

# FROM THE HERMITAGE, Stamford, CT

By Larry Ginsberg

Fiction: Women's Suffrage debate, Stamford, CT April 13, 1915

Musical Interlude: "She's Good Enough To Be Your Baby's Mother And She's Good Enough To Vote With You." – Lyrics by Alfred Bryan – Music by Herman Paley

Moderator: Willkommen! and bienvenue! Welcome! The issue before our panel today is woman's suffrage. And no, suffrage has nothing to do with suffering except maybe in our panelists' family dynamic. It comes from the Latin suffragium which means a "voting tablet" or "ballot"

Musical Interlude: Keep Woman in her Sphere – D. Estabrook C 1880's

Today's Panelists: Speaking in Favor of Women's Suffrage will be Maud Nathan, a Sephardic Aristocrat and a descendant of the first Jews to arrive in New Amsterdam in 1654. After the untimely death of her daughter, Annette in 1893, Maud devoted her life to help New York's exploding poverty. Social Activism for the poor and women's rights became her calling. As a Founder of the New York Consumer's League she worked tirelessly to educate the public on how stores and factories treated the workers, many of them women. Maud became a suffragette when she realized that in order for women, especially the "working poor" to lobby the New York legislature for better conditions successfully they had to be enfranchised. So, let us warmly welcome the esteemed Maud Nathan.

Speaking in opposition to Women's Suffrage will be Annie Nathan Meyer, also a Sephardic Aristocrat and a member of New Amsterdam's Founding Jewish elite, but also Maud Nathan's younger sister. Annie's life has revolved around her activism to allow women to obtain a quality education. Though opposed by her father and the professors in Columbia's "women's course," Annie decided to raise funds to establish a college for women, where they could attend lectures, study and have a campus of their own. Her efforts bore fruit and Barnard College was founded in 1890, and its founding "mother" continues to sit on Barnard's Board of Trustees. Annie's anti-suffrage stance is in accord with her view that higher education for women is to be applied in the house and that women's suffrage will not cure all the evils of society, such as prostitution, political graft, war! Let us warmly welcome the accomplished Annie Nathan Meyer.



Annie Nathan

Musical Interludes: That Suffragette by Pauline R. Browne 1913 and The Anti-Suffrage Rose by Phil Hanna 1915

It was decided by lot that Maud Nathan will speak first and then Annie Nathan Meyer will have a chance for rebuttal. If there is time, the panelists will take questions thereafter.

Take it away: Maud Nathan

Maud Nathan: Wow, thanks to the moderator, for that awesome intro. Now, in order for women to obtain anything, we must be enfranchised. Since we are required to obey laws it is only fair that we "have a voice" in their enactment; since we are required to pay our fair share of imposed taxes, we should be able to vote on their amount and usage. TAXATION WITHOUT REPRESENTATION IS TYRRANY. If we could vote, we could more easily pursue the moral, educational and humane policies and laws that we deem desirable and appropriate without having to totally rely on the good graces of those empowered males. Also, these laws that are critically unjust for women could be amended more quickly. And we could pursue better wages and better working conditions for women and the working poor. Equal suffrage would also increase the proportion of educated voters because currently, in every state, more girls than boys are graduating high schools.



Maude Nathan

Since most women are moral, law abiding citizens our votes would not increase to any great degree the vicious and criminal vote. With the vote, we could pursue fair treatment. In the public service; secure legislation for the protection of children; and directly influence public affairs. But even more important it would make us more broadminded, politically astute in the manner of obtaining social justice and it would make it more difficult for notoriously bad candidates to be nominated or elected. To conclude: "My experience in investigating the condition of women wage-earners warrants the assertion that some of the evils from which they suffer would not exist if women had the ballot ... In those states where women vote, there is far better enforcement of the laws which protect working girls." Thank you for your attention and interest.

Moderator: thank you Maud Nathan and now in rebuttal: Annie Nathan Meyer.

Annie Nathan Meyer: Thank you, Thank you, Thank you, my dear sister! You make Women's Suffrage sound like a panacea for all the ills in our world today. As my sister, here, made it clear, we, women, have our own spheres of influence but they are not such that we require enfranchisement to pursue them. We are quite content with the municipal vote to deal with our core issues of housing, education and childcare. The Country must deal with issues beyond our legitimate sphere of influence such as national administration, the maintenance of military forces and questions of war or peace. Since all government rests ultimately on force and because women are incapable of serving for purpose of National defense due to physical, moral and social reasons, we need not have the vote to influence affairs of state that are without the sphere of our influence or abilities. WHAT'S NEXT, WOMAN BEING ALLOWED TO STAND FOR PUBLIC OFFICE. Furthermore, our suffrage must, if at all, be based on the equality of the sexes. I, for one, believe that our interests are perfectly safe in the hands of men; that we have a vast though indirect influence on national and local politics. Our physical nature makes us unfit for direct competition with men and competition with our menfolk will destroy all their chivalrous consideration. To conclude: "Nature has no place for the unmarried woman. You girls who would throw yourself into life's arena on equal basis with men – think twice ... Besides, women's lack of logic and clearness stands in your way. If women are elected to office a bad woman will win out every time." Thank you for your consideration.



Moderator: I'm sorry our time has run out, though I would request that each of our panelists leave you with a final comment.

Miss Nathan please.

Maud Nathan: I hope, someday, I will be able to raise a toast to the First Woman President of the United States of America.

Mrs. Meyer.

Annie Nathan Meyer: Daddy always liked me best!

Moderator: Thank you ladies, I believe much was said here today to help you decide if women should obtain suffrage here in our "fair" land.

# The Woman Voter's Bulletin

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No. 1

## Women to Take Active Part in Legislative Session

### MATERNITY AND INFANCY PROGRAM HAS WIDE SUPPORT

The legislation which Connecticut women will undoubtedly follow with the keenest interest of all the women before the General Assembly is the appropriation requested by the State Board of Health for the maternity and infancy program.

Congressmen will either be able to assist in double her efforts to save the lives of mothers and babies or she will continue developing the program at the present rate. The League of Women Voters, the Business and Professional Women's Clubs, the Council of Jewish Women, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the College Club of Hartford, Norwich, Bridgeport, New Haven and New London, the Connecticut Child Welfare Association, all join in asking that the General Assembly meet the Federal offer of aid this year. Other organizations are greatly interested in the program.

#### History of Demand

The United States has a higher death rate for mothers from childbirth than any of the civilized countries. In 1918 28,000 mothers died from this cause while in the United States 7,000,000 of their children



Miss Maryjoy Cannon  
Legislative Chairman

of the mothers and babies of maternity and infancy. An annual appropriation of \$1,000,000 was made, to be divided, according to population, among the states which accept the

### WOMEN'S BILL FOR 9-HOUR DAY, 56-HOUR WEEK IS INTRODUCED

"Women will be found to be fearfully weighted in the race for 1920. The duty of men is to see that not a grain is piled upon that load beyond what nature intended that burden to be added to it." Huxley.

This duty of "men" has now been extended to women; they have at least an equal responsibility and a greater interest in seeing that as a sex they receive the necessary protection of the law. It has been an established principle for many years that women need special protection in industry. Forty-three states limit the hours of work for women, and many of these the period of work within which employment is permitted.

In Connecticut no woman may be employed in any mechanical or manufacturing establishment more than 16 hours a day or 55 hours a week, not between the hours of 10 a. m. and 4 p. m., nor for four weeks before or after childbirth, nor in professions where maintenance according to necessity. They may not be employed in mercantile establishments more than 16 hours a week.

1,006,503 WOMEN IN NEW YORK STATE  
ASK YOU TO VOTE FOR WOMAN SUFFRAGE  
AMENDMENT No. 1 NOV. 6<sup>th</sup>

