshot injuries to the face during the war.¹¹⁷ Despite this prevalence, few doctors focused on facial repair, and when they did, survival outweighed aesthetics. The results were cases like Private Joseph Harvey, who, even after repairs to his fractured face, was still discharged with a gaping hole in his cheek.¹¹⁸ Even with a rise in facial wounds, the high rate of infection meant very few were interested in taking the risk. According to Fitzharris, “fewer than forty plastic operations are reported to have taken place in both the North and the South” during the Civil War.¹¹⁹

WWI, however, saw maxillofacial trauma (that is, injury to the jawbone and to the soft tissues of the face) on a new scale, with roughly 280,000 men from France, Germany, and Britain suffering some form of facial trauma before the end of the war.¹²⁰ These facial injuries had a variety of causes, from burns to shrapnel, and they could range from minor disfigurement to complete inhibition of function for the patient. For patients who had lost substantial function, even daily actions like eating or drinking could become a struggle. There was also a strong social stigma against soldiers who bore these injuries. While some wounds were considered desirable as a physical symbol of bravery and service, facial wounds were viewed as frightening. Dr. Fred Albee, another WWI surgeon, wrote in his autobiography, “The psychological effect on a man who must go through life, an object of horror to himself as well as to others, is beyond description.”¹²¹ As the casualties started to rise, some medical practitioners began to recognize the lack of existing infrastructure to tend to these wounds properly.

¹¹⁶ Laurann Figg and Jane Farrell-Beck, “Amputation in the Civil War: Physical and Social Dimensions,” *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 48, no. 4 (October 1993): 455, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24623267>.

¹¹⁷ U.S. Surgeon-General's Office, *The Medical and Surgical History of the War of the Rebellion, 1861-1865, Part I Volume II: Surgical History*, edited by George A. Otis (Washington, DC, 1870–88), 321.

¹¹⁸ *Shell Wound of the Face with Great Destruction of the Soft Parts*, June 22, 1865, photograph, Otis Historical Archives National Museum of Health and Medicine, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/22719239@N04/2342453933/>.

¹¹⁹ Fitzharris, *The Facemaker*, 57-58.

¹²⁰ Reid, *Medicine in First World War*, 99.

¹²¹ Fred H. Albee, *A Surgeon's Fight to Rebuild Men: An Autobiography* (London, England: Robert Hale Limited, 1950), 110.

With the war beginning to take full effect, Gillies received his first assignment, which saw him posted to Boulogne, France, in 1915.¹²² Here, his path intersected with Charles Valadier, an eccentric French-American dental surgeon who, when faced with the gruesome jaw injuries soldiers were sustaining at the front, began to lobby for a specialized unit to address these injuries.¹²³ In *The Principles and Art of Plastic Surgery*, published thirty-nine years after the end of the war in 1918, Gillies wrote his own recollection of Valadier, stating, “He toured about until he had filled with gold all the remaining teeth in British GHQ [General Headquarters]. With the generals strapped in his chair, he convinced them of the need for a plastic and jaw unit.”¹²⁴ It didn’t take long for the genial Valadier to convince British authorities to give him control of a 50-bed, two-ward unit located in Wimereux. Valadier was so committed to his work that much of the unit was funded from his own pocket; he even converted his personal Rolls Royce into a mobile dental operatory outfitted with everything needed to perform surgery in the field.¹²⁵ At Wimereux, Gillies got his first taste of plastic surgery, where he witnessed Valadier’s early experiments with bone grafts in reconstructive surgery of the jaw. Despite having only a brief partnership with Valadier, Gillies learned many of the early principles he’d later operate by. For example, he learned that facial wounds saw the best results with hourly irrigation. Additionally, he noted that cases involving facial lacerations and severe fractures healed more effectively with early primary closure.¹²⁶ By the end of his time at the jaw unit, Gillies was eager to learn more. Unfortunately, his focus on plastics was put on hold when he was reassigned to the Belgian Field Hospital that spring.

This field hospital, located a mere seven miles north of Ypres, was a dilapidated two-story almshouse (poorhouse) that had been rapidly turned into an eighty-bed ward. Its staff had seen significant hardship due to their proximity to the front line, which had been relocated several times as the Germans laid siege to new cities. When the Second Battle of Ypres began on April 22, 1915, the reduced staff of the field hospital was quickly overrun.¹²⁷ In her diary, a young nurse at the facility wrote of the experience,

¹²² Bamji, “Sir Harold Gillies,” 144.

¹²³ J. E. McAuley, “Charles Valadier: A Forgotten Pioneer in the Treatment of Jaw Injuries,” *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Medicine* 67, no. 8 (August 1974): 785-789.

¹²⁴ Harold Gillies and David Ralph Millard, *The Principles and Art of Plastic Surgery*, Vol. 1 (London, England: Butterworth and Company, 1957), 6-15.

¹²⁵ William P. Cruse, “Auguste Charles Valadier: A Pioneer in Maxillofacial Surgery,” *Military Medicine* 152, no. 7 (July 1987): 339, <https://doi.org/10.1093/milmed/152.7.337>.

¹²⁶ Cruse, “Auguste Charles Valadier,” 339-340.

¹²⁷ George H. Cassar, *Trial by Gas: The British Army at the Second Battle of Ypres* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 2014), 263.

“Our hospital soon became a shambles, the theatre a slaughter house. We started working that day, April 23rd, and we never stopped for about two weeks.”¹²⁸ Gillies, the hospital's surgeon-in-chief, worked constantly to staunch the flow of wounded being carted through the doors of his meager operating room. The young nurse wrote, “Operations continued day and night, with two tables occupied all the time... one case was lifted off, a wet cloth mopped the blood on to the floor and another was lifted on.”¹²⁹ The hospital during Ypres embodied the fast and faceless triage of industrial medicine as the staff struggled to keep their heads above water. By the end of the battle, the British had lost an estimated 59,275 men, and Gillies emerged with a graphic understanding of the damage industrial weaponry could do to the human body.¹³⁰

From the ugly wreckage of Ypres, Gillies earned a promotion to major and another reassignment that sent him back to France.¹³¹ On his way to his next posting, Gillies visited Paris to see the work of Hippolyte Morestin, Europe's premier facial surgeon.¹³² Gillies wrote that watching Morestin's work “was the most thrilling thing I had ever seen. I fell in love with the work on the spot.”¹³³ Gillies had witnessed incredible work, but he also recognized the natural shortcomings of these few independent doctors. There was no cooperation, no teaching, and no guarantee that the patients who needed these procedures would ever see any of these specialists. Operations for plastic surgery needed to be centralized if doctors were to have any hope of properly helping patients and making progress. So, Gillies took the initiative and presented his idea to Sir William Arbuthnot Lane, the senior surgeon running Cambridge Military Hospital in Aldershot, England, just southwest of London. By early 1916, Gillies' new unit had been approved, and he received special orders assigning him to Aldershot.

While this was the first time hospital wards catering specifically to facial wounds had been established, the face has always had notable importance; it is in many ways inseparable from one's humanity. People are identified by their faces, judgments are made based on their features, and emotions are gauged by their facial expressions. It is even a recurring feature in language with idioms like “saving face” or “facing the music.” So, to lose one's face is to lose a vital aspect of one's identity—to become an outsider

¹²⁸ *A War Nurse's Diary: Sketches From a Belgian Field Hospital* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1918), 98.

¹²⁹ *A War Nurse's Diary*, 98-99.

¹³⁰ Cassar, *Trial by Gas*, 263.

¹³¹ Fitzharris, *The Facemaker*, 68.

¹³² Bamji, “Sir Harold Gillies,” 144.

¹³³ Gillies and Millard, *The Principles and Art*, 7.

separate from those who retain their identities. For many soldiers, WWI stripped them of their identity and normalcy, and made them another cog in the military-industrial system. As Biernoff notes, facial disfigurement is not considered the same as other wounds; instead, it “presents the trauma of mechanized warfare as a loss of identity and humanity.”¹³⁴

The war produced a variety of injuries, not all of which were perceived by society in the same way. Historian Dr. Beatriz Pichel, examined this difference in her recent article, “Broken Faces: Reconstructive Surgery During and After The Great War,” noting that while service members who lost limbs were still capable of returning to the jobs they left with the right prosthesis, maxillofacial wounds presented a different challenge.¹³⁵ As Pichel writes, “Facial mutilations, however, were altogether different as a mask would only hide an individual’s true identity,” therefore making them socially acceptable.¹³⁶ But these masks also obscured their identity while still failing to fix the root problem. Furthermore, Pichel pointed out that “disfigured faces had a stronger connection to the violence of war than did other disabilities,” as injuries that led to procedures like amputations were more common in a civilian context.¹³⁷

The social sentiment toward wounds during the war was complex. To be wounded was considered proof of heroic service, but not all wounds were considered equal; where some brought glory, others brought only disgust and shame. For example, the 1918 book, *The Happy Hospital*, by Corporal Ward Muir, ends with a chapter on the facial injury ward of the hospital that demonstrates this unequal viewing of war wounds. He displayed just how shaken by the damage even trained medical personnel found themselves, stating, “I feared, when talking to him, to meet his eye... I feared that inadvertently I might let the poor victim perceive what I perceived: namely, that he was hideous.”¹³⁸ Based on his experiences, Muir considered how difficult it was to work with someone who was disfigured, writing, “I confess... I had not known before how usual and necessary a thing it is... to gaze straight at anybody to whom one is speaking, and to gaze with no embarrassment.”¹³⁹ Muir’s words convey how alienated these men must have felt when even experienced medical staff struggled to treat them normally.

¹³⁴ Biernoff, *Portraits of Violence*, 57.

¹³⁵ Beatriz Pichel, “Broken Faces: Reconstructive Surgery During and After The Great War,” *Endeavour* 34, no. 1 (March 2010): 1.

¹³⁶ Pichel, “Broken Faces,” 1.

¹³⁷ Pichel, “Broken Faces,” 1.

¹³⁸ Ward Muir, *The Happy Hospital* (London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent, 1918), 145.

¹³⁹ Muir, *The Happy Hospital*, 143.

Public sentiment toward these wounds and the surgical efforts to repair them outside the medical field was equally complicated. A variety of articles were published about the work being done at Queen Mary's Hospital to bring attention to patients and, therefore, more funds. The picture these articles paint is deeply mixed with excited descriptions of these unbelievable medical advances and confessions of horror at witnessing such injuries. In one article for *The New Zealand Observer*, a journalist relayed a story he'd been told in which a man who had been disfigured in an accident "knowing how human beings regard disfigurement, shot himself," committing suicide. The journalist went on to observe that "He was perfectly justified" in his course of action.¹⁴⁰ This is a bleak and surprising outlook considering societal opposition to suicide at the time. But the patient's actions show just how devastating these injuries were for the man. Another article called the Facial and Jaw Department a "chamber of horrors," and upon seeing the wax teaching models used to demonstrate injuries and repair methods, declared, "Madame Tussauds galleries never contained a more ghastly record of human mutilation."¹⁴¹ A similar sentiment of horror mixed with wonder was published in *The Bamberg Herald* of South Carolina in articles spreading word of Gillies' work. Writing about an injured private, one story stated, "He will not look like himself, but he will look human. He has been saved from a horror which need not be described."¹⁴² According to the author, it was more important for the patient to look human according to societal norms than for the patient to be able to preserve his sense of self and identity.

Unfortunately, even personal relationships were affected by the social sentiments toward these wounds. One of Gillies' early patients, Private Walter Ashworth, sustained brutal damage while fighting at the Somme when a bullet ripped through his cheek, shattering his jaw. He had collapsed into a crater where he lay for three days before someone noticed he was still alive and dragged him away from the front. He was admitted to Cambridge Military Hospital on July 5, 1916, where he would undergo three difficult surgeries to repair his face. Tragically, upon hearing of his facial disfigurement, Ashworth's fiancée broke off their engagement. However, one of the fiancée's friends, Louise Grime, was troubled by her friend's behavior. She took to writing to Ashworth during his hospitalization and visited him several times. Eventually, the two fell in love and married. Despite this happy turn of events, Ashworth's struggles with public perception continued. When returning home, Ashworth resumed his job in a tailor shop, but his boss had not expected him to have facial scarring, and so he forced Ashworth to

¹⁴⁰ "New Men: Another Appeal," *New Zealand Observer*, September 29, 1917, <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/TO19170929.2.5.4>.

¹⁴¹ "Salvage: Miracles of Facial Surgery from Experiment to Achievement." *The Western Star*, November 18, 1919, <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/WSTAR19191118.2.18>.

¹⁴² "New Faces for War Wrecks: Wonderful Work for Facial Reconstruction Being Done," *Bamberg Herald*, December 13, 1917, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86063790/1917-12-13/ed-1/seq-9/>.

work in the back of the shop out of fear that his appearance would distress the customers.¹⁴³ Ashworth's story is by no means the only one, and many men recount the horror they faced, not only from strangers, but also from loved ones.

Despite Gillies' success in getting himself a unit, there was very little initial interest in helping him get started. Most of the experienced medical staff and good equipment at Aldershot had been shipped off to the front, leaving behind novices and veteran personnel too old to serve. Difficulties were further compounded by the apathy of the War Office when requesting help. Gillies sent out special casualty tags to ensure facial injury cases made it to Aldershot, which, weeks later, began to reappear attached to casualties. What started as a trickle of injured soldiers became a flood. Those early days at Aldershot solidified the concepts and ideas that had already been swirling around Gillies' head and marked the start of what became his concrete set of principles. His focus was on restoring aesthetics as well as function to the patient's face, and he believed firmly that this new branch of surgery could only prosper if approached in a multidisciplinary way that included other specialists.¹⁴⁴

Being in charge of the ward at Aldershot had its complications as Gillies struggled to balance his medical duties with obedience to the military. Gillies complained about the strict rules and too-short hospital stays, writing, "As soon as the healing had occurred, the soldier was sent back to his battalion or battery, often looking like a travesty of his former self."¹⁴⁵ Healing soldiers just to return them to the front was the moral crisis hitting all doctors in military service. They were under great pressure to return as many soldiers to the front as quickly as possible. Military surgeons like Chief Officer of Horton War Hospital, Lieutenant Colonel J.R. Lord wrote that, "The main objects of the surgeon were to shorten time under treatment, and preserve manpower."¹⁴⁶ However, as many doctors had come from civilian service, they had something of an abstract allegiance to military goals; many disagreed with putting military benefit over patients. Gillies himself seemed to have mixed opinions on the matter, writing, "I would have you know that my first duty is to the Army, and that this involves the sending back to duty as many soldiers

¹⁴³ Andrew Bamji, *Faces from the Front: Harold Gillies, The Queen's Hospital, Sidcup and The Origins of Modern Plastic Surgery* (Warwick, England: Helion & Company, 2017), 185; Fitzharris, *The Facemaker*, 131.

¹⁴⁴ Fitzharris, *The Facemaker*, 79.

¹⁴⁵ Gillies and Millard, *The Principles and Art*, 26.

¹⁴⁶ Ana Carden-Coyne, *The Politics of Wounds: Military Patients and Medical Power in the First World War* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2014), 92.

as possible in the shortest time.”¹⁴⁷ But in many ways, this declaration conflicted with his actual methodology when it came to plastic surgery.

As his plastic skills progressed, perhaps one of Gillies' foremost principles became, “never do today what can be put off till tomorrow.”¹⁴⁸ He believed that being hasty with surgery led to mistakes and “irrevocable waste of tissue.” This was a very different approach from the desperate triage being conducted in frontline facilities like the Belgian Hospital. The split between ideology and action may have been simply for show, as a means for Gillies to keep the resources allotted to him. Or perhaps he truly believed he served the army first and patients second. Either way, Gillies continued to gain support for his unit at Aldershot, where he remained through the summer of 1916.

That July, the Battle of the Somme began. Over the course of the first day, the British Army suffered a catastrophic 57,470 casualties, of which 19,240 were dead.¹⁴⁹ Such astonishing numbers in just one day resulted in thousands of wounded flooding the hospital system. When recalling the casualties, Gillies described them as “Men without half their faces; men burned and maimed to the condition of animals.”¹⁵⁰ The Battle of the Somme made it apparent that Aldershot was simply not large enough to accommodate the massive influx of patients. As Gillies later wrote, “though we prepared for 200 casualties, 2000 arrived.”¹⁵¹ This wasn't the only issue facing them at Aldershot, as the overcrowded ward left very little room for the convalescence required between surgeries, and the War Office had strict rules regarding injured soldiers. In his recount of the ward at Aldershot, Gillies wrote that the War Office “stubbornly refused to allow a military patient to leave the hospital until he could take his place in the trenches again.”¹⁵² The soldiers were occasionally given an afternoon outing as their only form of recreation, but the sergeant-major “hated it” and would cancel these meager outings at the “slightest suggestion of a cloud in the sky.”¹⁵³ Forcing the men to stay in the suffocating wards, only further bored and discouraged them.

¹⁴⁷ Fitzharris, *The Facemaker*, 83.

¹⁴⁸ Gillies and Millard, *The Principles and Art*, 30.

¹⁴⁹ Peter Hart, *The Somme: The Darkest Hour on the Western Front* (New York: Pegasus Books, 2011), 7.

¹⁵⁰ Biernoff, *Portraits of Violence*, 118-119.

¹⁵¹ Gillies and Millard, *The Principles and Art*, 12.

¹⁵² Gillies and Millard, *The Principles and Art*, 30.

¹⁵³ Gillies and Millard, *The Principles and Art*, 30.

Simply put, Gillies and his growing staff needed far more than just one ward; they needed a hospital. The solution was found in Sidcup, England, where Frogna House, an old estate, was up for sale. It was suggested by Charles Kenderdine, a trustee for the Queen Mary's hospital in Roehampton, who was also the agent for the estate.¹⁵⁴ Kenderdine eventually was elected treasurer of the committee to raise money by public appeal for the new hospital. Tremendous effort went into buying and supporting the hospital, and while it was supported by The Joint War Committee and the army medical establishment, there was also heavy reliance on private donations from its aristocratic supporters. One such donor was Sir Heath Harrison, a shipping magnate who donated an impressive £10,000 to help get the hospital started.¹⁵⁵ Frogna House was finally opened in June 1917, later named Queen Mary's Hospital in honor of Queen Mary of Teck, who both helped fund and advocate for hospitals and their wounded throughout the war. The hospital was a vast upgrade from Aldershot, eventually offering over one thousand available beds and staffed with dozens of talented surgeons from Great Britain and beyond. Here, Gillies built a complex multidisciplinary staff that included surgeons, dentists, radiologists, anesthesiologists, artists, sculptors, and photographers, all collaborating for the success of patients' facial reconstructions.¹⁵⁶

During this time, Gillies and his colleagues developed many new surgical techniques to ease and improve the process of facial reconstruction, including the tubed pedicle, arterial flaps, and an adaptation of the epithelial inlay, which allowed for the reconstruction of eyelids. Cartilage and bone grafts were improved upon, and rhinoplasty, for the first time in decades, saw developments that allowed it to combat the gruesome injuries. These developments were not limited to only the facial surgeons; other specialties saw similar leaps in discovery, like dental surgeon Kelsey Fry, who developed a number of jaw techniques.¹⁵⁷ Ivan Magill, an early anesthesiologist, developed endotracheal intubation, which allowed for easier access when performing procedures on the face.¹⁵⁸

There were even more than just surgical improvements made. Gillies wrote in his 1920 book, *Plastic Surgery of the Face*, that when faced with these difficulties, "Surgery calls

¹⁵⁴ Bamji, *Faces from the Front*, 53.

¹⁵⁵ Bamji, *Faces from the Front*, 54.

¹⁵⁶ Fitzharris, *The Facemaker*, 153.

¹⁵⁷ Bamji, "Sir Harold Gillies," 144.

¹⁵⁸ Fitzharris, *The Facemaker*, 242.

Art to its Aid.”¹⁵⁹ The staff of Queen Mary’s went well beyond just medical; it included a variety of artists, from photographers and painters who created teaching diagrams and documented surgeries, to sculptors who took plaster casts of faces to help surgeons visualize repairs.¹⁶⁰ Perhaps the most notable artist Gillies worked with was Henry Tonks, a surgeon turned art professor whom Gillies convinced to use his unique skills to draw and paint records of the surgeries they performed. These paintings and sketches proved less intrusive in the operating room and more detailed than what was achievable with black and white photography.¹⁶¹ Many of the surgical records in Gillies’ textbooks and case notes were done by Tonks. Some artists even created custom masks for patients whose faces could not be fully repaired by surgeries.¹⁶² This complex team of professionals reflected Gillies’ belief that facial reconstruction required multidisciplinary care.

The surgeries patients underwent to receive these maxillofacial repairs were far from easy. The reconstruction of faces took significant time and effort as well as the full commitment of the patient. As one journalist for the *Otago Daily* (New Zealand) wrote, “some of the patients at present under treatment have been in hospital for 12 or 18 months, and a few have been there as long as two years.”¹⁶³ The slow incremental nature of the surgeries was intentional, as rushing often led to ugly consequences like in the case of young pilot Ralph Lumley. Lumley had become “exceedingly depressed” by the prospect of having to endure another long wait between surgeries, and the medical staff had become concerned.¹⁶⁴ Gillies chose for once to disregard his favorite maxim and push forward with the surgery, a choice that ultimately ended in disaster when Lumley’s new skin grafts failed to take and became infected with gangrene. Twenty-four days after the operation, Ralph Lumley died. His death seemed to haunt Gillies, who in his case study book wrote, “The author feels that his desire to obtain a perfect result somewhat over-rode his surgical judgment of the general condition of the patient... One

¹⁵⁹ Harold Gillies and W. Kelsey Fry, *Plastic Surgery of the Face Based on Selected Cases of War Injuries of the Face Including Burns with Original Illustrations* (London, UK: Oxford University Press; London, UK: Hodder & Stoughton, 1920), 5.

¹⁶⁰ Gillies and Fry, *Plastic Surgery of the Face*, x-xii.

¹⁶¹ Fitzharris, *The Facemaker*, 101.

¹⁶² Reid, *Medicine in First World War*, 104-105.

¹⁶³ “Plastic Surgery: Facial and Jaw Injuries. Some Details of the Treatment. Valuable System of Records,” *Otago Daily Times* (NZ), September 6, 1919, <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/ODT19190906.2.12>.

¹⁶⁴ Gillies and Fry, *Plastic Surgery of the Face*, 364.

could have wished that this brave fellow had had a happier death.”¹⁶⁵ Lumley’s death was a tragic example of what could happen when delicate surgeries were rushed and not given enough time for post-operative healing.

Many soldiers during the recovery process were left with open wounds that required constant irrigation to avoid the deadly scourge of gangrene. Those with jaw injuries were often also impaired from closing their mouths properly or speaking. Eating was especially difficult for those with jaw and palate injuries, forcing patients to live on completely liquid diets. In a letter to his father, New Zealand patient Lieutenant Horace Ellen, who sustained a jaw injury, wrote, “My food is all liquid... to be fed means a glass, a bib, a piece of cotton-wool, and a sister to hold my head and jaw—some performance.”¹⁶⁶ With some soldiers needing as many as ten to twelve surgeries to properly restore the face, keeping morale up was a matter of necessity.¹⁶⁷

Many patients who passed through Gillies’ care underwent multiple difficult surgeries. One such man was a naval gunner named Walter Yeo. Officer Yeo was stationed on the *HMS Warspite*, but after the brutal Battle of Jutland in 1916, he found himself under Gillies’ care, having suffered severe cordite burns. Cordite, a propellant explosive used to drive a shell or projectile from a gun during the war, resulted in injuries known as “flash burns.” Yeo’s burns were severe, disfiguring his face and resulting in loss of both his upper and lower eyelids. Thankfully, Gillies had a plan to carry out a “complete replacement” of the upper half of the face. The surgical team started by creating a chest flap and connecting it with tubed pedicles to establish blood supply. A “tubed pedicle” is a flap of skin that is stitched into a protective cylinder, and attached to the site of injury. Unlike open flaps this technique reduced the chance of infection. Once a blood supply had been established, the pedicle could be returned. After clearing away the scar tissue, they transferred the flap to the face and returned the pedicles to the neck. Three epithelial “outlays” were performed to restore the function of Officer Yeo’s new eyelids. Gillies even ensured that Yeo’s new skin graft included artificial eyebrows as the finishing touch. In his final case notes, Gillies wrote that Yeo had been deemed medically fit to return to service in the navy. This outcome commends the impressive reconstructive nature of Gillies surgeries but it is also a dark reminder of the pressure to return patients to the front if possible.

¹⁶⁵ Gillies and Fry, *Plastic Surgery of the Face*, 364.

¹⁶⁶ “Maimed Soldiers: Wonders of Surgery,” *The Press* (NZ), February 8, 1919, <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/CHP19190208.2.91>.

¹⁶⁷ “Plastic Surgery: Facial and Jaw Injuries. Some Details of the Treatment. Valuable System of Records,” *Otago Daily Times* (location), September 6, 1919, <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/ODT19190906.2.12>.

Another patient, Lt. William M. Spreckley, was admitted to the hospital in 1917 with a gunshot wound to the face which had resulted in the complete loss of his nose. Gillies would conduct a rhinoplasty to rebuild the nose but took a slightly different approach in the hopes of achieving better results. He started by removing a piece of cartilage from below one of Spreckley's ribs, which was then carefully carved into an arrow-like shape in the hopes that it would offer better lateral support. Next, he created a skin-graft inlay to supply the lining to go over the cartilage. Then, while ensuring it maintained a connected blood supply, Gillies swung the cartilage and skin-graft inlay downward to construct the bridge of Spreckley's nose. Unfortunately, Gillies was very discouraged by the initial results, comparing the swollen nose to "an anteater's snout" and recalling how his colleagues "roared with laughter."¹⁶⁸ Gillies, frustrated, swore to never go through with the method again; however, as the swelling reduced and excess tissue was removed, a nose began to appear. Gillies later, when outlining his sixteen principles for plastic surgery, would recall the incident writing, "hasty judgment leads often to the discard of the principle the soundness of which may later be proved."¹⁶⁹ Later pictures of Spreckley show a man whose face is indistinguishable from those that have never had a facial operation.

The hardest of all jobs in the ward and eventual hospital was keeping up the spirits of the patients. In the words of Aldershot Nurse Catherine Black, "the task of trying to rekindle the desire to live in men condemned to lie week after week smothered in bandages, unable to talk, unable to taste, unable even to sleep" was perhaps the toughest part of her work.¹⁷⁰ Keeping up the men's spirits was helped by Gillies' strong belief in including the patient in their own care, both directly and indirectly. He often consulted them on how their reconstructed faces would look, allowing them to pick the preferred shape of their features.¹⁷¹ This enabled him to include patients in their own care in a way that offered a little autonomy in a system that often viewed injured men as just another cog in the system to be repaired and returned to the front as soon as possible. There were also less direct ways in which the men could assist in their treatment, like participation in workshop activities that were available to teach the men vital skills and keep them active, from bookbinding to repairing motors. Activities also sometimes fed back into the hospital, with options like gardening, poultry farming, helping to produce the large amount of food the patients needed, or making toys around

¹⁶⁸ Gillies and Millard, *The Principles and Art*, 40.

¹⁶⁹ Gillies and Millard, *The Principles and Art*, 40.

¹⁷⁰ Gillies and Millard, *The Principles and Art*, 9.

¹⁷¹ Bamji, "Faces of War," 719.

Christmas that could be sold.¹⁷² Some men even took the opportunity to fully retrain into entirely new careers. Such was the case Malcolm Shirlaw, who worked as a miner before the war but, inspired by the treatment he received at Queen Mary's hospital, eventually retrained as a dental technician.¹⁷³

Overall, between 1917 and 1925, 5,000 WWI service members were treated at Queen Mary's and associated hospitals, and doctors there performed a total of 11,000 operations.¹⁷⁴ By the end, much of the staff that had started there during the war had left, with many returning home. Gillies remained until 1925, when the last eight facial patients were transferred out.¹⁷⁵ It was the end of something special, but it was not the end of Harold Gillies' work. He continued on postwar, performing a mix of reconstructive and cosmetic surgeries for civilian patients. During World War Two, Gillies was called on again to serve his country as one of the very few plastic surgeons in England, helping to organize plastic surgery services throughout the war.¹⁷⁶ Postwar, Gillies turned to all new plastic surgery challenges as he pioneered sex reassignment surgeries and founded the British Association of Plastic Surgeons.¹⁷⁷ Gillies was many things, but his patients seem to remember him best for his devotion and kindness. In a time when surgeons were encouraged to treat their patients with systematic dehumanization, Gillies gave his patients autonomy and focused on healing them both in function and aesthetics, allowing for the restoration of identity after facing devastating injuries.

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¹⁷² Fitzharris, *The Facemaker*, 198.

¹⁷³ Bamji, *Faces from the Front*, 194.

¹⁷⁴ Reid, *Medicine in First World War*, 102.

¹⁷⁵ Fitzharris, *The Facemaker*, 242-243.

¹⁷⁶ Bamji, "Sir Harold Gillies," 151.

¹⁷⁷ Fitzharris, *The Facemaker*, 260-262.

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