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*Militant Citizenship: Rhetorical Strategies of the National
Woman's Party, 1913-1920* by Belinda A. Stillion Southard
(review)

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boundaries was the best route to that end. She treats paternalism/maternalism with a softer touch than have many past historians. Though it may seem faint praise, Gillespie is sure that the Reynoldses were white Southerners who sincerely believed in “separate but equal,” and tried to make it work.

Gillespie’s approach to the Reynolds’s hierarchical relationship with their employees is not especially analytical. Paternalism worked for the benefit of people like them, and if Gillespie barely stops short of praising them for carrying it out benignly, she at least demonstrates that they were good at it. The author exalts R.J.R.’s entrepreneurial skills so often it seems at times that the thesis is that he was a good businessman. Likewise, Katharine Reynolds as an exemplar of the upper-class “country living” movement is similarly touted but to little conclusion. No one is going to deny that these wealthy white folks were a definitive part of the New South, particularly its inherent, ambiguous mingling of past and present, personal and pecuniary.

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Militant Citizenship: Rhetorical Strategies of the National Woman’s Party, 1913–1920. By Belinda A. Stillion Southard. (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 2012. Pp. 303. \$45.00 cloth; \$24.95 paper)

The battle for women’s suffrage in the United States spanned more than seven decades and continues to provoke a well-deserved fascination. The focus of this well-documented study is the National Woman’s Party (NWP), whose radical strategies of marches, picketing, and burning President Wilson’s speeches and effigy in Washington, D.C., gave a new visibility to the movement during its final years. Their strategies were effective in accomplishing that goal and, argues Stillion Southard, in allowing women to constitute themselves as national citizens. The book brings a new dimension to our under-

standing of the closing years of the suffrage movement.

Grounded in the vocabulary of scholarship in rhetoric and public address, this study bears some marks of its dissertation origins as it sets forth its analysis of the strategies employed by the NWP. It explores their use of “militancy”—a strategy that “confronts” rather than “appeals to institutional power”—and “political mimesis”—a strategy whereby “disempowered rhetors mimic political rhetorics, rituals and practices to assert political agency, constitute political identities, and earn political legitimacy” (pp. 15, 18). The suffrage parade, the formal establishment of the NWP, the appeal for popular support through the Silent Sentinel pickets and the internationalized arguments surrounding the burning of Wilson’s speeches, are framed as more than simple imitation or borrowing from the demonstrations and discourse of earlier political parties and of President Wilson; these strategic choices enabled NWP members to enact the very citizenship they desired to achieve as a result of the movement.

The theoretical scaffolding of the opening chapters soon fades into the background, allowing the detailed and thoughtful analysis of the practices of the NWP to come forward. Primary sources—letters, publications, speeches, and images—combine with a broad set of secondary sources to support Stillion Southard’s examination of the ways by which the NWP built a “collective, nationwide movement” uniting women “as politically empowered constituents” (p. 111). Even familiar stories of the suffrage movement are made new when told through the lens of the NWP. “I regret that we have not an ounce of energy nor a postage stamp to devote to Senator O’Gorman,” wrote Harriot Stanton Blatch in her refusal to join in the NWP lobbying efforts (p. 89). Stillion Southard uses this kind of exchange to offer new insight into tensions between the NWP and other suffrage organizations.

With its primary focus on the NWP as a whole rather than on the discourse and activities of individual members, *Militant Citizenship* is a good complement to Katherine Adams and Michael Keen’s *Alice Paul and the American Suffrage Campaign* (2008), a book Stillion Southard, whose notes and bibliography are otherwise quite extensive

and thorough, does not mention. The most powerful chapter of the book details the 1918 “Watch Fires of Freedom” protests staged in Lafayette Square at the statues of Lafayette and Rochambeau. Stillion Southard’s analysis powerfully lays out the parallels between Wilson’s rhetoric and the transnational vision and arguments of the NWP. The “NWP’s Watch Fires” not only drew attention to the hypocrisy of Wilson’s prodemocracy speeches that ignored the reality of women’s disenfranchisement, they also fashioned “an international model of woman citizenship” (p. 171).

One particularly impressive feature of the work is the author’s consistent attention to issues of race and class; at every turn she points out the expedient rhetorical choices of the white, middle-class NWP leadership and analyzes the political and cultural implications of those choices. Upon reaching the closing pages of the book, readers may be reminded of Audre Lorde’s classic warning in “The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House.” This tale of the NWP demonstrates the tremendous impact of inventive rhetorical strategies while reminding us that successes gained by adopting the strategies wielded by those in power come at some cost to those who remain on the margins.

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Truman’s Triumphs: The 1948 Election and the Making of Postwar America. By Andrew E. Busch. (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2012. \$37.50 cloth; \$19.95 paper)

Andrew E. Busch’s *Truman’s Triumphs* is an outstanding analysis of the 1948 presidential election and its impact on American political development. Busch’s work requires us to abandon former ways of understanding this pivotal election in favor of a more convincing