

ELEANOR ROOSEVELT, ADDRESS BY MRS. FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT—THE CHICAGO CIVIL LIBERTIES COMMITTEE (14 MARCH 1940)

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Abstract: Eleanor Roosevelt's speech to the Chicago Civil Liberties Committee advocated protection of civil liberties at a time of perceived communist threats. Roosevelt urged listeners to act in accordance with the ideals of democracy and to uphold their responsibility to protect the rights of all Americans. Examining the speech within its own historical framework reveals how Roosevelt embraced an increasingly public role as a political first lady and addressed a basic tension between civil liberties and national security that still concerns us today.

Key Words: Civil Liberties, Eleanor Roosevelt, Republican Motherhood, Rhetorical First Lady

On March 14, 1940, Eleanor Roosevelt (ER) implored a Chicago audience to "have courage," "not succumb to fear of any kind," and work together toward a "more truly . . . democratic nation" (14).¹ In addressing the Chicago Civil Liberties Committee, an organization located in a city rife with suspected communist activity,² Roosevelt's speech equated freedom with democracy and placed the responsibility of upholding democratic freedom upon each man and woman in America. Given the turbulent climate of 1940, when some argued that the support for civil liberties reflected un-American sentiment, ER's speech reflected the first lady's own courage and commitment to democracy and civic deliberation.

ER's speech also reflected a universal understanding of citizens' rights and responsibilities that challenged gendered boundaries of public and private spaces during the 1940s. Toward these ends, ER modeled universal citizenship and championed civil liberties in unprecedented ways, emphasizing the need for individuals to resist fear-laden attitudes that eroded civil liberties. While simultaneously reflecting and transcending traditional gender ideologies, ER spoke to the CCLC as a rhetorical first lady. An examination of her speech reveals limitations of this position as well as ER's ability to supplement her argument because of, not in spite of, her position as a first lady taking the public podium. This essay examines ER's speech as rhetorical first lady discourse and asserts three claims. First, ER embraced a dual persona within the speech that reflected her position as a woman simultaneously outside of and privy to the sphere of politics. Second, ER articulated a faith in the potential of American democracy to effectively fulfill the will of the people by upholding "the real principles of democracy-in-action" (14). Lastly, ER imbued her speech with a nationalist spirit, echoing notions of American exceptionalism in order to move her audience to action but offering a revision of the tenets of this philosophy in the process. In the end, ER's public *performance* as a rhetorical first lady modeled the civic responsibility she espoused, reflecting the long-held tenets of republican

motherhood and extending the legacy of the rights rhetoric often featured by women orators who came before her.

The Gendering of Public and Private Spheres

In some ways, a separation of the "public" and "private" spheres serves a legitimate function within a liberal political framework that values individual freedom. The public realm is the place of interaction between the individual and the state; conversely, the private sphere represents a space where the individual maintains personal autonomy apart from the interference of government.³ The public and private divide has historically denoted male and female difference, and the ensuing distinctions between the sexes have been an enduring part of Western thought since antiquity. In *The Politics and the Constitution of Athens*, Aristotle defined the relationship between humans and the state in part through a gendered interpretation of men and women's "correct" and seemingly natural roles. "The male is by nature superior," Aristotle explained, "and the female inferior; and the one rules and the other is ruled; this principle, of necessity, extends to all mankind."⁴ Aristotle further argued that both sexes have separate attributes, quoting the poet Sophocles who declared: "'Silence is a woman's glory."⁵ This early prescription justified women's exclusion from political deliberation, a sentiment whose legacy was felt for centuries.⁶

The relegation of most elite white women to the private sphere had important ideological implications. Examining the gendered differences between the public and private spheres, Patrice Clark Koelsch's survey of classical Greek thought leads her to conclude that a sex-based "distinction implicitly denigrates women and excludes truly personal concerns from political legitimacy."⁷ The public and private spheres were not just separate from one another but were assigned hierarchical value whereby those in the public had rights and freedoms not granted to those relegated to the undervalued private sphere. The private sphere, thus, provided "the productive and reproductive labor of persons who could not participate in the *polis*," which meant that "women, as a biologically laboring class, were devalued," despite their necessity to the existence and maintenance of the public sphere.⁸

The cultural separation of gendered spheres was replicated in the United States during the post-revolutionary era. Before America sought its independence from Britain, continental thinkers espoused a separation between woman and the state that reflected the views of antiquity.⁹ Despite the influence of the Enlightenment thinkers, who encouraged subjects to reconsider their relationship to the government and state, these philosophers "offered no guidance to women analyzing their relationship to liberty or civic virtue."¹⁰ As the nation's founding fathers penned a fresh political framework, they sought guidance from an English Whig tradition "that never gave explicit attention to basic questions about women."¹¹ In so doing, they avoided infusing into their vision of the new republic more recent philosophies that might have given women increased access to the public sphere.

In order to maintain a gendered public/private divide, America's nation builders normalized the public presence of men and the private political function of many women through a practice later termed "republican motherhood." According to Linda K. Kerber, republican motherhood "guaranteed the steady infusion of virtue into the Republic" through women's "significant political role" of nurturing "public-spirited male citizens."¹² This notion

"assumed that women's lives were shaped primarily by family obligations" and thus "offered a politics congruent with the world as most women experienced it."¹³ The republican mother model became integral to the perceived need for women to fulfill a unique, gendered, and politically significant role. Kerber explains that women "would devote their efforts to service: raising sons and disciplining husbands to be virtuous citizens of the Republic." This role was critical due to the perception that "the stability of the nation rested on the persistence of virtue among its citizens." Ultimately, Kerber explains, "the creation of virtuous citizens was dependent on the presence of wives and mothers who were well informed."¹⁴

A popular twentieth-century painting of Betsy Ross by Charles H. Weisgerber illustrated the spirit of republican motherhood. The painting, featuring Ross presenting her newly-stitched American flag to three revolutionary leaders, including George Washington, "became a symbol for appropriate female action in the public sphere." This depiction of Ross created the ultimate symbol for women of the new nation; her embodiment of republican motherhood offered women a socially-acceptable prototype for political participation.¹⁵ More than a supplement to a history lesson of America's founding, Ross provided an articulation of proper female citizenship.

Notions of republican motherhood simultaneously supported civic participation and prescribed strict parameters for how this engagement could take shape. As a socially-sanctioned political role for women, republican motherhood relegated women's citizenship to the private spaces of the family. Such family expectations, at least in part, corresponded with the precepts of the "cult of true womanhood," a mid nineteenth-century social code that included the "four cardinal virtues" of the woman's private sphere: piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity.¹⁶ These "womanly" virtues translated into the social expectation that women would be dependent on the men in their lives and remain in the home.

Some women were moved to challenge gendered social conventions in order to advocate issues they felt were of great concern, moving their civic and moral roles as republican mothers and true women from the family to the community. Notable female orators such as Angelina and Sarah Grimké spoke out against slavery as part of the male-led abolition movement of the early-to-mid nineteenth century.¹⁷ Other women, including Lucretia Coffin Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and later Frances Willard were all part of reform efforts geared toward morally-charged issues such as slavery, alcohol abuse, and prostitution.¹⁸ These women wrote and spoke publicly, "donning the armor of God" to persuade audiences that such social problems, because they indicated a lack of virtue, were within the province of the woman's sphere.¹⁹ Other women, however, still objected to women publicly speaking out on social issues, even when they supported the same causes. Catharine Beecher, for example, supported abolition but opposed women's *public* acts of moral suasion, or the use of persuasive appeals. Beecher was so opposed to women speaking publicly that she wrote and circulated an essay denouncing Angelina Grimké for her orations on the cause that both women favored. The written essay allowed Beecher to express her opinion in protest in a way that she deemed more socially acceptable for a woman. Beecher perceived that the written word, rather than the spoken word, was more appropriate for women's acts of moral suasion, ironically illustrating the difficulty women had in identifying and negotiating their own sense of propriety and influence.²⁰

The nation's earliest female orators also faced persecution for their outspokenness on public issues. Gradually entering the public debates over social issues, female speakers "in a position to exert meaningful social and political *influence*" were often characterized as sexually deviant, particularly when addressing mixed sex or "promiscuous audiences."²¹ Susan Zaeske argues that although the earliest iterations of "promiscuous" merely referred to any indiscriminate mixture, "by the 1820s both the word and the phrase had become increasingly linked with the morality and sexuality of women."²² Political participation enacted through public address or deliberation was rarely favored by women; many were even hesitant to sign their name under the title "citizen" on public petitions.²³ Nan Johnson affirms that "at the start of the nineteenth century, the arts of rhetoric were the undisputed province of the male professional classes."²⁴ And, in postbellum America, popular writers often cautioned that "if happiness was to be preserved in American homes, women needed to reserve their rhetorical influence for their counseling and instructive roles as wives and mothers."²⁵ By "redirecting women to rhetorical roles in the home," those penning manuals and guides for women's rhetorical activities helped deter many women from any overtly public or political act, thus "complicating their access to the public rhetorical spaces where the fate of the nation was debated."²⁶

Despite defamation and censure, early women orators advocating for the rights of others helped develop a sense of political efficacy among women, which served as a catalyst for the first-wave of the women's rights movement. Females prohibited from speaking at male-led abolitionist meetings formed "female anti-slavery societies and ultimately . . . began to press for their own rights in order to be more effective in the abolitionist struggle."²⁷ Historian Lori D. Ginzberg notes that "the late 1850s witnessed a burst of legislative activity on the part of women," attempting to secure their own "civic and political rights" as they joined men in social and political work.²⁸ Women from across the country who were still wary of talking about politics became politically involved in more socially acceptable ways. Many supplied anti-slavery fairs with sewing circle handiwork or signed public petitions (often distributed by women) that were labeled "prayers."²⁹ Although women cautiously experimented with varying levels and types of political engagement, a remarkable number of postbellum American women were gradually leaving their homes, imbuing the private and now public sphere with the sentiments of republican motherhood.

Prior to the suffrage campaign, women's political interests were frequently redirected toward benevolent work on behalf of others. By the Gilded Age, many women formed alliances and philanthropic organizations meant to uphold members' moral and civic obligations. In particular, middle- to upper-class white women embraced volunteerism as a "full-time career" because of their financial security and new-found leisure time.³⁰ Early grassroots efforts to assist those in need became more organized after the Civil War. According to Kathleen D. McCarthy, by 1900 women who experienced formal "political invisibility" were able to form robust and collaborative kinship networks that paralleled the structure of the local, state, and national government.³¹ Benevolent work allowed women to "slowly but forcefully" embrace a place within the "political public sphere through a series of maternally themed political associations." As women took part in benevolent social movements centered on the protection and education of children and women,³² they extended their influence outside of the private realm. Nevertheless, women still were denied a full political voice.

Benevolent work thus gave way to new levels of public engagement by the end of the nineteenth century, enhancing women's sense of autonomy, self-worth, and collective power. The "New Woman" emboldened by the employment, consumer, and leisure opportunities afforded by an increasingly urban and industrial life eschewed true womanhood for a fiercer sense of independence.³³ Generally, the New Woman was "young, well-educated, probably a college graduate . . . highly competent, and physically strong and fearless"; this spirit of empowerment helped influence women of various ages, most of whom were white.³⁴ Middle aged, white women of means formed women's clubs, which granted women access to public speaking and interests outside the public sphere.³⁵ Other New Women embraced more overt and active political roles, particularly those aligned with efforts during the Progressive Era to bring change to overcrowded city centers. Earlier, morally-driven female societies had granted women public leverage and collective power, so that "what had long been women's province through voluntary associations and charitable benevolence was increasingly defined as a proper scope for public policy."³⁶ New Women pioneered "the creation of new public spaces—voluntary associations located between the public world of politics and work and the private intimacy of family." In doing so, they made "possible a new vision of active citizenship."³⁷ Thus, a significant number of twentieth-century women had unprecedented, yet still limited, public and political access even before gaining suffrage in 1920. This access reflected women's gradual willingness to transcend gendered public and private divides.

The First Lady: An Emerging Rhetorical Figure

The role of the first lady epitomizes the contradictions and cultural tensions experienced by American women straddling the public/private divide. Barbara Burrell notes that "the woman who serves as first lady is in this role because of her relationship to a man, not through her own achievements. She is to represent the expressive, supportive, traditional role of women as wife, mother, and homemaker." As an exemplar of woman's potential, however, first ladies have "the potential to dramatically alter the idea of what is private and what is public in the political realm."³⁸

Most first ladies have had to navigate the politics of a public/private divide; many also have served as role models for other women. Shawn J. Parry-Giles and Diane M. Blair argue that first ladies "helped craft a role for women's participation in the political sphere, transforming the twentieth-century version of the republican mother into an activist voice of national consequence."³⁹ Before 1920, according to these authors, the first lady role was primarily limited to private-sphere political influence and morally-sanctioned benevolent acts. First ladies performed "social politicking" through such private activities as advising their spouses, attempting to shape their own and/or their spouses' political image, or performing acts of patronage—"the practice of securing political jobs or other rewards for acquaintances and family members."⁴⁰ As discussed earlier, the wave of benevolent volunteering that afforded many women morally permissible yet limited access to the public sphere was also embraced by eighteenth- and nineteenth-century first ladies who carefully navigated the fine line between maintaining a "womanly" sense of privacy and pursuing societal improvements aimed at socially acceptable projects for women.⁴¹

Just as women assumed varying levels of participation in earlier debates about slavery and other moral concerns, so too did first ladies take on differing levels of exposure to public issues while in the White House. In the twentieth century, for example, Ellen Wilson, first wife of Woodrow Wilson, made slum clearance a top priority after she personally witnessed the unfit living conditions of poverty-stricken Washington, D.C. neighborhoods. Although Ellen Wilson did not directly appeal to Congress in support of this cause, she commissioned a White House car to be used to tour the slums and raised enough attention about the issue to persuade a member of Congress to sponsor a bill for housing appropriations.⁴² Representing a different interpretation of the role, Grace Coolidge, with a "youthful demeanor and lively personality . . . not incommensurate with the mien of the politically liberated 'new woman' of the 1920s," remained essentially silent during her tenure in the White House.⁴³ According to Janis L. Edwards, Grace Coolidge contended that "the responsibility of a first lady was to maintain and preserve a civic monument" of the first lady office "against the potential impact of words or deeds by a presidential wife who acted outside her conventional role."⁴⁴ Even in the early twentieth-century, the legacy of woman's separate sphere was apparent in the White House.

By the late 1920s, however, first ladies' activities were increasingly rhetorical in nature. As these women began to supplement acts of goodwill with direct activism and advocacy on the behalf of others, they broadened "their space of authority to local, state, national, and international communities."⁴⁵ First lady discourse, at times, still reflected antecedents of republican motherhood while illustrating that women could bring such moral and civic commitments to the public stage. Lou Hoover, for example, delivered speeches to Girl Scouts about responsible citizenship, framing this duty around the roles of "wives, mothers, and homemakers."⁴⁶ At the same time, Hoover also established a new precedent for first ladies by delivering formal speeches and by reaching out to a wide range of Americans through radio addresses. Hoover thus established important groundwork for ER's later political activities.⁴⁷ At the same time that the presidency itself was becoming more of a "rhetorical" institution, first ladies began to assume a public voice that appealed to mass audiences, utilizing "the power of public persuasion to fulfill the president's or their own political goals."⁴⁸

Eleanor Roosevelt: Independent Public Servant

ER's approach to the role of first lady in many ways paralleled the gradual rise of public women during her lifetime. A brief biographical sketch of ER reveals her own transformation into a public actor and illuminates her willingness to embrace a rhetorical and political role. From her unique perspective as a public woman and, more specifically, a first lady interacting with a diverse cross-section of Americans, ER challenged limited notions of citizenship and extended conceptions of one's responsibility to the community. ER's view of democracy, so evidently centered around the role of the individual, highlighted the personal needs and responsibilities of the community. ER envisioned a shared community encompassing individuals from varied backgrounds. Arguably, ER's commitment to communal unity was linked to her lifelong ethic of service to others and active political engagement. Examining ER's activities prior to her first ladyship accentuates her interest in benevolence as a "new woman" and informs an assessment of her rhetorical choices while in the White House.

Although ER's impact as a forward-thinking and incredibly active first lady is widely celebrated, she reportedly did not initially embrace her move to the White House. ER resented FDR's desire to become president, a view she later labeled as "pure selfishness."⁴⁹ After FDR's inauguration, she remembered walking "up to the White House portico with considerable trepidation."⁵⁰ Instead of aspiring to the position of national *hostess*, ER considered the role of the traditional first lady inhibiting. She refused to perform the ceremonial functions expected of a first lady, calling such matters "futile and meaningless."⁵¹ Vacillating between her own desires and cultural expectations, ER admitted having difficulty remembering that she "was not just 'Eleanor Roosevelt,' but the 'wife of the President.'"⁵² Biographer Blanche Wiesen Cook writes that ER countered her fears that "she would . . . be forced into a life of political confinement somewhere in the shadows, a prisoner to the presidency" by plunging "into the political fray."⁵³ ER's choice to leave the recesses of the White House in favor of public exposure had significant personal and political implications. Many political wives knew that their actions not only reflected on the work of their spouse, but also on the nation as a rising world power.⁵⁴ Still, ER eschewed the traditional role of first ladies as social hostesses, unwilling to unlearn a lifetime of personal independence.

ER's preference for following her own instincts emerged from a life-long engagement with the community and an ongoing sense of social and civic responsibility. ER's pre-White House life was characterized by travel and first-hand exposure to community problems that lured her out of an insular, domestic experience. At the age of fifteen, ER was sent to study at Allenswood, a finishing school in England. There she studied under Headmistress Marie Stouvestre, who encouraged her students to think and act with a sense of social responsibility and service to others.⁵⁵ Souvestre not only asked her students to respond critically to history and literature lessons, but she also took ER and her other students on trips to the continent, where their curriculum came to life. During these travels, Stouvestre insisted that ER "see the people of the country" and not just her "own compatriots," thus broadening her worldview beyond the confines of Allenswood.⁵⁶

When ER returned to the United States, she followed her mentor's advice and remained socially engaged, volunteering with the Junior and Consumers Leagues and teaching at the College Settlement on Rivington Street in New York City's Lower East Side.⁵⁷ This exposure to poorer areas of the city, plagued with inadequate housing and oppressive working conditions, made a lasting impression on ER. She admitted that "the streets filled with foreign looking people, crowded and dirty, filled me with a certain amount of terror." Nevertheless, she reconciled her fear with the "glow of pride" when one of these individuals identified himself as the father of an admiring pupil. Individual responsibility to the needs of a community was a guiding factor in the settlement movement, which had gained popularity by the early twentieth-century.⁵⁸ Settlement houses, situated in poverty-stricken urban centers, attracted workers after college graduation, and thus "the houses served as field-based graduate schools for a generation of college-educated women."⁵⁹ Settlers, or volunteers living in the same community as the "neighbors" they served, extended the notion of benevolence to embrace a more direct interaction with a diverse, often predominantly immigrant community. Instead of merely helping the poor, this public work rendered many settlers "transformed by the experience."⁶⁰ Although ER admitted that as a settler, she was "ready to drop all this good

work" to enjoy a summer of "idleness and recreation," her early exposure to the unpleasant realities of the less fortunate informed her future volunteer work and sense of social service.⁶¹

ER's commitment to public service became increasingly political in nature after she married FDR in 1905. ER's public work was initially impeded by her multiple pregnancies during the early part of the marriage. Either pregnant or recovering from pregnancy from 1906 to 1916, the future first lady waited until her children were sufficiently self-reliant before again focusing her attention on civic activities.⁶² By this point FDR was Governor of New York and he encouraged ER to direct her efforts toward activities that would support his political commitments. Specifically, FDR asked his wife to inspect state facilities that he could not easily visit due to his polio-induced immobility.⁶³ ER traveled extensively in order to report back to her husband on the conditions of his less fortunate constituents. Touring the country became part of ER's regiment, and this continued after she arrived at the White House. Her civic activities were supported by FDR and his closest aide, Louis Howe. As her husband's ambassador, ER traveled more than 40,000 miles during her first three months in the White House.⁶⁴ Traveling as first lady, ER became the president's eyes and ears, inspecting conditions throughout a nation struggling to recover from economic depression. In the process, she challenged traditional notions about the proper role of the first lady in ways that had direct and substantive influence on the Roosevelt administration's political outlook and policies. Not satisfied in taking a seat behind or even beside her husband, ER met Americans in her ongoing pursuit to connect with the nation. She met and spoke with members of underserved populations and social service agencies such as the American Friends Service Committee. Through her exposure to the country, ER determined that new economic policies were essential to the future of the ailing nation. She returned to Washington D.C. to express her observations and opinions directly to the president. Through her first-hand exposure to the living conditions of the poor, ER was able to advocate effectively for government aid to populations in need. She even spearheaded efforts to set up subsistence homesteads and government subsidized social welfare programs.⁶⁵

Just as ER's direct interaction with others in the public sphere contributed to her own influence as first lady, it also enabled and legitimized the political work of other women. ER voiced her observations and political opinions to the nation through a variety of media, including radio, syndicated newspaper columns, and magazine articles, and she supplemented this communication with frequent public speaking engagements.⁶⁶ ER followed in First Lady Hoover's footsteps by appealing to the nation directly via radio, but she also broke new ground in validating the presence of women in public discourse.⁶⁷ Setting a new precedent for White House communication, ER regularly held her own press conferences, granting access only to women journalists.⁶⁸ She also appealed directly to readers across the globe as she became a political pundit through her daily "My Day" articles, which were syndicated and circulated to more than four and a half million persons.⁶⁹ ER became the first wife of the president to take advantage of her visibility and "turn this access to her own advantage."⁷⁰ Through her travels across the nation and her direct appeals to the men and women of America through various media, ER portrayed herself as a politically viable liaison between the White House and the nation that it served. Such political engagement was demonstrated most clearly in ER's promotion of civil liberties during her March 14, 1940 speech to the Chicago Civil Liberties Committee.

Freedom and Fear: The Debate Over Civil Liberties

The 1930s was a decade when the very meaning of Americanism was called into question. Increasing diversity in heritage, religion, and thought provoked fear among many Americans, and a growing national debate over the rights and freedoms of the citizenry pitted organizations like the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) against legislative and judicial decisions. Congressional investigations, most notably those of the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), roused the suspicions of many Americans fearful of communist infiltration into their local communities. Simultaneously, many individuals resorted to abusive measures in silencing those who did not follow prescriptive norms for "American" behavior and values.⁷¹ This volatile political context provided the backdrop for ER's rhetorical response to the controversy over civil liberties during wartime.

The *New York Herald Tribune* on the day of ER's speech, March 14, 1940, evidences the charged political atmosphere surrounding the debate over civil liberties. One article reported Wendell L. Willkie's call for increased protection of civil liberties for all Americans. A second article described a defensive FBI director, J. Edgar Hoover, who had been called upon to deny accusations that he authorized wire tapping the telephones of U.S. Senators.⁷² The nation directed its attention toward an unfolding drama between the principles of liberty and concerns about American security.

Amid these concerns, ER addressed the Chicago Civil Liberties Committee (CCLC), openly supporting the group's work to preserve basic freedoms for all Americans. The CCLC was an organization of approximately one thousand volunteers that had become a branch of the ACLU some six years earlier.⁷³ On the national level, the ACLU was gravely concerned with what it perceived as attacks on personal freedoms. Critics feared that impending legislation might impinge upon personal liberties, especially those of the foreign-born and "fifth-columnists"—a term applied to anyone suspected of having communist affiliations. Specifically, the Smith Act, which stood to become "the first peacetime sedition law in American history," proposed to criminalize membership in any organization that sought the overthrow of the U.S. government. It also called for the "fingerprinting and registration of all aliens."⁷⁴ The ACLU was one of only three organizations that had testified against the act. The act passed overwhelmingly in late June, despite the protests of the ACLU.⁷⁵

The congressional debate only exacerbated concerns among many civil libertarians that FDR's New Deal would extend the reach of government and threaten basic freedoms. For supporters of the ACLU, "the New Deal reawakened . . . the fear of a leviathan state which would manipulate the national emergency to justify repression."⁷⁶ As historian Samuel Walker has noted, ACLU founder Roger Baldwin was a leader in voices such concerns, defining civil liberties as freedom *from* governmental intervention. Baldwin warned that unless the administration's power was restricted, Americans might soon lose their right to express freely their political views or protest against governmental actions.⁷⁷

Escalating concerns over the communist threat culminated in the sensational investigations of the House UnAmerican Activities Committee (HUAC). In October 1939, Representative Martin Dies (Democrat, TX) visited Chicago as HUAC's chairman, focusing national attention on the city that he argued was the center of the communist threat.⁷⁸

According to one historian, Dies and his committee became "an effective political lightning rod which attracted those who had failed to find a home in the New Deal and wanted to believe the worst about it."⁷⁹ Unabashedly sharing his findings with the nation, Dies named 2,000 of the 4,700 communists allegedly living in the Chicago area at the time of his visit,⁸⁰ including many professionals and government workers, particularly employees of Roosevelt's Works Progress Administration (WPA). Furthermore, Dies claimed that one civic-minded organization, the League for Peace and Democracy, was "communistic" and peopled by "hundreds of government employees."⁸¹ Dies thus raised suspicions about communist influence among civic organizations as well as local governments. According to the congressman, his "revelations" proved that Chicago represented "the powerhouse of subversive energy and propaganda in the Middle West."⁸² With such rhetoric, HUAC succeeded in raising "the fear of Communism to a fever pitch."⁸³

National fears provoked by HUAC manifested themselves in a growing number and variety of assaults on civil liberties. In 1942, a book published by the CCLC catalogued a variety of attacks on civil liberties during this period, including not only those inspired by the communist threat, but also some related to labor disputes and economic disparities. Freedom of religion, freedom of the press, and freedom of conscience were not the only rights violated during this period. The CCLC also insisted that Americans had a right to freedom from organized mob violence and unconstitutional police activities, and it expressed concerns with academic freedom and the rights of immigrants.⁸⁴ Writing in *Cosmopolitan* just one month before her speech to the CCLC, ER echoed the organization's broad concern with civil liberties, chronicling the forms of intolerance that concerned her most. According to the first lady, a "wave of anti-Semitism" was the "greatest manifestation of intolerance today," but she added that "in some places anti-Catholicism runs a close second and in others fear of the Negro's aspirations is paramount."⁸⁵

Xenophobic sentiments had led to a variety of groups being labeled and attacked as un-American. Immigrants were often denied employment in the public and private sectors due to suspicions about their loyalties. Many were flatly denied naturalization; those allowed to apply for citizenship were frequently made to repay any government-sponsored financial aid received prior to naturalization.⁸⁶ Measures such as the Smith Act justified limitations on the basic freedoms of a wide variety of Americans, but especially on immigrants. Even Jehovah's Witnesses fell prey to humiliation and violence. Refusing to perform the rituals of patriotism, such as saluting or kissing the American flag, members of the group were denied their religious freedom and exposed to mob and police brutality.⁸⁷

The most vehement opposition to the "un-American," however, was directed at those subscribing to communist thought.⁸⁸ In September 1940, Theodore Irwin wrote in *The Public Opinion Quarterly*:

Deprivation of the civil rights of Communists has taken the form of beatings of members who solicited signatures to put the party on the ballot; the revocation of citizenship of Communists on relatively trivial grounds; and moves by public official in at least eight states . . . aimed at depriving the Communist party of its place on the ballot in the national election.⁸⁹

Well over a year before the attack on Pearl Harbor, anti-communist sentiment was alive throughout the United States. ER, as a visible representative of the Roosevelt administration, occupied a precarious role as a rhetorical first lady committed to universal tolerance in spite of such extreme national exigencies.

Eleanor Roosevelt's Civil Liberties Speech

ER occupied a tenuous place as a first lady condemning civil liberties violations on the public podium. Her CCLC speech illustrated the ways in which she simultaneously lauded and challenged prevailing notions of civic virtue from this contested position. She capitalized on her institutionally sanctioned, yet unofficial role, drawing upon the legacy of women before her, and embracing and extending the republican motherhood tradition. ER's constructed vision of civic virtue exemplifies the limitations and potential of rhetorical first lady discourse in three ways. First, ER bolstered her credibility as an exponent of American values by appealing to her audience through a dual persona; she alternately spoke as a woman of the people and from the more distanced position of first lady. Secondly, ER became an interlocutor, deciphering foundational American documents that offered a blueprint for democracy and enacting her political role in the process. Finally, ER infused her speech with a revised sentiment of American exceptionalism, by which she urged her audience to *act* upon the nationalistic principles of humanity and inclusion. In so doing, ER demanded that Americans embody, not just agree with, the ideals associated with Americanism, enacting her notions of civic virtue as a rhetorical first lady while encouraging others to do the same in their own communities.

ER's speech reflected a dual persona that stemmed from her position as a first lady both outside and inside the scope of governmental influence. When greeting her audience, ER's tone was humble. Apologetically, she admitted that "a great many" of the audience members "could give my talk far better than I" thanks to their "first-hand knowledge" of civil liberties violations (2). Later, ER admitted that she "had almost forgotten how hard the working man had to fight for his rights" (14). In both instances, ER's self-effacing language elevated the experience of the average American, imbuing her talk with respect for those in the audience. Despite the fact that ER related to her audience, her discourse acknowledged her tenuous identification with the American people when speaking from her role as first lady. By creating a framework in which she distanced herself from the lived experiences of her audience, ER nodded to the antecedents of a generally private first lady position.

Shifting to her voice as a rhetorical first lady, however, ER also asserted her authority as a proponent of the preservation of civil liberties. She bolstered her ethos by reversing her original position, arguing that she was "more conscious of the importance of civil liberties in this particular moment of our history than anyone else" (2). ER's basis for this claim was her experience as an active, public first lady. She admitted, "as I travel through the country and meet people and see the things that have happened to little people, I am more and more conscious of what it means to democracy to preserve our civil liberties" (2). ER challenged her audience to respect her authority as a first lady who learned her most significant lessons about democracy from the people of the nation. ER focused her attention away from more long standing first lady concerns inside the White House to the political realities of the nation; her perspective bolstered her ethos as an authority on turmoil in Chicago, and America in general.

Speaking with assuredness, ER shared experiences that legitimized her interpretations of national and international political situations. ER reflected on her leadership work with the National Committee of Democratic Women, recounting her exposure to intolerant literature. It was this first-hand experience from which ER claimed to have drawn her understanding of the hatred harbored by some in the name of religious purity. ER illustrated her understanding of communism through a book-length account she read about its rise in Czechoslovakia. "I can only say that it seems to me we should read as vivid a story as that now," she urged, "just to make us realize how important it is that for no reason whatsoever should we allow ourselves to be dominated by fear so that we curtail civil liberties" (8). Unhesitatingly, ER spoke of her self-education on international affairs and asked the audience to emulate her model responsible world citizenship. Notably, the first lady did not reference FDR's stance on civil liberties issues. ER was not acting overtly as a spokesperson of the Roosevelt administration; instead, she was using her voice as an independent political actor to provoke action on the part of her audience members.

Through an association between individual rights and national responsibilities, ER's speech before the CCLC fused personal liberties with nationalistic appeals, also allowing her to interpret democratic blueprints established by America's founders and model her vision of citizenship. Faith in democracy, she suggested, could triumph over exaggerated fears. As a first lady appealing to the CCLC's "promiscuous audience," ER enacted her vision of active political engagement; in so doing, she also infused a political argument with her unique perspective as a woman of great accomplishment. ER advocated a return to virtuous democratic ideals, guiding her audience toward morally sound standards of citizenship. ER grounded the discourse of civil liberties in foundational American documents, calling for the preservation of civil liberties for all Americans as a realization of democratic ideals. She counted every individual among the vanguard of sacred freedoms, and appealed to all listeners to actively pursue the public work of enacting effective citizenship. ER's ability to model the liberated citizen reflected the legacy of republican motherhood and positioned her as a harbinger of equality, championing the need for each individual's full participation in the community.

As ER posited a faith in the underlying philosophy of American democracy, she drew on fundamental premises established by the nation's political architects. ER encouraged her audience to "obey the laws" and "live up" to the democracy envisioned in the founding documents of the nation (8). ER declared: "We have to make up our minds as to what we really believe. We have to decide whether we believe in the Bill of Rights, in the Constitution of the United States, or whether we are going to modify it because of the fears that we may have at the moment" (12). Relying on these foundational American documents, ER legitimized her opinions and substantiated her political appeal.

Early woman's rights orators such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony based their arguments for change on the tenets of foundational American texts; ER's use of such documents echoed these early women's voices while reminding listeners of the first lady's relationship to the national seat of government.⁹⁰ These earlier women adopted a natural rights stance to bolster their arguments for political inclusion, speaking as disenfranchised members of the public. ER, in her politically institutionalized role, borrowed from the founding documents as a representative of the presidential administration. In so doing, she underscored the nation's commitment to democratic ideals through her words and her presence while

simultaneously exposing the prevailing discrepancies. ER imparted a faith in the robustness of the American political structure to meet the needs of a diverse citizenry through governmental representation and accountability.⁹¹ This belief was reflected in the speech, as ER advocated for "free discussion and really free, uninfluenced expression in the press" (6). She contended that free speech was never threatening when exercised within a political framework constructed by the "fundamental principles that we have laid down" (6). By situating herself as a proponent of basic tenets of American democracy, ER not only aligned civil liberties with such foundational principles, but also legitimized her public role as political actor.

As an advocate for the preservation of civil liberties, ER remained adamant that these rights should extend to all members of the community. According to ER, difference served as a reminder of every individual's need to personally uphold the "spirit of America" by safeguarding all community members (5). ER's story of visiting a poverty-stricken immigrant family exemplified her commitment to difference. Her willingness to "travel through the country and meet people and see the things that have happened to little people" rendered ER a credible witness to injustice and one more able to critique the erosion of civil liberties than "anyone else" (2). Thus, the first lady embodied her own model of virtuous citizenship, advocating an equitable application of rights that would allow the nation to fulfill its republican promise.

ER's performance exhibited the ability of women not only to enter public spaces but also to dissent against powerful national leaders; she implicitly took issue with the strident anti-communism of J. Edgar Hoover and some conservatives in Congress. ER also validated the political power of her listeners, instructing them to assume an active and engaged role to help "guard the mainstays of democracy" (2). Only when individuals lived up to their "obligation to the various strains that make up the people of the United States" would their own civil liberties be safe (10). She thus cautioned her audience against thoughtlessly buying into the anti-communist frenzy of the day. Speaking as a voice of wisdom and perspective, she articulated the principle behind her defense of civil liberties. "The minute we deny any rights of this kind to *any* citizen," she warned, "we are preparing the way for the denial of those rights to someone else" (12).

In her speech on civil liberties, ER harkened back to the traditional republican mother who taught her charges how to be good citizens and uphold their democratic duty. In the process, she relied upon her status as first lady to give her argument weight. ER pinned the hope for a more perfect democracy on "the youth of the nation" who could be trusted to "herald" its "real principles" (14). Accordingly, the first lady urged parents to start earlier in educating their children about the freedoms afforded by their nation. The first lady thus utilized her access to the podium as an unelected political figure to promote the protection of civil liberties.

ER's speech reflected of the tenets of republican motherhood and was based largely, but not entirely, on the democratic structure established by America's founders; nevertheless, the CCLC address implicated citizens' responsibilities extending beyond those specified in the Constitution. Specifically, ER lamented the plight of an immigrant family who seemed to have fallen outside of the concern and protection of the community. "It hurt you," ER asserted. "Something was wrong with the spirit of America that an injustice like that could happen to a man who, after all, had worked hard and contributed to the wealth of the country" (6). ER's claim that the situation did not align with the spirit of America pointed to a cultural code of

American identity that was not detailed in any governmental document. Rather, the sentiment to which ER referred implicated a shared sense of duty and responsibility for the essence of national law. The "spirit of America" is a concept heavy with personal and cultural connotation but one lacking an official or governmentally sanctioned definition.

ER leveraged her call for increased civil liberties protection by invoking the spirit of America while explaining how the nation had failed in living up to this democratic characteristic. In so doing, ER shaped her call for the protection of civil liberties in a manner that echoed the Puritan jeremiad and a reliance on the notion of American exceptionalism. The jeremiad was a political sermon delivered by Puritan clergy in New England.⁹² It called for listeners to realize their disobedience in the eyes of God and then recommit themselves to a covenant with Him.⁹³ When Puritans left England to start a new life of service to God in America, they imported the jeremiad as a genre of sermon, although the new American jeremiad had features that distinguished it from its European precursor. Specifically, the Puritan jeremiad included "an unswerving faith in the errand" or the destiny of the Puritans to tame the American wilderness to establish an earthly city from where they could live as God's disciples.⁹⁴ Firmly rooted in this notion of the errand was the concept of being God's *chosen* people, contributing to a feeling of American exceptionalism. Joyce Appleby explains that exceptionalism, in the context of American nationalism, means more than being different than other nations. She argues that exceptionalism "projects onto a nation" characteristics that "represent deliverance from a common lot."⁹⁵ This sense of superiority is one that has remained with America past Puritan times. The national sentiment of exceptionalism also imbues America with a "unique moral value and responsibility" that comes along with its perceived special status.⁹⁶

ER's speech assumed the tone of the jeremiad and relied on the responsibilities inherent to American exceptionalism to provoke change. ER lamented what she observed in America; she noted with disdain the breaches of basic human rights in a land founded on principles of freedom. In her explication of the crisis of civil liberties' violations, ER chastised those who did not live up to the precedent set forth by founders, thus suggesting that America had fallen in its effort to maintain the basic tenets of democracy. This tone of reproach and ER's call to recommit to the freedoms ensured in the nation's official documents infused her talk with the flavor of the Puritan jeremiad and a secular errand to preserve basic freedoms. ER admonished those who did not preserve civil liberties based upon her belief in America's responsibility to live up to its exceptional status, both historically sacred and secular in nature.

Despite ER's having evoked American exceptionalism in her speech, she nevertheless complicated her position by challenging the assumptions of who can and should embrace an American identity. Reminiscent of the voice of traditional Republican motherhood, ER contended that Americans had "an opportunity to teach our children how much we have gained from the coming to this land of all kinds of races, of how much this has served in the development of the land" (11). This praise echoed the narrative of Puritans leaving Europe in order to fulfill their divinely inspired mission to tame the New England wilderness. ER complicated this quintessential story of American exceptionalism, however, when she continued:

Yet somehow I think we have failed in many ways to bring early enough to children how great is their obligation to the various strains that make up the

people of the United States. Above all, there should never be race prejudice; there should never be a feeling that one strain is better than another. After all, we are all immigrants—all except the Indians, who, I might say, are the only inhabitants of this country who have a real right to say that they own the country. I think that our being composed of so many foreign peoples is the very reason why we should preserve the basic principles of civil liberty. (11)

As evidenced above, ER reshaped notions of "American" to emphasize difference over homogeneity. Her depiction of all Americans being immigrants except for American Indian tribes challenged the perception that the American land was created by God for early settlers who would develop it for their own use. She altered the resonant story of American exceptionalism, seating the promise of the nation in its ability to extend the tenets of democracy as articulated by the nation's founders. She concluded, "It should be easy for us to live up to our Constitution" (11).

From a twenty-first century perspective, ER's concept of American identity might seem commonplace; however, during much of the twentieth-century, notions of American nationalism did not include diversity explicitly. Vanessa B. Beasley's examination of presidential rhetoric during the twentieth century reveals that some executives were willing to describe a national identity based on shared ideas even when they suggested that immigrants were not able, cognitively and attitudinally, to be citizens of the United States.⁹⁷ FDR, whose rhetoric reflected more tolerance than his predecessors, was generally unwilling to address issues of immigration in a straightforward manner.⁹⁸ In enacting her role as first lady and model citizen, ER also articulated a revision of what American spirit could be, altering the assumptions of American exceptionalism that undergirded notions of nationalism and citizenship. Perhaps her ability to blend a dual voice, her dedication to foundational texts, and her willingness to challenge long-held prescriptions of national identity are more possible because of ER's position as an unelected, somewhat peripheral actor.

ER exploited her own political agency and access to public spaces in ways unavailable to earlier women activists, who typically spoke from the political periphery. Earlier women's right activists, like Elizabeth Cady Stanton, made powerful moral arguments about discrimination and injustice, but they spoke as commentators on a political scene of which they were not fully a part. At a time when women finally had the vote but still hovered on the margins of the political sphere, ER, an orator of the new woman tradition, spoke with confidence and self-reflection from a position of considerable authority. In the process, she extended the legacy of women's rights rhetoric, pointing the way toward an era when women would routinely speak from positions of institutional power and promulgating, with a new level of authority, the expansion of rights to all Americans.

ER's performance, although bolstered by her role as a first lady, was also limited by her association with the president. Allida M. Black notes that between 1940 and 1962, ER's stance on civil liberties included three elements: 1) disdain for lessened war-time civil liberties, 2) defense of those called into question by the administration, and 3) personal increase in post-war civil liberties campaigning. Despite these commitments, ER noticeably refrained from speaking against the Roosevelt administration's internment of Japanese-Americans.⁹⁹ ER's hesitancy to speak against the president's policy indicated the extent to which the role of first

lady—as supporter or political partner of the president—also limited her rhetorical options. Still today, it is hard to envision a first spouse publicly criticizing the president.

America's Ongoing Civil Liberties Debate

After ER's 1940 address, Chicago would continue to be a center of controversy over the limits of freedom in a time of suspicion. On February 7, 1946, for example, a disturbance took place outside of the Chicago West End Women's Club when Father Arthur Terminiello delivered a talk about the choice between Christian nationalism and communism. Terminiello blamed the conspiracy against American nationalism on Russia and communism in general but also pointed to Eleanor Roosevelt and the New Deal as domestic sources of un-American sentiment. While Father Terminiello spoke to the audience inside the club, a riotous crowd protested outside, attesting to the explosive nature of this topic. The incendiary was arrested later that evening for provoking a public disturbance.¹⁰⁰

ER's message, while offensive to some, can now be remembered as a courageous statement in support of civil liberties during a tumultuous time in the nation's history. Her ideas also were manifested in FDR's famous Annual Message to Congress in 1941, where he outlined his four freedoms: freedom of speech and expression, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear. According to biographer Allan M. Winkler, this rhetoric "provided the ideological framework for American views" about World War II.¹⁰¹ Although it would be presumptuous to say that FDR's discourse was framed by his wife's political views, ER's defense of civil liberties and civil rights—topics which the president generally did not treat as high priorities—echoed in the president's "Four Freedoms" speech.

The first lady's address also resonates in today's discussions of the conflict between civil liberties and national security in times of war. Just as many Americans in ER's day feared that the nation's safety would be compromised by communism, Americans struggle today to uphold individual liberties in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks and the subsequent War on Terror.

Advocates for civil liberties have called into question the decisions of the Bush administration after the 2001 attacks. One prime area of debate involves the 2001 passage of the Patriot Act and its reauthorization by President Bush in March 2006. According to the White House, the Patriot Act permitted increased communication between law enforcement and intelligence officers in order to bring "terrorists to justice."¹⁰² The Act also has enabled criminal investigators to employ the same "tools" to terrorist investigations that were used for other, non-terrorist security and enforcement measures. According to the Bush administration, the Act's 2006 renewal was meant to "improve our nation's security while we safeguard the civil liberties of our people."¹⁰³

Opponents of the Patriot Act cite its threats to civil liberties as the primary reason to oppose this legislation. According to the Center for Constitutional Rights, the Act jeopardizes First Amendment rights, devalues our right of privacy, and minimizes due process for non-citizens.¹⁰⁴ One provision of the Act affords the government unrestricted access to library records, allowing government officials to learn about people's reading habits, while another grants law enforcement agencies the power to subpoena records without judicial approval.¹⁰⁵ Despite the controversial nature of the Act, which grants unprecedented power to the

executive branch, the "hastily drafted, complex, and far-reaching legislation" initially passed with minimal deliberation.¹⁰⁶

Whether one supports or opposes current legislation that restricts civil liberties, two things remain certain. First, upholding personal freedoms becomes a more complex and philosophically challenging task during times of perceived national security threats. In abstract terms, civil liberties and democratic ideals "garner overwhelming support."¹⁰⁷ Yet in "applied contexts" like war, our allegiance to those values sometimes wavers.¹⁰⁸ Secondly, public deliberation and political involvement enable citizens to identify, articulate, and make public their own opinions about these difficult questions. Barbara Olshansky, Director Counsel of the Global Justice Initiative, argues that "only the people—individually, collectively, and through their elected representatives" can reclaim rights that she thinks are under "assault by the executive branch."¹⁰⁹ Increased public debate about civil liberties, particularly in light of America's ongoing international conflicts, will only help citizens better understand their individual rights and equip them to make well-informed decisions as to if and when these freedoms should be compromised in the name of national security.

ER's public stance on the need to protect civil liberties illustrated her willingness to put the rights of others ahead of her own political popularity, even when that stance prompted others to accuse *her* of unpatriotic sentiments.¹¹⁰ ER's address contributed to ongoing discussions of civil liberties that extend well into our present moment. In light of the United States' ongoing security concerns both at home and abroad, this tension between national security and personal liberties will no doubt be with us for a very long time. One can appreciate the enduring nature of this debate tied so closely to the very notions of American democracy.

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Notes

1 I respectfully use Eleanor Roosevelt's initials in lieu of "Roosevelt" for clarity and simplicity; other scholars have used the same reference. I will also later refer to President Roosevelt as FDR for these same reasons. Eleanor Roosevelt to the Chicago Civil Liberties Committee, "Address by Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt," March 14, 1940, Eleanor Roosevelt Papers, Franklin Roosevelt National Library. Here and elsewhere passages from the speech are cited with reference to paragraph numbers in the text of speech.

2 Lizabeth Cohen, "Encountering Mass Culture at the Grassroots: The Experience of Chicago Worker in the 1920s," in *Popular Culture and Political Change in Modern America*, eds., Ronald Edsforth and Larry Bennett (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991).

3 This separation reflects a theoretical ideal. Such a finite distinction of course is often blurred, and certainly many would deny the existence of this division between public and private.

4 Aristotle, *The Politics and The Constitution of Athens*, ed., Stephen Everson (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 17.

5 Aristotle, *The Politics*, 29.

6 Aristotle also asserts that a man should rule his wife because "the male is by nature fitter for command than the female, just as the elder and full-grown is superior to the younger and more immature," despite the fact that "the idea of a constitutional state implies that the natures of the citizens are equal, and do not differ at all." Aristotle, *The Politics*, 27.

7 Patrice Clark Koelsch, "Public and Private: Some Implications for Feminist Literature and Criticism," in *Gender, Ideology, and Action: Historical Perspectives on Women's Public Lives*, ed., Janet Sharistianian (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), 12.

8 Koelsch, "Public and Private," 13; Exclusion from the *polis* was based solely on sex. Slaves and resident aliens, for example, would have also been considered non-citizens by Aristotle. See Stephen Everson, "Introduction," in *The Politics and The Constitution of Athens*, xviii.

9 Eighteenth-century philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau, for example, equated a woman's desire to be part of the political community with a denial of her sexuality, similar to earlier conclusions drawn by Plato. See Linda K. Kerber, "The Republican Mother: Women and the Enlightenment—An American Perspective," in *Toward an Intellectual History of Women: Essays by Linda K. Kerber*, ed., Linda K. Kerber (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 41-62.

10 Linda K. Kerber, *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), 27.

11 Kerber, *Women of the Republic*, 28.

12 Kerber, *Women of the Republic*, 11-12; Kerber attends to the limitation of the political influence truly granted to women by noting that "The image of the Republican Mother could be used to mask women's true place in the polis: they were still on its edges."

13 Linda K. Kerber, "Republicanism in the History and Historiography of the United States," *American Quarterly* 37 (1985): 488.

14 Kerber, *Women of the Republic*, 285; Kerber, "The Republican Mother," 58-59.

15 JoAnn Menezes, "The Birthing of the American Flag and the Invention of an American Founding Mother in the Image of Betsy Ross," in *Narratives of Nostalgia, Gender, and Nationalism*, eds., Jean Pickering and Suzanne Kehde (New York: New York University Press, 1997), 85.

16 Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860," *American Quarterly* 18 (1966): 152.

17 Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, *Man Cannot Speak for Her: A Critical Study of Early Feminist Rhetoric*, 2 vols. (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1989).

18 Campbell, *Man Cannot Speak for Her*.

19 Stephen Howard Browne, *Angelina Grimke: Rhetoric, Identity, and the Radical Imagination* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1999), 95.

20 Browne also argues that Beecher's *An Essay on Slavery and Abolition with Reference to the Duty of American Females* recognized "the relationship between virtue and action . . . in terms of duty a principle that governed for Beecher the optimal ordering of self and

community." Beecher's published persuasive writing challenged the tenets of republican motherhood while simultaneously trying to uphold them, illustrating woman's changing relationship with this ideological framework. Browne, *Angelina Grimke*, 87.

21 Susan Zaeske, "The 'Promiscuous Audience' Controversy and the Emergence of the Early Woman's Rights Movement," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 81 (1995): 198. Emphasis mine.

22 Zaeske, "The 'Promiscuous Audience' Controversy," 191.

23 Susan Zaeske, *Signatures of Citizenship: Petitioning, Antislavery, and Women's Political Identity* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 98.

24 Nan Johnson, *Gender and Rhetorical Space in American Life, 1866-1910* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2002), 3.

25 Johnson, *Gender and Rhetorical Space in American Life*, 15.

26 Johnson, *Gender and Rhetorical Space in American Life*, 2.

27 Campbell, *Man Cannot Speak for Her*, 1: 4.

28 Lori D. Ginzberg, "'Moral Suasion is Moral Balderdash': Women, Politics, and Social Activism in the 1850s," *Journal of American History* 73 (1986): 604.

29 Lee Chambers-Schiller, "'A Good Work Among the People': The Political Culture of the Boston Antislavery Fair," in *The Abolitionist Sisterhood: Women's Political Culture in Antebellum America*, eds., Jean Fagan Yellin and John C. Van Horne (Ithica, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994); Beth A. Salerno, *Sister Societies: Women's Antislavery Organizations in Antebellum America* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2005).

30 Kathleen D. McCarthy, "Women and Political Culture," in *Charity, Philanthropy, and Civility in American History*, eds., Lawrence J. Friedman and Mark D. McGarvie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 192.

31 McCarthy, "Women and Political Culture," 182.

32 James M. Lindgren, "'A New Departure in Historic, Patriotic Work': Personalism, Professionalism, and Conflicting Concepts of Material Culture in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries," *The Public Historian* 18 (1996): 43-44.

33 See Angelika Köhler, *Ambivalent Desires: The New Woman Between Social Modernization and Modern Writing* (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2004); and Mary Martha Thomas, *The New Woman in Alabama: Social Reforms and Suffrage, 1890-1920* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1992).

34 Jean V. Matthews, *The Rise of the New Woman: The Women's Movement in America, 1875-1930* (Chicago, IL: Ivan R. Dee, 2003), 13.

35 Matthews, *The Rise of the New Woman*, 15.

36 Thomas, *The New Woman in Alabama*, 2.

37 Thomas, *The New Woman in Alabama*, 3.

38 Barbara Burrell, *Public Opinion, The First Ladyship, and Hillary Rodham Clinton* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 14.

39 Shawn J. Parry-Giles and Diane M. Blair, "The Rise of the Rhetorical First Lady: Politics, Gender Ideology, and Women's Voice, 1789-2002," *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 5 (2002): 567.

40 Parry-Giles and Blair, "The Rise of the Rhetorical First Lady," 570; Parry-Giles and Blair list a variety of examples of early social politicking activities, including Abigail Smith Adams's meeting with members of Congress, Dolley Payne Todd Madison's willingness to guard the

White House when President Madison took leave from Washington, D.C. before the War of 1812, and Sarah Polk's perusal of newspaper articles to be read by the president. Burrell similarly notes that care for the president, interest in the social aspect of the political community, and direct sway over the president or public policy are examples of the increasing levels of political involvement presidential wives have assumed in their role as first lady. See Burrell, *Public Opinion*.

41 Parry-Giles and Blair, "The Rise of the Rhetorical First Lady," 572-575.

42 Betty Boyd Caroli, *First Ladies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 140-141.

43 Janis L. Edwards, "Grace Goodhue Coolidge: Articulating Virtue," in *Inventing a Voice: The Rhetoric of American First Ladies of the Twentieth Century*, ed., Molly Meijer Wertheimer (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.), 146.

44 Edwards, "Grace Goodhue Coolidge," 154.

45 Parry-Giles and Blair, "The Rise of the Rhetorical First Lady," 567.

46 Ann J. Atkinson, "Lou Henry Hoover: Mining the Possibilities as Leader and First Lady," in *Inventing a Voice: The Rhetoric of American First Ladies of the Twentieth Century*, ed., Molly Meijer Wertheimer (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.), 168.

47 Nancy Beck Young, *Lou Henry Hoover: Activist First Lady* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004), 146.

48 See Parry-Giles and Blair, "The Rise of the Rhetorical First Lady," 567. According to Jeffrey K. Tulis, the notion of the rhetorical presidency refers to twentieth-century presidents' willingness to speak directly to the people instead of primarily to the Congress. In so doing, these presidents are thought to have enlivened the spirit of the people through their direct public appeal more than earlier presidents. See Jeffrey K. Tulis, *The Rhetorical Presidency* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987).

49 Eleanor Roosevelt, *This I Remember* (New York: Harper and Row, 1949), 69.

50 Roosevelt, *This I Remember*, 76.

51 Roosevelt, *This I Remember*, 88.

52 Roosevelt, *This I Remember*, 89.

53 Blanche Wiesen Cook, *Eleanor Roosevelt*, 2 vols. (New York: Penguin, 1999), 1:2, 9.

54 Molly M. Wood, "Diplomatic Wives: The Politics of Domesticity and the 'Social Game' in the U.S. Foreign Service, 1905-1941," *Journal of Women's History* 17 (2005), 146.

55 See Tamara K. Hareven, *Eleanor Roosevelt: An American Conscience* (Chicago, IL: Quadrangle Books, 1968), 6-7; and Lois Scharf, *First Lady of American Liberalism* (Boston, MA: Twayne Publishers, 1987), 24.

56 See Eleanor Roosevelt, *This is My Story* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1937), 84; and Scharf, *First Lady of American Liberalism*, 26.

57 See Myra Gutin, *The President's Partner: The First Lady in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1989), 82; and Blanche Wiesen Cook, *Eleanor Roosevelt*, 2 vols. (New York: Penguin, 1999), 1:1.

58 Roosevelt, *This is My Story*, 108.

59 Marilyn Gittell and Teresa Shtob, "Changing Women's Roles in Political Volunteerism and Reform of the City," *Signs* 5 (1980): 70.

60 Gittell and Shtob, "Changing Women's Roles," 70; Eleanor J. Stebner. *The Women of Hull House: A Study in Spirituality, Vocation, and Friendship* (Albany: State University of New York Press 1997).

61 Roosevelt, *This is My Story*, 109.

62 Caroli, *First Ladies*, 187.

63 Gutin, *The President's Partner*, 85.

64 Allida M. Black, *Casting Her Own Shadow: Eleanor Roosevelt and the Shaping of Postwar Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 25.

65 Blanche Wiesen Cook, *Eleanor Roosevelt*, 2:130.

66 Maurine H. Beasley, *Eleanor Roosevelt and the Media: A Public Quest for Self-Fulfillment* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 4.

67 Young, *Lou Hoover*, 140-143.

68 Beasley, *Eleanor Roosevelt and the Media*, 51-67.

69 Black, *Casting Her Own Shadow*, 26.

70 Beasley, *Eleanor Roosevelt and the Media*, 4.

71 One representative example of such abuse is the mob harassment, physical attack, and damage to personal property suffered Jehovah's Witnesses in Litchfield, Illinois in 1940. See Chicago Civil Liberties Committee, *Pursuit of Freedom: A History of Civil Liberty in Illinois 1787-1942*, eds., Edgar Bernhard, Ira Latimer, and Harvey O'Connor (Chicago, IL: Chicago Civil Liberties Committee, 1942), 15-17.

72 "Willkie Urges Action to Guard Civil Liberties," *New York Herald Tribune*, March 14, 1940; "J. Edgar Hoover Denies Tapping Senators' Wires," *New York Herald Tribune*, March 14, 1940.

73 Chicago Civil Liberties Committee, *Pursuit of Freedom*, 15-17, vii; Mrs. Charles Helen S. Ascher to Chicago Civil Liberties Committee, March 23, 1934, Swarthmore College Peace Collection (hereafter cited SCPC), American Civil Liberties Union Records (hereafter cited ACLUR), Box 6, Swarthmore College—Swarthmore, Pennsylvania (hereafter cited SC—S).

74 Samuel Walker, *In Defense of American Liberties: A History of the ACLU* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999), 123; Members' Bulletin from Philadelphia Civil Liberties Committee, May 29, 1940, SCPC, ACLUR, Box 6, SC—S.

75 Walker, *In Defense*, 123.

76 Jerold S. Auerbach, "The La Follette Committee: Labor and Civil Liberties in the New Deal," *Journal of American History* 51 (1964): 435.

77 Walker, *In Defense*, 96.

78 "Dies Calls Chicago ISMS Power House," *New York Times*, October 4, 1939.

79 Auerbach, "The La Follette Committee," 449-450.

80 "Dies Calls Chicago ISMS Power House."

81 "Dies Calls Chicago ISMS Power House."

82 "Dies Calls Chicago ISMS Power House."

83 Walker, *In Defense*, 120.

84 Chicago Civil Liberties Committee, *Pursuit of Freedom*.

85 Eleanor Roosevelt, "Intolerance," in *Courage in a Dangerous World: The Political Writings of Eleanor Roosevelt*, ed., Allida M. Black (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 121.

86 Theodore Irwin, "Control: Freedom and Censorship," in *Public Opinion Quarterly* 4 (1940): 524.

87 See Chicago Civil Liberties Committee, *Pursuit of Freedom*, 15-17. Witnesses considered the flag a worldly emblem that symbolized values conflicting with their religious beliefs.

88 In 1940, the ACLU also experienced a schism resulting in the organization's denouncement of former leader Elizabeth Gurley Flynn due to her identification as a communist. See Walker, *In Defense*, 121-125.

89 Theodore Irwin, "Control: Freedom and Censorship," 523.

90 Campbell, *Man Cannot Speak for Her*.

91 Eleanor Roosevelt, "The Moral Basis of Democracy," in *Courage In a Dangerous World: The Political Writings of Eleanor Roosevelt*, ed., Allida M. Black (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999).

92 Sacvan Bercovitch, *The American Jeremiad* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978), 6.

93 Bercovitch, *The American Jeremiad*, 32.

94 Bercovitch, *The American Jeremiad*, 6.

95 Joyce Appleby, "Recovering America's Historic Diversity: Beyond Exceptionalism," in *Marks of Distinction: American Exceptionalism Revisited*, ed., Dale Carter (Aarhus, Denmark: Aarhus University Press), 25.

96 Thomas B. Byers, "A City Upon a Hill: American Literature and the Ideology of Exceptionalism," in *Marks of Distinction: American Exceptionalism Revisited*, ed., Dale Carter (Aarhus, Denmark: Aarhus University Press), 46.

97 Specifically, Presidents Harrison, Cleveland, and McKinley created discourse of this strain. Vanessa B. Beasley, *You, the People: American National Identity in Presidential Rhetoric* (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 2004), 73-81.

98 Beasley, *You, the People*, 83.

99 Black, *Casting Her Own Shadow*, 132-135.

100 Patrick Schmidt, "'The Dilemma to a Free People': Justice Robert Jackson, Walter Bagehot, and the Creation of a Conservative Jurisprudence," *Law and History Review* 20 (2002): 519-520.

101 Allan M. Winkler, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Making of Modern America* (New York: Pearson Education, Inc., 2006), 164.

102 "President Signs USA PATRIOT Improvement and Reauthorization Act," March 9, 2006, www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases (accessed April 2, 2007).

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104 Nancy Chang and the Center for Constitutional Rights, *Silencing Political Dissent: How Post-September 11 Anti-Terrorism Measures Threaten Our Civil Liberties* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2002).

105 "Bush Renews Patriot Act Campaign," *New York Times*, January 4, 2006.

106 Chang, *Silencing Political Dissent*, 43.

107 Darren W. Davis, *Negative Liberty: Public Opinion and the Terrorist Attacks on America* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2007), 4.

108 Davis, *Negative Liberty*, 4.

109 Barbara J. Olshansky, "Our Civil Liberties: Who's Watching the Home Front?," in *Awakening from the Dream: Civil Rights Under Siege and the New Struggle for Equal Justice*, eds., Denise C. Morgan, Rachel D. Godsil, and Joy Moses (Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2005), 220.

110 For a discussion of ER's critics, including J. Edgar Hoover, who associated her sentiments with un-American fascism, see Black, *Casting Her Own Shadow*.