



Gender and Vermont History: Moving Women from the Sidebars into the Text

How did Vermont institutions and culture create opportunities or barriers for women's self-development? How did women, in turn, forge identities in this place? Did women help create and benefit from Vermonters' spirit of independence and self-reliance?

By MARILYN S. BLACKWELL

On March 30, 1939, Dorothy Canfield Fisher wrote an impassioned letter to the *Burlington Free Press* urging Vermont legislators to pass a bill granting women the right to serve on juries in Vermont. She compared women's status in this regard to that of African Americans and insisted that the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution assuring women's right to vote gave them "all the rights and duties of citizenship," including "the right of women to have members of their own sex on juries which try them." Despite her efforts and those of other activists, the bill failed, and Vermont women were not assured that right until passage of a statewide referendum in November 1942.¹

Fisher's advocacy and her articulate defense of women's rights in American society raise questions about how she portrayed women in *Vermont Tradition*, her idiosyncratic history of the state written over

.....

MARILYN S. BLACKWELL teaches United States, women's, and Vermont history at Community College of Vermont. Her article, "Surrogate Ministers: Women, Revivalism, and Maternal Associations in Vermont," appeared in *Vermont History* 69 (Winter 2001). She is currently researching the political activities of Clarina Howard Nichols in Vermont and Kansas.

Vermont History 71 (Winter/Spring 2003): 46–61.

© 2003 by the Vermont Historical Society. ISSN: 0042-4161; online ISSN: 1544-3043

a decade later. Did she include women and address women's status in her description of the state's early history?

Often characterized as "Vermont's First Lady," Fisher was a prolific Vermont booster, whose popular novels spread ideas about Vermonters and the merits of country life as much as any other writer in the mid-twentieth century.² Raised in the Midwest, Fisher spent much of her adult life after her marriage in 1907 at her ancestral home in Arlington.³ She did not pretend to be a historian, but she did have a theory of history. "History is worth reading," she wrote, "when it tells us truly what the attitude towards life was in the past."⁴ Based on her reading of Vermont history, her knowledge of Vermont folklore, and her own family's heritage, *Vermont Tradition: The Biography of an Outlook on Life* was an effort to define the attitude that had molded Vermonters.

Fisher's portrait reaffirms one of the most persistent images of Vermont as the embodiment of the American ideal of freedom. Writing in the 1950s, she built on national themes developed during the war years coupled with nostalgia for preindustrial virtues that the Vermont tourist industry had promoted since the late nineteenth century.⁵ The New Hampshire Grants controversy, in Fisher's view, symbolized the American struggle for democracy and freedom against aristocratic old-world systems of hierarchy and power that New York landlords exhibited. The freely held, small farms emerging out of this struggle laid the foundation for Vermonters' sense of self-reliance and independence and for a largely classless, tolerant society that assimilated social differences.

In this freedom-loving place, where were the women? Ironically, women appear throughout *Vermont Tradition* in Fisher's stories gleaned from folklore, but historical women are largely missing. Noting that, "Something is told about the spirit of a people by the stories they chance to hand down, by the kind of women they admire," Fisher describes several active, strong-minded, and hardworking women in the white settlement era.⁶ Young women race horses to see who can reach Bennington first; a wise matron chooses a house site based on the quality of the water for washing fine linens; grandmothers plow fields. In one revealing story a Connecticut man, who had come to clear land, greets his wife and children when they arrive the following spring. "I think I know . . . what he felt," Fisher tells us:

"Oh my wife, my love, when you come the meaning of life springs up like a fountain. With you and the children here, I am a whole man again, deep-rooted in hope, faith and joy." But, she continues, "I am sure that he put none of that feeling into words. Probably what he said was something like this: 'I've got a line of pump-logs rigged up right to the door. You won't need to go to the brook for water. Little

Delia's fat as a pig, ain't she.' It was a language his wife understood as well as he."⁷

This scene, like much of *Vermont Tradition*, reveals as much about Fisher's sense of romance and her practical values in the 1950s as about early Vermont. In her view, a frontier woman knew how to wash clothes and feed her children; her inventive and loving, but inexpressive, husband would prepare the way to make life as easy as possible. Fisher accompanied this image of the complementary roles of men and women settlers with the conviction that "the traditional, submissive, husband-obeying wife, who loved to be commanded by a male . . . certainly was not a Vermont product."⁸ Yet she had little evidence for this assertion. Her stories of the mid-nineteenth century portray Vermont grandmothers lovingly corresponding with the children who have left home, caring for wounded soldiers, or maintaining family farms and the idea of home.

Fisher's portrayal of women testified to the classless, preindustrial nature of Vermont society and the image of the state as a seat of rural virtues. The Victorian woman, elevated to genteel ways and idleness by her middle-class status, did not exist in Fisher's Vermont.⁹ Instead, she depicted women's farm and household work as a means of domesticating, democratizing, and channeling Vermont's history into a narrow stream of frontier traits and home values that persisted in the rural Vermont of her own lifetime. Fisher blended women's identity into that of the men of Vermont because she saw them as marriage partners maintaining a Jeffersonian ideal of democracy. She failed to ask historical questions about women's status, rights, and freedoms in Vermont's past, even though during her long career she supported equal opportunities for women and many of her novels address gender role tensions.¹⁰

To a considerable extent Fisher's perspective also resulted from women's invisibility in history. For example, she explained that when President Lincoln said "government by the people," he certainly did not "dream of including half of 'the people'—women. Almost nobody in his time would have done so." Yet a number of women and men had dreamed of including women in "the people" long before Lincoln's presidency.¹¹ For example, Vermont's Clarina Howard Nichols appeared before the state legislature in 1852 to support a petition allowing women to vote in school meetings. Apparently, Fisher was unaware of Nichols's activism. Yet she easily could have integrated her story into *Vermont Tradition* because Nichols relied as much on American ideals of equality and freedom as Fisher to develop her theory of women's rights. Moreover, Nichols championed the same values of home and motherhood that Fisher wrote about extensively throughout her life.¹²

The absence of real women as actors in Fisher's work provides a good example of why we need to ask questions that will offer Vermont women a more usable past. How did Vermont institutions and culture create opportunities or barriers for women's self-development? How did women, in turn, forge identities in this place? Did women help create and benefit from Vermonters' spirit of independence and self-reliance?

In 1977 Faith Pepe first attempted to address some of these questions. She urged researchers to look beyond biography and examine women's institutions and social trends affecting women.¹³ At that time, collecting women's stories and identifying women's archival sources had just begun. The emphasis on social history in the 1970s and American diversity in the 1980s spurred local and state historians all over the country to recover details of the daily lives of ordinary Americans from every ethnic group. We learned about Daisy Turner, the oldest black woman in the state, and about the young Vermont women who migrated to Lowell to work in the textile mills.¹⁴ At the same time, Deborah Clifford wrote about Vermont women's long struggle for suffrage and their temperance activism in the late nineteenth century.¹⁵ In 1988 Constance McGovern echoed Pepe's appeal and challenged Vermont historians and writers to examine patterns of marriage and divorce, treatment of women in prisons and asylums, the experience of ethnic women, and the status of poor and working-class women. McGovern called for more interpretive accounts that show "how events and trends in Vermont history affected women and defined womanhood."¹⁶

Today, despite considerable new research, that challenge remains largely unfulfilled. Scholars of social and women's history have used Vermont evidence and data to explore questions at the regional or national level, while historians using the state as a unit of analysis have rarely asked questions about women's status. Local historians have brought women's experience in family and community life into our collective memory, but this material remains largely unconnected to economic and political trends in the state. Consequently, in histories of Vermont, women are visible, but they remain largely in the sidebars. Consider *Vermont Voices*, the new documentary history of Vermont, which encompasses 166 documents; the editors included some exemplary entries by women, but only 13, representing 8 percent.¹⁷ In Jan Albers's *Hands on the Land*, which has been hailed as a new synthesis, women appear in photos and boxes alongside the narrative. They work on farms; they bake crackers and cookies; they exchange some goods; they partake of leisure activities; and by the early twentieth century they are getting a little uppity both with their menfolk and the tourists. Dorothy Canfield Fisher is the only woman who is given serious atten-

tion in the text as a promoter of Vermont tradition.¹⁸ For the most part, women are not actors in the story; their labor to build communities and a Vermont identity is not connected to the main narrative. Clearly, the authors of both of these books tried to bring women out of the shadows of the past. But they have found neither enough material nor a compelling analytical model that would incorporate women in the story of the state.

In the 1990s historians of women sought to resolve this problem in history writing by focusing on gender rather than women as a separate group. They examined the ways that men's and women's attitudes about gender, intertwined with race and class perspectives, shape our social, economic, and political institutions.¹⁹ In state history writing, attention to gender can help produce a more synthetic history as long as women's experience from their own perspective remains paramount. Historians need to continue to highlight those individual female actors from the past—many from different class and ethnic backgrounds—who help Vermonters define a sense of place while also examining the way ideas about gender influenced the development of Vermont society and culture.

With this approach in mind, I have chosen a few examples from the research of the 1990s to raise some new questions and to suggest ways to move women out of the sidebars of Vermont history and into the text. These examples highlight themes connecting women to a chronology of the state's history: their role in the economy, their status in Vermont law, and their influence in religious and political life.

RECENT RESEARCH ON WOMEN IN VERMONT

In 1749, Peter Kalm, a Swedish traveler near St. Jean, Quebec, described three Abenaki women in a canoe holding guns poised for duck hunting. They donned "funnel shaped caps, trimmed . . . with white glass beads" and "French women's waists and jackets."²⁰ This intriguing image raises a number of questions about Abenaki women in the eighteenth century: Did the acquisition of guns modify traditional gender roles in food gathering and hunting? To what extent did women participate in and benefit from extensive trade networks with Europeans? How did Abenaki women cope with endless war, disease, and family loss?

Colin Calloway, Frederick Wiseman, and others have enlightened us about the Abenaki world, but the voices of Western Abenaki women from this period are hard to find.²¹ How did their experience of migration, trade relations, interracial marriage, diplomacy, war, and Jesuit missionizing differ from that of Abenaki men? Some clues can be found in regional histories. Bunny McBride has detailed the lives of

Eastern Abenaki women, including Molly Ockett, who lived near Bethel, Maine, much of her life, participated in Catholic rituals, and periodically appeared in northern Vermont to doctor the sick and wounded.²² John Demos's *Unredeemed Captive*—about the capture of Eunice Williams from Deerfield in 1704 and her father's attempt to retrieve her—provides a good description of the war-torn landscape between Quebec and the Connecticut River Valley. Here Abenaki, Iroquois, and white women struggled to adapt to an interracial borderland.²³ These women moved between, around, and sometimes outside of French Catholic missions, intertribal settlements, and English Protestant communities. Their struggle for survival reminds us that Vermont did not emerge out of a wilderness but out of a clash of empires and cultures, and that women's fortunes rose and fell somewhat differently from men's during that lengthy conflict.

One female voice from the eighteenth century that has become clearer is that of Lucy Terry Prince. Dubbing her a "Singer of History," David Proper identified Prince as the earliest black poet in America for her bloody ballad, "The Bars Fight." In detailing the last Abenaki raid on Deerfield, Massachusetts, in 1746, Prince depicts a scene of slaughter; she names five men as victims of Indian violence and then describes the experience from a woman's perspective:

Eunice Allen see the Indians comeing
And hoped to save herself by running;
And had not her petticoats stopt her,
The awful creatures had not cotched her,
Nor tommyhawked her on the head,
And left her on the ground for dead.

Petticoats made women vulnerable, but Eunice Allen "hoped to save herself."²⁴ Prince's oration provides a glimpse of women's experience of wartime violence, reveals a little about her own attitude toward life, and raises additional questions about how the insecurities of the frontier influenced women's actions and their status.

Lucy Terry Prince's subsequent migration to Vermont with her husband Abijah and her way with words before Governor Chittenden and his Council in 1785 have long been part of the mythology of early Vermont.²⁵ Proper has verified some and demystified much of the Prince story. But why did "Abijah's Lucy," as she was sometimes called, speak before the governor and council about a property dispute in Guilford in the late eighteenth century? Under the common law of coverture, a married woman held limited legal standing; she could not sell property, make contracts, sue, or make a will, and was barred from legal proceedings unless accompanied by her husband. Married women were

allowed to petition authorities and to present grievances, but usually they only did so when their husbands were dead or absent. Where was Abijah when Lucy presented their case? Was she simply more outspoken and articulate than her husband? Or were Vermont's political culture and infant legal system so fluid that women had more space to negotiate than they had later? What difference did Prince's race make? In the period of the Republic, which was crucial to establishing Vermont as both a region of disorderly outcasts and rogues and of quintessential democracy, how did women fare? Was it simply a place where they were at the mercy of male protectors, or did they benefit from the land-grab era in other ways? Did they prosper or were they harmed by frontier instability, common-law marriages, frequent marital and family separation, and a dearth of religious and educational institutions?

For Mary Goss of Montpelier, the disorder was clearly a problem. In a letter of 1821, she bemoaned that, "Vice and immorality greatly prevail" in the capital. Yet, she noted hopefully, "Praying circles have recently been instituted and a system of visiting from house to house established." Praying circles were only one mode of female evangelizing. Congregational women like Mary Goss, who represented a relatively educated, elite class in Vermont's commercial villages, not only formed Bible societies, Sunday schools, and missionary societies, but also comprised a significant majority of new Congregational members in the first round of religious revivals in the 1810s and 1820s.²⁶ While men built the meetinghouses that grace Vermont's landscape, women filled them. During this early period of church organizing, when the competition among churches was fierce, women's religious work played a significant role in Vermont's history. We know that a few, such as Baptist Clarissa Danforth of Weathersfield and Methodist Margaret Peckett of Bradford, took leadership roles, but how did women's evangelical efforts influence the development of Vermont communities and the structure of the state's churches? Incorporating their efforts into histories of the revival period will provide a fuller picture of Vermont's evangelical culture and what Tom Bassett called the "open race" between denominations.²⁷

Unlike their religious activism, women's labor in Vermont between 1790 and 1840 has been more clearly documented. Laurel Thatcher Ulrich and Thomas Dublin have shown the importance of women's cloth production and putting-out work in northern New England even as mechanization of the textile industry developed.²⁸ How did women's shifting economic roles in this era contribute to the increasing specialization and regional dependence of the Vermont economy? Would the sheep craze have emerged without the labor of women who spun and

wove wool at home in between the carding and fulling process? Even Brattleboro's Mary Palmer Tyler, who participated in a flourishing literary culture by writing *The Maternal Physician* in 1811, remained productive. In the 1830s she planted 450 white mulberry trees, hatched silk worms, and spun, twisted, and dyed her own silk floss for market.²⁹

Much of the new research delineating rural women's lives shows how their productive work influenced their attitudes about class and appropriate gender roles. Catherine Kelly has shown how women of the provincial middle class such as Tyler, whose childcare manual promoted the elevation of women's maternal roles, still clung to the values associated with the household economy through garment sewing and knitting.³⁰ For historian Karen Hansen, women's habitual work formed the basis of a cohesive social world in New England; men's and women's tasks and social activities were integrated and sometimes interchangeable rather than set apart in separate spheres as delineated in the urban middle-class home.³¹

Equally important was the effect of women's work on marriage relations. In an advertisement of 1804, an estranged husband complained about his wife Sukey and her refusal to uphold her female obligations:

For she will neither spin nor weave,
But there she'll sit and take her ease;
There she'll sit, and pout, and grin,
As if the Devil had entered in;
For she would neither knit nor sew,
But all in rags I had to go:
So, farewell Sukey! and farewell, wife!
Till you can live a better life.³²

Indeed, this husband felt cheated of his wife's production. Historians Mary Beth Sievens, who examined marital conflicts, and Randolph Roth, who researched domestic violence, have shown that early Republic households were not necessarily harmonious. Vermont couples did have greater access to divorce than some other Americans; by 1803 Vermont statutes included adultery, fraudulent contract, desertion, intolerable severity, and impotence as legitimate causes for divorce. Women's household production became an important resource in their efforts to negotiate around their inferior legal status under coverture. Roth concludes that the economic interdependence of husbands and wives, coupled with high literacy rates and relatively easy access to divorce in Vermont and New Hampshire, helped prevent domestic murders.³³ Women's continuing household production during the antebellum era clearly helped shape their experience and a distinct rural ideology, while aspects of Vermont's legal code may have softened the effects of patriarchy.

American women were excluded from formal politics during this period, but they were deeply involved in social reform, especially antislavery and temperance. New research on Rachel Robinson of Ferrisburgh and her efforts at Rokeby to boycott slave products and harbor fugitives highlights the absence of studies about other women in Vermont's antislavery movement.³⁴ We know that women were members of the Vermont Anti-Slavery Society, but what happened to them when the Liberty Party formed?³⁵ How actively did they participate in national petition campaigns against Indian removal and slavery? In the mid-1830s women's antislavery and temperance petitions began appearing at the Vermont legislature. In 1852, 20,500 Vermont women and youths signed petitions in support of statewide prohibition, compared with only 17,500 male voters.³⁶ Women's political activism and their relationship to political parties is clearly one area that needs additional study.

In the mid to late nineteenth century, when hill towns declined and industrial and tourist havens bustled, women's role in the economy became less visible. Instead, new research documents young women leaving the state while others sustained families and communities. In *Roxana's Children*, Lynn Bonfield and Mary Morrison show how women underpinned the social fabric of hill towns such as Peacham while facing family separation as their children emigrated. Linda Peavy and Ursula Smith treat the same topic in a larger context in *Women in Waiting in the Westward Movement*.³⁷ If Vermont communities experienced a so-called "winter," it was warmed by women who populated churches, schoolhouses, and voluntary societies.³⁸ With the help of Abby Hemenway, residents of Vermont hill towns could claim a proud identity. As she single-handedly documented the early history of these communities, Hemenway appealed to Vermonters' sense of place and pride as effectively as did Dorothy Canfield Fisher. Deborah Clifford's new biography of Hemenway shows the struggle a single, educated woman faced as she sought not only to gather local historical writings but also to make a living in Vermont.³⁹

Many single women migrated back and forth between Vermont farms and the state's commercial and industrial centers in the late nineteenth century, but we know little about their work lives. They faced a sex-segregated labor market in which women gained access only to low-level, unskilled employment. Did Vermont's economy during this era offer young women fewer opportunities than elsewhere, thereby limiting their choices and propelling them to emigrate at higher rates than young men; or did their obligations to farming and laboring families outweigh these considerations? Some women labored in small shops and textile factories; others operated boarding houses and served tourists who flocked to hotels, spas, and mineral springs. With the



“Girls, W. A. Cole Paper Company [Putney], Oct. 30 [18]99.” Courtesy of the Putney Historical Society.

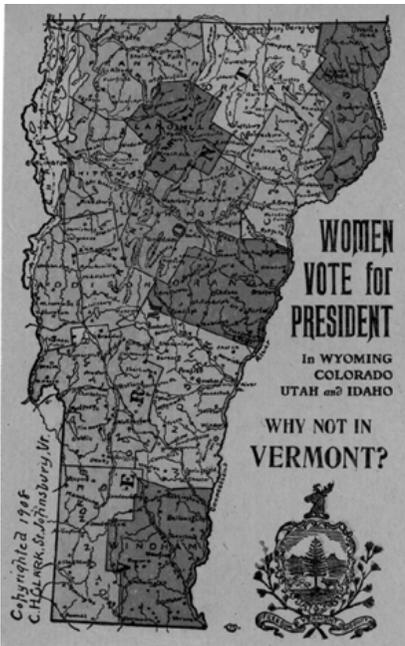
exception of Irish women in Northfield and Brattleboro, there has been little research on immigrant women in Vermont communities.⁴⁰ We need to know much more about French Canadian, Italian, Swedish, Eastern European, and other foreign-born women and whether their experience in Vermont—in both urban and rural areas—differed significantly from that of other places.

During the period 1890 to 1930, Vermont policymakers were intent upon selling the state to outsiders and developing regulations to bolster declining hill farms, families, and towns; this effort contributed to the myth about the state as a preindustrial oasis of self-supporting communities.⁴¹ Two important studies, Dona Brown’s *Inventing New England* and Nancy Gallagher’s *Breeding Better Vermonters*, provide clues about women’s participation in this process. Brown shows not only how feminine values infused the state’s policy of promoting farm vacations but also how the work of farm women and their encounters with tourists helped recreate a mythic rural life.⁴² Abenaki women also partook in

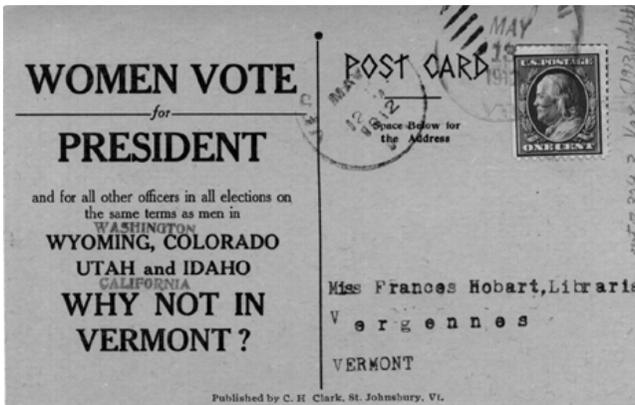
the selling of Vermont. According to Fred Wiseman, they took over basketmaking to service the budding tourist market; the “Indian basket” became a symbol of the exotic Indian and a way to sustain Abenaki families and reformulate their identity.⁴³ Nancy Gallagher’s sobering investigation of the state’s attempt at regulating reproduction should dispel any idealistic notions of sisterhood in Vermont. White women social workers helped implement a state policy that institutionalized and sterilized poor and disabled women, many of Abenaki ancestry, in an effort to protect a particular version of the ideal Vermont family.⁴⁴ The quest for ideal family relations drove the state’s incipient regulation of male sexuality, according to Hal Goldman, and a similar impulse appeared in my research on public health nurses. In her zeal to protect children and ensure the healthiness of Vermont homes, nurse Anna Davis of the Brattleboro Mutual Aid Society scoured the state in the 1910s for diphtheria, impetigo, tooth aches, and mental “defects” as she called them, not hesitating to impose her own concepts of cleanliness and behavior on her patients.⁴⁵ These studies provide material for an analysis of state policy that takes gender and race into account and shows how both women and men created Vermont’s version of the progressive state.

The most significant scholarship on Vermont women in the post-World War II era focuses on their representation in political life. In her study of rural women in local government, Ann Hallowell found higher rates of participation in Vermont than for women in more urbanized states. Yet, according to Karen Madden’s research on women in the Republican Party, involvement in party politics did not contribute to women’s political advancement. Gregory Sanford’s research on the lengthy debate over women’s jury service in the state supports Madden’s conclusion that barriers to women’s political participation continued to result in unequal citizenship through much of the twentieth century. These studies and Madeleine Kunin’s intriguing memoir, *Living a Political Life*, raise important questions about women’s participation in partisan and local politics in a rural state.⁴⁶ Kunin has given us new insights into women’s experience in Vermont politics in the late twentieth century. Her opening line, “Don’t cry, I told myself fiercely, stay in control,” speaks volumes about the struggle public women faced as they entered a world in which men had set the rules of engagement.⁴⁷ How did Kunin’s experience reflect the political context in Vermont? Why was Vermont’s first female governor a Democrat?

Beyond women’s place in political life, there are other areas of recent history ripe for investigation. How did increasing numbers of women in the wage force influence the growth and characteristics of the Vermont economy?⁴⁸ How did women feature in the back-to-



This postcard was probably commissioned by the Vermont Equal Suffrage Association, organized in 1907. It is copyrighted 1908, when only the four states noted on the front side allowed women to vote for president. By the time it was mailed, in 1912, Washington and California had passed woman suffrage laws, and those states were added to the message on the reverse side.



the-land movement, the environmental movement, and the debates over abortion, the state Equal Rights Amendment, and civil unions?

CONCLUSION

Despite these and other major gaps in knowledge about women in Vermont, some tentative hypotheses emerge from this review of recent

research. Evidence exists to support Dorothy Canfield Fisher's impression that Vermont women played an important role in the economy. This may not always have fostered their own freedom and independence, but it did influence gender ideologies and the way women experienced rural life. Visible and essential in the early nineteenth century, women's labor became invisible but no less essential on family farms and in ethnic communities by the end of the century. Like Fisher, many women were integral to the selling of Vermont, not only supplying the labor to serve tourists and vacationers but also creating that idea of home and community life that Vermonters sold to out-of-staters. To what extent did both the reality of women's work on farms and the myth about the virtues of rural life inhibit the development of women's identities as individual workers capable of claiming full citizenship rights? Vermont's early legal system allowed women relatively easier access to divorce than most other states, but the state lagged behind others in granting women full citizenship—property rights, suffrage, and jury service.⁴⁹ Between 1920 and the 1960s, the effect of Vermont's one-town, one-vote, one-party system may have opened political pathways for some women, but not political power.

In the 1990s many historians concluded that women's history not only varied by race and class but also followed a jagged pattern; it fell back nearly as often as it leaped forward, and it involved conflicts among women as well as between women and men.⁵⁰ Given the diversity of women's material and familial circumstances, Vermont scholars need to continue to ask how conditions in the state shaped opportunities for different groups of women and their access to social or political power. To that end, gathering the record of women's varied experience in the state and developing an analysis of the state's history that takes gender into account will help bring women out of the sidebars of Vermont histories and fully into view as actors in the state's past.

NOTES

¹ D. Gregory Sanford, "From Ballot Box to Jury Box: Women and the Rights and Obligations of Citizenship," paper read at the Vermont Judicial History Society meeting, 2 June 2000, 10–17; quote on 13.

² For Fisher's significance in Vermont culture, see William C. Lipke, "From Pastoralism to Progressivism: Myth and Reality in Twentieth-Century Vermont," in *Celebrating Vermont: Myths and Realities*, ed. Nancy Price Graff (Middlebury, Vt.: Christian A. Johnson Memorial Gallery, Middlebury College, 1991), 76.

³ Mark J. Madigan, ed., *Keeping Fires Night and Day: Selected Letters of Dorothy Canfield Fisher* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1993), 1–6.

⁴ Dorothy Canfield Fisher, *Vermont Tradition: The Biography of an Outlook on Life* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1953), 49.

⁵ Lipke, "Pastoralism to Progressivism," 74. For Vermont's tourist industry, see Dona Brown, *Inventing New England: Regional Tourism in the Nineteenth Century* (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995), 142–167.

- ⁶ Fisher, *Vermont Tradition*, 43.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, 45.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, 46.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, 42–43.
- ¹⁰ Madigan, *Keeping Fires*, 19–22.
- ¹¹ Fisher, *Vermont Tradition*, 433.
- ¹² For a brief overview of Nichols's career, see T.D. Seymour Bassett, "Nichols, Clarina Irene Howard," *Notable American Women, 1607–1950: A Biographical Dictionary*, eds. Edward T. James, Janet Wilson James, and Paul S. Boyer (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 2: 625–627.
- ¹³ Faith L. Pepe, "Toward a History of Women in Vermont: An Essay," *Vermont History* 45 (Spring 1977): 69–81.
- ¹⁴ Jane C. Beck and Wes Graff, *On My Own: the Traditions of Daisy Turner*, directed by Jane C. Beck and Wes Graff, 28 min., Filmmakers' Library, 1987, videocassette; Thomas Dublin, *Women at Work: The Transformation of Work and Community in Lowell, Massachusetts, 1826–1860* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979); *Farm to Factory: Women's Letters, 1830–1860* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981).
- ¹⁵ Deborah P. Clifford, "The Drive for Women's Municipal Suffrage in Vermont, 1883–1917," *Vermont History* 47 (Summer 1979): 173–190; "The Women's War Against Rum," *Vermont History* 52 (Summer 1984): 141–160.
- ¹⁶ Constance M. McGovern, "Women's History: The State of the Art," *Vermont History* 56 (Spring 1988): 78.
- ¹⁷ J. Kevin Graffagnino, Samuel B. Hand, and Gene Sessions, eds., *Vermont Voices, 1609 through the 1990s: A Documentary History of the Green Mountain State* (Montpelier: Vermont Historical Society, 1999).
- ¹⁸ Jan Albers, *Hands on the Land: A History of the Vermont Landscape* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press for the Orton Family Foundation, 2000), 100, 141, 172, 223, 249, 256, 259, 261, 271–272, 292.
- ¹⁹ For the classic statement of this approach, see Joan W. Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988). For the inclusion of race, see Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, "African-American Women's History and the Metalanguage of Race," *Signs* 17 (1992): 251–274.
- ²⁰ Adolph B. Benson, ed., *Peter Kalm's Travels in North America*, 2 vols. (1770; repr. New York: Wilson-Ericson, 1937), 2: 563, quoted in Colin G. Calloway, ed., *Dawnland Encounters: Indians and Europeans in Northern New England* (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1991), 56.
- ²¹ See for example, Colin G. Calloway, *The Western Abenakis of Vermont, 1600–1800: War, Migration, and the Survival of an Indian People* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990); Frederick Matthew Wiseman, *The Voice of the Dawn: An Autohistory of the Abenaki Nation* (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 2001); William A. Haviland and Marjory W. Power, *The Original Vermonters: Native Inhabitants, Past and Present* (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1994).
- ²² Bunny McBride and Harold E. L. Prins, "Walking the Medicine Line: Molly Ockett, Pig-wacket Doctor," in *Northeastern Indian Lives, 1632–1816*, ed. Robert Grument (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1996), 321–347; Bunny McBride, *Women of the Dawn* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), 45–67.
- ²³ John Demos, *The Unredeemed Captive: A Family Story from Early America* (New York: Random House, 1994).
- ²⁴ David R. Proper, *Lucy Terry Prince: Singer of History* (Deerfield, Mass.: Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association & Historic Deerfield, 1997), 18–19.
- ²⁵ For a fictional version of Prince's story, see Bernard and Jonathan Katz, *Black Woman: A Fictionalized Biography of Lucy Terry Prince* (New York: Pantheon, 1973).
- ²⁶ Marilyn S. Blackwell, "Surrogate Ministers: Women, Revivalism, and Maternal Associations in Vermont," *Vermont History* 69 (Winter 2001): 68–72.
- ²⁷ T.D. Seymour Bassett, *The Gods of the Hills: Piety and Society in Nineteenth-Century Vermont* (Montpelier: Vermont Historical Society, 2000), 69–96.
- ²⁸ Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, "Wheels, Looms, and the Gender Division of Labor in Eighteenth-Century New England," *William and Mary Quarterly* 55 (January 1998): 3–38; Thomas Dublin, "Rural Putting-Out Work in Early Nineteenth-Century New England: Women and the Transition to Capitalism in the Countryside," *New England Quarterly* 64 (December 1991): 531–573.
- ²⁹ Marilyn S. Blackwell, "Love and Duty: Mary Palmer Tyler and Republican Childrearing," (M.A. thesis, University of Vermont, 1990), 166–167.
- ³⁰ Catherine E. Kelly, "Between Town and Country: New England Women and the Creation of a Provincial Middle Class, 1820–1860," (Ph.D. diss., University of Rochester, 1992): 20–29; *In the*

.....

New England Fashion: Reshaping Women's Lives in the Nineteenth Century (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), 47–58. For Tyler's childcare manual, see Marilyn S. Blackwell, "The Republican Vision of Mary Palmer Tyler," *Journal of the Early Republic* 12 (Spring 1992): 11–35.

³¹ Karen V. Hansen, *A Very Social Time: Crafting Community in Antebellum New England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

³² *Weekly Wanderer*, 23 July 1804, quoted in Mary Beth Sievens, "Stray Wives: Marital Conflict and Gender Relations in Vermont, 1790–1830," (Ph.D. diss., Boston University, 1996), 94; and Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *The Age of Homespun: Objects and Stories in the Creation of an American Myth* (New York: Knopf, 2001), 367.

³³ Mary Beth Sievens, "'The Wicked Agency of Others': Community, Law, and Marital Conflict in Vermont, 1790–1830," *Journal of the Early Republic* 21 (Spring 2001): 19–39; Ulrich, *Age of Homespun*, 367–368; Randolph A. Roth, "Spousal Murder in Northern New England, 1776–1865," in *Over the Threshold: Intimate Violence in Early America*, eds. Christine Daniels and Michael V. Kennedy (New York: Routledge, 1999), 65–93.

³⁴ Ronald Salomon, "Being Good: An Abolitionist Family Attempts to Live Up to Its Own Standards," *Vermont History* 69 (Winter 2001): 32–47; Jane Williamson, "Rowland T. Robinson, Rokeby, and the Underground Railroad in Vermont," *ibid.*, 19–31.

³⁵ Reinhard O. Johnson, "The Liberty Party in Vermont, 1840–1848: The Forgotten Abolitionists," *Vermont History* 47 (Fall 1979): 259.

³⁶ *Journal of the House of the State of Vermont, October Session, 1852* (Montpelier, 1852), 356–358. For Vermont petitions in the anti-Indian removal and antislavery campaigns, see Mary Hershberger, "Mobilizing Women, Anticipating Abolition: The Struggle against Indian Removal in the 1830s," *Journal of American History* 86 (June 1999): 24.

³⁷ Lynn A. Bonfield and Mary C. Morrison, *Roxana's Children: The Biography of a Nineteenth-Century Vermont Family* (Amherst: University Press of Massachusetts, 1995); Linda Peavy and Ursula Smith, *Women in Waiting in the Westward Movement: Life on the Home Frontier* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994).

³⁸ For the classic statement of Vermont's "winter" period in the late nineteenth century, see Harold Fisher Wilson, *The Hill Country of Northern New England: Its Social and Economic History, 1790–1930* (New York: AMS Press, 1967).

³⁹ Deborah Pickman Clifford, *The Passion of Abby Hemenway: Memory, Spirit, and the Making of History* (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 2001), 211–229.

⁴⁰ For Irish women, see Marilyn Schultz Blackwell, "Entitled to Relief: Poor Women, Charity, and Medicine, 1900–1920," (Ph.D. diss., University of Massachusetts Amherst, 1996), 48–65; Gene Sessions, "'Years of Struggle': The Irish in the Village of Northfield, 1845–1900," *Vermont History* 55 (Spring 1987): 73–74.

⁴¹ Andrea Rebeck, "The Selling of Vermont: From Agriculture to Tourism, 1860–1910," *Vermont History* 44 (Winter 1976): 14–27.

⁴² Brown, *Inventing New England*, 135–167.

⁴³ Wiseman, *Voice of the Dawn*, 132–138.

⁴⁴ Nancy L. Gallagher, *Breeding Better Vermonters: The Eugenics Project in the Green Mountain State* (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1999), 71–126.

⁴⁵ Harold A. Goldman, "'He Had No Right,': Sex, Law, and the Courts in Vermont, 1777–1920," (Ph.D. diss., University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2000); Marilyn S. Blackwell, "The Politics of Public Health: Medical Inspection and School Nursing in Vermont, 1910–1923," *Vermont History* 68 (Winter/Spring 2000): 58–84.

⁴⁶ Ann Hollowell, "Women on the Threshold: An Analysis of Rural Women in Local Politics, 1921–1941," *Rural Sociology* 52 (1987): 510–512; Sanford, "From Ballot Box to Jury Box," 17; Karen Madden, "Ready to Work: Women in Vermont and Michigan from Suffrage to Republican Party Politics," (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 2002); Madeleine Kunin, *Living a Political Life* (New York: Knopf, 1994). For another look at women in political life, see Frank Bryan, "How Does 'Real Democracy' Treat Women? New Data and Perspectives from Vermont's Town Meeting," Research-in-Progress Seminar #135, Center for Research on Vermont, 11 March 1999.

⁴⁷ Kunin, *Living a Political Life*, 3.

⁴⁸ Several oral history collections provide a record of women's work experience. See for example, D'Ann Calhoun Fago, *A Diversity of Gifts: Vermont Women at Work* (Woodstock, Vt.: Countryman Press, 1989); Karen Lane, Mary Kasamatsu, and Eleanor Ott, eds., *My Mama Rolled Out of the Sleigh: A Sampler of Individual and Family Memories Recorded at the Vermont Women's State Fair* (Montpelier, Vt.: Governor's Commission on Women, 1988); *Voices of Vermont Nurses: Nursing in Vermont, 1941–1996* (S. Burlington, Vt.: Vermont State Nurses Association, 2000).

⁴⁹ Under Vermont law, married women gradually achieved the right to control their real and personal property and their own earnings between 1847 and 1919, when they finally gained full control over their real estate. See Vermont, *Acts and Resolves Passed by the Legislature of the State of*

.....

Vermont at their October Session 1847 (Burlington, 1847), 26; 1867, 29; 1884, 120; 1888, 98; 1919, 98. Vermont passed municipal suffrage for women in 1917, the same year New York and Rhode Island granted women full voting rights following numerous western states. Vermont women did not gain full suffrage until passage of the federal amendment in 1919. See Clifford, "Drive for Women's Municipal Suffrage," 188–189. For jury service, see Sanford, "From Ballot Box to Jury Box," 7.

⁵⁰ For an overview, see Nancy A. Hewitt, "Beyond the Search for Sisterhood: American Women's History in the 1990s," in *Unequal Sisters: A Multicultural Reader in U.S. Women's History*, 3 ed., eds. Vicki L. Ruiz and Ellen Carol DuBois (New York: Routledge, 2000), 1–19.